

Africa Regional Brief: Human Rights in the Context of Climate-induced Migration and Displacement

June 2023

Executive Summary

Climate mobility is fast becoming a growing trend in Africa, forcibly displacing people from their homes and livelihoods and disrupting human mobility patterns across different parts of the continent. In light of this worrying trend, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Flight and Migration Center in partnership with the Climate Migration and Displacement Platform and ACT Alliance jointly organised a consultative forum that gathered experts, civil society actors, and researchers to discuss the question of human rights in the context of climate-induced migration in Africa. This policy brief – which is a product of a two-day rigorous deliberation – highlights a shared understanding of the challenges and implications of climate mobility on human rights of various vulnerable groups in Africa. The policy brief also presents a set of recommendations for policymakers, civil society actors, researchers, and other players actively addressing on climate mobility in the continent.

Introduction

Climate change is increasingly posing severe multiple threats to human existence. Slow and rapid-onset extreme weather events – such as drought, rising sea levels, flooding, cyclones, heatwaves – are driving a series of human security challenges in several parts of the world. The increasing intensity and frequency of these weather events are putting people's lives and livelihoods in vulnerable situations. From water and land scarcity to violent conflicts, from food shortage to health crises, from forced displacement to human rights abuses – climate change is driving some of the worst humanitarian crises in human history. In Africa, specifically, extreme weather events are disproportionately threatening people's survival, despite contributing less than 4 percent to the global greenhouse gas emission¹. With agriculture accounting for 30 percent of Africa's GDP and source of livelihoods for 50 percent of the continent's population, climate change is making survival extremely difficult for the people and disrupting countries' economic growth. With about four consecutive failed rainy seasons in the Horn of Africa, for instance, 36.1 million persons have been affected by drought, while 8.9 million livestock were reported dead in the region. In addition, over 16 million persons in the region are unable to access clean water and 20.5 million are experiencing food shortage².

Notably, climate mobility is fast becoming a growing trend in Africa. Climate change is forcibly displacing people from their homes, motivating affected persons to migrate for survival, while also disrupting human mobility patterns across the continent. In 2021 alone, about 2.6 million people were displaced due to climate-related disasters in Sub-Saharan Africa³. This is also evident in about one million persons that were forced to move due to drought in Somalia, while 2.3 million people who were displaced due to drying up of Lake Chad around Nigeria, Chad, and Niger. In Southern Africa, about 10.1 million people were

¹ <https://www.cdp.net/en/research/global-reports/africa-report>

² <https://www.iom.int/iom-somalia-drought-response>

³ <https://www.internal-displacement.org/research-areas/Displacement-disasters-and-climate-change>

displaced due to climate crises and economic pressures⁴. This year alone, the record-breaking Cyclone Freddy displaced about 659,278 people in Southern Malawi, while also killing about 679 persons and leaving 2,186 people injured in the country⁵. Flooding events also affected 5.8 million people in 20 countries of the Western and Central Africa in 2022, with Nigeria alone experiencing over 1.3 million displacement the same year. More disturbing is the World Bank projection that the Sub-Saharan Africa will likely record about 86 million internal climate migrants by 2050 – the highest among other regions in the world⁶. These disturbing figures highlight the increasing impacts of climate change on human mobility in Africa.

Worryingly, climate mobility is significantly driving multiple human rights abuses in Africa. Beyond denying people's right to decent lives, climate mobility is abusing people's right to good health and wellbeing and right to food security – which is evident in the increasing food shortage and acute malnutrition in the continent and the various health crises that are related to extreme weather events in Africa, including meningitis, cholera, and stillbirth, among others. Additionally, climate mobility is restricting people's freedom of movement, as many climate events are forcing people to either move or stay. This is also in addition to denying people's rights to economic freedom, as extreme weather events are ruining people's businesses and sources of livelihoods, including fishing, pastoralism, farming, among others. Evidently, the continued shrinking of the Lake Chad Basin has affected over 40 million people that depended on it as their source of livelihoods⁷. In general, climate change is threatening all facets of human survival and impedes dignified living, making it a key driver of human rights abuses.

In light of this background, the consultative forum was organised to develop a shared understanding on the current and future trends of climate-induced mobility in Africa and acknowledging its human rights implications on the people. More importantly, the forum sought to promote comprehensive strategies that are targeted toward institutional advocacy and advance the role of civil society organisations in driving coordinated sustainable responses to climate-induced mobility at all levels – including local, national, regional, and global levels. In doing this, the forum gathered climate and migration experts, researchers, and civil society players from different regions in the continent to share their professional experiences and present a common African voice in promoting sustainable climate actions and proactive migration policies.

