

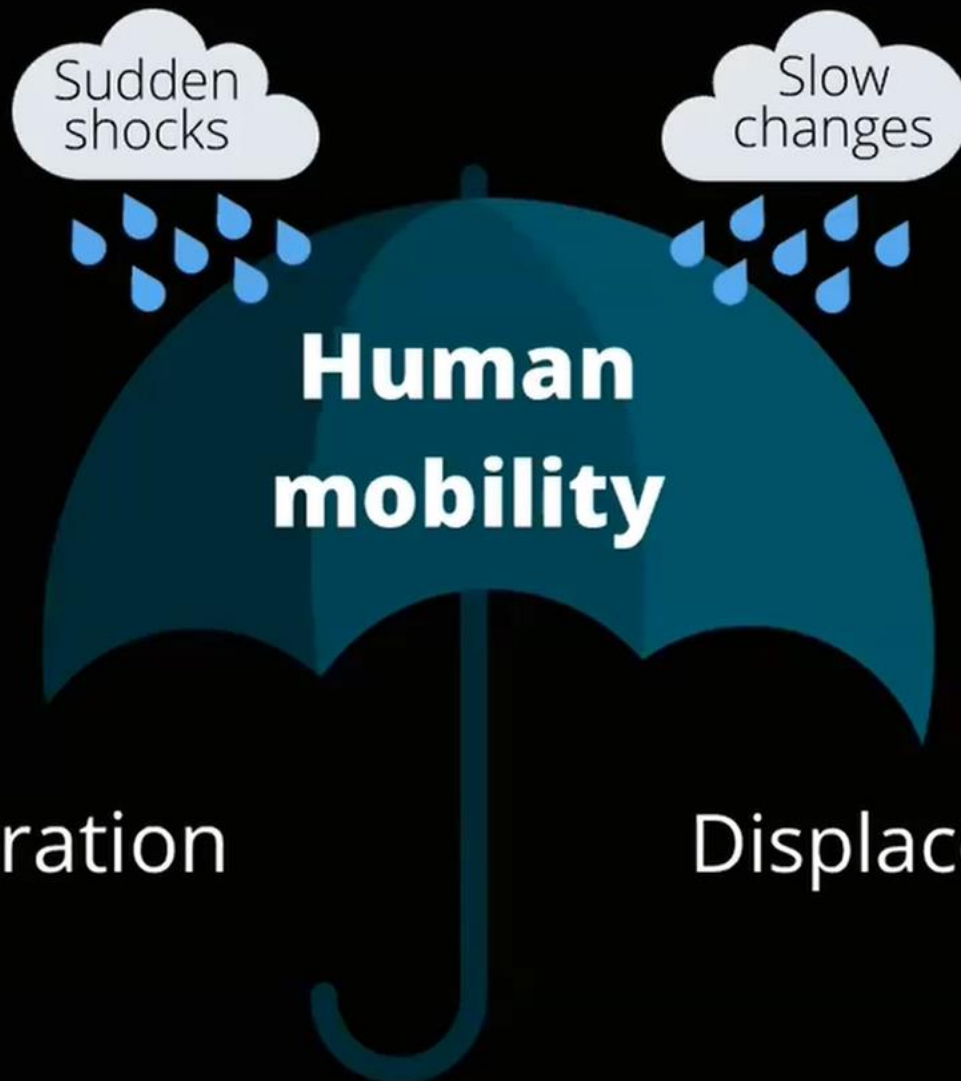


**Climate Change, Water, Migration Nexus**  
*Hydropolitics Academy, 3 June 2021*

# **Climate change and migration: myths and realities**

Caroline Zickgraf

The Hugo Observatory: Environment, Migration, Politics



# THE SPECTRUM APPROACH

AGENCY  
TIME  
SPACE



# The myth of the climate migrant: Climate change does not act alone

Climate change is a **threat multiplier** and **deepens** vulnerabilities and inequalities

Climate migration is not a new or distinct category, but a part of existing dynamics and **affects other migration drivers (SPEED)**



