

Call for papers:

COST Action IS1101 Climate Change and Migration - Bielefeld Workshop

Social inequality and social justice in environmentally-induced relocation

Workshop date and venue: 20-21 November, 2014 – University of Bielefeld, Germany

Organisers: Jeanette Schade / Kerstin Schmidt-Verkerk / Thomas Faist

Deadline for abstracts (no more than 500 words): Friday, 15 August

Background

In 2010, the state parties to the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreed in the COP16 outcome to take “measures 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”. Planned relocation and resettlement has since been increasingly discussed as a response mechanism to environmental or climatic stressors. In this context, it might be an ad hoc strategy following a disaster, a preventive long-term measure, or a measure to avoid displacement caused by climate change adaptation or mitigation projects. Relocation measures are sometimes carried out by the affected communities, but in most cases, national authorities and/or international organisations lead the drafting and implementation, often creating an involuntary and impelled character. Experiences from development cooperation demonstrate the danger of negative impacts upon the resettled and the receiving communities, including discrimination, livelihood deprivation, and conflict.

Workshop Objectives

The workshop will bring together experts and young scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds, as well as practitioners to provide a platform for dialogue. Through the lens of the crucial concepts of social inequality and social justice, it will inquire into approaches that enhance the human agency of those affected by relocation policies in the context of climate (adaptation and mitigation) measures.

Questions to be addressed include:

- **Inequality:** What are the differences and the commonalities of climate change related relocations organised in the developed versus the developing world or in democratic versus authoritarian societies? How does social inequality within society impact upon relocation policies and decisions, legal framings and opportunities for redress, and upon the reproduction or even aggravation of social inequalities?
- **Justice:** How can the inequalities at the international, national, and local levels that have an unfavourable impact on affected people be addressed? How are appropriate governance mechanisms designed, and how are assigned responsibilities effectively encouraged? How do existing climate finance and governance mechanisms look like and do they address the challenge of social inequality and vulnerability? How can the conjunction between local, national, and international policy levels and policy actors be organised in a way favourable for those affected?
- **Procedures:** Who decides whether relocation is the appropriate form of adaptation to climate change or whether in-situ options are preferable? If relocation results to be the best option, who selects the new settlement area and who decides what the old area will be used for?
- **Agency:** How is the involvement of the affected communities organised and guaranteed, and how can their marginalisation, the destruction of livelihoods, and conflicts over resources be avoided?
- **Learning:** What can we learn from past experience and the application of existing guidelines for relocation in the context of natural hazards and disasters? What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing relocation safeguards in the context of climate change and climate policies? What are the different challenges, and what are the commonalities of ad hoc relocations, long-term preventive relocations, and relocations related to investments in climate change mitigation and adaptation measures?

Abstracts of no more than 500 words, which address one or several of these questions, should be submitted by Friday, 15 August, 2014 to the conference organisers at: kerstin.schmidt-verkerk@uni-bielefeld.de.

Financial support is available for a limited number of participants.