Contextual Clarification of Key Terms

Climate Mobility

Leveraging on the *African Shifts* report's working definition, this policy brief defines **climate mobility** as the movement of people due to the impacts of rapid or slow-onset climate events, which happens both within and across national borders. In the policy brief, climate mobility involves both forced displacement, voluntary migration, and planned relocation, which are either temporary or permanent⁸. This policy brief agrees that planned relocation or conscious migration is a viable adaptation strategy to climate change. It also agrees that climate change is not the only factor that drives mobility in Africa, rather it is one of the

⁴ <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/record-numbers-of-displaced-africans-face-worsening-prospects#:~:text=In%20Southern%20Africa%2C%2010.1%20million,IDPs%20and%20one%20million%20refugees>

⁵ https://dih.immalawi.org/documentsviewer/Tropical%20Cyclone%20Freddy%20PostDisaster%20Needs%20Assessment%20Government%20of%20Malawi_April%202023/645dd92e6a214409852edbb9

⁶ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/09/13/climate-change-could-force-216-million-people-to-migrate-within-their-own-countries-by-2050>

⁷ <https://reliefweb.int/report/chad/tale-disappearing-lake#:~:text=The%20surface%20area%20of%20the,the%20loss%20of%20invaluable%20biodiversity>

⁸ <https://africa.climate-mobility.org/overview#african-shifts>

significant drivers of mobility in the continent. This policy brief uses ‘climate mobility’ and ‘climate-induced mobility’ interchangeably.

Vulnerable Groups

In the context of this policy brief, **vulnerable groups** represent people that are affected by the impacts of climate change. This includes youth and children, women and girls, Elderly and People Living with Disabilities (EPWDs), people living in rural, urban, and coastal areas, and border communities, among others.

Challenges and Implications of Climate Mobility on Human Rights in Africa

This section deep-dives into the region-specific challenges and implications of climate-induced mobility, especially as it relates to human rights abuses of affected persons in different parts of the continent. Experts in the consultative forum focused on West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa, while also sharing insights on some North African countries.

Challenges and Impacts

Loss of Livelihoods

This is arguably one of the most daunting impacts of Climate Change and a major driver of mobility in Africa. Extreme weather events are making people to lose their sources of livelihoods. The increasing frequency and severity of droughts in many African sub-regions is affecting people’s businesses. Farmers, pastoralists, and fishermen are losing their source of income due to frequent drought, which is causing water scarcity and land degradation. For instance, more than 1 million persons are at risk of losing their livelihoods in Somalia, Eastern Africa, due to drought⁹. Water scarcity and lack of pastoral lands are throwing many pastoralists in Western and Central Africa into different lives, with many abandoning their trades. Floods are also forcibly displacing people both internally and cross-borders (especially for border communities). Many people in coastal communities that depend on water for their businesses are threatened by sea level rise, with many losing their investments and sources of income. In Southern Africa, for instance, strong wind and heavy rain associated with Tropical Cyclone Freddy affected more than 1 million persons in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, and Madagascar and displaced over 160,000 persons in these countries¹⁰. More disturbing is that Malawi incurred loss of worth over \$94 million in its productive sector due to Cyclone Freddy, including losing over \$55 million and \$3 million worth of crops and livestock respectively¹¹. These climate crises are not only disrupting human mobility patterns, but they are also making people lose their sources of livelihoods and leading to unemployment in these hotspots’ regions in Africa.

Shrinking Resources and Violent Conflicts

Climate crises are significantly reducing the quality and quantity of available natural resources needed for human survival. In Africa, climate crises are drastically shrinking available natural resources – such as water and land. Evidently, the Lake Chad Basin shared by Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon has reportedly shrunk for over 90 percent, displacing more than 3 million people¹². More so, pastoralists are also losing their herds due to lack of water and increase heatwave. For instance, more than 7 million livestock were

⁹ <https://www.iom.int/news/intensifying-drought-threatens-displace-over-1-million-people-somalia>

¹⁰ <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-cyclone-freddys-record-breaking-devastation-the-new-normal#:~:text=More%20than%20508%20000%20people,to%20a%20dire%20humanitarian%20situation>

¹¹ https://dih.immalawi.org/documentsviewer/Tropical%20Cyclone%20Freddy%20PostDisaster%20Needs%20Assessment%20Government%20of%20Malawi_April%202023/645dd92e6a214409852edbb9

¹² <https://reliefweb.int/report/chad/lake-chad-basin-humanitarian-snapshot-23-march-2021>

reported dead in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia due to drought and starvation¹³. Shrinking natural resources are also leading to violent conflicts and social unrest, which is due to fierce competition over available resources – such as land grabbing, ethnic profiling, looting of farmlands, cattle rustling, among others. In Northern Nigeria, farmer-herder conflicts over farmlands and grazing routes have displaced over 300,000 persons and killed over 1,300 people since 2018¹⁴.

