



GOAL AND SCOPE OF THE NANSEN INITIATIVE

The overall goal of the Nansen Initiative is to build consensus among States on key principles and elements to protect people displaced across borders in the context of disasters caused by natural hazards, including those linked to climate change.

The planned outcome of this process is a protection agenda based on three pillars:

- 1 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION and solidarity;
- 2 STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT of affected people regarding admission, stay, status; and
- 3 OPERATIONAL RESPONSES, including funding mechanisms and responsibilities of international humanitarian and development actors.

KEY AREAS OF THE PROTECTION AGENDA



The agenda will cover all relevant phases, namely

- 1 PREPAREDNESS before displacement occurs;
- 2 PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE during displacement; and
- 3 TRANSITION TO SOLUTIONS in the aftermath of the disaster.

While the Nansen Initiative focuses on the needs of persons displaced across borders, it also addresses related issues such as disaster risk reduction, internal displacement, or the management of migration as an adaptation measure.

THE NANSEN INITIATIVE DEFINITIONS

NANSEN INITIATIVE is a state-led consultative process to build consensus on a protection agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change.

DISASTER is understood as “serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources” (UNISDR). In the present context, those disasters provoked by a natural hazard are relevant.

SUDDEN-ONSET DISASTERS comprise hydro meteorological hazards such as flooding, windstorms or mudslides, and geophysical hazards including earthquakes, tsunamis or volcano eruptions.

SLOW-ONSET DISASTERS relate to environmental degradation processes such as droughts and desertification, increased salinization, rising sea levels or thawing of permafrost.

CLIMATE CHANGE refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

CROSS-BORDER movements take place if affected people do not move inside of a country, but across international borders.

DISPLACEMENT describes forced movements of people, while the term migration is used for voluntary movements.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE are people or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border (Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement).

CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF DISASTERS AND THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE refers to situations where people flee or are displaced across borders in the context of sudden- or slow-onset disasters, or in the context of the adverse effects of climate change.

NOTE: “Climate Refugee” is often being used in the media to define a person displaced in the context of disasters like droughts, sea level rise as well as extreme weather events like hurricanes, tsunamis or earthquakes. This concept does not exist in international law and is not endorsed by the Nansen Initiative.

THE NANSEN INITIATIVE
DISASTER-INDUCED CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT

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THE NANSEN INITIATIVE

DISASTER-INDUCED CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT



TOWARDS A PROTECTION AGENDA FOR PEOPLE DISPLACED ACROSS BORDERS IN THE CONTEXT OF DISASTERS AND THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

With the support of:



german humanitarian assistance
DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

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THE CHALLENGE

Every year around the world, millions of people are forcibly displaced by floods, wind-storms, earthquakes, droughts and other disasters. Many find refuge within their own country but some have to go abroad. In the context of climate change, such movements are likely to increase. National and international responses to this challenge are insufficient and protection for affected people remains inadequate.

While people displaced within their own countries are covered by national laws, international human rights law, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and a few regional instruments, a serious legal gap exists with regard to cross-border movements in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change. These people are in most cases not refugees under international refugee law, and human rights law does not address critical issues such as their admission, stay and basic rights. Criteria to distinguish between forced and voluntary movements in the context of disasters have not yet been elaborated.

The situation is exacerbated by operational and institutional shortcomings, such as a lack of coherent institutional responses and effective inter-state as well as (sub-)regional cooperation.

THE RESPONSE

In view of this protection gap, there is a need for an inter-governmental process to address the challenges of cross-border displacement in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change.

With the adoption of paragraph 14 (f) of the Cancún Outcome Agreement in December 2010 (COP16), states recognized climate change-induced migration, displacement and relocation as an adaptation challenge, and agreed to enhance their understanding and cooperation in this respect. Based on the outcome of the Nansen Conference on Climate Change and Displacement in Oslo (June 2011), Norway and Switzerland pledged at the UNHCR Ministerial Conference in December 2011 to address the need for a more coherent approach to the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change. The pledge was welcomed by several states and provides the basis of the Nansen Initiative.



