



QUICK TIPS

THE INTEGRATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS INTO MIGRATION PROGRAMMES

This document provides practical “quick tips” for programme managers to integrate environmental, climate change, and biodiversity considerations into migration interventions and displacement strategies. While indeed the EU actively aims to tackle the challenge of forced migration arising from environmental degradation and climate change, this document does not delve into causal factors of migration or displacement.

Migration programmes may pose environmental and climate risks,

contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and environmental harm. However, they also have the potential to facilitate a transition towards a sustainable, low-carbon development. The table below outlines the intricate balance of risks and opportunities for sustainability inherent in migration interventions. By addressing the challenges head-on and harnessing the potential benefits, migration programmes can significantly contribute to green growth and environmental protection.

Risks and opportunities of migration programmes for the environment, biodiversity and climate

Opportunities

Migration reduces pressures on natural resources in communities of origin and can contribute to **building resilience by providing livelihood diversification** or leading to the acquisition of new adaptive skills.

Labour and circular migration has the potential to support the green transition and sustainable practices by enhancing employability through green reskilling and skills upgrading.

Migrant remittances facilitate access to land, resources and farm inputs, and act as an income gap filler when farm production fails. The **diaspora**, through their **remittances and skills**, can contribute to the green development of their origin communities.

Returnees can bring new knowledge and skills along with social and economic benefits to their community of origin, fostering green development.

Risks

Uncontrolled and forced displacement leads to a higher **competition for resources** in transit and destination areas e.g., land, food, water, fuelwood eventually triggering further movements.

The use of plastic items, packaging, chemical products and fuels can generate waste during transit or long-term displacement **polluting the environment**.

New settlements and irregular migration pathways, **especially in fragile ecosystems, may cause or exacerbate existing environmental issues and create new ones** e.g., desertification, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and degradation of habitats.

A comprehensive migration management framework encompasses several key aspects to ensure that migration is managed in a way that is safe, orderly, and beneficial for migrants, host communities, and countries of origin. Environmental, climate change, and biodiversity considerations can be integrated within some of these key aspects, as presented below

Protection: initial assistance and sustained integration for migrants in hosting and origin communities



Foster environmental resilience and green growth in hosting and origin communities

- ▶ Use **agroecology and climate-resilient practices to bolster sustainable land management** and biodiversity conservation in pastoral and agricultural sectors. Explore ways to enhance the sustainability of agri-food systems, [here](#). *Sustainable practices*
- ▶ Support the development of **green jobs**, encompassing initiatives in waste management, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture, as well as innovative solutions for clean energy and water accessibility in affected communities. *Green jobs*
- ▶ Promote **income-generating initiatives** potentially supported through **cash transfers**, such as greenhouse vegetable cultivation, microloans for rural entrepreneurship, and training in sustainable resource management and financial literacy. Cash-transfer programmes should include awareness-raising to incentivise purchasing goods that have durability characteristics appropriate for the use context, purchasing locally produced goods and avoiding extraction of local natural resources, vouchers to refugees for replanting trees. **Cash-for-work schemes** can be linked to natural resources management activities. *Green jobs*
- ▶ Build **climate-resilient infrastructures**, including water storage facilities, WASH systems, and soil conservation measures, to enhance agricultural productivity and natural resource preservation. *Infrastructure development*



Education and awareness

- ▶ **Raise awareness** about environmentally sensitive migration pathways, providing migrants with tailored information on local climatic conditions and sustainability practices and behaviour, particularly in the agriculture and livestock sectors. *Capacity building*
- ▶ Incorporate **environmental awareness projects** such as school vegetable gardens, initiatives for waste minimisation and recycling, or water conservation and the utilisation of grey water, into the educational institutions. *Sustainable practices*



