



# Proceedings: Human Mobility in the context of Climate Change: Towards a Common Narrative and Action Pathway

Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka, Bangladesh  
25 July 2022





## Introduction

In July 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Bangladesh co-hosted a policy dialogue – **Human Mobility in the context of Climate Change: Towards a Common Narrative and Action Pathway** – at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

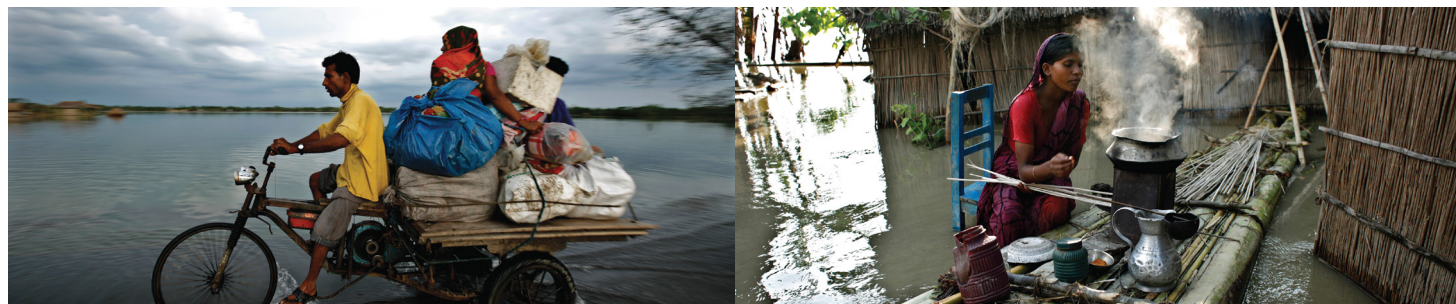
The dialogue brought together key stakeholders from the Government of Bangladesh, civil society, academia, private sector, development and humanitarian practitioners, donors and media. Hon'ble Foreign Minister, **Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen** graced the event as chief guest. Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, **Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, M.P.**, IOM Deputy Director General for Operations, **Ms. Ugochi Daniels**; Foreign Secretary (Senior Secretary), **Ambassador Masud Bin Momen**; and UN Resident Coordinator, **Ms. Gwyn Lewis** spoke at the event. Keynote presentations were made by IOM Special Envoy for Migration and Climate Action, **Ms. Caroline Dumas** and Head of Secretariat, Climate Bridge Fund, **Mr. Golam Rabbani**. Secretary of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, **Dr. Farhina Ahmed**; representative from UN Women, **Ms. Dilruba Haider**; Head of Secretariat, Platform on Disaster Displacement, **Mr. Atle Solberg**; and Director of International Center for Climate Change and Development, **Dr. Saleemul Haque** participated in a panel discussion.



The dialogue provided an opportunity to take stock of existing commitments and frameworks related to climate change and human mobility. It also served to identify barriers and potential entry points for Bangladesh to contribute to **advancing global, regional and national engagement on the migration, environment, and climate change nexus**.

## Human Mobility in the context of Climate Change

Human mobility, if it is voluntary, well managed, safe, orderly and dignified, benefits migrants, and sending and receiving communities. The current unprecedented level of human mobility across the globe is being driven not only by economic, social, and geopolitical forces, but also by the effects of climate change. There is widespread consensus among world leaders and the international community on the need for immediate climate action. The climate change - human mobility nexus in Bangladesh and around the world, therefore, should feature prominently in climate change and migration related discussions. There is a need to redouble efforts to ensure that climate change discussions include migration and human mobility dynamics to ensure that safe, humane and orderly solutions are provided for people who are staying, on the move, or have moved due to climatic effects. Despite the fact that in 2010, the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP 16)** acknowledged the potential impact of climate change on human mobility, and COP 19 established the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts in 2013, there has been limited progress in translating these high-level proclamations into action. **The world is already experiencing loss and damage attributable to human-induced climate change.**







The UN High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement and the Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement have both called for immediate action and improved planning to prevent displacement and develop long-term solutions for internally displaced people.

