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Climate-Induced Migration: Conflict Resolution and Legal Efforts in Pacific, Africa, and South Asia

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Climate-induced migration involves people relocating caused by detrimental climate changes affecting their living environment. Pacific, Africa, and South Asia have experienced climate-induced migration resulting from extreme weather events, sea level rise, drought and desertification, and temperature extremes. The purpose of this research is to find out in terms of conflict resolution, what legal efforts have been made by the government of the affected regions to address climate-induced migration. This study uses descriptive qualitative method and case studies. Based on the results obtained from the data, it was found that the affected governments are pursuing various legal efforts to be able to tackle climate-induced migration. Several efforts made, namely "Migration with Dignity" policy, the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project, Great Green Wall initiative, the African Union's Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre, and India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The regional initiatives mentioned earlier play pivotal roles in implementing these frameworks and fostering collaborative endeavors, whilst the innovative legal frameworks, guided by SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) indicators, ensure that climate-induced migration is addressed effectively. To sum up, dealing with climate-induced migration requires a holistic approach involving regional collaboration and innovative legal frameworks.

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1. Introduction

Climate-induced migration refers to the forced relocation of individuals due to adverse changes in the climate affecting their living conditions. This migration can be prompted by both rapid or gradual environmental shifts, and it is becoming a critical worldwide issue.

Core factors prompting climate-induced migration are extreme weather events, sea level rise, drought and desertification, as well as temperature extremes. Extreme weather events may include storms and hurricanes, and flooding, whilst coastal erosion due to sea level rise inundate low-lying areas, forcing coastal communities to relocate. The Maldives, among other small island states, is at risk of becoming uninhabitable. Furthermore, prolonged droughts lead to water scarcity for drinking and agriculture, driving mass migration in regions like the Sahel in Africa. Also, desertification, where fertile land turns into desert, makes traditional livelihoods, like farming, unsustainable. Moreover, in terms of temperature extremes, increasingly frequent and severe heatwaves can render regions uninhabitable and disrupt agriculture, as observed in parts of Australia.

The global impacts of climate change can be seen in affected regions like Pacific Islands, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia, which will be discussed further in this study. The entire communities in Pacific Islands are forced to relocate because the island is exposed to sea level rise and extreme weather events. Sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, grappling with droughts and desertification, resulting in migration within and between countries. Similarly, South Asia is also struggling with climate change, particularly experiencing floods and cyclone, driving substantial internal migration.

Based on this description, the central problem to be examined in this study is how the affected regions address climate-induced migration. To answer this, the research problem is posed as follows: In terms of conflict resolution, are there legal efforts by the government of the affected regions to confront climate-induced migration? This research aims to explore what legal efforts that the affected regions governments have made to mitigate this migration driven by climate change. The benefit of this study is to offer practical insights for the vulnerable regions to handle migration due to climate change.

2. Method

Type of Research

Based on the research objectives, the type of research used is case studies. A case study involves studying, explaining, or interpreting a case naturally within its context, without external intervention. The data itself is sourced from documentation.

Types and Data Sources

In this study, the types of data used by the compiler is qualitative data, in other words, verbal data. In obtaining such data, the compiler needs to perform a literature review to gather information from various concepts and theoretical references relevant to the research title.

The data source used in this study is secondary data, which is obtained from reading or reviewing literature, the internet, and documents associated with the research topic.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques used by the researcher is literature study.

Literature study involves gathering data by investigating various information and theories that are relevant to scientific papers, whether physical sources such as books or digital sources like e-books, websites, and online journals. Literature study is essential for acquiring data that relates to the research topic and validates theoretical frameworks.

Data Analysis Techniques

This analysis technique basically consists of three components, namely data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions.

Data Reduction

The data reduction involves the following stages: editing, grouping, and summarizing data. This way, the researcher can find themes, groups, and data patterns.

Data Display

Data presentation or data display entails organizing data by grouping related components together to create cohesive units. This is because qualitative research typically embodies diverse perspectives and nuanced viewpoints.

Drawing and Verifying Conclusions

Drawing and testing conclusions is essentially applying inductive principles, looking at patterns and trends in the displayed data.

Data Language

This research employs theoretical sampling, whereby literature sources or studies are selected strategically based on their theoretical alignment with the research questions.

3. Result and Discussion

Legal Efforts and Conflict Resolution by the Affected Regions Governments
Pacific Islands: Kiribati and Tuvalu

Both Kiribati and Tuvalu face severe threats from rising sea levels. Additionally, Tuvalu is grappling with greater frequency of extreme weather events. To tackle this challenge, Kiribati government has launched the "Migration with Dignity" policy. This initiative aims to prepare its citizens for potential relocation by offering education and training to facilitate migration to other nations, such as New Zealand and Fiji.

Meanwhile, Tuvalu's government has actively sought international aid and raised awareness about their situation in global forums, including the United Nations. They have also explored potential relocation agreements with neighboring countries.

In addition, the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project is a major initiative designed to enhance the resilience of Pacific Island nations to the adverse impacts of climate change. Key activities of the PACC Project include pilot adaptation projects, policy development, and knowledge sharing.

Pilot Adaptation Projects are implemented to demonstrate effective adaptation measures in key sectors such as food security, water resources, and coastal management. Bolstering agricultural practices to ensure food security, enhancing water management systems to maintain a stable water supply, and coastal management aiming to protect coastlines from erosion and sea level rise.

The PACC Project also promotes the inclusion of climate adaptation into national and regional policies by helping to craft policy frameworks that prioritize climate adaptation and fostering the enactment of legislation that supports climate-resilience development.