Inadequate Funding Support for Affected Persons

Funding gap is one of the major challenges that arises from climate mobility. In the case of rapid-onset extreme weather events, affected persons are faced with numerous humanitarian challenges, such as lack of shelter, food shortage, lack of access to clean water, among others. This is evident in the seasonal rain and flash floods that destroyed at least 17,600 homes and affected about 299,500 people in Sudan¹⁵. Slow-onset weather events, such as drought and sea level rise are also affecting human mobility. For instance, coastal communities in Lagos, Mombasa, Alexandria, and Dar es Salaam are deeply affected by sea level rise, making people to migrate for survival¹⁶. Despite all these impacts, there have been significant funding gap in supporting these affected persons and communities. Beyond inadequate funding for humanitarian assistance, there is a much more significant gap in climate adaptation finance. Experts have noted that Africa needs not less than \$52.7 billion annually till 2030 to sufficiently adapt to climate change¹⁷. Many African countries have failed to commit the needed budgeting and financial commitment to advance sustainable climate actions in the continent. These finance gaps have made it extremely difficult for local stakeholders to promote sustainable actions in addressing climate change and its impacts on human mobility in Africa.

Limited Data and Infrastructure for Preparedness

Many African countries are yet to fully embrace data-driven approaches in addressing climate mobility. Despite the existence of meteorological departments in many countries, there is still significant gap in using data for early warning systems and predicting climate disasters. At the moment, there is yet to be a centralised and country-specific data bank on the trends of climate mobility in Africa. While we are now experiencing increasing data on rapid-onset climate events, there is still limited data available on the trend of slow-onset weather events as well as their impacts on human mobility in Africa. However, even in situation where experts provide early warnings, government and stakeholders have failed to put in place disaster risk management infrastructures to avert the devastating impacts of climate disasters. Despite several early warnings about Cyclone Freddy, the Malawian government did not act proactively. This is also the case in Nigeria, where the government neglected early warning signals of the flood that displaced over 1.4 million people last year¹⁸. On the continental level, we have seen little or no efforts from the African leaders, despite the World Bank prediction that the continent will likely experience about 86 million climate migrants by 2050. These instances indicate the lack of infrastructure, limited available data, and poor political will of policymakers to address climate mobility in the continent.

¹³ <https://agrilinks.org/post/drought-induced-loss-livestock-horn-africa-will-impact-communities-years-come#:~:text=More%20than%20seven%20million%20animals%20dead%20in%20Ethiopia%2C%20Kenya%20and%20Somalia>

¹⁴ <https://www.icirnigeria.org/farmers-herders-crisis-over-300000-displaced-1868-deaths-recorded-in-3-years-report/>

¹⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2022-000277-sdn>

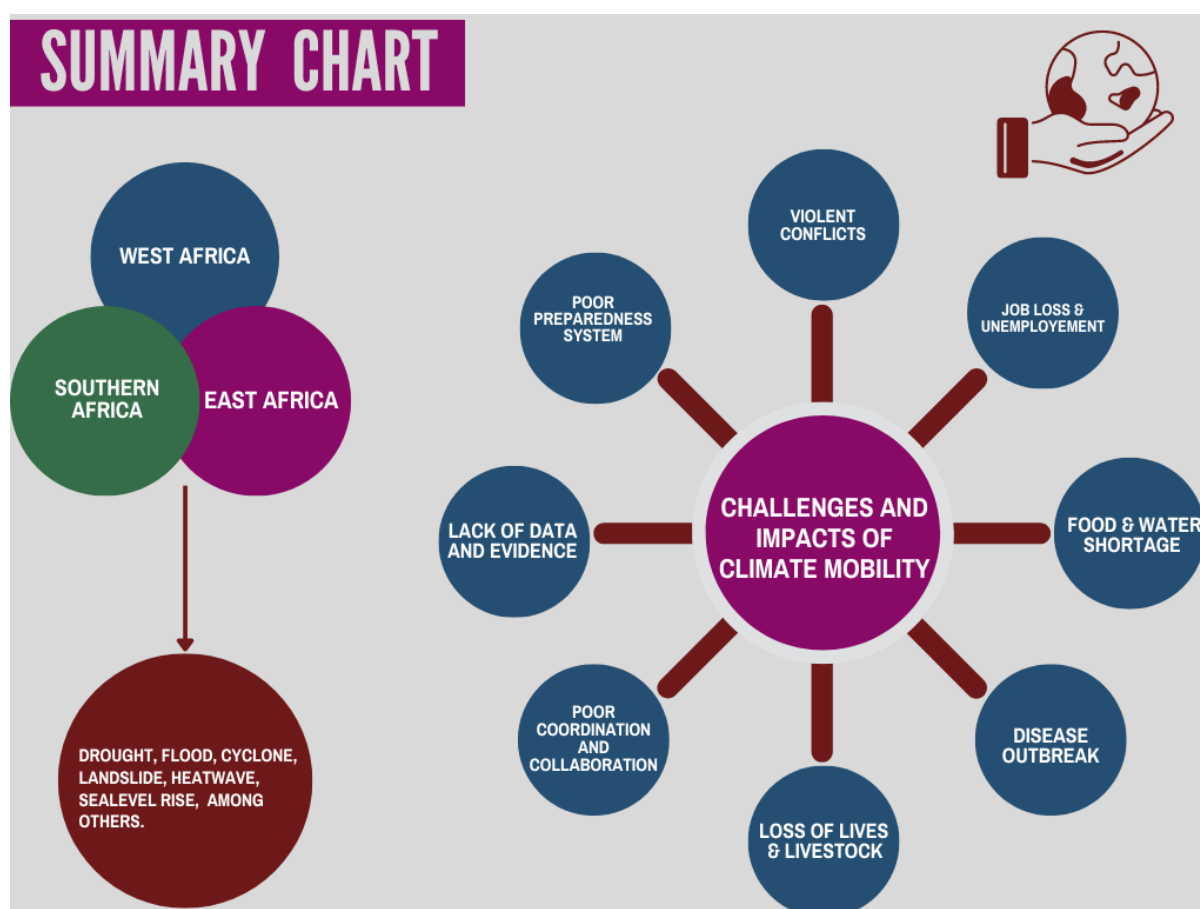
¹⁶ <https://africa.climate-mobility.org/explore-the-data/sea-level-rise>