Amanda Nero/IOM



# WHICH IMPACTS?

## CLIMATE IMPACTS AND DISPLACEMENT



Sea Level  
Rise



Temperature  
Increase



Climate  
variability



Extreme  
events



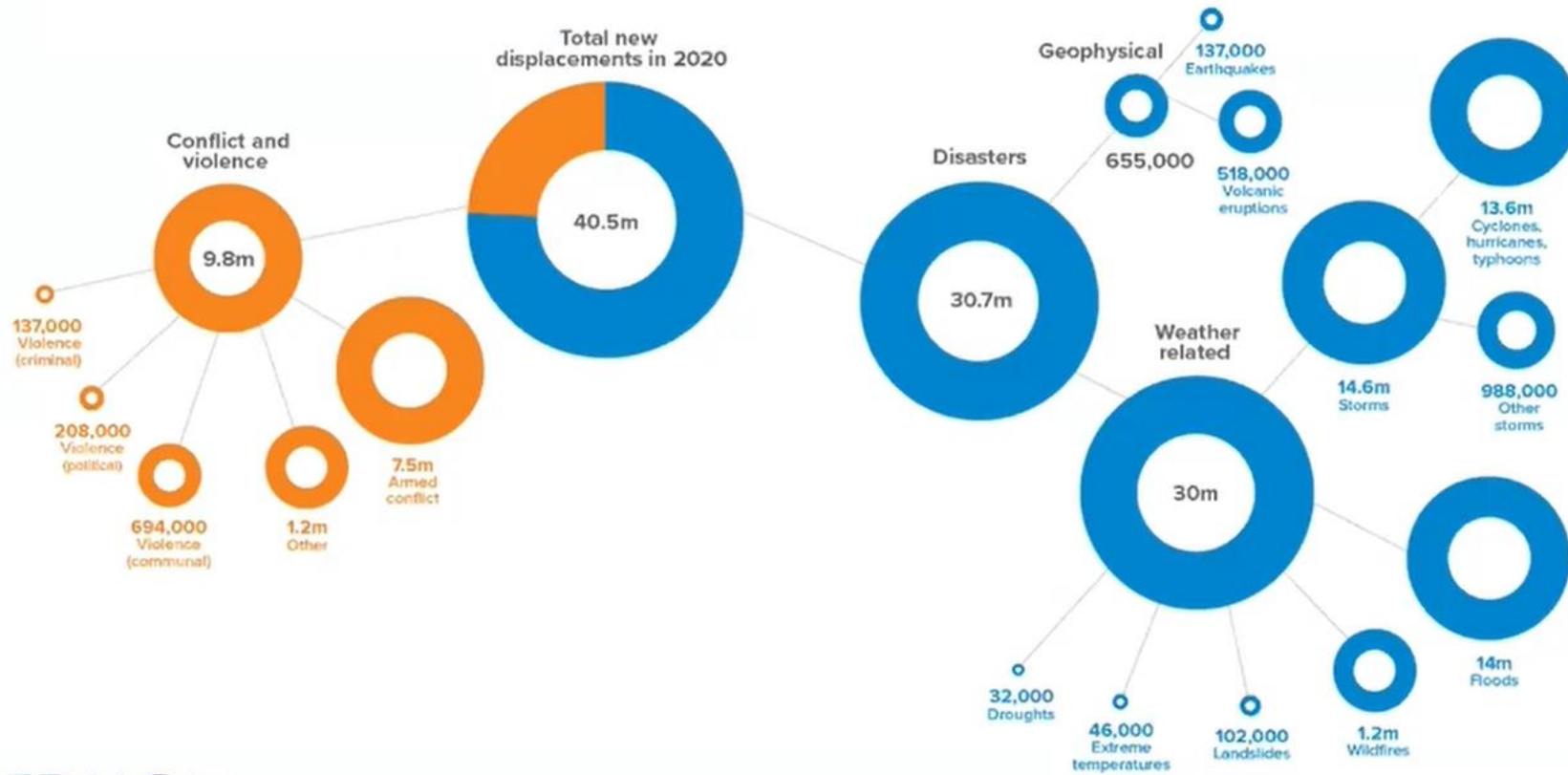
Biodiversity  
loss

@CKZickgraf





# New displacements in 2020: breakdown for conflict and disasters



**IDMC** internal displacement monitoring centre

Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.



