

Asia Pacific Forum on Loss and Damage

Creating a community of practice across the Asia Pacific

Special Edition for COP20

Including information on the
new two-year workplan



The objective of the forum is to disseminate knowledge and new research on loss and damage in the Asia Pacific region so as to create a community of practice among researchers.

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Climate Negotiations

Loss and damage: From Warsaw to Lima

By: Erin Roberts, International Centre for Climate Change and Development
Researcher, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)

In November 2013 the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts (WIM) was created to enhance understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches to address loss and damage, strengthen dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies among relevant stakeholders and enhance action and support to address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change. The decision also laid out some of the modalities through which these functions could be carried out. Several of these functions are relevant to research on loss and damage including: action to address gaps in understanding of and expertise in approaches to address loss and damage, providing an overview of best practices, challenges, experiences and lessons learned in undertaking approaches and providing technical support and guidance to address loss and damage. Research on these topics has already been undertaken in the Asia Pacific region as well as other parts of the globe and the findings should be incorporated into and built upon in the work of the WIM. The workplan in its entirety can be found [here](#).

In Warsaw it was decided that an interim Executive Committee would develop the initial two year workplan of the WIM and would consist of two members of five bodies, with balanced representation of developing and developed country representatives, including: the Adaptation Committee, the Least Developed Country Expert Group, the Standing Committee on Finance, the Technology Executive Committee and the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I of the Convention. Nominations were completed in early 2014 and the interim Executive Committee met for the first time in late March 2014. At that meeting the interim Executive Committee began to develop ideas for the key areas and priority actions that should be addressed by the workplan. Parties were not able to develop a coherent workplan at this time. At the intersessional negotiations, held in Bonn in early June, the interim Executive Committee held a side event during which they explained the progress they had made and announced an open call for Parties and observers to provide input into the activities that should be included in the workplan. Several submissions were received from both Parties and observers and can be found [here](#).

The initial meeting of the interim Executive Committee resumed in mid-September during which the interim Executive Committee explained how it had consolidated and incorporated the input received in response to the call. The draft workplan was presented and observers were asked to provide feedback both in person and through an online portal. After all the observers who wanted to had provided feedback the meeting was called to a close so that the interim Executive Committee could meet to revise the workplan further. The following morning the draft workplan was presented to observers. The workplan contains nine action areas and highlights several key areas relevant to on-going research on loss and damage in the Asia Pacific region, including the need to better understand how to address non-economic losses and slow onset processes.

The workplan will be presented to Parties during the 41st session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific Advice (SBSTA), to take place in Lima in early December 2014. If Parties approve the workplan in the SBI/SBSTA it will be sent to the Conference of the Parties for final approval and adoption. The composition and procedures for the Executive Committee will also be discussed during the 41st session of the SBI/SBSTA. It is hoped that the Executive Committee will be established early in 2015 so that it can begin the important work of implementing the workplan and operationalizing the WIM.

Research

Feedback from the Initial Two-Year Workplan from a Research Perspective

By: Stephanie Andrei
Researcher, ICCCAD

The Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM) released its initial two-year workplan for the implementation of the functions of the mechanism. The outcome of the two-year plan will be evaluated in 2016 at the twenty-second Conference of the Parties (COP) during which the outcome, structure and effectiveness of the WIM will be considered.

The initial two-year workplan includes nine action areas that aim to enhance knowledge related to: 1) impacts on vulnerable individuals in developing countries and how the implementation of loss and damage approaches can benefit them; 2) comprehensive risk management approaches, including social protection and transformational approaches, in building long-term resilience for countries and communities; 3) data and knowledge of slow onset events and their impacts; 4) data and knowledge of non-economic losses and ways forward; 5) capacity and coordination to prepare for, respond to and build resilience against extreme and slow onset events; 6) how the impacts of climate change are influencing patterns of migration, displacement and human mobility; 7) financial instruments and tools that address the risks of loss and damage in accordance to country policies in order to make development climate resilient and find innovative instruments and tools; 8) existing bodies and expert groups under the Convention and outside that may contribute to the above-mentioned elements, and; 9) developing a five-year rolling workplan for consideration at COP 22.

The plan also includes some activities that researchers could significantly contribute to and in addition could provide some guidance to the

research community on further research. This article will highlight some existing research findings that could enhance understanding and inform gaps in knowledge.

