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GUIDANCE NOTE

A Development Approach to Migration and Displacement

United Nations Development Programme

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Overview

In 2013, the United Nations Population Division estimated that there were 232 million international migrants globally, and nearly half of them were women.¹ Forced displacement presently affects over 60 million people worldwide, of which over 38 million are internally displaced.² The phenomenon of internal migration is even larger in scale—according to the Population Division, there were approximately 762 million internal migrants in 2005.³ The movement of people occurs in different ways and for different reasons in different regions. Migration and displacement flows and trends are difficult to predict and monitor.

Migration and displacement are important and rapidly growing phenomena. More and more people in all parts of the world are on the move. In general, international migration refers to the voluntary movement of women and men across internationally recognized borders. They are driven by their search for a better life, economic opportunities, education, or their desire to reunite with family members abroad. In contrast, the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention on Refugees refers to forced displacement or forced migration as the situation of people who are forced to leave or flee their homes due to conflict, violence and human rights violations.

UNDP is working to maximize the developmental benefits of migration and displacement for poor countries and people, and to mitigate any negative consequences. While humanitarian agencies provide invaluable and critical short-term responses to large-scale displacement and refugee scenarios, **UNDP works with partner countries to balance short-term responses to addressing the impacts of migration and displacement with long-term sustainable development solutions.**

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A. Executive Summary

Migration and displacement are important and rapidly growing phenomena. More and more people in all parts of the world are on the move. In general, international migration refers to the voluntary movement of women and men across internationally recognized borders. They are driven by their search for a better life, economic opportunities, education, or their desire to reunite with family members abroad. In contrast, the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention on Refugees refers to forced displacement or forced migration as the situation of people who are forced to leave or flee their homes due to conflict, violence and human rights violations. A refugee is a person who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” An internally displaced person (IDP) is someone who is forced to flee his or her home, but who remains within his or her country’s borders. Other important forms of migration include internal migration, which refers to the general movement of people within national borders. For example, in recent years, the movement of people from rural to urban areas has led to rapid urbanization in many countries.

In 2013, the United Nations Population Division estimated that there were 232 million international migrants globally, and nearly half of them were women.¹ Forced displacement presently affects over 60 million people worldwide, of which over 38 million are internally displaced.² The phenomenon of internal migration is even larger in scale — according to the Population Division, there were approximately 762 million internal migrants in 2005.³ The movement of people occurs in different ways and for different reasons in different regions. Migration and displacement flows and trends are difficult to predict and monitor.

Migration and displacement can have negative development impacts, affecting poverty reduction, economic growth, human and social welfare, and environmental sustainability. At the same time, migration and displacement can have positive effects when affected communities and individuals are able to develop skills and coping mechanisms *in situ* and support economic growth. Development responses that meet the needs and priorities of origin, transit and destination countries while supporting refugee and migrant populations are therefore critical. Integrated development solutions that promote access to land, property, housing and sustainable livelihoods combined with effective services delivery, and accountable and responsive governance are essential to help the displaced and communities of origin, transit and/or destination.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) fully recognize migration and displacement as core development considerations. The SDGs include targets to protect migrant workers’ labour rights, promote safe and secure working environments (target 8.8), implement planned and well-managed migration policies (target 10.7), reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances (target 10.c), and produce high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated among others by race, ethnicity, and migratory status (target 17.18).

In December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly stressed that international migration is a cross-cutting phenomenon that should be addressed in a coherent, comprehensive and balanced manner, integrating development with due regard for social, economic and environmental dimensions and respecting human rights. It called upon all relevant bodies, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system—including UNDP—to strengthen their collaboration and cooperation to better and more fully address the issue of international migration and development, in order to adopt a coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approach.⁴

The Role of UNDP: Development Solutions to Migration and Displacement

UNDP is the UN’s global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build better and more resilient lives. On the ground in over 170 countries, UNDP works to assist national counterparts to formulate and implement their own solutions to global, regional, and national development challenges.

In this context, UNDP is working to maximize the developmental benefits of migration and displacement for poor countries and people, and to mitigate any negative consequences. While humanitarian agencies provide invaluable and critical short-term responses to large-scale displacement and refugee scenarios, UNDP works with partner countries to balance short-term responses to addressing the impacts of migration and displacement with long-term sustainable development solutions. In recent years, UNDP has worked increasingly to support regional, national, and local efforts to manage human mobility and migration for sustainable development. A growing team of 'migration and development' experts works through UNDP's network of Country Offices, Regional Hubs and Global Programmes to support countries on a wide range of initiatives relating to migration and displacement while promoting sustainable development and poverty reduction.

