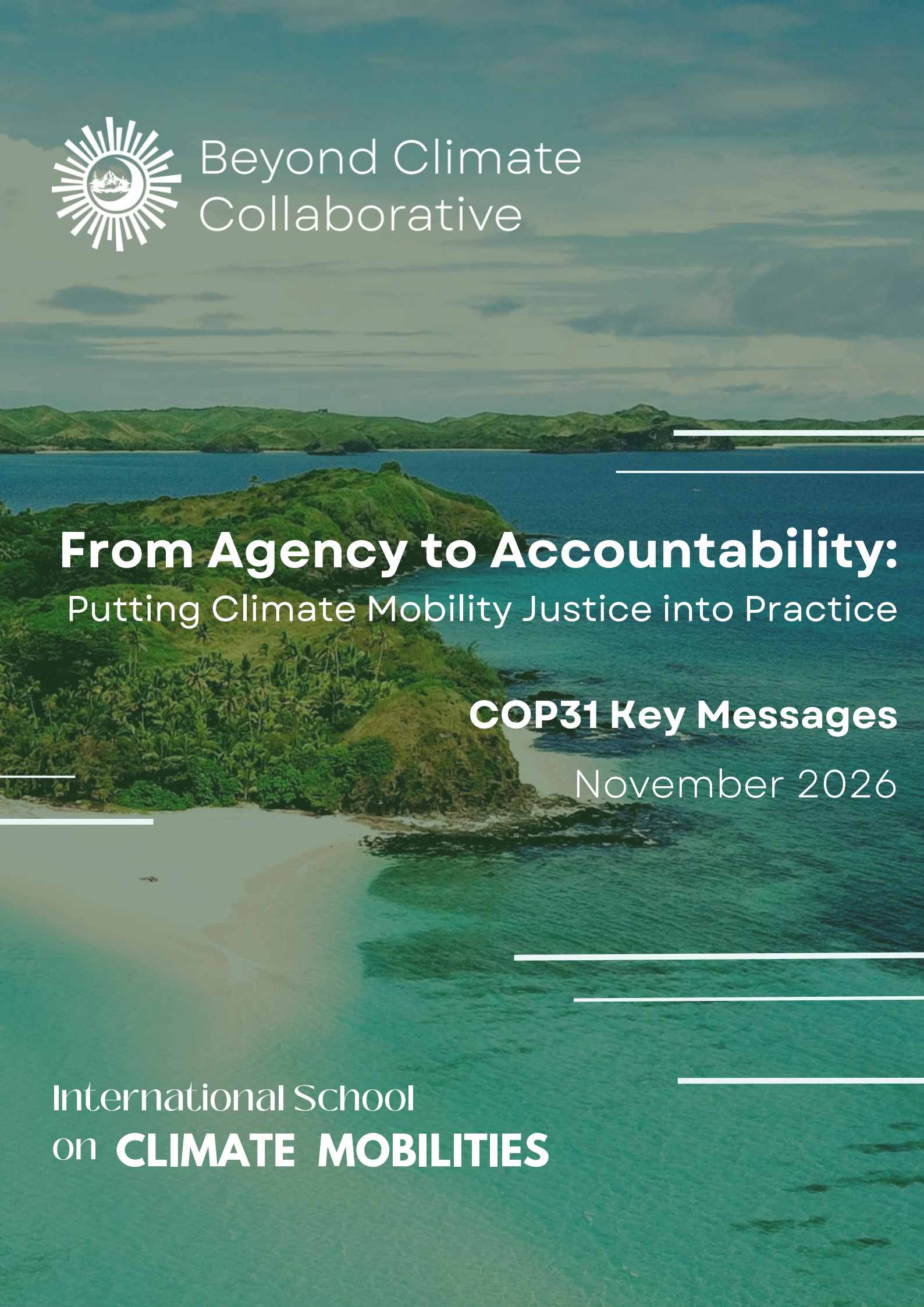


Beyond Climate Collaborative

From Agency to Accountability:

Putting Climate Mobility Justice into Practice

COP31 Key Messages

November 2026

International School on **CLIMATE MOBILITIES**

Acknowledgements

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The order and framing of the messages have been adapted to create a more targeted intervention for key stakeholders, while preserving the integrity and intent of each contribution.

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Beyond Climate Collaborative

Executive Summary

At COP30, Beyond Climate Collaborative (BCC) called for climate and environmental (im)mobilities to be treated as sites of justice, agency, dignity and systemic transformation rather than crises to be managed. This brief turns that broad call into a practical question: **what does a just approach look like, and what does it require of key stakeholders?**

The brief is grounded in Beyond Climate Collaborative's emerging **Just-SHAPE framework for climate mobility justice**, advancing that all knowledge production, data collection, policy and governance, action and funding for climate-related (im)mobilities must be justice-based, sustainable, human rights-respecting, rooted in agency and self-determination, people-centred, people-powered and participatory, equitable and inclusive. Affected communities and emerging leaders hold essential knowledge about local inequality and their own futures. Centring that knowledge challenges racialised, colonial and technocratic approaches to climate mobility action, challenging a multitude of stakeholders to (un)learn, unravel, disrupt, and radically reimagine how we think about, talk about, and work to address climate and evironmental-related (im)mobilities in the twenty-first century. Getting there is, unavoidably, a process of unlearning: disrupting how each of us has been trained to think, talk about, and act on climate-related (im)mobilities, and building the collective will to imagine new ways of understanding, working, and showing up.

