



International Organization for Migration

Climate Change Adaption and Migration



Debates and issues



Global context

Migration has always been linked to environmental change but in today's world the reality of climate change adds a new complexity to this nexus:

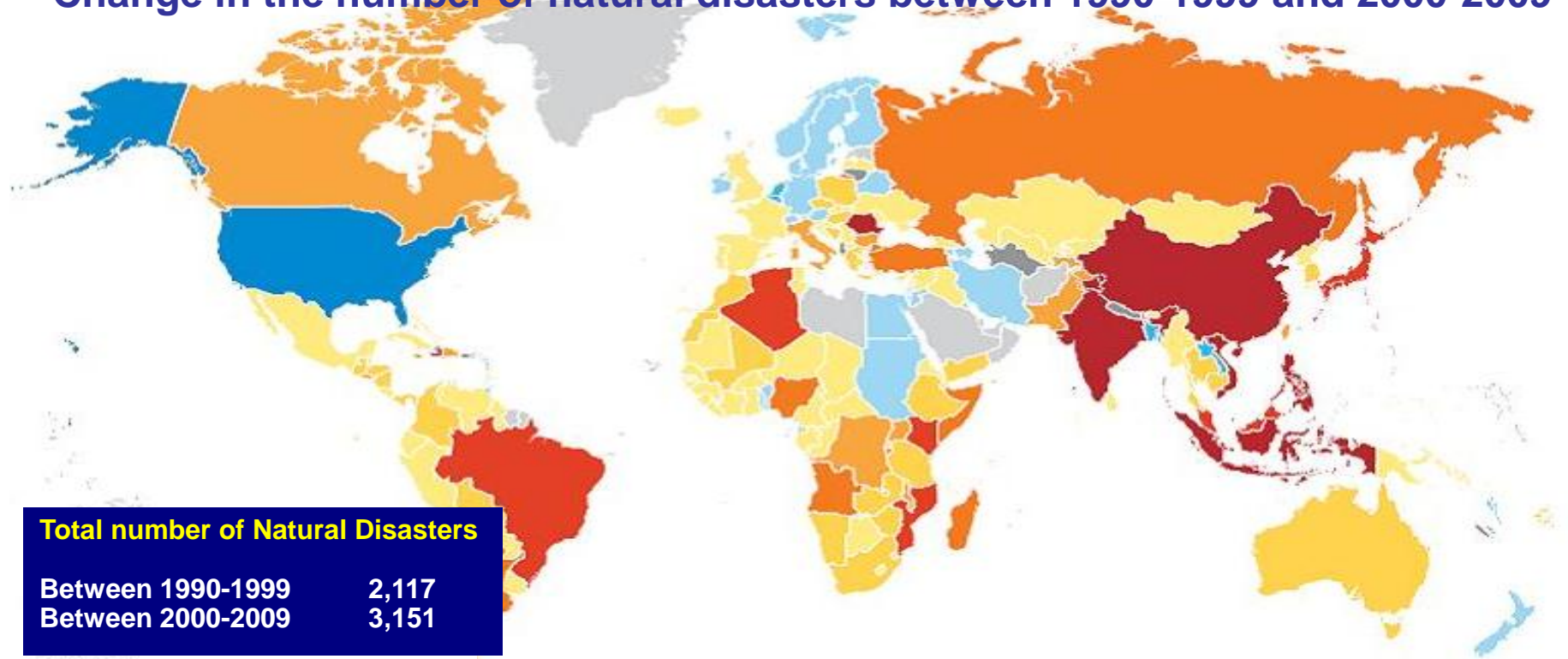
- Extreme weather events (e.g. heat waves, extreme rainfall and flooding etc)
- Water stress and land degradation
- Sea level rise and storm surges

Climate change is likely to aggravate and exacerbate the frequency of natural disaster and have significant socio-economic consequences.



