Displacement is one of the most common impacts of disasters. In 2020, nearly 30.7 million new displacements were recorded around the world, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Displacement does not only mean losing one’s home. For millions of people, displacement means becoming separated from their loved ones, losing their livelihood, developing health problems and missing out on their education. And it means suffering: for some from trauma, for others from being trafficked and from violence.

Factors influencing disaster displacement are human made, including unsustainable urbanisation, environmental degradation, and lack of political will. Not only is disaster displacement on the rise, projections are bleak, requiring urgent action to reduce disaster risk and the impacts of climate change. Climate-related disasters already force millions of people to flee their homes each year, and climate change is projected to increase disaster displacement. As extreme weather events become more frequent and intense, the most vulnerable people, such as refugees and internally displaced people, will be the hardest hit. Humanitarian assistance can help address the impacts of climate-related disasters, but a massive increase in global efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change and reduce the risk of disasters is critical to contain the suffering.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 recognises disaster displacement as an important concern. It also identifies actions to reduce potential humanitarian needs and strengthen the resilience of those affected until they are able to find a solution to their displacement.

To support countries and regions in aligning their policies, strategies and practices with the Sendai Framework guidance on disaster displacement, NRC has been spearheading an initiative with the following concrete results.

With funding from the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) and in collaboration with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and partners,¹ NRC led the development of the Words into Action guide *Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Strengthen Resilience* (hereafter “WiA guide”) published by the United Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in 2019. NRC then provided support to the Governments of Mozambique, Nepal and South Africa to develop relevant national instruments on disaster displacement based on the WiA guide. Tangible outcomes achieved with the initiative’s support include the Mozambican Policy and Strategy on Internal Displacement Management and the South African national guidelines on disaster displacement.

NRC developed two other related tools to disseminate the WiA guidance: *Addressing Disaster Displacement in Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice: A Checklist* and an eLearning course on disaster displacement, in multiple languages. NRC promoted use of the guide, the checklist and the eLearning course through online trainings offered to Governments, regional bodies and organizations in 2021. This year, with UNDRR support,

¹ GFFO, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), PDD, UNDRR, UN Migration Agency (IOM), and UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) were members of the working group to develop the guide.
the WiA guidance will also reach local governments assessing their resilience through a tailored annex to the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities.

Yet much remains to be done to address displacement in the context of disasters and climate change and to achieve the Sendai Framework Target B to substantially reduce the number of affected people by 2030. Foremost, Governments must live up to their commitment to leave no one behind. Governments must fulfill their responsibility to meet the needs and uphold the rights of affected people. Governments must be instructed by affected people to guide actions and to measure how well they reduced displacement risk and provided assistance against their diverse needs, feedback and perceptions, throughout the disaster risk management cycle. Governments need to understand local displacement risk, encourage community preparedness measures, protect displaced people from risks related to their displacement and include displaced people as equal partners in action to build back better. Effective action requires that Governments make resources available at local level where displacement can be prevented and addressed in preparedness, response and recovery.

The lofty ideal of leaving no one behind can be materialized by meaningfully engaging displaced people, people at risk of displacement and partnering with CSOs. As the Report of the UN Secretary-General’s High Level Panel on Internal Displacement (2021) makes clear, many displaced people are eager to rebuild their lives and could do so independently if they had adequate resources. Civil society organizations (CSOs) can support Governments to understand the concerns of displaced people and of people at risk of displacement to address these concerns in plans and programmes. Partnership with CSOs can also amplify the reach and impact of limited resources, promoting the effectiveness of investments in risk reduction.

NRC encourages Governments and other Global Platform participants to:

- Include, engage and partner with displaced people, people at risk of displacement and CSOs in planning and programming for DRR, climate change adaptation and development.
- Update or develop local, national and regional DRR strategies and policies with provisions on disaster displacement and human mobility, building on efforts made to achieve Target E.
- Allocate funding and ensure appropriate human resources to implement these measures in disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, as well as capacity building and training, particularly at the local level.
- Designate a governmental focal point on disaster displacement to facilitate information-sharing and, as relevant, coordination within and across ministries, between the local and national level, and with civil society, affected communities and other partners.
- Implement the Words into Action Guidelines on Disaster Displacement, use the accompanying Checklist, and build capacity through the eLearning course and other training.

NRC further recommends:

- Ensure that national DRR policies and strategies are coherent with policies and strategies on climate change action, development, humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, and refugee protection.
• Scale up the application and sharing of effective practices and learning, including the use of risk assessments, early warning systems and other preparedness measures, to ensure that disaster displacement is addressed, and related risk is reduced, in line with the Sendai Framework.

• Improve disaster displacement data collection; develop national targets and indicators on disaster displacement, for national reporting and to the Sendai Framework Monitor; and enhance access to data and evidence on risks related to disaster displacement.

NRC stands ready to assist countries to improve policy and practice on disaster displacement in partnership with displaced people and people at risk of displacement.