RAOUL WALLENBERG INSTITUTE
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW

Mahidol University
Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies

Climate Change Human Mobility and Human Rights

Workbook for Students



CLIMATE CHANGE, HUMAN MOBILITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Form
CCS	Carbon Capture and Storage
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
GHGs	Greenhouse Gasses
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Order for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgeder and Intersex
LGU	Local Government Unit
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
OHCHR	(United Nations) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SLAPP	Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation
SOGIE	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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Module 1: Human Rights and Climate Change

Module Overview

Module 1 on Human Rights and Climate Change introduces the concepts of human rights and climate change, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities. It provides participants with the essential understanding of the relationship between human rights and climate change and enables them to identify the challenges that occur due to climate change in the realization of human rights.

Introduction

As the impact of climate change grows in intensity and frequency, it brings to the forefront not only environmental concerns but also urgent issues of justice and human rights. Marginalized communities, those who have contributed least to the problem, are often most affected. To enhance climate resilience, understanding the climate change impacts and adopting a human rights-based approach is essential.

This first module will show how climate change is a human right concern. To do this the module will firstly explain what human rights are, and how climate change is a human rights concern alongside being an ecological, economic, technical, and social problem. This includes considering the human rights impacts of climate change responses, such as mitigation (trying to reduce its impact), and adaptation (finding ways for communities to live in a changed climate).

As the impact of climate change grows in intensity and frequency, it brings to the forefront not only environmental concerns but also urgent issues of justice and human rights. Climate change will have a greater impact on vulnerable communities. Given they have contributed least to the problem, it is unfair. Hence, there is need for climate justice: those who have created the problem have more responsibility to fix it, and to assist those who face the negative consqequences of climate change.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, readers will have the knowledge and capacity to:
(1) **Define** and explain human rights and climate change.
(2) **Identify** which rights are at risk due to climate change
(3) **Identify** the human rights elements in responses to climate change: mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage
(4) **Examine** the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable communities

Warm Up Questions

What are some impacts from Climate Change to your life?

Click here to Answer

Do you think this issue is connected to human rights? Why or why not?

Click here to Answer

Teacher's Instructions

I. Introduction to Human Rights

What are human rights?

Our contemporary world has recognized that every person, no matter where they are or woh they are, deserves to be treated with fairness, justice, and equality. The world was not always like this and even toady amny States, institutions, businesses and other entities do not always live up to this standard. Regardless, this committment is real, universally recognized, and in law. It is the task of everyoneto keep it. Human rights are freedoms and entitlements for every person, simply by being human. They apply to everyone, regardless of nationality, gender, ethnicity, religion, or any other status.

> "Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination."
> (United Nations, Human Rights 2025)

Human Rights are especially important in climate change. They ensure that everyone is treated equally no matter the situation, which is very important in times of crisis. If a climate change disaster occurs, it is important that all humans get protection and that responses to climate change do not help some people and not others. For example, in a response to a cyclone, it is a violation if a country decides to only help its own citizens and not help migrant workers, refugees, or tourists. Similarly, it is unjust if a government decides to respond to increasing heat by air conditioning classrooms in the city but not the countryside. Responses to climate change should be based on the key principles of human rights which are:

Human rights are rights **inherent** to all human beings, they are not earned or endowed but always exist for everyone
Human rights are **inalienable**, everyone always has their rights and they cannot be taken away
Human Rights are **universal**, they exist everywhere
Everyone is entitled to these rights, without **discrimination**."

Universal Inherent Inalienable

Quiz Questions

1. Multiple Choice:

Which of the following is NOT a principle of human rights?

a. Universal
b. Reversible
c. Inalienable
d. Interdependent

2. True or False:

The principle of universality means that only citizens of a country are entitled to human rights.

3. Link the statement with the concept:

Statement

a) You aer born with human rights
b) If a person goes to jail, they still have human rights
c) in the middle of the ocean, outside any Nation State, a person does ot have rights
d) Human rights exist in every country

Concept

1. Universality
2. Inherent rights
3. Inalienable rights
4. Not a human rights concept

Teacher's Instructions

What are the primary international conventions on human rights?

Foundational Documents on human rights can b efound in the International Bill of Human Rights, which comprising the following international standards:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - an international document drafted by aUN commission chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, and accepted by the UN General Assembly as Resolution 217 on 10 December 1948.

- A Milestone document becuase it is the first time ever that countries around the world agreed to universal, inalienable, and inherent human rights.
- A foundational text listing a person's individual's rights and freedoms.
- Though not legally binding, the UDHR is universally acknowledged by every country to be the basis of human rights, and it has been incorporated in subsequent international treaties, regional human rights instruments, and national constitutions.
- UDHR is considered as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.



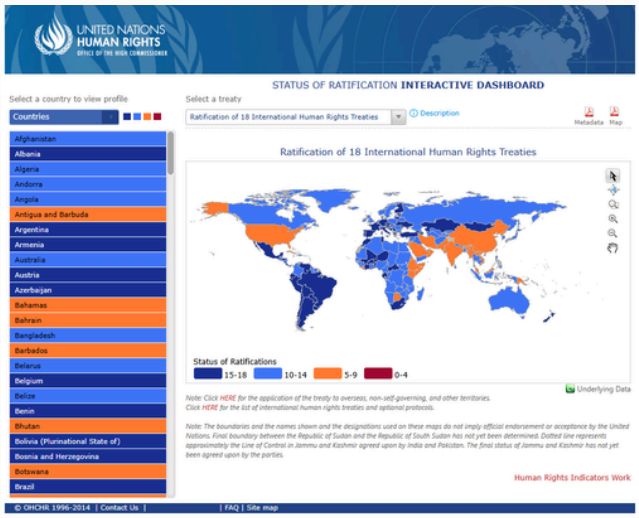
Photo Source: Keystone/Getty Images. (n.d.). Eleanor Roosevelt at the temporary UN headquarters, Lake Success, New York, 1946 [Photograph]. In B. Little, How Eleanor Roosevelt Pushed for a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. History.com.

The international convenants on human rights

While the UDHR is not legaly binding, it has been codified into international law in two treaties, known as the Covenants. These are:

The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) a treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly as Resolution 2200A (XXI) on 16 December 1966, and came into force on 3 January 1976

- The ICESCR takes the rights in the UDHR (mainly articles 22 to 27) and makes them legally binding
- The ICESCR categorizes rights into three groups: economic rights (rights around work and earning money) social rights (rights around government services such as health, education, housing, food and water) and culture rights (the rights to speak your language, practice your religion, and participate in cultural activities).
- Around 172 State have made the ICESCR legally enforcing (that is they have ratified it). In Asia in 2025 almost every State has ratified except four countries, which can be found by visiting the OHCHR ratification dashboard (see below).
- ICESCR is relevant to climate change in many ways. For example: rights around work will change as the world gets hotter; rights to housing will be threatened by climate disasters; there will be many new health threats created by a warming climate.



See the Ratification Dashboard

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is a treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly as Resolution 2200A (XXI) on 16 December 1966, and came into force on 23 March 1976.

- The ICCPR takes most of the rights in the UDHR (mainly articles 2 to 21) and makes them legally binding
- The ICCPR categorizes rights into four groups: fundamental rights (rights which a State cannot re-define or ignore), rights in the court system (such as fair trial or equal before the law), civil rights (rights which ensure people have freedoms such as to marry, speak, move and practice a religion), and political rights (rights around being democracy).
- As of 2024, there are 174 countries which have ratified the ICCPR. In Asia in 2025 almost every State has ratified except eight countries. Check with the OHCHR dashboard (above).
- ICCPR is relevant to climate change in many ways. Climate change is a governance issue, so political rights are necessary for people to work together to mitigate and adapt to climate change. A significant problems is the amount of dis– and mis-information on climate change, and rights to seek and recieve accurate information is important to stop this.

Discussions

What treaties has your country ratified and not ratified? Is this a good record? Discuss why your country chose to ratify these treaties

Click here to Answer

Teacher's Instructions

Climate change is not just an environmental issue—it's a *human rights crisis*. It directly and indirectly threatens the enjoyment of a broad range of human rights, especially for people in vulnerable situations.

II. Introduction to Climate Change

There is a huge difference between weather and climate. Weather refers to the daily changes in atmospheric conditions. Every day it could be sunny, raining, hot or cold. On most days we check to see what the weather is. On the other hand, climate refers to the longer-term averages of weather. That summer is hot and winter is cold is climate. When we talk about climate change, we are not talking about changes to the weather. A cold day in summer is odd and rare, but it is not unusual. When a winter is not cold, or every storm is more severe, or rainfalls stop, these changes to climate are severe, sometimes dangerous, and not part of the natural variation of the weather.

There are manycations causes for climate change. For example, the exhaust from a car (mainly carbon dioxide) has a certain impact. But so does an uneaten lunch which is thrown in landfill (and becomes methane, another GHG), or a tree that is chopped down (and cannot recyle GHGs into oxygen). Each of these require different solutions and actions by a State.

Definitions

Climate change refers to a long-term shift in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. Such shifts can happen naturally or due to the sun's activity, or a large volcanic eruption. These changes are largely driven by human activity, especially the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas. (Link)

"Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth, trapping the sun's heat and raising temperatures.

The main greenhouse gases that are causing climate change include carbon dioxide and methane. These come from using gasoline for driving a car or coal for heating a building, for example. Clearing land and cutting down forests can also release carbon dioxide. Agriculture, oil, and gas operations are major sources of methane emissions. Energy, industry, transport, buildings, agriculture, and land use are among the main sectors causing greenhouse gases."

(United Nations, Climate Action)



Teacher's Instructions

III. Humans are responsible for climate change

Climate scientists have confirmed that human activities, especially greenhouse gas emissions, are responsible for driving global warming to an unprecedented level.

The Earth's surface temperature is now around 1.2°C higher than in the late 1800s (before to the Industrial Revolution), making it the hottest period in the last 100,000 years. This does not mean that everywhere it is merely 1.2°C hotter, but rather the overall average is this amount. In some areas summer is hotter by 4-5°C. In other places it is cooler for short periods of time. The last decade, 2011-2020, was the warmest on record. This trend has been continuing since 1850.

Climate change is not just about high temperatures; it disrupts the entire Earth system, where changes in one region can produce global consequences (United Nations, Climate Action)

The IPCC (Inter governmental Panel on Climate Change) is a body of thousands of scientists who are studying the impact of climate change. They review tens of thousands of scientific articles and produce huge reports on the impact of climate change. The sixth and latest report, came out in 2023. The full report is thousands of pages long and references to nearly 20,000 academic articles. The facts are that humans have created climate change through the burning of fossil fuels and other activities, and the world is getting hotter.

Climate change is not just about getting hotter, but how this extra heat will change weather patterns. For some places it means less rain, others more rain. It can mean stronger storms, or milder winters. The impacts are not even across the world.

A major challenge facing thoe fighting against climate change is the large amont of mis- and dis-information aimed at making people unsure about these facts. By creating doubt, those organizations who profit from climate change, which includes the fossil fuel industry, plastics companies, and conservative political groups, want to keep their profits or their political positions.

Many clearly false claims are made such as "there are bigger problems like poverty"; "the change is natural and not man made"; "climate change is a hoax"; and "renewable energy creates as much GHG as does fossil fuels". If people start doubting the facts of climate change they may be less willing ot act, or more tolerant of polluting companies. The challenge of responding to climate change is not just acting to reduce GHGs, but also combatting these falsehoods

Causes of Climate Change

Producing power by fossil fuels: The use of fossil fuels to generate power and heat accounts for a significant portion of total global emissions. The majority of electricity is still generated by burning coal, oil, or gas, which emits carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide, potent greenhouse gases that blanket the Earth and trap solar heat. Globally, a little more than a quarter of electricity comes from wind, solar, and other renewable sources that, unlike fossil fuels, produce little to no greenhouse gases or pollutants into the atmosphere.

Manufacturing goods: Manufacturing and industry generate emissions, which are mostly caused by the combustion of fossil fuels to make cement, iron, steel, electronics, plastics, clothing, and other items. The construction sector, as well as mining and other industrial operations, emit gases. Machines used in the manufacturing process are frequently powered by coal, oil, or gas, and some products, such as plastics, are derived from fossil fuel-based compounds. The manufacturing industry is one of the world's greatest emitters of greenhouse gases.

Destroying forests: Cutting down forests for farms or pastures, or for other purposes, emits carbon because trees release the carbon they have been storing when felled. Because trees absorb carbon dioxide, removing them reduces nature's ability to keep emissions out of the atmosphere. Every year, over 12 million hectares of forest are destroyed. Deforestation, together with agriculture and other land use changes, accounts for around 25% of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.

Fossil Fuel transportation: Most automobiles, trucks, ships, and planes use fossil fuels. As a result, transportation contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide emissions. The largest portion is accounted for by road vehicles, which use internal combustion engines to burn petroleum-based fuels such as gasoline. However, emissions from ships and airplanes continue to increase. Transportation contributes about one-quarter of worldwide energy-related carbon dioxide emissions. And indications indicate to a large increase in energy use for transportation in the next years.

Causes of Climate Change

Producing of food: Food production emits carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases in a variety of ways, including deforestation and land clearing for agriculture and grazing, digestion by cows and sheep, the production and use of fertilizers and manure for crop growth, and the use of energy to power farm equipment or fishing boats, typically with fossil fuels. All of this makes food production a key contributor to climate change. Packaging and distribution of food also contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.

Powering Building: Residential and commercial buildings account for more than half of all electricity consumption globally. They continue to release considerable amounts of greenhouse gases as they use coal, oil, and natural gas for heating and cooling. Rising energy demand for heating and cooling, as well as increased power usage for lights, appliances, and connected devices, have all led to an increase in energy-related carbon dioxide emissions from buildings in recent years.

Consuming too much: Human housing and energy consumption, how people move around, what they eat, and how much waste they generate all contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The consumption of items such as apparel, electronics, and plastics is also increasing. Private households contribute significantly to global greenhouse gas emissions. Our lives have a significant impact on our environment. The wealthiest have the most responsibility: the richest 1% of the world population is responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions than the lowest 50% combined.

(Adapted from United Nations Climate Action, Link)



IV. What are the general effects of climate change?

Rising Temperatures: Global surface temperatures have been increasing, with each decade since the 1980s warmer than the last. This leads to more heatwaves, wildfires, and health issues, especially in the Arctic.

Stronger Storms: Warmer air and oceans cause more intense storms, including cyclones and hurricanes, resulting in deadly floods and widespread destruction. More recently the number of storms, and their intensity has increased.

More Droughts: Water scarcity is worsening in many regions, harming crops and ecosystems. Droughts also contribute to dust storms and expanding deserts.

