



Practical Toolkit on Climate Change and Disaster Displacement

ADDITIONAL TRAINING MATERIALS



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Refugee Law



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NOTES FOR TRAINERS

The training activities below accompany the ***Practical Toolkit Training Module***. The Training Module and additional Training Materials can be accessed on the Kaldor Centre's Climate Mobility Hub:

<https://climatemobility.unsw.edu.au/>.

The training outline and activities below can be adapted to your organizational context and the duration of your training session. If you have any questions or feedback, or would like additional support in implementing the *Practical Toolkit* Training Module, please contact

kaldorcentre@unsw.edu.au.

SAMPLE TRAINING OUTLINE

This sample training outline is for a 60-minute group training session. This may be adapted for a longer session (eg 90 minutes) or for use as a guide for individual learning.

Time	Activity	Description	Training Materials
5 min	Introduction	PLENARY Invite participants to share: Have you been involved in international protection claims involving climate change and/or disasters? What are the main challenges in such claims?	Participant worksheet – preparation (see page 10)
5 min	Overview	INDIVIDUAL Share the <i>Practical Toolkit</i> and invite participants to look through it, noting the main sections in the Table of Contents.	Practical Toolkit (hard copy or electronic)
25 min	Training video and activities	PLENARY Play the <i>Practical Toolkit</i> Training Video. Pause the video at each of the ‘Suggested Activities’ and invite participants to complete the activities.	Practical Toolkit Training Video
15 min	Hypothetical scenarios	SMALL GROUP Share the <i>Practical Toolkit</i> Scenarios for discussion in small groups.	Scenarios (see pages 5-8) Notes on scenarios (see page 9)
10 min	Wrap up	PLENARY Invite small groups to share their findings from the small group discussion above. Invite brief reflections from participants – eg what is one thing you have learned in this session that you will take into your future work?	Participant worksheet – reflection (see page 11)



SCENARIO 1 – ARO

Aro is a citizen of a low-lying Pacific atoll State who moved from an outer island to the main urban island seeking better opportunities for work, education for his children and access to healthcare. Over time, rapid population growth and limited land have led to severe overcrowding, with multiple families living on small, traditionally-owned landholdings. Housing is dense and informal, and tensions over land use have increased.

Environmental conditions have steadily worsened. Sea-level rise and storm surges now cause frequent flooding during high tides, while saltwater intrusion has contaminated underground freshwater supplies. Traditional food crops have declined due to soil salinization, and coastal erosion has reduced habitable land. Although sea walls have been built in parts of the atoll, they provide only limited and uneven protection. The government is lobbying for additional international assistance to protect the small nation.

These environmental pressures have contributed to food insecurity and declining health, and have also impacted on people's livelihoods. Disputes over land and resources have intensified. Public services, including healthcare, are available but overstretched.

Aro moves to a neighbouring State in the hope of finding alternative employment and supporting his extended family back home. When he cannot find employment, and discovers his visa is about to expire, he applies for international protection.

Discussion questions

1. Does Aro qualify for international protection under article 1A(2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention or human rights-based 'complementary protection'?
2. How would you assess the future risk of harm in the context of long-term environmental degradation?
3. How does Key Consideration 5 in the *Practical Toolkit* apply to this scenario?



SCENARIO 2 – SALMAN

Salman lives in Azalia, a small, landlocked State in South-East Asia with a population of around 163 million. He lives with his wife and four children on a char – a temporary sand island that has formed in the middle of one of Azalia’s great rivers. Life on the char is precarious. The land shifts with each monsoon season and homes are built from lightweight materials so they can be dismantled or rebuilt quickly. Farming and fishing provide just enough to survive, but access to schools, healthcare and stable markets is limited and often depends on river conditions.

Over the years, Salman and his family have been forced to flee their home repeatedly due to seasonal flooding. Each time they return after the flooding, they have to start from scratch to rebuild their home and their livelihood. Salman and his wife worry constantly about illness during floods, when clean water becomes scarce. Despite this, the family knows that land elsewhere is unaffordable, and that char living, though dangerous, is their only option.

In recent years, the Azalian government has introduced a large disaster risk reduction (DRR) programme along the river, constructing stone embankments to protect towns and farmland on either side from flooding. These walls have successfully reduced flood damage for established communities and commercial agriculture on the banks of the river. Because char dwellers are among the poorest in the country and lack formal land titles, the government has not extended the programme to protect them. As a result, families like Salman’s continue to face repeated displacement.

Eventually, Salman and his family travel to a neighbouring State, where Salman seeks international protection.

Discussion questions

1. Does Salman qualify for international protection under article 1A(2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention or human rights-based ‘complementary protection’?
2. How does the government’s implementation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) programmes impact on your assessment of Salman’s claim?
3. How does Key Consideration 3 in the *Practical Toolkit* apply to this scenario?



SCENARIO 3 – ARUN AND LEELA

Arun and Leela are a married couple in their late 50s and citizens of Lankora, a coastal State prone to severe seasonal cyclones. They have lived for many years in the capital of Port Selan, in a small coastal home. Their two adult children migrated overseas long ago and are now permanently settled in New Albion, where they live with their own families.

