



Photo Credit: IOM - MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INSIGHTS

COMMUNICATION BRIEF

BUILDING NEXUS RESILIENCE: ADDRESSING MIGRATION AND CONFLICTS IN WATER-ENERGY-FOOD (WEF) SYSTEMS

WEBINAR 3

GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS AND EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING

DECEMBER 3, 2024

BUILDING NEXUS RESILIENCE: ADDRESSING MIGRATION AND CONFLICTS IN WATER-ENERGY-FOOD SYSTEMS

BACKGROUND

According to the International Organization for Migration, there were over 280 million international migrants in 2020, a number influenced by global crises such as conflicts, economic instability, and disasters, and positive factors like labor migration and free movement agreements. Migration drivers include water stress, extreme weather events, energy poverty, and food insecurity. This surge in migration trends also impacts host nations, particularly in regions already facing resource scarcity challenges. Anticipated climate change and population growth will exacerbate these challenges, causing nonlinear impacts across water, energy, and food systems. Migration can also contribute positively to all aspects of economic, environmental, and social development and is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the intricate interdependencies among these resource systems, but their complex relationships with migration (forced, economic, rural-urban, internal, and cross-border) remain insufficiently addressed. Understanding the connections between migration and key environmental resources (e.g., water, energy, and food) including how resource scarcity influences migration needs further study.

Existing Water-Energy-Food nexus models often fail to capture the nuanced interplay between conflicts and migration. Nexus communities from across the globe search for better tools to understand these trends and interconnections and guide anticipatory action toward improving the resilience of communities facing these pressures. Moreover, there is a need to understand the impact of the various underlying conditions and vulnerabilities on amplifying disaster risks related to water, energy, and food systems that contribute to migration. Also, connecting the vulnerability and resilience of resource systems (primarily water, energy, and food) with the nexus still needs to unravel solutions for long-term sustainable development. The webinar series aims to fill this gap.

OBJECTIVES

This webinar series aims to catalyze cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional, and international dialogues toward understanding the knowledge gaps and opportunities in taking a holistic, systems approach to addressing these tightly interconnected challenges. With a focus on water, energy, and food systems, the webinar series will also consider other key environmental resources like climate, land, and ecosystems.



OUTCOMES

The webinar series is envisioned to facilitate the development of a common framework and road map for integrating migration in nexus assessment tools. This would contribute to exploring and developing anticipatory tools and strategies incorporating migration dynamics into nexus assessments, aiming to guide policymakers, researchers, and practitioners toward evidence-based, sustainable, and resilient solutions.



WEBINAR 3 PROGRAM

• Introduction

Bassel Daher, Texas A&M University, SustainFood Network, IWRA

• Panel and Moderated Discussion

➤ The climate change, rural livelihoods and migration nexus in Zimbabwe: implications for climate change adaptation and migration governance

Lucy Szaboova, Climate change and migration specialist, FAO

➤ Forced Migration: Causes, Consequences, and Policy Responses

Manuel Hernandez, Senior Research Fellow in the Markets, Trade, and Institutions Unit of IFPRI

➤ Navigating climate disasters: governance in action – lessons from floods response in South Sudan and Poland

Ludwika Klejnowska, Institutional Donor Relations Manager at Polish Humanitarian Action

➤ Public policy Vs Public opinion: Russian case

Yulia Kuznetsova, Geographer, Science Communication Expert

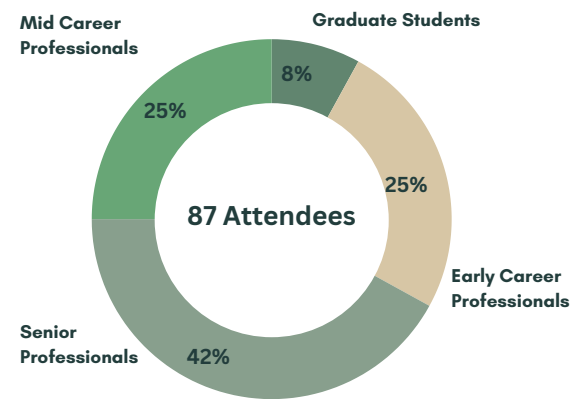
• Moderated Q&A

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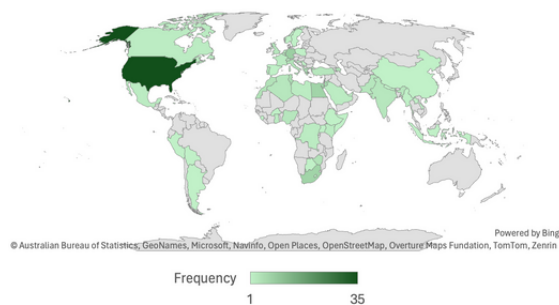
• Next Steps