Warming Oceans & Rising Seas: Oceans absorb heat and expand, and melting ice raises sea levels, threatening coastal areas. More CO_2 makes oceans acidic, harming marine life.

Biodiversity Loss: There is a tendency to focus on the impact to humans, but climate change is just as catastrophic of other forms of life. There will be a rise in species extinction as many animals and plants can't adapt or relocate. The increase in storms, wildfires, and heatwaves will also kill many animals. Some species are now under threat such as the Australian Koala or the Polar Bear. Though many other species such as insects have had drastic reduction in numbers, but they do not get the attention of more famous animals like Koalas.

Health Risks: Climate change harms health through pollution, disease, extreme weather, and food insecurity, with 13 million deaths annually linked to environmental causes.

Poverty & Displacement: Climate impacts force millions into poverty and displacement, especially in vulnerable regions. Over 23 million people are displaced annually by weather-related events. The oceans will rise flooding lands such as river deltas and foreshores. While this may not happen for decades, countries such as India, Bangladesh, Vietnam and China will have millions of displaced people. Rising sea levels will ruin many agriculturally rich areas in Bangladesh and Vietnam. It will inundate coastal cities like Jakarta, Manilla, and Bangkok,

Food Insecurity: The changes cause by climate change will mean a drop in the production of food as farmland faces drought, flooding, or rising sea levels. Humans also need to change their diet to food which has less carbon footprint, such as eating less meat and more vegetables.

Quiz Questions

Multiple Choice:

1. Which of the following is NOT a consequence of climate change?
   a. Increased frequency of heatwaves
   b. Ocean acidification
   c. Increased plastic use
   d. Food insecurity

2. Matching:

Match the climate change effect with its consequence:

1. Sea level rise_____	A. Displacement of coastal communities
2. Heatwaves _____	B. Increased wildfire risks
3. Extreme storms _____	C. Health problems for the edlerly
4. Drought _____	D. Infrastructure damage

3. Which of the follwing does not increase GHGs?

A. Growing more cattle and sheep
B. International airplane travel
C. Cutting down forests
D. Using Solar Panels for energy
E. Constructing concrete buildings

V. International Responses to Climate Change

This section lists some of the important international laws and bodies which have been developed to repsond to climate change. These are not the only responses, as there are also regional and national level actions, alongside actions undertaken by private groups. It is a summary of important bodies and laws which are necessary to understand how the international community is acting.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1994

Entered into force on 21 March 1994, the Convention has been ratified by all States in the United Nations. Preventing “dangerous” human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 1988

An intergovernmental body of the United Nations formed by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988.The IPCC informs governments about the state of knowledge of climate change. It does this by examining all the relevant scientific literature on the subject. This includes the natural, economic, and social impacts and risks. It also covers possible response options. The IPCC does not conduct its own original research. Thousands of scientists and other experts volunteer to review the publications. They compile key findings into "Assessment Reports" for policymakers and the general public; Experts have described this work as the biggest peer review process in the scientific community.

The Paris Agreement, 2015

A legally binding international treaty on climate change, adopted by 195 Parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force in November 2016. It replaces teh previous agreement, the *Kyoto Protocol*, and aims to keep the global average temperature to well below 2°C; however, in recent years, world leaders have stressed the need to limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of this century.

The Paris Agreement is a landmark in the multilateral climate change process because, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations together to combat climate change and adapt to its effects by sharing technology, capacity building, and financial assistance. It works in a five-year reporting cycle. Since 2020, countries have been submitting their national climate action plans, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Human Rights Instruments and Climate Change: Summary

Human Rights Treaties	All human rights treaties are legally binding on countries which ratify them. Given that all humans are affected by climate change, they are all relevant
International Customary Law	These are standards found in international law, and maybe not in a treaty, but which all States must accept. These include environmental principles such as to prevent damage to the environment, the duty for States to cooperate, and the importance of protecting the environment for future generations.
International non-binding standards (soft law)	Soft law are the policies, documents, and other international agreed standards which do not create legal obligations but are still important in governing state responses to climate change. These include reports and findings from UN bodies such as the UNGA, Special Rapportuers, and the IPCC's reports.
State Constitutions and Domestic Law	Across Asia many, if not most, constitutions recognize the right to a clean environment. While many of these constitutions were drafted before people realised the problem of climate change, the constitutional right to a clean environment can be used to mitigate climate change.

VI. How can we address climate change?

As the IPCC's 2023 report notes: "The climate crisis is increasingly distressing. Fortunately, there are many things we can do to ensure our future is as prosperous as possible. These actions fall into one of two broad categories: climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation. These terms go hand-in- hand while navigating through the climate crisis, but they mean very different things."

Climate change mitigation

Mitigation is the process of reducing the impact of climate change. These actions are typically reducing the use of GHGs, reforestation, and also changes to diet, transport and energy use. There are many, many more activities that can be defined as mitigation.

Climate change adaptation

Adaptation means changing behavior, systems, and sometimes even people's way of life to protect families, economies, and the environment from the impacts of climate change. Adaptation aims to protects people from the harsh effects of climate change and to ensure people can live a life of dignity in this changing world.

Mitigation can fall into three general categories.

1. Mitigation by reducing GHGs.

Reducing GHGs can be done by changing to renewable energy sources (e.g., solar, wind, hydro). It can also be achieved by reducing consumption. At a person level, individual can mitigate climate change. This includes actions such as installing rooftop solar panels, promoting cycling, using public transportation, not throwing out food waste (try composting), planting trees, or convincing others not to chop down trees. The less people travel, eat meat, or turn on their air conditioner can all help reduce GHGs.

However, the main emitters of GHGs are not people, but industries, and this is where the most work on mitigation must be done. Fossil fuel use must be minimized, or ideally stopped, though this is a very hotly debated issues around the world. In other industries, their efficiency can be improved through better use of recycling or more efficient energy use. Greener manufacturing practices further contribute. Concepts such as the 'Circular Economy,' where products are developed so they can be recycled and reused is prioritized, will helps to reduce the amount of resources a society uses and reduces the amount of GHG emissions.

2. Mitigation by increasing Carbon Sinks

Carbon sinks are anything that can absorb GHG out of the air and store them. Mostly they are natural, such as trees, forests, and jungles which absorb carbon dioxide and store this as wood. Other natural sinks include mangroves, marshes and seaweed which are known as blue carbon sinks. Soil can also be a carbon sink. Carbon sinks potentialy can be artificial, for example technological innovations such as carbon capture and storage (CCS), which trap emissions before they enter the atmosphere, but as yet no technology has been invented which can take GHG out of the atmosphere to fully mitigate climate change.

The most common mitigation process here is reforestation, the process of planting trees and regrowing forests. Across Asia most countries have a history of deforestation where most tree cover was lost. This continues at a fast rate in places such as Indonesia, threatening species and contributing to climate change. However, some countries such as Thailand, Vietnam and China are undergoing reforestation, where more trees being planted than are chopped down. In some places reforestation is called rewilding, especially when farmland is transformed back into its original forest, or afforestation where a forest is planted where there never was one.

3. Mitigation through technology and economy.

International agreements allow for countries to introduce carbon pricing mechanisms such as emissions trading schemes, cap and trade, or carbon tax schemes. All these economic tools have the aim of reducing emissions by making them more expensive, for example by taxing emissions. They can also give financial benefits to countries with low emissions or large carbon sinks by allowing them to trade these sinks with high emitting countries. While there is much debate if these financial tools will work, they are an important step in many countries for business to address their emissions and find ways to reduce their impact or encourage others to develop carbon sinks.

Some people believe there can be a technological solution to climate change. For example, massive geoengineering projects such as huge CCS machines in the ocean, placing a earth-sized shield in the sky to reduce the sun's glare, or to harvest the atmosphere with some chemicals which will reduce the amount of heat captured in the atmosphere. These plans are seen as incredibly risky and a last resort to mitigate climate change. Importantly, none of these technologies exist. The technology response is favoured by some climate obstructionist groups because they allow fossil fuel industries to continue emitting GHGs in the (false) belief that the the pollutants can be captured and stored at some later date.





Adaptation

Adaptation is how to prepare for climate change so the impact on people's lives will be less and not as dangerous. Adaptation focuses on managing the consequences by doing things such as changing the way people live, work, eat, and travel. Adaptation is also about preparedness. Houses, communities, towns and cities all need to be better prepared for the changing climate conditions. Some may need to be prepared for floods and storms, others for drought and high temperatures. Preparedness comes from having better understanding of the risks and having action plans to respond to them. While disaster preparedness has been around a long time, many places now have to develop new plans for the problems which climate change will bring. Many Asian cities are not prepared for heat waves. Even though most cities are hot, they may be prepared for extended periods of heat that is dangerous to the young and the old.

Not all adaptation comes from policies and building. There are environmental ways to adapt. This may include reforesting, which can help reduce flooding by soaking up the water, or reduce heat by producing shade. Coastal erosion can be slowed with mangroves, and agriculture can use different crops to ensure soil maintains its vitality. Wildfires can be reduced by better forestry management. In all these cases there is an environmental answer to the problem, which is also simultaneously an act of mitigation.

Some key features of adaption include:

Building:

Houses need to adapt. They need to use green energy sources (though this is mitigation), but they also need to be able to respond to extreme heat with better cooling and insulation or survive in stronger winds in cyclone areas.

Communities need adapt. For example they may need cool centres where the elderly can go during a heat wave. This may be a local hall which can be air conditioned. Communities may also need disaster plans. For example, an evacuation plan if a cyclone or a flood will hit it.

Cities need to adapt. For example they may need to hold out a rising oceans by building sea walls. They may have to change public transport so it can operate during a heat wave, or is more efficient and does not rely on fossil fuels.

Work and the Economy

People's work may need to change. Some jobs, like a motorbike delivery, maybe become dangerous during extreme heat, or teachers and students cannot learn in an unconditioned classroom. For agriculture there may be significant changes. Farmers may need to change when they sow and reap their crops, or adjust crops to the available water. The economy may need to introduce innovations such as climate-sensitive insurance schemes which protects people if a disaster hits. This could have big consequences as houses building areas which will be flooded may not be able to get insurance, meaning people cannot live there anymore.

Equitable and effective adaptation

Wealthy areas will have more money to invest in adaption than poor ones. They can have more shady areas to reduce heat or be able to work from home because they have good internet. Adaptation depends on good governance, access to technology and information, and wealth among other factors. A wealthy urban municipality with robust institutions and infrastructure will likely have higher adaptive capacity than a remote rural community with limited access to resources. It is important that adaptation is equitable, in that everyone benefits from it. Also, it should be based on an idea of environmental justice: that responses to climate change are just and non-discriminatory. As the next module discusses, women and young children, the elderly, Indigenous Peoples, refugees, and ethnic minorities are disproportionately affected by climate change. They may suffer the harsh consequences from climate change, but may not get access to adaptive measures.

Loss and Damage:

A future response must be added. Loss and damage is about how to deal with the negative impacts of climate change. There are many economic, international relations, human rights, and justice qhallenges especially how to compensate those who will suffer the consequences of climate change the most. Climate change will impact the poor the most. Millions of people will lose their livelihood as farms cannot produce agriculture, islands and coastal communities disappear under the seas, and cities get too hot to live in. Many of these people and countries did not contribute at all to climate change, but will suffer the consequences the most. For example the small Pacific Island countries like Tuvalu and Kiribas will eventually disappear. The tens of thousands of people living on those islands will lose everything: their land, houses, jobs, culture, government, and way of life. They did not contribute to climate change, but suffer the consequences. It is only fair that those countries that created climate change, such as Europe countries, USA, Australia, China, and others will compensate those who suffer most from climate change. Who pays, and how much they pay, is a point of much debate.

More about
Loss and Damage

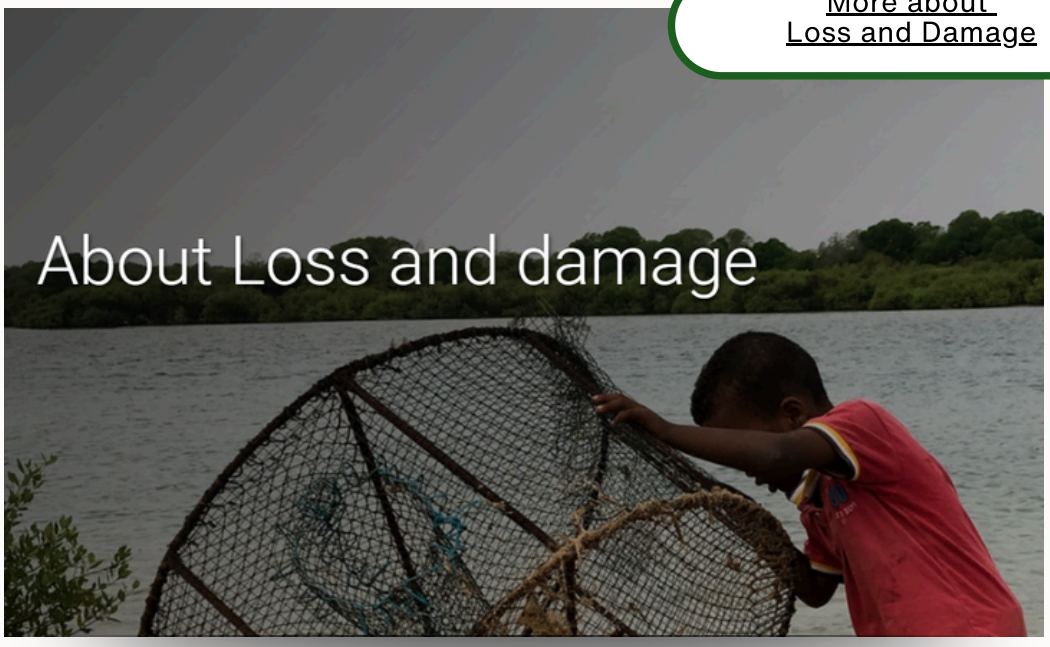


Photo Source: UNEP/Hannah McNeish. (2024, September 30). Photograph illustrating loss and damage. In About loss and damage. United Nations Environment Programme.