Forecasting climate-induced migration movements and displacement

- ▶ **Integrate meteorological forecasts, real time data from community-based early warning systems, and predictive approaches** to identify displacement trends and proactively plan support measures to ensure resilience of communities to climate hazards and minimize harm. These measures can include: 1) Forecast-based financing; 2) Invest in climate-resilient livelihoods and infrastructures; and 3) Promote community evacuation simulations. *Risk management*
- ▶ Advance **research, data collection, and knowledge exchange** on climate-related displacement, exploring forecasting and modelling of displacement risks to inform effective responses. *Knowledge generation and sharing*



Minimise environmental and climate risks in the operations

- ▶ Incorporate the **assessment of climate, environmental, and natural hazard risks** into both operational and strategic risk evaluations. This process may encompass, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Rapid Environmental Assessments (REAs) for the formulation of displacement strategy and the site planning of camps and settlements.
- ▶ Mainstream **disaster risk reduction measures within the site planning** processes for refugee camps, settlements and host communities. This ensures the integration of contingency planning measures, such as pre-positioning of resources and optimization of supply chain operations in response to various displacement scenarios.
- ▶ Implement **environmental requirements in the construction and management of facilities, including migrant reception centres**, to reduce energy consumption and minimise environmental impact. This applies to consideration in the design of water supply, sanitation, waste management, incorporation of solar panels, and energy-efficient design (considering insulation, shading, and natural ventilation and transport).
- ▶ Apply **sustainable procurement practices** to align with environmental sustainability objectives e.g., ensuring distributed items do not lead to resource overexploitation or pollution.

Risk management

Risk management

Infrastructure development

Sustainable practices



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Legal migration and mobility



Green skills development and mobility

- ▶ Implement proactive cooperation programmes that facilitate **circular migration specifically designed to address environmental and climate-related challenges**. For instance, recruit seasonal workers from areas vulnerable to climate change or natural disasters to work in green sectors. This approach helps mitigate forced displacement by enabling the transfer of advanced agricultural skills and technologies back to their home regions. These skills include new crop tending methods, sophisticated farming technologies, and effective farm management practices, promoting sustainable development and adaptation to climate impacts.
- ▶ Develop **reskilling and upskilling programmes** to: 1) align migrant training with host countries' green employment needs and integrate them into national education systems; 2) address green skill shortages in key industries, including agriculture and sectors like renewable energy, construction, and manufacturing; 3) update labour migration schemes, with environmental and climate-focused training, especially in agriculture and renewable energy. Ensure these initiatives are inclusive and support workers from industries at risk due to shifts towards greener technologies. For example, train ex-coal workers in solar technology to transition them into sustainable roles.

Strategic planning

Capacity building + Strategic planning

- ▶ Implement **targeted training and certification** to enable innovative career paths via circular migration. Develop and deploy accessible certification models for green skills that meet the evolving needs of green sectors. For example, introduce a certification for solar panel installation that qualifies migrants for employment in both their home and host countries, fostering skill transfer and sectoral growth.
- ▶ Promote **data collection and strategic planning** to enhance **support for young migrant workers in green transition** by 1) developing and sharing detailed labour and skill forecasts to tailor education and training programmes to sector-specific needs; 2) gathering and publishing age-disaggregated employment data to better design targeted training initiatives e.g. analysing employment trends in green construction to develop a specialized training module for young migrants in eco-friendly building practices.

Capacity building

Knowledge generation and sharing
+
Strategic planning



Diaspora engagement in driving green development and innovation

- ▶ **Involve skilled diasporas in mobility programmes to:**
 - Supporting green initiatives/industries promoting knowledge transfer e.g., create platforms that connect diaspora investors with green start-ups and projects needing funding in their origin countries;
 - Allowing diaspora to participate in short term consultancy roles in collaboration with local communities and/or conduct workshops and mentoring sessions that upskill local workers in renewable energy and sustainable agricultural practices;
 - Implementing Diaspora Professional Return Programmes to enable these experts to collaborate directly with governmental institution.
- ▶ **Involve the diaspora in the development of green policies and strategic plans.** Utilize their international experience to inform policy frameworks that support sustainable development, such as renewable energy incentives and eco-tourism guidelines.
- ▶ **Promote innovation** by encouraging the collaboration between diaspora and local communities in generating innovative solutions through Climathons and green hackathons designed to foster problem-solving thinking for environmental challenges.
- ▶ Support **diaspora-led initiatives for environmental conservation** and community development, such as water conservation systems, afforestation projects, and renewable energy installations.