THE APPROACH

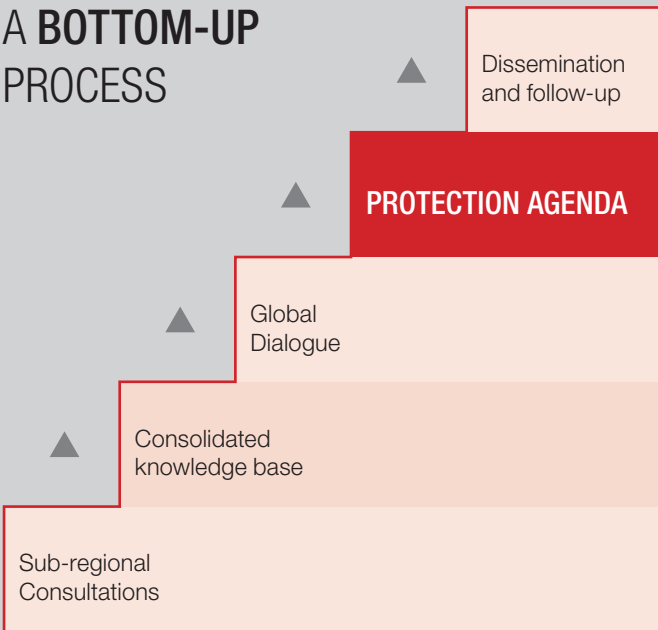
The Nansen Initiative is a bottom-up, state-led consultative process with multi-stakeholder involvement.

To feed the Nansen Initiative process with good practices and build a sound knowledge base, inter-governmental regional consultations and civil society meetings already took place in the Pacific (Cook Islands and Fiji), Central America (Costa Rica and Guatemala), the Horn of Africa (Kenya), South-East Asia (Philippines and Thailand) and will take place next in South Asia over the course of 2015.

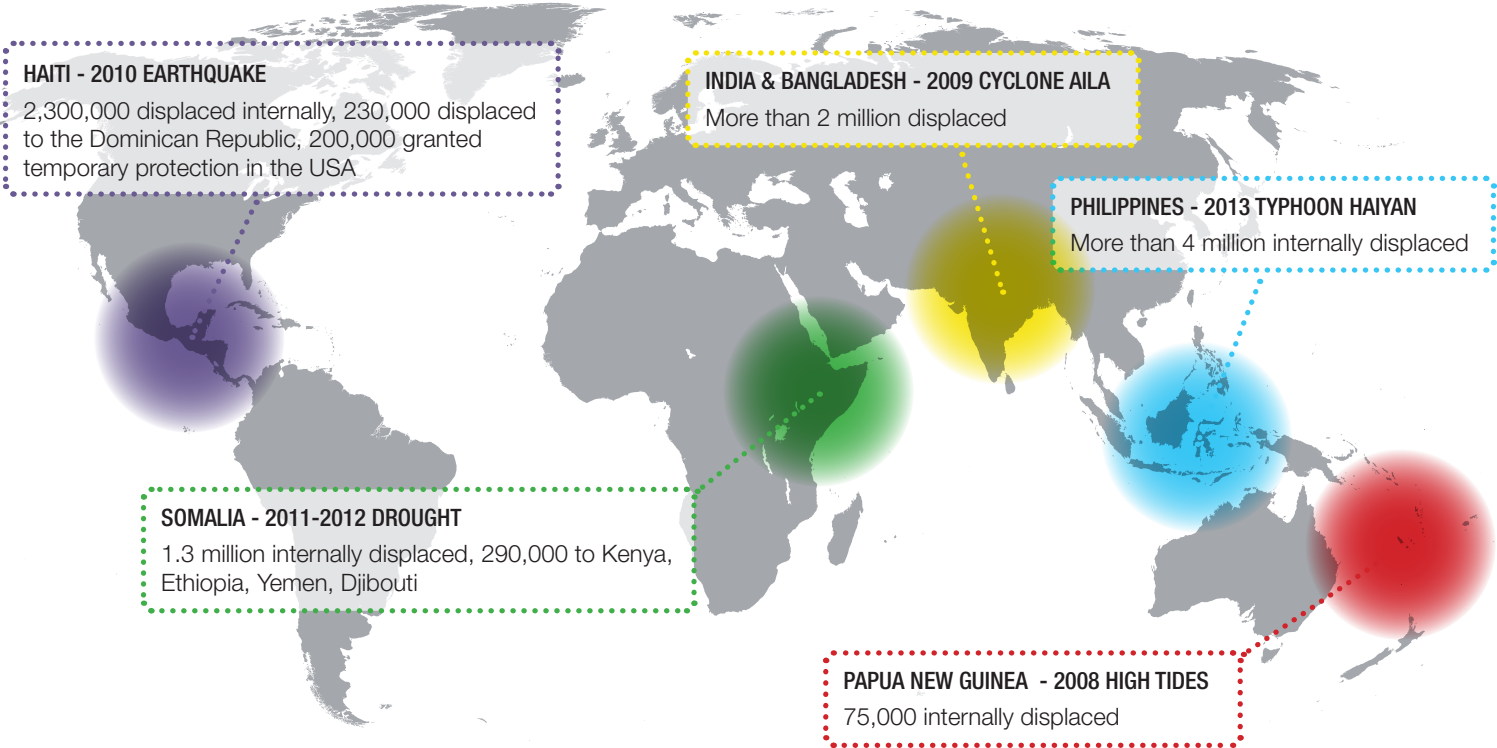
The results of the regional consultations and civil society meetings will be consolidated and discussed at a global inter-governmental consultation in October 2015. The Nansen Initiative does not seek to develop new legal standards, but rather to build consensus among states on the elements of a protection agenda, which may include standards of treatment. Its outcomes may be taken up at domestic, regional and global levels and lead to new laws, soft law instruments or binding agreements.

