BRIEFING ON CLIMATE MIGRATION
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LLDCs)
CONCEPT NOTE

• Programme:

Remarks by Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)

Remarks by Mr. William Lacy Swing, Director General, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Presentation by Ms. Dina Ionesco, Head - Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division, IOM Headquarters

Presentation by UN-OHRLLS

National Experiences

Interactive Discussion
• Objectives of the briefing:

In a context of increased policy awareness with discussions on migration and climate change taking place both under the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), this briefing will seek to stimulate an exchange on the following points:

- The climate-migration nexus in LLDCs: what are the knowledge gaps, what are the under-discussed issues/regions?
- Current policy developments: what are the opportunities under both global climate and migration negotiation and at the regional level?
- Programmatic responses in the LLDCs context: sharing examples of innovative programmes and policies to address climate migration and reflecting on necessary future programming.

• Climate Migration in Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs): What is at stake?

The nexus between migration, the environment and climate change has been increasingly recognized as a key global policy issue over the past decade, and issues related to climate and environmental migration are high on the global policy agenda, both from the perspective of climate change policy and of migration policy. Consequently, policy processes dedicated to migration on the one hand, and to climate change and environmental issues on the other hand, have integrated questions of migration, environment and climate change.

Evidence reveals that in Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) both slow changes in the environment and sudden-impact disasters directly and indirectly affect the movement of people. Some of the environmental factors related to the adverse effects of climate change in the LLDCs include desertification, land degradation, drought and flooding including glacial lake outbursts. However, few studies have focused on the specific challenges faced by LLDCs in terms of climate change and migration. In 2017, 18.8 million people worldwide were displaced by natural disasters, the majority of them weather-related, such as floods and storms. Such displacement of people occurred in many LLDCs worldwide, but mostly occurred in African and Asian LLDCs.

In addition, the slow impacts of climate change affect people’s migration in LLDCs, with land degradation and droughts for instance driving migration movements, notably from rural to urban areas. Available data points to an increased vulnerability of LLDCs populations to numerous environmental risks and this is likely to influence future migration trends. One example is linked to rising global temperatures – it is estimated that by the end of the century, 30 to 60 million persons – including in LLDCs- will be living in areas too hot for the human body to function if the average temperature rises by 1.5°C.

2 For instance, in 2017, 27,000 persons were displaced by disasters in Afghanistan, 189,000 in Niger and 5,200 in Paraguay.
3 IOM (2017b), Extreme Heat and Migration
Climate change also has severe implications on water security in the LLDCs. The LLDCs are generally the most water stressed countries by virtue of their geographical location and many LLDCs are located in dry regions where hyper-arid, semi-arid and arid conditions prevail. These conditions continue to worsen due to climate change, desertification and land degradation. A study by UN-OHRLLS indicate that more than 15 per cent of drylands worldwide are located in LLDCs. Furthermore, 60 per cent of the population in LLDCs are located in these drylands compared to only 32.2 per cent in transit countries. Water scarcity is therefore set to impose severe constraints on developmental aspirations of LLDCs.