



Migration and climate change: crisis or adaptation?

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A polarised debate

- ❑ Migration as failure to adapt to CC: very large, undifferentiated flows
- ❑ Migration as adaptation: affected by several factors other than CC; likely to increase, but highly differentiated flows
- ❑ High levels of uncertainty in predictions



A negative policy context

- ❑ Internal migration: a ‘growing problem’?
- ❑ International migration: ambivalent perceptions, growing hostility fuelled by economic insecurity
- ❑ Migrants as actors or victims – what implications for policy?



The debate and the evidence

- ❑ Methodological problems: limited data, uncertain predictions
- ❑ The 'common sense' approach
- ❑ The advantages and limitations of learning from the past



Drought, desertification and land degradation

- Analogies with Africa's drylands (and their limitations)
- Tradition of mobility and income diversification
- Increase in local, short-term movements
- Long-distance movement less likely to be affected



Drought, desertification and land degradation (2)

- ❑ Locally-specific gender norms and relations affect migration patterns
- ❑ Other differentiating factors: wealth, education and social connections; household structure; landlessness; age
- ❑ Long-term vulnerability and marginalisation (pastoralists)



Extreme weather events

- Provided there is sufficient support, people return as soon as possible
- Repeated events and limited access to government and non-govt support systems increase vulnerability



Sea level rise

- ❑ Combines both gradual processes of inundation and increases in the severity of storm surges and flooding
- ❑ Much will depend on technical adaptation
- ❑ But perhaps also on more decentralisation of urbanization and industrialisation patterns



Income diversification, mobility and environmental degradation

- Increasingly important elements of adaptation
- Remittances and non-farm incomes in rural household budgets: 30-50% in Africa, 60% in Asia, 40% in LA (estimates)
- Seasonal mobility increasingly involves urban destinations (and non-farm jobs)
- But also strong links and investment in rural homes



Accommodating and supporting mobility

- Non-environmental factors of mobility must be integrated in adaptation to CC
- Recognise the growing need for non-farm incomes as a driver of mobility
- The poorest do not move – adaptation policies need to take this into account



Small towns and local institutions

- Small towns can provide local non-farm jobs for poor, low-skilled rural residents
- They should also provide basic services, increasingly important with CC
- Can contribute to more decentralised urbanization patterns away from LECZs



Small towns and local institutions (2)

- ❑ But this can only be achieved within a broader approach to development and poverty reduction
- ❑ Local governments and institutions too often lack capacity, resources and support from higher-level government.



Conclusions

- ❑ Need for a radical shift in perceptions of migration and mobility
- ❑ Adaptation initiatives should support mobility but also income diversification and more balanced distribution of opportunities
- ❑ Lack of mobility should perhaps be more concerning than mobility