Global Context: ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Change in the number of natural disasters between 1990-1999 and 2000-2009



49% increase in natural disasters over last decade compared with previous decade





Table 12: Southeast Asia Population in Hot Spots at High Risk of Climate Change Impacts, 2000

Country	Total Population (‘000)	Percentage of national population at risk of			
		Coastal Flooding	Cyclones	Riparian Flooding	Water Stress
Brunei Darussalam	317				
Cambodia	13,145	18.0	1.0	100.0	
Timor-Leste	739				
Indonesia	212,060	25.9			68.2
Lao PDR	5,275		64.2		
Malaysia	22,334	29.3			
Myanmar	47,833	34.1	9.4	32.7	48.9
Philippines	75,652	39.3	100.0	7.7	
Singapore	3,923				
Thailand	62,770	21.3	9.1		65.3
Viet Nam	78,114	67.8	60.5	100.0	

Lao PDR = Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

Source: Calculated from hot spot analysis and United Nations projections.



Global Context 2011:

“Era of Greatest Human Mobility”

1 billion migrants worldwide

- 215 million international migrants
- 740 million internal migrants

Urbanization

- Half of world's population in urban areas — 1st time in history

Feminization

- 50% of migrants women

Remittances

- 440 billion USD in 2010
- 325 billion USD to developing countries alone



Global Context

As early as 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change posited that:

“the gravest effects of climate change may be those on human migration”.



Global Context: Policy

- In UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the displacement and migration consequences of climate change are increasingly recognised as an issue. The Cancun Agreements in December 2010 state:
- *“14. Invites all Parties to enhance action on adaptation under the Cancun Adaptation Framework, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, by undertaking, inter alia, the following:*
 - ...
 - (f) Measures to **enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation** with regard to **climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation**, where appropriate, at national, regional and international levels;”



Issues

Current debates on migration and climate change revolve around three issue:

- i) Knowledge base
- ii) Capacity
- iii) Policy



1. Understanding Environmental Migration Trends



Measuring

- Predictions remain most contentious issue

Table 1: Estimates and Forecasts of Global Environmentally Induced Migration

Source	Current estimates	Forecasts by 2010	Forecasts by 2050
El-Hinnawi (1985)	30 million	50 million	150 million
Myers (1993, 2002)	25 million		150 million, then 200 million
Myers and Kent (1995)	25 million	50 million	212 million
Stern (2007)			200 million
Christian Aid (2007)	25 million		300 million

Note: The estimates and projections include migrants displaced by climate impacts as well as other environmental disruptions. For this reason, the term “environmentally induced migration” has been preferred to “climate-induced migration” here.



Measuring

- Quest for numbers is hampered by:
 - Concepts and definitions of environmental migration
 - Lack of reliable and disaggregated migration data
 - Confusion between people living in places at risk and people expected to migrate



Dimensions of environmental migration

- Dramatic sudden impacts vs slow onset change impacts.
- Forced vs voluntary migration.
- Temporary vs long term migration
- Moving as a result of perceived vs actual threats.
- Movement as forced displacement vs movement as an adaptation to environmental impact.
- Climate change as the only/major cause vs a contributory cause

