INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

by
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Outline of Presentation

• Introduction
• The Relationship Between Environmental Change and Migration
• Anticipated Hot Spots in Southeast Asia
• Potential Mobility Responses
• Development and Policy
• Conclusion
A Complex Interrelationship: Migration, Environment, Resources and Development

Population Mobility

Resources

Environment

Economic Development and Social Change
Key Issues

• Need to get away from simplistic view that climate change = displacement
• Need to recognise that environmental change and climate change will add a new dimension to existing complexity
Key Issues in Environmental Migration

- Internal Vs International
- Complexity – there rarely are single causes of migration
- Resettlement vs migration as adaptation
- Sudden vs slow onset impacts
- Forced vs voluntary migration
- Moving as a result of potential vs threats of actual environmental deterioration
- Linear vs non linear impacts
- Migration is only one of several adaptations to climate change
Key Issues in Impact of Environmental Change on Migration

• Needs to be considered in context of existing migration, not separately
• Can influence migration through impact at both origin and destination
• Crucial role of migration networks
• Inter-relationship with poverty – poor least able to use migration as adaptation more likely to be forcibly displaced
• Proactive potential to facilitate development – not only a reactive response
Poverty: Central Issue

The poor are most exposed because

• They are often forced to exploit natural resources on the environmental margins such as coasts, flood plains or semi-arid areas;
• They are more directly dependent on natural resource management and environmental services for their livelihoods;
• They have poor accommodation, no means to flee and are often living in groups that are comparatively poorly informed and/or educated about environmental hazards;
• They have the fewest personal or community economic resources to support autonomous adaptation, including migration;
• They often have the least access to formal institutional assistance or collective adaptation responses;
• They are often distanced from national and international decision-makers and therefore, their plight may go un-noticed or responses may be comparatively weak or late;
• Most likely to move only as a last resort. Forced, Non-Linear Movement.
Major Climate Change Hazards in Southeast Asia

- The SE Asia region has been identified as one of the global regions most at risk of experiencing natural disasters.
- Strong correlation between countries most at risk of experiencing environmental hazards and those at greatest risk from climate change.
- Main climate change impact:
  - Coastal vulnerability, inundation, storm surges
  - Cyclones and typhoons
  - Riparian flooding, impact of glacier melt
  - Water stress
Southeast Asia: Location of Hot Spot Areas Likely to be Most Impacted by Coastal Flooding Associated with Sea Level Rise, Riparian Flooding, Cyclones/Typhoons and Water Stress as a Result of Climate Change

Source: Yusuf and Francisco, 2009, 6
Indicative Population Projections

• To underline the urgency of the need for development of appropriate institutions and mechanisms to cope with the impact of climate change.
• To give an indication of the areas that are most likely to be impacted by climate change induced mobility in order to target intervention strategies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Population 2000 ('000)</th>
<th>Percent of National Population at Risk of:</th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Coastal Flooding</td>
<td>Cyclones</td>
<td>Riparian Flooding</td>
<td>Water Stress</td>
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<td><strong>112,751</strong></td>
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<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangkok</td>
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<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
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Migration Policy Responses are of Two Types

• Remaining In Situ will be dominant
• Migration of some people out of areas influenced by climate change on a *temporary* or *permanent* basis can enhance the capacity of those left behind to adapt to climate change.
• In extreme cases where climate change makes it impossible for communities to remain in their home areas, *displacement migration and resettlement* elsewhere offers a last resort.
Key Policy Issues

- Most of mobility adjustments will be internal
- Key international dimensions
  - funding of internal adjustments
  - role of international migration as an adaptation mechanism
  - role of international migration in resettlement
- Necessary for setting up an international fund on “polluter pays” principles to fund adaptation and resettlement
- Should there be a dedicated fund for migration adaptation–resettlement or should it be a fund for all adaptation?
Key Migration Policy Issues – Migration and Adaptation

• Migration must be seen as not just a response/survival mechanism but a potential mechanism for development
• Build on role of migration as a facilitator of development and building resilience in origin areas.
• Focus on high risk areas in encouraging internal and international migration.
• Policy to facilitate and enhance existing flows and in some cases help create new flows.
• Need to involve poorest groups in them.

(cont.)
• Introduction of best practice into temporary labour migration
• Improving governance.
• Need for more ‘development friendly’ approach in destination countries (e.g. RSE in New Zealand).
• Based on recognition of the reality of the effects of ageing and low fertility in high income nations
• National Spatial Development Policy – encouraging development away from hot spots over the next five decades.
A huge population redistribution has already occurred in Southeast Asia.

<table>
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<th>1950</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2050</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number urban (m)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number rural (m)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>210</td>
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</table>

* A significant change in population distribution has occurred in the last 40 years. Why not just as large a change in the next 40 years?
Resettlement of Entire Communities: A Last Resort

• Focus of attention – resettlement on both a temporary and permanent basis will need to be planned for.
• Need to mesh responses with existing disaster management systems (Hyogo Framework for Action).
• Some permanent displacement will be necessary, most within countries.
• Need to build on huge body of existing knowledge on planned resettlement of displaced populations.
Barriers to Establishing a New International Regime to Protect Climate Change Migrants

- Difficulty of separating climate change from other drivers of migration.
- Reluctance of potential destination countries to accept a new category of asylum seeker
- Lack of existing international cooperation on migration in Asia and the Pacific.
- Short term vs long term goals.
Advantages to Accommodating Climate Change Migration Within Existing Structures

• The option is immediately available to climate change forced migrants.
• It overcomes the manifest suspicion of destination country governments and societies existing, let alone expanded, ‘asylum’ categories of immigration.
• It obviates any need to set up new institutions, structures and mechanisms.
• There are for many nations a plethora of different categories of migration which provides a range of ways in which climate change displaces could be accommodated.
• The system would utilise existing migration networks where they exist to facilitate migration and to assist settlement at the destination.
Recommendations

1. Consciousness Raising on Population and Migration in Climate Change Adaptation Plans
2. Need for an Improved Empirical Basis
   - Data Collection on Migration
   - Targeted Case Studies
3. Capacity Building and Improvement in Governance in Migration – Internal and International
4. Enhanced Regional and International Cooperation
5. Develop Best Practice in Migration Policies and Programs
6. Effective Mechanisms for Funding Migration Responses
7. Integrate with Disaster Management
8. Enhancing Resilience and Adaptive Capacity in Communities