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***Climate change and migration: policy framework,
gaps and needs***

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INTRODUCTION

The idea for this work was born after my internship at the Barilla Center For Food and Nutrition (BCFN) of the Barilla Foundation. In particular, I was involved in a project called "Food and Migration", created and developed with the Limes, the Italian Review of Geopolitics, with which I then had the honour of working side by side. The project, in particular, examines the often-underestimated link between food systems, and particularly food insecurity, with the movement of peoples and provide interviews, expert columns and in-depth analysis on a regular basis throughout the year. In this context, I focused my research and analysis on the relation between food systems, migration and climate change and the outcomes of this long work have been a series of in-depth articles on specific cases and relevant interviews with experts working for relevant organizations operating in the field of Migration. For this reason, at the end of this experience, I considered it coherent and interesting to develop a research and to develop an analysis to deepen the theme of the relationship between climate change and migration.

To do so, I decided to begin with a general overview about migration. In fact, for millennia, people have been migrating and settling in different areas around the world. Over the years, this phenomenon has changed in important ways, and today has become one of the most discussed issues in the international studies and debates. Even if much more attention is given to the international movements, the majority of people move inside the country of origin. In this regard, the World Bank reports that, with the steady intensification of some drivers of internal migration, such as climate change and conflict, the number of internal migrants is expected to exceed 1 billion people in the future. The choice to migrate or stay can be influenced by the interaction of several contextual factors, including economic, political, social, cultural, demographic, environmental events and conditions. Moreover, migration can also be voluntarily, when resilient people use it as a coping and adaptation strategy, or forced, when local conditions leave them no alternative. In this context, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is reported to be one of the regions with the highest number of internal migrants. In particular, rural-urban migration is the prominent form of internal migration in SSA and it is often linked to marriage and agricultural practice, involving contractual or seasonal labourers, but also to war, political instability and environmental shocks, in particular in the last few years. In fact, around the world is higher and higher the number of people moving in anticipation or as a response to environmental stress every

year. For this reason, I decided to dedicate the second session to the analysis of the climate-migration nexus. Disruptions such as cyclones, floods and wildfires destroy homes and assets, thus contributing to the displacement of people; slow-onset processes – such as sea-level rise, changes in rainfall patterns and droughts – contribute to pressures on livelihoods, and access to food and water, which can contribute to decisions to move away in search of more tenable living conditions. And in a region, such as Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), in which the combination of rising GHG emissions, population growth in highly exposed regions and the institutional failure to build and implement effective adaptation measures exacerbate the over-reliance on natural factors, large-scale population displacements and migrations to face climate change are very common. However, even if there is increasing recognition of the link between climate change and migration, it is difficult to find a clear cause-and-effect correlation between the two phenomena. In fact, in this case we speak about an indirect relationship, mediated by other structural and individual factors which can determine the eventuality and direction of the migration path and influence its outcomes. Despite this, the growing number of documented cases of displacement and migration due to climate events leaves no doubt that climate conditions are currently a key driver and will increasingly be so in the coming years. Nevertheless, today, there are still fragmented international governance and measures to address climate migration. And the third part of this study is, therefore, dedicated to the analysis of the legal and political framework. There have been a number of initiatives since 2011 that aim to establish approaches, action for cooperation and provide practical recommendations for responding to environmental migration and displacement, which reflects a recognition of the increasing importance of the issue and of the need for coordinated efforts to address it. Of significance, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) hosts the world's first legally binding regional instrument on internal displacement, the Kampala Convention, which recognizes environmental degradation and natural disasters as drivers of internal migration in Africa and explicitly addresses protections and assistance for persons internally displaced due to both natural disasters and climate change. However, despite progress in tackling the issue, several formidable challenges remain. With few legally binding instruments, most rely on the interest of states in participating and complying, and they often address specific situations rather than constituting a holistic response to internal and cross-border migration and displacement in the context of climate change and slow- and sudden-onset disasters. Meanwhile, there are comparatively few international initiatives for addressing internal displacement, with most

focusing on cross-border movements.

For this reason, it is important that policymakers work to create specific governance, frameworks and measures to prevent and manage displacements due to climate change. First of all, they should intensify the efforts to tackle the primary cause, which means environmental change and its consequences. Moreover, they should formulate long-term solutions to help those who could become displaced, those who are already moving, those who remain behind and those who host newcomers. Before migration, adapt-in-place solutions can help communities stay; during migration, policies and investments can enable mobility for people who need to move away from unavoidable climate risks; After migration, planning can ensure that both sending and receiving areas are well equipped to meet the needs and aspirations of their populations. Lastly, they should invest in data collection, analysis, and research around the environment-mobility nexus, since information is the very first step if we want to study and try to manage this complex phenomenon.

At the end of this session, I decided to report the interviews I had the opportunity to conduct during my internship. In particular, I could interview three experts working for relevant organizations operating in the field of migration: Roberto Sensi of Actionaid, with which I had an interesting conversation about the concept of migration and adaptation to climate change and events; Cristina Rapone of FAO, with whom I analysed the link between migration, agriculture, rural development, and climate change; Mauro Martini of IFAD, who explained me very well the role of remittances and how Italy's G20 Presidency reiterated its commitment to remittances.

CHAPTER 1

MIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW

1.1 International and Internal migrations

Migration is a complex and heterogeneous phenomenon touching almost every society around the world. From a spatial point of view, it is possible to distinguish between international movements, when people move outside the country of birth, and internal movements, when people migrate within the country of birth. Over time, these movements significantly increased and changed. In particular, it is reported that the estimated number of international migrants has increased over the past 50 years. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there were around 72 million people living in a country other than their countries of birth in 2019, which equates to 3.5 per cent of the global population, while in 2020 this amount increased to 281 million, which corresponds to 3.6 per cent of the global population. As shown in Table 1, this amount is about 128 million more than 30 years earlier, in 1990 (153 million), and over three times the estimated number in 1970 (84 million).

Table 1. International migrants, 1970–2020

Year	Number of international migrants	Migrants as a % of the world's population
1970	84 460 125	2.3
1975	90 368 010	2.2
1980	101 983 149	2.3
1985	113 206 691	2.3
1990	152 986 157	2.9
1995	161 289 976	2.8
2000	173 230 585	2.8
2005	191 446 828	2.9
2010	220 983 187	3.2
2015	247 958 644	3.4
2020	280 598 105	3.6

Source: UN DESA, 2008; UN DESA, 2021.

However, as we can see, this is a very small minority of the world's population (only 3,6 per cent), meaning that the majority of people decide to remain in the country of birth.

In fact, although international migration is the focus during international and policy debates, the number of internal migrants is at least 3 or 4 times larger than the number of people which migrate across borders.

Unfortunately, since more attention has been always given to international migration movements, there are few figures and statistics on internal migration on a global scale. In fact, to the best of our knowledge, the most recent figure published in the literature dates back to 2009, with 740 million internal migrants, which is more than 10 percent of the world's population (UNDP, 2009). However, with the steady increase in global population and intensification of some drivers of internal migration, such as climate change and conflict, the number of internal migrants is expected to exceed 1 billion people in the future (World Bank, 2021).

The measure of internal migration is further complicated by the duration of the migration project, which may be temporary (including seasonal migration) or permanent. In this respect, internal migration is more likely to be permanent when reflecting a trend towards urbanization in the country, while seasonal in contexts where internal migrants keep an activity in rural areas during the agricultural season. (World Bank, 2021).

In fact, internal migration patterns are heterogeneous, with migration simultaneously occurring from rural to urban areas, but also between rural areas and from urban to rural areas. In large developing countries undergoing urbanization, especially in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa—where the rural population is still disproportionately large—there are significant internal migration flows from rural to urban areas and between rural areas (Brueckner and Lall, 2015)

1.2 The drivers of migration and their influence on internal displacements

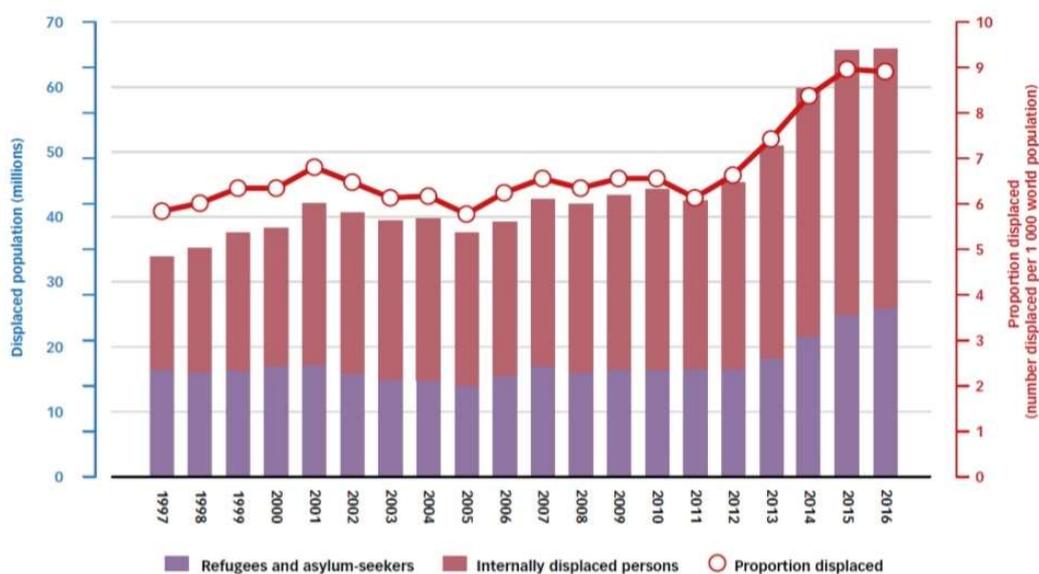
The choice to migrate or stay can be influenced by the interaction of several factors, including economic, political, social, cultural, demographic, environmental events and contexts (IOM, 2020). In particular, the choice to migrate can be influenced by the combination of “push factors”, which encourage people to leave the place of origin and settle elsewhere, and “pull factors, which make a place attractive for migrants. For example, better economic opportunities, job or education prospects and socio-political stability are

pull factors in the area of destination, while high unemployment, environmental degradation, water-related disasters, wars, political instability, diseases and shocks are common push factors (UNU-INWEH, 2020).

All these factors are highly contextual and interact and co-exist in defining migration decisions or shaping migration strategies. The combination of different contextual elements can, indeed, generate voluntary or involuntary/forced migration and in some cases can also trap people in immobility, preventing them from migrating.

