Subtheme: Social Protection and Climate-Induced Migration

Social protection can be part of a proactive approach to managing climate-induced migration and on the other hand it can reduce distress migration and erosive coping strategies. In particular, public employment opportunities can create assets that enhance livelihood opportunities and explicitly address the impacts of climate change in both rural and urban areas and in places of origin and destination.

Mainbody

Not all aspects of livelihood insecurity can and have to be addressed by a single approach. It does also not offer a solution for maintaining indigenous culture often strongly affected or even disrupted by climate change. Hence, an effective approach needs to combine different policy instruments to support protection, adaptation and migration. Policies must consider planning and facilitating migration as an adaptation strategy. Social protection programmes serve as important temporary safety nets and provide fast startup support depending on the design and effective implementation for different climate-induced migration outcomes. Social protection provides a generic effective approach to deal with different forms of migration.

Climate change exacerbates the drivers of temporary and permanent migration, such as food insecurity, income shocks or deteriorating livelihood opportunities. Social protection can be an effective instrument to address these threats. However, benefits are not generated automatically. Programmes must be designed and implemented in a way that they explicitly address climate risks.

Recommendations

- Effective protection strategies require flexible targeting and timely provision of transfers to smooth income and consumption fluctuations as well as address chronic and transitory poverty affected and caused by climate change taking into consideration needs of marginalised groups such as women, persons with disabilities and children.
- Urban areas must be included in social protection programmes due to increasing rural-urban migration, the high level of exposure of urban areas to climate risks and vulnerability of migrants living in informal settlements.
- Programmes must also be accessible for a broad range of target groups, as climate change not only affects below the poverty households, which often have exclusive access to social protection.
- Limited government capacities and fiscal feasibility may impede the expansion and effective implementation of social protection. Developing countries may need further support not only for designing and adjusting programme designs to current and projected climate change impacts but also for effectively implementing social protection schemes.

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