



PLATFORM
ON DISASTER
DISPLACEMENT
FOLLOW-UP TO THE NANSSEN INITIATIVE



EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

WORK OF THE PLATFORM ON DISASTER DISPLACEMENT (PDD)
in Support of the Strategy Review Process of the PDD 2022-2023

**OCTOBER
2023**

Work of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD)

in Support of the Strategy Review Process of the PDD 2022-2023

An external assessment report issued in October 2023



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EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF THE WORK OF THE PDD | October 2023

Assessment Report

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ACRONYMS

ACMI	Africa Climate Mobility Initiative
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CCMI	Caribbean Climate Mobility Initiative
CEPREDENAC	Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America
CIEL	Center for International Environmental Law
CMARN	Climate Migration Africa Research Network
CMDP	Climate, Migration, and Displacement Platform
COP	Conference of the Parties
CVF	Climate Vulnerable Forum
DIP	Division of International Protection
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich Ebert Foundation
GCCM	Global Centre for Climate Mobility
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GNDR	Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction
HLP	High-Level Panel
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFI	International Funding Institution
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRFC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MECR	Migration, Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
MIRPS	Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework
MMC	Mixed Migration Centre

MPTF	Multi Partner Trust Fund
MSC	Most Significant Change
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIPA	Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSACA	Office of the Special Advisor on Climate Action
PAMAD	Project to Avert, Minimize and Address Disaster Displacement
PCCMHS	Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme
PDD	Platform on Disaster Displacement
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PPLA	Protection Policy and Legal Advice
PRDD	Pacific Response to Disaster Displacement
RCM	Regional Conference on Migration
RCP	Regional Consultative Processes
RWI	Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law
SACM	South American Conference on Migration
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TFD	Task Force on Displacement
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UNU	United Nations University
UNTFHS	United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
WiA	Words into Action
WIM	Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage
WIM ExCom	Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERALL SUMMARY

Introduction. This external assessment was conducted over 23 days between June and September 2023 in support of the current Strategy Review process of the PDD. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) contracted the consultants and acted as the main point of contact. The ‘Sounding Board’ for this assessment was constituted of the EU as Chair of the PDD, Kenya as Vice-Chair of the PDD, and Fiji as previous Chair of the PDD (from 1 January to 30 June 2022), as well as Switzerland.

The methods included a literature review, observation of the Strategic Retreat (Chateau de Bossey, Vaud, 13 June 2023), introductory meetings in Geneva, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders (remote), follow-up questionnaires and the presentation of findings on the Sounding Board on 31 August 2023. The consultants selected stakeholders who could contribute a diversity of perspectives, taking into consideration factors such as current or previous engagement with the PDD, the capacity of that engagement, geographic representation, and organisational or institutional mandates. The total number of assessment respondents was 39, who contributed over 60 responses comprised of six introductory meetings, 29 in-depth interview responses, and 25 follow-up questionnaires and inputs via email.

Summary. In the PDD’s work over the last seven years, many key stakeholders noted the important strides that have been made in taking forward the work of the Nansen Initiative and the Protection Agenda, including normative and policy strides in key global processes such as the GCM, the GCR, Sendai and UNFCCC. Considering these important normative strides towards the protection of cross-border displaced persons, stakeholders are asking: Is the PDD’s work done? Should the PDD continue? If not, what should the PDD do next? Some of these questions are echoes from conversations that took place towards the design of the 2019-2022

Strategy (extended to 2023), and they still hold relevance today. This assessment noted the predictable level of uncertainty and ambiguity at this point in the PDD’s existence. These questions are understandable and essential when properly concluding or extending any initiative or project.

Based on the in-depth discussions and analysis of the PDD’s key achievements, value-added, challenges, and structural arrangements, this assessment found robust support for the next phase of the PDD, which is still widely considered to be a relevant, unique, and useful initiative. There was broad consensus among stakeholders that the PDD needs to continue. Along with the impacts of the PDD’s global normative and policy work, the assessment also highlighted the important work done by the PDD and partners at regional and sub-regional levels. Even though there are many new actors in an increasingly populated landscape with relevance to the work of the PDD, stakeholders argued that the PDD continues to hold a unique role, particularly as a State-led and multistakeholder initiative, a neutral and trusted convenor, an adept framer of key messages, and a repository of expertise able to identify gaps and connect with a global Community of Practice of researchers, civil society, international organisations, and governments. While the stakeholders overwhelmingly agree that the PDD should continue, there were different ideas, as outlined in this report, about its desired form and function in the next strategic phase and beyond.

One of the PDD’s strengths is the ongoing strategic support from the Steering Group, Advisory Committee, and the Chair over the last year in preparation for the ending of this phase of its work. This assessment acknowledges the significant contributions of this noteworthy strategic support. Furthermore, this assessment notes that there is no lack of available data to

support decision-making towards the next Strategy. There is widespread consensus that the PDD should continue in a similar form, and that it should continue its neutral, convening role, supporting normative work including new thematic priorities. The PDD has an ongoing, important role in informing and helping to shape the global agenda on the nexus between the often-siloed areas of climate change, disaster risk reduction, and human mobility.

While there may be a time in the future when the PDD's core structures, function, form, and hosting arrangements could be revisited, this assessment found that at present there is limited appetite and limited rationale for embarking on drastic changes. The difficulties seem to lie more in the uncertainty about what the PDD should look like in terms of smaller adjustments, potential additions, or other revisions that strengthen the PDD's existing structures, strategic focus, and future approaches to better unlock its potential.

There are interesting and exciting strategic opportunities for the PDD as it nears the end of this phase of its work and begins planning for the important next phase. This assessment demonstrated that the PDD does need to be adapted for the next phase of its work. Importantly, this does not require the creation of a large structure or an external focus beyond its current work and the identified emerging priorities. However, to better capitalise on the strategic potential within the PDD, the capacity of the Secretariat does require revisiting and reassessment. The Secretariat needs to be strengthened to unlock this potential, through the addition of a few key positions. While these new roles require funding, this assessment emphasizes the importance of supporting these new roles financially with ongoing funding. Given the continued high expectations of the PDD, as demonstrated in this assessment, along with new aspirations for its work, bolstered and ongoing support for a strengthened Secretariat is needed. This assessment broadly concurs with the widespread position among stakeholders that the Secretariat should remain small, flexible, and agile, but there is room still to increase its effectiveness and impact in implementing the workplan of PDD.

There are also important decisions to make regarding the structure and function of the Steering Group, Advisory Committee, and Group of Friends. The Steering Group membership remains the key challenge, with questions remaining about the optimal number of members and how to address uneven levels of engagement. The Advisory Committee plays an important role, but their contributions could be more strategic. There are mixed feelings about the Group of Friends and the role and contributions of the group needs to be assessed moving forward.

It is also a key moment to consider developing a longer-term Strategy for the PDD, supported by shorter, flexible workplans. Importantly, a longer-term Strategy does not equate to the institutionalisation of the PDD as a permanent actor on the landscape. However, it would respond to the widely held view among stakeholders that for now, the PDD needs to continue its work, with a sharpened vision for the years ahead. A longer-term Strategy should also enable more time for planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning. A key finding of this assessment was the need for the strengthening of the measurement and communication of the PDD's impact. An adaptive monitoring and knowledge management system showing impact evidence would contribute to a clearer understanding of the PDD's achievements, strengths and challenges for future assessments and strategic reviews.

In terms of the “bigger picture” moving forward, there are risks, threats, and issues that will require ongoing attention. These include, for example, the politicisation and securitisation of migration discourse and practices, the continued emergence of new players in the landscape with associated risks of overlapping mandates, shrinking funding sources, and uncertainty of where development and humanitarian funding will go in the future. Over the course of several months, this assessment has been undertaken against a background of reports of unprecedented heatwaves, drought, wildfires, flooding, and intense storms across the globe, with significant displacement in their wake. As the adverse impacts of climate change continue to intensify, the expertise within the PDD is likely to become even

more valued in addressing these complex challenges.

The PDD remains well-placed, as a relevant and unique State-led initiative, to continue its convening, catalysing, coordinating, and bridging work across emerging and important thematic areas through its expertise and collaboration, while expanding its more strategic and broader review-monitor-remind functions. Ahead of the inception of the PDD, Betts (2015) noted, “*At this stage, the main challenge is not to come up with definitive answers; it is instead to build flexible structures that can continue to advance*

understanding and framing of the issue while still ensuring that people in need of international protection – irrespective of the cause – do not fall through the cracks between existing institutional mandates.” In 2023, this assessment found this statement still valid, especially in terms of the need for a flexible structure that advances the understanding of disaster displacement and protection as well as continuing to support the more complex yet vital implementation of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda and the emerging thematic priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC AREAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PDD’s Continuation as a Neutral, State-led Initiative

During the assessment, almost all stakeholders spoke about the ongoing need for the PDD to continue at this time as a neutral, State-led initiative outside of the UN system. Currently, some of the PDD’s core strengths are rooted in its perceived neutrality and the trust this engenders in stakeholders. The PDD is also valued for its convening power, agility, proactive focus, and its expertise and flexibility in working across thematic areas such as climate change, DRR and human mobility.

This assessment supports the continuation of the PDD outside of the UN system at this time (not precluding the Secretariat being hosted by UNOPS), with continued careful attention to crafting a strategic approach and workplan that is complementary to the work of other actors and partners, and that serves to catalyse action.

Steering Group Membership

This assessment found that most respondents were in favour of a small, strategic increase in the number of members. While the addition of too many new members could pose a risk to the current balance and effectiveness of the Steering Group, some strategic additions could help to revitalise discussions, and bring forward new ideas, new energy, and potentially new resources. However, strategic decisions regarding the ideal size and composition of the Steering Group are closely linked to the issue of Steering Group member engagement discussed below.

This assessment suggests that the Steering Group would likely benefit from a small and strategic increase in the number of members.

Steering Group Member Engagement

The assessment noted that for various reasons, there are currently uneven levels of engagement from Steering Group Member States. The need to bolster this engagement and further enhance the leadership of Member States was highlighted throughout discussions for this assessment. This is a complex issue due to the competing priorities and busy schedules of Member State representatives in Geneva, as well as the difficulties some Member States

experience in relevant coordination with their Capitals, in which issues of climate change, DRR and human mobility are often articulated through different and sometimes siloed departments or institutions.

Linked to the above point, this assessment recommends ongoing discussions and decisions about how best to strengthen member engagement. This could potentially include the agreement and articulation of an informal minimum commitment from Member States, aligned with the forthcoming strategic period. National-level coordination challenges could potentially be supported with enhanced sub-regional and national engagement to assist in bringing focus to the issues and to support a whole-of-government approach.

Input and Contributions of the Advisory Committee

This assessment found widespread recognition of the importance and value of the Advisory Committee. The Secretariat is in close and regular contact with various Advisory Committee members towards the implementation of the PDD workplan, including collaboration towards side events, workshops, training, research, and other activities. Nonetheless, there is a general view that there remains significant untapped potential within the Advisory Committee, with opportunities for the PDD to play an even stronger catalytic role. As a minor point, the assessment also suggests that given its size and current governance function, the Advisory Committee may more closely resemble a “Community of Practice” than what is more commonly referred to as an Advisory Committee.

The assessment suggests that the creation of a Partnerships position within the Secretariat could provide the PDD with the capacity to further explore and pursue potential engagements and opportunities for collaboration with Advisory Committee members. The Partnerships officer could also work more closely with Member States, building stronger bridges between the Steering Group and Advisory Committee.

The assessment suggests that the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee could benefit from a minor review.

Role of the Group of Friends

This assessment found mixed perspectives regarding the value of the Group of Friends. The Group of Friends model played an important role during the Nansen Initiative in building awareness, knowledge and support among a wider group of States than those in the Steering Group which was crucial to the development and endorsement of the NIPA. For the PDD and its workplan there remains strategic value in having the opportunity to reach out to a larger group of States at key moments, however, there are outstanding questions regarding the impact of these meetings on a twice-yearly basis (once in Geneva and once in New York), in comparison with the time and investment involved.

This assessment suggests that if the Group of Friends is to continue, it should be accompanied by changes to enhance its strategic value and impact. There could be a “lighter” model approach, in which meetings are held strategically at key moments, potentially supplemented by more regular, creative, and strategic sharing of information with interested States.

Secretariat Capacity

The assessment found widespread appreciation of the Secretariat’s expertise, professionalism, and many accomplishments in its work towards the strategic objectives of the PDD, particularly given its small size. However, there is also a widespread recognition that much more could be accomplished with relatively limited investment in enhancing capacity within the Secretariat. This assessment strongly agrees with the analysis that the added value of the Secretariat is significant and could be further enhanced with modest investment and support. Additional positions that could be considered to further leverage impact include, for example, Partnerships (elaborated in more detail below), extended Communications capacity, Research, Technical, and M&E. Importantly, such suggestions are made based on the assumption that a significantly larger Secretariat is not required; instead, the

Secretariat should maintain its small size with its associated agility and responsiveness but with the addition of a few more key supportive functions.

Keep a small and agile Secretariat with a few additional posts to support the strategic adaptations. An external capacity needs assessment might provide a better understanding of the capacity needs and gaps based on the Steering Group's strategic direction. These roles could include, for example, a prioritised combination of some of the following: Partnerships, Communications (extended capacity), Research, Technical (Loss and Damage, Planned Relocation, etc.), and M&E & Knowledge Management.

Strengthening of Regional and Sub-regional Work

The assessment noted that currently, the Geneva-based Secretariat is supported by only 1.5 Regional Advisers (in the Pacific and the Americas), despite the strong emphasis that stakeholders place on the importance and impact of work done at the regional and national levels. Steering Group Member States could potentially play a tangible role in championing or supporting Regional Adviser positions in their own regions where positions are currently lacking, either through financial support, secondment, or other forms of support in facilitating the role. Any expanded regional presence would need to be carefully planned to avoid the duplication or overlap of mandates with other partners. However, the PDD's track record of successful and effective engagement at the regional and sub-regional levels, along with the emphasis placed on the importance of this work by stakeholders in this assessment, suggests that this could be an important area of added value for the PDD and its partnerships in the next strategic period.

This assessment notes the widespread support for continuing the work of PDD at the regional and sub-regional levels and strengthening its role at these levels, including the deployment of PDD Regional Advisers in further regions (cited areas included Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, the sub-regions of Africa, and the Middle East).

Consider prioritising an expansion of Regional Adviser presence, where there is (1) regional/sub-regional support, (2) clear hosting options for such a position, (3) a strong relationship with partner agencies to ensure complementarity and avoid overlap, and (4) strategic relevance in relation to the specifics of the new PDD Strategy.

Strategy Length

The assessment supports the view that the articulation of a longer strategy period would be more advantageous to the PDD's functioning than the current three-year strategic cycle. A longer strategic period would provide the opportunity to develop a longer-term vision and more time to implement, monitor, and adapt to the strategic objectives. Importantly, a longer-term strategy could still be accompanied by a shorter, flexible workplan that enables the PDD to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and priorities and maintain the agility that is widely considered to be one of its key assets.

This assessment recommends a review of the strategy period to consider (a) lengthening the strategy period to five or seven years, and (b) creating a long-term vision for 2030 in alignment with other international stock-taking for that year.