A follow-up process shall ensure wide dissemination and facilitate implementation of recommendations.

A BOTTOM-UP PROCESS



WORKING TOWARDS A GLOBAL PROTECTION AGENDA



REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

1 PACIFIC Human Mobility, Natural Disasters and Climate Change in the Pacific 21-24 May 2013 Rarotonga, Cook Islands	2 CENTRAL AMERICA Disasters and Cross-Border Displacement in Central America: Emerging Needs, New Responses 2-4 December 2013 San José, Costa Rica	3 GREATER HORN OF AFRICA Displacement in the Greater Horn of Africa: Protecting People on the Move 3-4 March 2014 Nairobi, Kenya
4 CENTRAL AMERICA Disasters and Cross-Border Displacement in Central America: Emerging Needs, New Responses 1-2 April 2014 Guatemala city, Guatemala	5 GREATER HORN OF AFRICA Natural Hazards, Climate Change, and Cross-Border Displacement in the Greater Horn of Africa: Protecting People on the Move 21-23 May 2014, Nairobi, Kenya	6 SOUTH-EAST ASIA Disasters and Displacement in South-East Asia 30 June – 1 July 2014 Bangkok, Thailand
7 PACIFIC Impacts of Climate Change and Disasters on Human Mobility in the Pacific: Challenges and Opportunities 18-20 August 2014, Suva, Fiji	8 SOUTH-EAST ASIA Human Mobility in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change in South-East Asia 15-17 October 2014 Manila, Philippines	9 SOUTH ASIA Upcoming consultation over the course of 2015

LEGEND: Intergovernmental Civil Society Organizations



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

With States as primary stakeholders, the Nansen Initiative is managed by a Steering Group, a Consultative Committee, an Envoy and a small Secretariat.

Nine states with balanced representation from the Global South and North form a **STEERING GROUP** that initiates, hosts, overviews and steers the process. The Steering Group is chaired by Switzerland and Norway and includes the following countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Kenya, Mexico and the Philippines. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are Standing Invitees to the Steering Group.

States from affected sub-regions together with states receiving displaced people represent important stakeholders for the Initiative. International organizations as well as academic experts, civil society and the affected people are also actively participating in the process.

A **CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE** made up of representatives from international organizations dealing with displacement and migration issues, climate change and development, researchers, think tanks and non-governmental organizations are informing and supporting the process through the experience of its members.

A **GROUP OF FRIENDS OF THE NANSEN INITIATIVE** comprising interested states and regional organizations who would like to be associated with the Initiative. They contribute to the work of the Initiative with comments and proposals.

Professor Walter Kälin acts as **ENVOY OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP** of the Nansen Initiative, representing it throughout the process and providing strategic guidance and input.

Finally, the process is supported by a small **NANSEN INITIATIVE SECRETARIAT** based in Geneva, Switzerland.