Difference Between Climate Adaptation, Mitigation, and Loss and Damage

	Mitigation	***Adaptation***	***Loss and Damage***
What is means	Reducing or preventing GHG emmissions and other causes of climate change such as deforestation.	Adjusting to climate change and reducing vulnerability	Compensating those who have lost because of climate change
What it does	Address causes	Manages impacts	Compensates those most affected
Goals	Reduce the negative impact of climate change	Reduce risk to better prepare people to live in a world undergoing climate change	Ensure the poor and vulnerable do not lose everything, and that polluters pay for creating climate change
Key Stakeholders	GHG emitting industries Agriculture Transport Individuals	People vulnerable to climate change impacts Communities and cities which must change National governments who have to prepare people for climate change	International System GHG emitting countries and industries The vulnerable and poor
Politics	Mitigation must be done by the rich countries and high-emitting economies, who are more accountable since they are the ones who have historically contributed the most to greenhouse gas emissions	Poor countries in the Global South and climate-vulnerable areas may already affected by changes. These areas may not have an adequate infrastructure, financial resources, and technologies	Who will pay for the loss and damage, and how much? Do poor countries have the governance to manage this or will it be lost to corruption?
Examples of activities	Electrify energy use, for example electric cars. Using renewable energy sources Reducing waste sent to landfills Reforestation Reducing cattle herds	Infrastructure and building improvements Making cities cooler with more shade Flood protection Disaster response strategies Build cyclone resistant building Seawalls to keep out rising ocean levels	The Green Climate Fund, set up under the Paris Agreement, where poor countries can be compensated by the rich GHG emitting countries.

Climate Resilient Development

IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, 2023 highlighted that each community and each nation can adopt its own starting point for climate adaptation and sustainable development. But whichever pathway is followed, climate-resilient development will only be possible with fundamental changes in five major areas:

- in our world's energy systems;
- in the way we use, manage and safeguard the land and freshwater, the oceans and their respective ecosystems;
- in the way cities and infrastructure are planned, built, organized and governed;
- in the way our economies and industries function and
- in the way our societies function on a local, national and international level.



How climate change impacts human rights?

Through UDHR

VII. HUMAN RIGHTS and CLIMATE CHANGE

How does climate change affect human rights?

Discussion

What are the human rights obligations of GHG emitting countries and industries to those people who are most affected by climate change?
Do they have human rights obligations?
Can people rely on these comapnies and countries to act in the interests of those people vulnerable to climate change?

Click here to Answer

VII. HUMAN RIGHTS and CLIMATE CHANGE

How does climate change affect human rights?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has categorically stated that greenhouse gas emissions ifrom human activity are the main cause of climate change and that it is a real phenomenon. Human Rights Council resolution 41/21 and the IPCC have confirmed that the growing frequency of climate change has both directly and indirectly threatened people's ability to fully and effectively enjoy a variety of human rights worldwide. Climate change significantly affects human rights by threatening the fundamental conditions necessary for people to live with dignity. Direct Impacts on Human Rights are:

1. Right to Life

Extreme weather events (e.g., heatwaves, floods, hurricanes) lead to increased mortality.
Rising sea levels and natural disasters threaten the survival of entire communities, especially in small island nations and coastal regions.

2. Right to Health

Worsening air pollution*:* Climate change is expected to worsen air pollution, which can pose health risks and change disease patterns like heart and lung diseases
Malnutrition rises due to climate-induced crop failures and food insecurity.
Spread of diseases: Climate change can alter the distribution and seasonality of vector-borne diseases, leading to increased risks of malaria, dengue fever, and other illnesses.
Mental health impacts*:* Climate change can cause anxiety, stress, and other mental health issues due to the loss of homes, livelihoods, and the fear of future disasters.

3. Right to Food

- Droughts, floods, and shifting growing seasons disrupt food production.
- Small-scale farmers and indigenous communities are vulnerable if they are unable to live off their land.

4. Right to Water and Sanitation

- Melting glaciers and erratic rainfall threaten freshwater supplies.
- Droughts and contamination affect access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities.

5. Right to Adequate Housing

- Rising sea levels, floods, and extreme weather events destroy homes and infrastructure.
- Displacement due to climate impacts leads to inadequate shelter, especially in informal settlements or refugee camps.

How does climate change affect human rights?

6. Right to Work and Livelihood

- Job losses and economic disruption: Extreme weather events and climate-related disasters can damage infrastructure, businesses, and industries, leading to job losses and economic hardship.
- Impacts on agriculture and fishing: Climate change can disrupt agricultural cycles, reduce crop yields, and damage fishing grounds, threatening the livelihoods of farmers and fishermen.
- Increased competition for resources: Climate change can exacerbate resource scarcity, leading to conflicts and displacement, which can further undermine livelihoods.
- Reduced worker productivity: Extreme heat can reduce worker productivity and increase the risk of heatstroke and other health problems

7. Right to Leisure

- Disrupted recreational activities: Extreme weather events and climate-related disasters can disrupt outdoor activities and recreational opportunities.
- Damage to natural environments: Climate change can damage natural environments, such as coral reefs and forests, which are important for recreation and tourism. Increased risk of heat stroke, respiratory illness, and injury threatens to violate the right to a safe and decent workplace for professional athletes and event workforces.

8. Right to Self-Determination and Cultural Rights

- Indigenous peoples and traditional communities face loss of ancestral lands and cultural erosion.
- Climate migration can break social ties and undermine community cohesion.

9. Right to Development

- Climate change hampers sustainable development and widens global inequality.
- Least developed countries are disproportionately affected despite contributing the least to emissions.

10. Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination

- Climate change exacerbates existing inequalities based on gender, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, etc.
- Women, children, older persons, and people with disabilities are often more vulnerable to its impacts.

How does climate change affect human rights?

Indirect Impact:

Displacement and Migration: Climate-related disasters force some people to leave their homes, leading to displacement and migration, which can undermine various human rights.

Disproportionate Impact on Vulnerable Groups: Developing countries and marginalized communities often bear the brunt of climate change impacts, exacerbating existing inequalities.

Potential for Conflict: Competition for scarce resources like water and land, exacerbated by climate change, can lead to increased conflict and instability.

Some of the WHO and the World Bank predictions on Climate change's impact on human rights are as follows:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">How climate change Impact Human rights</th></tr>
<tr><td>Right to Life

250,000
additional deaths are expected from climate change between 2030 and 2050</td><td colspan="2">Right to Self -Determination

Displacement from climate change will prevent people from practicing their right to their culture. Those who are most vulnerable are individuals in small island in developing countries and indigenous people</td></tr>
<tr><td>Right to Development

135 million
people are expected to fall into poverty by 2030</td><td>Right to Food

20%
increase in risk of hunger and malnutrition by 2050</td><td>Right to Water and Sanitation

2.7-3.3 billion
people will live in severe water-scarce region by 2050</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Right to Health

23%
of the population in the central Sub-Saharan region will face an increase risk of death or poor health

62%
Of population in Southeast Asia will face an increased risk of death or poor health</td><td>Right to Housing

26.4 million
people have been internally displaced every year due to weather-related events since 2008</td><td>Right to Health
1.5 million
Children are at risk of water born illnesses, drowning and malnutrition from the 2022 floods in Pakistan</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Right to Education
Displacement poses major risks to children's right to access education. Classrooms become saturated, infrastructure and learning materials are destroyed, and children face linguistic barriers and discrimination</td></tr>
</table>

Quiz Questions

1. Multiple Choice:

1. Which right is most directly affected by rising sea levels?
   a. Freedom of expression
   b. Right to adequate housing
   c. Right to privacy
   d. Freedom of religion

2. Climate Change Myths:

Climate mis-information is everywhere. Find an example of information on climate change which you are not sure if it is true of not. Do some resaerch to determine if it is true or actually a for of mis- or dis-information

3. Label each of these actions as either Mitigation, Adaptation, or Loss and Damage

1. Compensating people who lose their homes to sea level rise
2. Changing to renewable energy transportation
3. Increasing hte amount of recycling in a community
4. Developing houses resistant cyclones and extreme weather
5. Developed countries putting money in a fund to help poor countries adapt to climate change
6. Changing work hours to avoid the hottest times of the day
7. Protecting forests and coral reefs
8. Taxing GHG emitting industries and using the funds to support people displaced by climate change

Further Reading

- OHCHR, The impacts of climate change on the effective enjoyment of human rights Link
- OHCHR, The impact of climate change on the rights of people in vulnerable situations Link
- UNEP 2015, Climate Change and Human Rights Link
- UNEP, Human rights are at threat from climate change, but can also provide solutions. Link
- UNDP, 2022, Environmental Justice: Securing Our Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment, Link
- UN-HRC, 2018, The Slow onset effects of climate change and human rights protection for cross-border migrants, ReliefWeb, Link
- Kling A. 2019, Climate change and human rights – Can the courts fix it? ReliefWeb Link

Module 2: Human Rights and Climate-Related Mobility

Module Overview

A consequence of climate change will be increasing human mobility, affecting millions of people worldwide. This mobility may be voluntary, as people decide to move to places which are safer or have work. Sometimes the mobility may be forced as people have to move to escape disaster, famine, or to find a livelihood. People who are moving are vulnerable. They have to live in a new environment. Sometimes their legal status is unclear. Their economic security can be threatened. The human rights of people on the move is not simple as it can depend on why they move, where they are moving to, and who recognizes their movement. This module explores how human rights relates to climate-related mobility. It examines the legal frameworks, vulnerabilities, and policy responses related to those who move due to climate-induced factors.

Introduction

This module explores the intersection of human rights and climate-related migration, displacement, and planned relocation. It examines the legal frameworks, vulnerabilities, and policy responses related to those who move due to climate-induced factors.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, readers will have the knowledge and capacity to:

- **Describe** and **distinguish** the various forms of mobility, including migration, displacement, and planned relocation caused by climate change.
- **Identify** relevant human rights frameworks applicable in migration, such as rights for refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrant workers, and non-citizens affected by climate change.
- **Analyze** vulnerabilities associated with climate-related migration
- **Solve** problems created by climate related mobility using a rights-based framework..

Climate change inflicts economic damage on a scale that eclipses even war, but the greater assault lies in the displacement it causes—forcing communities to compete over dwindling resources, sparking conflict, and stripping away essential human rights such as food, water, and security.

Warm Up Questions

Think about your own life or community. If you were forced to imediatley move becuase of climate change, what are teh essential items you would bring? What would you be forced to leave behind?

Click here to Answer

Click here to Answer

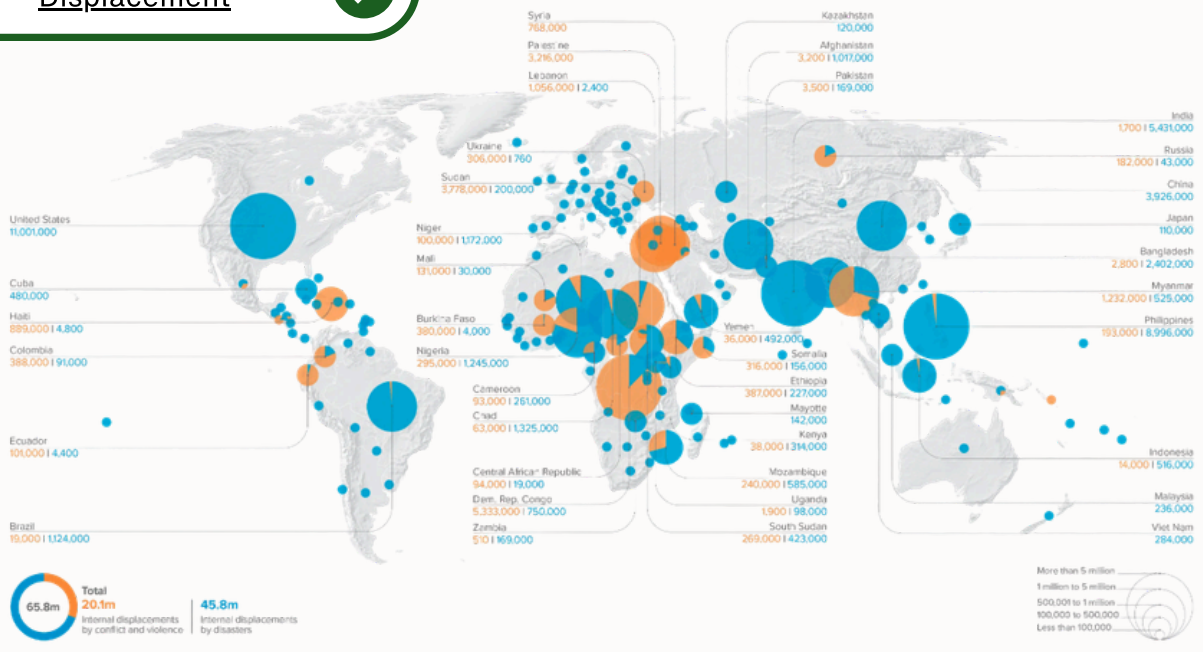
Teacher's Instructions

I. Climate Change Mobility

The 2025 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) reveals that climate change is a major driver of human mobility, with disasters such as floods, storms, droughts, and heatwaves displacing millions worldwide. In 2024 alone, disaster-related movements surged across regions: South Asia saw numbers nearly triple to 9.2 million, the Americas reached a record 14.5 million and Sub-Saharan Africa recorded its highest total ever, with nearly every conflict-affected country also experiencing climate-induced displacements. These trends show that **climate change not only amplifies natural hazards but also compounds existing vulnerabilities,** forcing people to move within their own countries in search of safety.

The impacts are far from equal: poorer communities and fragile states are disproportionately affected, as they have fewer resources to adapt or recover. This highlights that climate mobility is not just an environmental issue, but a human rights challenge threatening access to food, water, housing, and security, and demanding urgent action to strengthen resilience and protection for those most at risk.

More about Displacement



Definition

Climate chabge mobility, as defined in United Nations policy frameworks, refers broadly to the spectrum of human movement prompted by climate change, including forced displacement during disasters, voluntary migration from chronically affected areas, and organized evacuation or relocation efforts. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) frames it as the movement of individuals or groups compelled or choosing to move—temporarily or permanently—within or across borders because of sudden or gradual environmental changes. This inclusive concept acknowledges various forms of mobility, including "immobility," where people remain in risky environments due to constraints despite growing threats.

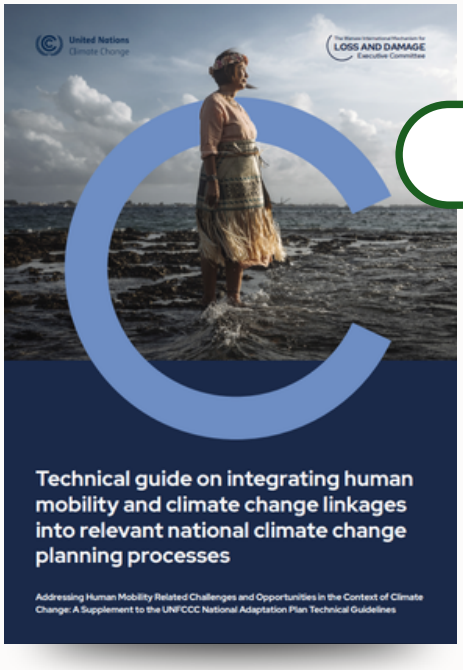
Real Life Story

Baby Begum's Struggle — A Tale of Flood-Driven Displacement in Bangladesh
Based on a story told by Guardian news reporter Luke Taylor, May 23, 2025.