With regard to involuntary migrants, which include refugees abroad and internally displaced persons (IDPs), the amount of forced displacement is reported to be on the rise (Table 2),

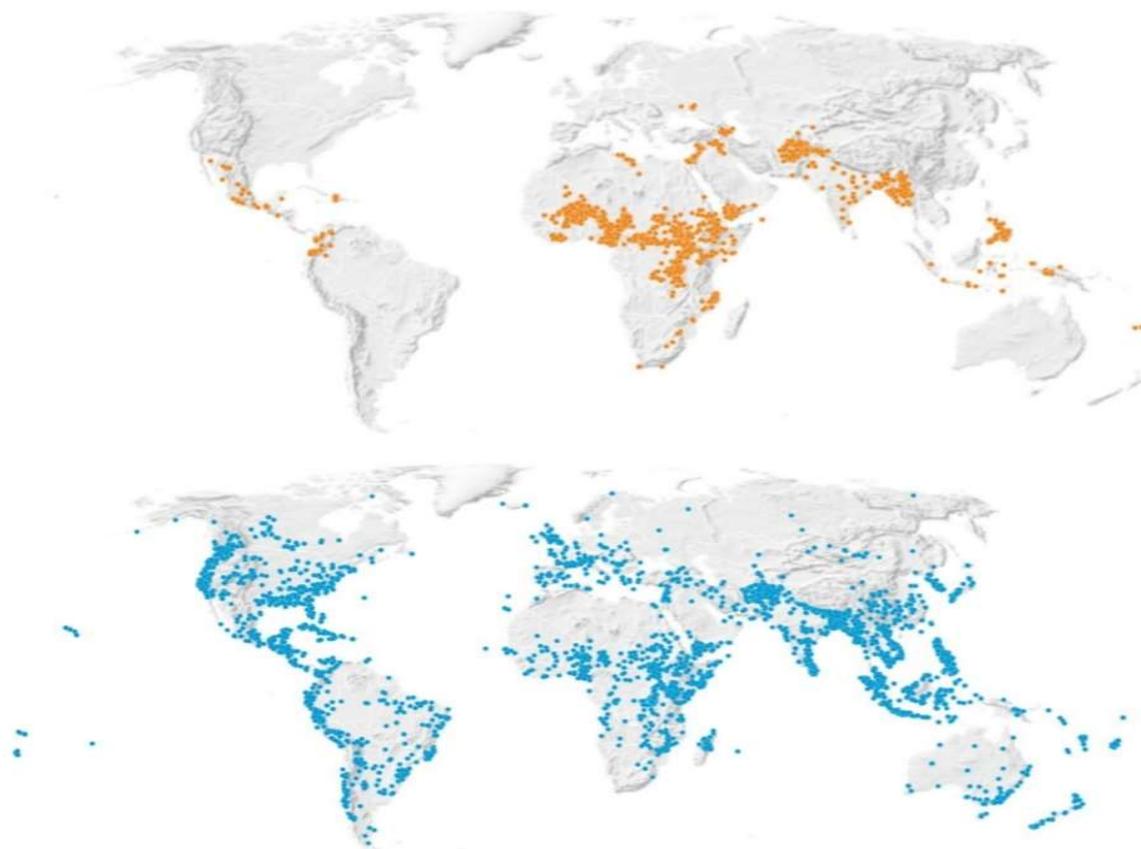
Table 2: Trend of global displacement and proportion displaced (1996-2016)



Source: UNHCR, 2017

and to understand why, it is important to focus on push factors. In fact, push factors such as conflicts, political instability, poverty, shocks, climate instability and, recently, the Covid-19 pandemics are powerful drivers of migration and have caused an increase in the number of forced displacements in the last few years. According to statistics, in 2020 there had been a total of 40.5 million new internal displacements across 42 countries and territories due to conflict and violence, and 144 countries and territories due to disasters. Among them, seventy-six per cent (30.7 million) of these new displacements were triggered by weather-related disasters and 24 per cent (9.8 million) were caused by conflict and violence. (IOM, 2021).

Table 3: Conflicts displacements (top) and disaster displacements (bottom) in 2020 by location



Source: IDMC, 2021

As we can see in Table 3, many more people are newly displaced by disasters than those newly displaced by conflict and violence, and many more countries are affected by disaster displacement.¹ In this regard, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported that the likelihood of being displaced by a natural disaster has increased by 60 percent between 1970 and 2014 worldwide, and is expected to continue growing as a consequence of climate change.

Anyway, this causal relationship between forced migratory flows and shocks, crises or other push factors in the areas of origin makes the issue of (involuntary) migration strictly dependent on living conditions, food security and resilience capacity in places of origin, which are the ultimate arbiter in determining who does and who does not migrate as a response to traumatic events.

¹ The content in this subsection is based on and drawn from IOM, 2021, World Migration report 2022, IDMC, 2020 and IDMC, 2021. Please refer to these documents for explanatory notes, deeper analysis, caveats, limitations and methodologies associated with the numbers and trends presented.

BOX 1 Afghanistan: IDPs and the Taliban takeover

During my traineeship, in one of the articles I produced, I analysed the displacement situation in Afghanistan, and in particular how did the Taliban takeover, culminating with the storming of Kabul on August 15, worsen the already alarming situation in the country.

In fact, the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban is causing a reinvigorated displacement crisis and worsening the living conditions in the country's refugee camps. Even before the Taliban takeover, Afghans already constituted one of the largest refugee populations worldwide. In particular, almost 6 million Afghans have been forced to leave their homes in recent years, including 3 million internally displaced people (IDPs). Today, as a consequence of recent events, the number of displaced people is significantly rising and more and more Afghans are expected to flee in the future due to escalating violence and political uncertainty. In particular, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), already more than 550.000 people were newly displaced inside the country and, in July 2021 alone, the number of IDPs nearly doubled compared with the month before. In this context, the living conditions in the overcrowded displacement camps and informal settlements are dire and refugees face incredible daily hardships to meet their basic needs. Food supplies are grossly insufficient and the micronutrient quality and caloric intake of food rations are below minimum standards. In fact, the WFP reported that almost 60 percent of displaced Afghans have inadequate food consumption and face the risk of starvation, and this percentage is expected to increase as a consequence of the growing number of displaced people in the country.²

² Please refer to <https://www.foodandmigration.com/a-growing-food-and-humanitarian-crisis-in-afghanistan/> for the full text

1.3 migration data and features in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has a long history of internal and international migration. In 2015, UNDESA estimated that about 33 million of Africans were living outside their country of nationality, representing 14% of international migrants worldwide. However, this figure masks sharp differences between migration in North Africa and SSA. In particular, while in the first case the great majority of people migrate overseas to reach Europe (90%), sub-Saharan Africans move mostly within Africa (nearly 70%), to neighbouring countries or within their region (UNDESA, 2015).

In this regard, the IOM reported that the number of internal migrants has significantly increased in the last few years. In 2020 around 21 million Africans were reported to live in another African country, which is a significant increase from 2015, when around 18 million Africans were estimated to be living within the region. In particular, the largest new internal displacements in Africa in 2020 took place in SSA, with the majority caused by conflicts and disasters.³ In fact, the African Union and the IOM (2020) reported that in 2018 over two thirds of African countries were in the world's top 10 of new conflict-related internal displacements, in particular Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Nigeria, Central Africa Republic, Cameroon and South Sudan, and that Nigeria, Somalia and Kenya were among the top 10 for new disaster-related displacements.

Despite the previous figures, it should be noted that existing data sources provide a limited picture of migration trends in Africa. In particular, measuring the extent of internal migration in SSA is very difficult for many reasons. First of all, only approximately half of the countries in the region collect information and quality data about migration, due to limited human and budget resources. Moreover, temporary and transit migration are usually not reported, while short-term (i.e., for less than 12 months) and, seasonal migration remains difficult to capture. Lastly, essential disaggregated data on migrants' characteristics (age, gender, rural or urban location, occupations and skills, working conditions and wages, and social protection) is very fragmented and unreliable at national, regional and also international levels. For these reasons, even if some data is also available through censuses, most of the information on internal migration in SSA relies on case studies and indirect sources, such as household surveys which are not specifically designed to capture migration (FAO, 2017).

³ Please refer to IOM, 2021, World Migration report 2022, for more detailed information and figures about that

However, because of the prominent and sharp increase in internal migration in SSA, a considerable body of empirical research has starting focusing on understanding the dynamics of internal movements within the region. In general, contemporary patterns of internal migration indicates that, in line with SSA still growing and dominant rural population - the FAO reported that SSA's population is expected to increase by 1.4 billion by 2050, in particular in rural areas -, the majority of migrants originate from rural areas. In particular, rural-urban migration is a prominent form of internal migration in SSA and it is often linked to marriage and agricultural practice, involving contractual or seasonal laborers, but also to war, political instability and environmental shocks, in particular in the last few years. Rural-rural migration also contributes to population redistribution in many countries. For example, the FAO reported that in 2010 this flow constituted about 1/3 of the internal movements of people in Burkina Faso and Uganda. This kind of migration often reflect the extension of the agricultural frontier, and can also be associated with crises and changes in environmental factors. Moreover, rural migration to other regions within the country is often linked with the economics of important cash-crop production areas (e.g. cotton, groundnut, cocoa, coffee and also rice) that offer employment opportunities to a large number of workers. However, most often, rural-rural migration results mainly from limited employment opportunities in cities. In fact, the search for an improved economic situation and the search for better income generating activities are among the major reasons for migration.

Nevertheless, generalizations are difficult to make because internal migrants' profiles in SSA are highly diversified and reflect the multiplicity of local conditions. In fact, the decision to migrate is complex and influenced by a myriad of interlinked factors, and results from a combination of specific local, individual and family characteristics. In particular, migration dynamics are highly context specific: migrants have different reasons for moving, reflecting diverse situations, opportunities and constraints shaped by local contexts, and the overall country characteristics in terms of levels of poverty and welfare, economic diversification, and political and social conditions.

In certain circumstances, migration can be a process where rural households try to adapt and manage risk, diversify their activities and livelihoods, and adopt new life styles. In fact, for many regions, rural migration is a complementary resource for households which are most of the time engaged in family farming. In other cases, migration is not a choice: it can be driven by the impossibility of people to sustain their livelihoods in the place where they

live, due to poverty, food insecurity, or adverse conditions related to environmental issues or conflicts. Lastly, these negative conditions can also trap people in immobility, preventing them from moving, due to the lack of economic and social resources.

For this reason, the complexity of the drivers of rural migration makes it difficult, if not impossible, to predict how many people will migrate, why, who they will be, or where they will go.

CHAPTER 2:

CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

2.1 Climate change: an overview

Climate change is generally considered as ‘a change in climate patterns due to human activities, in particular greenhouse emissions, going beyond the natural variability in the climate’ (McMahon et al., 2021).

Today, human activities are already estimated to have caused about 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, with a likely range of 0.8°C to 1.2°C and significant regional variations (IPCC 2018). In this regard, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on the State of the Global Climate reported an accelerated pace of climate change, noting that the years 2016, 2019 and 2020 have been the warmest on record, and 2011–2020 the warmest decade ever. Furthermore, according to the World Bank, the annual average temperature is projected to increase by up to 4° Celsius in the coming century.

