Environmental change, circular migration, and adaptation: A gendered perspective from the Hindu Kush Himalayan Region

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International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Serving 8 countries in the HKH region
Regional intergovernmental learning and knowledge centre

**Vision:** Men, women, and children of the Hindu Kush Himalayas enjoy improved wellbeing in a healthy mountain environment

**Mission:** To enable sustainable and resilient mountain development for improved and equitable livelihoods through knowledge and regional cooperation
Himalayan Climate Adaptation Programme (HICAP)

**Goal:**
Enhance resilience to change, particularly climate change

**Objectives:**
- Reduce uncertainty
- Knowledge and capacity development
- Actionable proposals

**Cross cutting components:**
- Climate change scenarios
- Water availability and demand scenarios
- Communication and outreach
- Sub-basin level
- Ecosystem services
- Environmental science
- Social science

**Vulnerability and adaptation**

**Gender in adaptation**

**Local community level**

**Communication and outreach**

**Climate change**

**Environmental science**

**Food security**

**Social science**

**HICAP**

**Vulnerability and adaptation**

**Local community level**
Migration and adaptation
Migration as an adaptation:
Research on environmental change, migration and adaptation in ICIMOD
ICIMOD publications on environment, migration and adaptation

ICIMOD publication

Labour Migration as a Response Strategy to Water Hazards in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas

Peer reviewed publications

Migration as an effective mode of adaptation to climate change

Reports commissioned by external agencies

 Migration and Global Environmental Change

DB3 Drivers of migration in mountaneous regions of the developing world: a review

Michael Hellmair and Souryadeep Banerjee
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Kathmandu, Nepal
October 2011
Under what condition can migration be considered an adaptation to increased stresses and shocks related climate change?
Impact of migration on CC adaptation

- Skills/knowledge
- Social network
- Cash remittances
- Attitude
- New technology

Migration

Vulnerability  Adaptive capacity  Resilience
Key research questions

**Vulnerability**
- Do migrant HH have increased capacities – natural, financial, social, human and demographic – to non-migrant HH?
- Do migrant HH have increased affordability of health or education, to non-migrant HH?
- Do migrant HH Live in less exposed areas compared to non-migrant HH?

**Adaptation**
- Do migrant HH have better adaptation strategies – structural and non-structural- to non-migrant HH?

**Resilience**
- Do communities with higher percentage of migrant HH have better flexibility in terms of deploying community resources during drought/flood?
- Are Communities with higher percentage of migrant HH better prepared for drought/flood?
Gender Migration and CC

Migration: Migration is highly gendered in terms of both drivers and impacts, which differ between men and women, although it is not clear how these differences might be played out in the context of climate change (Graeme Hugo, 2010)

CC: CC is most adversely felt by vulnerable people in the climate hot spots of the South and chief among them are women who constitute the larger percentage of the world’s poorest (IPCC)

Gender Studies: contestations over resources within HH and the unequal bargaining power within HH tends to subordinate women and children’s individual voices and volition in migration decisions
Migration framework

Empirical research → Policy analysis → Pilot

Contribute empirical evidence to the global discourse on migration and adaptation.

Actionable recommendations for government institutions, non-government organizations, and international development agencies.
Strategic and country partners

**Strategic Partner**

University of Sussex, United Kingdom

**Country partners**

India

Aaranyak, Guwahati, India

China

Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences, Kunming, People’s Republic of China
Empirical research
(2012-2014)
Assam, Eastern Brahmaputra Sub-basin (EBSB) in North East India
Floods in Assam, EBSB, North East India

Source: Aaranyak
Yunnan, Upper Salween and Mekong Sub-basin (USMSB) in South West China
Drought in Yunnan, USMSB, South West China
Research methodology

Qualitative
- Gender disaggregated FGD
- Key informant interviews
- Gender specific case study
- Settlement survey

Quantitative
- Household survey
- Study of labor migration and use of remittances in villages affected by flood and drought

Flood and non-flood affected
- Drought and non-drought affected
Qualitative

• FGD (6/village) in 14 villages
• 34 Key informant interviews
  40 in-depth interviews with women in 2 villages

Quantitative

• 1100 HH survey in 30-35 villages
• Settlement surveys in 30-35 villages
Data Base - China

**Qualitative**
- FGD (6/village) in 15 villages
- 34 Key informant interviews
  - 40 in-depth interviews with women in 2 villages

**Quantitative**
- 800 HH survey in 20-25 villages
- Settlement surveys in 20-25 villages
Migration framework

Empirical research ➔ Policy analysis ➔ Pilot

- Migration in adaptation and poverty reduction policies
- Adaptation and poverty reduction in migration policies
- Focus on mountain/hill and gender issues
- Opportunities and gaps in existing policies
Migration framework

Empirical research
- Study of labor migration and use of remittances in villages affected by flood and drought

Policy analysis
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Pilot
- Access to information
- Financial literacy
- Strengthening of social networks
- Productive use of financial remittance
THANK YOU
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