MIGRATION: THE HUMAN FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

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COMMON MEDIA NARRATIVES

UNDERSTANDING THE LANGUAGE OF MIGRATION, THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE
Migration, environment and climate change terms on Google Search

The size of the words is proportional to the number of pages returned by Google.com when searching for each term (2012)

CLIMATE “REFUGEES”? 

Often used to describe a person displaced in the context of droughts, sea-level rise or extreme weather or geophysical events.

The term is often thought to have ethical or awareness raising value, but does not exist in international law and is not endorsed by UN agencies.
“Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad.”

IOM Working Definition, 2007
Climate change could displace 216 million by 2050: Report

Australia could face waves of ‘climate refugees’
October 25, 2021

The climate refugees are coming. Countries and international law aren’t ready for them

Millions Displaced Another Cost of Climate Change
By The Conversation | Oct. 20, 2021, at 1:11 p.m.

Source: Atlas of Environmental Migration, 2016
PROJECTIONS ARE DIFFICULT

“Projecting the number of people migrating due to slow onset events is difficult due to the multi-causal nature of migration and the dominant role that socio-economic factors have in determining migration responses (high confidence).”

IPCC 6TH Assessment Report, 2022
MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE NEXUS
“[T]here is increased evidence that climate hazards associated with extreme events and variability act as direct drivers of involuntary migration and displacement and as indirect drivers through deteriorating climate-sensitive livelihoods (high confidence).”

IPCC 6TH Assessment Report, 2022
The impacts of climatic drivers on migration are highly context-specific and interact with social, political, geopolitical and economic drivers (high confidence).”

IPCC 6TH Assessment Report, 2022
Foresight's conceptual framework for the drivers of migration

**Micro**
- **Personal/household characteristics**: Age, sex, education, wealth, attachment to place, attitudes, preferences, marital status

**Meso**
- **Intervening obstacles and facilitators**: Political/legal framework, cost of moving, social network, diasporic links, recruitment agencies, technology

**Macro**
- **Economic**: Employment opportunities, income/wages/well-being, producer prices (e.g., agriculture), consumer prices

**Environmental**
- Exposure to hazard, loss of ecosystem services such as land productivity, habitability, food/energy/water security

**Political**
- Discrimination, persecution, governance/freedom, conflict/insecurity, policy incentives, direct coercion

**Social**
- Seeking education and family/kin obligations

**THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE ON DRIVERS**
- Spatial or temporal variability and difference in source and destination
- Gradual, Sudden, Actual, Perceived

Source: Foresight (2011) © IOM (Mokhnacheva, Ionesco), Gemenne, Boissière, 2015
ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION: FORCED OR VOLUNTARY?

**FORCED**
- ‘Migration for survival’
- Lifesaving movements in sudden-onset disasters

**IN-BETWEEN**
- Following disasters
- Secondary movements
- Slow onset processes

**VOLUNTARY**
- A matter of choice before the ‘tipping point’
- Pre-planned and strategised (thought through)

Forced – voluntary: a continuum
ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRATION: SHORT OR LONG-TERM?

TEMPORARY
- Short-term movements after disasters
- Displacement, evacuation
- Circular migration
- Seasonal migration

PERMANENT
- Protracted disaster displacement
- Migration and displacement from areas undergoing irreversible environmental changes (e.g. sea-level rise, desertification)

Temporary – Permanent
ENVIROMENTAL MIGRATION: NEAR OR FAR?

SHORT-DISTANCE

- Most evacuations and displacement in disasters
- Migration to nearby urban areas

LONG-DISTANCE

- Migration to other areas of a country
- International migration, within a region and beyond
DISCUSSING TYPOLOGIES OF HUMAN MOBILITY LINKED TO CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE
"Disaster displacement refers to situations where people are forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of a disaster or in order to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable disaster"

(The Nansen Protection Agenda, 2015)
“Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purposes of employment”

(IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019)
PLANNED RELOCATION

“A planned process in which persons or groups of persons move or are assisted to move away from their homes or places of temporary residence, are settled in a new location, and provided with the conditions for rebuilding their lives.”

(Brookings, Georgetown, UNHCR, 2015)
LINKS WITH HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

EVIDENCE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING LINKED TO CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE
EVIDENCE IS MOSTLY ANECDOTAL

- DISPLACEMENT FOLLOWING DISASTERS
- CAMPS & CAMP-LIKE SETTINGS
- IMPACTS ON VULNERABLE LIVELIHOODS
- IMPACT OF EXPLOITATIVE INDUSTRIES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Indian Ocean Tsunami</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Gorkha Earthquake</td>
<td>2015</td>
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THANK YOU!

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