

Socio-economic implications of climate induced migration

Dr. Diana Reckien

Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research,
Germany

Migration in context

Migration is the outcome of a weighing of push (source) and pull (destination) factors that are social, economic, political in nature.

Location characteristics of the source region and the aspiration of the destination region are as much important as enabling factors such as enabling policies and restrictions (visa, kin groups, economic possibilities).

Climate Change is expected to alter these factors with a threat to particularly affect the poorest of the society, the less skilled and women.

How?

Climatic change

Temperature and Precipitation changes



Rapid onset climatic changes

Slow onset climatic changes

Sea level rise

Floods

Glacier melting

Glacier lake outburst

Droughts

Heat waves

•Impacts are acute and conceivable, but most often **(assumed) temporary & not recurring**

•Impacts are less acute and therefore **less conceivable**
 •**Action might be delayed**, but then more sure or firm

Can trigger and reinforce migration

...Second and first order impacts of Climate Change (CC) that might alter migration

(75% of all world pop. in LECZ in Asia/P. and on av. 13% of a countries pop., 2000); highest abs. pop in LECZ in LLDC and LDC

Climatic change

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
Rapid onset climatic changes **Slow** onset climatic changes

(Can trigger and reinforce)
Different forms of migration

Temporal kind

Permanent/ long-term
 Temporary/ short-term
Periodic/ seasonal

Household implications

Whole family moves
Wage earner/skilled migration
 Younger people move
 Next generation/ student migration
 Whole family stays, e.g. due to land ownership

Spatial range

Regional/ Internal, rural-rural
Regional/ Internal, often to (near-by) cities or other economic centres
 Interregional/ International

Forms of migration

Push induced
 More pull induced
 State-induced
 Private

Socio-economic implications

Climatic change



(Can trigger and reinforce)

Different forms of migration

Socio-economic implications

Women migration ↑

Gender dimension

Women are responsible for fetching water (future drought conditions)
 Women often have no property rights (pos. or neg. for migration)

Women move for work, marriage or because of loss of land (w/wo family)

Family implications

Family disruption

Disease communication, e.g. AIDS

Women left alone raising kids and with household organization

Epidemic outbreaks

Family suffers, moves into poverty (threat to suicide)

Caste/Religion

Freedom to be flee caste rules

Economic implications

Remittances

Brain drain (internat. migr.)/ Less skilled (regional migr.)

Special skills drain

One particular socio-economic implication for drought

Climatic change

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
Rapid onset climatic changes **Slow** onset climatic changes

(Can trigger and reinforce)
Different forms of migration

Socio-economic implications

Gender dimension

*Impact of drought on women
(Sundari, 2005)*

Drought and water scarcity

Increase in women's time and energy spent in collection of water

Less time for productive activities

Low-levels of income

Low levels of consumptions

Malnutrition and deteriorating health

Poverty

Internal, cross-state migration, often to cities
e.g. India and particularly among lower income class

Policy implications

Policy options can target

PREVENTION

Conditions in source regions

Migration might:

- *Aggravate existing problems (poorest and less skilled are least likely to move),*
- *Impact the local economy (mostly negative),*
- *Alter age, education & gender balance (brain drain, lack of women etc.),*

PROTECTION

Target movements itself (hinder or support the migration process)

Particularly a problem, when traditional pathways are hit by CC, might be affected by gender, different age or social groups

SOLUTIONS

Conditions in destination regions

Migration might:

- *Aggravate existing problems (particularly if destination is vulnerable to CC impacts, e.g. cities at the coast),*
- *Stress social coherence,*
 - *Alter age, education & gender balance,*
- *Impact the local economy (positive or negative).*

Socio-economic implications



Policy options can target

PREVENTION

Conditions in source regions



- Enable for **economic opportunities in other areas than cities & less vulnerable regions**
- Increase in economic situation** in source countries, might **increase migration in the short and only decrease it in the long run**
- Pay attention to the left behind and poorest members, e.g. women**

PROTECTION

Target movements itself (hinder or support the migration process)



- Foster regional cooperation** within and across countries
- Increase ability to influence migration through **legalization of flows**, e.g. to prevent trafficking
- Let **communities be part of resettlement organization**
- Allow flexible adjustment of immigration policies

SOLUTIONS

Conditions in destination regions



- For planned resettlements consider forming new settlements
- Otherwise, allow for proper **social integration of new migrants**
- Particular **focus on cities in vulnerable areas, e.g. coasts**
- Allow for proper facilities in new destinations, e.g. slums, infrastructure, health care
- Redirect from vulnerable inner urban areas

Summary

- **Migration is a way to increase income and employment, but not necessarily quality of life**
- In Asia-Pacific most migration occurs **from rural-urban areas**, less rural-rural (BAN, Rahman et al., 1996) - Urban incomes are more secure, **still the poorest can't move**
- Pay particular attention to **cities in Low Elevation Coastal Zones (LECZ)** and the destination areas for newcomers in cities
- Rural-urban migration has contributed to larger child labour
- **Less wealthy migrate to areas close by** and fuel internal migration, while the **more wealthy classes contribute to international migration**
- **Female migration is often regional** in nature, and if so often **supported by lower income women** and the less skilled, as well as women from lower castes in India
- Influence migration movements through dedicated economic or infrastructure (e.g. educational) supply or closure
- **Increase infrastructure and health care in receiving urban areas, but also support economic development in other, non-urban areas**