Rising global temperatures have contributed to more frequent and severe extreme weather events around the world, including heat waves, droughts, heavy precipitation, floods, and severe storms, along with continued sea-level rise, ocean warming and acidification, and glacial loss (WMO 2021b). In fact, climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of both slow onset events, including long-run and gradual processes of environmental degradation, such as desertification, ocean acidification, erosion and droughts, and sudden-onset disasters events, including natural disaster such as temperature and precipitation extremes, floods, storms and droughts.

These events have significant implications for the ecosystems, crops and livelihoods directly affected by them. For example, high temperatures, prolonged droughts and extreme precipitation patterns reduce the agricultural productivity and the size of the agro-climatic zones suitable for perennial crops (Porter et al., 2014). Some sources predict that by 2050, close to 4.8 billion people (>50% global population), and a similar percentage of agricultural production, will be at risk due to increased rainfall variability or due to the variability in droughts. In particular, drought is reported to be the greatest cause of agricultural production losses, with 82 percent of its impact on agriculture (Reardon, 2021). Storm surges and flooding have also become more common, resulting in the destruction of livestock, land and goods, and contributing to the ongoing food insecurity. Furthermore,

climate change has worsened existing tensions in communities over reduced access to water and grazing land, leading to increased violence over these natural resources.

These impacts of climate change are unevenly distributed and are most heavily felt in poorer countries. This is due to several factors. First of all, poor countries present a greater vulnerability since they are on average hotter and their economies depend mainly on climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture, for their livelihoods. For this reason, they are much more exposed to climate-related hazards. Moreover, populations in least developed countries are most affected by climate change due to their lower resilience and adaptation capacity, including low economic and social capital. In fact, the impact of the same shock or stress can vary widely, depending on the vulnerabilities of agri-food systems and their capacities to prevent, anticipate, absorb, adapt and transform external shocks.

In this regard, tropical and sub-tropical regions, and most notably Sub-Saharan Africa, are among the most vulnerable and exposed to climate change impacts. This vulnerability results from certain local specificities. First of all, most of the population rely directly on agriculture for their livelihood (70% according to the FAO). Moreover, the 96 percent of the agricultural land deeply depend on the rain for crop production: temperatures and rainfall changes have severe impacts on livelihoods, shortening the time for crop maturity, increasing water stress and affecting flowering and seed set (FAO, 2017). On top of that, low education levels, poverty and political instability reduce their capacity to adapt to climate change.

As a result, more and more people are pushed to migrate to cope with the consequences of climate shocks and seek better living conditions.

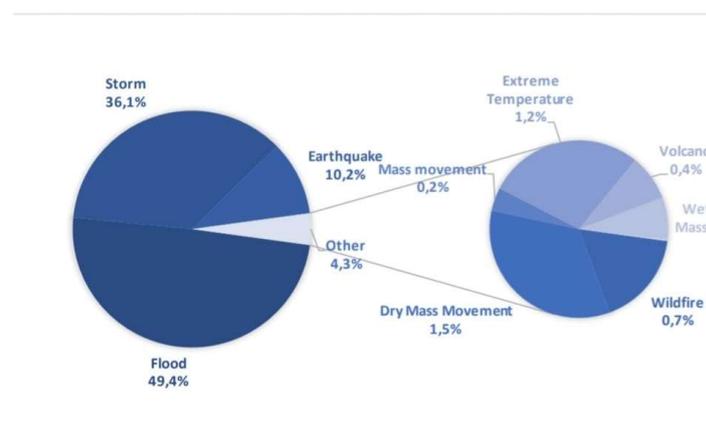
2.2 The complex nexus between climate change and migration

The impact of environmental change on migration and displacement is complex and the climate change- migration relationship is far from being based on linear causality.

First of all, we are talking about an indirect relationship, mediated by other structural and individual factors which can determine the eventuality and direction of the migration path and influence its outcomes. In particular, as highlighted by Black et al, 2011, within a given context, climate events interact with and is mediated also by other drivers of migration, such as economic development, demographic dynamics and urbanisation processes, the presence of conflicts or other forms of violence, agricultural productivity, food security and the

scarcity of resources, social and gender inequality and so on. In fact, human mobility is multi-causal and operates on different spatial dimensions, timelines and policies where environmental factors are most appropriately identified as threats or vulnerability multipliers which can increase pre-existing inequalities. It is possible to identify a less complex or questionable cause-and-effect correlation in the case of sudden onset environmental disasters, but even in this case the existing inequalities and the dynamics of power play a decisive role in the migration process, influencing their destination, duration and conditions. Therefore, due to the complexity of the variables and their interdependence, a direct relationship between climate change and migration, as well as a prediction of these flows, is very problematic. Despite this, the growing number of documented cases of displacement and migration due to climate events leaves no doubt that climate conditions are currently a key driver and will increasingly be so in the coming years (Sensi, 2021). In this regard, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's (IDMC) collects figures on the stock of disaster-related internal displacements and classifies the data by type of natural hazard causing displacement. According to the data collected by the IDMC (2019), between 2008 and 2019 roughly 288 million people were reported to be internally displaced due to disasters and, among them, weather-related disasters were the most important causes of displacement, with floods causing about half of all disaster-related displacements.

Table 4: types of hazards causing disaster related internal displacement 2008 - 2019



Source: European Union, 2020. Authors' presentation of IDMC data
 (available at <https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>)

In 2020, 40.5 million new displacements took place, of which 30.7 million were triggered by disasters, and also in this case the overwhelming majority, 30 million, was the result of

weather-related hazards such as storms (14.6 million) and floods (14 million) (IDMC 2021). Alarmingly, this number is expected to rise to tens of millions within the next 20 years, and hundreds of millions in the next 50 years (IOM, 2008). In particular, projections by the IOM suggest that, by 2050, more than 200 million additional people labelled as ‘environmental migrants’ will be internally displaced due to environmental factors, including extreme weather events.

When analysing migration as a consequence of climatic conditions, it is possible to make a distinction ‘slow-onset’ and ‘rapid’ or ‘sudden-onset’ events. In fact, the migration outcomes of slow onset events differ from the outcomes of fast-onset events. In the case of sudden-onset events such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods or similar, displacements tend to be forced but temporary and over short distances. In fact, these events are often associated with temporary evacuations before or after the event, depending on the magnitude of damage to physical infrastructures. In fact, people often attempt to return to their places of origin and rebuild their livelihoods, and only a small proportion of these displacements leads to more permanent migration. On the other hand, slow-onset events create gradual environmental change through incremental impacts that occur over a longer period and, for this reason, it often takes time for exposed populations to realize and experience the full severity of these slow-onset conditions; hence, migration responses tend to be slow to materialize, as people first attempt other ways of adapting, and more planned. In this case migration is often initially temporary and in the form of seasonal migration in order to seek out alternative income and ways to meet basic needs, but then becomes permanent as soon as climate change makes it impossible to survive in the place of origin.

However, it is important to keep in mind that migration is an expensive investment requiring the availability of capital, and it may be too costly for some households. Liquidity and social constraints can prevent the most vulnerable people from migrating in response to a climatic shock, thus creating the so called “trapped populations” (IOM, 2015). As a result, a significant group of people living in environmentally vulnerable locations lives in a condition of “forced immobility”, thus facing a double jeopardy: they are unable to move away from dangers because of a lack of assets, and this feature makes them even more vulnerable to environmental change (European Parliament, 2020). Hence, on the other hand, those who migrate could be seen as resilient, since they have the resources to move. In fact, migration has been increasingly seen as a positive adaptive response to the impacts of climate change, able to reduce exposure and vulnerability to physical risks associated with

climate impacts, and boost the resilience both of migrants and the households left behind, through livelihood diversification and remittances, for instance. According to this view, migration can reduce risk to lives, livelihoods and ecosystems, and enhance the overall capacity of households and communities to cope with climate change by diversifying rural incomes. Moreover, contributions of migrants through the transfer of remittances, as well as knowledge and skills upon their return, can significantly strengthen the livelihoods of families and communities affected by climate change. (FAO, 2017). Therefore, considering migration as an adaptation strategy means giving it the capacity to strengthen people's resilient response to climate change, and also insisting on individual capacities to respond strategically to environmental challenges through the potential of migration (Letta and Montalbano, 2022). However, this framing of "migration as adaptation" has been criticized as it emphasizes the role of individuals and households over responsibility to the political and economic forces and structures that foster vulnerability (Ribot, 2011). In fact, the risk of this vision is to place excessive emphasis on the individual's ability to respond strategically to environmental challenges through the potential of migration, instead of investing in adaptation processes with policies characterized by technical and financial transfers by the countries responsible for emissions to those most vulnerable to climate shocks. Consequently, placing emphasis on this concept represents a shift of responsibility from those who should invest in mitigation to those forced to face the negative consequences. Moreover, with the emphasis on migration as a form of adaptation, there is a risk of oversimplifying this concept, which is the result of a complex set of factors linked to economic development, financial stability, human capital, cultural norms, political dynamics, groups and social networks. Proponents of migration as adaptation argue that this already happens everywhere and with relative or significant success. But migration doesn't have an automatic positive adaptive nature, and can also be erosive. What determines its outcome are the conditions under which it takes place. The adaptive capacity is in fact heterogeneous among regions, social groups and families within a given population, and is constantly evolving (Sensi, 2021).

So it would be better to say that migration, given certain conditions, is one of the possible ways in which a given population, at a given time, can adapt to the impacts of climate change, but not always and, moreover, it is not the only one.

