



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Assessing the climate change, environmental degradation and migration nexus in South Asia



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South Asia, comprising 8 countries including Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nepal, is affected by a range of natural disasters including floods, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), storm surges, droughts, cyclones and heavy precipitation. These disasters take a huge toll as they displace thousands of people every year. The impact of natural hazards is amplified by the following facts: most countries in the region lack strong economies and infrastructure, majority of the population and the industries depend on land resources, and large proportions of the population live in environmentally vulnerable areas. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has predicted that slow onset disasters and sudden onset disasters will increase in severity and frequency, threatening lives and livelihoods across the region. The IPCC also speculates that though current movements are driven by economic and social factors, the environment will have a significant impact on migratory flows in the future.

In order to assess the climate change, environmental degradation and migration nexus in South Asia, IOM will undertake a related study, field research and national consultations in Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nepal to share the findings of the research and raise awareness on the subject. The project will culminate in a regional level dissemination meeting. Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nepal have been selected for this project for their commonalities including high rates of urbanization and international migration (though the Maldives is an exception as it witnesses net in-migration) and their high exposure to diverse climatic events. The experiences of these

three countries will serve as lessons for the whole region, as they all face similar challenges due to environmental degradation and climate change.

Through this project, IOM aims to contribute to national and regional policies which address the expected impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on migration and displacement. The project activities thus include:

1. Assessing existing evidence of the linkages between climate change, environmental degradation and migration through a policy and literature review at the regional and national level in Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nepal. Field research will be carried out on the nexus in selected districts of each of the three countries that experience high out-migration and are vulnerable to environmental events.
2. Drafting a regional strategy framework and model national action plans (NAP's) based on a consultative process and linked to existing action plans/policies.
3. Organizing a regional dissemination meeting for policymakers to present the assessment study, model NAP's and regional strategy framework.

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*Developing Capacities in
Migration Management*

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