Drawing on five years of shared learning from the BCC's *International School on Climate Mobilities* and from BCC's 2025 Voices on the Move global survey of emerging leaders working at the frontlines of climate mobility and environmental justices, the brief gives evidenced calls to action for a variety of key stakeholders involved in producing knowledge, advocating, and governing climate-related (im)mobilities. Each key message names the assumption the group currently works under, reframes it against the principles, and illuminates key recommendations to advance climate mobility justice.

COP31 must mark the turning point where the global community shifts the narrative from vulnerability to agency, and from agency to acountability – and delivers the climate mobility justice this moment demands.

Executive Summary

From Agency to Accountability: Putting Climate Mobility Justice into Practice

1 Researchers and Research Institutes

- **Research with communities, not on them:** Share decisions on questions, methods, data ownership, interpretation, publication, and use with communities from the start.
- **Look beyond just movement:** Study immobility and the structures that determine who can move or stay.
- **Build on what exists:** Engage with the field's past work and frontline communities' own stories.
- Impactful teaching: Teach climate (im)mobilities in an interdisciplinary, locally rooted, history-informed way with community perspectives.
- **Put people before funding bodies:** Where research and funder aims diverge, prioritise the interests of affected people.
- **Share knowledge where it matters:** Get findings to communities, leaders, researchers, and policymakers in accessible languages, formats, and open-access outputs.

2 Frontline Communities and Emerging Leaders

- **Lived experience is expertise:** Recognise and assert community knowledge so communities act as peers in research, policy, and governance.
- **Hold power to account:** Demand and model accountability and repair, grounded in reparative justice.
- **Build collective strength:** Use peer networks for training, knowledge exchange, and trans-national mobilisation.
- **Secure language access:** Meaningful participation depends on being able to understand and be understood.

3 Disaster Risk Reduction Actors

- **Move from resilience to accountability:** Pair disaster risk reduction measures with adaptation and resilience building, with accountability to people and communities on the frontlines.
- **Planned relocation as community-led:** Ensure consent, cultural continuity, and long-term support so relocation is just and community-led.
- Not simply beneficiaries: Treat persons impacted by disasters as collaborators, first responders, and active agents.
- **Beyond the individual:** Recognise that disasters disrupt care networks and communities, so responses must be relational and community rooted.
- **Holistic responses:** Collaborate across sectors to deliver just outcomes, especially as political will and budgets shrink.

Executive Summary

From Agency to Accountability: Putting Climate Mobility Justice into Practice

4 Peacebuilding and Conflict Response Actors

- **Evidence exists:** Most conflict-affectedcountries are also highly climate-vulnerable. Let's avoid deferring action until the data is complete.
- **Climate is integral:** Environment, conflict, and displacement are mutually constitutive and shaped by colonial and structural histories.
- **Recognise ecological violence:** Deliberate destruction of landscapes is itself a form of displacement, and rebuilding a house isn't restoring a home.
- **Knowledge is local:** Ground peacebuilding in Indigenous knowledge and women's leadership, centring people as agents rather than victims.

5 Legal Practitioners

- **Use jurisprudence to promote structural change:** Build on recent rulings and pursue sustained accountability, including corporate liability and reparations, beyond individual cases.
- **Movement lawyering:** Keep legal practice accountable to communities and tied to organising, advocacy, and intersectional cases.
- **Address the internal displacement gap:** Focus on internal displacement and recognise the right to stay alongside the right to move.
- **Legal aid as disaster aid:** Integrate access to justice into disaster response before, during, and after rapid onset disaster events.
- **Legal pluralism and community authority:** Engage Indigenous and community legal traditions and treat FPIC as genuine consent, not procedural consultation.
- **Share legal knowledge:** Document and circulate cases, jurisprudence, and protection gaps across jurisdictions.
- **Accessible justice:** Remove barriers of cost, distance, documentation, and awareness through community-based and inclusive legal services.
- **Integrate legal education and climate literacy:** Pursue ongoing cross-disciplinary learning as laws and climate risks evolve.
- **Bottom-up legal and climate adaptation:** Support existing community-led processes rather than imposing external legal solutions.

Executive Summary

From Agency to Accountability: Putting Climate Mobility Justice into Practice

6 Funders, Investors, and Philanthropists

- **Deliver on the Loss and Damage Fund and Global Goal on Adaptation:** Push for credible replenishment, grant-based adaptation finance, and direct access for community-led organisations.
- **Sustained, flexible, accessible, and locally led funding:** Provide long-term, flexible funding with simplified, accessible procedures.
- **Put money behind community priorities:** Fund neglected areas like legal aid, community research, and storytelling according to community-identified needs.
- **Reparative finance:** Address historical and structural harm through land restitution, debt cancellation, and community-led recovery.
- **Compensate and protect:** Fairly pay grassroots groups and give rights defenders roles in funding decisions.
- **Accountability:** Require supply-chain transparency and tackle power imbalances, not just procedural due diligence.
- **Communities define impact:** Offer capacity support chosen by recipients and measure success by community agency, rights, and just outcomes.

7 Policymakers and Government Ministries

- **Integrate climate mobility across ministries:** Embed mobility and immobility in domestic policy areas with clear cross-ministry responsibilities.
- **Support staying, moving, returning, and rebuilding:** Give all four outcomes equal attention and expand people's choices.
- **Share authority and learn locally:** Give communities real decision-making power and learn from local responses.
- **Address intersecting inequalities:** Back inclusion commitments with budgets, accessible services, and public reporting.
- **Prevent dispossession and ensure accountability:** Protect land rights, require safeguards and remedies, and pursue restitution and international responsibility-sharing.