For Bangladesh, the impacts of climate change, including environmental degradation and natural disasters, increasingly contribute to displacement and migration in Bangladesh. The impacts of climate change are expected to displace one in seven people in Bangladesh by 2051. If no immediate action is taken, with a projected half meter sea-level rise, Bangladesh could lose up to 11 per cent of its land, with over 18 million people potentially forced to migrate. Bangladesh's advocacy efforts on the global stage on behalf of climate-vulnerable nations have been recognized, as has the country's leadership in global migration dialogues.

The impacts of climate change are drivers of both internal and cross-border migration and displacement in Bangladesh. Engagement with the international community will be essential in supporting the Government and people of Bangladesh to address these issues. At the national level, the Government of Bangladesh has finalized the Perspective Plan (2021-2041), Delta Plan (2018), Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2009) and Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan (2022-2041) and the National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management (2021). However, even with these national policy documents, tools, and instruments that acknowledge climate migration, there is a need for an established institutional mechanism to address climate change and migration in Bangladesh as well as a concerted and planned action to translate the policy documents into action. Current institutional arrangements in Bangladesh involve multiple ministries dealing with the issue through various different lens: where MoEFCC focuses on climate change; disasters and displacement are dealt by Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, and migration across the border falls mainly under Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment. There is no clear institutional framework for internal voluntary migration.



## Recommendations

The dialogue through vibrant discussions, provided a list of policy and operational recommendations which are recalled below. The operationalization of these recommendations will have a bearing on the extent to which Bangladesh is able to **manage human mobility and displacement in the context of climate change moving forward** and will offer lessons for similarly climate vulnerable countries.



### Cross-cutting

- **Quantify** the impacts of climate change, including loss and damage, in Bangladesh through assessments and data collection to inform future actions and understand evolving risks.
- **Continue** to research climatic change and its sectoral impacts in order to integrate these into national planning and transform obstacles into opportunities.
- **Undertake** research, generate statistics, and develop a clear understanding and awareness of the connection between climate change and migration to improve national and global approaches.
- **Enhance** gender disaggregated data collection around climate migration.
- **Increase** social safety mechanisms and access to finance for climate vulnerable populations.



### Solutions for People to Move

- **Ensure** inclusive mobilization of all public, private, and non-profit partnerships and application of the whole of society approach to address human mobility in the context of climate change.
- **Ensure** affected communities' voices are heard in climate change and migration-related decision-making and negotiation processes.
- **Advocate** for recognition of migrants' contributions in their host society and countries countering xenophobia.
- **Build** capacity of vulnerable women and increase protection services to ensure that women and vulnerable groups have the skills necessary to improve living standards.
- **Empower** affected communities through upskilling them to match the labor market demand in-country and across borders.
- **Advocate** for global sharing of responsibility for those displaced by the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, salinity intrusion, river erosion, floods, and drought.



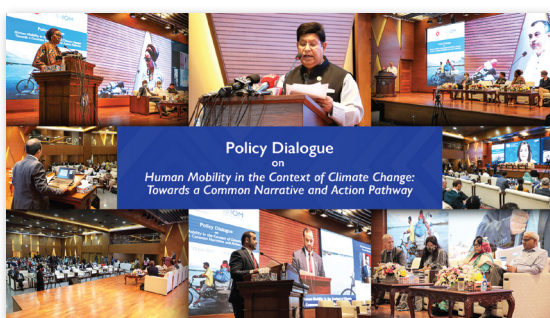
### Solutions for People on the Move

- **Assist** and protect migrants and displaced people.
- **Facilitate** safe and orderly migration in the context of the changing climate.
- **Integrate** human mobility in the context of climate change into key national, regional, and global processes and policy frameworks.
- **Creating** climate-resilient, migrant-friendly communities and cities for climate migrants to move to on a planned and voluntary basis.
- **Ensure** basic services and adequate livelihood opportunities for the people on the move.



### Solutions for People to Stay

- **Increase** climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures, actions, and resources to prevent displacement and strengthen people's resilience.
- **Develop** adaptation strategies to prevent climate induced displacement and involuntary migration in accordance with the Paris Agreement.
- **Advocate** for increased access to climate finance for climate vulnerable states, including Bangladesh.
- **Provide** climate smart livelihood opportunities in climatic hot spots of the country.



Watch the video to learn more



Click to view the outreach report