Bassel Daher, Texas A&M University, SustainFood Network, IWRA

WEBINAR STATS



from
57 Countries



Bassel Daher
Texas A&M Energy Institute,
Texas A&M University

[LINK TO BIO](#)



Lucy Szaboova
Food and Agricultural
Organization of the
United Nations (FAO)

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Manuel Hernandez
International Food
Policy Research
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Ludwika Klejnowska
Polish Humanitarian
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Yulia Kuznetsova
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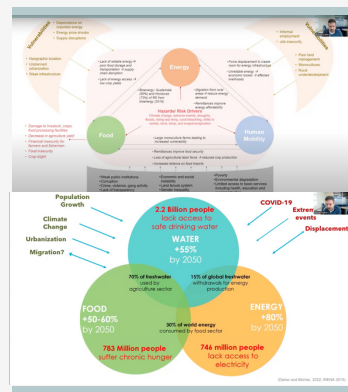


[Conference Details](#)

WEBINAR 3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS AND EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

- Daher highlighted the **growing research** on the water, energy, and food nexus, noting **gaps** in understanding their role in migration, and stressing the need for **cross-sector collaboration** and **lessons** from past governance frameworks.
- Using a recent white paper featuring a systematic literature review on the interconnections between food and energy insecurity and human mobility, Daher emphasized the critical importance of understanding underlying conditions such as governance frameworks, public institutions, and other key factors.
- The introduction emphasized the need for **cross-disciplinary, intersectoral**, and **international** dialogues and approaches to effectively address the complexity of such interconnected challenges.

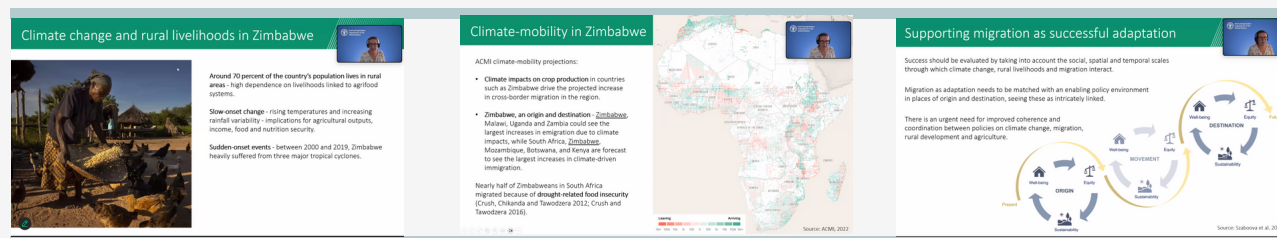


WEBINAR'S GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How can **governance frameworks** effectively address the **interconnected challenges** of climate-induced mobility within the Water-Energy-Food Nexus?
- What **strategies can enhance policy coherence** across sectors and regions to manage the multidimensional causes and consequences of **migration and forced displacement**?
- In what ways can **science communication and public opinion** shape evidence-based policymaking to improve governance responses to climate change, migration, and resource management?

CLIMATE CHANGE, RURAL LIVELIHOODS, AND MIGRATION IN ZIMBABWE: IMPLICATIONS FOR ADAPTATION AND GOVERNANCE

- Szaboova presented findings from an **FAO study in Zimbabwe**, where she explored the role of climate change in **shaping people's decision to migrate**, as well as the role of migration for **livelihood adaptation** in rural migrant-sending areas. She reflected on the implications of these findings for the success of migration as climate change adaptation and for migration governance.
- Economic and climatic drivers of mobility are intricately linked in rural Zimbabwe: **declining yields** due to **changing rainfall patterns** and **droughts** exacerbate poverty and food insecurity and make migration a desired alternative.
- Remittances (including money, goods and food) sent by migrants contribute to improved food security and help households cope with the impacts of climate change.
- Without **holistic and targeted support and interventions** that address the **root causes** of vulnerability in rural areas, migration may present challenges for populations left behind that can hinder its potential to build long-term resilience. These challenges include economic impacts like the loss of labor and reduced land cultivation, as well as social challenges such as early and child marriage and children dropping out of school.
- To facilitate migration as a successful adaptation to climate change, policies, programmes and legal frameworks need to view places of origin and destination as intricately linked.
- To address challenges and fully harness the potential of migration as a form of **adaptation**, stronger coherence and coordination are essential among policies on climate change, migration, rural development, and agriculture.



