# Call for input: thematic priorities of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons

## Topic: Climate change and internal displacement

ODI’s Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) conducted a two-year qualitative research project in western Afghanistan and northern Mozambique. The research focussed on how communities (both internally displaced and hosting) cope with and adapt to the combined pressures of climate change, conflict and displacement when these occur at the same time and in the same place. The research mapped the range of strategies people employ, and analysed the obstacles, challenges and opportunities that they present for their protection and wellbeing.

Here is a summary of the key recommendations that came out of the project

**To recognise agency, policymakers and practitioners should:**

* Support communities in protracted situations to rebuild and diversify their livelihoods by combining humanitarian relief with anticipatory action (cash transfers, community mitigation and readiness actions) and long-term development assistance (training, equipment, transport and documentation).
* Adopt pragmatic approaches to informality. Instead of penalising people under pressure for taking steps to maximise their access to assistance, provide them with the kinds of support (such as cash transfers) that offer greater flexibility and autonomy, and better meet their needs.

**To amplify local voices, policymakers and practitioners should:**

* Prioritise local partnerships, for example with civil society organisations, community-based organisations and refugee-led organisations, through sustainable partnership models and direct and reliable funding.
* Recognise host communities’ role in humanitarian responses, as well as their vulnerabilities, by extending development assistance to them and ensuring that information about the impacts of hosting and aid distribution are better circulated and understood.

**To take (im)mobility into account, policymakers and practitioners should:**

* Avoid polarising narratives of migration as either crisis or adaptation. The short-term gains for funding and awareness-raising are outweighed by the long-term risks to migrants’ protection and wellbeing.
* Tailor assistance to those who move as well as those who stay through mobile cash transfers, subsidised transport costs and route-based approaches.

**To nuance language, policymakers and practitioners should:**

* Put the language of politics back into climate-centric approaches. Go beyond superficial or technical fixes by funding research and interventions that address power relations, socioeconomic inequalities and historical injustices.
* Recognise the limitations of the IDP label. Use it only when necessary, mindful of its unintended impacts on people’s identity, protection and wellbeing, as well as its limitations as a marker of humanitarian need.

**To strengthen linkages, policymakers and practitioners should:**

* Reject siloed ways of working by using jargon-free language, co-producing knowledge and interventions, setting criteria and quotas for local representation, and making funding dependent on interdisciplinary analysis and programmes that build on local partnerships.
* Acknowledge continuity in crisis by designing assistance with a historical lens that builds on the knowledge, skills and strategies that people already possess, or would like to in the future, through flexible programming and meaningful participation in design and delivery.

**Additional links**

* Policy brief: [Living with climate change, conflict and displacement](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/Lb47CMQ2Lh1wkRswa6EP?domain=odi.org/).
* Initial think piece: [Climate change, conflict and displacement: five key misconceptions](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/CBfWCN92Mc8OPEh4T_Ds?domain=odi.org/)
* Mozambique working paper: [Coping with the risks of conflict, climate and internal displacement in northern Mozambique: ‘We can’t just sit here with our arms crossed’](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/wSZ6COy2Ncj7Z0hkwQpq?domain=odi.org/)
* Afghanistan working paper: [Climate change, conflict and internal displacement in Afghanistan: 'We are struggling to survive'](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/I4xFCPZ9OHRjNoFjv4Of?domain=odi.org/)
* Summary of the wider research findings: [infographic](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/rePMCQ02Ptp2l3uruz-n?domain=odi.org/)