Baby Begum is a 40-year-old mother from Sunamganj in northeastern Bangladesh—a region annually besieged by monsoon rains and seasonal flooding. In June 2022, a catastrophic flash flood—the worst the area had seen in a century—rushed through her village, sweeping away homes, crops, livestock, and life savings. In a matter of hours, she, her husband, and two disabled sons found themselves on their roof, fearing for their lives until a fisherman rescued them.

Initially placed in an emergency shelter, the family's ordeal only deepened as they grappled with crowded, unsanitary conditions. By 2023, they settled into a cramped slum in *Sylhet*, where Begum worked as a housemaid and her husband became a rickshaw driver—until an injury forced him out of work. As the breadwinner, Baby Begum earned just 5,000 taka (about EUR 25) per month. Once able to send her sons to a special school, she now struggles with their frequent illnesses and lack of medication. Their home, made of tin sheets, was damaged again in the 2024 rains, exposing them to further hardship. Beyond losing their physical home, they lost community, security, and hope.

Taylor, L. (2025, May 23). 'I don't want to be here. But we can't go home': What life is like for people forced to flee floods and fighting. **The Guardian**. from https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/may/23/floods-trauma-displaced-conflict-climate-crisis-safety-bangladesh-sudan-colombia-idp-camps



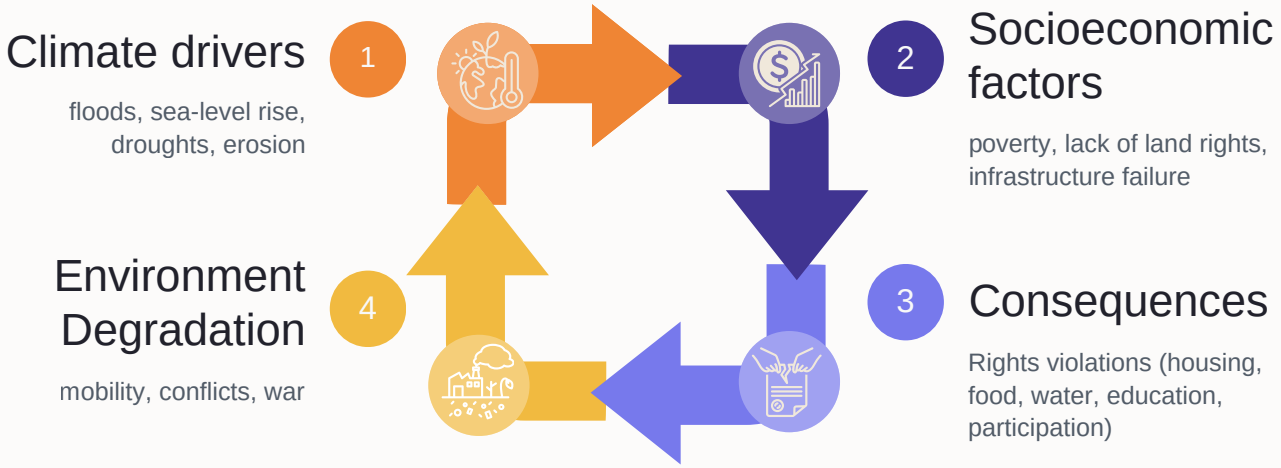
More about
Relavant Climate Change
Planning Process

Environmental upheavals will cause human migration. People may need to move because of loss of habitable land, water scarcity, or greater vulnerability to disaster. Displacement has far-reaching consequences, including disruptions in social networks, stresses on infrastructure, and issues for both origin and destination locations. Climate-related migration be seen as an adaptive response to climate hazards. It has the potential to help people adapt to climate change while also ensuring long-term economic prosperity. Successful migration, as a form of adaptation, depends on a number of things including safe and regular migration pathways, legal and physical protections, and economic predictability.

The concern is that migration can be dangerous to those on the move. Their legal and physical protection may not be guaranteed. People who have to migrant are likely to be from more vulnerable groups. If people are wealthy, they live in a safe suburb, and have a good job, they may not be forced to move. But for the poor who lose their job or their land may be forced to find work elsewhere. Small hold farmers may be forced off their land, floods impact low lying areas including informal settlements, and badly constructed houses are not safe from cyclones.

As the sections below will show, the law which protects people displaced because of climate disaster is limited and weak.

Drivers and Impacts of Climate Mobility



Cycle of climate mobility and wider consequences

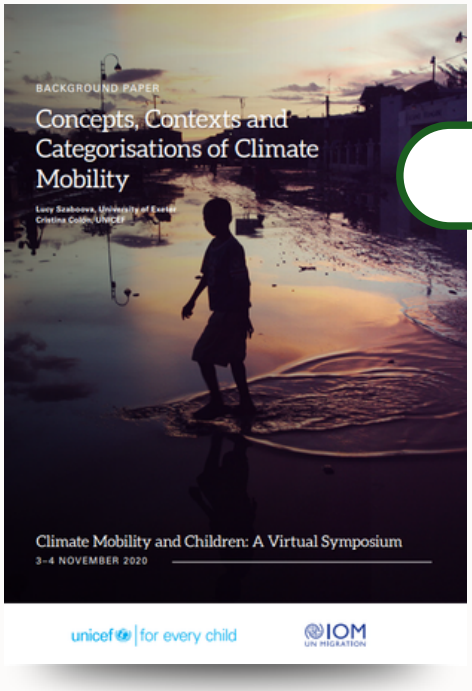
The first driver is **climate change itself**, with floods, sea-level rise, droughts, and erosion directly forcing people from their homes and livelihoods. These shocks do not affect everyone equally, but instead interact with socioeconomic vulnerabilities such as poverty, insecure land rights, and weak infrastructure. Communities already on the margins are far less able to adapt, making them more likely to move.

Displacement then leads to serious **human rights consequences**. People who are uprooted often face inadequate housing, food insecurity, lack of clean water, disrupted education, and exclusion from participation in decision-making. These conditions deepen inequality and prolong suffering well beyond the initial climate shock.

Finally, large-scale or repeated mobility places pressure on new environments and host communities. This can accelerate **environmental degradation**, strain resources, and contribute to conflicts and even war. Such instability feeds back into the cycle, creating new drivers of displacement.

Overall, climate change mobility is not an isolated event but part of a **self-reinforcing cycle** where climate change, vulnerability, rights violations, and environmental stress are deeply intertwined. It shows why addressing climate mobility requires not only disaster response but also social protection, human rights safeguards, and sustainable development.

Different types of mobility



More about climate mobility

Climate-related mobility encompasses various types of human movement driven or influenced by climate change. Different types of migration will have different causes, different risks, and different ways to mitigate adapt to the migration. The following is a list of some different types of migration:

Climate-related migration: This involves people moving voluntarily, often seeking better opportunities or livelihoods, but influenced by climate change impacts.

Causes: Typical reasons include people moving from agricultural lands which are losing their productivity because of droughts or deserts. More recently this can include people moving from sea-level rise which may make some land unusable for agriculture.

Risks: People may lose their livelihood and be forced into unemployment in the city. In cases of international migration people can risk losing their legal status

Mitigation and Adaptation: There are ways to reduce desertification or to have crops which use less water in cases of drought. But in many cases unless climate change is reversed the world will see a lot of climate migration

Teacher's Instructions

Climate-related displacement: This type of climate migration refers to situations where people do not have a choice but are forced to relocate. However, distinguishing voluntary and forced displacement is not always possible, as it can be a mixture of reasons, though it is import to recognize that people in many situations are moving because they have no other choice.

Causes: This can occur because of the same reasons for migration above, but also forced movement can be due to climate-related hazards like floods, storms, or wildfires. People have been forced to relocate because their homes are no longer safe to live in because of floods, or they are disappearing under the rising sea. Sometimes the cause is not direct. Pressures on resources caused by climate change may lead to conflict, which forces people to leave.

Risks: In some cases people must move quickly, they may not be prepared to move. They may have lost of misplaced documents so they are vulnerable to a loss of legal status. They may be vulnerable to exploitation by people helping them migrate, threatening their economic livelihood of making them vulnerable to trafficking or labour exploitations

Mitigation and Adaptation: Places which have prepared for disasters with disaster plans and humanitarian assistance ready, will be better prepared for forced migration. Some locations can be build to be more resilient to disasters, so people are not forced to leave.



Photo Source: UNHCR/Andrew McConnell. (2023, March). Nyeritea Kay Nakney and her three children traveling by canoe to a camp for internally displaced people in Bentiu, South Sudan [Photograph]. In Kristy Siegfried, “Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts.” UNHCR.

Planned relocation: This involves governments or organizations relocating communities in advance of anticipated climate impacts. In some places governments may consider it is safer and easier to relocate a population rather than adapting the community to the changing environment

Causes: When communities vulnerable to climate change do not have a large population, and governments do not have the resources to stop the impact of climate change, their planned relocation is a better option. One common example is small islands that are threatened by sea level rise. Because the small population, and the difficulty in raising an island above the rising sea, the only option is for these people to be moved by their government. If an area is more prone to natural disasters, governments may decide to move them. For example, people living in flood plains may have to move not only for personal safety but because the Government does not have the resources to rebuild their houses or rescue them every flood season.

Risks: Moving communities will have a significant impact on their way of life. Their culture and economic livelihood may suddenly change. Different groups such as the elderly may face additional change when they are removed from the only way of life they know into a strange and foreign area.

Mitigation and Adaptation: States across the world have begun to address how they will relocate people from small ocean states This includes preparing them for work, education, and health in new places (and often new countries). People may need a new citizenship. They should be supported when they continue their culture, language and religion, in a new place.



Photo Source: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2022, August 10). **Image: Displacement due to disasters and climate change** [Photograph]. In "New Asia Pacific guide: Planned relocation in the context of disasters and climate change." IFRC Disaster Law.

Immobility and Trapped populations:

These people are forced to stay in areas where there may be infrstructure damage or environmental degradation because they do not have the resources to move or they have no where to go. Though, in some cases it relates to people who decide not to move because want to stay near their homes or keep their property secure.

Causes: If a natural disaster is about to affect and area, some people may be too poor to move. Or they are unwilling to move because they fear their property and possessions may be lost. But in some cases people may not want to move because they want to stay near the place they live.

Risks: People who cannot move can be at great risk from the impact of climate disasters. They may be trapped in flooding or forced to sit out a cyclone. They may have to stay on land which is no longer productive because they do not have the resources to move elsewhere

Mitigation and Adaptation: Disaster preparedness has to consider what to do with populations who cannot, or refuse to, move. In some cases, this may be forcing people to relocate, or to provide them the resources so they are able to, which can be financial support, or vehicles to help them relocate their essential possessions



Photo Source: Nero, A. (Photographer). (2023, October 4). A man walks through a community affected by river erosion in Bangladesh [Photograph]. In C. Zickgraf, “Where Are All the Climate Migrants? Explaining Immobility amid Environmental Change.” Migration Policy Institute.

II. Mobility Responses

Examples

Planned Relocation

Iloilo Flood Control Project (IFCP) was the biggest relocation project in the history of Iloilo and this resulted in the relocation of 3,500 households – the majority lived below the poverty line. Since the government could not handleit, four NGOs assisted, however, the houses that they received were only in exchange for "sweat equity". Therefore, those who contributed less hours of labor got smaller houses.

In-situ management

After Typhoon Haiyan, there were 3 stages in the relief efforts:

1) Provision of food and shelter,
2) Food security and livelihood projects, an
3) Long-term climatechange adaptation.

Explore more on the relocation project



Good governance initiatives in flood management, Iloilo City

Good governance initiatives in flood management, Iloilo City Post

Institute of Environmental Science for Social Change / 16 ส....

Many responses to climate mobility seem to treat the symptoms rather than the root causes. What if we took a step back to reflect on climate change itself, alongside the need for governance and human rights principles as the foundation for managing its impacts?

Discussions

In your opinion, which groups of people are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate-related mobility, and why? What factors make them more exposed to risks or less able to adapt compared to others?

Click here to Answer

What do you think are the main elements of justice for people facing climate mobility? Do you think money alone will be enough for them? Is it possible that people forced to relocate can find justice?

Click here to Answer

Features of Climate mobility

Climate change will impact a population differently as the changes occur slowly. At first, people may move when there is environmental degradation: the environment is not as resourceful, but people can still live off it. In this first stage the choice can be deliberate and rational, and it may only be available to those with the resources to move to a new location and find a new job. In these early stages it is possible that people can adapt as well by using different crops, or improving their houses to better respond to the effects of environmental degradation and climate change. Migration may be seasonal and not permanent.

Once more severe impacts of climate change occur, people may be forced to move permanently. They may need to abandon their land and homes, and find new jobs elsewhere. There may be more forced migration or concerns because some people are trapped or immobile. At this stage governments may need to plan relocation as well. People who stay may be unable to continue with their existing work, agriculture or other activities. If migration is caused by increasing natural disasters, the people who cannot move may be the poor and marginal people who are less resilient to natural disasters, and more vulnerable to the dangers from these disasters.

All forms of movement will also have impact on where the people move to. At the destinations, for example in cities, climate migration will increase the population, often of the poorer areas, creating strains of housing, infrastructure, and government services. This may also increase tensions with the long term residents when the increase in population reduces the quality of life or overloads government services. These changes may create a feedback loop where people who move because of environmental degradation create environmental pressures in their destination countries which again creates more environmental degradation.

Addressing climate-related mobility through human rights

People on the move are humans, and therefore they have human rights. Though, exactly what human rights and protections people on the move have will depend on who they are and where they are. People's rights are slightly different if they are inside or outside their country of citizenship, if they are male, female, a child, or a worker. It will also depend on what State they are in, as each State may interpret human rights differently. The table below gives some explanations to these differences.

