Leveraging Social Capital and Migration Strategies in Coastal Bangladesh

Abstract

Coastal Bangladesh, home to 40 million people, faces escalating disaster risks every year due to cyclones, salinity intrusion, and coastal erosion. While migrating to a safe place and the social networks they have worked as adaptive strategies, their interplay with formal risk management systems remains poorly understood. The study looks at how family support (bonding capital) helps people share risks, how community groups and NGOs (bridging capital) help people find new ways to make a living, and how building relationships with authorities and planning migration (linking capital) affects communities to handle climate change. This research will elucidate how each form of social capital contributes to strengthening climate resilience. However, to conduct the study, data will be collected across two districts (Bhola, Satkhira) of Bangladesh. With the aim to address the research questions, (a) how kinship networks and social capital facilitate risk-sharing and (b) how migration transitions from distress coping to livelihood diversification, the study will utilize a mixed method. A survey will be conducted to collect responses from three hundred eighty-four households; twelve focus group discussions will be conducted to interpret the findings from the survey. The study incorporates insights from the social capital theory of Robert David Putnam. The outcomes of the research will focus on how the migration strategies integrate different forms of social capital and policy guidelines for aligning migration with national and district-level disaster adaptation. Overall, the study will provide empirical support for practitioners by demonstrating how bonded, bridged, and connected associations support climate-resilient transitions.