



# Islamic Relief

Climate action position paper:  
**Climate migration**



# Climate migration and displacement

Climate-induced migration includes both movements across borders and internal and localised migration within a country. It mostly takes place in poorer, vulnerable and desert regions and landlocked and small island countries.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which provides regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change including its impacts and future risks and options for adaptation, reports high confidence that “climate hazards are a growing driver of involuntary migration and displacement and are a contributing factor to violent conflict”.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2008, climate change has uprooted over 260 million people. In the next few years, hundreds of millions more will be at risk of displacement due to hazards including rising sea levels, floods, tropical cyclones, droughts, extreme heat and wildfires.

The actual numbers of future migration and displacement will depend on how well people are able to adapt and, in particular, on their social and economic situation. Patterns will rest, “not only on the physical impacts of climate change, but also on future policies and planning at all scales of governance,” according to the IPCC. One study shows how a billion people will either be displaced or forced to endure extreme heat for every additional 1°C rise in the global temperature.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1910114117>









# Migration and Islam

The Qur'an calls on humankind to fulfil the role of protectors and helpers to "those oppressed men, women and children, who cry out, 'Lord, rescue us from this town where people are oppressors!'" (Qur'an 4:75), and promises that those escaping persecution will find "many a refuge and a great plenty in the earth" (Qur'an 4:99). Islamic teachings emphasise that refuge is the divine right of the persecuted and that humankind has the responsibility to provide shelter and protection to those in need, wherever they seek it.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> <https://www.islamic-relief.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/The-Rights-of-Forced-Migrants-in-Islam.pdf>



## Islamic Relief's position

1. Climate-induced migration responses must be included within climate change action and financing.
2. A legal definition of 'climate migration', including internal displacement, should be formulated in addition to the existing concept of refugees.
3. A guiding principle must be providing protection to climate migrants, alongside equal economic opportunities and access to basic services, while maintaining their dignity and agency.<sup>4</sup>
4. Climate displacement must be recognised in the context of existing social and economic inequalities, collapsing food systems and livelihoods, and continued conflict.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> [https://www.islamic-relief.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/IRWClimateInducedMigration\\_Digital-V2.pdf](https://www.islamic-relief.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/IRWClimateInducedMigration_Digital-V2.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Islamic Relief Worldwide Global Strategy Framework 2023-2033. In preparation.



**Islamic Relief Worldwide**

19 Rea Street South  
Birmingham  
B5 6LB  
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 121 605 5555  
Fax: +44 121 622 5003

[irw@irworldwide.org](mailto:irw@irworldwide.org)  
[www.islamic-relief.org](http://www.islamic-relief.org)

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Registered Company No. 02365572