Mapping internal and international migration and rights

This table breaks down the different ways climate change drives human mobility and the complex impacts it creates. It organizes the causes and consequences into three main categories:

Types of Displacement and Forced Migration	Impacts due to Loss of Livelihoods and Economic Impacts	Causes of migration
•**Climate-Induced Displacement:** Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities and forced people to move struggling with poverty, conflict, and lack of access to resources. •**Internal Displacement:** Extreme weather events like floods, droughts, and storms can lead to large-scale internal displacement, forcing people to leave their homes and seek refuge within their own countries. •**Cross-Border Migration:** Climate-related disasters and resource scarcity can also drive people to seek refuge in other countries, leading to increased cross-border migration. •**Vulnerability:** Refugees, IDPs, and migrants are often already vulnerable, and climate change can further exacerbate their challenges, making them more susceptible to disease, food insecurity, and conflict. •**Lack of Legal Status:** Many climate-induced migrants are not recognized as refugees under international law, leaving them with limited legal protections and access to assistance	•**Agriculture and Fisheries:** Climate change can destroy crops, damage fishing grounds, and reduce agricultural productivity, leading to food insecurity and loss of livelihoods for many. **Resource Scarcity:** Climate change can lead to competition for scarce resources like water and land, potentially leading to conflict and displacement. **Economic Vulnerability:** Migrant workers are often employed in sectors vulnerable to climate change, such as agriculture and construction, making them particularly vulnerable to economic hardship. **Increased Costs:** Climate change lead to increased costs for basic needs, such as food and water, further straining the resources of vulnerable populations.	•**Conflict:** Resource scarcity and displacement can exacerbate existing tensions and lead to conflict, particularly in areas already facing instability. **Social Tensions:** Large-scale displacement can put a strain on host communities, potentially leading to social tensions and conflict. **Weakened Governance:** Climate change can weaken governments' ability to respond to disasters and provide basic services, further exacerbating the challenges faced by vulnerable populations.

Legal Rights of People in Climate Mobility

Human Right Legal Framework	Climate Mobility Population	Important and relevant rights
UDHR	All humans	UDHR applies to everyone, everywhere. It recognizes the main human rights. The UDHR is not legally binding, but it is recognized as the official definition of human rights by the UN
ICCPR	Relevant to a) People who move within their country b) People who move across a border	Fundamental rights such as life and freedom from torture Rights to access justice and a fair trial Freedoms such as movement, speech, religion People should have their rights respected regardless of citizenship, except some political rights (like voting and political participation) which is based on citizenship
ICESCR	Relevant to a) People who move within their country b) People who move across a border	Rights to work, food, water, housing, health and education. The access to this right may depend on citizenship. For example, primary school is free and compulsory for all children, but universities may not be freely accessible for non-citizens. The right to housing is relevant in emergency situations, but government housing may only be available to citizens
CEDAW	All Women	Eliminating all discriminations against women in areas such as work, education, political participation, health, protection from violence, and equal before the law. These rights should be the same regardless if the woman is a citizen or not (though it does not give women full political participation where they are not a citizen).
CRC	All children (normally under 18 years old).	Rights to participation, non-discrimination, best interests of the child, and all other human rights including education, health, and protections from exploitation in labour.

Legal Rights of People in Climate Mobility

Human Right Legal Framework	Climate Mobility Population	Important and relevant rights
Persons with a disability	People with a disability affected by climate change	Persons with a disability should maintain all their human rights during climate mobility including their protection, their right to participate in decisions on movement, and their special needs for all rights but especially education, health, and justice
Refugee Convention (1951)	People who have crossed a border to seek protection from persecution. **Note:** there is **no** legal category of '**climate refugee**' in this or any other treaty.	Rights to asylum and protection from being sent back to where they may be persecuted. Recognition of their rights found in the UDHR and relevant ICCPR and ICESCR rights It is important to note that just because people are fleeing economic hardship caused by sea level rise does not make them a refugee, they have to flee persecution, which is usually some from of significant human rights violation.
UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement	Internally Displaced People	Given most people are internally displaced, these principles have much importance, though they do not have the legal strength of international treaties. They establish important standards such as the protection of IDPs, their right to assistance, and identify who should be helping IDPs (this is mainly national governments, but can also be international organizations).
Migrant Workers Convention	A person who is being paid to work in a country where they are not a national.	A migrant worker should have all their relevant human rights recognized, such as legal rights like accessing a court, access health and education, and rights in the workplace. However, only a very small number of States have ratified this treaty.

Legal Rights of People in Climate Mobility

Human Right Legal Framework	Climate Mobility Population	Important and relevant rights
Conventions on Statelessness (1954 & 1961)	Persons who do not have nationality in any country	Recognition of Stateless peope as rights holders, though the Conventions do not set human rights standards as they appeared before the human rights treaties. The conventions may become important as States disappear due to climate change (such as small islands) or when people lose their natinality thorugh climate migration.
Trafficking and smuggling	Vulnerable displaced persons	Undocumented people migrate, either voluntarily, or by smuggling, or without their consent when they are trafficked, still deserve protection. This includes their protection from exploitation for trafficked persons, or their legal rights for people who are smuggled. It is important to note that not all trafficked people cross a border, and that people who are smuggled may end up in a situation of exploitation and thus become trafficked
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)	Indigenous people impacted by climate change	Though not a legally binding treaty, this stil etablishs standards for the protection of Indigenous groups who may lose their land or means of livelihood because of climate change. This includes recognizing thir land ownership, their participation in decisions about them, and the recogniton of their culture

II. Mobility Responses

Discussions

A community is forced to relocate after their village beomes unliveable becuase of the rising ocean. Being near a border, some villagers decide to relocate to a nearby city in the neighbouring country which is more developed and with better jobs and government services, though they may have an undocumented legal status.
Other villages decide to move to a nearby regional city which has a high level of poverty and poor services, though all the villages can legally reside there.

a) What are the relevant human rights standards for bth groups of people
b) What are the advantages and disadvntages for each group?
c) Where would you go? Why?

Click here to Answer

Teacher's Instructions

Quiz Questions

1. Multiple Choice:

1. Which of the following treaties does not protect people's rights during climate migration?
   a. The ICCPR & ICESCR
   b. Statelessness Conventions
   c. Laws of Armed Conflict (IHL)
   d. Trafficking Protocol

2. Climate Mobility and Refugees: True or False?:

1. Climate refugees are not recognised in refugee law international law because they are not persecuted because of their status.
2. People who are displaced across an international border become stateless
3. If you cross a border illegally you are considered trafficked
4. No matter where a person is displaced to, they still have human rights
5. States have no right to move people even if they are threatened by climate emergencies

3. Label each of these actions as either Climate mobility, Climate displacement, Planned relocation, or Immobility

1. A Farmer leaves his land to work as a taxi driver because of poor crop yields
2. A shop owner stays at the shop during a typoon to prevent looters
3. Rising sea levels force people to leave their island home
4. Children move to the city to go to school because their local school is hot and uncomfortable
5. A government moves the elderly from a small village to a larger town so they are closer to health facilities
6. Cyclones destroy a family home. With no where to live they move in with relatives in the next town
7. Because no warning were given in a minority language, people cannot leave their town during a climate emergency
8. Due to bushfires, an indigenous twon is closed by the Government and all villagers must relocate.

Further Reading

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Case Studies

- Malak, M. A., Lina, N. K., Quader, M. A., & Mahmood, R. (2024). Immobility, Older Adults and Adaptation to Tropical Cyclones: Insights from Coastal Bangladesh. Migration and Development, 13(1), 58-81. https://doi.org/10.1177/21632324241281093 (Original work published 2024)
- Nizar, D.A., Dang, L.Q. (2024). Rising Waters, Stagnant Paths: Gendered Experiences of Flooding and Restricted Mobility in Can Tho City, Viet Nam. In: Jolly, S., Ahmad, N., Scott, M. (eds) Climate-Related Human Mobility in Asia and the Pacific. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-3234-0_5
- Otoiasi, L. (2024). Climate Change-Related Displacement: Inter-Island and Rural–Urban Migration in the Solomon Islands: Options for a Viable National Resettlement Plan. In: Jolly, S., Ahmad, N., Scott, M. (eds) Climate-Related Human Mobility in Asia and the Pacific. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-3234-0_10
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Module 3: A Rights-Based Approach to Climate Mobility

Module Overview

A useful tool to understanding protecting people during climate-induced migration is the Human Rights-Based Approach (RBA). This approach is one way to ensure human rights are mainstreamed into planning responses, identifying and acting on problems, and to make decisions. An RBA is an approach, which means it is s one way of looking at a problem, deciding what is important, and what actions should be undrtaken to ensure the result is the protection of people's rights, that actions are just and fair, and that the approach itself is democratic, and it is participatory ensuring that no one is left behind.

Introduction

The Rights-Based Approach to climate-related migration, focusing on how human rights principles can be applied in migration planning and policy. Applying a Rights-Based Approach ensures that climate mobility policies and responses are guided by core human rights principles such as non-discrimination, participation, transparency, accountability, and human dignity. This means that affected communities should be included in decision-making processes, have access to information, and be protected from harm, whether they are moving or staying in place. It also means that governments and other actors have clear responsibilities to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights throughout all stages of climate-related movement.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- **Apply** a Rights-Based Approach to climate-related migration.
- **Assess** the role of duty bearers (governments, international organizations, and the private sector) in protecting climate migrants.
- **Identify** legal frameworks and accountability mechanisms for rights-based climate-related migration governance.
- **Evaluate** real-world case studies where RBA has been applied (or neglected) in climate migration planning.

When people are forced to move by climate impacts, the question is not only where they will go, but also how their rights will be protected along the way.



Photo Source: Climate Reality Project. (2023). **On thin ice** [Photograph of a submerged traffic sign in floodwaters]. Climate Reality Project. from https://cri.org/reports/on-thin-ice/

Warm Up Questions

“If people are forced to relocoate, all the government needs to worry about is that they do not starve, and they have some shleter. All other problems have to be fixed by the people themselves, it is not the government responsibility”
What do you think about this statement, is it fair?

Click here to Answer

I. What is the Human Rights-Based Approach?

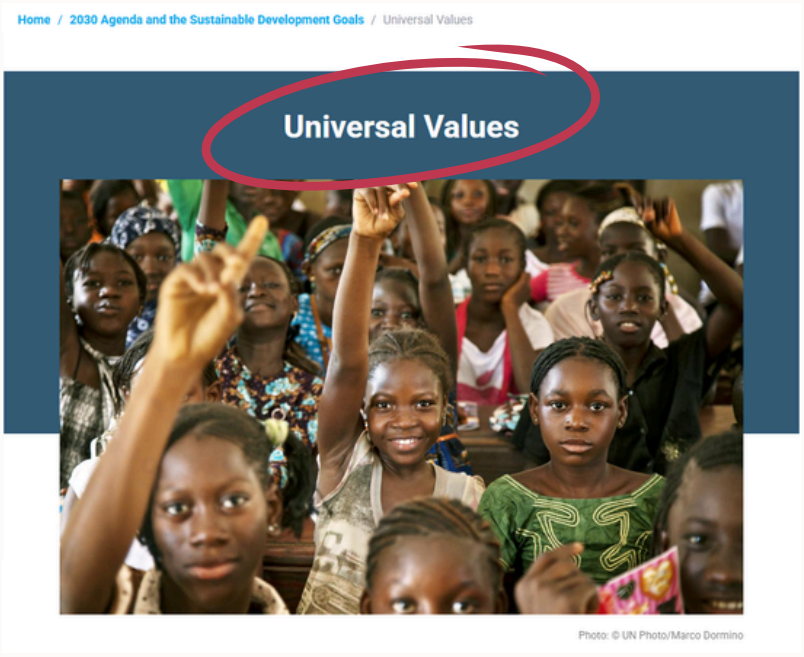


Photo Source: Dormino, M. (Photographer). (n.d.). Children raising hands in a classroom [Photograph]. United Nations. In *Universal values*. United Nations Sustainable Development Group. from https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

More on UN Definitions

European Commission

More on EU Definitions

A RBA can be used for designing and developing any activity, from planning a class to responding to climate change. When a RBA is used, the activity will be planned to ensure that human rights are the standards are ensured during that activity, and the result or outcome will positively impact people's human rights. As described below, how activities are planned will be rights based, meaning the outcomes should be the improvement of rights. Further, if problems occur in that activity, human rights are the values which are used to ensure the solution has a sense of justice and is relevant and useful to everyone. While RBA is an approach, and different people or organizations may be different approaches, there are a common set of principles which many people agree are important to successful RBAs.

An RBA should be used when planning any development, implementing a policy, or undertaking any action which is going to impact people and their communities. For example, if a school is built, can all people, including children with a disability access it? If a disaster preparedness plan is developed, a basic standard would be the plan itself does not violate human rights. It does seem logical, but these simple features are often left out.
Another use for RBA is as a guide during the implementation of an activity to ensure problems are addressed with a sense of justice, transparency, and non-discrimination. A common example is using RBA to respond to a dispute. For example, a local government want to stop people selling food on a footpath. An RBA would look at how the government can ensure the freedom of movement of people on the footpath, and the right to work of the food sellers. RBA can be used in doing research through rights-based research, or in teaching a class through human rights-based education.

How to Relate HRBA and Climate Change

Human Rights are relevant to all the actions of climate change: mitigation, adaptation, and loss and recovery. In addition, as discussed in the next module, gender-responsive and intersectional approaches are also critical. Given climate change will have massive impacts, it will affect everyone, and impact them differently, there have to be standards which ensure the there is justice, participation, and minimum standards during all of this.

An RBA requires that actions taken in response to climate change consider human rights. Though there are a lot of different ways to apply human rights, there are some key principles which can guide a rights based approach. These are summarized below in the **PANEL framework**, which is a commonly used framework to describe HRBA. Panel is a useful tool to describe the key elements of an RBA and it can be easily implemented when assessing plans or when addressing problems related to climate induced migration.





More Resources on HRBAs

Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to Climate Action: PANEL



HRBA has five principles, summarized as the acronym, PANEL:

1. **Participation**. All decisions being made should involve those people effected by the decisions. This can be expressed many ways, such as the disability rights phrase: "Nothing about us without us." By ensuring people can participate in discussions, decisions, and debates, will increase the quality of the decisions made. If people are badly impacted by a decision, and cannot participate in this decision, they may protest and create conflict. Ensuring different people can participate ensure the discussion covers all the different possible impacts, ideas, or improvements. Participation is not merely being present. It is when people can seek and receive information; it is when there is space where they can express themselves; it is also where their views are taken seriously.

2. **Accountability**. To be accountable ensures there is a sense of justice guiding the responses to climate change. A main element of rights-based accountability is done by ensuring that duty bearers recognize their obligations, and respect the rights of the rights holders. It also means there should be mechanisms in place to ensure that if something goes wrong and people feel their rights are not respected or that they have not received justice, they can access some kind of remedy. Accountability has many elements. It can start with duty bearers being responsible for their actions and doing all they can to lessen risks and respect rights. Next, accountability means that when someone's rights are violated, they can seek justice for this. It may be through recognition, compensation, or restitution of their rights.

3. **Non-discrimination and equality**. People should be treated equally where that is relevant, or not be discriminated against because of an arbitrary or unfair process. This is important for the next module when looking at intersectionality and climate mobility. In some situations everyone should be treated equally. This is, for example, when everyone is treated equally by the law, regardless of any feature about them such as religion, ethnicity, gender, or citizenship. In some cases people should not be discriminated against. For example, when making a decision who should get compensation, that should be based on criteria such as need.