Executive Summary

From Vulnerability to Agency: It's Time for Climate Mobility Justice

8 Humanitarian Actors

- **Look beyond those already displaced:** Include people who stay or face repeated displacement
- **Treat affected people as decision-makers:** Give communities real influence over priorities, resources, implementation, and evaluation from the outset.
- **Do not assume that migration is adaptation:** Assess risks at origin and destination
- **Support migrant networks:** Acknowledge and support the material and non-material remittances that strengthen local adaptation.
- **Recognise recovery beyond material assistance:** Address grief, cultural ties, and psychosocial and legal needs as communities define them.
- **Coordinate without transferring responsibility:** Link sectors for continuity without using coordination to excuse funding gaps or offload burdens onto communities

9 Storytellers (Advocates, Journalists and Artists)

- **Recognise storytelling as cultural continuity and reclamation**
- **Expose the systems that shape climate (im)mobilities:** Place stories in their historical, political, and economic contexts and link them to demands for accountability.
- **Challenge narratives that frame mobility as a security threat:** Avoid crisis and invasion language and reflect the complexity of why people move or stay.
- **Give communities authority over their own representation:** Ensure consent, shared ownership, fair compensation, and accountability in how stories are told.
- **Resource youth participation and share decision-making power:** Create paid, accessible pathways and formal roles for young people in research, policy, and finance.

10 Private Sector and Business

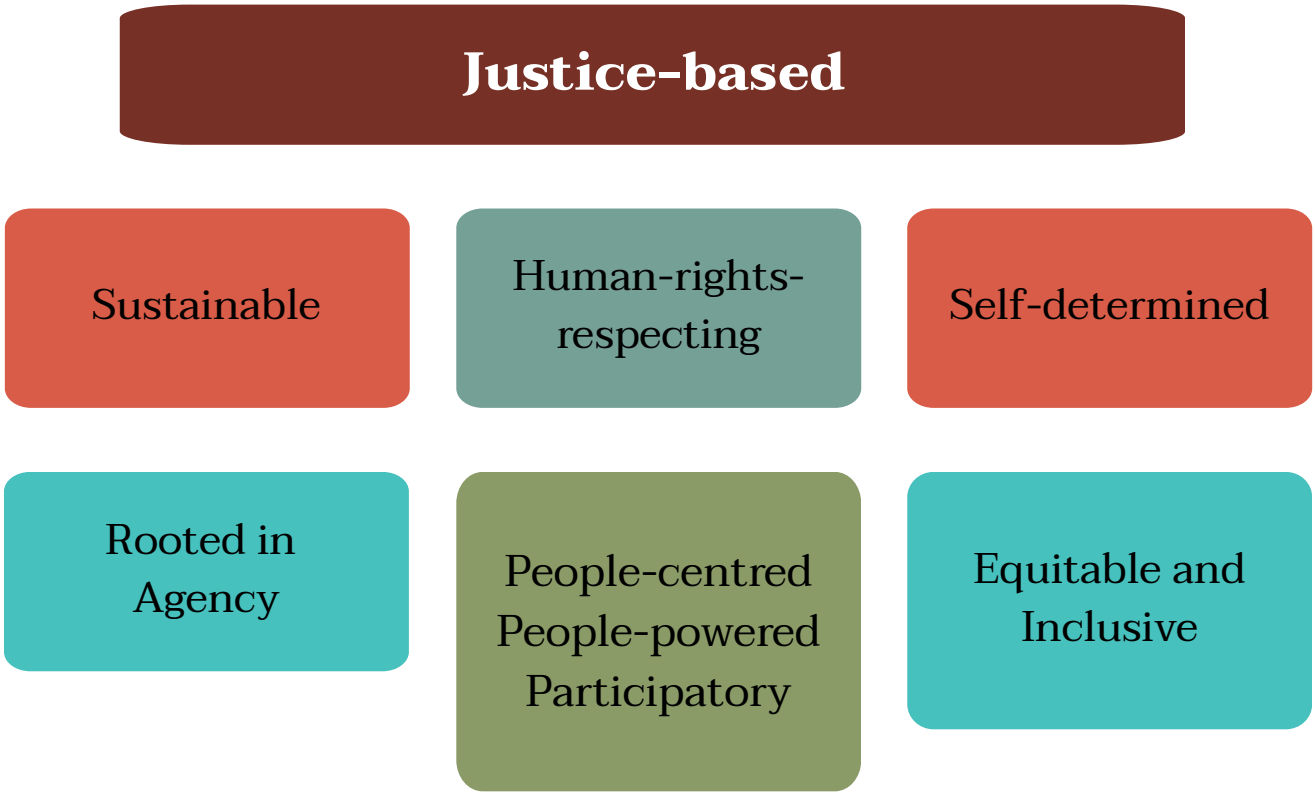
- **Prevent displacement before projects are approved:** Assess displacement and rights risks across the project lifecycle, with community participation.
- **Make climate commitments accountable to affected communities:** Ensure carbon credits, offsets, and net-zero claims don't conceal rights violations, and disclose real social impacts.
- **Make businesses responsible for remedying the harm they cause:** Provide accessible grievance mechanisms and community-defined remedies, without substituting for prevention.
- **Bridge the gap between public policy and community realities:** Use their position to align investments with local needs and help address gaps that policy and markets leave open.