FORCED MIGRATION: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND POLICY RESPONSES

- Hernandez's focused on the main findings of a recent review study on forced migration conducted for **IFPRI's Annual Global Food Policy Report**. He highlighted the multidimensional causes of migration, including **socioeconomic, climatic, conflict**, and other factors; the resulting consequences on migrants, sending, and hosting communities; and outline some possible **policy responses** to attend **forced migration**.
- Migration is a complex decision influenced by various triggering factors, events, and shocks.
- Forced displacement** – when people must leave their original place of residence – results **climate change, armed conflict, criminal violence**, and **economic shocks**, which are often interrelated, multiplying their impact.
- Migration, including forced migration, constitutes an important adaptation strategy, with both challenges and opportunities.
- Migration requires resources and socioeconomic networks, and often those who stay behind are the most vulnerable.
- To improve the outcomes of forced migration, it is critical to: **broaden the scope of research**; **accelerate transition** from humanitarian aid to development policy and **better integrate refugees** into hosting communities; **align social protection** and climate action objectives; and address “**forced immobility**” (the situation of those that stay behind).

NAVIGATING CLIMATE DISASTERS: GOVERNANCE IN ACTION – LESSONS FROM FLOODS RESPONSE IN SOUTH SUDAN AND POLAND

- Klejnowska's presentation highlights the **humanitarian and governance** challenges in addressing floods in Poland and South Sudan, focusing on their differing contexts and responses.
- Effective governance, proactive disaster risk management**, and **climate adaptation** are essential to mitigate the effects of climate-induced disasters.
- Addressing systemic gaps and fostering international collaboration is critical, especially in fragile states like South Sudan.
- This year's floods in South Sudan affected **1.4 million people**, **displaced 380,000**, submerged critical infrastructure, and devastated crops and livestock, worsening food insecurity in a nation where six out of ten people already face food insecurity.
- The economic losses in Poland were estimated between **\$2.5 and \$6.5 billion**. The government declared a state of natural disaster in response to the widespread destruction caused by the flooding.

PUBLIC POLICY VS PUBLIC OPINION: RUSSIAN CASE

- Kuznetsova examined the evolution of Russia's climate policies, **highlighting challenges** in communication and how shifting narratives affect migration trends and public opinion shaped by political developments.
- Since 2022, the climate agenda in Russia has lost significance, **shifting from GHG emissions reduction to adaptation strategies** and becoming increasingly disconnected from global processes.
- Before 2022, businesses led climate initiatives and participation in the global carbon market, but post-2022 sanctions and economic isolation have **reduced financial support**, prioritizing political goals over global collaboration.
- Policies targeting NGOs and independent journalism, along with disrupted international collaborations, have stifled constructive criticism of Russia's environmental policies.
- Public skepticism** about climate change has grown, with the issue increasingly framed as a "Western-origin" narrative since 2022.



WEBINAR'S DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS



- International immigration has **surged by 62%** over the past two decades, equating to approximately **100 million people** moving from one country to another.
- A significant portion of international migrants originate from **rural areas**, reflecting the **vulnerabilities** in these regions.
- 80% of displaced populations** live in areas facing acute **food insecurity**, compounding their vulnerabilities.
- A **systems, interdisciplinary approach** is necessary to integrate climate action, migration, and rural development policies effectively.
- Without addressing **root causes** like governance and resource limitations, sustainable recovery remains a **challenge**.

OPEN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the **key gaps** in current research and implementation related to WEF resource management and migration dynamics, and how can policymakers address these gaps?
- How can **enhanced collaboration** between the water, energy, and food sectors contribute to **building resilience** against climate-induced migration and conflicts?
- What role does **effective science communication** play in shaping public opinion and influencing policymakers regarding climate change and migration issues?
- How can the findings **guide** the creation of policies that enhance rural livelihoods and climate adaptation while effectively managing migration? What roles should **international organizations** and other stakeholders play in this process?
- What integrated policy approaches are most effective in tackling the **root causes** of climate-related challenges?
- What key governance actions focused on **humanitarian aid** can countries adopt to enhance their responses to climate disasters?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [A systems approach for disaster risk reduction](#)
- [Climate change, rural livelihoods and migration nexus in Zimbabwe – Impacts on rural livelihoods and adaptation](#)
- [Evaluating migration as successful adaptation to climate change: Trade-offs in well-being, equity, and sustainability](#)
- [Managing climate mobility](#)
- [Forced Migration: Fragility, Resilience, and Policy Responses](#)

For more information, check out:

WEBINAR SERIES WEBPAGE