¹⁷ <https://gca.org/news/new-report-reveals-africa-is-facing-a-crisis-in-funding-for-climate-adaptation/#:~:text=In%202019%20and%202020%20an,estimated%20African%20countries%20will%20need.>

¹⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/nigeria-floods-response-flash-update-2-last-updated-1-november-2022>

Loss of Cultural Values, Traditional Knowledge, and Family Disintegration

Climate mobility is causing loss of age-long cultural values and traditional knowledge. Many affected in rural communities are forced to move for survival, while abandoning their families and traditional lifestyles. For instance, many transhumance pastoralists in the East and Horn of Africa and the Sahel region are now forced to abandon their nomadic lifestyle as grazing routes and pastoral lands are becoming scarce. This is not only depleting cultural values, but it is also leading to loss of traditional knowledge that are deemed necessary for climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. The recent African Climate Mobility Initiative (ACMI) *African Shifts* report also acknowledges the increasing rural-urban and cross-border migration in the Eastern and Western Africa, which is largely driven by climate change. In essence, both rapid and slow-onset climate events are driving family disintegration and paving way for social unrest.



Implications on Human Rights

Climate mobility is having significant implications on human rights in Africa. Extreme weather events are inflicting human rights abuses on different stakeholders in varying degrees. This section explores a few human rights challenges induced by climate mobility, with specific focus on four major groups of affected persons: youth and children, women and girls, rural communities, as well as Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (EPWDs).

Rights to Decent Lives

One of the most devastating implications of climate mobility is denying people their rights to decent lives. Affected persons are denied their rights to live decent lives in various ways. For instance, youth and children are denied rights to enjoy their childhood, with many experiencing child labor and exploitation, while some are living despicable lives as refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). UNICEF data revealed that at least 13.5 million

children are displaced in Africa¹⁹. With climate events causing job losses, many young people in hotspot regions are denied access to decent jobs and forced to migrate either internally or cross-border in search of good lives. They are forced to engage in hard labor, while facing all sorts of exploitation and discrimination outside of their communities or home countries. Also, women and girls are forced to do menial jobs in unfavourable weather conditions, making them experiencing all sorts of gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual harassment. Climate mobility puts women in vulnerable situations, making them susceptible to all sorts of human rights abuses, such as rape, child marriage, discrimination, among others. The Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (EPWDs) are also denied rights to either move or stay during climate crises, lack adequate care and support, and face intense vulnerability at refugee and IDP camps. Additionally, people of rural communities lose their sources livelihoods to extreme weather events and denied access to basic amenities, such as clean water.

Right to Quality Education

Quality education is a basic human right that should be enjoyed by everyone. However, this is not the case for many people that are affected by climate mobility. They are denied rights to formal or informal education, making life extremely difficult for them. For example, weather events are denying youth and children access to school and learning facilities. This is evident during flood events in Sudan and cyclones in Malawi, which significantly destroyed schools and washed away many classrooms²⁰. In addition, increasing heatwaves and drought are significantly impacting young people and children's concentration at school, as the temperature in classrooms is extremely hot while there is little or no water for them to drink during learning sessions²¹. Climate events are denying women and girls access to quality education and fuelling unfair traditional practices. During climate crises, quality education for women and girls is deprioritize while they are either forced into early marriage or engage in transactional sex for survival. This aligns with recent data that highlighted that climate crises will abruptly end schooling for over 12.5 million girls in 30 hotspot countries, with 22 of these countries located in Africa²². Also, EPWDs are unable to access quality information and infrastructural support that help them adapt to extreme weather events. More so, quality education is a luxury many people in rural communities cannot afford. Climate disasters are making it tedious for affected persons in rural communities to access formal education, as these communities have little or no social infrastructures that can withstand these weather events.