Operational Role

Respondents in this assessment presented varied opinions regarding the appropriate role of the PDD in operational or project-based work. Some argued strongly that the PDD should not be involved in the implementation of projects or other "operational work" while others suggested that the project-based or operational work was central to the PDD's effectiveness. This assessment suggests that there is a strong strategic and practical rationale for much of PDD's project-based or operational work, in responding, for example, to the demand for more capacity building and

support to policy development which may also include some “operational” components, particularly at regional or sub-regional levels. In the absence of such work, it will be difficult to carry forward enhanced work in the regions and sub-regions, and funding challenges will be further exacerbated. Importantly, this assessment also found that there may be different interpretations among stakeholders of what “operational” or “project work” means for the PDD.

While this assessment found that there is significant value in the PDD’s contributions to the projects in which it has been involved to this point, the PDD’s future operational role needs careful clarification from the Steering Group. This is particularly important given the widely expressed need for the PDD to remain an initiative that does not compete for funding, but rather catalyses shared opportunities that work towards the implementation of the workplan and amplify the strengths of all partners.

This work could begin with a clarification exercise among Steering Group and Advisory Committee members to ensure a common understanding of what “operational” or “project work” means in the context of the PDD’s work.

Financial Support

While the issue of Secretariat funding is well articulated through various other discussions and reflections, assessment respondents noted the importance of ongoing and stable financial support of PDD’s work. The assessment noted stakeholders’ high expectations of the PDD and aspirations for its future work, in contrast with the relatively limited funding available to support its work. The Steering Group is currently discussing how financial stability for the PDD can best be achieved. The financial sustainability of the PDD’s structure and work is important as this assessment found that the current situation contributes to uncertainty and ambiguity regarding the PDD’s role and future. While the strategy should be set in line with existing and available resources, there are certain issues (engaging on IDPs and loss and damage that might require staff positions) that need more proactive financial planning.

This issue is complex and might require the external input of funding specialists who could guide the PDD to develop a more sustainable approach to the funding of the Secretariat.

While decisions related to funding are the responsibility of Member States, it might be useful to request input on this matter from the Advisory Committee.

Outcomes and Impacts

This assessment found strong support for the strengthening of the PDD’s monitoring and evaluation of its outcomes and impacts. Respondents argued that one of the reasons for this is that if the PDD is more able to show impact there will be more funding and financial sustainability. While the impact of policy and advocacy work is notoriously difficult to assess, as discussed above in the report, there have been interesting advances in documenting impact and contribution. For example, it is important to (1) ensure that data collection is part of the planning and implementation processes, (2) develop a Theory of Change early in the planning process, (3) use M&E tools to collect relevant data throughout the policy influencing work, and (4) select M&E tools that are responsive to changes and allow for ongoing adaptive learning. There are interesting and useful qualitative tools like Most Significant Change (MSC), Case Studies, and Outcomes Mapping to assist in developing a body of evidence of change (or contribution to this change).

Consider the development of a specific M&E strategy to track and measure impact.

Key components for such monitoring include (1) attitudinal change, (2) discursive commitments, (3) procedural changes, (4) policy content, and (5) behaviour change.

This approach requires specific M&E and knowledge management strategies and staffing.

Consider outsourcing this role.



BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

In December 2021, the Steering Group of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) agreed to extend the PDD Strategy 2019-2022 until 31 December 2023.¹ In October 2022, a working group (co-hosted by the European Union [EU], Fiji and Kenya) was established to develop options for the way forward of the PDD. This assessment's objective was to provide a brief overview of the PDD since its launch in May 2016, an appraisal of the PDD's current position, and a discussion of the possible ways forward beyond 2023.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) called for an assessment that looked to the past, present and future in its scope. During the Inception Phase, in further discussion with SDC, it was decided that the assessment would focus on the PDD's key achievements, challenges, relevance, added value, before providing a discussion on the current landscape and the PDD's possible future strategic and operational directions. Importantly, this assessment complements the concurrent work of the Strategy Review Working Group.

APPROACH AND METHODS

The assessment was conducted over 23 days between June and September 2023. The methods included a literature review, observation of the Strategic Retreat (Chateau de Bossey, Vaud, 13 June 2023), introductory meetings in Geneva, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders (remote), follow-up questionnaires and the presentation of findings on the Sounding Board on 31 August 2023. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) contracted the consultants to conduct the assessment and acted as the main point of contact. The 'Sounding Board' for this assessment was constituted of the EU as Chair of the PDD, Kenya as Vice-Chair of the PDD, and Fiji as

previous Chair of the PDD (from 1 January to 30 June 2022), as well as Switzerland.

Given the limitations of time and the availability of stakeholders during the northern hemisphere summer, it was agreed that between 20-25 key stakeholders would be engaged for interviews. However, the total number of assessment respondents was 39, who made over 60 responses comprised of six introductory meetings, 29 in-depth interview responses, and 25 follow-up questionnaires and inputs via email.

Stakeholder selection. A longlist of potential stakeholders was developed early in the consultancy based on background reading and inception discussions. The longlist was designed to cover the three pillars of the ToR (looking back, looking to the present, and looking to the future) with a stronger emphasis on exploring current and future strategic opportunities. From this list, a sample of stakeholders was selected by the consultants. The consultants selected stakeholders who could contribute a diversity of perspectives, taking into consideration factors such as current or previous engagement with the PDD, the capacity of that engagement, geographic representation, and organisational or institutional mandates. Many stakeholders shared institutional positions as well as personal viewpoints while distinguishing between these in discussions.

LIMITATIONS

There were several limitations to this external assessment. One limitation (while a strength of the PDD) is the extensive and diverse network of stakeholders that comprise its global Community of Practice. This, combined with the temporal scope of the assessment (2016-2023), meant that there were substantial numbers of stakeholders who would be likely to provide valuable input into the assessment, but who could not be included in

¹ SDC (8 May 2023). Terms of reference. External Assessment of the Work of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) in Support of the Strategy Review Process of the PDD 2022-2023.

the available time. This limitation was mitigated by adding additional interviews as possible in the timeframe and seeking written input where interviews were not feasible.

Another challenge was that this consultancy was initially conceptualised to take place earlier in 2023, to be launched with the attendance of the selected consultants at the Advisory Committee meeting in Bogis-Bossey in early March. Data collection and the drafting of the report were to culminate in a presentation of findings to the Steering Group on 13 June 2023 in Bogis-Bossey. However, due to the assessment started later than initially planned, this consultancy began in mid-June, with the attendance of one consultant at the Steering Group meeting. The delay led to three limitations. First, the consultants missed the important strategic discussions and opportunity to meet key stakeholders face-to-face at the Advisory Committee meeting. This limitation was mitigated by a careful review of the 2023 Advisory Committee Meeting Workshop Report. Second, the delay meant that concurrent strategy processes and discussions among PDD stakeholders were already well-advanced by the time the consultancy began, creating some risk of duplication of efforts

and challenges for ensuring alignment between processes. This limitation was mitigated by reviewing available documentation regarding other discussions (e.g., the Strategy Working Group meeting) and engaging with stakeholders who were taking part in these discussions. Third, the revised timing meant that primary data collection would necessarily take place in July and early August, coinciding with extended leave time for many stakeholders in the northern hemisphere summer. This limitation was mitigated by extending the anticipated primary data collection window to adjust to the availability of those on leave, where possible.

Finally, stakeholders' names and affiliations are not linked to their input in the report. The report uses the term "external stakeholder" to refer to respondents who are not part of the PDD structures (Steering Group, Secretariat, Envoy of the Chair) and whose primary affiliation is with an external organisation or institution. These divisions are, at times, challenging, as some "external stakeholders" may indeed be considered part of the PDD through Advisory Committee membership.





FINDINGS

FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The PDD was launched in May 2016 at the World Humanitarian Summit to follow up on the work started by the Nansen Initiative (2012-2015) and support the implementation of the recommendations of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda. The Nansen Initiative was a State-led, bottom-up consultative process intended to build consensus on the development of a Protection Agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across international borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change and strengthen the management of disaster displacement risks in countries of origin. The governments of Norway and Switzerland launched the Nansen Initiative in October 2012.

“One of the insights from the Nansen initiative has been recognition of the importance of state-led and regional organisation-focused initiatives, with an advocacy structure outside of the UN.”²

The “Nansen Initiative Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change” (Protection Agenda) was endorsed by more than 109 governmental delegations at a Global Consultation on 12-13 October 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland, which marked the end of the Nansen Initiative. The PDD works toward the implementation of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda.

The PDD is a multi-stakeholder State-led initiative “working towards better protection for people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change.”³ The PDD enhances

cooperation, coordination, and action and promotes initiatives at the national, regional, and international levels and among key stakeholders working with an array of policy and action areas including climate change, development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, and refugee protection.

The PDD’s current Strategy 2019-2022 (extended until the end of 2023) identifies and is organized around four priorities (1) supporting the integrated implementation of **global policy frameworks** on human mobility, climate change action and disaster risk reduction that are relevant for disaster displaced persons; (2) promoting policy and normative development to **address gaps in the protection** of persons at risk of displacement or displaced across borders; (3) facilitating the **exchange of knowledge and strengthen capacity** at the national and regional levels to implement effective practices and instruments that can prevent, reduce and address disaster displacement; and (4) strengthening the **evidence and data** on disaster displacement and its impacts.

PDD STRUCTURE

The PDD is comprised of the following:

- Steering Group
- Envoy of the Chair
- Group of Friends
- Advisory Committee
- Secretariat
- Working Groups.

² Betts, Alexander. “Governance questions for the international community.” Forced Migration Review 49 (2015).

³ PDD. What we do. <https://disasterdisplacement.org/what-we-do/>

Steering Group: A Chair, supported by a Vice-Chair, directs the Steering Group for one and a half years. The Chair leads the Steering Group, while the Vice-Chair takes over from the Chair after the end of its term. The membership is currently comprised of 18 States and the EU.



The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are standing invitees to the Steering Group and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is an *ex officio* member, by virtue of hosting the PDD Secretariat.

Envoy of the Chair: The Envoy of the Chair is an advisory position appointed by the Chair.

Group of Friends: The Group of Friends is an open-ended group and consists of States and regional organisations. It convenes in Geneva and New York.

Advisory Committee: This committee is made up of 148 organizations, institutions and individuals, with a total of 250 individual focal points with expertise in fields such as humanitarian assistance and protection, human rights, migration management, refugee protection, disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and development.

Secretariat: The Secretariat supports the development and implementation of the Platform's activities. The Secretariat is hosted by UNOPS. Currently, the Secretariat is comprised of the Head, a Policy Officer, a Communications Officer (60%), an Administration Officer, an Associate Policy Officer, and an intern. There is also a Project Manager for the PDD Project to Avert, Minimize and Address Disaster Displacement (PAMAD), funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). The Secretariat is hosted in Geneva, with two Regional

Advisers (one hosted in Costa Rica for Latin America and the Caribbean, and one Regional Advisor on Disaster Displacement in the Pacific held jointly with IDMC and funded under an IDMC project.)

FUNCTIONS

Advisory Committee: (1) Provide expert input and strategic advice to the Chair and Steering Group of the Platform, and, as applicable and appropriate, and (2) Support implementation of activities in the Workplan in consultation and coordination with the PDD Chair, the Envoy of the Chair and the Secretariat.

Envoy of the Chair: (1) Provides strategic advice to the Chair and the Steering Group, (2) Represents the Chair in high-level public events (at request), and (3) Chairs the Advisory Committee.

Group of Friends: (1) Strengthen awareness regarding the protection and assistance needs of disaster displaced persons, (2) Disseminate information about PDD's work to a larger audience and, and (3) Activate support for joint advocacy efforts, as appropriate.

Steering Group: (1) Provide political support and commitment to raise awareness on disaster displacement and to disseminate and implement the Protection Agenda, (2) Participate actively in the promotion and development of PDD policy priorities and policy interventions, (3) Provide leadership and guidance in the development of the Strategy of the Platform, and (4) Support implementation of the PDD Workplan at the national and regional level, as applicable.

Secretariat: (1) Support implementation of the PDD Strategy and Workplan under the supervision of the Chair, (2) Coordinate efforts of key stakeholders to follow-up on the Nansen Initiative and implement the Protection Agenda, (3) Coordinate and provide support to members and partners of PDD in the implementation of the PDD Workplan, and (4) Provide policy, research, capacity building, administrative, communication and other types of technical assistance to the Steering Group, Envoy of the Chair and other members and partners of the PDD, as required.

Sources: PDD, Relevant Terms of Reference.

Working Groups. The PDD's Steering Group is currently convening in the **Working Group on DRR**, co-hosted by the EU and the Philippines; the **Working Group on Climate Change**, co-hosted by Bangladesh and France; the **Working Group on Human Mobility**, co-hosted by Germany and Fiji and the **Working Group on Strategy Review** co-hosted by the EU, Fiji, and Kenya. The Advisory Committee has a **Data and Knowledge Working Group**, co-chaired by IOM and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS, STRENGTHS, AND CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Given the scope and diversity of the PDD's achievements since its launch in 2016, this presentation of key achievements is non-exhaustive, and can necessarily only present a high-level overview. The PDD's comprehensive Annual Reports provide well-documented details of achievements, which have been clearly mapped and presented against the strategic priorities.

This section focuses on global and regional policy and advocacy achievements. It also presents a visual overview of key achievements and presents feedback from stakeholders regarding their perceptions of the most significant changes that can be linked to the PDD's work. It should be noted that this section presents some of the PDD's substantive achievements, but not the less tangible (but no less important) achievements that stakeholders raised in this assessment. These include, for example, the PDD's achievements in convening, coordination, networking, capacity building and others. These will be explored later in more detail as strengths and added value.

Advocacy and policy influencing. One of the PDD's main achievements has been its ability to highlight the challenges of human mobility, especially disaster displacement, within relevant global frameworks and processes. The PDD has contributed technical knowledge and expertise to major global policy processes including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including the work of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM ExCom) Task Force on Displacement (TFD). This work has contributed to the inclusion of human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change within key policy documents,

disseminating coherent approaches and messages across processes and different thematic areas of focus. One external stakeholder, for example, observed that the PDD *"defined and supported the inclusion of climate change, disasters, and environmental degradation in the text of the Global Compact for Migration."* COP decisions as well as Global DRR Platforms also include references to disaster displacement.

The PDD has also supported the development of innovative regional law and policy, including, for example, Argentina's Humanitarian Visa and the IGAD Free Movement of Persons Protocol. An external stakeholder noted, *"[The] PDD has brought concrete contributions to policy and legislative developments in various parts of the world."*

Specific outcomes of the PDD's engagement include the GCM, where the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda is explicitly mentioned (paragraph 2) and the inclusion of pathways and humanitarian protection measures (paragraph 5). These outcomes were the result of systemic PDD advocacy as well as drawing on regional PDD-led advances. For example, in November 2016, *A Guide to Effective Practices for RCM Member Countries: protection for persons moving across borders in the context of disasters* was adopted at the regional and sub-regional levels by the Member Countries of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) in Central America, North America and the Dominican Republic.