**DISASTERS HAVE  
CAUSED**

**318 million  
internal  
displacements**

SINCE 2008

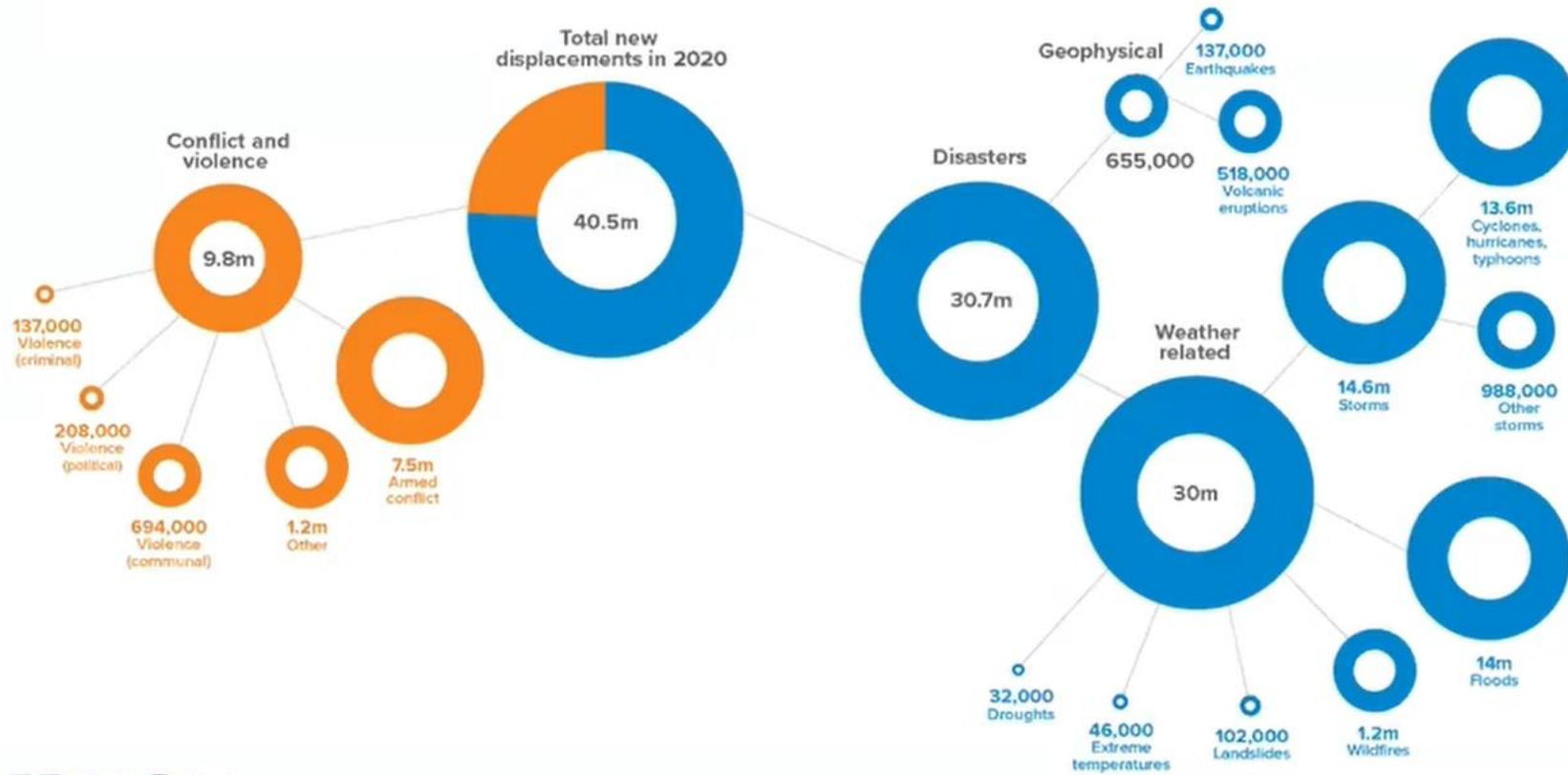
IDMC 2021



© International Organisation for Migration



## New displacements in 2020: breakdown for conflict and disasters



**IDMC** internal displacement monitoring centre

Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.



# What the numbers don't capture

**SLOW ONSET CHANGES,  
CROSS-BORDER  
DISPLACEMENT, 'VOLUNTARY'  
MIGRATION....**







# The myth of billions: future scenarios

The relationship between climate change and human mobility is much more complex and **non-linear** than media or public portrayals of hundreds of million or billions of 'climate refugees'

**Deterministic** assumptions hinder our ability to support those at risk of displacement



## THE POOREST AND THE MOST MARGINALISED WILL SUFFER THE GREATEST CONSEQUENCES

Policy and humanitarian response has largely overlooked an **invisible threat**: the people who **cannot** move

People are then at increased risk of displacement (or worse): at origin, in transit, and at destination



© Sibylle Desjardins / IOM



# BEWARE THE CLIMATE REFUGEE

## CHANGING THE STORY

Promoting climate action does not require using people displaced as weapons.

