Governing translocal social resilience.
Multi-level policy analysis of climate change adaptation and migration in Thailand.

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BACKGROUND

➲ "Migration as adaptation" to climate change (McLeman & Smit 2006)

➲ This allows individuals to diversify income sources, spread risk for the household, and to send remittances, which in turn, increases resilience back home (Tacoli, 2011)

➲ But policy makers often view migration as negative, maladaptive and/or last resort

➲ Community climate change adaptation programs often neglect the role of migration

Photo 1: Masked protestors demand climate justice in Bangkok, Thailand. Courtesy of Flickr user Shubert Ciencia.

Photo 2: Rural households can diversify their livelihoods in order to remain resilient in the face of climate change. Here farmers harvest crops in Jomtien, Thailand. Courtesy of Flickr user lynhdan.

CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

➲ Translocality emphasizes local-local interactions but these interactions are embedded in a multiplicity of structures beyond the immediate trans-local scale, such as national policies, global economies, or patterns of climate change (Brickell & Datta 2011)

➲ The ability to adapt does not happen in a vacuum and can depend on policy intervention; especially in the case of migration, if populations are "trapped" (Black et al 2009)

➲ A detailed multi-level policy and stakeholder analysis is needed in order to understand the various roles and layers of governance of the climate change-migration nexus
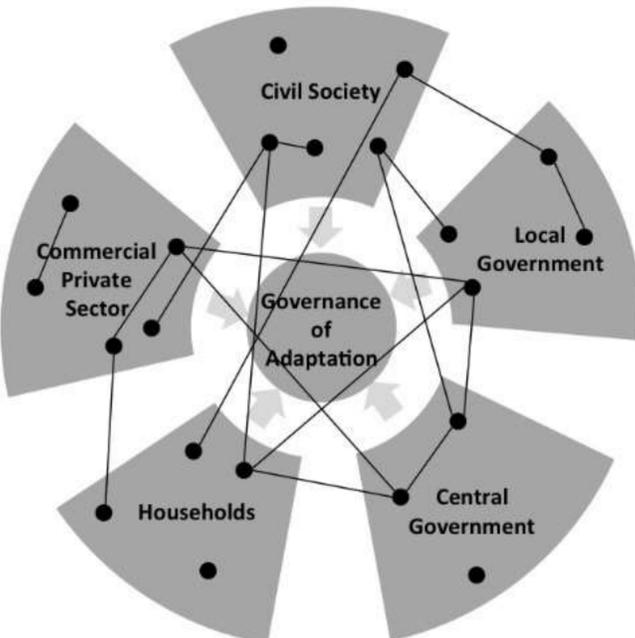

Fig. 1: Different sectors of society involved in the governance of adaptation are schematically represented as different triangular slices. The dots represent individual organizations or persons (i.e. actors) within each sector, and the lines represent relational ties among these (adapted from Bodin & Crona 2009)..

Photo 4: Local residents meet ro discuss environmental problems and priorities. Photo by: Sopon Naruchaikusol.

> My policy and research background, with most recent work at the World Bank, Overseas Development Institute, and Woodrow Wilson Center, positions me nicely to analyze the climate change policy environment of Thailand, and how migration and translocal resilience can be incorporated within it.

QUESTIONS

➲ What role does migration play in climate change adaptation policies and programs?

➲ How are policies on "environmental migration" framed?

➲ How do different existing policies on the international, national and local levels account for the potential for social resilience building through translocality?

➲ How can migration be mainstreamed into climate change adaptation policies?

Photo 3: Often definitions of adaptation and mandates to create national adaptation plans of action funnel down from UN COPs. Here UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon at COP19 in Warsaw, Poland. Courtesy Flickr user UNclimatechange .

ACTIVITIES

➲ Analysis of policy documents, gray material, data, websites, etc. at the intersection between migration and climate change adaptation

➲ Interview experts, practitioners, policy makers etc on multiple levels of climate change policy decision making and implementation

➲ Analysis of climate change adaptation policies and their implementation on the local level

"Migration has always been a strategy used by people to improve their quality of life"

Bakewell (2008)

Literature:
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