It can be expected that the majority of research will overlap several of the themes identified by the two-year workplan. For instance, areas 1 and 6 identify the need to enhance understanding on impacts on vulnerable communities and migration, displacement and human movement, respectively. Two influential reports that are likely to advise future research are the Foresight Report on 'Migration and Global Environmental Change' and the 'Where the Rain Falls' Project conducted by the United Nations University-Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS). While the former helped consider global trends in migration in the context of environmental change (2011), the latter looked into how rainfall variability, food and livelihood security and migration are all linked. While both documents demonstrate compelling evidence that migration due to climate change will increase in the future, they also helped raise awareness as to the complex interaction of drivers affecting individuals' decision to migrate.

The UNU-EHS eight-country case study went further to reveal that migration had a more direct relationship to rainfall variability in sites that depended on rain-fed agriculture of which most rural communities depend on (2012). One of the major limitations in both case studies was the lack of data collection on migration in most countries. This will likely take several years to be improved. Additionally, there have been challenges in terms of terminology that continue to dominate discussions at the national level.

In comparison, area 4 on non-economic losses and damages is a new research topic that will require not only innovative research methods but also additional discussions. The difference between the quantifiable and unquantifiable remains largely a difference of perspective. Take for instance education: while educational materials and the cost of a professor's time can be easily quantified, the impact of losing two years of schooling to a pupil's development cannot be easily monetized, though it will have an economic impact in the form of future livelihood prospects (among others). Similar things can be said of health, culture, social relations, ecosystem services and the environment.

...while educational materials and the cost of a professor's time can be easily quantified, the impact of losing two years of schooling to a pupil's development cannot be easily monetized, though it will have an economic impact in the form of future livelihood prospects.

Two forthcoming research projects could help address the research gap on non-economic losses and provide input in the activities of the workplan. The first project includes a monetary assessment of non-economic losses conducted by LEAD Pakistan whereby a contingent valuation method was used to demonstrate what individuals were willing to pay for items such as health and education. This method involves asking individuals their willingness to pay to avert a loss and their willingness to accept compensation for a loss that has already occurred. What this study successfully demonstrated was that not all losses are equally weighted by all individuals (for more information please see the article entitled 'Loss & Damage: Quantified!' in this newsletter).

The second is a study conducted by the Asian Development Bank along with the Bangladesh Center for Advanced Studies and ICCCAD that utilizes a qualitative method to assess non-economic losses in Southwest Bangladesh. Here individuals were asked to share stories related to unquantifiable losses they have experienced over the years due to sudden and slow onset events. Researchers then collated the results and identified the items that can be included as non-economic. These included: individual level impacts such as life/health/psychological and education, societal level impacts such as traditions/religion/customs and culture/heritage, and environmental level impacts such as biodiversity/species and ecosystems. In all the villages, individuals explained health issues have started increasing due largely due to salinity intrusion and that relations between individuals were disintegrating due to environmental stressors. Both projects are innovative in their own right and at the very least provide a starting point for future research to build upon.

One thing that the workplan demonstrates is that

loss and damage will require the research community to be innovative and critical as to how losses may ensue directly as well as indirectly due to climate change. The Asia Pacific region has stood out in this regard since there is a significant amount of research emerging related to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and loss and damage of which includes the Asia Pacific Network on Global Change Research (APN) fourteen project initiative.

While there remains a lot that still needs to be understood about loss and damage, research is burgeoning and findings and lessons learned are accumulating. As such, consolidating these lessons learned and providing guidance on the development and implementation of approaches to address loss and damage is an important part of the workplan.

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We will be hosting a side event at COP 20 on **9 December 2014** from 17:00-19:00. Since space is limited, all those interested in attending are asked to RSVP to: lossanddamageforum@gmail.com

Non-Economic Losses

Loss & Damage: Quantified!

By: Kashmala Kakakhel
 DRR and Climate Resilience Coordinator, LEAD Pakistan

Despite the progress at the international level, little work has been done to quantify non-economic losses from climate change impacts. My forthcoming paper, *Loss & Damage: Quantified!* to be published by LEAD Pakistan, attempts to address that gap. Using empirical research in one village impacted by the 2010 Pakistan floods, the paper attempts to build a simple model to quantify both economic and non-economic losses and damages.