Right to Political Participation and Representation

Despite being severely affected by climate change, affected persons are not duly represented in policymaking processes, denying their rights to political participation and representation. Specifically, youth and children are rarely integrated into local, national, and regional policymaking and implementation processes. This is in violation of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Right of Child that noted that "young persons have the right to have their voices listened to and taken into account decisions that affect their lives"²³. In addition, women and girls are less represented in climate change and migration policymaking and implementation processes, including ministries of environment and interior, climate envoys, environmental agencies, among others. As of 2021, women represent 25 percent of 12,113 parliamentarians in Africa, and fewer than 10 women have ever held Presidential positions in the continent. This is also the same for EPWDs, whose voices and concerns are not usually

¹⁹ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/135-million-children-now-uprooted-africa-including-those-displaced-conflict-poverty>

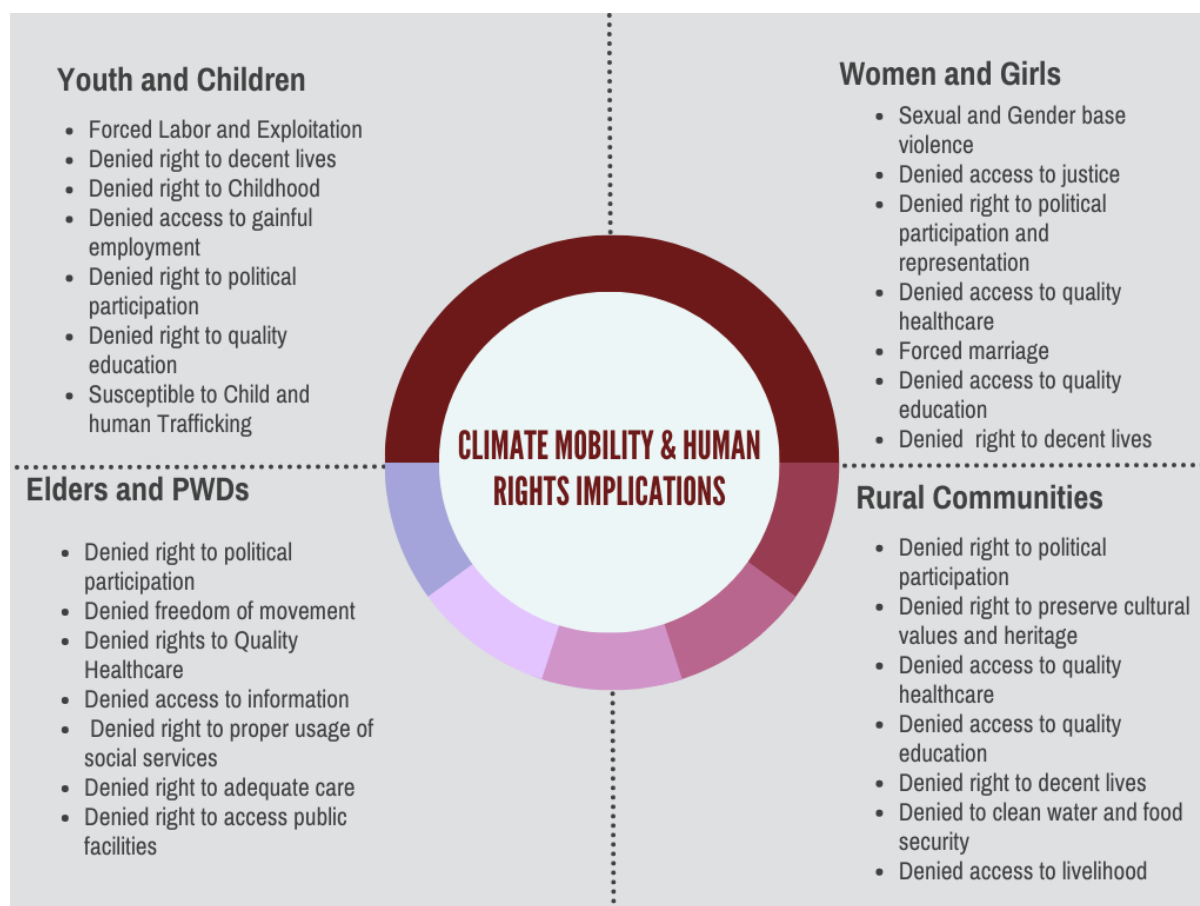
²⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/stories/better-environment-education-sudan#:~:text=In%20Sudan%2C%20the%20floods%20affected,to%20cover%20the%20cost%20of>

²¹ <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-09-26-how-climate-crisis-affects-education-in-south-africa/>

²² <https://gca.org/4-ways-that-climate-change-impacts-girls-education-in-africa/>

²³ <https://www.generationunlimited.org/media/3021/file/Action%20Guide%205:%20Young%20people%E2%80%99s%20participation%20and%20civic%20engagement.pdf>

reflected and represented in climate and migration policies. More so, affected persons in rural communities – such as IDPs, refugees, pastoralists, farmers, fishermen – are not duly represented in climate or migration policymaking process. While majority of them are considered uneducated, however, their experiences in adapting to climate crises are usually overlooked by policymakers and climate experts.



