Climate-forced displacement threatens the rights and human dignities of communities and individuals at risk (health, water, housing, education, cultural practice, freedom of movement, etc.).

While loss of jobs and social cohesion due to climate change impacts may force communities to leave, access to jobs and the ability of communities to maintain their social cohesion are amongst the factors that help communities decide where they can resettle.

Currently, there are no dedicated climate funds earmarked to help communities relocate or to compensate for the loss and damage they’ve experienced.

When communities are forced to relocate, the costs are typically financed through local initiatives (federal, state, arrangements between two countries, or through community-based revenue).
The right to self-determination must be upheld and respected. This means that community decisions to build protections in place and relocate are centered in decision-making.

States most responsible for carbon emissions must pay for their contributions, and states that access these funds must ensure that those who are directly affected have equitable access and are meaningfully engaged in decision-making processes.

States must fulfill their responsibility to uphold the rights of people who are at risk. A variety of international treaties and principles offer guidance on protecting their rights.

Vulnerable countries should consider existing international frameworks to help them develop equitable and rights-based strategies to address climate-forced displacement.

These include:

- UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- Peninsula Principles on Climate Displacement within States
- Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda
- Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- UN Declaration on Human Rights
- UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- UN Human Rights Council Special Procedures (includes several relevant thematic mandates)
- Platform on Disaster Displacement
- UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- UN Migrant Worker Convention
- State-based humanitarian policies

An Example of Climate-Forced Displacement

Carteret Islands
Papua New Guinea

About 2,000 villagers being forced to relocate due to the ongoing impacts of sea level rise

2005 Year the Carterets decided to manage their own relocation to mainland Bougainville. Some villagers have relocated, while some still remain on the islands

13 Years passed since this community decided to relocate. Still working to secure land and financial resources to help the rest of their community relocate

UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

UN Migrant Worker Convention

State-based humanitarian policies