The study was conducted in the village of *Prang Majokai*, in the district of Charsadda in North Western Pakistan. With 2,000 inhabitants and located less than 2 km away from the River Jindai, the village is vulnerable to the impacts of extreme flooding during the summer, as experienced during the 2010 floods when most of its inhabitants had to be relocated. This article summarises three of the important conclusions highlighted in the paper.

Non-economic losses can be quantified

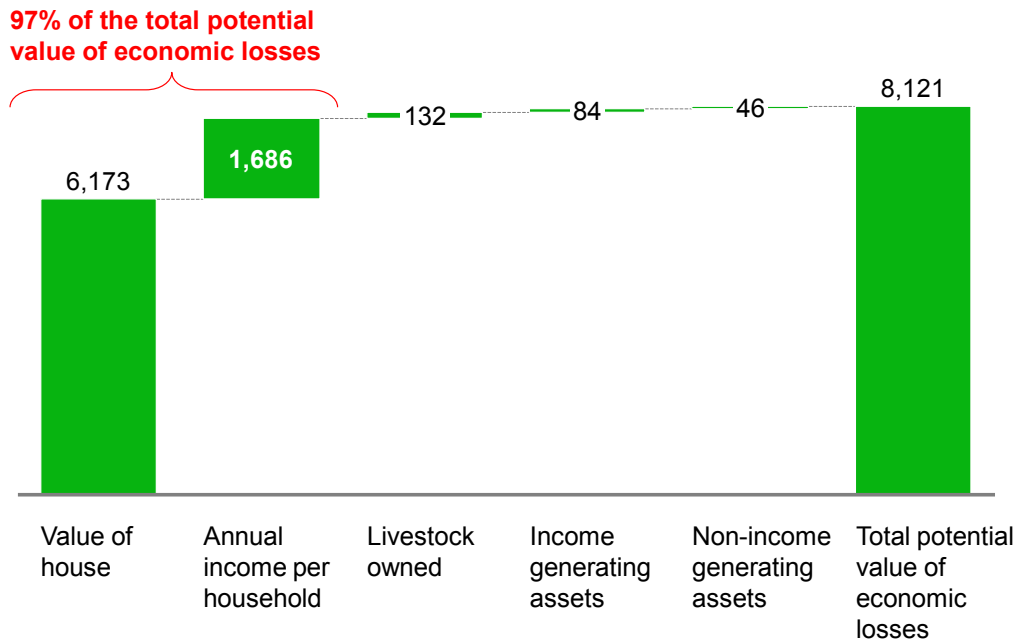
The study proves that assigning value to and quantifying non-economic loss and damage is possible. To do so, the Contingency Valuation Method (CVM) was used. The overall approach (**Figure 1**) involved four major steps to quantify (economic and non-economic) loss and damage for one community at risk from floods; (1) Defining appropriate categories of loss and damage; (2) Calculating the total potential value at stake; (3) Calculating a proportion of the total value lost from a single extreme event, and (4) Forecasting the net present value of the loss from all potential extreme events in the future to 2050.



Figure 1. Quantifying loss and damage: an overview of the methodology

97% of the potential economic losses derived from the risk of people losing their homes or their annual income

Total potential value of economic losses (US\$ / household)