2.3 Climate change and migration in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA)

In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), rural communities still heavily depend on climate sensitive livelihood activities because of the remaining importance of extractive activities (hunting, fishing, and gathering), and on agriculture for rural incomes (sales of products and self-consumption of food, water, and energy) (FAO, 2017). For this reason, these communities are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation: severe weather events, irregular weather patterns and desertification make rural livelihoods more precarious and increase seasonal vulnerability, heightening competition over strained natural resources, thus threatening lives over the short term and making people's livelihoods untenable over the long term, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable (Africa Union et al, 2020). In this regard, many studies have reported a positive and significant relationship between climate change effects and displacement, in particular internal displacement, in SSA. Marchiori et al. (2012) estimated that temperature and rainfall anomalies produced the displacement of 5 million people between 1960 and 2000 in the region; Barrios et al. (2006) analysed from a macro-perspective the link between average annual rainfall and the urbanization rate in Sub-Saharan and found that a decrease in precipitation is a strong determinant of migration to urban areas; the IDMC (2019) reported that disasters forced almost 2.6 million people to flee their homes due to drought, cyclones and floods in 2018; according to the IOM Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to have the largest number of internal climate migrants and, in particular, the region could see as many as 85.7 million internal climate migrants (4.2 percent of the total population) by 2050, according to statistics. In fact, many rural households decide to cope with environmental shocks through migration. In the case of SSA, it is important to analyse also the role played by the family in the migration decisions. In fact, the decision to migrate often take place within the family, rather than being an individual choice. The migration of some individuals responds to an overall family strategy, designed to adapt to a variety of conditions, including climate. For example, a farm household may send one or more members to urban centres to be employed in non-farm activities or to a different rural location as a form of income diversification, ensured through the transfer of remittances on a regular basis (Cattaneo et al., 2015). Moreover, in SSA environmental disasters and climate-related events exacerbate and interact with other crises and factors already increasing vulnerability and influencing migration inside the region. First of all, in some developing countries with high fertility and

rapid population growth, environmental change can create further pressure on youth population to migrate. The increasing population in Africa, in fact, is adding pressure on the environment, particularly in light of growing urbanization trends. Growing populations and urbanization rate also mean that larger numbers of people will be at risk of disasters and subject to the impacts of climate change, and they may choose or be compelled to migrate as a result. Secondly, the majority of rural people are poor; more than 300 million people are in extreme poverty, and their ability to cope with external shocks is limited by scarce or non-existent possibilities for savings (FAO, 2017). Poverty means also that communities have few resources to invest in making their homes safer to remain in or recovering quickly from displacement (Beegle et al., 2016). On the other hand, poverty doesn't necessarily lead to migration and displacement. In fact, the most vulnerable groups often lack the means or connection to move, remaining trapped in their territories, thus increasing their already existing vulnerabilities (Rigaud et al. 2018). Furthermore, where conflicts and political/social instability have already caused massed displacements, climate-related events exacerbate the pre-existing crises, triggering new and secondary movements. Lastly, low levels of human development are another important element to consider. According to the Economic Analysis and Policy Division of UNDESA, more than three quarters (76%) of the African countries dealing with internal displacement rank among the United Nations classification of least developed countries. Some of the main causes are the slow development of irrigation supplies, the low adaptive capacity of existing farming systems, and the limited institutional capacity to design and implement effective adaptation measures. Underdevelopment can be a contributing driver of instability and, at the same time, displacement itself can undermine development progress, impoverish people and lead to unmet protection needs, loss of social capital and social tensions, which can worsen the already existing vulnerabilities. (Africa Union et al, 2020). Moreover, it is also important to remember that displacement/migration itself can have environmental impacts, causing environmental degradation that can prolong the humanitarian emergency or worsening relationships with host communities: rapid urbanization or poorly managed refugee camps and internally displaced persons (IDPs) settlements can put pressure on scarce water, energy and food resources, lead to uncontrolled waste disposal, and put refugees and migrants in direct competition with local communities. (Africa Union et al, 2020).

For this reason, it is impossible to analyse how climate change influences internal movements without considering the political, social and economic context of the region.

BOX 2: Climate change and migration in Tanzania

Another article I wrote for the Food and Migration project at BCFN was about climate change, malnutrition and migration in Tanzania, which is part of Sub-Saharan Africa.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, most of the country's economy is based on agriculture. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Tanzania's agricultural sector contributes to about 30 percent of its GDP and to 95 percent of the country's food requirements. Moreover, about 80 percent of the country's population relies directly on agriculture for their livelihood. The increase in extreme weather variability induced by climate change is having harmful effects on the agricultural production, food security, water resources and human health in a region where the agricultural industry is the main provider of wealth. In the case of Tanzania, this can be explained in terms of the high temperatures that the country faces during its driest seasons, which causes great damages to both yields and crop quality. Furthermore, the decrease in the monthly rainfall averages is closely associated to the main factors that considerably hinder its agriculture industry, which strongly depends on the availability of water. In this regard, the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) additionally reported that as little as 2 percent of agricultural households have access to irrigation. On top of that, many prevalent human diseases in the country are linked to climate fluctuations, from cardiovascular mortality and respiratory illnesses caused by heat waves, to altered transmission of infectious diseases, and malnutrition caused by crop failures. For this reason, the rural Tanzanian population during the driest seasons usually migrates to more productive parts of the country as a coping strategy to deal with the decrease in crop supply, which gives them peace of mind in terms of food security and availability. However, migration is an extremely challenging and dangerous activity that only the luckiest Tanzanian families can go through in order to improve their situation. In fact, the poorest and most vulnerable families living in rural areas may not be able to migrate to more suitable locations during the hardest seasons, as migration itself requires funds and resources that they may lack of.⁴

⁴ Please refer to <https://www.foodandmigration.com/tanzania-climate-change-malnutrition-and-migration/> for the full text

CHAPTER 3: POLICY FRAMEWORK, GAPS AND NEEDS

3.1 Global policy framework: development, gaps and limits

Categorizing environmental migrants for the purpose of identifying the applicable legal instrument or specific provisions is very arduous. One major difficulty in developing policies on climate and migration is the complex nature of the issues involved. As explained in the previous chapter, migration in the context of adverse climate impacts is mostly multi-causal, as the decision to migrate is often shaped by a combination of different factors, including climate drivers. The complexity of the phenomenon and diversity of individual situations makes, indeed, legal codification, which should be guided by clear-cut categories, particularly difficult (IOM, 2015). As a consequence, today there is no recognized legal definition, nor an established framework, to capture and explain and regulate migration driven by climate change and events. According to the prevailing interpretation of the 1951 Geneva United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, people moving in the context of environmental change do not meet the requirement for refugee protection. This because the convention applies only to those who cross international borders on fears that they would otherwise be persecuted, and natural disasters or environmental degradation are not considered forms of persecution (IOM, 2015).

However, states do have the right to make unilateral, bilateral or multilateral arrangements outside the Convention to offer protection or assistance to those threatened by displacement. (Barnett and Campbell, 2010). Moreover, the link between migration, mobility and climate change has recently moved from the margins of policy debates at the international level to a more prominent place both in the context of specific debates on climate change and those related to migration and forced displacement, as well as broader conversations about humanitarian and development assistance (European Parliament, 2020). This growing political interest is evidenced by the development of different global principles and multilateral initiatives in order to strengthen protections for those displaced for environmental reasons and to foster the resilience of those who could potentially be displaced (IOM, 2021). It is therefore useful, at this point, to analyse the main steps taken in the framework of the discussion on global governance in the field of environmental migration.

The first time that the issue was recognized in international climate policy was in 2010 at COP16, when Parties to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) adopted the Cancun Agreements. (Mcauliffe et al, 2019). These agreements included a set of significant decisions by the international community to address the long-term challenge of climate change collectively and comprehensively over time, and to take concrete action immediately to speed up the global response to it. In particular, the paragraph 14(f) called for better knowledge and collaboration regarding climate change and displacement: “Invites all Parties to enhance action on adaptation under the Cancun Adaptation Framework by undertaking measures to enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation, where appropriate, at national, regional and international levels” (UNFCCC, Cancun Agreements, 2010). After that, in 2011, the Nansen Conference on Climate Change and Displacement and the UNHCR Ministerial Conference committed to working towards a more coordinated approach to addressing the protection needs of those displaced across borders due to disasters and climate change. The conclusions of the Nansen Conference on Climate Change and Displacement led to the establishment, in 2015, of the Nansen Initiative, which has been particularly active both globally and regionally in strengthening protection for environmentally displaced persons. Rather than creating new legal obligations or standards, the Nansen Initiative has worked to foster a global consensus on the components of a protection agenda for those displaced across borders by natural disasters and climate change, which could then be used to craft various laws and agreements at different levels (European Parliament, 2020). The Nansen Initiative is very important because it was the first global initiative addressing cross-border movements in this context, inspiring also many of the efforts that followed. Another important step has been the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC, also known as COP 21 or the Paris Climate Conference, which took place at the end of 2015. The resulting Paris Agreement (2016), ratified by 189 delegations (out of 197), is particularly remarkable since it is the first legally binding international agreement on climate change. Under the Paris Agreement, countries undertake to address climate change by working to mitigate temperature increases and building the capacity of states to respond to its adverse impacts. In particular the agreement sets out a global framework to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2° C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C (FAO, 2017). Moreover the COP 21 created, under the Warsaw International Mechanism, a Task Force on

Displacement with the aim of developing ‘recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to climate change’(UNFCCC, 2018). The Task Force, which includes existing bodies and technical experts from different groups under the UNFCCC, as well as relevant organizations and expert bodies from civil society outside the convention, produced comprehensive recommendations that touched upon the whole human mobility spectrum, such as encouraging countries to integrate climate change and migration concerns when formulating national laws, policies and strategies, and supporting the facilitation of regular and safe migration pathways (Ionesco and Traore Chazalnoel, 2018). The non-binding Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, developed by the UN Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly after a multi-year process, constitute another important framework to address internally displaced people’s (IDPs) needs. They do not foresee a specific status for IDP, but they do spell out a number of specific protections that are particularly relevant in the context of internal displacement, such as the prohibition from arbitrary displacement, including arbitrary evacuation in the case of disasters or the obligation of authorities to prioritise all feasible alternatives to displacement (principle 7). Moreover, The Guiding Principles define IDPs as persons who were compelled to leave their homes or habitual residences, ‘in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border’. As a consequence, they also apply to internal displacement caused by environmental events. Even if the Guiding Principles are non-binding, they are based on and consistent with binding laws and have gained significant traction among the international community as a useful tool for addressing internal displacement. (Cohen, 2011). The last important international agreement to consider is The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which is an inter-governmentally negotiated agreement, adopted in 2018 and prepared under the auspices of the United Nation. It is a non-binding intergovernmental agreement which sets out a set of guiding principles and also articulates concrete measures to address challenges and opportunities related to international migration (Africa Union et al, 2020). The Global Compact highlights also the need for new approaches as people migrate, are displaced or relocate across borders as a result of sudden- and slow-onset natural disasters, environmental degradation, and the adverse effects of climate change (Martin et al, 2018). In fact, the text contains multiple references to environmental migration, articulating a wide

and comprehensive understanding of the challenges linked to the environment–migration nexus. First of all, Objective 2 is about minimizing the adverse drivers that compel people to move and includes a stand-alone section dedicated to climate change and disasters, which is titled “Natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation” (Mcauliffe et al, 2019). In this section the Compact recognizes the importance of environmental drivers, stating that “population movements are not necessarily homogenous, and may be of a mixed, composite character. Some... may result from sudden-onset natural disasters and environmental degradation (para 12).” In that respect, the text recognizes that climate change adaptation and resilience measures in countries of origin need to be prioritized to minimize the adverse drivers of migration. Furthermore, a few important references can be found under Objective 5, which calls for cooperation among states to identify, develop, and strengthen solutions in the case of slow-onset environmental degradation related to the adverse effects of climate change, such as desertification, land degradation, drought, and sea level rise. In this context, planned relocation and visa options are cited as options in cases where adaptation in or return to their country of origin is not possible (Martin et al, 2018). Lastly, Objective 23 is committed to international and regional cooperation in the context of disasters. However, the Global Compact for Migration is only concerned with international migration, and it is very problematic, because the vast majority of environmental movements takes place internally. Moreover, it does not make any reference to migration as a tool that can help people adapt to environmental change: for the most part, movements of people are depicted in negative terms in relationship to acute disasters, slow-onset effects of climate change and environmental degradation as a driver of irregular migration, rather than as a mechanism for building resilience and reducing vulnerability to these drivers. Lastly, due to the non-legally binding nature of the Compact, some States may decide to only take limited action to address environmental migration challenges. In fact, it is worth noting that even if numerous binding and non-binding legal instruments are relevant to environmental migrants, applying these instruments to individual cases, in the context of a general lack of knowledge and awareness of the issue among States, represents a very real challenge. Nevertheless, all these initiatives mark important milestones in identifying climate change and other environmental factors as drivers of migration and in outlining areas of cooperation to address the issue