"PDD was very active in many fora (e.g., COP 25-27, ECOSOC events, webinars) feeding inputs and key messages maintaining a focus on protection aspects of displacement related to disaster and climate change, something very few actors do. As such, it fulfilled its mission but also clearly filled a gap." **External Stakeholder.**

A *Guide on admission and stay* was also developed under the leadership of the Member Countries of the South American Conference on Migration (SACM) with the support of the PDD. At the XVIII SACM Conference in Bolivia in November 2018, Member Countries adopted the *Lineamientos Regionales en Materia de Protección y Asistencia a personas desplazadas a través de fronteras y migrantes en países afectados por desastres de origen natural*. The PDD also contributed to the framing of disaster displacement in the UNSG Action Agenda on Internal Displacement through the submission of the Envoy of the Chair of the PDD on *Internal displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects on climate change*.⁴

A brief **overview of other key achievements** since 2016 is listed in the first graphic below. Respondents were also asked to reflect on the **most significant changes** resulting from PDD's work, a selection of which is presented in the second graphic below.



⁴ <https://disasterdisplacement.org/portfolio-item/internal-displacement-in-the-context-of-disasters-and-the-adverse-effects-of-climate-change-submission-to-the-high-level-panel-on-internal-displacement-by-the-envoy-of-the-chair-of-pdd/>

OTHER KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Advocacy, Communications & Outreach

The PDD has worked with artists to engage different audiences in creative ways at global policy fora and processes, such as the Migration Week in Morocco in December 2018, the Global Platform for DRR in May 2022 in Indonesia, and others. PDD has a joint communications workplan with IOM and UNHCR and disseminates information via website, newsletter, and social media. PDD reaches out to governments in Geneva, New York and capitals to raise awareness of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda and disaster displacement.

Africa

In 2021, the PDD, IOM, UNHCR and other partners conducted a Virtual Workshop Series on disaster displacement which resulted in the elaboration of a Research Agenda and the establishment of the Climate Migration Africa Research Network (CMARN). See also below under East and West Africa and MPTF.

Americas and the Caribbean

The PDD has supported different Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) in South, Central, and North America to develop and adopt guidelines for admission and stay (RCM in November 2016 and SACM in November 2018). The Guidelines are a non-binding regional instrument on the protection of people displaced across borders and migrants in countries affected by disasters linked to natural hazards. The PDD supports the implementation of these guidelines in the Americas, for example, the August 2017 (Panama/Costa Rica) and March 2022 (Ecuador/Colombia) cross-border disaster-displacement simulation exercises.

Asia

The PDD supported the organization of workshops such as: the Regional Knowledge Forum for the Hindukush Himalayas in Nepal in September 2017 (with ICIMOD and IOM); Roundtable on Displacement in the Context of Disasters in Southeast Asia, in Bangkok in December 2017 (with SEI, Chulalongkorn University); Regional Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction, Preparedness and Disaster Displacement, in June 2018 in the Philippines with government representatives from 11 Pacific Island countries.

Capacity and Coordination

The PDD has a decentralized workplan that brings together the work of many partners working across human rights, humanitarian, DRR, climate change, development and other sectors. IOM and UNHCR have dedicated capacity and an MOU to work with the PDD. There are Regional Advisers in the Americas and the Pacific. The PDD engages in the capacity building of key partners and stakeholders in different regions.

Climate Change Governance

The PDD and its partners provided key messages on disaster displacement into the COP 25, 26, and 27 negotiations, where it also organised side events. The PDD supports the implementation of the TFD's Plan of Action and the Five-Year Rolling Workplan of the WIM Excom.

Data and Knowledge

The PDD engages on data and knowledge including the organisation of virtual webinars. IOM and IDMC co-chair the Advisory Committee's Data and Knowledge Working Group. The PDD Advisory Committee has met four times (2016, 2017, 2019, 2023) to exchange research and effective practices. The PDD has commissioned research in gap areas, including the inclusion of human mobility in DRR strategies, Human Rights and slow-onset events, Free movement agreements, Planned Relocation, a baseline mapping of GCM's implementation related to disasters and climate change, etc. It also supported a special edition of the Forced Migration Review on the Climate Crisis and Displacement (Issue 69, 2022).

DRR Governance

The PDD participated in the 5th, 6th and 7th Global Platforms for DRR (Mexico 2017, Switzerland 2019 and Indonesia 2022) as well as numerous Regional DRR Platforms throughout the years, where it provided key messages on disaster displacement into relevant sessions, organized side events, and engaged with partners.

East Africa

The PDD has participated in several Regional Consultative Processes on human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change in the IGAD region. The PDD also supported IGAD in the development of a Free Movement protocol for the region that includes specific provisions for cross-border disaster-displacement situations. See also below under MPTF.

Human Mobility Governance

The PDD provided input to the elaboration of the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees as well as research and implementation support for relevant provisions. It also engages with the GFMD and the UN Migration Network and supports the implementation of the UN Migration Network's Workplan.

Internal Displacement

PDD has engaged with GP20. The Envoy of the PDD has provided input to the development of the Report of the High Level Panel on Internal Displacement and the PDD has followed the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement and the launch of the UNSG's Action Agenda.

Loss and Damage

The PDD engages in discussions on Loss and Damage as well as concrete activities in project countries inter alia through implementing the Project to Avert, Minimize and Address Displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change (PAMAD). The project was launched in 2021, with funding from Norway. The inception phase concluded in 2022 with national consultations with governmental and non-governmental partners in the four project countries (Bangladesh, Fiji, Guatemala, and Kenya). The project will run until the end of 2024.

Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund

The PDD engages with Member States and a number of partners including IOM, the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNHCR, the IGAD Secretariat and the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre in the context of a Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund joint program to address drivers and facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration in the context of disasters and climate change in the IGAD region. The project contains elements of risk modelling but also conducts cross-border disaster-displacement simulation exercises such as in May 2023 (Uganda/Kenya and Ethiopia/Kenya).

Pacific

The PDD is involved in two projects in the Pacific, including the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme and the Pacific Response to Disaster Displacement (PRDD) project. The PDD supported a Regional Consultation in Fiji in December 2022. The PDD, with the support of IOM and partners, is currently supporting the development of a Regional Framework for Human Mobility, under the leadership of Fiji and Tuvalu.

West Africa

IOM and UNHCR have implemented projects on disaster displacement in West Africa and the Sahel with funding from France in support of the PDD Workplan.

Words into Action (WiA) Guidelines

The Words into Action guidelines supporting governments to implement the Sendai Framework with regards to disaster displacement, a checklist and eLearning course Disaster Displacement: How to Reduce Risk, Address Impacts and Strengthen Resilience was developed and rolled out through a partnership between the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the PDD, and UNDRR, with funding from Germany.

Most Significant Changes

“Despite continuing disagreement on terminology (disaster displacement? environmental migration? climate refugees?), the issue is now firmly anchored in the international agenda, and a multitude of actors are working on it.”

“Global policy and regional policy frameworks have important references to the challenges of disaster displacement, from which one can support policy development in gap areas ... The recognition and awareness of the challenges is of a completely different order than if one compares it to 2016 or even before the NIPA.”

“A clear, concise, and evidence-based conceptualization and articulation of the three core pillars or phases⁵ under which action is needed to address disaster and climate related human mobility. This articulation has gained acceptance among a broad set of stakeholders working on the themes; I would argue it is a widely co-opted articulation that many stakeholders communicate in their advocacy and other key message to build knowledge and understanding.”

“The PDD has achieved a relatively high degree of policy coherence across relevant policy processes.”

“The PDD provides high quality expertise in a field where a considerable gap existed previously.”

“The PDD has helped the international community realize that there are concrete legislative and policy actions to be taken to put protection principles in practice. It has not only helped maintain the topic visible but also made it palatable to decision-makers and communities.”

“There are now solid references for disaster displacement in global frameworks.”

“New laws and policies that actively supports the protection of people on the move in the face of disaster.”

“As part of the EU’s mandate as Chair of the PDD, the EU prepared a policy document (Commission Staff Working Document, July 2022) on disaster displacement. This was the first time that the EU services embarked on such an exercise.”

“The partnership between IOM, UNHCR, and the PDD.”

“Supporting the capacity building of the developing countries in knowledge development and data collection.”

“Disaster displacement is now widely recognized and there are several tracks of work for addressing it. This was possible thanks to the PDD and the willingness of its members to move the agenda forward, advocate for its inclusion in relevant multilateral processes and create partnerships for discussing common areas of work and collaboration.”

⁵ Measures that help (1) people at risk of displacement associated with disasters, climate change and environmental degradation to stay in their homes; (2) people affected by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation to move out of harm’s way; and (3) to better protect people who are forced to leave their homes—whether that is within countries or across international borders.

Regional engagement. Following the examples of Other Key Achievements and Most Significant Change above, three examples of achievements at the regional level are summarised. These examples build on the overviews provided above under Other Key Achievements.

One, in the **Pacific**, the PDD has some notable achievements. For example, one, the PDD jointly implemented the PRDD project with NRC and IDMC (as leads) and IOM between September 2019 and December 2022. The PDD provided technical input and support to the development of a Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility with in-country tailored support in Fiji, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu to strengthen the capacity to generate new evidence for disaster displacement planning, prevention, and responding.

Two, the PDD supported the project funded by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) and Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS), together with the International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) since March 2019, inter alia by participating in the joint working group on Climate Mobility co-chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu. The PDD's engagement included regional policy work with in-country technical and operational capacity support through established national and regional mechanisms. The PDD Chairmanship of Fiji also organized a Regional Consultation in the Pacific in December 2022 and Fiji is one of the PAMAD project countries in which implementation on action and support to avert, minimize and address disaster displacement is currently ongoing.

Two, in the **Americas**, PDD has, for example, (1) contributed to disaster displacement, in its various forms, now being part of the regional discourse and main policy processes, in particular, regional policy dialogues on disaster risk reduction (CEPRENAC, DRR regional platforms, and action plans), migration governance (RCPs) and refugee protection (MIRPS), (2) fostered and facilitated

inter-governmental dialogue and cooperation to address the needs of people displaced in the context of disasters leading to the creation of collaborative platforms to advance and adopt concrete instruments, in particular, the new South American Conference on Migration "Network on Migration, Environment, Disasters and Climate Change" and its regional non-binding instruments (regional guidelines adopted in 2018), and the work of the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), and (3) supported countries having adopted normative, legislative initiatives and other instruments (e.g., Argentina's new immigration normative and a chapter on human mobility and climate change in Guatemala's National Adaptation Plan to Climate Change based on the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda.")

Three, respondents highlighted the PDD's notable achievements in the **IGAD** region which included the (1) technical assistance to the drafting of the IGAD Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in IGAD Region that was signed by Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia (the remaining countries are to sign later in 2023), (2) specific inclusion of Article 16 on the IGAD protocol which enjoins IGAD Member States to support persons displaced across international borders by natural disasters, and (3) technical assistance to the IGAD Secretariat, IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, Kenya and Uganda as well as the central and local governments to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the management of disaster displacement in the IGAD Region (binational SOPs) as evidenced in the MPTF project.

This assessment found notable support for greater regional coverage, for example, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, the sub-regions of Africa, and the Middle East as well as strengthening the Pacific. More regional focal points would support relevant national work.

Attribution. A common assessment finding was the difficulty in being able to attribute changes and impact to the work of the PDD. This is not an uncommon issue for organisations and platforms working in the area of influencing and informing policy as well as advocacy: "Activities directed at

policy change are, in general, very hard to monitor and evaluate. As policy change is often a complex process, it is difficult to isolate the impact of a particular intervention from the influence of other factors and various actors.”⁶ Moreover, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools for policy and advocacy can be difficult to use.

Despite these difficulties, various M&E tools are available that show evidence for the influence of advising, advocacy, and lobbying.

KEY DIMENSIONS OF POSSIBLE POLICY IMPACT

Framing debates and getting issues on to the political agenda: this is about **attitudinal change**, drawing attention to new issues and affecting the awareness, attitudes or perceptions of key stakeholders.

Encouraging **discursive commitments** from states and other policy actors: affecting language and rhetoric is important to, for example, promote recognition of specific groups or endorsements of international declarations.

Securing **procedural change** at domestic or international level: changes in the process whereby policy decisions are made, such as opening new spaces for policy dialogue.

Affecting **policy content**: while legislative change is not the sum total of policy change, it is an important element.

Influencing **behaviour change** in key actors: policy change requires changes in behaviour and implementation at various levels in order to be meaningful and sustainable.

Source: Jones (2008).

The ongoing use of qualitative tools, for example, Case Studies, Most Significant Change (MSC) and Outcomes Mapping have also proven useful for tracking policy work and advocacy. It should be noted that these approaches require specific M&E and knowledge management strategies. Specific associated recommendations are provided at the end of the report.

STRENGTHS AND VALUE-ADDED

The assessment found widespread convergence regarding the perceived strengths and value-added of the PDD since its launch. These strengths are discussed under the headings of (1) state-led

initiative, (2) convening and coordination, (3) bridging work across thematic areas, and (4) expertise and longevity. This section also includes some discussion of future considerations, which are later summarised with recommendations in the Discussion and Conclusion.

State-led Initiative. The PDD’s **character as a State-led initiative** is perceived by almost all consulted stakeholders to be a strength at present. Stakeholders reflected that the State-led nature of the PDD enables high-level discussions, buy-in and the building of State support on key themes at a structural level. This design also enables the development of State champions on specific themes.

While acknowledging the **expertise, institutional strengths and commitment of the relevant UN agencies** on human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change, the majority of the stakeholders suggested that the PDD’s current positioning outside of the UN system enables it to be **agile and flexible**, without some of the political challenges, institutional competition, and delays that can sometimes be linked with more prescribed institutional mandates, which may impose constraints, particularly when engaging on complex and politically difficult issues.

Most stakeholders highlighted that the PDD’s current positioning allowed it to maintain a **clear and consistent focus and specific discussion related to disaster displacement**, without the risk of shifting or diluted priorities, or major institutional changes. One Member State respondent said, “We see [disaster displacement] is a focused discussion at PDD. That’s why we have this level of confidence and engagement.” Another Member State respondent suggested that while there might be a time in the future when the work currently done by the PDD could be absorbed into another agency, this time did not seem to be imminently at hand. This respondent shared, “If you want to keep the subject [of disaster displacement] on the agenda, I have a feeling it would be harder to be pushed through another

⁶ ODI (Feb 2011). A guide to monitoring and evaluating policy influence. Background Note (Harry Jones). https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/m_e_policy_influence.pdf

agency.” One stakeholder noted that the PDD’s current positioning allowed it to maintain continuity, noting that, *“It is very hard to hold onto this cross-cutting expertise where there are not dedicated staff in place, and there are shifting agendas.”*

Convening and Coordination. The assessment found that the PDD currently plays a **highly valued, transparent, trusted, and neutral “convening role”** bringing together interested States, academics and researchers, UN agencies and civil society representatives. One external stakeholder suggested that the PDD brings together *“different parts of the puzzle that wouldn’t come together if it weren’t for some neutral and external convener.”* Another external stakeholder suggested that this convening work enabled those in the PDD’s networks to better understand what other actors were working on, which helped them **avoid duplication** of efforts.

“They [the PDD] are an in-between entity and have a very specific place or role where they can engage with a lot of actors at different levels. They can help connect the dots informally and more formally, so I think they have a very specific situation and niche.”
External Stakeholder.