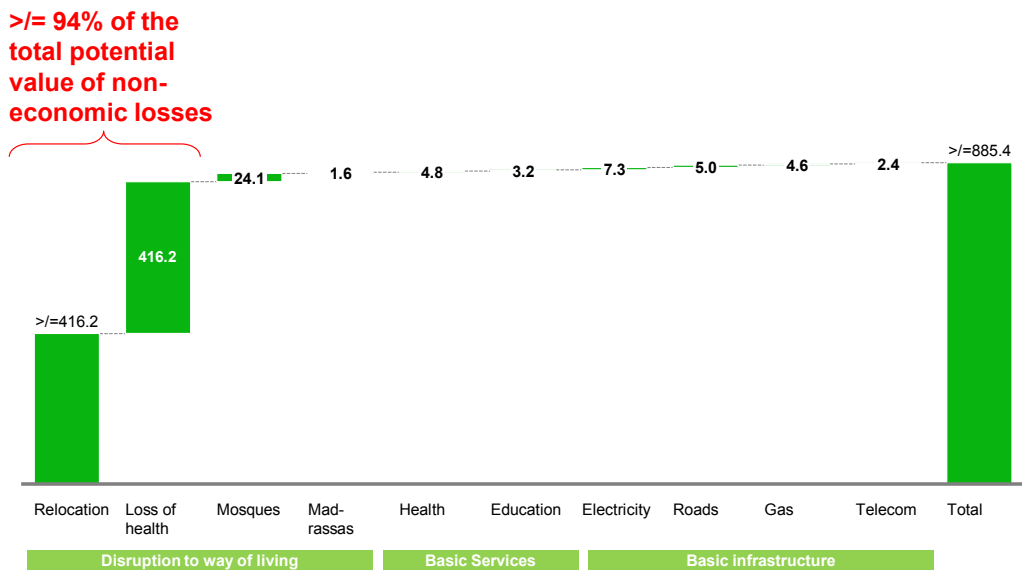


SOURCE: Primary research

Figure 2. Total potential value of economic losses

94% of potential non-economic losses, according to respondents, came from the risk of relocation or the loss of health to family

Total potential value of non-economic losses¹ (US\$ / household)



Note: The non-economic cost of relocation is expressed as >= 416.2 since all but one respondents refused to put a value on their willingness to accept to not relocate. As such, for the purpose of quantification, this paper assumes that this value is at least equal to, or greater than the next highest, which is the value of loss of health to the residents.

SOURCE: Primary Research

Figure 3. Total potential value of non-economic losses

Not all losses are equal

The study found interestingly that from the perspective of those at risk, i.e. the residents of *Prang Majokai*, some types of loss were valued much more than others.

Residents identified five economic loss categories, with an average value of just over USD 8,000 per household. 97 percent of this value came from just two of the five categories, the value of peoples' homes and the potential loss of annual income (**Figure 2**).

Residents also identified ten non-economic loss categories the value of which was determined by the study. Of these only two categories, potential relocation and poor health amounted to 94 percent of the overall value (**Figure 3**). In the context of these fundamental challenges, other basics like education and access to health services and infrastructure were seen as 'luxuries' most respondents were prepared to compromise on.

If the data from *Prang Majokai* is assumed to be representative, then what those most at risk seem to be saying is, "all we want is to live in our homes, and to guarantee the health of our families". From a policy perspective, this could mean resources are better spent at prioritizing losses/impacts at the community level. Such an approach could contribute to designing efficient and effective approaches to reduce losses following an environmental event.

Consensus on non-economic losses will continue to be a challenge

The paper shows that non-economic losses can be quantified. However, significant subjectivity on the topic will remain, since depending on the method used to compute them, their value varies considerably (**Figure 4**).

To determine the potential value of non-economic losses, this study tested two approaches within the Contingency Valuation Method. Specifically, respondents were asked both about their *willingness to pay* to avert a loss as well as their *willingness to accept* compensation for a loss that has

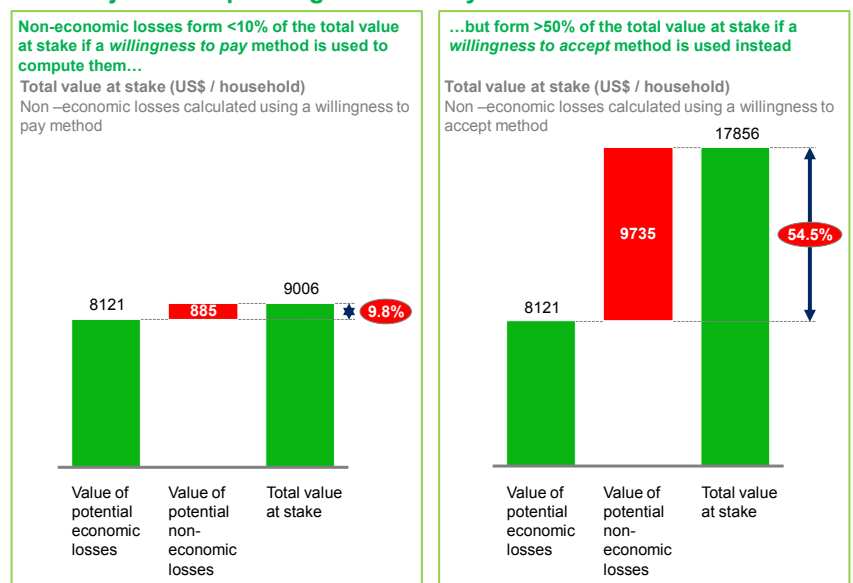
occurred. The latter approach typically showed an 11X greater value for the same set of non-economic loss categories. This large variance identifies the challenge of non-economic losses; even if quantified, developing a consensus on their value will remain subjective and a different approach to resolving for them may be necessary.

