

Workshop on Longitudinal Research on Environmental Change and Migration

Concept Note

The KNOMAD Thematic Working Group on Environmental Change and Migration will be hosting a workshop entitled “Longitudinal Research on Environmental Change and Migration: Workshop on Objectives, Methods and Applicability to Policy and Practice” on 18-19 March 2015 at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC. The workshop stems from the conclusions of a symposium that discussed research priorities regarding environmental change and migration hosted by KNOMAD on May 28-29, 2014.¹ The symposium aimed to assess the current state of the evidence on two dimensions of environmental change and migration: the environmental determinants of movements of people in both acute and slow onset situations; and the movements of people as an adaptation strategy in the context of environmental change. The goal of the symposium was to examine current knowledge about the interconnections between the environment and migration, discuss the policy implications of what is known, identify issues and methods to fill gaps in knowledge, and develop a research agenda to improve future evidence-based policymaking in this area. The symposium focused on three forms of mobility, as outlined in the Cancún Adaptation Framework. Paragraph 14(f), which invited States to undertake ‘[m]easures 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.’

There was general consensus among participants that longitudinal research designs should be put in place now to further understanding of the interconnections between migration and environmental change. Longitudinal research is “research in which (a) data are collected for each item or variable for two or more time periods, (b) the subjects or cases analyzed are the

¹Symposium on Environmental Change and Migration: State of the Evidence* May 28-29, 2014 World Bank, Washington DC
[http://www.knomad.org/powerpoints/environmental_change/KNOMAD_Symposium_Report_Final_TWG11%20\(final%20version\).pdf](http://www.knomad.org/powerpoints/environmental_change/KNOMAD_Symposium_Report_Final_TWG11%20(final%20version).pdf)

same or at least comparable from one period to the next; and (c) the analysis involves some comparison of data between or among periods.”² Longitudinal research can be prospective (studying changes to happen in the future) or retrospective (studying changes that have already taken place). The former generally are panel studies in which the same individuals or households are interviewed at repeated sequences to determine what changes have occurred. In the latter, respondents are asked to reconstruct their experiences in order to gain understanding of the changes that occurred in the past. Longitudinal studies do not always require that the same individuals are interviewed or observed over time. Repeated cross sectional studies—that is, research that applies to a single time interval with different respondents—can be constructed to permit comparison over time if the same information is solicited from comparable respondents during each round of data collection.

The symposium concluded that three types of longitudinal studies are needed to improve policies and programs aimed at addressing the impact of environmental change on migration. First are studies that focus on the determinants of migration. Longitudinal research may help understand the distinctions between recurring movement in the face of repetitive shocks and first or only movements. They will also help determine the extent to which movements related to slow onset processes, such as rising sea levels, result in different forms of movement over time. In this respect, longitudinal data could help draw conclusions about longer-term occurrences such as climate change.

Second, there is need for longitudinal research on the longer-term impacts of migration on those who move in the context of environmental change. This type of research would examine spontaneous movements of people, focusing on both anticipatory migration and displacement. Such studies would also help identify the impacts of such movements on communities of origin and destination. Among issues to be examined are the economic impacts (employment, wages, income and assets), fiscal effects at the local, regional and national levels, as well as the social, cultural, political, environmental and other factors that are influenced by human mobility. Longitudinal research provides useful information in determining which individuals, households and communities benefit from migration as compared to those who do not fare as well.

Third, longitudinal studies are needed to assess the long-term impacts of programs that are supported and implemented by governments to help people adapt to climate and other

² Scott Menard (2002). *Longitudinal Research: Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., p. 2.

environmental changes, including those involving movements of people. These adaptation programs may be aimed at ameliorating the factors that cause people to be displaced, or they may be planned relocation programs to help people adapt to environmental changes. There is no legal definition of planned relocation but a working group assembled by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Brookings Institution and Georgetown University has proposed a working description: *Planned relocation is a process in which persons or groups of persons are moved away from their homes, settled in a new location, and supported to rebuild their lives. Planned relocation involves the state, generally takes place within national borders, and is undertaken for reasons linked to disaster, environmental change and/or the effects of climate change.* Economic, social, cultural and other impacts are likely to change as people move through the adaptation process. Impacts on would-be and actual migrants as well as their communities of origin and destination are also likely to change as planned relocation takes place. Understanding the long-term effects of different adaptation strategies will help policymakers and practitioners undertake better planning and implementation.

In summary, the workshop will focus on the role of longitudinal data collection and analysis in improving understanding of the three principal issues: the determinants of environmentally-induced migration, in both acute and slow onset situations; the economic, social and other impacts of these movements on the migrants as well as communities of origin and destination; and the long-term efficacy of migration as an adaptation mechanism as well as the long-term efficacy of strategies to reduce emigration pressures. For each topic, roundtable discussion will be followed by smaller breakout groups that will aim to develop specific proposals and guidelines for addressing the topic. The goal of the workshop participants is to identify priorities for longitudinal research and make recommendations on the best ways to accomplish such studies.

Longitudinal Research on Environmental Change and Migration
A Workshop on Objectives, Methods and Applicability to Policy and Practice
March 19-20, 2015
World Bank, Washington, DC
MC C2-125

AGENDA

Thursday, March 19, 2015

- 9:00 Welcome and Introductions
 Dilip Ratha, Head - Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and
 Development (KNOMAD)
 Susan Martin, Chair, TWG Environmental Change and Migration
- Tour de Table: What are the most important issues to address regarding
 longitudinal research on environmental change and migration?
- 10:15 Break
- 10:30 Longitudinal Research on the Environmental Determinants of Migration
 Moderator: Susan Martin
- This session will focus on research designs that would enable scholars,
 policymakers and practitioners to understand more clearly the various ways in
 which environmental changes, on their own or in combination with other factors,
 affect mobility of persons. All forms of mobility will be considered: anticipatory
 migration, displacement and planned relocation. The session will review the
 findings and implications of current longitudinal studies as well as future research
 needs.
- 12:15 Public Session on Resilience and Vulnerability as a Determinant and Impact of
 Environmentally Driven Mobility
 Location: MC 6-100
 Moderator: Dilip Ratha
 Speakers: Dominic Kniveton, University of Sussex
 Caroline Zickgraf, University of Liege
 Marco Venier, UNODC
- 14:00 Longitudinal Research on the Impacts of Environmentally Induced Migration
 Moderator: Koko Warner
- This session will focus on research designs that would enable scholars,
 policymakers and practitioners to understand more clearly the impact of various
 forms of human mobility in the context of environmental change. As above, the
 session will consider the impacts of anticipatory migration, displacement and

planned relocation, and it will review current studies as well as future research needs.

- 15:30 Break
- 15:45 Break Out Groups
(One group on environmental determinants/other on impacts)
- 16:45 Reports on Break-out Groups
- 15:00 Adjourn
- 19:00 Dinner

Friday, March 20, 2015

- 9:00 Longitudinal Evaluations of Migration-Related Adaptation Programs
Moderator: Kanta Kumari
- This session will focus on research designs that would enable scholars, policymakers and practitioners to understand more clearly the implementation and impact of adaptation programs that affect mobility patterns. These adaptation programs may seek to address the determinants of migration to enable people to remain in situ, or they may involve migration as an adaptation strategy. It will focus, in particular, at longitudinal evaluation of planned relocation programs.
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 Break Out Groups
(One group on adaptation to reduce emigration pressures/one on migration as form of adaptation)
- 11:45 Reports on Break-Out Groups
- 12:15 Recommendations
Moderator: Susan Martin
Tour de table
- 13:00 Lunch