Stock Taking: Documenting existing Policies and Initiatives on Climate Mobility and Human Rights in Africa

This section explores some existing policies that are focused on climate mobility at the global and regional levels.

Global Agenda

Climate mobility falls within the intersectionality of climate change and migration. In this light, current global efforts on climate-induced migration and displacement largely come from the climate change and migration fora. Leading global policies on climate mobility include:

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)

Adopted in 2018, the GCM represents a comprehensive intergovernmental agenda on global migration governance and development²⁴. Specifically, the Objective 2 of the GCM highlights the importance of deploying global and regional instruments in addressing climate mobility, either displacement, voluntary migration. Resting on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Objective 7 of the global compact also highlights the need to promote the human rights of affected persons, including children, women, elderly, and Persons with Disabilities,

²⁴ https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180205_gcm_zero_draft_final.pdf

and rural communities. This non-binding document remains the one of most comprehensive agenda that calls for global efforts in addressing climate mobility as well as its implication on human rights.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

This presents a forward-looking and action-oriented framework on disaster risk reduction. The framework presents four priorities in advancing disaster risk reduction: i) Understanding disaster risk (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience (iv) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction²⁵. Particularly, the framework provides global action plans to build responsive and resilient structures to climate disasters and its effects on vulnerable populations.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

This is a global agreement on preventing dangerous and disruptive human intervention on the climate system²⁶. Adopted in 1994, the primary objective of the Convention is to advance stable greenhouse gas concentration at a level that would prevent human-induced interference on the climate system. With an ambition of keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees, parties to the Convention (COP) gather every year to take stock of global efforts on addressing climate change and devastating effects. The outcome document of COP27 and the recent IPCC AR6 Synthesis report affirm the urgent need to address climate-induced mobility, globally and in Africa.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The global agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals represents an action plan for people, planet, and prosperity²⁷. As a comprehensive global agenda, it advances universal respect for human rights and human dignity, particularly vulnerable persons, including climate migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons.

Regional Agenda

Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change

This declaration is one of the comprehensive and globally recognised policy documents on the devastating impacts of climate mobility in Africa. Jointly signed by the Heads of Ministries from Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), East African Community (EAC), and the States of the East and Horn of Africa, the declaration outlines the concerns and the commitment of these intergovernmental organisations to promote sustainable actions in addressing the devastating impact of climate mobility on the people²⁸.

African Youth Declaration on Climate Mobility

This declaration represents the voices of African youth on the increasing trend of climate-induced mobility across the continent. Launched at COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, the declaration outlines the urgent demands, recommendations, and the commitment of young people in promoting sustainable actions in addressing climate mobility. Specifically, it also highlights the need to integrate young people into designing and implementation of regional and national policies on climate mobility.

Africa Shift Report and Agenda for Action

This report presents a comprehensive data on the trends of climate mobility in Africa. It combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches in presenting up-to-date trends on

²⁵ https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf?_gl=1*flsqj6*_ga*OTkwNzQ1MTczLjE2ODM4Mjk1NDE.*_ga_D8G5WXP6YM*MTY4NDY2MDg5Ny4xLjEuMTY4NDY2MDkzMi4wLjAuMA

²⁶ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/what-is-the-united-nations-framework-convention-on-climate-change>

²⁷ <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

²⁸ https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11411/files/documents/Kampala%20Ministerial%20Declaration%20on%20MECC_English%20signed.pdf