4. **Empowerment**. The process of responding to climate change should empower, and not disempower people. Empowerment can take a number of forms, but common ones are empowerment through knowledge, for example greater knowledge of human rights ensures people can claim them, knowledge of the law can better protect people. Empowerment can be through developing people's capacity in ways which help them such as a farmer increasing crop yields, or a boss having better relationship with staff to increase their productivity.

5. **Legality**. Legality is about ensuring that actions are unpinned by the law. Mainly, this is about using the legal power of human rights (as human rights are legal, they are based on international law which is applied through a national legal system). This ensure there is a rule of law, meaning that decisions and their responses are just, transparent, and equal for all. It also ensures justice is easier to find because the standards are in law and be judged in a court or similar body. Legality means that the actions are not based on morals, traditions, or charity, as these are not legally binding but rather codes of conduct or feelings people have.

Applying PANEL to Climate Change Mobility

Participation and inclusion in climate change

Many decisions have to made during climate change mobility. For example, in making a decision to relocate people because an area is more prone to flooding needs decisions on who to move first, how to move them, where move to, and what they do when they are relocated. Each of these decisions should be participatory becuase when a community participates in the decision they may know a lot about the risks they face, to challenges to move, and where they should go to. While they may not have much choice to movre, by having them participate in these decisions will give them some ownership over the process of moving them somewhere else. Further, people living in the location where they relocate to should also participate in this process. They should have a chance to express their concerns, ensure the process of relocation is fair and the government is aware of possible problems which may arise.

A rights-based intervention may include elements such as:

Theme	Key Elements
Non-Discrimination	- **Co-design**: Involve all stakeholders from the outset - **Impartiality**: Ensure fairness and unbiased participation - **Inclusivity**: Actively include diverse and marginalized perspectives - **Gender-responsiveness:** Address gender dynamics and needs - **Representation**: Reflect the diversity of the community
Participation	- **Early Involvement**: Start participation in early project stages - **Accessibility:** Make participation easy for all - **Concrete Change:** Ensure outcomes are real and tangible - **Ongoing Engagement**: Create structures for long-term participation - **Building Resilience**: Participation itself strengthens communities
Empowerment	- **Decision-Making**: Participation must influence decisions - **Ownership:** Build community responsibility for climate action - **Accountability:** Hold decision-makers answerable for outcomes - **Collaboration**: Promote partnerships among stakeholders **- Power Dynamics:** Address imbalances and amplify marginalized voices

The elements of the action for climate empowerment



What is the importance of adopting RBA for climate migration?

A RBA approach highlights the impacts of environmental issues and other disasters on people's rights, with particular attention to marginalized and vulnerable groups. It emphasizes the obligations and accountability of States, while also reinforcing the responsibility of duty bearers to respect, protect, and fulfill these rights. At the same time, it promotes transparency and ensures meaningful participation in governance, making responses more just, inclusive, and effective.

If a RBA is not used, the risks are that marginalized and vulnerable groups are excluded, leaving their needs unmet and deepening existing inequalities. Decisions will be being top-down and non-participatory, which risks the outcomes being increased mistrust and social tensions, and even conflict when people feel ignored or silenced. While an RBA or any approach will not solve all the problems, it does increase the ability of responses to climate change to be safer because they are participatory and more sensitive to potential conflict.

A response which is blind to people's rights result in greater accountability gaps, allowing for states or businesses to act without responsibility and for people's the human rights to be weakened and even violated. If **rights violations** are unaddressed, such as loss of housing, food insecurity, or denial of access to remedies, the response will end up in dissatisfaction, anger, and perhaps conflict. .

Without the safeguards of legality, transparency, and inclusivity, responses to climate change or disasters may be short-term, unjust, and ineffective—ultimately worsening vulnerability rather than building resilience.

Given these points it is important to address an RBA not only from the viewpoint of the rights holders, but also thte duty bearers and what their roles and obligations are.

A human rights–based approach reminds us that climate action is not only about protecting the planet, but also about protecting people—especially those whose voices are too often left unheard. Without rights at the center, solutions risk leaving the most vulnerable behind.

II. Accountability and Climate Change

Who are rights holders and duty bearers under the HRBA?

Rights holders

Every human is a rights holder, but everyone will have slightly different rights and different abilities to claim those rights. Children, indigenous groups, and migrant workers, for example, have rights specifically addressing their status. The more powerful people in society may have few problems protecting their rights, whereas other people may have difficulty claiming thems. An RBA is not so concerned about helping priviedged people protecting their rights (though, importantly their rights should never be denied). Rather, an RBA is about ensuring the protection for specific groups whose human rights are not fully realized, respected, or protected. These groups tend to include women/girls, children, ethnic minorities, Indigenous peoples, persons with a disability, migrants, and youth, among the variety of vulnerable groups.

Duty bearers

Almost everyone is also a duty bearer, but their obligations will differ accoring to their role and their capacity. Individuals have a duty to reduce their waste and contribution to GHG emmissions. They also have duties to respect the rights of tohers, to not discriminate, and to promote inclusion.

It is imortant to highlight those duty bearers who have the greatest obligations, especialy in relationship to climate change. This includes States which have made a legal commitment t protecting rights, and business entities who contribute most to climate change. These actors have a duty to promote and protect human rights, and to abstain from human rights violations.

Accountability, legality, and duties

In addressing climate change, states and businesses are the key duty-bearers, accountable for promoting, protecting, human rights and and preventing future violations. States must prevent and redress climate impacts, while businesses must be accountable for their climate impacts and participate responsibly in mitigation and adaptation efforts.

The obligations of these actors are now strengthened in law by the recent International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion which finds there are “binding obligations for States parties to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment from anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.”

[link to advisory opinion: https://www.icj-cij.org/case/187]

Duty bearers: States, business, fossil fuel industry

State Obligations

Duty to Protect: must ensure that state actions and policies do not cause or contribute to human rights violations related to climate change.

Duty to Fulfill: must take measures to ensure that individuals can access to clean water, food security, and healthcare.

Mitigation: Governments should phase out fossil fuel subsidies and invest in clean energy alternatives.

Extraterritorial Obligations: must consider the human rights impacts of their actions and policies on other countries, regarding polluton, climate change, and loss and damage.

Just Transition: should facilitate a just transition away from fossil fuels ensuring rights to work, access to energy, and a clean environment.

Climate Action: responsible to take action in reducing emissions and supporting adaptation measures.

Business Responsibilities

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable practices and technologies.

Develop strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change, such as investing in climate-resilient infrastructure.

Implement risk-based due diligence processes to identify, prevent, and mitigate human rights and environmental risks,

Engage with stakeholders, including affected communities, to understand their concerns and ensure meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

Be transparent about their climate-related impacts and actions and staop all mis- and dis-information campaigns.

Set science-based targets for emissions reductions and work towards net-zero emission

Invest in renewable energy sources and technologies to reduce their carbon footprint. ensure that their supply chains are sustainable and do not contribute to human rights or environmental harms.

Fossil fuel companies' Duties

End: the use of fossil fuels and ensure carbon zero energy production

Must take action to reduce emissions, invest in renewable energy and phasing out fossil fuel infrastructure.

Should support just transition for those impacted in the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

Should fully disclose the financial and physical risks of climate change

Should support accurate climate policies and reject disinformation and lobbying efforts that undermine climate action.

Should be held accountable for their share of the costs of climate-related damages and climate change adaptation.

Should invest in renewable energy and other low-carbon technologies.

Must ensure that their activities do not violate human rights, particularly those of marginalized communities who are disproportionately affected by climate change

RBA in Action

When an RBA plan is put into action a number of activites need to be undertaken. The table below outlines a number of them. These actions will depend on the type of action undertaken and who should be doing this.

Component	***Description***	***Key Stakeholders***	***Examples in Practice***
Human Rights Principles	The objecitve of any action is improving human rights: identify the relevant rights	Duty bearers, service providers, governments.	Identifying relavant rights when people are relocated: health, housing, work, etc.
Participation	Ensure affected communities can meaningfully engage in decision-making	Local communities, civil society	Community-led adaptation projects
Non-Discrimination	Prioritize equity and protect vulnerable groups from exclusion	Women, Indigenous Peoples, refugees, disabled	Gender-sensitive climate budgeting
Transparency	Make all relevant information available	Governments, corporations, media, service providers	Public meetings, internet information portal, translation of relevant project information.
Empowerment	Build capacity of communities to adapt and advocate for their rights	Local leaders, educators, NGOs	Climate education, capacity development, local adaptation grants
Legal accountability	Hold actors responsible for climate commitments and impacts. Ensure actions are complaint with relevant standards on human rights and the environmental	Courts, legislators, policymakers, human rights officers	Access to justice mechanisms for groups claiming violations, climate litigation.
Remedies & Redress	Ensure access to justice for those harmed by climate impacts	Tribunals an other remedy mechanisms, Courts officials	Compensation schemes, environmental ombudsman

Activity

Applying PANEL to a project can be challenging. As the previosu table shows there are a lot of elemets involved. In this case study, note down for each aspect what are the relevant PANEL elements, and what should be done about them.

The government has decided your university must close as it sits too close to the shoreline and the rising oceans will soon flood it. All students are now enrolled in another university in a distant part of the city. Also, this is a technical university, focussing on science and engineering, and you study in a law and social science university.
The facilities are much worse than your current universities, as the classroom are temporary and not air-conditioned, with no wifi. The library and study facilities are much worse. Many lecturers decide to resign as they do not want to travel far to work, so there are sometimes no lecturers to teach courses. Arguments have occurred between students from the different universities as queues for food and other services are much longer. The Science university is mainly men, and the have made inappropriate comments to female students from your university which insult or threaten the women. The facilities for women, such as bathrooms, is also lacking.

Action	PANEL Element	What action to undertake?
Preparation to move to the new university		
Education quality		
Availability of facilities		
Conflict between students		

Teacher's Instructions

Click here to Answer

Discussions

Why do you think a human rights–based approach is important when addressing climate-related migration? How might using this framework help ensure that solutions are fair, inclusive, and sustainable?

Click here to Answer

What forms of remedies or compensation should be provided to communities harmed by climate change, and who should bear the responsibility for funding them?

Click here to Answer



Teacher's Instructions

Quiz Questions

1. Multiple Choice:

1. Which statement best describes the Rights Based Approach?
   a. RBA is law which is applied by governments
   b. RBA is a tool used to improve the planning and implementation of any project by putting human rights as a central concern
   c. RBA will measure how man violations occur duing an activity, and will help find justice for these violations
   d. RBA is a tool used by NGOs to force accountability on to duty bearers

2. RBA: True or False?:

1. NGOs are duty bearers as well as States.
2. Not every project is relevant to RBA becuase some are not based on human rights
3. Every person has a right to participate in climate migration decisions if it effects them.
4. RBA is based in law, becuase human rights are laws

3. Which element of PANEL best describes these actions

1. A program educates people about their rights in migration
2. A project ensures that all climate information is available in all the languages spoken in the area as well as accessible for people with hearing and visual disabilities
3. A meeting is held with all people to discuss the disaster preparedness plan, and they can express their views on the plan.
4. A factory which created pollution damaging local fishing areas pays compensation to fishers who lost some livelihood
5. A government does not destroy illegally built houses becuase it recognizes than it cannot make people homeless. Rather, it looks for other solutions.

Further Reading

- UNFCC, A human-rights-based approach to climate change (Link)
- Sébastien Jodoin S., Savaresi A., Wewerinke-Singh M.,2021 Rights-based approaches to climate decision-making, Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability, Volume 52, Pages 45-53, ISSN 1877-3435, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2021.06.004 .
- OHCHR, Key Messages on Human Rights and Climate Change (Link)
- Schäfer L., Künzel V., Jorks P. 2020, A Human Rights-based Approach to Climate and Disaster Risk Financing (Link)

Module 4: Gender and intersectionality in Climate Mobility

Module Overview

This module explores how gender roles, social norms, and intersecting identities shape people's experiences of climate change and mobility. While extreme weather and environmental stress affect everyone, the risks and burdens are not distributed equally. Groups such as women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, youth, and those with diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) often face additional challenges in displacement, adaptation, and recovery. At the same time, they are key actors in building resilience and leading community responses.

Students will be introduced to approaches like the Gender Transformative Approach and the FIRE Framework, which link human rights, gender equality, and climate adaptation. By applying these tools, participants will learn to analyze how social inequalities influence who moves, who is left behind, and who has access to protection and resources. The module encourages reflection on how existing laws and policies can be made more inclusive and equitable, and how responses to climate change can be strengthened by addressing these gaps.

Introduction

Climate change is not a "gender-neutral" crisis. Its impacts—such as floods, droughts, and displacement—intersect with existing inequalities in society. People's ability to move, adapt, or recover depends not only on environmental conditions but also on social roles, access to resources, and power relations. Women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, youth, and LGBTI+ communities often face greater risks during climate-related migration, while also carrying key responsibilities for family and community survival.

This module introduces the concept of gender and intersectionality in climate mobility, showing how overlapping identities shape vulnerability and resilience. It highlights why applying a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach is essential for fair and effective climate action. Students will explore tools such as the Gender Transformative Approach and the FIRE Framework, and reflect on how inclusive policies can reduce risks, strengthen resilience, and ensure dignity and justice for all people on the move.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

1. **Explain key approaches** such as the Gender Transformative Approach and the FIRE Framework within the Rights-Based Approach.
2. **Identify links between gender, human rights, and climate change,** particularly how unequal access to resources and decision-making shapes vulnerability and resilience.
3. **Analyze laws, policies, and social contexts related to climate change and mobility,** paying attention to how different groups experience displacement and adaptation differently.
4. **Propose inclusive and equitable measures** to strengthen responses to climate change by addressing gaps in existing policies and programs.

Warm Up Questions

Have you ever noticed that some groups are blamed for social or environmental problems more than others? What do you think this says about power and inequality?

Click here to Answer

In what ways could including more voices—such as women, youth, or marginalized groups—change how we respond to climate change?

Click here to Answer

Teacher's Instructions

I. Human Rights, Gender and Intersectionality in Climate Change

Climate change magnifies existing inequalities rather than affecting everyone in the same way. The consequences of floods, droughts, and displacement are filtered through structures of power and exclusion, which shape who can move safely, who is left behind, and who bears the heaviest burdens in recovery. Vulnerability is therefore not only about geography or exposure to hazards, but also about how societies distribute resources, assign roles, and recognize rights.

This is where the concept of intersectionality becomes important. Intersectionality recognizes that people's experiences are shaped by the overlap of different identity factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, disability, citizenship, or sexuality. A [erson's identity can give them greater access to rights and empower them, or it can do the reverse: it can take away their rights and disempower them. For example being a citizen, a male, or a member of the police can all make someone more protected and respected. But identity is not a single thing, it has many dimensions. As an example, an educated gay male will have certain priviledges as an educated male, but face discrimination becuase of his sexuality. These dimensions intersect. It is important to understand this link between aspects of a person's identity and how this imapcts their rights. Discrimination occurs differently across gender (and sexism), sexuality (and homophobia), ethnicity (and racism and ability (and ableism).