To conclude, the work done is only a first step in the journey to quantifying loss and damage and therefore, it had several constraints. It was based on data from one village, and only considered flooding. Future projections assumed no change in mitigation or adaptation efforts. Finally, in calculating loss and damage, the issue of attribution was deliberately not addressed. All of this represents the opportunity for further, more in-depth research which could lead to developing a country level approach to the quantification of loss and damage. However, even in its current limited form, the study showed the value that quantification can bring; it proves that communities at risk may not view all losses equally, and this insight can be of great value in helping to design approaches to address loss and damage at both national global forums.

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While non-economic losses can be calculated, their actual value continues to be subjective depending on how they are calculated



SOURCE: Primary Research

Figure 4. Subjectivity of calculations

Methodology

A toolbox for assessing loss and damage

By: Kees van der Geest (UNU-EHS) & Anam Zeb (LEAD Pakistan)

Introduction

Loss and damage refers to impacts of climatic stressors that cannot be or have not been avoided through mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk management (Warner & van der Geest, 2013). Between 1970 and 2012, a total of 8832 disasters, including droughts, floods, windstorms, tropical cyclones, storm surges, extreme temperatures, landslides and wildfires, have resulted in 1.94 million deaths and USD 2.4 trillion of economic losses globally (WMO, 2014). Besides the havoc caused by sudden-onset events, there are enormous losses and damages from slow-onset processes, such as sea level rise and desertification.

While policy makers and governments formulate strategies and decisions on the basis of cost-benefit analyses for their country, not all impacts can be quantified or expressed in monetary terms. Existing disaster loss assessments do not adequately address non-economic losses and damages.

“Disaster loss estimates are lower bound estimates because many impacts, such as loss of human lives, cultural heritage, and ecosystem services, are difficult to value and monetize, and thus they are poorly reflected in estimates of losses”
– IPCC AR5

As the IPCC puts it: “Disaster loss estimates are lowerbound estimates because many impacts, such as loss of human lives, cultural heritage, and ecosystem services, are difficult to value and monetize, and thus they are poorly reflected in estimates of losses” (2014: 19). Despite the emergence of the topic in the climate negotiations in recent years, comprehensive methods for assessing loss and damage are lacking.

The toolbox

In 2014, UNU-EHS, LEAD-Pakistan, AIDMI (India) and IDS-Nepal received funding from the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) to develop and test a toolbox for assessing loss and damage at the local level. The project will last two years and can be divided into three stages: 1) the development of the toolbox; 2) the testing of the toolbox in Pakistan, India and Nepal; and 3) fine-tuning, publication and dissemination of the final handbook, with lessons learnt from the test case studies.

Besides providing a firm theoretical basis, the handbook will include guidance on site selection, training of field staff, budget considerations, analysis of results, etc. Moreover, it will provide hands-on research tools, such as questionnaires and topic lists for focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

The training

From 27 to 31 October 2014, a five-day training course was given by Kees Van Der Geest (Associate Academic Officer at UNU-EHS), who drafted the handbook. The training took place at LEAD-Pakistan, and was attended by the principal investigators for the three case studies under this project. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Familiarize the investigators with the conceptual framework and methods;
- Introduce and justify the study sites where the toolbox will be tested, and the climatic stressors and impacts the studies will focus on;
- Refine the methodology, based on feedback and discussions.

