

Preface

The specter of mass migration as a consequence of climate change has been haunting public and academic debates for several years now. Yet the debates are still lacking solid conceptual foundations which would help frame the relevant issues. This book aims to deliver two key elements, a grounding of the debate in migration theories and concepts of development. The former focuses on migration as a process of cumulative causation and thus connects environmental migration to other forms of geographic mobility. The latter moves from a lop-sided emphasis on vulnerability to development as capabilities.

Toward this end this book presents selected results from the conference ‘Environmental Change and Migration: From Vulnerabilities to Capabilities’ held in December 2010 in Bad Salzflun in Germany. It was the first of a new conference series on ‘Environmental Degradation, Conflict and Forced Migration’, jointly sponsored by the European Science Foundation, Bielefeld University and its Center for Interdisciplinary Research. An interdisciplinary publication arising out of a conference always risks ending up as a compilation of only loosely connected studies. Therefore, we engaged in a continuous process of revising the framework and the contributions. We thank the authors for their continuous engagement in this process.

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Methodologies, Political Discourses and Human Rights

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