Introduction

At COP30, Beyond Climate Collaborative called for a shift in how we think about and frame climate and environmental-related (im)mobilities: not as crises to be managed, but as sites of justice, agency, dignity, and systemic transformation. That call was necessarily broad.

This brief asks a narrower, harder question: **What does a just approach to climate (im)mobilities actually look like in practice – and what does it require of each of us, specifically?**

We start from a Beyond Climate Collaborative's emerging **Just-SHAPE framework for climate mobility justice**, advancing that all knowledge production, data collection, policy and governance, action and funding for climate-related (im)mobilities must be:



Key Messages

1 Researchers and Research Institutes

Are researchers and institutions prepared to share authority over research agendas, data, and authorship from day one, even when it challenges funder expectations and their own assumptions about expertise?
Are institutions ready to measure success by whether research is useful to the communities it concerns, rather than by citations and journal rankings?

Are scholars in the fast-growing field of climate (im)mobilities willing to credit what communities have long known, rather than repackaging it for personal success?
Will think tanks and research institutions turn their attention to the structures which trap and displace people, even when the actors behind them are powerful funders, partners, or government?

- **Research with communities, not on them:** Research questions, methods, data ownership, interpretation, publication, and use should be shared decisions from the start.
- **Look beyond just movement:** research must give greater attention to immobility and regimes including borders, land tenure systems, and extractive industries, increasingly including data centres, that impose structural limits, determining who can move and who can stay. Some examples include: Land Tenure and Climate Mobility in the Pacific, and Just AI, Just Land
- **Build on what exists:** climate mobility is a long-standing, multidisciplinary field. Researchers should engage with past and current work, especially frontline communities' own stories. Researchers should avoid normative or environmentally deterministic understandings of climate mobility, instead understanding the diversity of pre-existing vulnerabilities and mobilities that climate impacts interact with and influence. An example includes: Climate & Staying Put: Five Countries, One Pattern
- **Impactful teaching:** the way we teach climate (im)mobilities matters. Teaching and student engagement should be interdisciplinary, locally rooted, based in histories that explain long-standing inequalities, and include diverse community-forward perspectives.
- **Put people before funding bodies:** where research and funding aims diverge, researchers have a duty to put the interests of people affected by climate (im)mobility first, particularly under an increasingly polarised political climate-related pressures.
- **Share knowledge where it matters:** findings should reach communities and emerging leaders in relevant languages, formats, and mediums, through open access and alternative outputs, and be shared actively with other researchers and policymakers. See Climate Brides.

Key Messages

2 Frontline Communities and Emerging Leaders

How can communities and emerging leaders assert their knowledge as expertise, on their own terms, rather than adapting it to institutional language to be heard?

What would it look like for frontline communities to set the terms of accountability themselves, and to define what repair means, who must answer for harm, and how progress is judged?

What do peer networks need to be able to share training, knowledge and strategy, and to mobilise across borders under their own leadership?

- **Lived experience is expertise:** The knowledge held within communities and emerging leaders should be recognised and asserted as expertise in its own right. This means claiming a place as peer actors in research, policy and governance, insisting on credit and ownership of their data and stories, and bringing community-generated evidence into decision-making spaces.
- **Hold power to account:** Frontline communities and emerging leaders can demand and model accountability and repair, holding institutions and one another to commitments grounded in reparative justice. This means defining for themselves what repair looks like, and practising the same transparency and fairness inside their own networks.
- **Build collective strength:** Peer networks can offer accessible training, knowledge exchange and collective mobilisation, particularly across borders. They are strongest when led by their members and resourced for the long term, so that participation doesn't rely on short project cycles or unpaid labour.
- **Secure language access:** Meaningful participation depends on being able to understand and be understood. Events and dialogues should provide interpretation, and documents and agreements should be translated, including into local and Indigenous languages, with time for communities to review them before they consent or commit.

Key Messages

3 Disaster Risk Reduction Actors

Will disaster risk reduction actors centre community and individual agency when enacting climate measures like planned relocation?

Will DRR insist on adaptive or resilience action not only from frontline communities but also those responsible for structural and systemic harm?

Will DRR support collaborative and holistic cross-sector responses with communities and other actors to affirm the importance of justice and care-centred approaches?

- **Move from resilience to accountability:** Asking communities to adapt indefinitely to conditions they did not create is an injustice. DRR actors should pair resilience programming with bringing attention to the actors and conditions that cause harm and highlight who should be held accountable and be responsible for repair.
- **Planned relocation as community-led:** Planned relocation and managed retreat have been hailed as potential solutions for disaster risk reduction, even though they also bring an additional risk of forced displacement. Consent, secure tenure, fair compensation, cultural continuity, and long-term support are critical to ensure that affected communities and people maintain agency, self-determination, and decision-making.
- **Not simply beneficiaries:** Affected people and communities should be considered active drivers and collaborators of DRR action, beyond a simplistic and colonialist view of affected persons as recipients or beneficiaries. Actors working with frontline communities should use participatory methods like risk assessments to obtain a grounded understanding of local issues, and then invest in anticipatory, locally driven adaptation, including for people who cannot or will not move.
- **Beyond the individual:** Disasters displace not only individuals, but also the care networks of dispersed families and communities, making relational and community-rooted responses essential rather than optional. Building just and sustainable futures demands collaboration, cross-border solidarity, and ethics of care that honour community-rooted ways of knowing, being, and organising.
- **Holistic responses:** Cross-sector collaboration is necessary to achieve just social, political, environmental, and economic outcomes for communities affected by disaster. In the face of shrinking political will and stagnating budgets, such collaboration becomes even more important to address the uneven impacts of climate change on all parts of society.