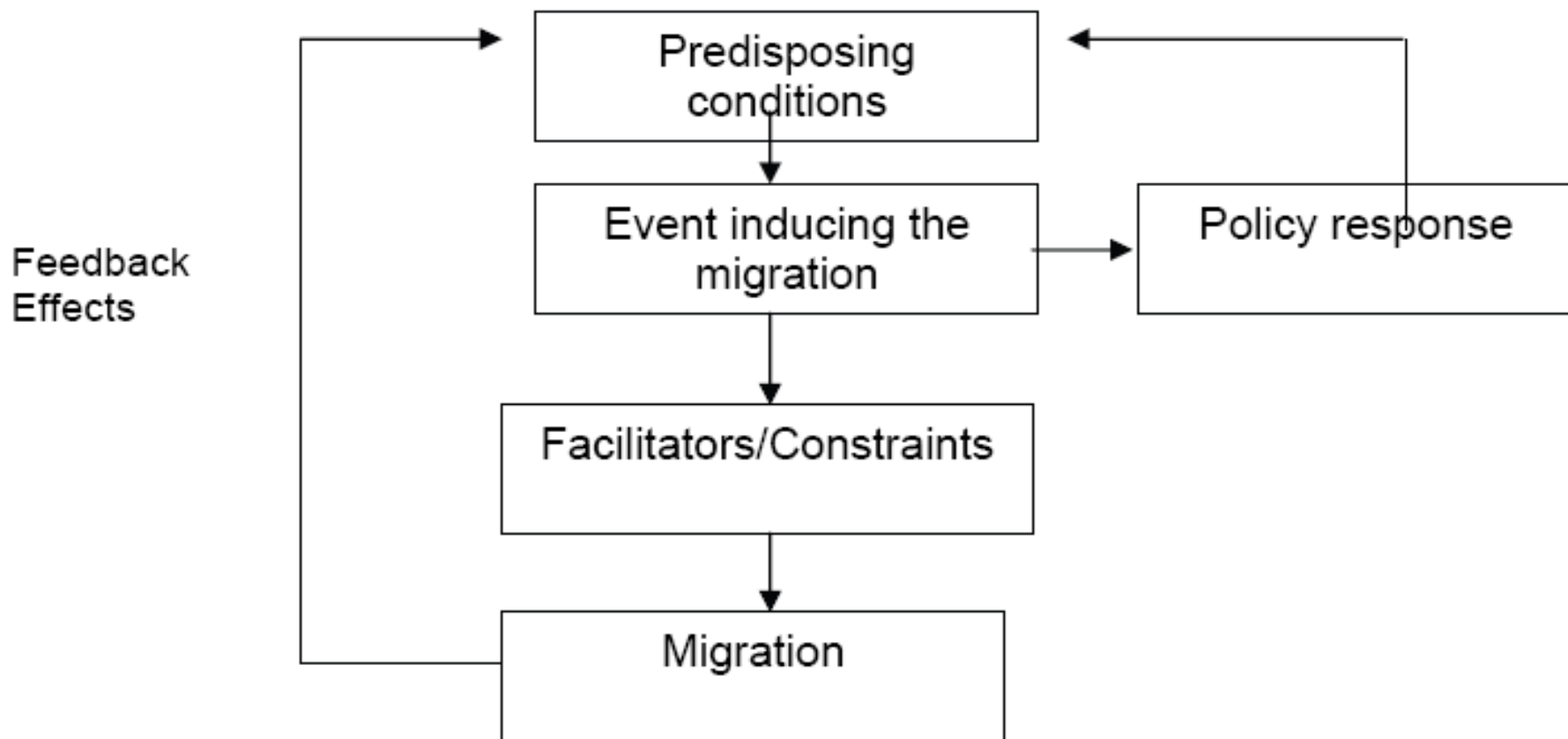


2. (Adaptive) Capacity



Capacity

Figure 3: A Theoretical Model of Environmental Migration



Source: Hugo 1996.



Capacity

Ability To Cope With Climate Change Impacts Depends On:

- Poverty, income, financial capacity
- Inappropriate policies and institutions and weak governance
- Resilience – strength in adapting to, or overcoming, vulnerability
- Existing mobility patterns



3. Policy responses



Policy Responses

- In situ adaptations is the most common response to climate change – adaptation mechanisms are designed to promote alternative to migration.
- Policy mechanism needed to cope with:
 - i) sudden onset events which rapidly destroy livelihoods or displace populations on permanent or temporary basis.
 - ii) Slow onset event, which see an incremental decline in the ability of an area to provide livelihood and may trigger proactive migration.
- Challenge not to defer action on ii)



Policy Responses

- Need to develop policies that facilitate migration away from areas that are at risk of environmental problems to areas that are better endowed.
- A major issue is that **the poorest are the least able to make such moves** due their limited resources and connections. Yet they are **the groups most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.**



International Organization for Migration

Thank you!

For further information,
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