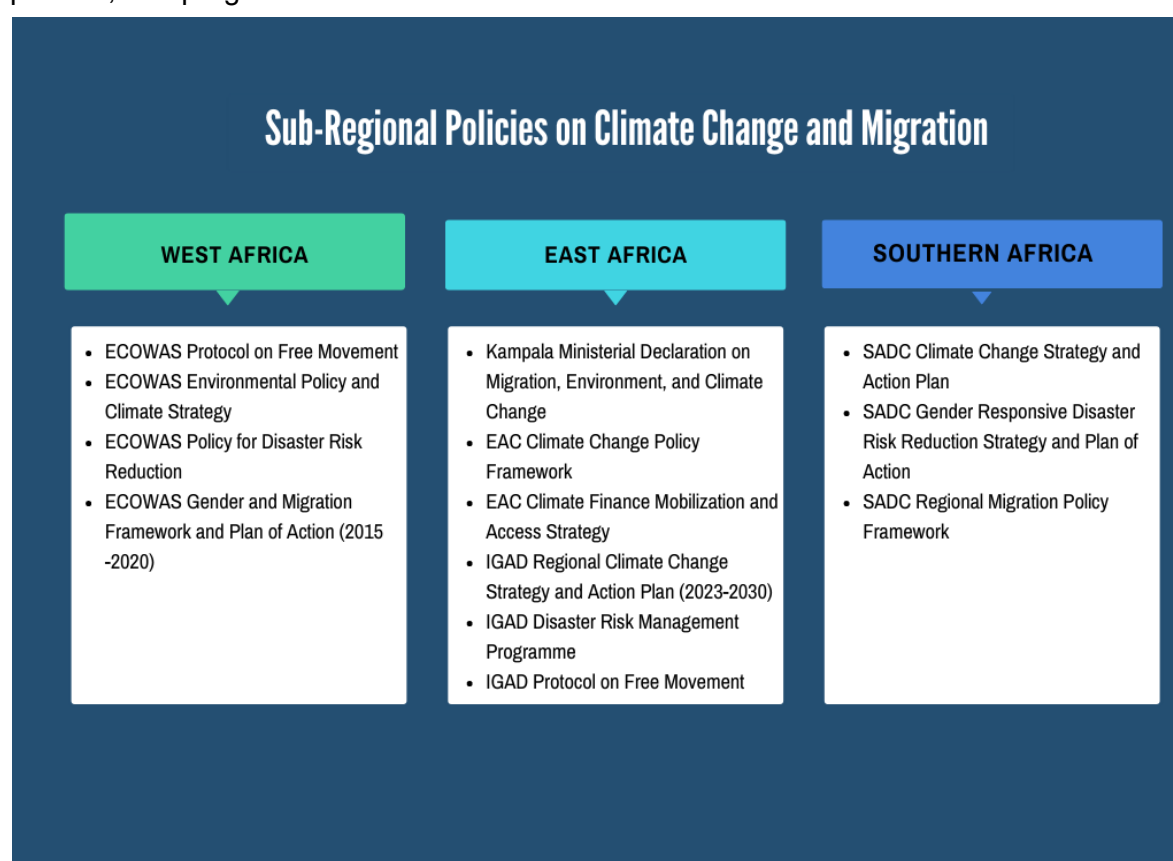
how slow and rapid-onset climate events are forcibly displacing people and driving internal or cross-border migration²⁹. The report also presents several projections on climate migration in Africa as well as agenda for action that can help mobility become an adaptation strategy to the extreme weather events.

Migration Policy for Africa and Plan of Action

This is a follow-up document to the 2006 AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa³⁰. Adopted in 2018, this policy document outlines the priority of African leaders on the question migration and displacement in the continent. Among other priorities, this framework highlights the need to address forced displacement, including those caused by climate disasters. The document also called for a regional cooperation and forward-looking migration governance in the continent.

AU Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan

As the African Union seeks to achieve its Agenda 2063, this strategy document provides policy framework and action plans for sustainable climate actions in the continent. Acknowledging the devastating impacts of climate change in Africa, the document presents four major objectives; i) strengthen the adaptive capacity of affected communities and pursue climate-resilient development pathways; iii) enhance Africa's capacity to mobilise resources and improve access to and development of technology for ambitious climate action; iv) enhance inclusion, alignment, cooperation, and ownership of climate strategies, policies, and programmes³¹.



²⁹ <https://africa.climate-mobility.org/overview>

³⁰ <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-au-mpfa-executive-summary-eng.pdf>

³¹ https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/41959-doc-CC_Strategy_and_Action_Plan_2022-2032_08_02_23_Single_Print_Ready.pdf

Identified Gaps

Lack of political will for implementation

Regional bodies, national and international institutions, research agencies, and youth groups – are beginning to acknowledge and promote policies ideas on climate-related disasters and its impact on migration and displacement. However, political institutions at regional and national levels have shown little or no political will to implement these policies.

Inadequate Coordination and Collaboration

At the regional and national levels, government agencies and institutions lack effective coordination and collaboration strategies in implementing adaptive and resilient strategies, as well as responding to climate disasters. This is partly due to overlapping mandates of these agencies and inter-agency rivalry.

Marginalisation of Affected Communities in Response Strategy

Affected communities are usually marginalised at the policymaking circle, especially where issues concerning their future are being discussed and decided. The structural marginalisation poses severe threats to the sustainability of climate actions and migration policies at the local level. This is also the same for climate adaptation researchers – most of whom overlook the depth of traditional knowledge and solutions of frontline communities in mitigating and adapting to extreme weather events.

Inadequate Funding

Available funding for implementing climate actions is inadequate to address the damages many African countries and vulnerable groups have suffered over the years. Specifically, climate finance to fund resilient and adaptative strategies are somewhat unavailable. Recent reports revealed that many developed countries have failed to fulfil their \$100 billion annual climate finance pledge to Africa. African Leaders have also shown little financial commitment to addressing climate mobility.

Climate literacy and lack of education

Despite experiencing one of the harshest devastating effects of climate change, Africa still has the lowest level of climate literacy in the world. The average national climate literacy in Africa is still 37 percent. This is also informed the reason why many African Leaders are yet to take the growing threats of climate mobility serious.

Poor investment in Research and Database

Data is the lifeline of any meaningful global and public policy. African countries are yet to significantly invest in building a comprehensive database on climate mobility, which will help understand contextual differences, provide early warning signals, as well as promote relevant and context-specific policy interventions. With lack of up-to-date data, it becomes very difficult to effectively monitor and evaluate national and continental progress in addressing these issues.