Key Messages

4 Peacebuilding and Conflict Response Actors

Are conflict response and peacebuilding actors integrating climate-related knowledge into their work in conflict-affected areas? Are these actors taking action to address the impacts of climate change where they work?

Will they raise awareness in the climate sector about the environmental issues they witness, including ecological violence, and advocate for their recognition?

- **Evidence exists:** Data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre make the case plainly: 80% of internally-displaced persons live in countries that are also among the most highly climate-vulnerable, such as Sudan, Yemen, and Colombia. However, these settings often remain excluded from climate finance. As humanitarian funding contracts and data systems come under threat, with three-quarters of conflict-displaced countries lacking up-to-date data last year, the temptation is to defer action until the evidence is more complete. That should not be the case: peacebuilding and conflict response actors must bring awareness to and take action mitigating the impacts of climate in conflict-affected areas.
- **Climate is integral:** Environmental change and risks are deeply entangled with politics and economics. Conflict reshapes environments, environmental destruction reshapes livelihoods, and displacement interrupts ecological knowledge. These processes are mutually constitutive, not sequential, and they are shaped by histories of colonial extraction, structural inequality, and political neglect that no linear causal model can capture. Understanding the role of climate and environment in conflict is critical knowledge for all conflict response and peacebuilding actors.
- **Recognise ecological violence:** Ecological violence is, in itself, a form of displacement. When irrigation systems are targeted, forests burned, orchards uprooted, and soils contaminated with white phosphorus, everyday ways of being and doing are affectedIC. Ecological violence names this deliberateness as harm directed not only at landscapes, but at the social worlds those landscapes sustain. Displacement begins when the conditions that make staying possible disappear, and "ecologies of return" make clear that rebuilding a house is not the same as restoring a home.
- **Knowledge is local:** Affected communities and individuals are firsthand witnesses and knowledge-holders of the issues surrounding them. Enact peacebuilding and conflict response models that are grounded in Indigenous knowledge and women's leadership, such as the GER-Rwanda's (Global Initiative for Environment and Reconciliation) environmental peacebuilding. Stories from conflict areas should highlight people as more than beneficiaries or victims, and instead as agentic actors and collaborators in their own right.

Key Messages

5 Legal Practitioners

Are legal practitioners prepared to move beyond strategic litigation towards sustained, structural change, even when it challenges established legal strategies and powerful public and private actors?

Are they ready to treat legal aid as an essential part of disaster response, ensuring that people can access justice before, during, and after displacement?

- **Use jurisprudence to promote structural change:** Recent judicial developments, including the Colombian Constitutional Court's ruling as well as the advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, provide important foundations for advancing climate justice. Practitioners should push for their implementation, build on existing jurisprudence, and translate legal milestones into lasting protections for affected communities. While strategic litigation has achieved important advances, individual cases cannot, on their own, transform the structures that produce climate-related harm and displacement. Practitioners should develop sustained approaches to accountability, including corporate liability and reparations from private actors for historical harms to communities and environments.
- **Movement lawyering**: Legal practice should be accountable to communities and connected to organising, advocacy, and policy change. Litigation should build precedent while supporting broader movements for justice. Because climate (im)mobilities intersect with multiple forms of inequality and harm, practitioners should pursue intersectional cases.
- **Address the internal displacement gap:** Legal practitioners must give greater attention to internal displacement, including addressing slow-onset climate impacts, challenges to planned relocation, and situations where people face pressure to move but lack effective legal protection. The right to stay deserves greater recognition alongside the right to move, asylum, and reparations.
- **Legal aid as disaster aid:** Access to justice should be integrated into disaster prevention, preparedness, and response, from the outset, and not offered only after displacement has occurred. Legal support should help people protect their land and housing rights, access identity documents and insurance claims, challenge evictions, and secure essential protections before and after disasters.
- **Legal pluralism and community authority:** Legal practitioners should engage with Indigenous and other community-based legal traditions where relevant, recognising their normative systems, knowledge, and science-based evidence. Free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) must be understood as requiring community consent before action is taken, including relocation, rather than as a procedural consultation requirement that allows projects to proceed without consent. Shared decision-making must be central to legal processes affecting communities.

Key Messages

5 Legal Practitioners

Are lawyers and legal systems prepared to recognise community knowledge, Indigenous legal traditions, and collective decision-making authority on their own terms?

- **Share legal knowledge:** Practitioners should continue to document and share legal cases, emerging jurisprudence, and gaps in protection related to climate mobility, refugee and asylum practice, and cases involving protection from return. Although laws and legal mechanisms remain insufficient, they can still be a powerful source of protection and justice when practitioners apply them creatively and connect them across jurisdictions.
- **Accessible justice:** Legal protection must be available to people facing the practical barriers that often prevent them from asserting their rights, including cost, distance, documentation requirements, limited legal awareness, and inaccessible services. Lawyers should consider community-based legal aid, mobile legal clinics, local-language information sessions, remote support where safe, disability-inclusive services, and low- or no-cost representation or crowdsourcing.
- **Integrate legal education and climate literacy:** Climate (im)mobilities require practitioners to work across disciplines and legal fields, including climate science, disaster governance, land tenure, migration and asylum law, gendered harms, disability rights, labour protections, and local political realities. As legal standards and climate-related risks evolve, continuing education and the exchange of practical experience are essential to effective representation and protection.
- **Bottom-up legal and climate adaptation:** Legal practitioners should work alongside mobile people, migrant communities, and locally led initiatives that are already responding to climate-related challenges. Rather than imposing external legal solutions, they should strengthen existing community processes, support people in asserting their rights, and ensure that legal interventions respond to locally identified priorities.