To date, UNDP has planned or implemented at least 192 migration-related initiatives in a variety of countries, more than 22 of which are ongoing. In addition, currently, UNDP is working in over 30 countries that have suffered disasters and conflict and transit countries with crisis migrants (including IDPs), and in host and origin communities to create livelihoods opportunities for all, alleviate the pressure on local governments to provide basic services, and support social cohesion.

This UNDP Programme Guidance Note has four principal objectives:

- It enables UN Resident Coordinators and UNDP Resident Representatives to engage in meaningful discussions on UNDP's work in the context of migration and displacement with Governments. It highlights the multiple links between UNDP's work on sustainable human development with issues relating to migration and displacement.
- It provides Regional Hubs and Country Offices with a series of select programming options (based on good practices) that promote integrated solutions to migration and displacement, which can be tailored to the needs and priorities of different communities, countries and regions. These activities do not provide a comprehensive list of programming activities, nor are they blueprints that can be directly implemented. Different countries will require different approaches and initiatives, depending not least on their status as countries of origin, transit and/or destination. For example, many developing countries are both countries of origin, transit *and* destination; they collectively host 41% of all international migrants.⁵
- It emphasizes UNDP's specific role as the UN's leading development agency and sets out UNDP's position with in global, regional, and national partnerships, complementing the work of other UN and non-UN agencies by addressing migration and displacement through the sustainable development lens.
- It takes stock of current resources, expertise and experiences within UNDP in terms of migration and displacement.

Going forward, UNDP will work to support integrated development programmes that harness the positive potential of migration for development, address the drivers of migration and the root causes of displacement, and provide comprehensive responses to situations of crisis, protracted displacement and return. Interventions will be based on **three Areas of Work**, ensuring that UNDP adds value to and builds on existing efforts already under way at the national, regional and global levels.

These three Areas of Work are designed to address barriers to effective country action in managing migration and displacement. They are related to factors that influence how effective societies are in managing migration and displacement for long-term sustainable development benefits, and in short-term crisis situations.

For example, barriers include the absence of effective and coherent governance—from local to global levels—and the lack of capacity to make and implement informed decisions to tackle migration and displacement in all its forms. At the national level, in practice, decisions can be taken by a variety of government departments based on short-term political interests that do not fully take into account the potential positive development benefits of migration. At the international level, systems are rarely in

place to meet the needs of different types of migrants and displaced people travelling across borders. Supporting migrants and displaced people requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that addresses the entire migration corridor through countries of origin, transit and destination. But issues of sovereignty can lead to a lack of international cooperation on matters of migration and displacement. As a result, local communities, who may already be under pressure from low incomes, lack of food and water security and lack of basic services, can be left to cope with overwhelming flows of migrants and displaced people without appropriate support. In addition, traditional funding mechanisms still differentiate between humanitarian and development aid. As a result, funding to address migration and displacement in countries of origin, transit and destination is often splintered and inadequate.

This Programming Guidance Note outlines how UNDP will address these barriers through three Areas of Work. Programming options detailed under each Area of Work will be implemented based on national and /or local level assessments, which will define needs and priorities. The Areas of Work are set out below:

- **Developing comprehensive national policy and institutional frameworks for migration**
By supporting the formulation and implementation of comprehensive national policy and institutional frameworks for migration, UNDP will help to strengthen government capacity to integrate migration into regional, national and sub-national development strategies and plans.
- **Managing migration for long-term positive development impacts at the sub-national and local level**
UNDP will work with host and return communities to address the local drivers of migration and root causes of displacement (economic, social, political or environmental) while managing the impacts of immigration, emigration, internal migration and displacement. Efforts will focus on leveraging the potential of migration for local sustainable development. Emphasis will be placed on joint programming and inter-agency solutions.
- **Resilience based development solutions for migration and displacement in times of crisis, conflict and disaster.** UNDP will work with countries and communities affected by crisis, conflict and/or disaster to help them cope, rebuild, recover and protect development gains. By harmonizing humanitarian and development interventions, UNDP will help affected institutions and communities to withstand shocks and open the door to an unprecedented UN-integrated response for countries affected by migration and displacement crises. This approach builds resilience while ensuring that communities not only cope and recover from crisis but improve the longer-term development prospects needed to move towards lasting peace and prosperity. The UN/UNDP Resilience Based Development approach for the Syria Crises, and its Regional Refugee Resilience Programme (3RP) provide a good example of this area of work in practice¹.