The PDD operates within a global landscape in which **coordination is challenging and often lacking** among the many actors working on issues of human mobility, disaster displacement, and climate change.⁷ A lack of coordination creates barriers to effective planning, norm development and knowledge sharing, and misses potential synergies between key actors. The PDD’s **coordination through its network and partnership approach is valued** for creating opportunities for different actors and institutions to work together collaboratively. One stakeholder shared that this collaboration and an ability to *“catalyse, energize and bring people together”* was key to its ability to **achieve so much with relatively limited resources**. Another stakeholder emphasised that credit for

this strong coordination lies with all States, actors and agencies involved in the PDD, noting that, *“Sincere cooperation, which is rare, translates into impact.”* This stakeholder also shared that a key success of the PDD is that *“we manage to all work together and we sincerely want other players to continue, because we achieve much more together, and we know the value of working together.”*

In this context it was noted that the fact that the PDD Secretariat is hosted by UNOPS enables it to fulfil this neutral, coordinating function, being outside the UN system and yet connected to it.

At the same time, the PDD’s close engagement in various policy spaces allows it to act as a **bridge for NGOs** that may not be as well-connected or well-versed on contemporary policy debates, advances, and gaps. An external stakeholder commented, *“It is really hard to be a respected organisation for both the big UN organisations and civil society and academia, and I think the PDD plays that role well.”*

“I really would not diminish the importance of this role, and many people do. We absolutely need the glue between all these different actors to take us in the right direction, and they need to be neutral.”
External Stakeholder.

Another perceived added value of the PDD’s convening power is its strong relationships with key researchers and academics, which allows for a **streamlining of the time between knowledge production and the incorporation of this knowledge into relevant policy processes**. One external stakeholder highlighted the goodwill that exists for PDD and a prevalent sense of working towards the common good among the PDD’s Community of Practice, which encourages researchers’ engagement and collaboration as they can see the impact of their contributions in the formation of messaging and inputs to policy processes. In discussions towards this assessment, one Member State representative commented that the PDD’s **ability to reach out to such a broad**

⁷ Aleinikoff, T.A. & Martin, S. (25 July 2022). The responsibility of the international community in situations of mobility due to environmental events. Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility, 2022.

Community of Practice was *“a precious thing that no Member State could ever do.”*

The **less formal nature** of the PDD was also described by some Member State representatives as enabling dynamic and rich exchanges with colleagues, including other Member State representatives. One Steering Group member said, *“As many colleagues as possible can be involved and step into the conversation. This makes it rich because, otherwise, we are dealing with formal perspectives that come down from official points of view.”*

Without the constraints of a strict institutional mandate, the PDD is also well-positioned to place **a strong emphasis on process** in its work. For example, in conversations with governments, the PDD can openly explore governments’ interests and issues, leading to strong levels of government ownership and the development of a rich understanding within the PDD of the specific challenges in different regions. Others highlighted that the flexibility and adaptability of the PDD’s workplan enable it to focus not on projects, but on the identification and addressing of gaps in the implementation of the Protection Agenda.

Bridging work across thematic areas. Another commonly cited strength of the PDD, related to its convening power, is its **ability to formulate and feed consistent messaging** related to disaster displacement into policy discussions and processes **across areas such as human mobility (migration, displacement, and planned relocation), climate change, and disaster risk reduction.** Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of the PDD’s bridging work across these thematic areas, which may otherwise remain disconnected or siloed.

A respondent from one Member State spoke about the useful role of the PDD in developing messages across these thematic areas that were “digestible” for them, valuing their **“translation work” across the siloes** and between different stakeholders. Another Member State respondent highlighted that they do not have many venues where colleagues from these different spaces overlapped, *“where we meet all together, where we hear our colleagues, and they hear us.”* The PDD

structures were valued for enabling the translation and breaking down of highly sensitive and political issues into technical questions with which States can meaningfully engage, its *“review-monitor-remind”* functions.

Expertise and longevity. The stakeholders in this assessment also valued the **expertise within PDD structures.** This included the expertise and experience among Steering Group members, but also within the Advisory Committee, Envoy of the Chair, and Secretariat. Stakeholders spoke of the rarity of the **“deep knowledge” that has accrued over time** within the PDD, even while the landscape of actors working in related thematic areas has become more populated in recent years. Stakeholders suggested that the visibility of the Envoy of the Chair was a strong added value for the PDD. The **institutional history** that resides within the PDD was widely valued among respondents, including its linkages to the Nansen Initiative, as well as the consistency of the well-respected staff within the Secretariat.

“You need an organisation, a platform, or a group of people that can say hey, we discussed this ten years ago and a lot of this has been 80% settled. But there has been progress, and we have to not slide backwards. [The] PDD keeps this dynamic. You need it to keep the conversation progressing.”
Stakeholder.

The PDD Secretariat and the Envoy of the Chair continue to serve as **trusted and important sources of information and expertise**, with stakeholders valuing the accessibility, openness, and availability of up-to-date and specialised information. This expertise is also employed to assist stakeholders in building their conceptual understanding of disaster displacement and to promote rigour of terminology in a complex area. The PDD’s **capacity to identify gaps, and then gather and compile experts and develop and disseminate research papers** among States, UN agencies and NGOs was also noted as an important added value. Further, Stakeholders **appreciated the communications work** of the PDD, particularly

its information-sharing role, its engagement with artists, and its “amplification” of the work of others.

The Secretariat also plays a key coordination role in **leveraging the extensive experience and expertise within the Advisory Committee**, not only through the Advisory Committee meetings but also through its day-to-day work towards implementing the PDD workplan.

Respondents often noted that the expertise within the PDD’s structures was central to its effectiveness as an initiative. Commonly, respondents highlighted the PDD’s many achievements and accomplishments, especially considering the small size of the Secretariat and the relatively small number of Member States. An external said, *“I think that the PDD, more than any organisation that I have worked with, is good bang*

for the buck.”

“They punch above their weight. It’s remarkable. Part of it, and not by chance or coincidence, is that they attract good human resources.” **External Stakeholder.**

Another related value-added of the PDD is its role in providing **training and mentorship for young professionals**. One UN agency stakeholder indicated, for example, that interns trained through the PDD have often found positions in IOM or other Advisory Committee members, noting, *“Their capacity to train people is of great value.”* Another stakeholder suggested that the fact that people moved in this way between organisations was an indicator of strong cooperation and success.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

This section presents the assessment’s findings related to both challenges and opportunities in the PDD’s work, with relevance to the current strategic discussions. These challenges relate to (1) the PDD’s structure, (2) strategy and focus, (3) funding, (4) COVID-19, (5) engaging affected populations, and (6) mainstreaming gender and youth. As with the previous section, this discussion includes some reflection on future opportunities or considerations, which are summarised later in the report with recommendations.

Structure

Steering Group. As a State-led initiative, the effectiveness and impact of the PDD’s endeavours are closely connected to the Member States’ leadership, ownership and engagement that steer its work. However, there remain **outstanding strategic questions regarding the number, composition, representation, and engagement of the Member States** on the Steering Group. Some Member States have expressed that they value the agility, flexibility, and relative informality that a small group of States allows, noting that

substantial growth in the number of Member States could challenge these perceived strengths. There was also a view that the addition of new Members should not present a challenge to the good collaboration that currently exists. However, during the assessment, some stakeholders highlighted that there were **important absences of leading states that might add further weight and substance to the PDD’s work**. An opposite view was also put forward by a small number of stakeholders during the assessment, suggesting that a smaller Steering Group consisting of very active and engaged members might be more useful than a larger group.

A regularly cited challenge for the PDD was the question of **how to further strengthen the Member States’ engagement, ownership, and leadership**, and how to enhance their role in building the visibility of the PDD’s work. A common perspective was that there are **currently too few Member States that are actively, consistently, and substantively engaged**. One Steering Group respondent shared that at times, the Steering Group appears to be too “passive” and “more like

a network of diplomats, a little unsure sometimes of its purpose.” Some respondents suggested that the concrete roles and responsibilities of the Member States were not always clear and suggested that the articulation of a minimum level of commitment or engagement from all Member States could be useful.

Some argued for the need for a more dynamic Steering Group, bolstered by expertise from within countries, where Member State representatives bring relevant discussions to the table and set agendas with a higher degree of ownership. One Steering Group respondent suggested that there could be more opportunities at meetings for members to bring to the table concrete issues or projects that could potentially be supported by donor countries at the PDD table or that could be potentially supported through linkages to other funding opportunities.

One barrier to enhanced levels of ownership and engagement is the **heavy pressures and demands on the schedules of Geneva-based Member State diplomatic representatives**, which may make it difficult to prioritise PDD-related work or meetings. Another barrier is the challenge faced by some Geneva-based diplomats in relation to coordination at the Capital level, particularly where responsibilities for DRR, migration, and climate change remain siloed across different departments or institutions in the Capitals. One stakeholder suggested that it might be useful to bolster the PDD’s travel budgets to enable more Capital representation at Steering Group meetings, or to host more virtual meetings to specifically target and include Capital colleagues.

Envoy of the Chair. As noted above, the assessment found **widespread respect and appreciation for the professionalism and expertise within this role**. One Steering Group stakeholder expressed a view that not all Chairs may wish to have an Envoy, or that the selection and appointment of the Envoy could be done differently, as rotating Chairs may have different preferences regarding this role. However, it is important to note that in the current structure, it

is optional for any Chair to appoint an Envoy.

Group of Friends. The assessment found **diverging perspectives regarding the value of the Group of Friends**. According to the Group of Friends’ ToR, its objectives are “to strengthen awareness regarding the protection and assistance needs of disaster displaced persons, to disseminate information about PDD’s work to a larger audience and to activate support for joint advocacy efforts, as appropriate.”⁸ It is open-ended and meant to convene in Geneva and New York at regular intervals set as appropriate for each context. The Group of Friends is a mechanism to broaden the PDD’s reach beyond the Steering Group’s membership. To date, the Group of Friends has convened seven times since its inception in 2019, including remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under its current co-Chairs (the EU and Morocco), the Group of Friends has aimed to meet twice annually, once each in Geneva and New York.

Some stakeholders argued that while it may be difficult to quantify results, the **role of the Group of Friends in raising awareness and sharing information was nonetheless valuable**. Others highlighted that the Group of Friends was a useful structure for the PDD to be able to access when needed (for example, when disseminating key messages for global discussions). One Member State respondent shared, *“We would like to maintain the Group of Friends. It can be very beneficial for advancing the cause of the PDD.”*

However, other stakeholders argued that presently, the **Group of Friends’ value appeared to be limited**. One Member State respondent, for example, shared, *“In the very busy environments of New York and Geneva, getting people to attend can be difficult – sometimes we do not see the value. I think the Group of Friends is something we need to re-look at.”*

The ongoing **value and role of the Group of Friends should be explicitly considered against the new objectives** of the next PDD Strategy. Overall, there was support for the Group of Friends’ continuation but agreement that some change was needed. Many argued that there is

⁸ PDD (17 Sep 2019). TOR Platform on Disaster Displacement Group of Friends.

room to consider **how the Group of Friends can be more strategically utilised to enhance its value and impact**. Some, for example, suggested a “lighter version” of the Group of Friends, that could be convened at key, strategic moments. As one stakeholder put it, *“In terms of having the possibility to reach out when we have something to say, it makes sense.”* Others suggested that while the existing PDD newsletter was useful, there could be more regular, creative, and strategic sharing of information with the Group of Friends.

Advisory Committee. As noted above, the **Advisory Committee was widely cited by stakeholders as an important added value of the PDD**. While the Secretariat works closely and regularly with Advisory Committee members towards the implementation of the PDD workplan (for example, when organising side events and workshops, and commissioning research and training), many respondents also highlighted the Advisory Committee as a **source of continued untapped potential**. One attendee at the Advisory Committee meeting, for example, wrote in their meeting evaluation feedback, *“The PDD is special and effective because it is State-led but coming up with better ways of channelling input from civil society would strengthen it.”* Some stakeholders argued that the richness of experience and expertise could be tapped into more effectively by building stronger linkages and connections between the Advisory Committee and other PDD structures, including the Steering Group, and by holding more regular meetings and providing more direct input into ongoing discussions.⁹ Another question raised in the external assessment is whether the Advisory Committee is appropriately named, given its size and role in the PDD architecture, suggesting that a **review of the Advisory Committee’s ToR may be appropriate** moving forward.

Some stakeholders also noted that while the growth of the Advisory Committee was positive, it also changed the quality of the exchange that was possible. One stakeholder shared, *“I don’t get the*

kind of exchange that I find so valuable, where we can hash things out.” Finally, some external stakeholders expressed that there was a lack of clarity regarding how the input from the Advisory Committee was taken upwards and used in the Steering Group.

Secretariat. As outlined in the section above on the PDD’s strengths and added value, the **commitment and work of the small Secretariat is widely valued and highly praised** among stakeholders. While the small, lean team is valued for its expertise, professionalism and agility, most stakeholders suggested that there may be further potential within the current PDD structures that could be tapped and developed with relatively small additional commitments.

Multiple stakeholders identified the part-time nature of the Communications role within the Secretariat as an area that could potentially be further supported for enhanced results. Acknowledging the strong and impactful work being done in Communications, some felt that, if well conceptualized and targeted, a modest increase in resources to support the PDD’s communications efforts would likely represent a worthwhile investment. For example, additional technical communication capacity could support web content creation, media relations, and strategic social media efforts.

There was also reflection on the potential within the PDD, given their convening power and large Community of Practice, to **tap into the powerful communication capacity of the many organisations and institutions** with whom they engage. As one stakeholder said, *“They do it, but I’m not sure they do enough of that. Maybe with more resources they could do more.”* Similarly, another stakeholder shared that while the current communications work was excellent, there was more that could be done to create awareness of the work being done outside of the PDD, noting, *“The PDD should continue to be a megaphone amplifier. [...] This is one added value that helps*

⁹ Importantly, the hosting of in-person Advisory Committee meetings was not possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. The March 2023 meeting in Bogis-Bossey, therefore, was the first time this group had met in person since 2019. In the lifespan of the PDD, the Advisory Committee has met four times, in 2016, 2017, 2019 and 2023.

keep the topic high on the agenda.”

Stakeholders in this assessment also highlighted what they felt were current gaps in capacity within the Secretariat, such as limited human resource capacity in relation to research and analysis. While stakeholders highlighted the PDD’s important role in undertaking or facilitating research and analysis that addresses specific knowledge gaps in under-researched areas, some argued that there were capacity gaps within the Secretariat. Others contrasted the current research capacity with the capacity that existed under the Nansen Initiative. One stakeholder, for example, suggested that the *“PDD in some ways is still riding the coat tails of that [research] – but how long until that runs out?”* Others highlighted that with potential upcoming strategic areas of focus such as planned relocation or loss and damage, there are **important knowledge and data gaps that the PDD could address**, but that additional research and analytical capacity would likely be required.

Along with communications and research capacity, some stakeholders also suggested that there could be room within the Secretariat for a role such as a Partnership Officer that focused on **leveraging the value of the PDD’s extensive Community of Practice through the building of partnerships**, and the forging of even stronger connections between civil society, researchers, academics, UN agencies and States across cross-cutting thematic areas such as human mobility, climate change and DRR. Such a position could help address input from the Advisory Committee regarding the need for enhanced civil society engagement and calls for stronger connections between States and the expertise embedded in the Advisory Committee. Respondents suggested other possible Secretariat positions including Communications (extended capacity), Research, Technical (Loss and Damage, Planned Relocation, etc.), and M&E and Knowledge Management. This list is indicative and does not require all the positions; it would require prioritisation in line with the current strategy review.

