



The linkages and dynamics between flooding and forced relocation: Fieldwork Experiences from Vietnam and Mozambique

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Worldwide, increasing attention is currently being given to the potential future impacts of climate change. Among their several findings, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts it is very likely that extreme weather events will occur more frequently in the future and the number of people affected will be highest in the low-lying deltas of Asia and Africa. Population displacement can be a negative impact of extreme weather events. Therefore it is important to understand the current dynamics and linkages between extreme weather events, forced migration and migration in those regions of the world where people might be more vulnerable to these events.

In the last decade there have been unusually large flooding events in Mozambique and in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. Research into the current dynamics of population displacement as it relates to flooding in these areas was carried out in late 2007. The research aimed to understand the particular displacement patterns and migration responses – temporary or permanent displacement/internal or international migration/seasonal or circular migration - which a flood or repeated flooding events may trigger. The interplay between flooding events, population displacement and other social, political and economic factors have been examined in order to understand whether migration is a result of coping capacities being overcome (forced), a coping strategy (voluntary), or the combination of both.

Field research involved semi-structured interviews with experts, including represen-

tatives of international organisations, non-government organisations, government departments and academics, as well as with potential migrants in Mozambique and Vietnam. This research will contribute to an increased understanding of the role of environmental change/degradation in causing forced migration, since forced migration and migration studies have more commonly focused on economic, political and social reasons for population displacement. In addition this research will contribute to the development of planning and land use change strategies to manage the impacts of extreme weather events on local livelihoods.

Keywords: disaster-induced displacement, forced migration, environment, floods, climate change, vulnerability, environmental displaces, flood mitigation measures, resettlement