On the first day of the workshop, a lively discussion took place on the objectives of assessing loss and damage and the question whether or not the focus should be on informing compensation for climate change impacts or on supporting policy and action to minimize future losses and damages. The former requires an emphasis on measuring and putting dollar marks on losses and damages and the latter requires a deeper understanding of adaptation limits and constraints. Considering that compensation is quite controversial and the science of attribution is still in its infancy (James et al., 2014) it was decided that the main policy objective of the toolbox should be to support action to minimize future loss and damage in vulnerable

The conceptual framework of the handbook distinguishes two types of losses and damages: 1) impacts that could not be avoided by preventive or adaptive measures; and 2) adverse effects and costs associated with the measures taken to prevent, cope and adapt. A key element of the toolbox is that it differentiates adaptation, disaster risk reduction and coping strategies—terms that are often used interchangeably but that have different meanings. Coping strategies are short-term measures to deal with impacts of specific events. By contrast, adaptation measures are more permanent and adopted in response to long-term climatic changes and their impacts. Preventive measures or ex-ante risk reduction are measures taken to minimize impacts of future events (Warner & van der Geest, 2013). There are multiple linkages between the three types of responses. For example, when an actor's preventive measures change in response to climatic changes, we speak of adaptation. And when preventive measures are inadequate, it is more likely that coping strategies will fail.

Next steps

The workshop focused mainly on capacitating the principal investigators on the proposed methods for assessing loss and damage in vulnerable communities.

This will help them in the next few months to conduct high quality research in the selected sites. Based on the site selection guidelines in the handbook, LEAD Pakistan decided to study impacts from floods in Rajanpur (Punjab); AIDMI will study impacts from cyclones in Puri District (Odisha); and IDS-Nepal will focus on loss and damage from a landslide in Sindhupalchowk District.

The lessons learnt from these case studies will contribute to the final toolkit for assessing loss and damage which will be published by late 2015.

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 The logo for Africa, featuring the word "Africa" in a white, serif font centered on a dark grey rectangular background. Above this background is a solid orange horizontal bar.

The African Climate Policy Centre: Undertaking work to help the small island developing states in their efforts to avoid and address loss and damage

By: Fatima Denton

Director, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

The African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) is a hub for demand-led knowledge on climate change in Africa that is part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The ACPC is part of Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa), a joint initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC), UNECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB). ClimDev-Africa was established to help African countries respond to climate change by building capacity at the regional, national and sub-national levels. ACPC's role in ClimDev Africa is to enhance the policy basis for action and investment by enhancing understanding of how climate change will impact countries on the African continent by improving the analysis of climate data, seasonal forecasting and modeling facilities to provide support for decision making.

Recently ACPC has begun to engage in work to help the African small island developing states (SIDS) address climate change. The African SIDS, which includes Cape Verde, Comoros, Guinea Bissau, Mauritius, Saõ Tomé and Príncipe and the Seychelles, are a unique group of countries, all islands with the exception of Guinea Bissau, highly vulnerable to slow onset climatic processes like sea level rise (SLR), salinization, drought and extreme events like flooding and storm surges, from which they are already experiencing losses and damages. SLR has resulted in a loss of

agricultural productivity in Guinea Bissau, with salinated water reaching up to 100 kilometres inland. A flash flood in Mauritius in the spring of 2013 led to the loss of 11 lives and flooding and landslides in Cape Verde have caused extensive damage to lives and livelihoods.

From April to July 2014 ACPC undertook missions to the six African SIDS - to conduct needs assessment with the goal to understand of how efforts to address climate change could be supported in these countries. While they share similar characteristics such as size and isolation, the African SIDS are by no means a homogenous group; differing in geography, levels of development and in the progress of their response to climate change. With that said, all six countries expressed a need to better understand how the impacts of climate change. Some countries need basic data while others have extensive data but need to understand how climate change will impact key economic sectors. For example, though Mauritius has established a climate change centre and collects and stores a wide range of weather, climate data support is needed to undertake socio-economic assessments to understand how climate change will impact especially vulnerable segments of society.

Saõ Tomé and Príncipe has made significant strides in efforts to understand climate change, though there are some technical and capacity building needs to improve the coverage of meteorological and hydrological data collection. Comoros on the other hand needs support to enhance its ability to collect, store, manage and analyze meteorological and hydrological data to improve understanding of the impacts of climate change, both now and in the future.

Enhancing the understanding of the impacts of climate change in African SIDS will improve the capacity to avoid loss and damage by implementing robust adaptation measures that reduce vulnerability to climate change. This information will also help decision makers understand where adaptation efforts will not be adequate to address the residual impacts of climate change and will thus help inform efforts to address loss and damage.

