Building resilient cities and communities in climate displacement settings: Regional learnings and avenues for cooperation

Date & Time

Friday 25 April 2025
12:45-13:45

Room: Asia-Pacific Foyer
Mode of meeting: In-Person

Co-organizers: Australian Government, IOM, UN- Habitat, Cities Institute at University of New South Wales, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (Norwegian Refugee Council), UCLG ASPAC .

Background

The SDG Progress Report 2025 highlights that the most significant regressions in Asia-Pacific are in disaster-related indicators, where the region continues to suffer significant economic and infrastructural losses due to disasters. In 2023, the region recorded 12.76 million disaster-induced displacements, representing half of the global total.

Cities across Asia and the Pacific are at the forefront of displacement due to different factors such as urban growth, climate and environmental degradation, simultaneously serving as destinations for those moving while facing severe climate risks themselves. Most of this mobility takes place within countries and is often directed toward cities[1]. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, population growth, inequalities, and environmental degradation are driving large-scale internal migration, placing immense pressure on already overstretched urban infrastructure, housing, livelihoods, and services. The most affected populations include urban poor communities, informal settlers, women, children, persons with disabilities, and internally displaced persons.

As climate and environmental displacement reshape urban demographics, cities must urgently build resilience to both absorb new populations and mitigate climate risks. Countries across the region have different experiences in dealing with these issues. For instance, Fiji has identified 43 coastal communities in need of relocation due to climate threats[2], while the Philippines has recorded over 62 million (geological and climate-change related) disaster displacements since 2008 – 51 million of which tied to storms[3] – making it the most climate-vulnerable country globally. Myanmar's displacement crisis has weakened population resilience, particularly in coastal regions, while in Bangladesh, 1.2 million people are likely to be displaced by disasters in any given year, many of whom relocate to major cities where urban poverty exacerbates vulnerabilities[4]. In Indonesia, rapid urbanization has concentrated millions of people in high-risk areas, leading to repeated displacements.

Given these challenges, it is critical to strengthen regional cooperation and knowledge exchange to build city preparedness and resilience in climate displacement settings. The upcoming event,

[1] UNU-CPR, 2022, November 30, Climate-Related Migration Into Cities: What We Know and Why It Matters, https://unu.edu/cpr/blog-post/climate-related-migration-cities-what-we-know-and-why-it-matters.
[2] IOM, n.d., Fiji
[3] IDMC, n.d., Philippines country profile
[4] IDMC, 2019, Bangladesh - Figure Analysis – Displacement Related to Disasters

"Building Resilient Cities and Communities in Climate Displacement Settings: Regional Learnings and Avenues for Cooperation," will bring together urban experts, policymakers, and practitioners to share experiences, good practices, and innovative tools for addressing the intersection of climate risk, urbanization, and human mobility. Through panel discussions, expert insights, and case studies, the event will explore regionally replicable strategies for integrating climate adaptation into urban planning, governance, housing, and basic services.

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The event aligns with the following **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):**

- **SDG 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities
- **SDG 13:** Climate Action
- **SDG 10:** Reduced Inequalities
- **SDG 17:** Partnerships for the Goals

This event will help drive regional cooperation and solutions to address climate displacement in urban contexts, supporting progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

Objectives

This event aims to:

- Highlight key challenges and trends in climate displacement.
- Share regional experiences and best practices in urban resilience.
- Discuss practical policy solutions for mainstream mobility including climate mobility into urban planning
- Explore opportunities for regional cooperation and partnerships.
- Engage stakeholders in a dialogue on innovative approaches.

Key Event Outcomes

The event will encompass three main outcomes:

- Raise awareness of the intersecting issues of climate change, displacement, and urbanization.
- Showcase innovative solutions from urban settings across the region, including local action and regional cooperation models.
- By bringing together Member States, development partners, and key stakeholders, the event will facilitate knowledge exchange, foster new partnerships, and accelerate the adoption of proven resilience strategies throughout Asia and the Pacific.

Programme

Time	Agenda item
12:45-12:55	Welcome and Keynote presentation (10 min)
12:55-13:30	Panel Discussion (35 min)
13:30-13:40	Q&A Session (10 min)
13:40-13:45	Summary & Closing remarks (05 min)

Information and Contacts

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