Capacity building
+
Strategic planning

Advocacy and policy dialogue

Knowledge generation and sharing

Sustainable practices
+
Green jobs



Integrated border management and combating migrant smuggling

- ▶ **Support environmental awareness raising, training and/or protocol development** for border security agencies and stakeholders, including Coast and Border Guards, to explain and explore the environmental impacts of operations and to promote practices and codes of conducts aiming to avoid those.
- ▶ **Promote integrated planning and cross-sector collaboration**, involving environmental agencies for the protection of natural habitats during law enforcement activities.
- ▶ **Encourage a sustainable fleet management strategy** to
 - Transition to cleaner energy sources such as biofuels, hydrogen, or electricity;
 - Enhance energy efficiency by improving driver performance and vehicles maintenance;

Capacity building

Strategic planning

Capacity building
+
Strategic planning

- Implement vehicle use demand management strategies to reduce the distance travelled by optimising routes or exploring alternative methods of operation, such as the use of battery-powered drones in lieu of patrol cars in remote areas;
 - Use solar panels on vehicle roofs to power communications.
- ▶ Introduce **sustainable procurement practices** across various domains (using guidelines such as the EU Green Public Procurement Criteria):
- Vehicle, vessel, and aircraft acquisitions: prioritize the selection of modular equipment that allows for more frequent upgrades, promoting longevity and reducing environmental impact;
 - Consumables for routine use, reducing plastic usage in rations, field supplies, and operational equipment, as well as exploring options for downcycling ammunition.
- ▶ Sustainable **retrofit and climate proof of infrastructures** through energy efficiency (lighting modernisation and insulation), renewable energies (heat pumps or photovoltaics, combined into one system with heat and/or electricity storage) or rainwater harvesting and sustainable drainage systems.
- ▶ Promote **circular economy initiatives** for standing corps through the engagement with local governments, communities or business. Examples include: upgrading and retrofitting facilities that will temporarily serve for specific operations; military boots repair increasing the lifespan of equipment and uniforms; recycle or recover the textiles from old uniforms.

Sustainable practices

Infrastructures

Green jobs



Migration and development

Green remittances

- ▶ Incentivise the **use of remittances in adopting sustainable technologies and practices**, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, climate-resilient farming and infrastructure. This can be achieved by:
- Implementing fiscal incentives and economic rewards to incentivize investments in the target sectors
 - Facilitating outreach to diaspora members to inform about investment opportunities in start-ups and small business that contribute to positive environmental change

Sustainable practices
+
Green jobs



- Establishing advisory services, micro-insurance programmes, a finance facility for pilot projects and/or training initiatives focused on agro-ecological practices and environmental innovation.
- Providing financial literacy programmes that highlight savings and investment options in green sectors

Return and reintegration



Prioritization of environmental and climate sustainability in the livelihoods of reintegration projects

- ▶ **Incorporate environmental and climate considerations within the feasibility assessment** framework of reintegration projects to mitigate adverse impacts and address existing risks.
- ▶ Promote **reintegration projects** on sustainable management of resources, circular economy, green jobs creation, or environmental protection.
- ▶ **Rebuild resilient infrastructure** under the build-back-better approach in areas affected by disasters to facilitate the prompt return of displaced individuals and reduce the likelihood of future forced displacement.
- ▶ Implement infrastructure projects to **secure access to essential services** and reduce susceptibility to climate-related shocks, encompassing the construction of all-weather roads and irrigation systems.