Strategy and Focus

Short-term strategy. Since its launch in 2016, the

PDD’s workplan has aligned with three-year strategic periods, 2016-2019 and 2019-2022, with the latter extended by one year to 2023 due to implementation delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This three-year cycle followed the format of the PDD’s predecessor, the Nansen Initiative. In this assessment, while some viewed the three-year cycles as appropriate and useful, the **relatively short strategic periods were more commonly viewed as a challenge for the PDD** at this point in its development. Of practical concern was the significant time, energy and resources that are involved in developing the strategic direction of the PDD for such relatively short periods. Of substantive concern was that the short-term nature of the strategy made it difficult for the PDD to develop a longer-term vision, which many argued could help sharpen its focus and further enhance the effectiveness of its work.

“Maybe that short-term perspective is a trap, in the sense that when you are in the political atmosphere, things move fast, and you get a sense that things could be totally different in three years. This is true, but not true. Then, in three years, you are faced again with the same questions and the same conversations. Raising the big questions about the future of the PDD is time consuming.” **Member State Respondent.**

Part of the challenge faced by the PDD is that its mandate is much broader and more open-ended than the Nansen Initiative, which culminated in the Protection Agenda. Formed to follow up on the work of the Nansen Initiative and to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Protection Agenda, there remains no clear “endpoint” to the PDD’s work. As one stakeholder noted, *“When is the mandate of the PDD fulfilled?”*

As the earlier discussion of the PDD’s strengths and added value demonstrates, a large majority of stakeholders highlighted the current value and relevance of the PDD in the landscape of displacement in the context of disasters and climate change. Many argued that with the **impacts of climate change-related disasters**

becoming more intense and widespread, the PDD's expertise and convening power were likely to become even more relevant. However, this view sits somewhat uneasily alongside the PDD's current situation, in which its form, function and even its existence have been debated in strategic discussions leading up to the 2019-2023 strategy, and again in 2023 leading up to the next strategic period. There is also a general reluctance on the part of some key stakeholders to see the PDD transition into a long-term or permanent institution in Geneva. At the same time, some external stakeholders shared that they had never considered that the PDD could be anything but a long-term actor.

While some degree of reflection and discussion is critical for maintaining relevance and adapting to changes in the landscape, many respondents consulted in this assessment felt that there was room to consider **adjusting the strategic period to something longer, while avoiding the creation of a permanent or long-term institution**. One stakeholder shared, *"Maybe we are a prisoner of custom. We think [the strategy] should be three years, but maybe we need to be thinking differently."*

A longer-term strategy, for example, for five years (or with a longer-term vision of seven (2030) or 10 years) would enable the PDD Member States to set a longer-term strategic vision but would also build confidence among external stakeholders that could contribute to the development of longer-term, forward-looking strategic partnerships. Some raised a concern that a longer-term strategy risked excluding the input of new Member States who may come on board and may not allow for an adequately flexible response to new and emerging issues in a quickly changing landscape. However, having a shorter, flexible, and adaptable workplan and objectives (e.g., for three years) mapped to a longer-term Strategy could resolve those challenges, while ensuring that potential new Member States were broadly aligned with a longer-term strategic PDD vision.

Regional, sub-regional and national level work.

The importance of regional, sub-regional and national level work for supporting the translation of global norms and policies into practice has been recognised within the PDD since its inception. The 2016-2019 Strategic Framework, for example, stated that the PDD Platform "in particular through the regional members within the Steering Group, will support national or regional efforts to implement the Protection Agenda, building on the work of the Nansen Initiative Regional Consultations."¹⁰ The 2019-2023 Strategy went further to specifically include a strategic priority that the PDD was to "Facilitate exchange of knowledge and strengthen capacity at the national and regional levels to implement effective practices and instruments that can prevent, reduce and address disaster displacement."

The earlier discussion of some of the PDD's key achievements illustrates that much has been accomplished at sub-regional and regional levels. Currently, however, **the PDD's regional presence is limited** to one Regional Adviser for Latin America and the Caribbean in Costa Rica, as well as well as a Regional Adviser on Disaster Displacement in the Pacific shared with IDMC.

Respondents in this assessment commonly highlighted that the **PDD's future effectiveness and potential for impact were closely related to intensified regional work**. As one Member State respondent shared, the regional level *"is where the expertise and technical knowledge is needed."* An external stakeholder argued that in the next strategic phase, the PDD could *"reorganise for more impact at the national and regional levels."* Another external stakeholder said, *"One criticism is, if you're based in Geneva, it is so hard to have your finger on the pulse and be respected at the national and regional level. So, there is a deficit in more regional or national staff and support."*

In terms of discussions of enhanced regional work, there were some calls for the **strengthened engagement of all Member States in regional work**. One stakeholder commented, *"Steering Group members should also be champions for their regions. Could their role not include something at*

¹⁰ PDD. Strategic Framework 2016-2019.

the regional level?”

While support for an increased regional presence for the PDD is widespread among stakeholders, any expansion would need to concurrently consider (1) adequate funding support and resourcing, (2) buy-in and support from regional stakeholders, (3) ensuring the clarity of the PDD’s role to avoid overlap and potential competition with partner organisations, and (4) strategic clarification of the PDD’s position on “operational” or project-based work, as opposed its policy and normative work. These considerations are discussed in further detail below.

Project-based or operational work. In recent years, the PDD has been engaged to various degrees in a range of projects (e.g., PRDD, WiA, PAMAD, the Migration MPTF project and others). A larger focus on project work coincides with the 2019-2023 Strategy, which specifically tasked the PDD with facilitating the exchange of knowledge and strengthening capacity at the national and regional levels. In this external assessment, stakeholders shared **very different opinions regarding the PDD’s optimal role in project-based work**. Importantly, however, the assessment also found that there appear to be different interpretations among stakeholders of what “operational” or “project work” means for the PDD, suggesting that a clarification exercise within the Steering Group or Steering Group Working Group on Strategy Review could be useful.

Some external stakeholders expressed that at present, the process through which projects were taken on did not always seem clear. This included, for example, whether projects were strategically driven by the Chair or active Member States, or whether they were opportunities that had arisen and been taken up by the PDD.

Some stakeholders suggested that while there was a useful role for support and partnership on different projects, the PDD should avoid taking a lead role in project management and implementation due to the risks of creating competition and the potential duplication of costs and efforts. From this perspective, the PDD should avoid the risk of becoming a stakeholder itself,

with its own interests and mandates. Several stakeholders highlighted that one of the central reasons for the success of the PDD was that it had largely, so far, been able to avoid competition as well as the perception of it. A Member State respondent shared, *“What is special about the PDD is that it is not an institutional actor that competes for the same resources as others.”* Some emphasised the value of the PDD continuing to be a place where *“competition is left at the door.”*

However, the assessment also found strong support among some respondents for the continued engagement of the PDD in project work. Some argued that to date, the work of the PDD at the regional and national levels has not been in competition with other agencies and has largely been related to policy and capacity development support, aligning closely with its strategic priorities. Some respondents suggested that this work is useful and potentially necessary to supplement the financial means to enable PDD’s continued work as a policy platform, noting as well that on-the-ground experience at regional and sub-regional levels strengthens the experience and insights that can be brought forward into global policy processes and fora.

The collaborative nature of the projects in which PDD engages was also noted by some as a strength. One stakeholder, for example, referred to the PDD’s joint project development as *“a strong approach,”* adding that *“when we fundraise together, the projects give capacity to all of us together, as well as assisting with positioning and visibility.”* This stakeholder also highlighted the importance of the political vision of champion countries in supporting shared projects or initiatives that amplify effectiveness. Given the small size of the Secretariat, some viewed these partnerships with organisations that have fundraising power and capacity as important to the ongoing strategic approach of the PDD, to the amplified benefit of all. Others suggested that the leanness and agility of the PDD, along with the high levels of trust it enjoys, means that it is well-positioned to respond quickly and flexibly to the needs and proposals of the Steering Group.

With continued and strong calls from many

stakeholders for the PDD to enhance its regional and subregional work, **there remain important strategic questions for the Steering Group regarding the optimal role of the PDD in project-related work.**

Funding

A decentralised funding structure enables the PDD to work flexibly and in partnership towards the implementation of its workplan (See Annex 3 for the PDD Donors 2016-2023). However, the **resourcing or funding of the PDD was one of the main challenges highlighted** by stakeholders in this assessment, particularly for the Secretariat's salary and operational costs. Some highlighted that in general, there is often a reluctance among donors to fund core operational and salary costs.

As presented in detail above, this assessment found widespread agreement regarding the ongoing value of the PDD and its many significant accomplishments with relatively modest financial inputs. As one Member State respondent shared, *"The PDD, as the only State-led mechanism of its kind, is an important voice whose high-quality output is remarkable, especially in light of the comparatively low expenses and personnel capacities."* Despite this common view, the funding of the PDD Secretariat has been largely provided by only a small number of donors. Nonetheless, another Member State respondent felt that very few Steering Group members were of the view that all members should come forward to fund the work of the Secretariat.

"We have a very high expectation from the PDD, but the funding doesn't always match the expectations [...] We want it to exist and continue its work, but it is not getting the necessary funds to implement these lofty objectives." **Member State Respondent.**

Some Member States and other stakeholders suggested that **funding discussions would likely be easier once there was further clarity regarding the desired function and strategy of the PDD moving forward.** Others suggested that working towards enhanced ownership, leadership, and engagement

of Member States might also lead to revitalised funding commitments. Others suggested that a small, strategic expansion of the Steering Group membership could also bolster resource potential. As one Member State respondent shared, *"I think that if the role is clear enough to Member States, there would be a moment where the financing would not be viewed as a challenge, but as an opportunity [...] We don't yet have the sense that there is no money for the PDD."* Another Steering Group respondent suggested that increased leadership and ownership by Member States would likely boost the profile of the PDD and result in more resources. Many stakeholders shared the view that the PDD needed adequate funding to remain *"as big as necessary but as small and lean as possible."*

In discussions towards this assessment, various **potential funding options were raised.** Some stakeholders spoke about the possibility of a mechanism for assessed contributions from Member States, although others expressed concern that this could lead to unbalanced influence from the larger contributors, upsetting the equitable, collaborative dynamics that characterise the current format. As one Member State respondent shared, *"There is a fear that in that case [assessed contributions], maybe our voices will not have the same say."*

One Steering Group member suggested that secondments might be a useful option, particularly if specific needs were clearly articulated and presented. Another stakeholder reflected on the value of previous donor supported PDD liaison positions that were hosted within IOM and UNHCR. Some suggested that philanthropic, foundation, and private sector funds could represent other potential funding sources. However, others cautioned that foundations might be less likely to fund a State-led initiative and that such funding may be associated with governance complications and risks for the PDD, given its governance. However, there may be room for foundation or private sector funding to support some of the PDD's activities, including, for example, its convening work. Some suggested that a funding focal point or supported development funding position within the Secretariat might

provide some capacity to pursue other potential funding avenues while noting that such a position would itself require resourcing.

COVID-19

The **COVID-19 pandemic, which began in early 2020, has had a substantial impact on the work of the PDD.** Containment measures implemented by governments (such as travel bans, entry restrictions, quarantines, social distancing and limits on the size and format of meetings and events) meant that **many PDD activities planned for 2020 and 2021 were particularly impacted.** Importantly, the flexibility of the PDD's workplan, its decentralized funding structures that enabled the addition of new projects or programmes, and its ability to adapt as much as possible to virtual formats, helped the initiative to continue and advance its work through the challenges of COVID-19. While not a major theme in the assessment, some stakeholders reflected that the PDD, including the entirety of its members, had some important work ahead to *"regain its energy and vibrancy, some of which it has lost during the COVID period."*

Engaging affected populations

The assessment noted calls from some Advisory Committee members and other stakeholders for **increased attention to the engagement of affected populations in the PDD's work.** In this assessment, stakeholders acknowledged the importance of participation and noted the challenges and complications in such engagement

in high level policy settings, which remain the focus of much of the PDD's work. The risks of oversimplification and harmful tokenism in any potential engagement would need to be carefully considered and avoided.

Mainstreaming gender and youth

As part of the literature review, this assessment noted an Advisory Committee recommendation to mainstream gender and youth in the PDD's strategy moving forward. During the interviews, it was established that the Secretariat utilizes whole-of-society approaches and encourages local and national governments to involve civil society and all stakeholder groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, etc. Community engagement and disaggregated data form part of many of the PDD's key messages, project proposals, and principles in designing events. There are several gender champions in the Advisory Committee and the PDD seeks to involve them as well as youth representatives as appropriate (e.g., at regional/national consultations and COP side events, etc.).

The PDD does not have a specific plan for mainstreaming gender and youth. Given the fact that the PDD works through a partnership approach, it is not clear what such a plan might add to its work. Stakeholders during the interviews were not able to add anything substantive to this discussion. This might be an area for further discussion in the Advisory Committee.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE AND FUTURE ISSUES

The discussion of the current landscape is comprised of (1) key changes in the landscape, (2) current stakeholders, and (3) emerging thematic priorities.

KEY CHANGES IN THE LANDSCAPE

The landscape in which the PDD operates has changed significantly since its launch. There are

significantly more actors and institutions working in or increasingly focused on human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change and the nexus with related areas. While the range of these new actors and changes renders their full exploration beyond the scope of this assignment, a brief, non-exhaustive overview follows.

Within the UN system, the focus continues to strengthen and grow in relation to these thematic areas and their interconnections. For example, the IOM's Migration, Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction (MECR) Division, formed at the beginning of 2015 as a dedicated institutional unit to address the migration, environment, and climate nexus, is now well-established.¹¹ The UNHCR has published its own Strategic Framework for Climate Action (referencing its collaboration with PDD and others), in which it sets out the parameters for its response to the growing, global climate emergency, including sudden and slow-onset disasters.¹² In January 2020, the UNHCR also appointed a Special Advisor on Climate Action. IOM developed their own MECR strategy and appointed a Special Adviser within their administration. In partnership with UNDRR, work towards the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 continues, including on disaster displacement. Academic engagement and research have also intensified, for example, in the establishment and growth of the Hugo Observatory at the University of Liège, with a focus on questions related to environmental migration (e.g., the Habitable project).¹³

Another new institution is the Global Centre for Climate Mobility (GCCM), which describes itself as “a unique partnership enabled by UN Member States and supported by relevant agencies of the UN system, the World Bank, and respective regional intergovernmental organizations to address climate-forced migration and displacement.”¹⁴ The GCCM was established with the aim of producing knowledge, building

consensus, and brokering partnerships across sectors, stakeholders, and levels of governance to anticipate, plan for and address climate mobility.¹⁵

¹⁶ Under the GCCM are two regional initiatives.