As the CEDAW General Recommendation 35 notes:
Discrimination against women is inextricably linked to other factors that affect their lives. These may include ethnicity/race, indigenous or minority status, colour, socioeconomic status and/or caste, language, religion or belief, political opinion, national origin ,marital and/or maternal status, age, urban/rural location, health status ,disability, property ownership, being lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex, illiteracy, trafficking of women, armed conflict, seeking asylum ,being a refugee, internal displacement, statelessness, migration, heading households, widowhood, living with HIV/AIDS, deprivation of liberty, being in prostitution, geographical remoteness and stigmatization of women fighting for their rights, including human rights defenders. "Accordingly, because women experience varying and intersecting forms of discrimination, gender-based violence may affect some women to different degrees, or in different ways, so appropriate legal and policy responses are needed."
[hyperlink
https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n17/231/54/pdf/n1723154.pdf]

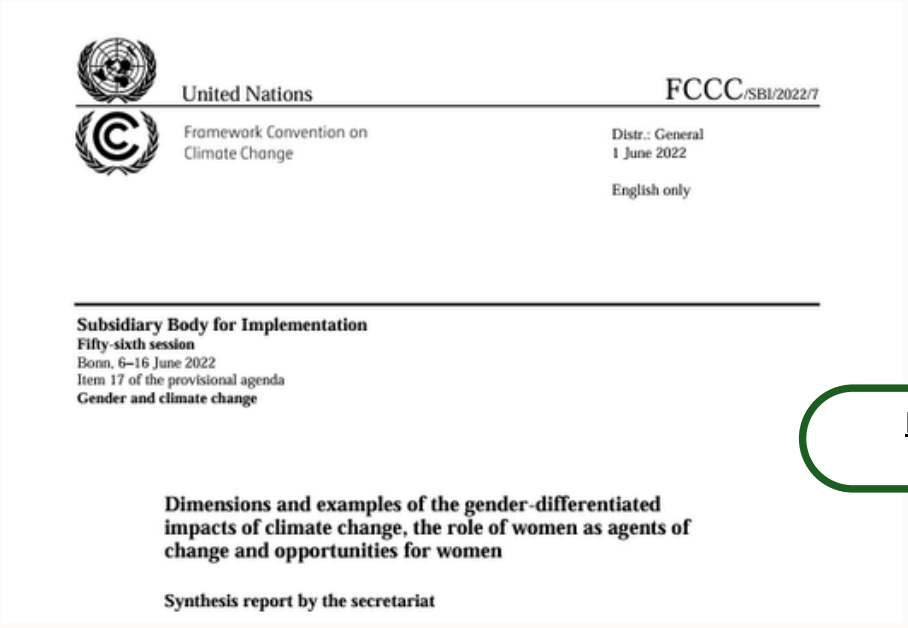
These overlapping identities determine who is more vulnerable, who has resources to adapt, and who may be left behind when relocation or adaptation policies are designed.

Magnifying Intersectionality and Climate Change

When disasters (storms, floods, droughts, heatwaves) occur, the impact isn't just about how strong the hazard is, or how exposed a place is. It also depends on:

- Who owns land or property, who controls finances.
- Who has voice in decision-making or in access to information & early warnings.
- Who carries burdens at home (care duties, cooking, fetching water etc.).
- Who is more constrained by social norms, traditions, legal systems, or discrimination.

These factors shape vulnerability. What looks like "just an environmental event" is often a moment when underlying inequalities get worse.



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Gender and climate change

Dimensions and examples of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, the role of women as agents of change and opportunities for women

Synthesis report by the secretariat

More on Women and Climate Change

The differentialted impact on wmen is well documented. As the UNFCCC report above shows, women often experience stronger adverse effects from climate change than men, not because of biology but because of unequal access to land, finance, and decision-making spaces. In many contexts, women cannot own land or are excluded from formal climate adaptation programs, which limits their ability to recover from droughts or floods.

Further, the UNFCCC report highlights, "providing opportunities for women and marginalized groups to participate in decision-making can contribute to the development and implementation of efficient and long-lasting climate-resilient policies."



Similarly, UN Women report titled Five examples of gender-sensitive solutions to displacement linked with climate change.[8] highlights that women and girls account for the majority of those displaced by climate-related disasters, yet they are also the ones who will face thre greatest challenges. The report shows how women and girls are: expected to provide care for families and communities in times of crisis; more vulnerable to violence; more prone to be excluded from family and community groups; more likley to take on extra labour in the fields when the men move to work in the city; and more likely to lose educational opportunities.

Indigenous peoples face another dimension of inequality. Various studies have shown that communities from the Arctic to the Kalahari are experiencing the loss of traditional lands and livelihoods due to wildfires, melting ice, or disrupted rainfall. Because their cultural survival is tied to their territories, climate-induced displacement threatens not just their homes but also their identity and rights. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, working with the UN, reports that an average of 26.4 million people are displaced each year by weather-related events. Yet displacement does not affect everyone equally. Those with disabilities, older persons, or those without financial means are often the ones who cannot evacuate safely, while LGBTQ+ people may face discrimination in shelters and host communities

[8] UN Women. (2022, March 8). Five examples of gender-sensitive solutions to displacement linked with climate change. Women's Resilience to Disasters (WRD) Programme. Retrieved from **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (n.d.).** What is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change?

II. The Gender Transformative Approach GTA

"*Gender-transformative climate change adaptation is a holistic approach that focuses on the economic, political, ecological and cultural causes of vulnerability. It addresses the roots of vulnerability through actions that aim to transform power relations shaped by unequal patriarchal norms and practices, and to empower women so that they have greater capacity to adapt." Camille Prosse* [9]

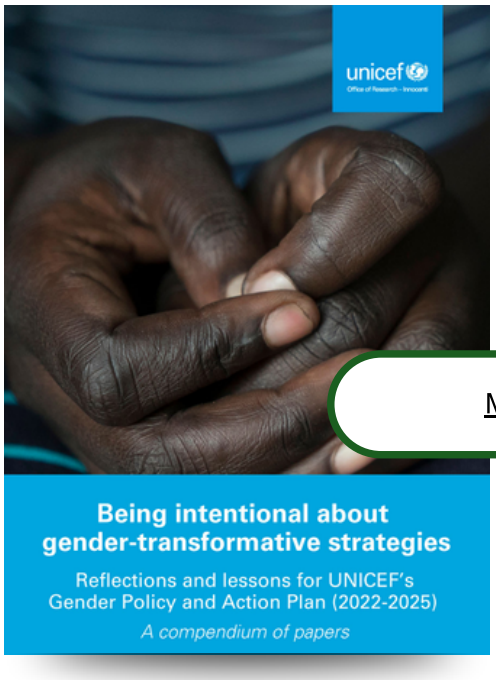
The Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) is an analytical and practical framework used in climate change, mobility, and human rights work. It goes beyond simply acknowledging gender differences or reducing gender gaps by actively seeking to transform unequal power relations that are shaped by patriarchal norms and practices, while empowering women and marginalized genders so that they have greater agency and capacity to adapt. The objective is to make responses to climate change mobility both more sustainable and also empowering for women

In climate contexts, GTA emphasizes:

- **Challenging patriarchal structures:** It recognizes that men and women do not contribute equally to climate change, nor do they face equal consequences. For example, men often control more resources and decision-making power, while women are left with greater caregiving and survival responsibilities.
- **Empowerment and agency:** The goal is not only to protect women but to ensure they can lead decision-making processes and adaptation strategies. This includes access to land, finance, technology, and political participation.
- **Resilience-building:** Evidence shows that empowering women strengthens community resilience. For instance, FAO has noted that closing the gender gap in agricultural resources could increase women's farm yields by up to 30%, contributing directly to food security.
- **Systemic change:** Rather than adding "women" into existing unequal structures, GTA seeks to change those structures—laws, policies, and social norms—that reproduce discrimination

A GTA is going beyond sensitization, or the process of identifying where climate change responses differ between men and women, to implementing changes so these difference will reduce and ultimately disappear.

[9] Pross Camille, Five Principles for gender-transformative climate adaptation, Stockholm Environmental Institute, (Nov. 2019) at https://www.sei.org/perspectives/5-principles-for-gender- transformative-climate-adaptation/.



More on GTA

Gender Sensitive Vs. Gender Transformative

Dimension	Gender-Sensitive	Gender-Transformative
Focus	Recognizes differences between women and men; addresses immediate needs	Challenges root causes of inequality; shifts norms, roles, and power relations
Goal	Identify gender gaps in access and participation	Achieve long-term gender equality by transforming systems and structures
Approach to Power	Works within existing power dynamics	Actively seeks to redistribute power and resources more fairly
Participation	Ensures women and girls are included in programs	Ensures women, girls, and marginalized genders have leadership and decision-making power
Agency	Supports women's and girls' access to services and opportunities	Builds agency, voice, and leadership while also engaging men and boys to shift harmful norms
Examples in Practice	Disaster response includes separate facilities for women in shelters	Climate mobility policies that guarantee women equal rights to land, finance, relocation decisions, and participation in governance
Outcome	Short-term improvement in women's access and safety	Long-term systemic change that dismantles patriarchy and promotes equity for all genders

Gender Integration Continuum

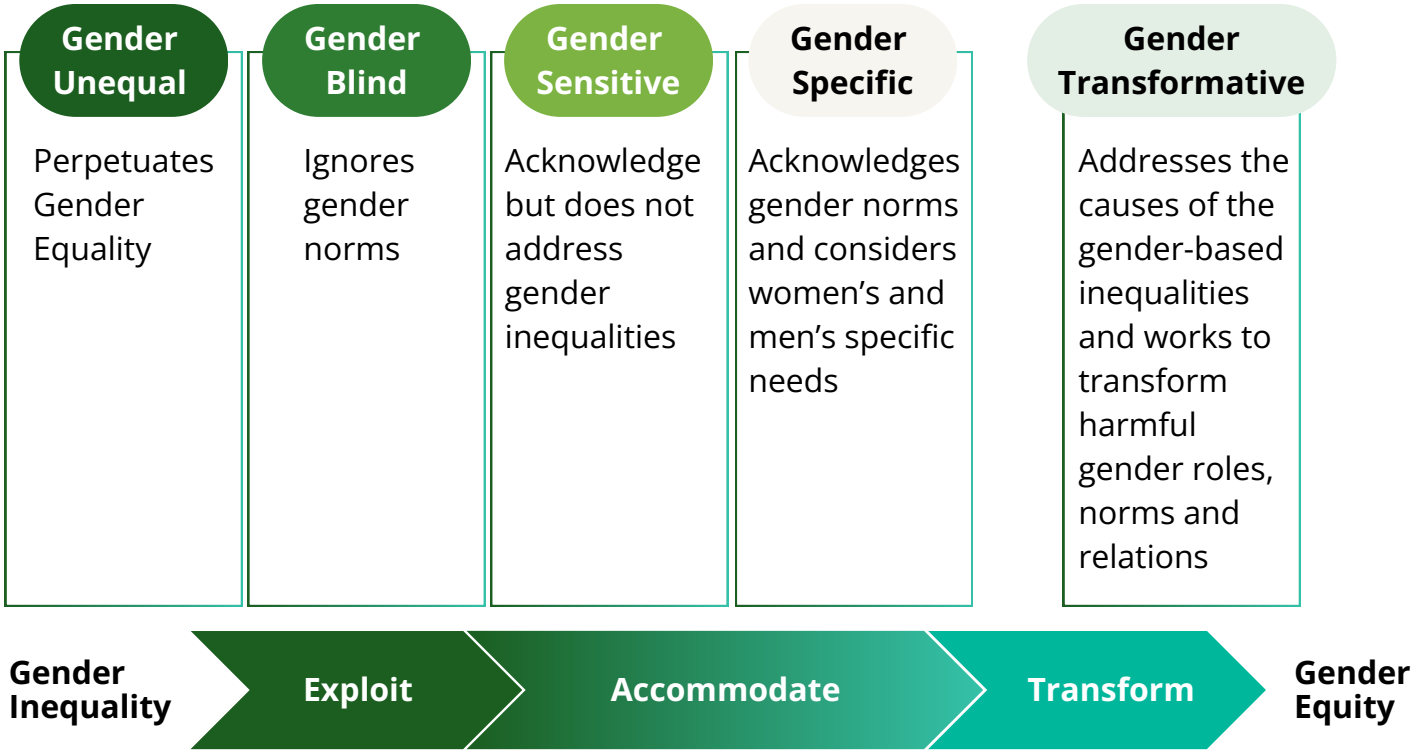


Diagram Source: Gupta, G. R. (2000). Continuum of approaches to action on gender and health [Infographic]. International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). Reproduced in UNICEF Gender Policy and Action Plan (2021).

Discussions

Imagine you are designing a disaster relief program for a flood-affected community. A gender senstiive approach shows women are more vulnerable to assault becuase they will be moved into large shared living areas, and they will have increased burden looking after children as men traditionally do not do any housework. What would a gender transformative approach do to address these problems?

Click here to Answer

III. What is the relevance of the Gender Transformative Approach to climate resilience?

Responses to discrimination may alleviate inequality, but they do not necessary stop the discrimination itself because the underlying structures and values are still in place. For example, increasing the number of girls in school does not necessarily mean that women will get equal employment opportunities if workplaces continue to favour male applicants over female. This is why a GTA approach is important: its objective is long term sustainable change by eliminating discrimination at its source.

Many positive changes during climate change may appear to have initial benefits for women, but these may be short term, or superficial, because the underlying causes still exist. As an example, increasing heat may lead women at a factory to protest about bad work conditions. The men, who are mostly working in management, work from air-conditioned offices. But the women, who work on the factory floor, are not in air-conditioned spaces. Eventually the male managers agree and change some work conditions to improve the situation. While this may seem like a positive step, it does not transform the situation of the women having to rely on male decisions to ensure their work conditions are satisfactory. Until women are among the decision makers, no one will know if the changes are permanent, and if the men will listen to future demands of the women.

A GTA is about ensuring that those who decide what is a problem and then make decision to fix that problem involves both men and women and hence can see these issues from both points of view. It is about ensuring that the structures of power, is not gender blind.

It is also about ensuring that gendered values, such as a women's role in the family, the institution of marriage, or the duties of a girl child, do not penalize women or reward men merely because of their gender. These are important in responses to climate change as labour at home, a girl-child's right to education, or the threat of child marriage are all critical concerns in climate change mobility.