BOX 4 Haiti: what happened after the earthquake in August 2021

Another country I analyzed is Haiti, and in particular what happened in the country after the 7.2 magnitude earthquake which affected the southwestern of the country in August 2021. In fact this event, combined with the pre-existing crises (political instability, gang crimes) and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, has exacerbated the humanitarian needs on the ground, pushing more and more people into poverty and leading to different migration movements. Because of the earthquake, according to the The Haitian Civil Protection General Directorate, more than 2.200 people died, over 12.000 people were injured and hundreds of thousands of buildings were destroyed, including homes, schools, hospitals and roads. Moreover, thousands of people lost their homes and are now internally displaced, living in precarious conditions in makeshift shelters or informal displacement sites. On top of that, the earthquake left deep cracks in crop fields, destroying many people's only source of food and livelihood. For this reason, thousands of Haitians decided to seek refuge abroad, but many of them have been blocked and pushed back. In particular, in September 2021, thousands of Haitians gathered on both sides on the US-Mexico border at Del Rio in southern Texas in hopes of gaining asylum in the US. However, the Biden administration denied migrants the possibility to claim asylum and expelled thousands of them involving a public health rule known as "Title 42", which is a provision put in place by the Trump administration last year to justify restrictive immigration policies, citing the need to prevent the spread of the Covid-19. Despite Biden administration officials said the expulsions were consistent with US laws, expelling Haitians back to a country reeling from political instability, poverty and natural disasters can led to accuses of cruelty and violation of the international law. In fact, Haitians on the move include people with different protection needs, profiles and motivations, including unaccompanied children, victims of trafficking and survivors of gender-based violence. This means that most of them may have well-founded grounds to request international protection. Moreover, international law prohibits collective expulsions and requires that each case can be examined individually. For this reason, through a joint statement, UNHCR, IOM and other international agencies called on States to refrain from forcibly returning Haitians without proper assessment of their individual needs and provide regular migration pathways for those most in need.⁵

⁵ Please refer to <https://www.foodandmigration.com/haiti-s-hunger-crisis-worsened-by-devastating-earthquake/>

3.2 Regional policy framework in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): the Kampala Convention

In addition to such global measures, several regional initiatives, especially in Africa, as well as national-level efforts, represent important steps in strengthening frameworks for protection in the context of environmental migration and displacement.

Notably, the African region has developed a few instruments that are legally binding, in contrast to the voluntary nature of most initiatives. In fact, in Africa, the issue of irregular migration and forced displacement has rocketed up the political agenda, attracting attention from academics, policymakers and the humanitarian community (African Union, 2009). As a result, African governments have made a series of commitments to prevent internal displacement and protect and assist IDPs, incorporating the principles of international law into national legislation and regional frameworks.

Of significance, Africa hosts the world's first legally binding regional instrument on internal displacement, The African Union (AU) Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, also known as the Kampala Convention (African Union, 2009). Adopted in 2009, the Kampala Convention came into force in December 2012. Forty member States of the African Union are signatories to the convention and, as of February 2020, 29 States have ratified it (ICRC, 2018). The convention is inspired by regional and international human rights law, international humanitarian law and analogical refugee law. In particular, the Kampala Convention is a strong legal endorsement of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and in fact the preamble recognizes the Guiding Principles as one of the most important frameworks for the protection of IDPs (Allehone, 2011). With regard to the contents, the convention has important implications for the protection of those displaced because of environmental factors. In particular, it recognizes environmental degradation and natural disasters as drivers (push factors) of internal migration in Africa and explicitly addresses protections and assistance for persons internally displaced due to both natural disasters and climate change. By doing this, it seeks to fill the legal vacuum with respect to the protection of those displaced as a result of several factors, including climate change, natural disasters and environmental degradation. And what is perhaps most important for protection efforts is the fact that the Kampala Convention is the first legally binding instrument related to IDPs that encompasses the African continent widely (European Parliament, 2020). It thus marks a milestone in the development of international law on internal displacement. Moreover, it has been also used

as a model for other regional arrangements on IDPs.

On April 2017 a ministerial conference of State Parties to the Kampala Convention adopted the first action plan for its implementation. The resulted Harare plan of action (PoA) sets out priorities and activities which shall be adopted by the African Union (AU), States Parties, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and partners. In order to facilitate implementation of the Kampala Convention, the PoA is structured around five objectives of the Kampala convention: Establish a framework for solidarity, cooperation and promotion of durable solutions between State Parties; establish a policy framework for the prevention, protection of and assistance to IDPs at national level; promote and strengthen regional and national measures to prevent and eliminate the root causes of internal displacement and provide for durable solutions; promote the obligations and responsibilities of State Parties; identify specific obligations, roles and responsibilities of armed groups, non-State actors and other relevant actors including civil society organizations (Africa Union, 2017). This highlights the fact that the effective implementation of the Convention requires a robust partnership among States, the African Union, international organizations and other organizations. And while many States have already made a notable commitment to the convention, it still needs to be systematically and comprehensively translated into practice by all African States to realize its full potential (ICRC, 2018).

Before the Kampala Convention, The African Union had already adopted a policy framework on migration in 2006, the Migration Policy Framework for Africa, in which it underscores the relevance of the environment migratory trends and also the impact of forced displacement on the environment. The policy was intended to serve as guidelines for states and urged states to incorporate environmental consideration in the development of national and regional policy on migration management (Allehone, 2011). As a result, the African Union has organized a series of ministerial meetings on forced displacement. And it was within the context of these ministerial processes where the idea of a regional convention on internal displacement was first conceived.

Beside this, other complementary and reinforcing regional initiatives have been developed, such as the Nairobi Declaration on Somali Refugees (2017), which recognizes the need to look inclusively at the Somalia environment, notably in view of significant numbers of IDPs. Moreover, the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement have also been integrated into some domestic normative frameworks or policies on the protection of IDPs, most notably in Kenya, Mali and Uganda (Africa Union et al, 2020).

Despite these efforts, the absence of a specific binding instrument to protect the rights of environmental migrants and the dispersion of applicable norms in different international, regional and national law instruments make the management of this phenomenon very problematic and stress the need for more specific and clear measures.

3.3 Policy needs and recommendations: how should institutions act to manage climate-induced displacement?

Based on the preceding discussion, there are several measures which need to be taken, both at the international and regional / national level, in order to manage the problem of displacements and migration due to climate change and environmental degradation.

First of all, managing the scale of internal climate displacement will require immediate collective action to tackle climate change and get on lower global greenhouse gas emission trajectories with differentiated strategies across regions and countries (IOM, 2015). In fact, if we want to minimize the burden of climate change impacts on key resources, livelihood systems, and urban centres that may drive people to migrate in distress, it is essential to act against what is causing the increase in climate change and disasters. In this regard, it must be noted that agri-food systems themselves are a major driver of climate change; for this reason, moving towards more sustainable agriculture and food production is a top priority. This includes taking measures to adopt climate-smart production techniques, manage food production systems in a sustainable way and restore and rehabilitate natural environments (FAO, 2021). Integrated management of landscapes and natural resources, combined with resilient agri-food systems, is in fact central to ensuring livelihood sustainability and food security, particularly in densely populated localities or in productive areas that may already be stretched.

Secondly, policymakers should develop policies to facilitate risk management and improve household resilience capacities in vulnerable regions. This could be achieved through a combination of protection, prevention and disaster risk reduction measures that address the root causes of vulnerability, as well as the immediate needs of people affected by climate shocks and crisis. In this regard, social protection programmes are increasingly seen as a mechanism to reduce household vulnerability to multiple shocks, including food shortages and climate shocks, and to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities (FAO, 2017). In particular, social protection supports low-income farming households in adopting more

profitable, but also riskier, economic and farming activities by facilitating their access to crop and weather insurance, which helps to enhance their ability to take out production loans and foster livelihood diversification. Furthermore, social programmes which boost education, create fair employment opportunities and guarantee access to primary services are also important in order to build a stronger resilient community. In fact, communities where people have stable livelihoods and secure land tenure, where basic health care and primary education are available, where women and girls enjoy fair access to resources and opportunities, and where local institutions have credibility, can cope with and adapt to a wider range of climate- and non-climate-related stressors without resorting to migration (IOM, 2015). However, as displacement often becomes the only option to face the effects of environmental degradation and shocks, policymakers should develop appropriate governance responses and solutions to manage each phase of this migration process. In order to do this, they should distinguish between rapid- and slow-onset events and take into account the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the involved communities. For people who need to move, policy makers should enable mobility by creating supportive environments for planned and orderly migration into areas of low risk and high opportunity and by enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration. In terms of cross-border migration, this could mean developing more visa options available to those fleeing extreme environmental degradation, as outlined under the Global Compact for Migration objective n°5h (IOM, 2021). Policies to manage and develop planned relocation of entire communities living in areas that are irreversibly damaged due to slow-onset degradation could also be critical in facilitating safe and orderly migration (Bower and Weerasinghe, 2021). However, since relocation can be disruptive and costly in both financial and human terms, it requires well-defined institutional frameworks that establish stable mechanisms for determining when and how to relocate people (Bergmann & Martin, 2018). Moreover, states have a responsibility to protect the rights of climate migrants and guarantee them access to essential services and integration programmes in the destination areas, thus contributing to a successful outcome of the migration path. Fostering integration and social cohesion can also help ensure that destination areas benefit from the opportunities that migrants bring to fill labour and demographic gaps, diversify human capital, and bring new skills and knowledge. Lastly, measures aimed at protecting those who are left behind, the so called “trapped populations”, are of major importance, as these people are often the most vulnerable to food insecurity, poverty and shocks and are those most in need of social

protection and humanitarian assistance. For this reason, much more funds are also needed in order to ensure organizations' teams can continue to deliver lifesaving aid in affected areas. Achieving all these goals requires, of course, coordinated action at all levels of governance, investments in the physical and social infrastructure of communities, and partnerships between scientists and policymakers (IOM, 2017). For this reason, it is essential to develop a common and coherent policy to address migration in the context of climate change and natural disasters. In this sense, international authorities should try and develop a common and a binding policy addressing this specific phenomenon, and they should find together specific definitions and frameworks for those fleeing their homes because of climate shocks. Finally, institutional frameworks should be reinforced by improving knowledge and figures about environmental change and mobility. In fact, data on the issue is still unsatisfactory, especially concerning the determinants of migration, long-term efficacy of migration as an adaptation mechanism, impacts, and efficacy of strategies to reduce emigration pressures (KNOMAD 2015, 2016). For this reason, also rigorous quantitative studies and systematic, comprehensive reviews (Bergmann & Martin, 2018) should be financed and improved.

