Between 2008 and 2013 sudden-onset disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones and floods displaced an estimated 166 million people. While the global number of people displaced by slow-onset disasters like drought is not known, in 2011 some 1.3 million Somalis were internally displaced, with 290,000 people seeking refuge across international borders in the context of the Horn of Africa drought crisis and instability within Somalia. An estimated 100,000 – 200,000 people left Haiti in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake to the neighboring Dominican Republic and other countries in the region. In the future, climate change is predicted to increase the frequency and intensity of hydro-meteorological disasters, prompting even higher levels of displacement. These large-scale displacements have a devastating effect on people and create complex challenges for recovery and reconstruction efforts. Displacement could often be avoided or at least mitigated by taking appropriate disaster risk reduction measures.

The Challenge

Millions of People Displaced by Disasters

The Response

Displacement in the Post-2015 Framework

To date, displacement generally has received little recognition within national, regional and international disaster risk reduction plans and frameworks. In the new Framework, it is very positive that for the first time, the needs of displaced people are prominently addressed in an international Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and we strongly advocate for the current human mobility references to remain in the final agreed Framework to ensure it’s comprehensive and effective.

166 million people

Displaced by disasters between 2008-2013

With the support of:
As of March 2015, the Nansen Initiative has held four inter-governmental Regional Consultations in the Pacific, Central America, the Greater Horn of Africa and Southeast Asia and four civil society meetings in the Pacific, Central America, Southeast Asia and South Asia to discuss the protection and assistance needs of people displaced across international borders in the context of disasters. Participants have consistently emphasized the importance of integrating human mobility within national and regional disaster risk reduction strategies and programmes.
Recognizing the potential of DRR to respond to displacement issues, the Regional Consultations have also identified the challenge of ensuring that disaster risk reduction and resilience building measures close the gap between development initiatives and the humanitarian response phase. At the national level, this challenge illustrates the need for coordination between government departments, and increased integration of elements of disaster risk reduction plans into development policies and national adaptation plans.

This section will highlight a few key recommendations addressing disaster risk reduction from the Nansen Initiative Regional Consultations held to date.

**PACIFIC**

1. Strengthen the resilience of communities through risk assessments, disaster preparedness measures, disaster risk reduction measures, and development interventions.

2. Integrate voluntary migration, forced displacement, and planned relocation within national laws and policies, such as National Adaptation Plans, Joint National Action Plans, and National Disaster Management Plans.

3. Continue to strengthen and deepen education, training and upskilling of Pacific Islanders, including through qualification and accreditation alignment, so that they can migrate with dignity if they choose to do so.

**CENTRAL AMERICA**

1. Incorporate internal and cross-border disaster-induced displacement scenarios within instruments like National Disaster Risk Management Policies and National Systems for Civil Protection, as well as in the Central American Policy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management (PCGIR), the Central American Regional Mechanism for Mutual Assistance and Coordination, the International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms and the revision of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

2. Harmonize relevant definitions and concepts at the regional level regarding comprehensive disaster risk management and displacement.

3. Promote the integration of activities aimed at strengthening the resilience of communities at risk of displacement in development plans and actions.

**GREATER HORN OF AFRICA**

1. Recognize that preventing and mitigating the impact of all forms of displacement in disaster contexts is a development issue that should be addressed within national development plans to strengthen the resilience of communities in areas at risk of displacement as well as in areas likely to host displaced people, through measures such as investing in infrastructure, livelihoods, education, and health care.

2. Integrate human mobility and the needs of communities affected by displacement, including host communities, into regional and national disaster risk reduction strategies and adaptation plans.

3. Consider programs that increase the resilience of pastoralist communities, such as livestock insurance, access to credit and funds, mobile schools, mobile health services, the development of industries for pastoral products, and support for alternative and diversified livelihoods.
Take appropriate action to implement paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Summary Statement of the 5th African Regional Platform and the Third Ministerial meeting for disaster risk reduction, which calls for cross-border cooperation for population movements including those induced by disasters. Anticipate cross-border movements and plan for the provision of assistance to those arriving through strengthening and developing cross-border data collection, early warning mechanisms, and contingency and preparedness plans that draw on information from multiple countries and incorporate traditional community-based knowledge and practices.

Recommend to carry out disaster risk management in accordance with existing relevant legal frameworks such as the Kampala Convention and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights.

Establish and strengthen coordination and response mechanisms to address cross-border movements in the context of climate change and disasters in all areas addressed in these conclusions, without prejudice to the sovereignty and security of the host states and the obligation of those admitted to respect the law of the land.

**SOUTHEAST ASIA**

1. Develop and institutionalize community-based and traditional disaster risk mapping tools and methodologies to identify populations most exposed to natural hazards and at a high risk of displacement, including groups particularly at risk such as children, women, older persons and persons with disabilities.

2. Integrate mapping of disaster-related displacement risks with climate change risk scenarios and projections to inform national and regional disaster preparedness and contingency planning, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, planned relocation plans, and development plans.

3. Establish early warning information systems, clearly describing the hazard, the populations most at risk of displacement, and evacuation corridors and sites. Distribute such information in ways that affected communities can easily understand.

\[\text{tens of millions} \quad \text{disaster related, displaced people each year}\]

**OUR CONCLUSION**

Based on these recommendations we suggest that the Post-2015 Framework:

- Acknowledges in its preamble that disasters displace tens of millions of people each year.

Includes into its “Priorities for Action”:

- The establishment of coordination and funding mechanisms as well as procedures to prevent and respond to internal and cross-border displacement.

- The integration of durable solutions for the displaced into post-disaster recovery and reconstruction efforts.

- A stronger integration of disaster risk management into the design and implementation of recovery and rehabilitation processes while facilitating the link between relief and development.

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Sources: IDMC, IOM, UNDP, UNISDR, THE WORLD BANK

[www.nanseninitiative.org](http://www.nanseninitiative.org)
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Failing to take action to prevent and mitigate internal and cross-border displacement discounts the needs of a particularly vulnerable group among the tens of millions of people affected by disasters every year and neglects an essential challenge of **disaster risk reduction**.”

Prof. Walter Kaelin, Envoy of the Chairmanship of the Nansen Initiative