Key Messages

6 Funders, Investors, and Philanthropists

Are funders, investors, and philanthropists prepared to redistribute both resources and decision-making power, allowing communities to set their own priorities and determine what meaningful impact looks like?

Are they willing to fund the work that is often overlooked even when it does not fit established funding priorities?

- **Deliver on the Loss and Damage Fund and the Global Goal on Adaptation:** Loss and damage and adaptation finance commitments remain far below what is needed and severely under-resourced. Its first country allocation (Nepal after the 2026 floods) was presented as an exception rather than a precedent. This lack of binding commitments from member states and the private sector is a key reason why frontline communities, emergency operations, and local efforts remain underfunded. Funders should press for a credible replenishment of the Loss and Damage Fund and a clear delivery pathway for tripling adaptation finance, prioritising grants over debt-creating instruments. They should also advocate for direct access and dedicated funding windows for community-led organisations, and push for Global Goal on Adaptation indicators that track whether finance reaches local actors and people affected by climate (im)mobility. Private investors and philanthropists should contribute to these mechanisms in ways that complement the obligations of states.
- **Sustained, flexible, accessible, and locally led funding:** Climate (im)mobility requires long-term support that responds to changing community priorities and circumstances. Funding should be both predictable and flexible enough to support locally led adaptation, displacement responses, and planned relocation, without imposing externally determined agendas or short funding cycles that undermine and disadvantage community initiatives. Complex technical and institutional requirements can prevent grassroots groups and organisations from accessing promised climate finance. Funders should simplify procedures, accept phased implementation where appropriate, and adapt application processes, reporting requirements, and fiduciary procedures proportionately to the recipients' size and capacity.
- **Put money behind community priorities:** Funders should direct resources towards areas that are routinely neglected, including legal aid, community-led research, storytelling, and rights-based approaches. Funding priorities should reflect the needs identified by affected communities rather than donors' pre-established objectives.
- **Reparative finance:** Climate finance should go beyond compensation for immediate losses and damages to address the structural and historical causes of harm. This includes supporting land restitution, debt cancellation, and community-led recovery, while ensuring that affected communities have the authority to determine what reparation and justice mean in their contexts.

Key Messages

6 Funders, Investors, and Philanthropists

Will they move beyond short-term compensation towards reparative finance that addresses historical harms, including through land restitution, debt cancellation, and community-led recovery?

Are they ready to accept accountability for their investments and ensure that the pursuit of climate solutions does not reproduce the inequalities that drive displacement?

- **Compensate and protect:** Unpaid and underpaid work exacerbate resource constraints and activist burnout, undermining the long-term efforts of those most affected by climate (im)mobilities. Grassroots organisations, youth groups, and community leaders should be fairly compensated for their labour, expertise, and time. Environmental and human rights defenders should have meaningful roles in funding and investment decisions, including at board level.
- **Accountability:** Funders and investors should require transparency across supply chains, uphold human rights and environmental commitments, and adopt zero-tolerance policies towards attacks and human rights violations. Accountability should go beyond procedural due diligence to address underlying power imbalances and ensure that commitments lead to meaningful change.
- **Communities define impact:** Financial support should be accompanied by long-term, non-paternalistic capacity strengthening, designed and chosen by the organisations receiving it. Rather than making funding conditional on meeting externally imposed institutional standards, funders should work with recipients to build capacity over time, recognising existing expertise and local systems. Funding success should be assessed by whether resources strengthen community agency, protect rights, address structural inequalities, and support just outcomes for people affected by climate (im)mobility. Funders should be prepared to learn from locally defined measures of success and remain accountable to the communities whose lives and futures their investments affect.

Key Messages

7 Policymakers and Government Ministries

Will governments continue to treat climate mobility as an emergency and border issue or embed the right to stay, move, return and rebuild across housing, land, health, education, labour, social protection, planning, adaptation and loss-and-damage policy?

Are ministries willing to move beyond consultation and share real authority with affected communities over decisions on relocation, land use, climate finance and recovery?

When climate action or planned relocation causes dispossession or displacement, will governments provide transparent safeguards, accessible remedy and long-term accountability?

- **Integrate climate mobility across ministries:** Most climate-related movement is internal, making domestic policy central to protection. Embed mobility and immobility in housing, land-use planning, health, education, labour, social protection, rural development, disaster-risk reduction, adaptation, and loss-and-damage systems. Establish clear responsibilities across ministries rather than leaving climate mobility to emergency or border authorities.
- **Support staying, moving, returning, and rebuilding:** Give these outcomes equal attention in policy and resource allocation. Invest in services, infrastructure, and livelihoods that make staying safe, while supporting dignified movement and voluntary return where conditions allow. Policies should expand people's choices, not assume that moving is always adaptive or staying always possible.
- **Share authority and learn locally:** Give affected communities meaningful decision-making power over relocation, land use, recovery, and climate finance. Learn from local governments and community-led responses rather than impose uniform solutions. Ensure frontline communities can shape loss-and-damage discussions, including international processes where national representation may not adequately reflect their priorities.
- **Address intersecting inequalities:** Gender, age, disability, income, livelihood, ethnicity, legal status, and land access shape who is exposed and who can move or recover. Nepal's NDC 3.0 commits to disaggregated data and inclusion assessments, while Vanuatu's includes gender equality, youth inclusion and human rights. Such commitments must be backed by dedicated budgets, accessible services and public reporting on who receives support. Review eligibility rules and documentation requirements so that assistance does not reinforce exclusion.
- **Prevent dispossession and ensure accountability:** Protect Indigenous and local community land rights and prevent relocation or climate projects from solely serving government or private interest. Require safeguards, meaningful consent and accessible remedies, and publish information on displacement, finance, grievances, and outcomes. Pursue land restitution and community-led recovery, alongside international responsibility-sharing through debt relief and technology transfer, particularly for the Global South and small island developing states.