CHAPTER 4: **EXPERTS SAY: INTERVIEWS WITH EXPERTS IN THE FIELD**

During my internship at the Barilla Centre for Food and Nutrition (BCFN), beside producing in-depth articles on the situation in different countries of the world, I also had the honour to conduct some interviews to some experts in the field of migration who have focused their work on the relation between migration and climate change, each of them under different aspects. I decided to report at the end of my work these interviews since they have been of great inspiration for me, and, most important, a source of so much new knowledge.

4.1 interview with Roberto Sensi, Actionaid: “Migration means adaptation to climate events”

The very first interview I decided to report is the one with Roberto Sensi, Policy Advisor on Global Inequality at ActionAid Italia. Mr Sensi deals with issues ranging from migration and development to international development cooperation, right to food and agroecology. Moreover, he is also ActionAid’s Right to Food Officer and has been Trade and Investment Policy Officer at MAIS, Movimento per l’Autosviluppo, l’Interscambio e la Solidarietà. I had the honour to meet him and to discuss with him some important issues, in particular the concept of "migration as adaptation to climate change", on which he had just published a study. Here the full interview:

Migration and climate change have acquired a central place in the public debate. Although the two issues are often analysed separately, it is increasingly clear that there is a relationship between these two phenomena. How would you describe the nexus between human displacement and climate events? “Defining the relationship between mobility (which includes many kinds of movements, such as economic and forced migration) and climate events is very complex. First of all, we must say that we are talking about an indirect relationship, mediated by other structural and individual factors which can determine the eventuality and direction of the migration path and influence its outcomes. In particular, within a given context, climate events compete with other important drivers such as overpopulation, unemployment, weak governance, violence, conflict, social and gender

inequality and so on. Although migration and displacement are increasingly perceived as the result of the effects of climate change, human mobility is multi-causal and operates on different spatial dimensions, timelines and policies where environmental factors are most appropriately identified as threats or vulnerability multipliers which can increase pre-existing inequalities. Concerning sudden onset environmental disasters, it is possible to identify a less complex or questionable cause-and-effect correlation; but even in this case the existing inequalities and the dynamics of power play a decisive role in the migration process, influencing their destination, duration and conditions. Therefore, due to the complexity of the variables and their interdependence, a direct relationship between climate change and migration, as well as a prediction of these flows, is very problematic. Despite this, the growing number of documented cases of displacement and migration due to climate events leaves no doubt that climate conditions are currently a key driver and will increasingly be so in the coming years”

Does this type of human displacement affect only violent and sudden climatic events or also the long-term ones, the consequences of which manifest over extended periods of time, such as drought and desertification? “Climatic events can be divided into two categories, each of which generates displacements and migrations with generally different characteristics. The first includes sudden environmental disasters (sudden-onset), such as floods, landslides, storms, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, etc. In this case, migration is usually immediate but temporary, as people generally return to their place of origin as soon as the climate emergency ends. The second includes progressive environmental disasters (slow-onset), which develop over long periods of time, such as drought and desertification. In this case, the migration is generally not immediate and tends to be seen as a long-term solution. In terms of the causal link between migration and climatic conditions, sudden extreme environmental disasters (sudden onset disaster) make it possible to identify a less complex and more direct cause-effect correlation. Nevertheless, even in this case, the existing inequalities and the dynamics of power play a determining role in the migratory path, influencing its destination, duration and conditions. For this reason, therefore, it is always necessary to analyze all the elements which can significantly affect the migration decision and evolution”

What is the position of international legislation and policies with regard to those who migrate because of climatic disasters or land degradation? Is there any form of protection to protect these people? “To date, from a legal point of view, international law has not yet defined the status of those who leave their homes for climatic reasons, especially because of the difficulty of distinguishing them from other drivers. For this reason, these people are not included in the United Nations (UN) Convention on Refugees of 1951. Nevertheless, as far as climate migrants are concerned, a context of soft-law has developed, which includes instruments, guidelines and policies that can guide governments in the recognition and management of the phenomenon. Some examples are the Nansen Initiative, with the aim of building consensus among States on how to face the phenomenon of cross-border mobility associated with extreme environmental phenomena, and the Task Force on Displacement, created to explore possible climate and mobility measures to be included in national adaptation plans. Moreover, it should be noted that today there are many more tools and initiatives for managing cross-border flows as compared with internal migration, although we know that human mobility is mainly domestic. Having said that, the adoption of legal protection mechanisms at the international and national level is urgent in view of an increasing number of displacements caused by environmental factors. In this regard, recently, something has started to change and some decisions by the UN Human Rights Committee have opened the doors to the possibility of requesting asylum for reasons related to the effects of climate change. Even if some steps have been taken, the road is still long and much more needs to be done”

A paper published by ActionAid analyzes the theme of climate migration. In particular, the document focuses on the phenomenon of migration as adaptation to climate events. What does it mean? “The concept of migration as a form of adaptation appeared firstly in a seminal study in 2011, which depicted mobility as a proactive way to build resilience and reduce vulnerabilities. Therefore, considering migration as an adaptation strategy means giving it the capacity to strengthen people’s resilient response to climate change, and also insisting on individual capacities to respond strategically to environmental challenges through the potential of migration. Those who support the concept of migration as adaptation see mobility as an opportunity to provide adaptive responses through the diversification of livelihoods, family risk and the use of remittances. However, with the emphasis on migration as a form of adaptation, there is a risk of oversimplifying this

concept, which is the result of a complex set of factors linked to economic development, financial stability, human capital, cultural norms, political dynamics, groups and social networks. Migration, in fact, doesn't have an automatic positive adaptive nature. The adaptive capacity is in fact heterogeneous among regions, social groups and families within a given population, and is constantly evolving. So it would be better to say that migration, given certain conditions, is one of the possible ways in which a given population, at a given time, can adapt to the impacts of climate change, but not always and, moreover, it is not the only one”

Besides those who move in response to a climatic event there are those who find themselves in a condition of “forced immobility”, thus facing increasing environmental risks and levels of poverty. Don't you think that more international attention should be paid to these people?

“Yes, of course. An important element that is often overlooked is that mobility is not always an option as a result of the deterioration of environmental conditions. People who do not have enough resources to migrate find themselves trapped in a condition of "involuntary immobility", which does not consent them to begin a journey which could guarantee them better living conditions and thus to potentially benefit from mobility as a means of adaptation. Those who cannot choose migration will therefore be forced to face increasing environmental risks and resulting levels of poverty. For this reason, forced immobility should be a priority for policy-makers, researchers and social actors who carry forward the idea of migration as a form of adaptation. For this reason too, the financing of programs aimed at supporting migration as adaptation should not be implemented at the expense of in-situ adaptation ones, which should be aimed at improving the resilience of communities affected by climate change. Forced immobility can lead to very high-risk situations.”

To conclude, what are the actions that decision-makers should take on mobility as a form of adaptation to climate events, both at the national and international level, and to other topics related to migration? “ActionAid proposes some generic recommendations to policy makers and international organizations on the specific issue of mobility as a form of adaptation. First of all, there is a lack of laws and policy frameworks. In fact, although there are a number of national and international regulatory instruments addressing migration, risk reduction, displacement and climate change, there are no specific tools for migration as an adaptation. It is therefore important that policy-makers fill this gap by promoting the

adoption of coherent instruments, funding and policies so that migration can give an effective contribution to adaptation processes. Furthermore, climate mobility should also be integrated into national strategies, such as development and poverty reduction, in order to ensure a coherent approach that minimizes risks and exploits the opportunities that migration can offer in tackling climate change. But migration response strategies should be better coordinated on internal mobility, taking into account the political and social challenges of climate migration and taking appropriate and planned action on both communities of origin and destination. Another important recommendation is that governments should take full responsibility for the environmental impacts of climate change. Mobility associated with climate change is not only a diversification strategy, but is also the result of the failure of mitigation policies. For this reason should be tackled by the international community to promote effective responses and not be delegated only to the most affected nations, communities and families. Governments have also the responsibility to protect the rights of climate migrants and to guarantee them access to essential services, contributing to a positive outcome of the migration process. Furthermore, as part of an effective and fair response to the impacts of climate change, international institutions and national governments should ensure adequate investment to better understand the link between migration and adaptation, and promote the financing of programs aimed at strengthening adaptive and migration-related practices. Finally, all initiatives, strategies and policies related to climate migration should take into consideration context analysis at a territorial level, which are capable of providing the essential elements to promote effective action.⁶

4.2 interview with Cristina Rapone, FAO: “There’s an inextricable link between migration, agriculture, rural development, and climate change”

The second interview is the one with Cristina Rapone, Rural Migration Officer at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Since 2011, she has been leading analytical and technical work on rural migration and its links to agriculture and rural development. Moreover, she is actively involved in policy, advocacy, and capacity development work at global and country levels. She coordinated the FAO Migration Framework, which guides FAO’s work on migration. She also coordinated the first Atlas on

⁶ Please refer to <https://www.foodandmigration.com/migration-means-adaptation-to-climate-events/>

rural migration in sub-Saharan Africa and contributed to the FAO flagship publication on the State of Food and Agriculture 2018 focused on migration, agriculture, and rural development. With her, we spoke about climate change, agriculture and rural internal migration.