To implement the programming options set out above, UNDP will develop new and strengthen existing effective partnerships across a wide range of organizations, sectors and disciplines to address the linkages between migration, displacement, and development. Key partners will include: governments; international, national and local action groups, including youth-led and youth-focused groups; local communities; donor partners; development organizations including other UN organizations (including those responsible for the implementation of migration-related Conventions), international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank Group, regional and national banks; research and science organizations; and the private sector.

Finally, it is important to note that UNDP staff have built up years of experience working on migration- and displacement-related initiatives—from the local to the global level and in crisis and post-conflict scenarios—in order to harness the development potential of expatriate or immigrant populations on all continents. To make the most of this experience and build on existing resources available within UNDP, a community of practice will be established to enable UNDP to draw more actively on the invaluable expertise in country offices, regional service centres and hubs, as well as at the different bureaux and

¹ <http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/ourwork/SyriaCrisis/projects/3rp.html>

units at headquarters. UNDP will invest in further strengthening the capacities of staff in these vital areas and support the acquisition of new knowledge and expertise where needed. Staff at regional, country, and headquarters level will be encouraged to join this community of practice.

B. Introduction

1. A person who resides outside his or her country of birth, irrespective of the motivation to move, is known as an international ‘migrant’, although there is currently no universally agreed definition for this term.⁶ For the purpose of this UNDP Programming Guidance Note, unless otherwise stated, a migrant denotes a voluntary migrant, while displaced populations include refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).
2. The 1951 UN Convention on Refugees and 1967 Protocol (as well as regional Refugee Conventions) define a refugee as a person who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country”. The Programming Guidance Note also uses the term ‘crisis migrants’ to refer to all migration flows that occur in the wake of large-scale crises. This is largely synonymous with forcibly displaced populations, although such phenomena may include mixed-migration flows, comprising refugees, and displaced and voluntary migrants.

Box 1: Defining Migrants, Displacement and Refugees		
International Migrants	Displacement	Refugee
Although there is currently no universally agreed definition for who constitutes an international migrant, statistical definitions include all persons who reside outside their country of birth, irrespective of the motivation to move. Several countries collect information on foreign citizens only, regardless of their country of birth. Often the term 'migrant' is used to refer to voluntary migrants, who choose to move across international borders, as opposed to forced migrants, who are compelled to leave their communities of origin.	Displacement is a forced removal of persons from their home or country, often due to armed conflict or natural disasters. Internally displaced person, or IDP, is someone who is forced to flee his or her home, but who remains within his or her country's borders. So unlike refugees or international crisis migrants, an IDP has remained inside their home country. IDPs also remain legally under the protection of their own government, even though that government may be the cause of their flight.	According to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, refugees are persons who have fled their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinions. Regional refugee conventions, namely the 1969 Organisation of the African Unity Convention and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration also regard groups of people as refugees who flee because of external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order.

3. In 2013, the United Nations Population Division estimated that there were 232 million international migrants globally, up from 175 million in 2000.⁷ Of these, nearly 59% lived in the developed regions, while the developing regions hosted 41% of the world's total. Women constituted 48% of international migrants worldwide. In the North, women constituted 52% of all migrants, while in the South they accounted for 43%. Migrants under the age of 20 represent 15% of all international migrants, while almost a quarter of migrants in developing regions fall into that age bracket (23%).⁸ 32% of international migrants are under the age of 30 and about half of young international migrants are women and girls.⁹

4. Of the 136 million international migrants living in the North in 2013, 82 million or 60%, originated from a developing country. 82 million or 86% of the 96 million international migrants residing in the developing world in 2013 originated from the South. The majority (60%) of young international migrants under the age of 30 live in developing countries.¹⁰ The number of international migrants is projected to increase sharply over the next decade, exceeding 250 million by 2015 alone.¹¹ The phenomenon of internal migration is even larger in scale. According to the Population Division, there were about 762 million internal migrants in 2005 alone.¹²
5. Migration and displacement are thus important and rapidly growing phenomena. More and more people in all parts of the world are on the move. As the world's population grows, migration and displacement pressures are projected to intensify. The new UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) report "World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision" estimates that the current world population of 7.3 billion is expected to reach 8.5 billion by 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion in 2100. New technologies, greater cultural exchange and cheaper transportation are bringing people closer together, facilitating and motivating human mobility. At the same time, people continue to flee from poverty, violence, war and conflict, repression, and persistent exclusion. Many more will flee as the impacts of accelerated environmental degradation and climate change make continued residence impossible in, for example, places where sea levels are rising.
6. The drivers of migration are multiple and complex. They can be economic, social, political or environmental. There are usually *push factors* and *pull factors* at work, leading to forced or voluntary migration. For example, people leave an area because lack of security, lack of services, natural disasters such as drought, flooding and crop failure, poverty and war, violations of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. They choose to move to a particular area because they hope to gain access to better employment, greater wealth, better services, reduced risk from natural hazards, and safety. Migration impacts on the place left behind and on the place where migrants settle. It can also affect the place(s) through which migrants transit.