Key Messages

8 Humanitarian Actors

Are humanitarian actors prepared to treat people affected by climate impacts as decision-makers with influence over assistance, protection and recovery strategies?

Will humanitarian actors share decision-making power with affected communities over assistance and recovery?

When migration is supported as adaptation, are humanitarian actors also addressing the risks people may face at destination, the needs of those left behind and the barriers confronting people who cannot move?

In an era of constrained humanitarian funding and prolonged climate impacts, will institutions deepen cross-sector coordination without shifting the burden of recovery back onto communities?

- **Look beyond those already displaced:** Assessments and assistance should include people who remain, cannot move or face repeated displacement, alongside displaced people and receiving communities. Identify barriers involving income, disability, documentation, transport, and services. Connect assistance with early warning, social protection and livelihood diversification so that staying can be a supported choice, not enforced by circumstance.
- **Treat affected people as decision-makers:** Communities are rights-holders and knowledge-holders, not merely recipients or beneficiaries. Build on existing local responses and give affected people meaningful influence over programme priorities, resources, implementation, and evaluation. Participation should shape assistance from the outset, rather than provide feedback on decisions already made.
- **Do not assume that migration is adaptation:** Moving may reduce immediate risks while creating debt, exploitation, insecure housing, or exclusion from services elsewhere. Humanitarian responses must account for restrictive migration policies and costs that can prevent people from reaching safety or accessing assistance. Assess outcomes across origin and destination, including effects on those left behind. Support safe movement without treating it as a substitute for addressing the conditions that make displacement necessary.
- **Support migrant networks:** Migrants and other people on the move maintain connections to their origin, transit, and destination communities. Through these connections, they exchange money, knowledge, and skills–material and non-material remittances–that can support local knowledge-based adaptation and resilience action in collaboration with those who remained behind. It is vital that humanitarian actors acknowledge and support these global networks of people who bring important resources to local responses.
- **Recognise recovery beyond material assistance:** Displacement can sever care networks and disrupt livelihoods, identity, cultural practices, and relationships to land. Trauma-informed programming should recognise grief and attachment to place. Connect immediate assistance with health and psychosocial care, legal and documentation support, and recovery priorities defined by communities themselves.
- **Coordinate without transferring responsibility:** Link humanitarian assistance with development, disaster-risk reduction, climate adaptation, peacebuilding, and local public services so that support continues beyond the emergency. Aid cuts, including the dismantling of USAID's operational capacity and funding shortfalls affecting UN agencies, are disrupting assistance. Coordination is increasingly urgent but cannot replace adequate funding or justify expecting communities to absorb institutional failures.

Key Messages

9 Storytellers (Advocates, Journalists and Artists)

How can storytelling centre the voices of impacted communities without extracting their experiences or reducing them to symbols of vulnerability?

Who gets to shape the story of climate (im)mobilities, whose interests does it serve, and who has the power to challenge how their experiences are represented?

Are journalists, artists, and advocates willing to confront the political and economic systems driving displacement, even when doing so challenges the institutions funding or publishing their work?

What would it take to move beyond raising awareness towards storytelling that redistributes power, resources, and decision-making to the communities whose stories are told?

- **Recognise storytelling as a practice of cultural continuity and political reclamation:** Art and storytelling can sustain relationships to land, identity, memory, and belonging. Support community-led creative practices that protect cultural knowledge and recognise storytelling and testimonials as more than a tool for communicating climate impacts.
- **Expose the systems that shape climate (im)mobilities**: Situate testimonies of displacement and immobility within their historical, political, and economic contexts, including colonialism, land dispossession, border enforcement, and anti-migrant campaigns. Connect individual experiences to the structures that produce vulnerability and constrain people's choices, and link public narratives to clear demands for institutional accountability and policy change.
- **Challenge narratives that frame mobility as a security threat:** Use language that reflects the complexity of climate (im)mobilities rather than reproducing narratives of crisis, invasion, or inevitable displacement. Recognise the multiple and intersecting factors shaping whether people move, remain, or are prevented from moving, including environmental change, political exclusion, and socioeconomic inequality.
- **Give communities authority over their own representation:** Centre the knowledge, priorities, and voices of people experiencing climate (im)mobilities without reducing them to victims or using their experiences as evidence for predetermined narratives. Some examples include: 350 Pacific, The First Nations Principles of OCAP, or India Unheard. Establish meaningful practices of consent, shared ownership, fair compensation, and ongoing accountability, enabling communities to influence how their stories are told, circulated, and used.
- **Resource youth participation and share decision-making power:** Move beyond symbolic consultation by creating paid, safe, and accessible pathways for young people, particularly those from climate-affected communities to shape climate-mobility research, policy, finance, local adaptation, and COP processes. Schools, universities, governments, and international institutions should provide the funding, mentorship, and formal decision-making roles necessary for sustained participation.