It is known that most of migrants worldwide move within their own countries and that many of them transfer from rural to urban areas. In this context, is migration considered only a survival strategy or also an effective livelihood diversification strategy to adapt, for instance, to the seasonality of agriculture? “A large share of migrants originates from rural areas. Most of them move within their own country or intra-regionally. In 2020, 63% of all international migrants in sub-Saharan Africa moved within the region. While public attention is mostly focused on international migration, internal migration within countries is almost five times bigger. In the State of Food and Agriculture 2018, FAO estimated in 1.3 billion the number of people living in developing countries that moved internally from rural to urban areas, but also from rural-to-rural areas, and from cities to villages. Internal and international migration can be interrelated, as migrants often move in steps. Seasonal migration is a typical feature of rural migration, and among the most common coping strategies of rural households to diversify their livelihoods and to adapt to the seasonality of agriculture. Seasonal migration is linked to the agricultural calendars, following seasonal weather patterns such as rainfall, or demand for labour in the harvest season. The COVID-19 pandemic has shed a spotlight on the vital role migrant workers play in our agri-food system, and especially seasonal workers involved in planting and harvesting, as well as in distribution and processing. FAO advocates for seasonal labour migration as a regular pathway of migration to harness its contribution to development in areas of origin and destination. Seasonal migration can be a triple win. When well-managed, (i) the migrants benefit from decent work opportunities and diversify their livelihoods; (ii) in destination areas, seasonal migration offers the opportunity to fill critical labour shortages; and (iii) in areas of origin, it reduces the pressure for people to migrate permanently, contributes to diversified livelihoods, and creates opportunities for investment of remittances as well as the transfer of knowledge and skills.”

How do these internal movements affect crop production and food availability? Does migration have a positive or negative impact on agriculture and rural development? Migration brings both opportunities and challenges to agriculture and rural communities. On one hand, it can relieve pressure on local labour markets and resources, while, on the other, it can help meet demand for labour in agriculture and food systems. In the short term, migration can cause a loss of family labour that could negatively affect levels of household farm and non-farm production and may encourage households engaged in agriculture to shift production towards less labor-intensive crops and activities. With young people migrating, rural communities risk also of losing the most dynamic share of their workforce. At the same time, remittances sent by migrants can foster investments in agribusiness, diversify income sources by launching farm and non-farm business activities, and hire labour. Forty percent of total remittances are sent to rural areas. Many families use this money to buy food and meet other basic needs, improving access to nutritious food and healthy diets. Migrants can also contribute in other ways, sharing knowledge, skills, and knowledge to support improvements in agricultural production and processing, and the development of agri-businesses back home and in their receiving communities. Migration can also lead to changes in the intra-household division of labour along gender and generational lines. People staying behind may experience increases in their workload, with possible negative impacts especially on women and children. Changes in intra-household dynamics can disrupt care arrangements for family members, which can have a negative effect on food security and well-being, but it can also have a positive impact in changing stereotypes around gender roles. Depending on the context, women may gain greater control over productive resources and remittances, potentially helping to close the gender gap in agriculture.”

And what about return migration? Which is its impact on rural development, agriculture, and economic growth of developing countries? “Return migration is a growing phenomenon and calls for increased attention on the sustainability of return and reintegration policies and programs worldwide. The pandemic has also driven an unexpected and unprecedented magnitude of the reverse migration of migrant workers, with rural communities facing enormous challenges to meet and accommodate the socio-economic needs of returnees. Return migration poses both challenges and opportunities to agriculture and rural communities. Many returnees may find challenges in reintegrating in rural areas,

experiencing difficulties in reclaiming or accessing land and natural resources, accessing support services to find employment, or set up their own business in the farm or non-farm sector, or readapting in the society of origin. However, when reintegration is sustainable, the benefits also extend to communities of origin where returning migrants can significantly contribute to rural development through their skills, knowledge, and economic activities. Reintegration assistance to be sustainable needs to be multidimensional, covering both economic, social, and psychosocial needs and considering the specificities of rural contexts. The productive reintegration of return migrants into rural economies can be facilitated by creating an enabling environment for agribusinesses (i.e., legal framework, access to finance, incentives, technical support, skills mapping and database, skills recognition) and supporting awareness-raising on farm and non-farm business opportunities. Interventions should also include livelihoods packages and tailored technical training for the reintegration of returnees, along with measures at community level to increase trust, social cohesion and prevent conflicts over natural resources and land disputes.”

Lastly, considering what we discussed above, which is the role of governments and of the international community in this context? Are they developing strategies, policies and actions plans? If not, what should they do in your opinion? “The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to shed light on the vital role migrants play in agri-food systems. Pursuant to the commitments outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, FAO advocates for increased attention by governments and the international community on the links between migration, agriculture, rural development, and climate change. Interventions should focus on addressing the adverse drivers of migration, including poverty, food insecurity, climate change and environmental degradation, to make migration from, to and between rural areas a choice and support resilient and sustainable rural livelihoods. Policies should also aim at maximizing the benefits of migration and harness the potential and agency of migrants for rural transformation, while minimizing the challenges to communities and rural populations. To do so, it is fundamental to promote dialogue between all stakeholders to strengthen policy coherence and ensure agricultural policies and programs integrate migration dimensions, while migration policies embed the needs of food systems”⁷

⁷ Please refer to <https://www.foodandmigration.com/there-s-an-inextricable-link-between-migration-agriculture-rural-development-and/>

4.3 interview with Mauro Martini, IFAD: “Italy's G20 Presidency reiterated its commitment to remittances, which are key for development and growth”

the last interview was with Mauro Martini, who is Migration, Remittances and Development Officer at the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). He provided technical advice to the Italian Presidency of the G20 as IFAD’s expert in the framework of the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion, and with him we focused on the theme of remittances

Remittances are an important part of migration processes and it is well we known that many rural families in developing countries rely mainly on these funds to meet their basic needs. Moreover, remittances significantly contribute to the GDP of several countries, which makes them an essential determinant of their socio-economic growth. How would you describe and comment this relation between remittance flows, migration and development?

“Remittances are a vital source of income for millions across the world, especially in rural areas, and are the most visible act of migrants’ contribution to the development of their communities and countries of origin. Remittances directly touch the lives of 1 billion people on earth, both at the sending side and receiving end. Through remittances, migrants support their families back home in putting food on the table, and enable access to health services, education, housing, water and sanitation. Remittances are often the first entry point for the un(der)banked population into the formal financial system, thus promoting financial inclusion for the most vulnerable groups. They also represent an important safety net in times of crisis and function as a risk management tool, improving poor people’s resilience to shocks. In general terms, remittances represent on average about 60 per cent of the receiving households’ total annual income. In turn, it is estimated that around 25 per cent of remittances are saved and invested in assets and income-generating activities, thereby increasing productivity, promoting employment and generating income, acting as an engine for local development. Of particular interest is the fact that, when it comes to rural areas, much of this amount is used for agricultural purposes. In recent years, we have witnessed an increasing recognition by the international community of the crucial role that remittances play on both socio-economic development and growth. In 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, in his global call to action to address the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted that “remittances are a lifeline for millions of people in the world”.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, adopted in 2018, dedicates Objective 20 (out of 23 objectives) on the importance to promote safer, cheaper and faster remittances, and the financial inclusion of migrants and their families back home. The same year, the UN General Assembly unanimously proclaimed the International Day of Family Remittances. Observed every year on 16 June, the Day recognizes the transformative impact that migrants, through remittances, have on millions of households, but also on communities, countries, and entire regions, supporting their long-term development strategies, particularly on poverty reduction and access to basic services at the household level. These person-to-person private financial flows can therefore be considered the social contract that binds migrants to their families back home. During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, migrants demonstrated once again their commitment towards their loved ones left behind in their countries of origin. Through the well-known hardships caused by the pandemic, they found alternative means to keep sending remittances home. They reduced their own consumption, drew down on savings, and found alternative jobs to the ones they lost. They kept sending regular amounts during the critical months in the aftermath of the first wave of the pandemic, thus preventing millions of low-income households in low- and middle-income countries from falling into extreme poverty. At IFAD we firmly believe that leveraging remittances further, through financial access, education and investment, will substantially contribute to strengthen households' economic development, highly benefitting entire communities.

In your opinion, considering the importance of remittances in rural areas and for agriculture, how should governments and international institutions act in order to take full advantage of remittances' potential and promote a sustainable development of receiving countries? “Remittances are indeed of crucial importance for rural people. Almost half of the US\$ 500 billion remitted annually to developing countries goes to rural areas, where 75 per cent of the world's poor and food insecure live. This well reflects the rural origins of a large share of international migrants. Furthermore, remittances invested in agriculture represent indicatively over three times ODA in agriculture. In order to take full advantage of the potential of remittances potential to spur development, first and foremost it is essential to have a better understanding of the needs of both migrants and their families. Only with a comprehensive knowledge of the market reality from a customers' standpoint can policy makers, the industry, and the development community develop effective strategies and

policies, and make informed decisions to the benefit of the end customers. Furthermore, a fully coordinated approach by the international community and national governments will result in policies designed to best support remittance families in achieving their own SDGs and the remittance service industry in ensuring that these flows are safely, quickly and cheaply transferred across borders. Every two years, IFAD invites hundreds of key actors of the global remittance arena to meet at its Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID), a recognized international platform to discuss challenges, opportunities and new trends in the remittance market. Here, public and private sectors and the civil society, from the local level up to national and international levels, meet to coordinate and implement strategies, policies and actions, and evaluate implementation efforts on a regular basis. There is an increasing general consensus on the most critical actions to take in order to maximize the impact of remittances for the development of migrants' communities and countries of origin. A consensus that has been recently further strengthened in the immediate aftermath of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, when it was clear that urgent action needed to be taken in order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the global remittance market. Almost immediately, the international community joined forces to address the new reality. In general, the main recommendations can be summarized around the aspects of the need to expand and strengthen the collection, analysis and application of remittance-related data; continue improving the enabling environment through sound regulatory frameworks and promote harmonization across jurisdictions; spur competition, innovation, and digitalization, leading to greater market efficiency and lower costs; and support improved access to remittances, especially in rural areas, matched with the development of remittance-linked financial products to enhance financial inclusion of recipients.