### Mitigation versus adaptation

It can result in fewer protections for people, their dehumanization, and more restrictive migration policies

| Hugo Observatory, University of Liège



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# CONFLICT AND CLIMATE

## THE RESOURCE LINK



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**Separating conflict from disaster or climate doesn't always make sense**

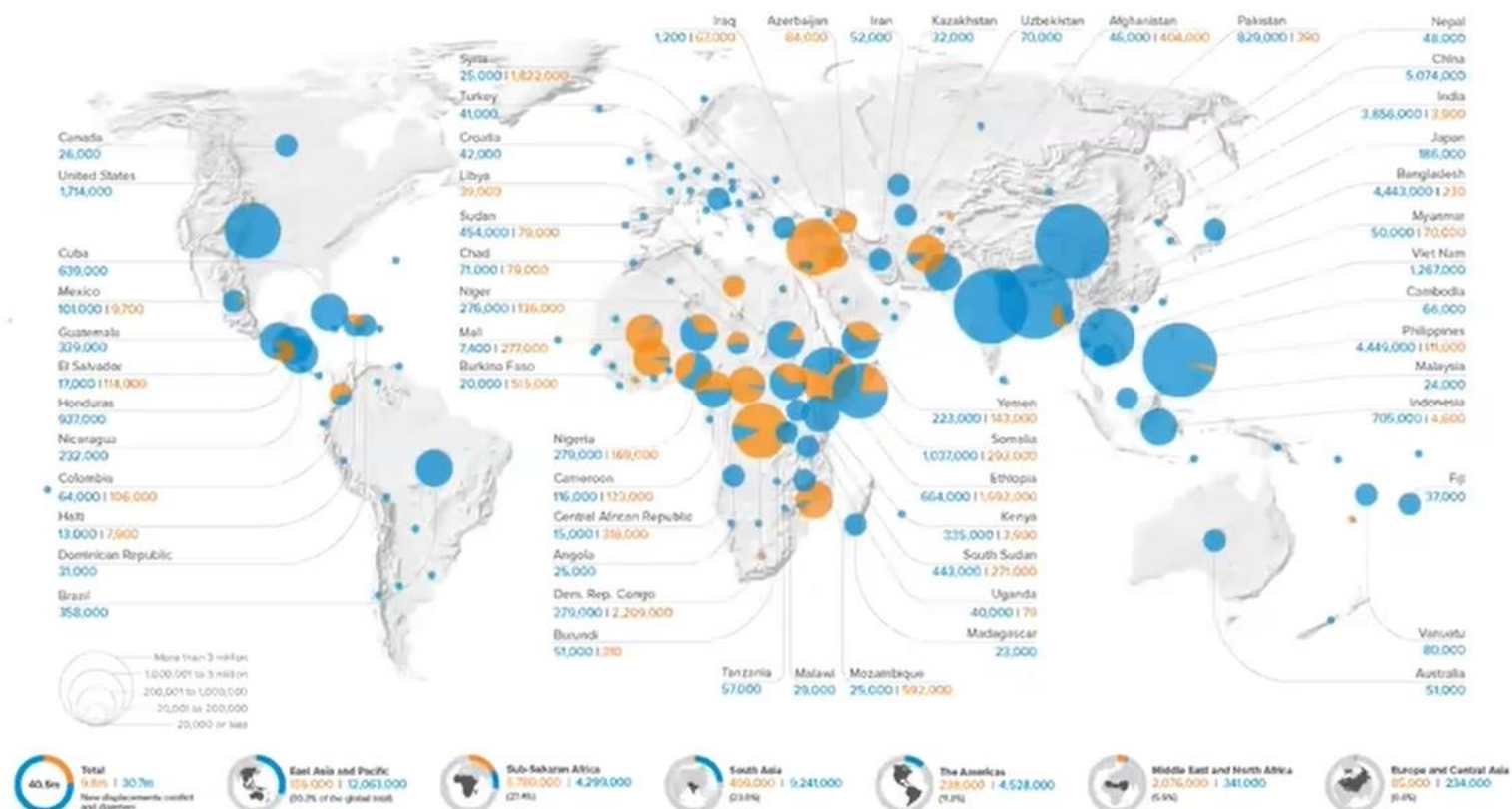
**When competition over resources drives displacement, and when displacement puts pressure on dwindling (or abundant) resources**

**When mobility and/or resources are poorly managed, we amplify risks for conflict and further displacement**





## New displacements by conflict and disasters in 2020



The country and territory names and figures are shown only when the total new displacements value exceeds 20,000. Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures. The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IDMC.

**IDMC** Internal displacement monitoring centre

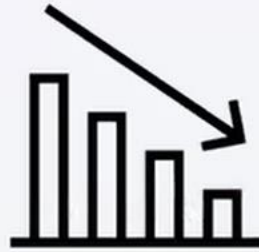


# What are we trying to do?



## AVERT

Avoid displacement in the future whenever and wherever possible



## MINIMIZE

Decrease the number of people who will be **forced** to flee the impacts of climate



## ADDRESS

Provide solutions for those displaced now and in the future

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# HOW?

Focus on **needs** rather than 'boxes'

Promote **sustainable** livelihoods

Recognize the **power** of migration as adaptation

Support **existing** mechanisms

Foster **human rights and equitable** approaches