The Africa Climate Mobility Initiative (ACMI) was initiated in September 2021 to set out a common agenda, informed by robust evidence, for addressing climate induced mobility across the African continent. It is a joint undertaking of the African Union Commission, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Organization for Migration, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Initiative's efforts are coordinated by the Global Centre for Climate Mobility.¹⁷

The Greater Caribbean Climate Mobility Initiative (CCMI) was launched in September 2022. It is a joint undertaking coordinated by the GCCM and the Association of Caribbean States, bringing together 25 countries, amongst them numerous Small Island Developing States, whose people are most at risk from the impacts of sea level rise and climate related events.¹⁸ The emergence of new actors such as the GCCM (including its regional initiatives like ACMI and CCMI) with unclear roles, scopes and plans presents some new potential coordination challenges for the PDD, to ensure continued relevance and avoid overlap.

CURRENT STAKEHOLDERS

The PDD works with a wide range of stakeholders in Geneva and internationally.¹⁹ In Geneva, the PDD works most closely with the IOM (MECR Division) and the UNHCR (Office of the Special Advisor on Climate Action [OSACA] and the Division of International Protection [DIP]'s

¹¹ IOM. Migration, Environment and Climate Change. <https://www.iom.int/migration-environment-and-climate-change>

¹² UNHCR. Strategic Framework for Climate Action. <https://www.unhcr.org/media/strategic-framework-climate-action>

¹³ See: [Linking Climate Change, Habitability and Social Tipping Points: Scenarios for Climate Migration - HABITABLE \(habitableproject.org\)](https://www.habitabilityproject.org/)

¹⁴ <https://www.cgdev.org/event/climate-change-and-migration-taking-global-commitments-step-forward>

¹⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/company/un-gccm/>

¹⁶ <https://climatemobility.org/about-us/>

¹⁷ <https://africa.climatemobility.org/about>

¹⁸ <https://climatemobility.org/regional-climate-mobility-initiatives/>

¹⁹ This includes PDD Advisory Committee members. A list of Advisory Committee members, which can be filtered by name, region of work, and area of work, is available on the PDD website at: <https://disasterdisplacement.org/about-us/advisory-committee/>

Protection Policy and Legal Advice [PPLA] team).

The PDD also engages closely with IDMC, NRC, and UNDRR, as well as other stakeholders including, for example, ActionAid, Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Secretariat, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), IFRC, OHCHR, Office of the Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement, UNFCCC Task Force on Displacement, and the United Nations Network on Migration, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The PDD also has contact with other organisations working in specific areas, such as migration with the Climate, Migration, and Displacement Platform (CMDP) and

Mixed Migration Centre (MMC), DRR with the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), and human rights with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI), Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), and Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL).

The PDD interacts with research networks such as the Climate Mobility Africa Research Network (CMARN) and academic partners like Columbia University, the Hugo Observatory, the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Kaldor Centre, and the United Nations University (UNU).

The table below shows the PDD's 'Implementing Partners' according to the Workplan 2019-2023.

The PDD's 'Implementing Partners' (Workplan 2019-2023)

ACT Alliance	IOM: International Organization for Migration	Stellenbosch University (Faculty of Law)
AII: Alaska Institute for Justice	JIPS: Joint IDP Profiling Service	UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons
AIDM: All India Disaster Mitigation Institute	NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council	UNDRR: United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
CADRI: Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative	OCHA: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme
Copenhagen University	OHCHR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	UNESCAP: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FLASCO: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales	OXFAM South Africa	UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	PIK: Potsdam Institute for Climate Impacts Research	University of Bern (World Trade Institute)
Hugo Observatory	Quaker UN Office	University of London (Refugee Law initiative)
ICIMOD: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development	MMC: Mixed Migration Centre	University of New South Wales (Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law)
ICMC: International Catholic Migration Commission	RI: Refugees International	University of Sussex
IDMC: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre	RESAMA: South American Network for Environmental Migration	USP: The University of the South Pacific
IFRC: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	RWI: Raoul Wallenberg Institute	World Bank
IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development	Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, Columbia Law School	
ICPAC: IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre	Sphere Project	
INHURED: International Institute for Human Rights, Environment and Development	SPREP: South Pacific Regional Environment Programme	

This assessment found extensive relevance, range, and depth of the PDD's partners across the globe. Some stakeholders expressed that they found it a challenge to understand how the PDD fits into the global landscape and interacts with other partners. This is in large part due to the complexities and different forms of the PDD's engagements and the wide range of partners working in many different and sometimes overlapping areas. This issue also relates to the problems associated with the PDD's character, that is, it is not the Secretariat, an institution, an organisation: *"It is an entity with a mandate, but a 'beast' with many pillars."* This assessment found, despite the PDD's communication, the need to strengthen stakeholders' understanding of its character. Some respondents highlighted the need for a landscape mapping of the PDD to highlight the

PDD's *"place in the landscape."* Others argued that a mapping exercise would be difficult to conduct given the PDD's extensive geographic reach, as well as its range of activities and partnerships.

EMERGING THEMATIC PRIORITIES

Assessment respondents noted the importance of the current process within the PDD to identify and reflect on key themes and sub-topics to prioritise in the coming years.

The key potential thematic priorities post-2023 are currently under discussion, for example, at the Strategic Retreat (13 June 2020) and the ongoing Steering Group Working Group meetings on Strategy Review. These discussions were also supported by input gathered at the March 2023 Advisory

Committee meeting. These potential thematic priorities are presented below.

Climate Financing. This discussion is focused on the possibilities of connecting and establishing relationships with international funding institutions (IFIs), multilateral development banks (MDBs), Global Funds, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders to work on facilitating access to finance for affected countries and communities. The significance of facilitating access to climate change financing for affected countries and communities has been highlighted. In these conversations, the PDD's past and ongoing activities have been emphasized, for example, the TFD under the UNFCCC WIM and the PAMAD project. The technical guide on access to financing as part of the WIM Task Force on Displacement Plan of Action.

During the assessment there was discussion about the importance of not having a separate conversation on climate financing but, instead, combining it with engagement on Loss and Damage and Planned Relocation. Some stakeholders noted that considerably more resources would likely be required if the PDD were to strongly focus on climate financing. Some stakeholders commented that many of the suggestions regarding the PDD's engagement with climate change are interesting *"but they sound more like a wish list,"* thus noting that this conversation needs more technical and expert input to be strategically useful.

Internal Displacement. Discussions highlighted a call by some PDD stakeholders for the more explicit inclusion of internal displacement in the PDD's mandate. The PDD is already supporting related global advocacy efforts,²⁰ with the issue being reflected in the Advisory Committee's membership. There has been discussion about formalising the PDD's work on internal displacement in the new strategy and engaging in areas where the PDD has added value, strategic relevance, and specific roles. While there is wide support for a stronger focus on internal displacement, there is also dissent, with some stakeholders arguing that the PDD's focus should remain on cross-border displacement.

The discussion highlighted the PDD's contribution to the work of the High-Level Panel (HLP) on Internal Displacement as well as its support of the GP20 Plan

of Action and the work of the Special Rapporteur on IDPs. It is interesting to note that much of the disaster displacement that occurs is internal and that a considerable amount of the PDD's past work includes, and also regards, internal displacement. Moreover, there are many mandated actors working on internal displacement and this could be an argument for the PDD not to engage further.

Loss and Damage. The discussion centred on the PDD's role in acting as a convenor for conversations and research on Loss and Damage. While the PDD has participated in the WIM Task Force on Displacement (with limited activities), participants discussed future activities, such as supporting and becoming a member of the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage and establishing a research program on displacement that includes, for example, Loss and Damage and the scale up program activities. With the PDD being a TFD member and the additional support coming in via the PAMAD project. The PDD has a key role to play to conceptualize displacement as loss and damage. It is also recognised that there is currently much attention on Loss and Damage, an issue that is notably much bigger than displacement and difficult for the PDD to address comprehensively.

Planned Relocation. The discussion addressed a possible expansion of work on planned relocation, with significant agreement that the PDD could effectively address gaps in this area. Past activities were highlighted, including convening and commissioning research on planned relocation with partners (Dataset and Global Study on Planned Relocation, and Regional and Thematic Case Studies). Possible future activities include providing capacity building and technical support to governments interested in developing guidance and policies on planned relocation, as well as advocating for access to financing for planned relocation and improving evidence and data. This is an institutional gap and, at the same time, an important form of human mobility going back to the Cancun adaptation framework which outlines migration, displacement and planned relocation as relevant types of human mobility in the context of climate change.

²⁰ This is done in an ad-hoc manner, as the opportunities arise, as per the 2019-2023 Strategy.

DISCUSSION



DISCUSSION

This final section consists of (1) future options, (2) a summary of challenges and opportunities, (3) the consultants' strategic summary of the three pillars of the PDD, and (4) key issues and recommendations.

FUTURE OPTIONS

There are numerous options that the PDD could take at this juncture.

First, the PDD could remain as it is, with no notable changes to its structure and function. This would require continued although no additional investment, and undoubtedly, given its track record of achievements, the PDD would continue as a respected player in the landscape for some time to come. However, this option affords no opportunity to grow and little opportunity to address current challenges, adapt, or tap the latent potential that so many stakeholders in this assessment have highlighted.

Second, the PDD could remain largely the same in form, with a modest expansion of support within the Secretariat to fill key gaps while maintaining the highly valued agility and flexibility of a small Secretariat. A small expansion of capacity within the Secretariat could better support the PDD to advance the strategic thematic areas that are identified through the development of the new strategy (e.g., Climate Finance, Internal Displacement, etc.). It would also help to address some of the key gaps and opportunities for enhanced effectiveness and impact, in particular regarding Partnerships, Research and Communications, as identified in this assessment. This would likely require some financial investment, commitments or support from Member States or other potential funding sources.

Third, the PDD could remain largely the same in form, with no changes in the Geneva-based Secretariat but with an expanded regional presence, e.g., through support for more Regional

Advisers in currently unrepresented or under-represented regions. This would respond to a widespread call from stakeholders for increased regional and sub-regional level work by the PDD, would provide opportunities for the PDD to bring its expertise more widely to regional and sub-regional contexts, and would respond to concerns among some stakeholders that the PDD is currently too "Geneva-based." However, expanded regional positions would also require additional financial investment, commitments, or support. In any expansion of the PDD's regional presence, careful attention would also need to be paid to ensuring complementarity with existing UN agency regional presence and work.

Fourth, given the PDD's successes and effectiveness, there could be a concerted effort to grow the PDD in terms of State Membership and Secretariat size and scope. There seems, however, to be very little appetite or strategic rationale for this possible trajectory, given the need to avoid duplication or overlap of work with implementing partners and UN agencies, funding constraints, and the wish to remain small, agile and flexible.

Fifth, the PDD could be absorbed into the UN system in a lead-agency approach. This would, of course, eliminate any risk of overlap, duplication, or competition, and would ideally mean that the work and focus of the PDD could be institutionalised and carried forward within the UN system. However, at present, there is widespread agreement that a lead-agency approach will not be appropriate to solve the governance and coordination challenges that currently exist. There is currently little support for this option.

Sixth, the PDD could work towards becoming an independent, registered organisation. This would be a dramatic shift for the initiative and would require a substantial overhaul of its governance, structures, and strategy. While this kind of dramatically altered PDD could be an option should the Member States decide to step back in

future, there would be serious implications in losing the highly valued State-led nature of the initiative. While there are international organisations that do have a member state governance structure, there are also problems regarding cost and the creation of competition. There is currently no noted interest in or support for this option.

Finally, the PDD could wrap up as an initiative.

The argument could be made that the PDD has achieved much of what it set out to in terms of its normative and policy work within global processes such as the GCM, GCR, Sendai, UNFCCC and other fora. Further, there are decidedly more actors and more attention globally to the intersecting issues of human mobility in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change than when

the PDD began. However, there was resounding support in this assessment for the continuation of the PDD, and little doubt among most stakeholders of its continued relevance, unique contributions, and value including in the new suggested areas discussed above.

The table below represents the consultants' analysis of the different degrees of support for future options for the PDD, based on discussions and input towards this assessment.

There is clear support for a future vision of the PDD that **combines options 2 and 3**, through a small, modest yet strategic expansion of the Secretariat, along with an enhanced regional presence for the PDD.

KEY: Support

Low or None		Medium		High		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Stays the same	Same with slight expansion & strategic focus	Same with more regional support	Significant growth	Absorption into UN agency	An independent organisation	Closure: End of PDD's work

SUMMARY OF KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This diagram provides an overview of the key challenges and opportunities identified in this assessment. These challenges and opportunities can be used to inform the ongoing strategy discussions. It is important that the new Strategy responds to these issues to ensure the PDD's ongoing success and adaptation to emerging issues and priorities.

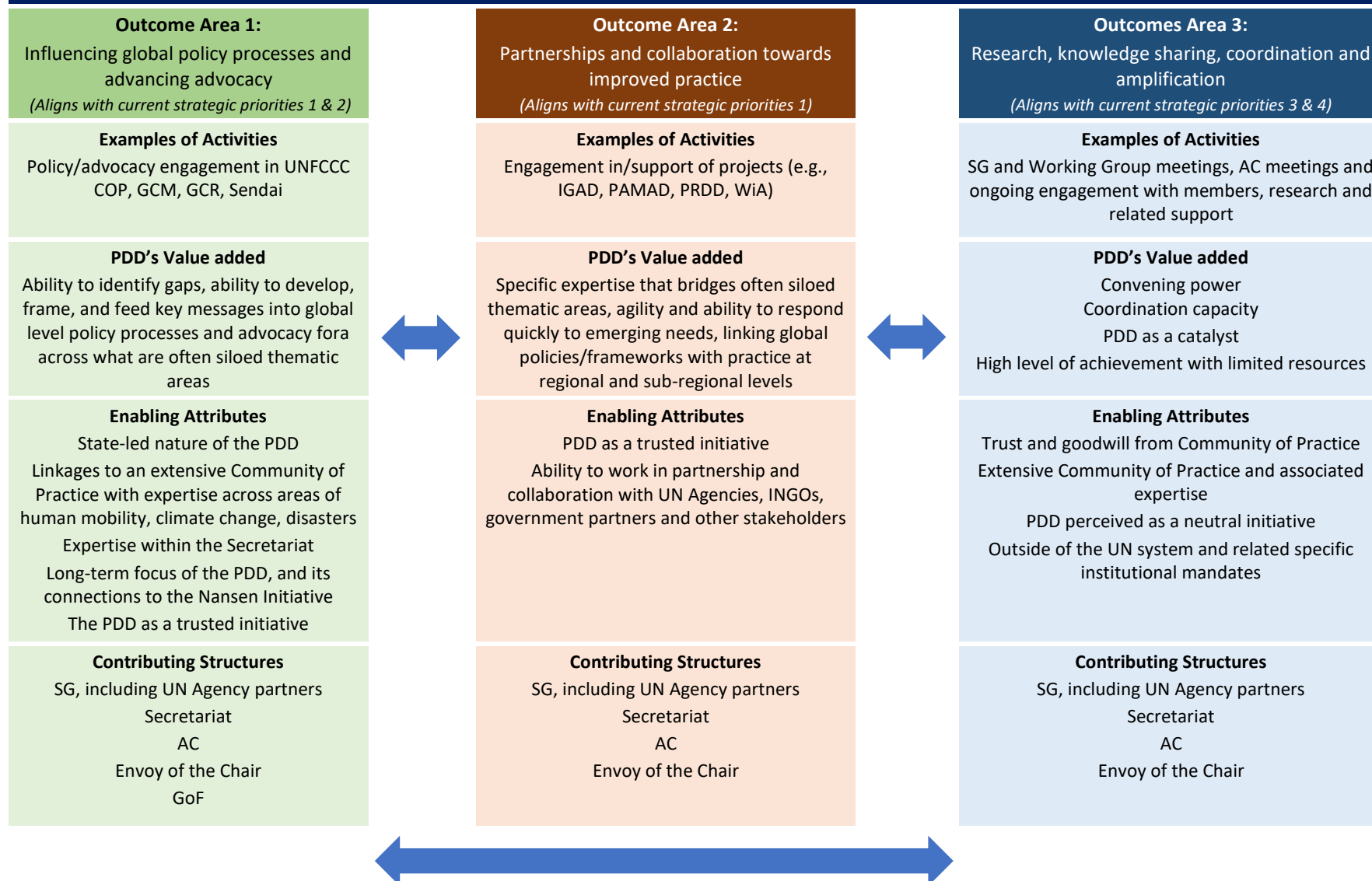


THE THREE PILLARS OF THE PDD

At the end of the data analysis and writing of the draft report, the consultants discussed the possibility of creating a graphic that could best describe the assessment findings for the ongoing strategy discussions and planning. Under the PDD's overall objective, the consultants aimed to create a graphic representation of the findings that showed the main pillars of the PDD's work, which are (1) Outcome Area 1: Influencing global policy processes and advancing advocacy (aligns with 2019-2023 Strategic Priorities 1&2), (2) Outcome Area 2: Partnerships and collaboration towards

improved practice (aligns with 2019-2023 Strategic Priority 1), and (3) Outcomes Area 3: Research, knowledge sharing, coordination and amplification (aligns with 2019-2023 Strategic Priorities 3 & 4). Under each Outcome, the consultants have highlighted associated examples of activities, value added, enabling attributes, and contributing structures. All three pillars contribute to and are influenced by the others. This graphic can be used as a draft overview of the assessment findings to inform the upcoming strategic planning.

