Policies and Frameworks
Displacement, Mobility and Solutions in the context of climate change

December 2023
1. Context and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

2. Key features of the Secretary-General’s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement

3. Legal Considerations regarding claims for international protection in the context of climate change and disasters
1. What came before the Action Agenda?

- IASC Operational Guidelines (2011)
What led to the Action Agenda?

- Record numbers of displaced and forward predictions
- Climate-related disasters on the increase
- Protracted nature of displacement
- Push by Member States to rethink and step up IDP approach
- Global multi-stakeholder consultations
2. Action Agenda - Guiding considerations

- Responsibility of the State: whole of government
- Agency and participation of IDPs
- Cross-cutting – work across the HDP nexus
- “Whole of displacement” approach
- Urban reality
- Whole of society and national capacity
- High-quality data and analysis
Three interlinked goals

• Durable solutions
• Prevention
• Effective protection and assistance

*working in partnership
Solutions: recommendations to Government

- Leadership, whole-of-government
- Safe and conducive environment
- Participation in elections
- Displacement addressed in national/local development plans, urban planning, DRR and climate change plans
- Legal and policy framework (equitable access to services)
- Collaboration with international actors
Solutions: UN commitments

• Meaningful participation and inclusion of IDPs in decision-making and solutions planning
• Support whole-of-government solutions strategies
• Attention to urban displacement and support for local/city authorities
• UN leadership and accountability:
  – Special Advisor
  – Steering Group
  – Resident Coordinator in lead for UN on solutions
  – UN IDP solutions strategy (with costing)
  – Global institutional plans
• Financing for solutions
• Pilot engagement with the private sector
• Support States to more effectively use data for solutions
3. What about climate refugees?

- A refugee is defined as a person who has crossed an international border “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.”

- The term “climate refugee” is not endorsed by UNHCR, and it is more accurate to refer to “persons displaced in the context of disasters and climate change”

- Bottom line: the effects of climate change can contribute to the need for international protection, but does not create new categories of refugees.
Legal Considerations on asylum and climate change (2020)

• Elaborates legal considerations related to climate change as a ‘risk multiplier’
• Confirmed people seeking international protection may have valid claims for refugee status.
• Recalls that States are bound to ensure access to fair and efficient procedures to assess the needs.
• Identifies temporary protection or stay arrangements as a pragmatic way to provide protection for those displaced.
Climate change and disaster displacement

• Focus should be on continued advocacy for climate change action, adaptation and financing
• We can address displacement within our collective work on climate change
• Legal and policy frameworks can guide our response, structure and inform national legislation
• We cannot predict the scale of displacement, but we can prepare for it in a principled, preventative, and practical way.
Discussion!