Key Messages

10 Private Sector and Business

Can businesses credibly claim to deliver climate solutions when their investments displace communities, restrict access to land, or undermine livelihoods?

Are investors and companies prepared to treat displacement prevention and human rights as core obligations, rather than risks to manage once harm has occurred?

When climate investments cause harm, who is responsible for remedy, and what would meaningful accountability require beyond ESG commitments and net-zero claims?

- **Prevent displacement before projects are approved**: Businesses and investors must assess and address risks of physical and economic displacement, restricted mobility, and loss of land and livelihoods across the full project lifecycle, from extraction and renewable energy to infrastructure, conservation, and carbon markets. Meaningful community participation and human rights assessments must inform project design and investment decisions. Examples of displacement include: Carbon Offsetting in Cambodia, or Tata Mundra coal plant, Gujarat. Strong examples to learn from: Tibar Bay Port, Timor-Leste or Prado Power mini-grid project.
- **Make climate commitments accountable to affected communities:** Carbon credits, biodiversity offsets, green bonds, and net-zero claims must not conceal eviction, dispossession, labour exploitation, or other rights violations. Companies should disclose the social and environmental consequences of their investments, substantiate their climate claims, and ensure that sustainability commitments reflect outcomes for affected communities, not just carbon metrics or ESG ratings.
- **Make a materially just transition:** Climate investments should create tangible, fairly distributed benefits for workers and communities rather than externalising costs onto those already facing inequality or displacement. Embed enforceable commitments to fair wages, safe working conditions, local employment, worker protections, training, and community benefit-sharing in investment agreements, business plans, and supply chains.
- **Make businesses responsible for remedying the harm they cause:** Where business activities contribute to displacement, dispossession, or environmental harm, companies and investors must provide accessible grievance mechanisms and effective remedies, including appropriate compensation and livelihood restoration. Remedies should reflect affected communities' own priorities, including cultural and collective ties to land, and must not substitute for preventing avoidable harm in the first place.
- **Bridge the gap between public policy and community realities**: Businesses operate at the intersection of government priorities, investment decisions, and local livelihoods. They should use this position to identify gaps between public climate commitments and their impacts on the ground and align investments with local needs. Businesses must account for how their decisions affect communities and work with public institutions to address harms that markets or government policy alone may not resolve.

Conclusion

The key messages in this brief are addressed to a variety of key stakeholders, but converge on the same few demands. Climate and environmental (im)mobilities will not be addressed solely or justly by managing movement more efficiently. They require a change in who holds authority, whose knowledge counts, and who is held responsible.

Share authority from the start. Researchers, humanitarian and DRR actors, governments, funders and lawyers are each asked to move beyond consultation and share real decision-making power with affected communities. That spans research agendas, relocation projects, recovery efforts, funding priorities and the measurement of success. Participation that only comes after decisions are made does not meet the standard this brief sets.

Treat staying, moving, returning and rebuilding as equally legitimate outcomes. Across stakeholder approaches, people who cannot or will not move are too often overlooked, and migration is too often assumed to be adaptation. A just response expands people's choices. It makes staying safe, supports dignified movement and return, and recognises the right to stay alongside the right to move.

Pair resilience with accountability and repair. Communities should not be asked to adapt indefinitely to conditions they did not create. Naming who caused harm, and who should remedy it through reparations, corporate liability, land restitution and reparative finance, is a necessary part of the response.

Recognise lived experience as expertise. Frontline communities and emerging leaders hold knowledge about localised inequality, culturally grounded needs and their own futures. Peacebuilders, storytellers, researchers and practitioners are asked to credit that knowledge, resource it fairly and let communities control how it is represented and used.

Back commitments with resources and structures. Inclusion pledges, coordination and local leadership need budgets, accessible procedures and public reporting to mean anything. This matters most now, as political will and funding shrink and communities are at risk of absorbing the costs of institutional failure.

None of these actors can deliver justice alone. Ahead of COP31 and beyond, we invite every actor to take the first step set out for their group, to be transparent about their shortcomings, and to remain accountable to the people whose lives and futures are at stake.

We must ask ourselves:

- ***Will states, international, and private actors step aside to allow frontline leadership to shape solutions?***
- ***Are we prepared to unlearn the habits, nomenclature and hierarchies that shape how we approach climate (im)mobilities, even when they have served our own institutions well?***
- ***Can we reimagine mobility and immobility not as crises to manage but as opportunities to repair, restore, and transform the systems that have long perpetuated vulnerability?***

Beyond Climate Collaborative

Beyond Climate Collaborative (BCC) works at the intersections of climate change, (im)mobility, and environmental justice. Our mission is to exchange knowledge, ideas, and resources to support emerging leaders advancing environmental mobility justice.

Through the Climate Mobility Justice Academy (CMJA) and its flagship program, the International School on Climate Mobilities (ISCM), and beyond, we engage a new generation of researchers, advocates, and practitioners from across the world in interdisciplinary learning, dialogue, and co-creation.

Together, we build bridges for (un)learning and (re)imagining how societies address climate-related (im)mobilities through the lenses of social, migrant, racial, feminist, economic, and environmental justice–uplifting emerging leaders to pioneer just, cross-sectoral, and sustainable solutions that restore equity, agency, and resilience for the planet and her people.

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