Box 2: What gives rise to the increased levels of migration and displacement being witnessed today?

- **Improved but insufficient development gains:** Many economic migrants originate from countries that have benefited from significant progress in terms of human development indicators over the last decade. These countries have succeeded in generating greater access to education and health care, have reduced levels of infant mortality and higher life expectancy. These social development gains, however, have often not been evenly distributed amongst different sectors of the population, have not been matched by economic development gains and/or are perceived in relative terms, especially in relation to bordering countries or other continents. Employment opportunities especially remain distributed unevenly between—as well as within—countries. The additional absence of social protection mechanisms, which can help protect against economic and environmental shocks, for example, exacerbates these tensions and increases incentives for migration. Consequently, youth are migrating in search of jobs that match their level of their ambition and aspirations. Countries with higher levels of human development have become destination countries for significant numbers of migrants.
- **Protracted conflicts and violent extremism:** From 2007 to 2014, the number of active civil wars almost tripled, from four to eleven, reversing the downward sloping trend witnessed since the end of the Cold War. The number of protracted conflicts also increased, as evidenced by conflicts in Libya, Syria, South Sudan, Iraq, Ukraine and the Central African Republic. Furthermore, more than 30 countries are now fighting violent extremist groups. The presence and operations of Boko Haram, for example, have displaced 1.2 million people internally, and forced more than 200,000 Nigerians to flee to Chad, Niger and Cameroon¹³, often feeding into and exacerbating pre-existing conflicts and dynamics of displacement amongst pastoralists. In Iraq, on-going violence, much of which is associated with the Islamic State (IS), displaced 2.2 million in 2014 alone and many more are being forcefully displaced by IS and related groups in Syria.¹⁴

- **Poor governance:** Endemic political exclusion, marginalization, discrimination and oppressive political environments combined with frequent human rights violations are also key push factors for migration. Many flee forced labour and/or military conscription, arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as degrading treatment and torture. Furthermore, poor governance environments that tend to exclude, marginalize, and discriminate against certain segments of the population often contributes to a lack of equal access to economic opportunities that affect livelihoods.
- **Climate change and weak natural resources management:** Both climate change and poor natural resource management are forcing people to migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search of new sources of livelihoods, contributing significantly to the high number of internally displaced persons. If urgent measures are not taken, climate refugees will soon contribute to a dramatic increase in the number of migrants seeking refuge and sustainable livelihoods abroad.

7. Migration generates both opportunities and challenges. While most migrants moving from a less to a more developed country or locality experience significant income and quality of life gains, millions end up in worse conditions. How migrants and their families fare is a key determinant of whether migration is positive for human development or not. As women account for 48% of all international migrants¹⁵, it is important to consider gender-specific and age-specific impacts, vulnerabilities, and the drivers of migration and root causes of displacement.
8. UNDP's 2009 Human Development Report (HDR) on "Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development" showed that orderly migration does benefit both source and destination countries. Migration can be a successful adaptation strategy, enabling people to find better and more sustainable lives by moving away from difficult living conditions. Migration relieves troubled countries by reducing pressure on jobs and (natural) resources, and decreasing the number needing to be fed and housed. In addition, migrants often send home remittances, which provide an important boost to countries with weak economies. In 2014, international migrants sent back US\$ 583 billion in the form of remittances to support their families and communities.¹⁶ Diasporas can also facilitate exports from countries of their origin, while return migrants can bring back home skills and establish new business. However, such interactions can cause dependency and inhibit local entrepreneurship. In countries with sizeable emigration flows, migration affects all spheres of public and private life, including investment, industry and agriculture, health and education, politics and social norms.
9. UNDP's Youth Strategy 2014-2017 states that involuntary and unregulated migration is accompanied by various benefits, including skills acquisition, remittances, professional opportunities and higher wages. But it also notes that job migration among young people also brings specific development challenges, including sex industry trafficking, crime, drug abuse, increased vulnerability to HIV and other health-related challenges, and weak migrant worker protection.

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