Risk management

Sustainable practices + Green jobs

Infrastructures

Infrastructures



Skills development

- ▶ **Empower returnees with knowledge and skills for sustainable livelihoods** in their home countries by
 - Assessing potential sectors for eco-friendly and climate-resilient economic activities locally, and
 - Improving coordination between host and origin countries to leverage training opportunities, facilitating seamless reintegration.
- ▶ Promote green entrepreneurship through partnerships with specialized bodies e.g., in reduction on the use of energy and raw material, avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions, waste and pollution, analysis of market demand for eco-conscious products or services, pinpoint green financing avenues, advance sustainable agricultural methods, implement eco-friendly business strategies, etc.
- ▶ Deliver technical and vocational training focused on environmentally sustainable livelihood avenues coupled with business development training.

Capacity building + Advocacy and policy dialogue

Green jobs

Capacity development



Financial inclusion

- ▶ **Enhance green financial services** by offering tailored financial products and services to migrants and host communities such as:
 - Debt financing for select Financial Service Providers (FSPs), supported by guarantees and complemented by technical assistance programmes; and
 - Financial literacy and business development training
- ▶ Encourage **innovative partnerships between finance providers and migrants** willing to launch green initiatives, for instance by connecting migrant microentrepreneurs with financial service providers for green business ventures.

Capacity development

Green jobs

- ▶ Facilitate swift and adaptable **financing for private sector development** by:
 - Establishing agreements with Multilateral Development Banks for responsive funding during extreme weather events, including pre-allocated emergency funds;
 - Deploying microcredit and intermediated lending to assist SMEs and individuals affected by climate events;
 - Utilizing cash grants for sustainable agriculture and livelihood projects, employing an inclusive spatial targeting strategy.

Green jobs

Policy and programming

Policy and programming coherence

- ▶ Ensure that **protection measures and response strategies for those displaced** by disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation are integrated **across all levels of policy** and programming, ensuring that vulnerable migrants, and displaced people are targeted as a category in its own right.
- ▶ Advocate for multilateral and regional **leadership** in ongoing processes to ensure comprehensive **access to protection services and recovery programmes**.
- ▶ Support countries in **integrating human mobility considerations into their nationally determined contributions**, national adaptation plans, and just transition strategies.
- ▶ Encourage engagement of institutions involved in Environment and natural resources management, Public Works and Urban Planning in migration dialogues and national consultations.
- ▶ Facilitate the integration of migrant's perspectives on DRR in policy-making processes. Migrants can raise awareness about disaster risks and advocate for better DRR policies and practices in both their home and host countries and they can help strengthen local institutions through participation in governance and advocacy, and promoting effective disaster risk management.

Advocacy and policy dialogue

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Further information and support

- ▶ 2024, IOM "[Harnessing labour migration to respond to the climate crisis](#)"
- ▶ 2023, OECD "[What role for migration and migrants in the Green Transition](#) of OECD countries?"
- ▶ 2023, UNHCR "[Overview of Strategic Plan for Climate Action 2024–2030](#)"
- ▶ 2023, Rita Issa, Amal Sarsour, Teresa Cullip, Sorana Toma, Ilse Ruyssen, Charlotte Scheerens. *Gaps and opportunities in the climate change, migration and health nexus: Insights from a questionnaire based study of practitioners and researchers*. Journal of Migration and Health, Volume 7, 2023, 100171, ISSN 2666-6235, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2023.100171>.
- ▶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666623523000211>
- ▶ 2022, IOM "[Integrating Migration into Environment and Climate Change Interventions](#)"
- ▶ 2022, Migration Policy Institute "[Financing Responses to Climate Migration. The Unique Role of Multilateral Development Banks](#)"
- ▶ 2021, Frontex "[The Green Deal and the European Border and Coast Guard \(EBCG\)](#)"
- ▶ 2021, UNHCR "[Review of environmental impact of Cash Based Interventions and in-kind assistance](#)"
- ▶ 2020, European Union Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF) "[Diaspora engagement initiatives on Green initiatives](#)"

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