Our Message – Recommendations

Having acknowledged the challenges and implications of climate mobility on human rights in Africa and affirmed the gaps in implementing existing policies, participants at the consultative forum jointly present a comprehensive set of recommendations to address climate change and human mobility nexus in Africa, specifically to leverage the transformative potential of human mobility while promoting the 'Africa We Want'.

In general, the consultative forum provides the following recommendations to policymakers, civil society actors, researchers, and other relevant actors:

Inclusive Policymaking and Implementation

- Meaningfully integrate vulnerable groups – such as youth, women and girls, rural communities, and EPWDs into negotiating, decision-making and policy implementation processes on climate mobility-related issues.
- Strongly call for a continental-wide comprehensive policy and coordinated framework and strategic action plans on climate mobility, that integrate the peculiarities of various sub-regional challenges, while also advancing countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- Prioritise the formulation and implementation of people-centred climate mobility policies and promote a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to climate adaptation and migration intervention strategies.
- Establish meaningful collaborations that promote city-to-city and cross-border partnerships in way that protect safe, orderly, and dignified human mobility, while setting up planned relocation in case of climate disasters and promoting innovative solutions to climate-induced mobility.
- Strongly urge the implementation of existing climate change and migration policies and improved political will, through empowering relevant institutions, investing adequate resources and collaborating with local agencies and frontline communities.
- Calls for climate mobility and its implication on human rights to reflect in key regional and sub-regional climate change and migration forums in Africa, including the Africa Climate Week.
- Calls for the establishment of a continental-wide annual forum on climate mobility and human rights in Africa, where stakeholders and affected persons are represented to take stock on the progress made against the World Bank's projection of possible 86 million climate migrants in Africa by 2050.

Capacity Building and Adaptation

- Strongly urge stakeholders to invest in fostering knowledge exchange and building the capacity of government officials, civil society members, and vulnerable groups, especially youth, women and people living in frontline communities – on climate change, human mobility, and human rights protection.
- Meaningfully integrate climate education and human rights studies into school curriculums at primary, secondary, and tertiary education levels, while putting local context and regional variations into consideration.
- Prioritise quality education for vulnerable groups on the move and in affected communities as an adaptation strategy to climate mobility, especially for children, youth, and women.
- Call for improved investment in green skills and innovation that will advance sustainable adaptation ideas to the impacts of climate change on human mobility and its human rights implications. Specifically focus on vulnerable groups, including youth, women and girls, EPWDs, and rural communities. This includes investing in irrigation systems and alternative crop systems in drought prone areas.
- Urge stakeholders to demystify complex climate mobility concepts and simplify education for everyone, through embracing informal educative models, including using local languages to explain climate change and its impacts on human mobility and human rights.
- Meaningfully explore and integrate local knowledge to modern scientific findings with the aim of advancing adaptive strategies to climate mobility and protecting human rights.

- Invest in innovative skills and diverse economic opportunities that provide alternative (green) jobs and migrant-friendly source of livelihoods to vulnerable groups on the move and those whose traditional jobs are threatened by rapid and slow-onset extreme weather events.

Research and Development

- Bridge the existing data gaps through investing in a consolidated continental-wide and country-specific database that highlights the trends of climate mobility and its implications on the human rights of affected persons, including youth and children, women and girls, EPWDs and rural communities.
- Strongly urge stakeholders to make databases on the trends of climate mobility easily accessible to the members of the public and relevant stakeholders in a simplified and timely manner.
- Call for adequate investment in an integrated early warning and preparedness systems that are informed by detailed assessment of hotspot regions and weather conditions of frontline communities.
- Leverage technology to advance data collection and dissemination that will facilitate swift response to climate disasters and enhance sustainable climate adaptation strategies, especially in hotspot regions.

Financing

- Call for the creation of specialised funding to support affected persons at the local, national, sub-regional, and continental levels – such as Climate Finance for Women, African Youth Climate Fund, Farmers and Pastoralists Support Fund, among others. This will enhance effective implementation of climate actions, provide humanitarian support, training and capacity building, as well as technological development.
- Strongly urge developed countries to fund the Loss and Damage finance facility, while also fulfilling their annual \$100 billion and doubling adaptation finance by 2025 commitment.
- Establish seamless processes in accessing climate finance and migration intervention funds, and eliminating any form of discrimination and barriers that will make funding available to local organisations, rural communities and affected persons on the move.
- Create an all-inclusive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that will aid accountability and transparency in the distribution of financing for climate mobility programmes.

Advocacy

- Call for people-centred institutional advocacy campaign on climate mobility and human rights, with the purpose of advancing the voices of vulnerable groups and influencing policy actions.
- Leverage traditional and social media platforms to inform and educate the public on climate mobility and timely dissemination of early warning signals.
- Establish school clubs and local groups that will educate and simplify complex legal and climate mobility concepts to the people, while also promoting community-led advocacy on climate mobility and its implications on human rights.