

Accommodating the Displaced

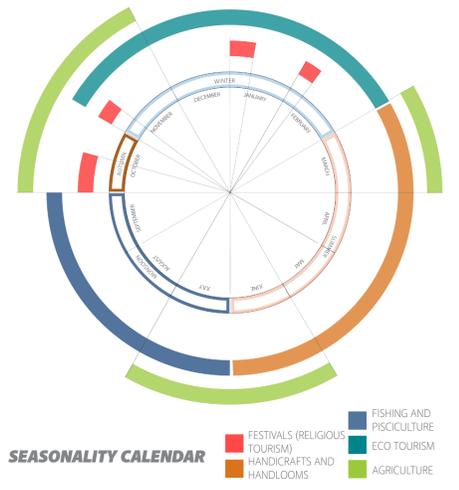
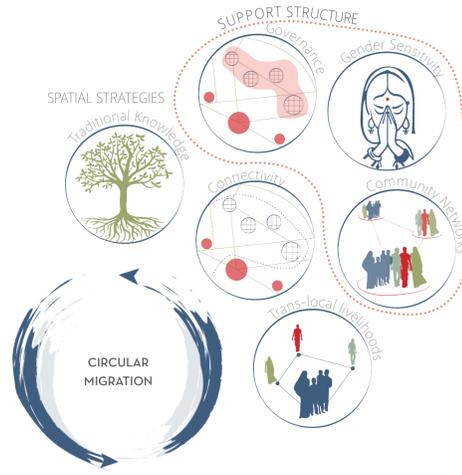
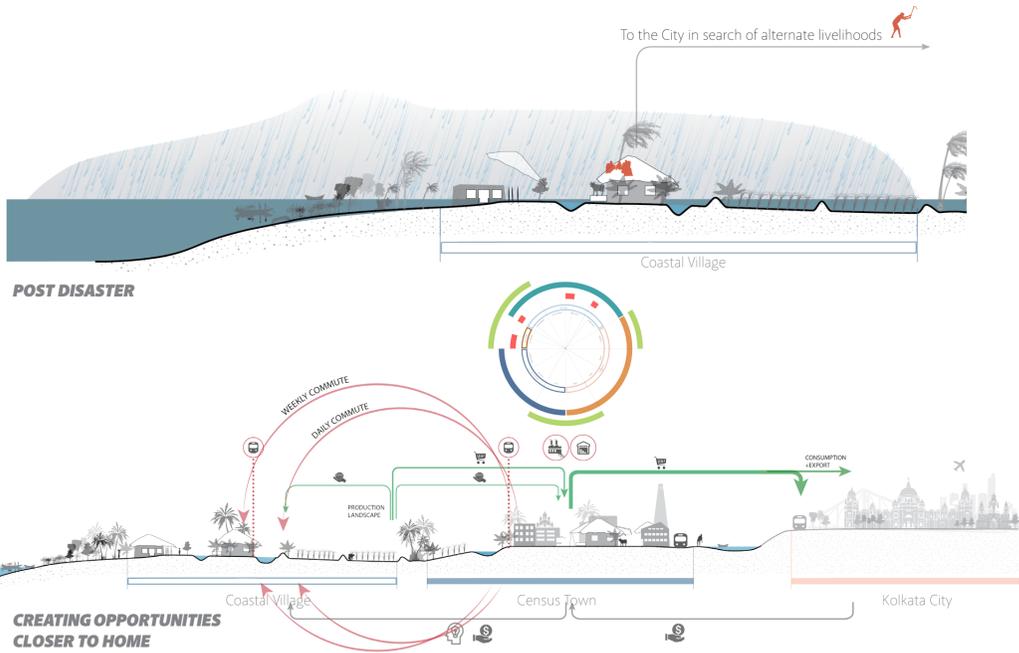
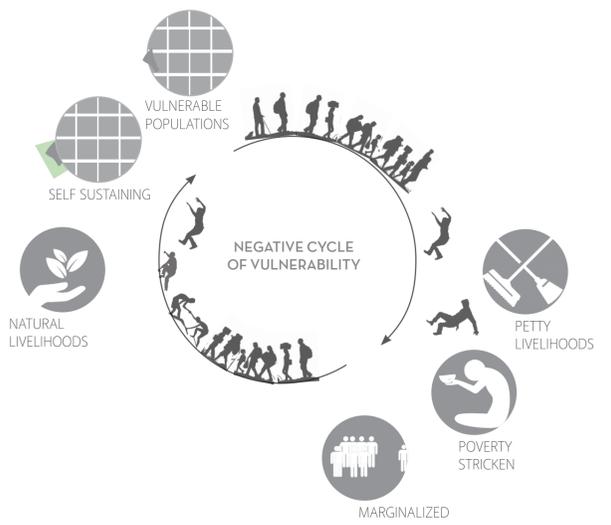
An inclusive regional strategy for circular environmental migration in the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta

Climate change is the defining crisis of the 21st century. While increasingly there are efforts being made globally to spread awareness about the impact of human activities on the natural environment, the talks on the direct impact of the change on the human are still nascent. There are an increasing number of people who are losing their land, livelihoods and basic access to food and potable water due to the adverse effects of climate change. In an attempt to survive these people have no option but to seek sanctuary in nearby settlements (Myers, 1997). A rough prediction of 200 million climate induced migrants by the end of the century has brought this issue to the forefront and is being termed as the 'human face of climate change' (Myers, 1997).

Caught in a 'negative vulnerability cycle' the displaced population lacks visibility, recognition and even a basic definitive category which makes it impossible for them to seek refuge or get national or international aid. Their migration is usually termed as 'economic' in nature and classified as an act of desire rather than survival. This research aims to establish this definitive category through a review of scientific literature. Further it highlights the social, economic and spatial injustice faced by the environmentally displaced people and investigates the role of

spatial planning, strategy and good governance as a tool to address the issue. Using methodologies like case studies, field trip, deductive mapping, data and comparative policy analysis, the research presents a strategic framework to socio-spatially and economically accommodate the EDP's. The strategy uses the ongoing and future migration for the socio-economic benefit of the sending and receiving regions. It aims to generate a sustainable livelihood pattern for the affected to enhance their climate-resilience as well as trigger their growth. It presents migration as an adaptive strategy for the affected population and focuses on community-based initiatives and self-organization as central concepts. This research aims to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between the migrant and the region by using the migrant as an asset for development.

The research constructs and tests this framework in the context of the cross-border region of the Ganges-Brahmaputra Delta (GBD). Being the largest and one of the most densely populated deltas in the world, it has been experiencing the impact of climate induced migration for decades. Further, the displacement of 140 million people by 2050, has been estimated.



Spatial Strategy Theme

- Traditional Knowledge :** The research considers traditional knowledge to be the primary asset of the migrant population. The strategy works with this core notion to use this knowledge for the socio-economic and environmental benefit of the region, exclusively in the context of small towns like the Census Towns.
- Connectivity :** The framework proposes strategies to increase the connectivity from the sending regions to the mainland for the ease of movement.
- Translocal Livelihoods :** The existing trend of trans-local livelihoods as an adaptation to the changing environment has been reinforced by carefully planning these livelihoods based on the traditional knowledge of the migrants.

Support Policy and Action Themes

- Governance :** Models to implement the spatial schemes and bring the communities to the forefront of the dialogue have been proposed. These provide an idea of the roles and responsibilities of the various key actors in the process.
- Gender Bias :** Policy recommendations have been made for gender sensitive planning. The recommendations aim to form a safety net for the migrants, exclusively the women to facilitate their economic independence and increase climate resilience.
- Community Networks :** Methods and key actors for establishing trans-local community networks have been given to form safety nets and maintain the community value of the migrating communities.

By creating a Seasonality Calendar it assesses the labor demands of the traditional economies and designs round the year opportunities