PDD Overall Objective: To support States and other stakeholders to strengthen the protection of persons displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, and to prevent or reduce disaster displacement risks in countries of origin.



KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section draws on the assessment findings as well as the various ongoing PDD strategic discussions, for example, the current Steering Group's work on strategy review and the Advisory Committee's input into the Steering Group's

discussions. This section begins with an overview and responses to the identified thematic priorities (outlined in the previous section) before moving on to the strategic areas and recommendations.

THEMATIC PRIORITIES

This assessment commented on the four thematic areas identified for consideration (2023).

1. Climate Financing

The assessment found that there seems to be an emerging consensus on the PDD's engagement in climate finance, but through its work on Loss and Damage. This engagement would primarily be done through advocacy to keep the issue of displacement on the UNFCCC agenda, research, and climate finance knowledge development relevant to disaster displacement. Moreover, the PDD could also convene discussions and contribute to relevant fora and support governments, upon request, on related financing issues.

This assessment also finds that the Advisory Committee's climate finance capacity should be strengthened especially given the quickly evolving field of climate finance and its potential relevance to fund responses to disaster displacement.

2. Internal Displacement

This assessment finds that while the PDD should formalise its work on internal displacement, it needs to clearly delineate its specific focus and value. That is, it needs to contribute to policy coherence and advocacy on addressing the needs of internally displaced persons in disaster contexts, where appropriate, and ensure that it does not duplicate existing work and initiatives.

3. Loss and Damage

This assessment found wide support for Loss and Damage as a significant focus in the PDD's next strategy. Areas of future engagement include (1) continue engaging with relevant initiatives like, for example, the WIM, TFD, Expert Groups, and Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, (2) convening relevant topical discussions, (3) commission research, and (4) support governments, when requested, with, for example, technical guidance, access to finance, policy development support, technical assessments, capacity building, etc.

4. Planned Relocation

This assessment finds that planned relocation should form part of the new strategy. Key activities include research (beyond the previous mapping and studies) and strengthening the distribution of practices, capacity building support, and convening topical discussions, including on financing, and partnerships.

STRATEGIC AREAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PDD's Continuation as a Neutral, State-led Initiative

During the assessment, almost all stakeholders spoke about the ongoing need for the PDD to continue at this time as a neutral, State-led initiative outside of the UN system. Currently, some of the PDD's core strengths are rooted in its perceived neutrality and the trust this engenders in stakeholders. The PDD is also valued for its convening power, agility, proactive focus, and its expertise and flexibility in working across thematic areas such as climate change, DRR and human mobility.

This assessment supports the continuation of the PDD outside of the UN system at this time (not precluding the Secretariat being hosted by UNOPS), with continued careful attention to crafting a strategic approach and workplan that is complementary to the work of other actors and partners, and that serves to catalyse action.

Steering Group Membership

This assessment found that most respondents were in favour of a small, strategic increase in the number of members. While the addition of too many new members could pose a risk to the current balance and effectiveness of the Steering Group, some strategic additions could help to revitalise discussions, and bring forward new ideas, new energy, and potentially new resources. However, strategic decisions regarding the ideal size and composition of the Steering Group are closely linked to the issue of Steering Group member engagement discussed below.

This assessment suggests that the Steering Group would likely benefit from a small and strategic increase in the number of members.

Steering Group Member Engagement

The assessment noted that for various reasons, there are currently uneven levels of engagement from Steering Group Member States. The need to bolster this engagement and further enhance the leadership of Member States was highlighted throughout discussions for this assessment. This is a complex issue due to the competing priorities and busy schedules of Member State representatives in Geneva, as well as the difficulties some Member States experience in relevant coordination with their Capitals, in which issues of climate change, DRR and human mobility are often articulated through different and sometimes siloed departments or institutions.

Linked to the above point, this assessment recommends ongoing discussions and decisions about how best to strengthen member engagement. This could potentially include the agreement and articulation of an informal minimum commitment from Member States, aligned with the forthcoming strategic period. National-level coordination challenges could potentially be supported with enhanced sub-regional and national engagement to assist in bringing focus to the issues and to support a whole-of-government approach.

Input and Contributions of the Advisory Committee

This assessment found widespread recognition of the importance and value of the Advisory Committee. The Secretariat is in close and regular contact with various Advisory Committee members towards the implementation of the PDD workplan, including collaboration towards side events, workshops, training, research, and other activities. Nonetheless, there is a general view that there remains significant untapped potential within the Advisory Committee, with opportunities for the PDD to play an even

stronger catalytic role. As a minor point, the assessment also suggests that given its size and current governance function, the Advisory Committee may more closely resemble a “Community of Practice” than what is more commonly referred to as an Advisory Committee.

The assessment suggests that the creation of a Partnerships position within the Secretariat could provide the PDD with the capacity to further explore and pursue potential engagements and opportunities for collaboration with Advisory Committee members. The Partnerships officer could also work more closely with Member States, building stronger bridges between the Steering Group and Advisory Committee.

The assessment suggests that the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee could benefit from a minor review.

Role of the Group of Friends

This assessment found mixed perspectives regarding the value of the Group of Friends. The Group of Friends model played an important role during the Nansen Initiative in building awareness, knowledge and support among a wider group of States than those in the Steering Group which was crucial to the development and endorsement of the NIPA. For the PDD and its workplan there remains strategic value in having the opportunity to reach out to a larger group of States at key moments, however, there are outstanding questions regarding the impact of these meetings on a twice-yearly basis (once in Geneva and once in New York), in comparison with the time and investment involved.

This assessment suggests that if the Group of Friends is to continue, it should be accompanied by changes to enhance its strategic value and impact. There could be a “lighter” model approach, in which meetings are held strategically at key moments, potentially supplemented by more regular, creative, and strategic sharing of information with interested States.

Secretariat Capacity

The assessment found widespread appreciation of the Secretariat’s expertise, professionalism, and many accomplishments in its work towards the strategic objectives of the PDD, particularly given its small size. However, there is also a widespread recognition that much more could be accomplished with relatively limited investment in enhancing capacity within the Secretariat. This assessment strongly agrees with the analysis that the added value of the Secretariat is significant and could be further enhanced with modest investment and support. Additional positions that could be considered to further leverage impact include, for example, Partnerships (elaborated in more detail below), extended Communications capacity, Research, Technical, and M&E. Importantly, such suggestions are made based on the assumption that a significantly larger Secretariat is not required; instead, the Secretariat should maintain its small size with its associated agility and responsiveness but with the addition of a few more key supportive functions.

Keep a small and agile Secretariat with a few additional posts to support the strategic adaptations.

An external capacity needs assessment might provide a better understanding of the capacity needs and gaps based on the Steering Group’s strategic direction.

These roles could include, for example, a prioritised combination of some of the following: Partnerships, Communications (extended capacity), Research, Technical (Loss and Damage, Planned Relocation, etc.), and M&E & Knowledge Management.

Strengthening of Regional and Sub-regional Work

The assessment noted that currently, the Geneva-based Secretariat is supported by only 1.5 Regional Advisers (in the Pacific and the Americas), despite the strong emphasis that stakeholders place on the

importance and impact of work done at the regional and national levels. Steering Group Member States could potentially play a tangible role in championing or supporting Regional Adviser positions in their own regions where positions are currently lacking, either through financial support, secondment, or other forms of support in facilitating the role. Any expanded regional presence would need to be carefully planned to avoid the duplication or overlap of mandates with other partners. However, the PDD's track record of successful and effective engagement at the regional and sub-regional levels, along with the emphasis placed on the importance of this work by stakeholders in this assessment, suggests that this could be an important area of added value for the PDD and its partnerships in the next strategic period.

This assessment notes the widespread support for continuing the work of PDD at the regional and sub-regional levels and strengthening its role at these levels, including the deployment of PDD Regional Advisers in further regions (cited areas included Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, the sub-regions of Africa, and the Middle East).

Consider prioritising an expansion of Regional Adviser presence, where there is (1) regional/sub-regional support, (2) clear hosting options for such a position, (3) a strong relationship with partner agencies to ensure complementarity and avoid overlap, and (4) strategic relevance in relation to the specifics of the new PDD Strategy.

Strategy Length

The assessment supports the view that the articulation of a longer strategy period would be more advantageous to the PDD's functioning than the current three-year strategic cycle. A longer strategic period would provide the opportunity to develop a longer-term vision and more time to implement, monitor, and adapt to the strategic objectives. Importantly, a longer-term strategy could still be accompanied by a shorter, flexible workplan that enables the PDD to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and priorities and maintain the agility that is widely considered to be one of its key assets.

This assessment recommends a review of the strategy period to consider (a) lengthening the strategy period to five or seven years, and (b) creating a long-term vision for 2030 in alignment with other international stock-taking for that year.

Operational Role

Respondents in this assessment presented varied opinions regarding the appropriate role of the PDD in operational or project-based work. Some argued strongly that the PDD should not be involved in the implementation of projects or other "operational work" while others suggested that the project-based or operational work was central to the PDD's effectiveness. This assessment suggests that there is a strong strategic and practical rationale for much of PDD's project-based or operational work, in responding, for example, to the demand for more capacity building and support to policy development which may also include some "operational" components, particularly at regional or sub-regional levels. In the absence of such work, it will be difficult to carry forward enhanced work in the regions and sub-regions, and funding challenges will be further exacerbated. Importantly, this assessment also found that there may be different interpretations among stakeholders of what "operational" or "project work" means for the PDD.

While this assessment found that there is significant value in the PDD's contributions to the projects in which it has been involved to this point, the PDD's future operational role needs careful clarification from the Steering Group. This is particularly important given the widely expressed need for the PDD to remain an initiative that does not compete for funding, but rather catalyses shared opportunities that work towards the implementation of the workplan and amplify the strengths of all partners.

This work could begin with a clarification exercise among Steering Group and Advisory Committee members to ensure a common understanding of what “operational” or “project work” means in the context of the PDD’s work.

Financial Support

While the issue of Secretariat funding is well articulated through various other discussions and reflections, assessment respondents noted the importance of ongoing and stable financial support of PDD’s work. The assessment noted stakeholders’ high expectations of the PDD and aspirations for its future work, in contrast with the relatively limited funding available to support its work. The Steering Group is currently discussing how financial stability for the PDD can best be achieved. The financial sustainability of the PDD’s structure and work is important as this assessment found that the current situation contributes to uncertainty and ambiguity regarding the PDD’s role and future. While the strategy should be set in line with existing and available resources, there are certain issues (engaging on IDPs and loss and damage that might require staff positions) that need more proactive financial planning.

This issue is complex and might require the external input of funding specialists who could guide the PDD to develop a more sustainable approach to the funding of the Secretariat.

While decisions related to funding are the responsibility of Member States, it might be useful to request input on this matter from the Advisory Committee.

Outcomes and Impacts

This assessment found strong support for the strengthening of the PDD’s monitoring and evaluation of its outcomes and impacts. Respondents argued that one of the reasons for this is that if the PDD is more able to show impact there will be more funding and financial sustainability. While the impact of policy and advocacy work is notoriously difficult to assess, as discussed above in the report, there have been interesting advances in documenting impact and contribution. For example, it is important to (1) ensure that data collection is part of the planning and implementation processes, (2) develop a Theory of Change early in the planning process, (3) use M&E tools to collect relevant data throughout the policy influencing work, and (4) select M&E tools that are responsive to changes and allow for ongoing adaptive learning. There are interesting and useful qualitative tools like Most Significant Change (MSC), Case Studies, and Outcomes Mapping to assist in developing a body of evidence of change (or contribution to this change).

Consider the development of a specific M&E strategy to track and measure impact.

Key components for such monitoring include (1) attitudinal change, (2) discursive commitments, (3) procedural changes, (4) policy content, and (5) behaviour change.

This approach requires specific M&E and knowledge management strategies and staffing.

Consider outsourcing this role.



CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

In the PDD's work over the last seven years, many key stakeholders noted the important strides that have been made in taking forward the work of the Nansen Initiative and the Protection Agenda, including normative and policy strides in key global processes such as the GCM, the GCR, Sendai and UNFCCC. Considering these important normative strides towards the protection of cross-border displaced persons, stakeholders are asking: Is the PDD's work done? Should the PDD continue? If not, what should the PDD do next? Some of these questions are echoes from conversations that took place towards the design of the 2019-2022 Strategy (extended to 2023), and they still hold relevance today. This assessment noted the predictable level of uncertainty and ambiguity at this point in the PDD's existence. These questions are understandable and essential when properly concluding or extending any initiative or project.

Based on the in-depth discussions and analysis of the PDD's key achievements, value-added, challenges, and structural arrangements, this assessment found robust support for the next phase of the PDD, which is still widely considered to be a relevant, unique, and useful initiative. There was broad consensus among stakeholders that the PDD needs to continue. Along with the impacts of the PDD's global normative and policy work, the assessment also highlighted the important work done by the PDD and partners at regional and sub-regional levels. Even though there are many new actors in an increasingly populated landscape with relevance to the work of the PDD, stakeholders argued that the PDD continues to hold a unique role, particularly as a State-led and multistakeholder initiative, a neutral and trusted convenor, an adept framer of key messages, and a repository of expertise able to identify gaps and connect with a global Community of Practice of researchers, civil society, international organisations, and governments. While the stakeholders overwhelmingly agree that the PDD should continue, there were different

ideas, as outlined in this report, about its desired form and function in the next strategic phase and beyond.