Finally, a GTA also recognizes the valuable contribution women already make to climate adaptation and to ensure this is properly recognized.

Key Principles for Gender-Transformative Climate Change Adaptation

Dimension	Explanation	Implications for Climate Adaptation
Context Awareness	Climate vulnerabilities are shaped by local realities, including cultural norms, economic structures, and power relations. One-size-fits-all solutions are ineffective.	Adaptation measures must be tailored to specific communities and designed to address systemic and local power imbalances.
Equal Access to and Control over Resources	Secure land rights, housing, and access to assets are essential for resilience. Women are often excluded when resources are redistributed or formal rights are required.	Policies should ensure women's equal rights to land, housing, and other resources so they can participate in and benefit from adaptation strategies.
Time Poverty from Care Work	Women already shoulder heavy unpaid care and domestic work. Adaptation programmes may unintentionally increase their workload.	Climate initiatives should avoid adding new unpaid responsibilities to women and instead address care burdens as a barrier to resilience.

Gender-related challenges in climate change mitigation and adaptation responses

Gender related challenges will differ for rural and urban women. For rural women one of the most pressing challenges in climate adaptation and mitigation is the **unequal access to and control over land**. Land is not only a key resource for livelihoods and food security but also for ecological integrity and resilience. When adaptation strategies involve restoring degraded land, they can create opportunities to rebuild ecosystems, provide employment, build local capacity, and reaffirm cultural identity. However, these opportunities often remain inaccessible to women—particularly rural women—who play central roles in **food security** but face significant barriers in accessing agricultural resources and services. Relocation policies often ignore the intersectional needs of these groups, while women and girls carry the heaviest burden of household care.

For women in the city, climate adaptation and mitigation differs. More women work in lower paid and labour intensive work, such as in garment factories or food service. Often they are balancing full time jobs with caring duties for children or the elderly, alongside domestic duties. As the climate warms, they may have to labour in hotter conditions, or take special care looking after those vulnerable to heat, such as the elderly. Cities can reduce these pressures by investing in social services and infrastructure such as healthcare, water, sanitation, and childcare. Including women meaningfully in land and resource management strengthens household resilience, enhances food security, and enables better adaptation during climate-related shocks. While gender sensitivity identifies these problems, GTA would require changes that ensure actions are sustainable and have genuine impact. This can include women being involved in decisions responding to increased heat, for example in a trade union or worker's collective, or allowing more worker flexibility for women recognizing their extra duties. By being decision makers workplaces can be better prepared to anticipate these challenges because women have been brought into the decision-making process.



More on mitigation and adaptation responses

Gender-related challenges in climate change mitigation and adaptation responses

Finally, gendered roles and responsibilities are often taken for granted as "normal," yet these roles place disproportionate demands on women and girls in the face of climate change. Disasters can lead to **loss of education, fewer income opportunities, and higher exposure to violence**. In some cases, this contributes to **early marriages and greater household burdens for women and girls.** In some contexts, these pressures can also lead to **early marriages** as households attempt to cope with economic strain. Recognizing and addressing these entrenched social expectations is essential, as climate adaptation measures that ignore them risk reinforcing harmful **gender inequalities** and norms rather than transforming them.



More on mitigation and adaptation responses

IV. What is the Framework for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality into Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (FIRE)?

FIRE (Framework for Integrating Rights and Equality) is a tool that brings together international legal and operational standards on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and emergency preparedness. It provides a systematic way to ensure that human rights and gender equality principles are embedded across policies and practices, helping governments and institutions design responses that are inclusive, accountable, and aligned with international obligations.[11]

Alongside the GTA, FIRE is a useful tool to map climate adaptation measures in a rights-based approach. As discussed later, the three frameworks discussed in this workbook can each be used to better understand and improve responses to climate adaptation for women.

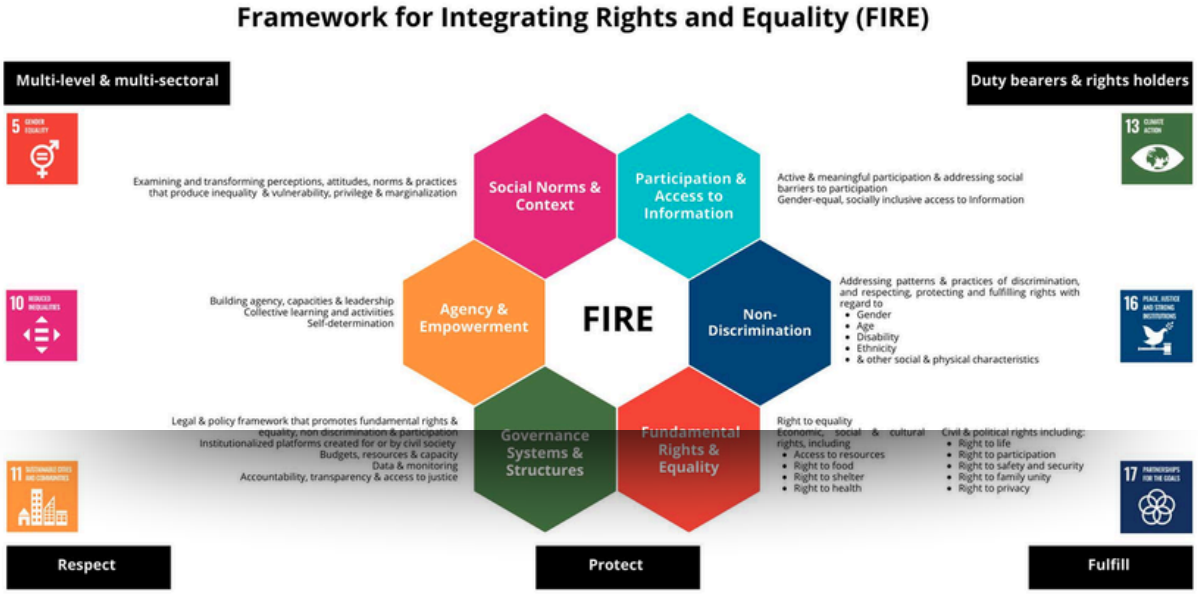


Diagram Source: Scott, M. (2022). Framework for Integrating Rights and Equality (FIRE) [Diagram]

[11] Scott, M. (2022, May). A Framework for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality into Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (FIRE) [2-pager]. Research on Water and Disasters, Lund University.

What are the core dimensions and their respective components of FIRE?

Component	Key Elements
Non-Discrimination	Addresses patterns and practices of discrimination; ensures respect, protection, and fulfillment of rights regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, or other characteristics.
Agency & Empowerment	1. Building agency, capacities, and leadership 2. Collective learning and activities 3. Self-determination
Social Norms & Context	Examines and transforms perceptions, attitudes, norms, and practices that produce inequality, vulnerability, privilege, and marginalization.
Participation & Access to Information	1. Promotes active and meaningful participation 2. Addresses social barriers to participation 3. Ensures gender-equal and socially inclusive access to information
Governance Systems & Structures	1. Legal and policy frameworks promoting rights, equality, non-discrimination, and participation 2. Platforms created for/by civil society 3. Allocation of budgets, resources, and capacity 4. Data collection and monitoring 5. Accountability, transparency, and access to justice
Fundamental Rights & Equality	1. Right to equality 2. Economic, social, and cultural rights (e.g., access to resources, right to food, shelter, health) 3. Civil and political rights (e.g., right to life, participation, safety and security, family unity, privacy)

If climate mobility is measured only by numbers relocated or shelters built, we miss the deeper truth. Real evaluation asks whether responses reduce vulnerability across lines of gender, class, disability, and identity. Success lies in ensuring that the most marginalized voices are heard, their rights upheld, and their resilience strengthened. Without such a lens, adaptation risks reinforcing the very inequalities it seeks to overcome.

V. Convergence and Contrast: HRBA, GTA, and FIRE

Aspect	Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)	Gender Transformative Approach (GTA)	FIRE Framework
Foundations	Grounded in international human rights law.	Rooted in feminist analysis; challenges patriarchal norms and seeks systemic change.	Developed by Raoul Wallenberg Institute (2022); integrates HRBA and gender equality into DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA).
Core Principles	PANEL: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination & Equality, Empowerment, Legality.	Transform unequal power relations; empower women and marginalized genders; shift harmful social norms.	Six consolidated dimensions: Fundamental rights & equality, Participation & access to information, Governance systems & structures, Non-discrimination & equality, Agency & empowerment, Social norms & context.
Focus on Power	Holds states and institutions accountable as duty bearers to rights holders.	Seeks to redistribute power and resources, challenge social norms, and elevate marginalized voices.	Embeds analysis of power asymmetries across law, policy, and social systems to ensure inclusive practice.
Gender Lens	Protects women and marginalized groups as rights holders needing equality.	Frames women and marginalized genders as agents of change, central to resilience and adaptation.	Aligns with CEDAW General Recommendation No. 37; integrates gender equality standards into DRR/CCA responses.
Application	Legal frameworks, policy design, monitoring & accountability mechanisms.	Community-level interventions, laws, and policies that transform gender norms and relations.	Practical toolkit for governments, civil society, and institutions to design inclusive and rights-based climate and disaster responses.

VI. Other Gender-related Frameworks

The frameowrks outline so far are not the only ones addressing cilmate change and gender A further four examples are detailed below.

1. *General Recommendation No. 37 of the CEDAW Convention*

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the most comprehensive international treaty on women's rights and provides a crucial foundation for addressing gender and intersectionality in climate mobility. Adopted in 1979 and often described as an international bill of rights for women, CEDAW obligates states to eliminate discrimination and ensure women's equal access to political, economic, social, and cultural life.

Importantly, **CEDAW General Recommendation No. 37 (2018)** explicitly addresses the gender dimensions of disaster risk reduction and climate change, recognizing that women and girls are disproportionately affected by environmental crises yet play vital roles in resilience and adaptation. By linking women's rights to disaster preparedness, climate adaptation, and mobility, CEDAW establishes a normative framework for states to integrate gender equality into climate and disaster policies, ensuring that responses uphold human rights and do not reinforce existing inequalities.

Principle	Explanation	Implication for Climate & Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)
Substantive Equality	Goes beyond formal equality; considers the different circumstances and needs of diverse groups.	Policies must aim for equal outcomes, not just equal treatment, by addressing structural barriers faced by women and marginalized groups.
Non-Discrimination	States must ensure all climate and DRR measures are free from discrimination.	Climate policies must actively prevent gender discrimination and protect vulnerable groups from exclusion.
State Obligations	CEDAW requires states to take measures ensuring women's full participation in decision-making.	Women must be meaningfully included in climate, DRR, and mobility planning and governance processes.
Protection	Women and girls should have access to social protection, care systems, and adaptive capacities.	States must provide healthcare, social safety nets, and adaptation resources so women can respond to climate impacts effectively.

How CEDAW addresses measure to gender inequality and climate Change?



Gender-Responsive Policies: States should ensure that all disaster risk reduction and climate change policies, laws, plans, strategies, budgets, and other actions are gender-responsive and based on human rights principles.

Participation and Leadership: States should take concrete steps to overcome the participation and leadership barriers that may be faced by women who face intersectional marginalization and discrimination.

Access to Information and Remedies: States should ensure equal access to information, participation, and remedies for women and girls affected by climate change and disasters.

Empowerment and Capacity Building: States should invest in gender-responsive social protection and care systems, and in empowerment and capacity-building for women and girls.

Traditional Knowledge: CEDAW recognises the importance of traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge systems in developing effective adaptation and response strategies relating to disaster risk reduction and climate change.

Addressing Underlying Causes: States must address the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality, such as poverty, lack of access to resources, and limited decision-making power.

2. *The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018)*

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018) is the first international agreement to explicitly recognize climate and environmental drivers of migration. It stresses that policies must be gender-responsive and child-sensitive, ensuring protection for women and marginalized migrants whose vulnerabilities often intersect. Similarly, the Global Compact on Refugees (2018) addresses displacement linked to disasters and climate change, calling for inclusive and equitable protection frameworks.

3. *Paris Agreement (2015)*

The Paris Agreement (2015) under the UNFCCC recognizes that climate change disproportionately affects women and marginalized groups, and calls for gender-responsive adaptation. This is directly relevant to climate mobility, since migration, displacement, and planned relocation are core aspects of adaptation strategies. The accompanying UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP) further commits countries to integrate gender considerations into national adaptation plans, many of which include mobility and relocation measures.

4. *The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030)*

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) emphasizes that disasters affect people differently depending on gender, age, disability, and social status, and that policies must be inclusive. Since extreme weather events are a leading cause of disaster displacement, Sendai's focus on disaggregated data and inclusive participation helps ensure that women, indigenous peoples, and vulnerable groups are not overlooked in relocation and recovery planning.

Discussions

How would you rank the seven standards and frameworks that address gender and climate change? Which ones do you think will be used the most, and which ones the least, and why?

Click here to Answer

Imagine you are asked to evaluate how your government and policy advocates are addressing climate change and human mobility. What key issues would you consider in your evaluation? Which international frameworks would you draw on to guide your analysis, and why?

Click here to Answer

Discussions



Teacher's Instructions

Moving Forward

> *Climate change is not only an environmental crisis but a **test of justice**. The measure of our response lies not in how many walls we build or people we move, but in whether rights are upheld, voices are heard, and resilience is shared by all.*

Key Takeaways

- Climate change is a human rights issue: it threatens access to food, housing, health, and life itself, especially for marginalized groups.
- Mobility is complex and unequal: people move under different circumstances, and their rights depend on legal, social, and political recognition.
- Accountability is essential: without transparency and remedies, climate responses risk reproducing injustice.
- Gender and intersectionality matter: addressing power imbalances and empowering diverse voices ensures no one is left behind.

Quiz Questions

1. Multiple Choice:

1. Which statement best describes intersectionality?

a. Another way to identify gender discrimination

b. A way to understand how different parts of a person's identity face different kinds of discrimination

c. Given identity is complex and multi featured, a way to show that not all people are equal

d. A tool to identitfy the intersection of identity and social position

2. Identify which summary best describes the framework or mechanism

Framework or mechanism

a) RBA
b) GTA
c) FIRE
d) CEDAW GC 37
e) Global Compact on Migration
f) Paris Agreement
g) Sendai Framwork

Summary

1. Under the UNFCCC, this document recognizes gender should be included in a States adaptation plans
2. A tool with an objective to empower women and change systems in climate responses so women are better protected
3. A non-binding ageement which asks States to have gender sensitive migration policies.
4. A tool enforcing the legal human rights obligations of States when developing polices and plans for people
5. Linking women's human rights to climate change, this document can be used by States to make climate responses more gender sensitive.
6. In disasters, this standard asks States to recognize that people will be impacted differently according to gender and other statuses
7. A tool briging together rights based and gender approaches in Climate adaptation

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