In February 2023, Cyclone Marea, a Category 5 cyclone, struck Port Selan directly. The storm caused widespread flooding and storm surges. Arun and Leela were trapped in their home overnight as the floodwaters rose rapidly, forcing them onto the roof until evacuation was possible. During the ordeal, Leela suffered a serious knee injury, and Arun witnessed neighbours being swept away and killed. Much of their neighbourhood was destroyed.

After the cyclone, the couple lived for several months in an emergency shelter before returning to their damaged home. However, flooding continued during heavy rains, essential services were unreliable, and warnings of further cyclones caused the couple intense distress. Both Arun and Leela began experiencing nightmares, flashbacks and heightened fear during storms. Each was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by local medical practitioners. Although the Lankoran government provided immediate disaster relief, long-term rebuilding and coastal protection have progressed slowly due to limited resources.

Arun and Leela travel to stay with their eldest child in New Albion. With no close family remaining in Lankora to provide daily care or emotional support, they fear that returning to Port Selan, without practical or emotional support there, would expose them to further psychological harm and a deterioration of their health.

Discussion questions

1. Do Arun and Leela qualify for international protection under article 1A(2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention or human rights-based ‘complementary protection’?
2. Under what circumstances could climate or disaster-related psychological harm constitute the basis for international protection?
3. Does your jurisdiction have an alternative humanitarian or other visa that may be appropriate in this scenario?



SCENARIO 4 – AMINA

Amina is a citizen of Kitanja, an East African country that has experienced prolonged drought, severe economic decline and political unrest following disputed national elections. She has lived for most of her life in Dara Province, a predominantly rural region that was widely perceived to have supported the opposition party during the most recent elections. She has two children, aged 8 and 9.

Following successive failed harvests, food insecurity in Dara Province became acute. The Kitanjan government announced an emergency food relief programme, to be administered through local councils and village committees. In practice, however, access to government food aid was largely controlled by local militias which frequently demanded bribes in exchange for food. International humanitarian organizations were barred from operating in Dara Province, following government restrictions imposed on non-governmental organizations accused of ‘foreign interference’.

Amina tried to obtain food from distribution points multiple times but was repeatedly told none was available. When she questioned why she kept missing out, she was accused of being ‘disloyal’ to her country. Her neighbours shared some of their food with Amina on occasions.

Amina sold her last remaining livestock and household possessions to obtain food, but this proved insufficient. Her children were missing school regularly due to hunger, and one of her children was hospitalized briefly for acute malnutrition. Amina also began experiencing severe anxiety and sleep disturbances. Eventually, Amina decided to leave. She and her children travelled by foot to a neighbouring State to seek food aid. While there, Amina applied for international protection.

Discussion questions

1. Does Amina qualify for international protection under article 1A(2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention or human rights-based ‘complementary protection’?
2. Do conditions in Dara Province constitute a serious disturbance to public order under the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention or 1984 Cartagena Declaration?
3. How does Key Consideration 2 in the *Practical Toolkit* apply to this scenario?



NOTES ON SCENARIOS

Scenario 1 – Aro

The facts in Scenario 1 are based on the case of *AW (Kiribati)* [2022] NZIPT 802085 (New Zealand). In that case, a man from Kiribati sought international protection based on a future risk of serious harm arising from the impacts of climate change (among other factors). The claim was denied, with the tribunal finding that future climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures could reduce the risk of serious harm below a ‘real chance’. This case is discussed on page 12 of the *Practical Toolkit*.

Scenario 2 – Salman

The facts in Scenario 2 are based on *Decree, RG n 8753/2020*, 13 March 2024, in which the Tribunal of Milan (Italy) granted subsidiary protection to an applicant on the basis of the risks he faced as a result of living in one of Bangladesh’s chars – temporary sand islands that emerge following flooding and which can be submerged again with future flooding. The tribunal held that severe flooding, erosion and landslides in the chars generated a risk of serious harm to the applicant. This case is discussed on page 33 of the *Practical Toolkit*.

Scenario 3 – Arun and Leela

This case is based on *AV (Nepal)* [2017] NZIPT 801125 (New Zealand), in which a married couple from Nepal sought protection on the basis of psychological harm following a major earthquake. Acknowledging that disasters can lead to serious human rights issues, the tribunal held that the risks faced by the applicants did not arise from any human act or omission that was ‘demonstrative of a failure of state protection’ (para 30), and the protection claim was denied. The role of human agency in international protection claims involving the impacts of climate change is discussed on pages 11–12 of the *Practical Toolkit*.

Scenario 4 – Amina

The facts in Scenario 4 are based on the case of *RN (Returnees) Zimbabwe CG* [2008] UKAIT 00083 (United Kingdom). This claim for international protection included the risk of harm to an applicant from Zimbabwe arising from discriminatory deprivation of basic assistance, including food aid, shelter and safe water. The tribunal held that discriminatory exclusion from food aid ‘is capable itself of constituting persecution for a reason recognized by the Convention’ (para 249). This case is discussed on page 9 of the *Practical Toolkit*.



PARTICIPANT WORKSHEET – PREPARATION

1. Have you been involved in international protection claims involving the adverse impacts of climate change and/or disasters?
2. What are the main challenges in such claims?