One of the PDD's strengths is the ongoing strategic support from the Steering Group, Advisory Committee, and the Chair over the last year in preparation for the ending of this phase of its work. This assessment acknowledges the significant contributions of this noteworthy strategic support. Furthermore, this assessment notes that there is no lack of available data to support decision-making towards the next Strategy. There is widespread consensus that the PDD should continue in a similar form, and that it should continue its neutral, convening role, supporting normative work including new thematic priorities. The PDD has an ongoing, important role in informing and helping to shape the global agenda on the nexus between the often-siloed areas of climate change, disaster risk reduction, and human mobility.

While there may be a time in the future when the PDD's core structures, function, form, and hosting arrangements could be revisited, this assessment found that at present there is limited appetite and limited rationale for embarking on drastic changes. The difficulties seem to lie more in the uncertainty about what the PDD should look like in terms of smaller adjustments, potential additions, or other revisions that strengthen the PDD's existing structures, strategic focus, and future approaches to better unlock its potential.

There are interesting and exciting strategic opportunities for the PDD as it nears the end of this phase of its work and begins planning for the important next phase. This assessment demonstrated that the PDD does need to be adapted for the next phase of its work. Importantly, this does not require the creation of a large structure or an external focus beyond its current work and the identified emerging priorities. However, to better capitalise on the

strategic potential within the PDD, the capacity of the Secretariat does require revisiting and reassessment. The Secretariat needs to be strengthened to unlock this potential, through the addition of a few key positions. While these new roles require funding, this assessment emphasizes the importance of supporting these new roles financially with ongoing funding. Given the continued high expectations of the PDD, as demonstrated in this assessment, along with new aspirations for its work, bolstered and ongoing support for a strengthened Secretariat is needed. This assessment broadly concurs with the widespread position among stakeholders that the Secretariat should remain small, flexible, and agile, but there is room still to increase its effectiveness and impact in implementing the workplan of PDD.

There are also important decisions to make regarding the structure and function of the Steering Group, Advisory Committee, and Group of Friends. The Steering Group membership remains the key challenge, with questions remaining about the optimal number of members and how to address uneven levels of engagement. The Advisory Committee plays an important role, but their contributions could be more strategic. There are mixed feelings about the Group of Friends and the role and contributions of the group needs to be assessed moving forward.

It is also a key moment to consider developing a longer-term Strategy for the PDD, supported by shorter, flexible workplans. Importantly, a longer-term Strategy does not equate to the institutionalisation of the PDD as a permanent actor on the landscape. However, it would respond to the widely held view among stakeholders that for now, the PDD needs to continue its work, with a sharpened vision for the years ahead. A longer-term Strategy should also enable more time for planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning. A key finding of this assessment was the need for the strengthening of the measurement and communication of the PDD's impact. An adaptive monitoring and knowledge management system showing impact evidence

would contribute to a clearer understanding of the PDD's achievements, strengths and challenges for future assessments and strategic reviews.

In terms of the “bigger picture” moving forward, there are risks, threats, and issues that will require ongoing attention. These include, for example, the politicisation and securitisation of migration discourse and practices, the continued emergence of new players in the landscape with associated risks of overlapping mandates, shrinking funding sources, and uncertainty of where development and humanitarian funding will go in the future. Over the course of several months, this assessment has been undertaken against a background of reports of unprecedented heatwaves, drought, wildfires, flooding, and intense storms across the globe, with significant displacement in their wake. As the adverse impacts of climate change continue to intensify, the expertise within the PDD is likely to become even more valued in addressing these complex challenges.

The PDD remains well-placed, as a relevant and unique State-led initiative, to continue its convening, catalysing, coordinating, and bridging work across emerging and important thematic areas through its expertise and collaboration, while expanding its more strategic and broader *review-monitor-remind* functions. Ahead of the inception of the PDD, Betts (2015) noted, *“At this stage, the main challenge is not to come up with definitive answers; it is instead to build flexible structures that can continue to advance understanding and framing of the issue while still ensuring that people in need of international protection – irrespective of the cause – do not fall through the cracks between existing institutional mandates.”* In 2023, this assessment found this statement still valid, especially in terms of the need for a flexible structure that advances the understanding of disaster displacement and protection as well as continuing to support the more complex yet vital implementation of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda and the emerging thematic priorities.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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ANNEX 2: DATA COLLECTION SUMMARY

SUMMARY

PHASE 1 Retreat & Introductory Meetings	PHASE 2 Key Informant Interviews	PHASE 3 Questionnaires and Other Inputs
# Responses 6	# Responses 29	# Responses 25
F 2 (33%), M 4 (67%)	F 18 (62%), M 11 (38%)	F 14 (56%), M 11 (44%)
TOTAL # RESPONDENTS 39		
TOTAL # RESPONSES 60		
F 57%, M 43%		

STAKEHOLDER LIST

Key

KII = Key Informant Interview

Q = Questionnaire

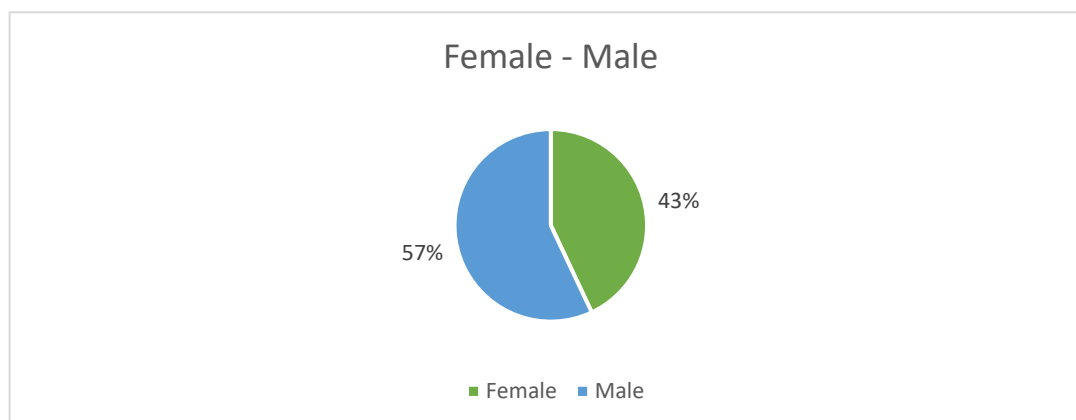
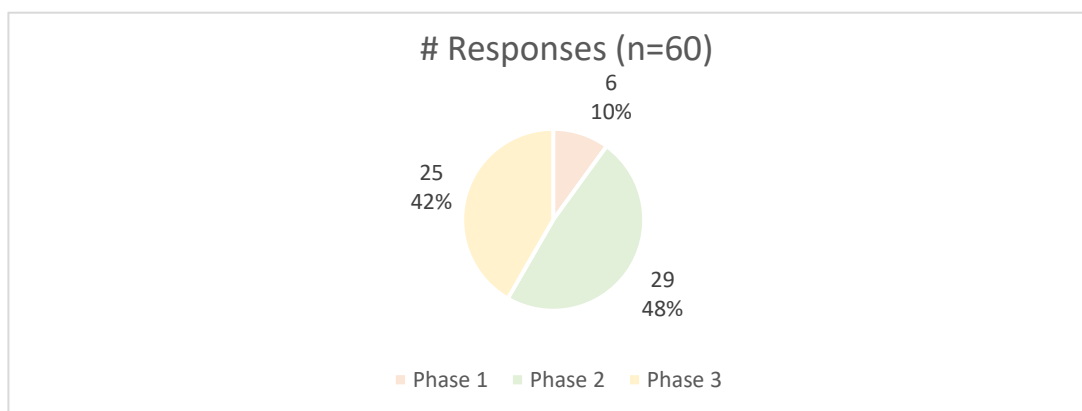
EM = Email Input

No.	Person interviewed	#	F	M	Position	Venue	Date	Method
Phase 1: Geneva Retreat, June 2023								
1	PDD Steering Group Strategic Retreat	(45)	-	-		Chateau de Bossy, Vaud, Switzerland	13 June 2023	Observer
2	Atle Solberg Sarah Koeltzow	2	1	1	Head of Secretariat, PDD Policy Officer, PDD Secretariat	Geneva	14 June	KII
3	Juan Carlos Méndez	1		1	Regional Adviser for Latin America and the Caribbean, Costa Rica, PDD Secretariat	Geneva	14 June	KII
4	Suzana Simichen-Sopta	1	1		Counsellor, Humanitarian and Migration Section, Permanent Delegation of the EU in Geneva	Geneva	14 June	KII
5	Walter Kaelin	1		1	Envoy of the Chair, PDD	Geneva	14 June	KII
6	Manuel Marques Pereira	1		1	Head of the Migration, Environment, Climate Change and Risk Reduction (MECR) Division, IOM	Geneva	14 June	KII
		6	2	4				
Phase 2: Remote Interviews: July 2023								
1	Atle Solberg Sarah Koeltzow	2	1	1	Head of Secretariat, PDD Policy Officer, PDD Secretariat	Remote	7 July 2023	KII KII
2	Yvonne Madeleine Diallo-Sahli Noemie Charton Alice Ochsenbein	3	3		Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and to other international organisations in Geneva	Remote	10 July	KII KII KII
3	Walter Kaelin	1		1	Envoy of the Chair, PDD	Remote	11 July	KII
4	Christelle Cazabat	1	1		Head of Programmes, IDMC	Remote	12 July	KII

5	Jerome Elie	1		1	Lives in Dignity Grant Facility, UNOPS (formerly ICVA)	Remote	18 July	KII
6	Kayly Ober	1	1		Senior Program Officer, Climate, Environment and Conflict, US Institute of Peace	Remote	18 July	KII
7	Anare Leweniqila	1		1	Deputy Permanent Representative (DPR), Permanent Mission of the Republic of Fiji to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva	Remote	19 July	KII
8	Manuel Marques Pereira	1		1	Head of the Migration, Environment, Climate Change and Risk Reduction (MECR) Division, IOM	Remote	19 July	KII
9	Tichafara Chisaka	1	1		Programme Manager, Inclusive Data Charter (IDC)	Remote	19 July	KII
10	Alexandre Porteret Marine de Clarens	2	1	1	Humanitarian Policy Assistant – Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)	Remote	24 July	KII
					Programme Manager and Policy Officer on Migration and Forced Displacement, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA), EU			KII
11	Shanchita Hague	1	1		DPR, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office & other International Organizations in Geneva	Remote	24 July	KII
12	Dina Ionesco	1	1		Senior Advisor on Migration, CVF	Remote	25 July	KII
13	Bina Desai	1	1		Consultant & Adviser, Former IDMC	Remote	25 July	KII
14	Ezekiel Simperingham	1		1	Global Lead, Migration and Displacement, IFRC	Remote	25 July	KII
15	Sinziana Puscas Hugo Brandam	2	1	1	IOM Environment, Climate Change and Risk Reduction (MECR) Division	Remote	26 July	KII
16	Isabelle Michal	1	1		Protection Officer, Climate Change and Disaster Displacement, Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section, Division of International Protection, UNHCR	Remote	27 July	KII
17	Francesco Luciani	1		1	Head of the Migration and Forced Displacement Unit, Directorate General for International Partnership (INTPA), EU	Remote	27 July	KII
18	Veronica Nzioki Duncan Ochieng	2	1	1	Second Secretary, Humanitarian Affairs, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations and Other International Organizations Director, National Disaster Management Unit (NDNU), Kenya	Remote	28 July	KII
19	Michelle Yonetani	1	1		Senior Policy Officer, Office of the Special Advisor to the High Commissioner on Climate Action , UNHCR	Remote	28 July	KII
20	Atle Solberg Sarah Koeltzow	2	1	1	Head of Secretariat, PDD Policy Officer, PDD Secretariat	Remote	2 Aug	Follow-up KII
21	Nina Birkeland	1	1		Senior Advisor on Disaster Displacement and Climate Change, NRC Geneva	Remote	7 Aug	KII

22	Suzana Simichen-Sopta	1	1		Counsellor, Humanitarian and Migration Section, Permanent Delegation of the EU in Geneva	Remote	9 Aug	KII
		29	18	11				
Phase 3: Questionnaires and Email Input								
1	Kayly Ober	1	1		Senior Program Officer, Climate, Environment and Conflict, US Institute of Peace	Remote	24 July	Q
2	Shanchita Hague	1	1		DPR, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office & other International Organizations in Geneva	Remote	27 July	Q
3	Ezekiel Simperingham	1		1	Global Lead, Migration and Displacement, IFRC	Remote	27 July	EM
4	Alexandre Porteret	1		1	Humanitarian Policy Assistant – Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)	Remote	28 July	Q
5	Walter Kaelin	1		1	Envoy of the Chair, PDD	Remote	31 July	Q
6	Atle Solberg	1		1	Head of Secretariat, PDD	Remote	1 Aug	Q
7	Atle Solberg	1		1	Head of Secretariat, PDD	Remote	1 Aug	EM
8	Jerome Elie	1		1	Lives in Dignity Grant Facility, UNOPS (formerly ICVA)	Remote	2 Aug	Q
9	Sarah Koeltzow	1	1		Policy Officer, PDD Secretariat	Remote	2 Aug	Q
10	Sarah Koeltzow	1	1		Policy Officer, PDD Secretariat	Remote	2 Aug	EM
11	Alice Ochsenbein	1	1		Program Officer, Migration and Forced Displacement Section, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	Remote	3 Aug	Q
12	Sanjula Weerasinghe	1	1		Coordinator, Migration and Displacement, IFRC	Remote	4 Aug	Q
13	Chirine El Labbane	1	1		Communication Officer, PDD Secretariat	Remote	8 Aug	Q
14	Lukas Frucht Kathrin Conrad Daniel Beck Johannes Sender Renata Rat	5	2	3	Federal Foreign Office, Foreign Ministry of Germany (GFFO)	Remote	11 Aug	Q
15	Juan Carlos Méndez	1		1	Regional Adviser for Latin America and the Caribbean, Costa Rica, PDD Secretariat	Remote	14 Aug	Q
16	Lucy Daxbacher	1	1		Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)/ Head of IGAD Mission to the Republic of Uganda and Manager EUTF Protocols on Free Movement of Persons	Remote	15 Aug	Q
17	Petra Sigrist	1	1		Counsellor, Law and Home Affairs Division, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and to other international organisations in Geneva	Remote	16 Aug	Q
18	Sarah Koeltzow	1	1		Policy Officer, PDD Secretariat	Remote	16 Aug	EM
19	Lauren Céline Naville Gissnäs	1	1		Senior Adviser, Department for Climate and Environment, Section for Nature and Climate, NORAD	Remote	18 Aug	Q

20	Jorge Adalberto González Mayagoitia	1		1	First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva	Remote	18 Aug	Q
21	Veronica Nzioki	2	1	1	Second Secretary, Humanitarian Affairs, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations and Other International Organizations	Remote	29 Aug	Q
		25	14	11				
	TOTAL	60	34	26				



ANNEX 3: PDD DONORS 2016-2023



Federal Republic of Germany
Foreign Office



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA



Migration
Multi-Partner
Trust Fund



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FOLLOW-UP TO THE NANSSEN INITIATIVE