Migration

Addressing Loss and Damage and Climate Displacement in South Asia

By: Vositha Wijenayake
Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, CANSA

Introduction

Despite both mitigation and adaptation efforts, it is now widely recognised that residual negative climate change impacts, or loss and damage, cannot be fully avoided. Recent disasters in South Asia demonstrate what could be a more frequent reality for the region. Floods in September 2012 displaced 1.5 million people in the northeastern state of Assam, while Cyclone Aila in 2009 displaced 2.3 million people in India and almost 850,000 in Bangladesh (Bhattacharyya and Werz, 2012). Coupled with poverty, high levels of extreme weather will impact millions of lives by increasing food and livelihood insecurity in South Asia. The urgency of addressing loss and damage is further demonstrated when looking at climate change from a human rights perspective due to the large-scale displacement and migration that will ensue.

Climate Induced Migration in South Asia

While there exist different drivers of migration, it is anticipated that a one meter sea level rise will displace millions of people in Bangladesh with the estimates ranging between 13 million and 40 million by 2100 (Nishat et al., 2013). While migration is primarily from rural to urban areas, cross border migration may also increase due to climate change factors. In addition to this, extreme weather events such as cyclones will lead to long-term impacts such as the loss of livelihoods and ecosystem services-as well as loss of territory. It is likely that loss and damage will lead to migration for many, while the most vulnerable which lack the social and financial capital to move, may be trapped (Foresight, 2011).

While the drivers influencing migration are vast, climate change will certainly increase pressures over the years. The findings of the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC predict displacement of "hundreds of millions of people" due to land loss induced by climate change (2014). In particular, extreme events will have social and economical impacts that will likely result in a large number of people being displaced from their homes. This may create added stress on receiving areas that may, in turn, lead to conflicts in the region. Research on migration in the future will need to take into consideration the complex relationship migrants have on the environment and vice versa.

There is also a need to expand research on disaster management. So far, research has been focused on disasters that arise from extreme weather, not slow onset processes like droughts, floods and sea level rise that are also common in South Asia. Here, there is an opportunity for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to update its disaster risk reduction strategy for South Asia to include issues on slow onset processes and their effects on human mobility. Countries also need to work towards introducing policies on social security, resettlement and rehabilitation to ensure that migration will be addressed at the regional level. In this, SAARC can play a key role.

International Law and Climate Induced Migration

The Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Walter Kälin, has identified five climate change-related scenarios that may directly or indirectly cause human displacement. They provide a useful starting point for analyzing the character of displacement and assessing the protection and assistance needs of those affected (2008):

- Hydro-meteorological disasters (flooding, hurricanes/typhoons/cyclones, mudslides, etc.);
- Zones designated by governments as being too high-risk and dangerous for human habitation;
- Environmental degradation and slow onset disasters (e.g. reduction of water availability, desertification, recurrent flooding, salinization, etc.);

- ‘Sinking’ small island states; and,
- Violent conflict triggered by a decrease in essential resources (e.g. water, land, food) owing to climate change.

In cases pertaining to hydro-meteorological disasters or environmental degradation causing international displacement, the internally displaced should be provided protection and assistance in accordance with the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. In these cases, the State of those internally displaced will be primarily responsible for their protection. However where those affected by disasters cross an international border they will not come within the traditional concept of refugee in international law entitled to international protection within the existing international refugee framework, nor would they necessarily be classified as migrants.

While environmental factors can contribute to prompting cross-border movements, they are not grounds, in and of themselves, for the grant of refugee status under international refugee law.

While environmental factors can contribute to prompting cross-border movements, they are not grounds, in and of themselves, for the grant of refugee status under international refugee law. However, UNHCR does recognise that there are indeed certain groups of migrants, currently falling outside of the scope of international protection, who are in need of humanitarian and/or other forms of assistance. This demonstrates the need for reform in laws and policies that will encompass those that are victims of climatic impacts, and yet are not protected by the norms that need to exist for their protection as well.

At the international level in the climate negotiations, migration has been somewhat of a taboo subject and as such has not been actively pursued as a theme either under mitigation or adaptation. Recently however, migration, displacement and human mobility have appeared in the proposed two-year workplan of the Executive Committee under the loss and damage mechanism. At COP20, Parties will discuss the workplan for 2015-2016 based on the work of the Executive Committee of which the current

draft plan covers the main areas outlined in COP decisions. This will include the issue of migration and displacement among other elements.

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