Lastly, the PACC Project also facilitates the exchange of knowledge and best practices among Pacific Island nations and other regions by organizing regional forums and conferences to discuss climate adaptation strategies, sharing experiences, and disseminating information through reports, case studies, and online platforms.

The success of the PACC Project can be seen in the Pilot Adaptation Projects that offer valuable lessons and replicable models, and its impact on national and regional policies to incorporate climate adaptation considerations, resulting in more resilient development planning.

Another endeavor undertaken by the Pacific Islands is through regional collaborations and local regulations. The Pacific Islands Forum encourages regional cooperation on climate adaptation and migration, whilst certain Pacific countries have enacted policies to support climate migrants from neighboring islands.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria, Chad, and Kenya

Nigeria and Chad suffer from extreme desertification and drought. In response to this challenge, Nigeria has introduced the Great Green Wall initiative to combat desertification and restore degraded land, despite ongoing challenges in implementation and funding. By boosting land productivity and offering sustainable livelihoods, this initiative alleviates migration pressures and resource conflicts.

Conversely, Chad is managing conflicts stemming from water scarcity and limited arable land through reforestation projects and initiatives to enhance water management, although political instability slows down progress.

Furthermore, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the African Union's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) focus on harmonizing policies on climate change and migration. Nations like Kenya have established national climate change frameworks incorporating measures for managing climate-induced migration, such as the National Climate Change Response Strategy, National Environmental Policy, and National Adaptation Plan.

South Asia: Bangladesh and India

Floods and cyclones are critical challenges for Bangladesh and India.

Bangladesh's strategy, namely Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), involves government investment in disaster management and climate adaptation measures, like building cyclone shelters and deploying early warning systems, along with long-term planning for sea level rise. The BCCSAP's holistic approach targets the root causes

of climate-induced migration while bolstering community resilience.

Meanwhile, in India, the response includes developing comprehensive disaster management plans and investing in climate-resilient infrastructure. The country is also working on enhancing water management and adaptation in susceptible regions.

Moreover, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre is engaged in regional disaster risk reduction and management, thereby indirectly addressing climate-induced migration. India itself has also formulated India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), featuring missions on water, agriculture, and disaster management, addressing concerns related to climate-induced migration

Challenges, Future Directions, and Innovated Policy Recommendations

Pacific Islands: Kiribati and Tuvalu

A major obstacle in Pacific Islands is the lack of infrastructure. Numerous nations in Pacific Islands, including Kiribati and Tuvalu, struggle with inadequate infrastructure that impedes extensive migration or adaptation projects. This includes shortages in housing, healthcare, and educational facilities.

To confront this challenge, firstly, prioritize resilient infrastructure through investment and community-based adaptation projects to reduce forced migration. Secondly, strengthen regional cooperation through frameworks such as the Pacific Islands Forum that will facilitate collective actions on climate adaptation and migration. Finally, secure international assistance by advocating for greater international funding and technical support for climate adaptation and relocation projects.

A SMART-based policy recommendation, that ensures it is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, involves enhancing infrastructure and community resilience through community-based adaptation initiatives. This effort aims to bolster local infrastructure and resilience to climate change. By December 31, 2025, construct 50 climate-resilient community centers in the Pacific Islands' most vulnerable zones, funded internationally and constructed with local labor, to aid local communities and minimize forced migration.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria and Chad

One of the key hurdles in Sub-Saharan Africa is political instability. Nations such as Nigeria and Chad grapple with considerable political turmoil, complicating the effective

implementation of climate adaptation and migration policies.

To tackle this concern, advocate initiatives that promote political stability and good governance to facilitate climate adaptation efforts. Using SMART indicators, policy recommendation involves establishing robust legal frameworks and governance systems to manage climate-induced migration and reduce resource conflicts. By the end of 2026, aim to draft and implement national climate migration laws in 10 Sub-Saharan African nations, integrating these laws into national legislation through collaboration with international legal experts and local authorities to address migration and conflict challenges.

South Asia: Bangladesh and India

A critical issue in South Asia is environmental vulnerability. Frequent natural disasters like cyclones and floods trigger a cycle of displacement and recovery, placing immense pressure on resources and infrastructure.

Addressing this challenge requires improving disaster preparedness and response systems to minimize displacement and support swift recovery in impacted regions. Innovative policy recommendation, guided by SMART indicators, emphasizes establishing and executing early warning systems for natural disasters in 30 coastal communities in South Asia by December 31, 2024. This involves deploying early warning systems, conducting community training sessions, leveraging existing technologies, and training local personnel to mitigate disaster effects and prevent forced migration.

4. Conclusion

Managing climate-induced migration demands a comprehensive strategy involving regional collaboration and innovative legal frameworks. By reinforcing legal structures and promoting innovative solutions, the global community can effectively address the impacts of climate-induced migration and strengthen the resilience of affected communities. The case studies analyzed in this research provide valuable insights for other regions facing similar challenges, underscoring the necessity of integrated strategies for climate-induced migration and conflict resolution. Moreover, regional organizations such as the Pacific Islands Forum, African Union, and SAARC are instrumental in implementing these frameworks and promoting collaborative efforts.

Following this, undertaking in-depth studies to grasp the complexities of climate-induced migration is imperative. This includes formulating policies based on empirical data and

establishing robust legal frameworks at national, regional, and global scales to manage migration and safeguard migrants. Additionally, enhancing regional and international collaboration to exchange best practices, resources, and support for communities impacted by climate-induce migration is crucial

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