



7 November 2022

## Public Services International

### **Submission to the Call for inputs: Report on addressing the human rights implications of climate change displacement including legal protection of people displaced across international borders**

We need to understand climate migration, not in isolation, but with its complex interlinkages with social, political and economic factors, including in the context of the covid pandemic and other health crises. This is crucial so we can build an approach that is people-centered, gender-responsive and grounded on sustainable development and the SDGs.

PSI's response to these interlinking challenges is rooted on three demands: climate justice, human rights, and quality public services.

1. *First, on Climate Justice.* This is where workers, trade unions and civil society are joined in concerted efforts to demand
  - Equity and justice in addressing the climate crisis.
  - This means holding rich countries who have contributed the most greenhouse gas emissions accountable for causing the problem of climate change for which the poor in developing countries are paying heavily, sometimes with their lives.
  - We continue to engage in social dialogue and advocacy for a just and equitable transition for all workers affected by loss and damage from climate change, in moving towards low-carbon energy production and other climate change response measures.
  
2. *Second, human rights above all else.* There must be fundamental respect for human rights and humanitarian law in dealing with migration, mobility, forced displacement, relocalisation and all measures dealing with the impact of the climate crisis on peoples and communities. (*Responds to Questions no. 2, 3, 5 and 7.*)
  - We need to recognize the complexity of climate-induced migration as it relates to social, political and economic factors, in order to ensure a gender-responsive, child-sensitive and people-centered approach.
  - There must be fundamental respect for human rights and humanitarian law; whether the person referred to is a migrant, a refugee or an internally displaced person (IDP) and whose movement or displacement was impacted by or a result of climate change, she or he is entitled to the full protection of her/his human and labour rights.
  - We need to strengthen the existing normative framework on migrant workers. This means ratifying and effectively implementing the UN and ILO Conventions i.e. UN Migrant Workers Convention, UN Core Conventions, ILO Conventions 97 and 143 (Migrant Workers) and all other international labour standards.
  - We call on all states to uphold the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees, and demand for a fair- sharing of responsibility in receiving and hosting refugees.

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- We remind states hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs) to adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
  - And as provided for in the GCM, provide more rights-based legal pathways to migration while preserving the integrity of the asylum system.
3. Thirdly, we will hardly survive this climate crisis if we do not provide *quality and inclusive public services*. (Responds to Questions no. 4 and 8).
- We have seen in the pandemic, disasters and conflicts how essential it is for public goods to remain available, accessible and universal.
  - Migration should not be our core solution for adaptation because not everyone wants to migrate, to be separated from their land, culture and livelihood. Often, it is the poorest and most vulnerable who are not able to migrate, or would not want to migrate. Our core adaptation strategy must first and foremost be about allowing people to stay, to adapt and build resilience. Afterall, it is humanity that we are working to save, the planet can regenerate itself.
  - Investing in health care, social care, disaster management and response, clean water, sanitation, public infrastructure and all range of public services is the best strategy for societies, displaced communities and host communities to adapt, build resilience, and pursue equitable and sustainable development.
  - The provision of public goods and services essential to our lives must not be left to the whims of the market. We must continue to fight privatization and put people over profit.
  - For developing countries most impacted by the climate crisis, integrate loss and damage support and adaptation assistance into their public services, with the overall goal of preventing displacement and humanitarian crises and eradicating poverty, rather than reacting to them.
  - Public service workers are at the frontlines of dealing with the impacts of the crisis. We need to ensure safety, decent work, fair remuneration and social protection for all workers.
  - And finally, to protect and defend the human and trade union rights of all workers, including migrant and refugee workers.