In this context, how did the COVID-19 pandemic affect remittance flows? Did statistics register a reduction, as predicted at the beginning of the pandemic, or have remittances proven to be resilient? And which is the current trend of flows? “When, at beginning of 2020, the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, there was widespread concern that remittance flows would plummet, leaving millions of people in low- and middle-income countries more vulnerable and without access to their major source of income. Initial estimates by the World Bank predicted a decrease above 20 per cent, as the situation appeared tragic. However, as official data from central banks around the world

started to be released, it became clearer that migrants, as in the case of previous economic crisis, were using all their resources to continue sending remittances to their loved ones back home to help them cope with their income difficulties and the new challenges posed by the pandemic. It was a real relief reading the World Bank data released this year on 2020 flows. The new data indicated that remittances totalled US\$540 billion in 2020, declining only 1.6 per cent compared to 2019 figures, and are expected to grow by 2.6 per cent in 2021. With the benefit of hindsight, it can be affirmed that remittances represented the sole large financial flow to developing countries remaining relatively stable during the economic crisis spurred by the pandemic. This demonstrated, once again, the incredible resilience of millions of migrant workers in times of crisis, doing all in their power to take care for their families back home. Italy is the perfect example of it. Data released quarterly by the Central Bank (Banca d'Italia) have initially shown a small but still very relevant increase at the beginning of 2020 with respect to the same period of 2019, and then a remarkable acceleration, up to the very recent released data indicating a 26 per cent increase in the second quarter of 2021 with respect to the same period of the previous year. This year, the G20 Italian Presidency, through the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPMI), commissioned IFAD and the World Bank a report on the resilience in the market of international remittances during the COVID-19 crisis. The report examines the factors that have contributed to the resilience of remittances during the pandemic. It further extracts key lessons learned on consumer behaviour and market performance, and analyses measures taken by governments and regulators in facilitating enabling environments. The COVID-19 pandemic has strongly impacted the remittance market, involving all stakeholders – migrants and their families, government and the industry alike – which, despite enormous challenges posed by the pandemic, played a crucial role to keep remittances flowing during these times of crisis. There has been a notable switch from informal to formal remittances, mainly through an increased adoption of digital technologies. Migrants demonstrated their resilience in maintaining the volumes of remittance flows; private sector operators adapted their business models; policy makers provided the necessary enabling environment. The main takeaway from this crisis is that sound cooperation and coordination between the public and private sectors is crucial to facilitate the necessary innovative reforms and promote new appropriate business models, which in turn will build stronger resilience for the remittance sector, ultimately benefitting migrants and their families.”

Did the change of channels used by migrants to send money home, for example the increase of digital transfer services, influence the trend? Even if the trend towards digital was already under way before COVID-19 struck, the pandemic accelerated the digitalization of remittances in an unprecedented way, as it forced both consumer behaviour and business models to change fast and adapt to the new reality, As described in the recent IFAD-World Bank report for the G20 GPMI under the 2021 Italian Presidency, border closures and business lockdowns in the early days of the crisis greatly hindered the use of cash-based, over-the-counter and informal systems. Under such conditions, the cost, convenience, and security of digitally-enabled remittances became apparent, thus increasing the attractiveness of digital channels as well as their uptake. This, in turn, has facilitated the development of linkages with other digital financial services, building longer term financial resilience for remittance users. However, it is worth mentioning that not all migrants were either able or willing to switch to digital. The majority of remittance flows have traditionally been cash-to-cash, and this trend has continued during the pandemic and will continue in the years to come. A number of barriers to a full adoption of digital tools include the lack of financial and digital literacy of a large segment of senders and receivers and low trust in the regulated channels, coupled with lack of adequate infrastructure, especially in rural areas of the receiving countries, reinforced by supply-side factors as well as regulatory barriers that often make the digital customer journey too disruptive or complex. It is therefore crucial that more attention be given to targeted strategies and coordination of activities at both at public and industry levels to unblock some of the barriers to digitalization, including the promotion of measures to improve the enabling environment, as well as financial and digital education programmes aimed at migrants and their families.

You provided technical advice to the Italian Presidency of the G20 as IFAD's expert in the framework of the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPMI). Has the issue of remittances been discussed? If so, which are the aspects analyzed and the main outcomes?

“Remittances have always been an important topic for Italy. At the G8 Summit in L'Aquila in 2009, Italy promoted the first ever commitment on the reduction of remittance costs through the 5x5 Initiative (reducing the cost of remittances from 10 per cent to 5 per cent over five years), which was then adopted by the G20. Since then, remittances have remained an ongoing agenda item of the G20 Roadmap on cross-border payments, and the commitment to reduce the cost of remittances has been taken up by many international

processes - not least the target 10.c of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aims to reduce the cost of remittances to 3 per cent by 2030, subsequently also adopted by the G20. This year, thanks to its G20 Presidency, Italy took the opportunity to promote with even greater vigour the discussions around the impact of remittances, not only as an indicator linked to the reduction of their costs, but also as a tool for accessing the formal economy, savings, credit, and as a driver for small businesses, in order to promote the financial inclusion of the most vulnerable segments of the population. Remittances was one of the priorities discussed at the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion, the G20 working group co-chaired by Italy (Bank of Italy) and Russia, mandated by G20 Leaders with the leading role in supporting country-led actions to reduce average remittance transfer costs and facilitate their flow. The G20 Leaders' Declaration contains several commitments that can be linked directly or indirectly to international remittances. In particular paragraph 49, dedicated to financial inclusion, extensively reports on the work undertaken on remittances during the Italian Presidency, and reiterates the G20's commitment to "continue facilitation of the flow of remittances and the reduction of average remittance transfer costs". In the framework of the GPFI, G20 member countries adopted a new template for their National Remittance Plans Update, addressing the new market realities and including particular focus on the impact of the crisis on remittance markets and related actions taken by the G20 countries. Among others, the G20 agreed to plan and report on better data, provide more information on competition in the market, current and new regulations, consumer protection, level of access to remittance service providers, and proposed actions in various fields, such as interoperability, promotion of competition and transparency, reduction of the impact of de-risking, fostering financial inclusion and innovation, as well as concrete actions to promote financial inclusion and maximize the impact of remittances in the receiving countries. Lastly, as previously mentioned, the GPFI produced a stand-alone report, jointly authored by IFAD and the World Bank, aimed at shedding light on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the remittance market amid an unprecedented switch to digital channels. Relying on a broad set of country-level experiences and on the recommendations of the Remittance Community Task Force, the report distils the main lessons learned on ensuring continued resilience of remittance flows in times future adverse shocks. The report was presented at the GPFI Workshop "Remittances in times of crisis and beyond", in July 2021 prior to validation by G20 Ministers of Finance, which highlighted the importance to deep dive into the impactful contribution of remittances in achieving

universal financial access and inclusion, and the need for G20 member states to continue in their efforts to reduce remittance costs and create enabling environments to maximize their impact for development.

In light of the above, which are your expectations and projections on remittances for the forthcoming years? Despite the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, international remittance volumes held firm through 2020 and 2021. This was mainly due to the efforts of hundreds of millions of migrants, who demonstrated commitment, resourcefulness and great resilience in continuing to send remittances regularly; the industry, adapting its business models to the new reality, thereby accelerating the trend towards digitalization; and the public sector – governments and regulators – taking appropriate measures and providing the necessary enabling environment to facilitate remittance flows. Digitalization of remittances emerged as a common theme and priority for all. The governments adopted measures to facilitate these flows and many service providers promoted and enabled international digital transactions, including reducing fees, creating awareness campaigns and supporting their agent networks. Maintaining this public-private dialogue going forward can provide enormous benefits for the sector and will be imperative to ensure the continued digitalization of remittances. The World Bank estimates an increase of remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries by 2.6 per cent per year, to U\$553 billion in 2021, and by 2.2 per cent to U\$565 billion in 2022 (World Bank estimates, May 2021). These are expected to grow twice as fast in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in South Asia. At the same time, according to recent data from GSMA, the switch from traditional cash-based channels to digital channels continued and even accelerated during 2020, with an increase of 65 per cent in cross-border remittances processed via mobile money, up from U\$7.7 billion in 2019 to U\$12 billion in 2020 (State of the industry report on Mobile Money 2021, GSMA). All conditions seem to be in place for these trends to continue and even accelerate in the coming years. However, to boost this trend even further, more attention should be given to coordinating activities at an industry level to unblock some of the barriers to digitalization, and targeted strategies should be developed to reduce the imbalances that vulnerable and underserved groups are facing in order for them to take advantage of digitalization. At the same time, it is crucial that governments create regulatory environments that reduce the costs of transferring remittances, promote digitalization, and allow competitive channels for transferring

remittances while increasing their productive use. Digital and financial literacy of both migrants and their family members receiving remittances is essential to foster informed choices on the use of remittances and remittance-linked services, and to leverage these flows for development purposes. The current financial ecosystem should encourage migrants and their families to send, receive and use remittances in ways that promote their financial inclusion and allow them to invest in productive sectors of the economy. At IFAD we firmly believe that we can achieve this, one family at a time, so that millions of people will be able to consider migration just as an option, rather than a necessity”⁸

8 Please refer to <https://www.foodandmigration.com/italy-s-g20-presidency-reiterated-its-commitment-to-remittances-which-are-key-for/>

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, displacements related to climate change and events are on the rise and will continue to probably grow in the future. Recently, this relationship between climate change and migration has gained increasing visibility on the policy agenda. This growing political interest is evidenced by the development of global principles, such as those articulated under the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and in the Recommendations developed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) through its Task Force on Displacement. In parallel with global discussions, regional policy dialogues – both on climate change and migration – are also exploring how to develop solutions that can support States to manage migration in a changing climate in ways that benefit affected populations. However, the majority of these initiatives are no-binding, and policy principles still need to be translated into actionable activities on the ground at national and local levels. Some countries have already developed national policies and frameworks that seek to address the challenges linked to the adverse impacts of climate change on migration, even if such efforts remain relatively limited. In this regard, the Kampala Convention, developed by the African Union, is a great example, beside being the very first binding policy addressing migration as a consequence of climate change. But, apart from that, the policy framework addressing the issue is still too fragmented and national policymakers should do more to implement all the existing principles. In particular, several actions should be implemented to address first of all environmental and climate drivers of migration. In this regards, adopting measures to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions and to develop more sustainable agriculture and food production is a top priority. Furthermore, policies to facilitate risk management and improve household resilience capacities in vulnerable regions, such as social protection and prevention measures, could help facing the negative effects of climate change and prevent displacement. Besides that, social programmes which create and guarantee access to primary services, employment and education are of equal importance in building resilient communities and facing climate stressors. Lastly, governments and policymakers should develop effective action plans aimed at regulating each phase of migration, taking into account the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the involved communities. When migration occurs, governments should enhance the availability and flexibility of regular migration pathways, for example by ensuring visa options to those fleeing extreme

environmental degradation, as outlined under the Global Compact for Migration objective n°5h. Moreover, it is essential to develop policies for planned relocation of entire communities living in areas that are irreversibly damaged by climate degradation. After, when climate migrants arrive in the destination areas, states have to develop specific protocols in order to protect their rights and guarantee them access to essential services and integration programmes. This way, also so the destination area itself will benefit from the opportunities that migrants bring by filling labour and demographic gaps, diversifying human capital and by bringing new skills and knowledge. Lastly, policymakers cannot forget those who are left behind, the so called “trapped populations”, since, as previously said, these people are often the most vulnerable to food insecurity, poverty and shocks and are those most in need of social protection and humanitarian assistance. For this reason, much more funds are also needed in order to ensure organizations’ teams can continue to deliver lifesaving aid in affected areas. To achieve all these goals, a common binding policy framework addressing internal displacements due to climate change is needed since the existing ones, such as the Global Compact for Migration, are mainly non-binding and are only concerned with international migration. And everybody, at all levels, should work in order fill these gaps. Because climate change seems far from being solved, and in the future this will impact on livelihoods and cause more and more internal displacements if we do not act now.

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