

Environmentally induced migration in the coastal regions of Bangladesh: Existing scenario and post-Covid implications on livelihood and food security

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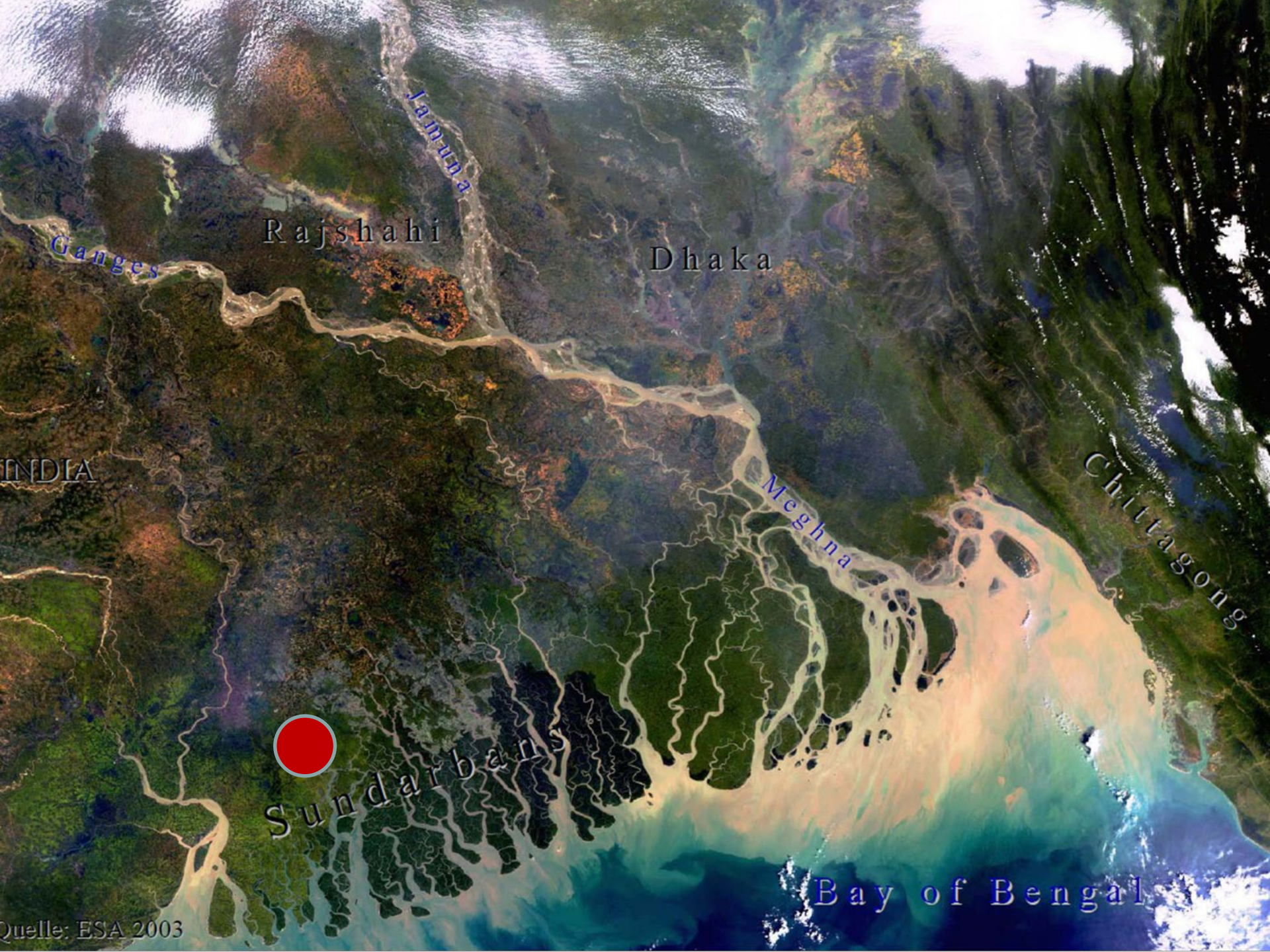
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Jamuna

Rajshahi

Dhaka

Ganges

INDIA

Meghna

Chittagong

Sundarban

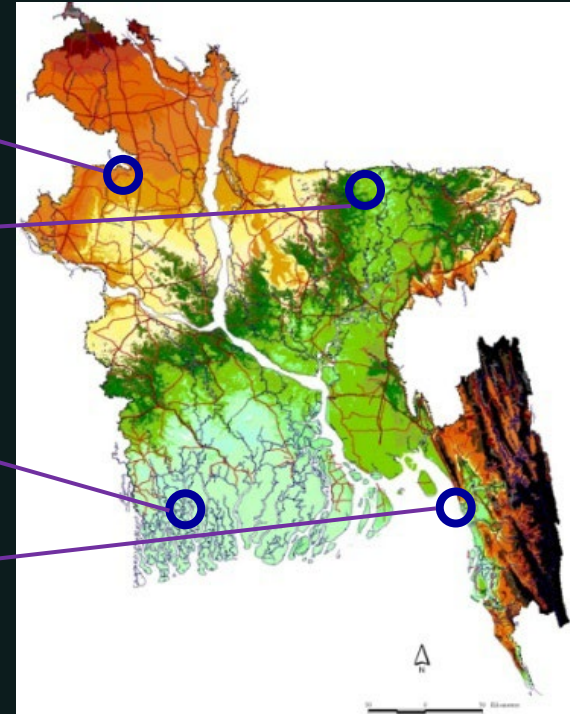
Bay of Bengal

1. N-W Region (Rajshahi Division): Flood and Drought

2. N-E Region (Sylhet Division): Early Monsoon Flash Flood & Heavy Rainfall

3. S-W Coastal Region (Khulna & Barisal Division): Salinity, Sea Level Rise, Cyclones, Tidal Surges and River Erosion

4. S-E Coastal Region (Chittagong Division): Cyclones, Tidal Surges and Sea Erosion



Study Contexts

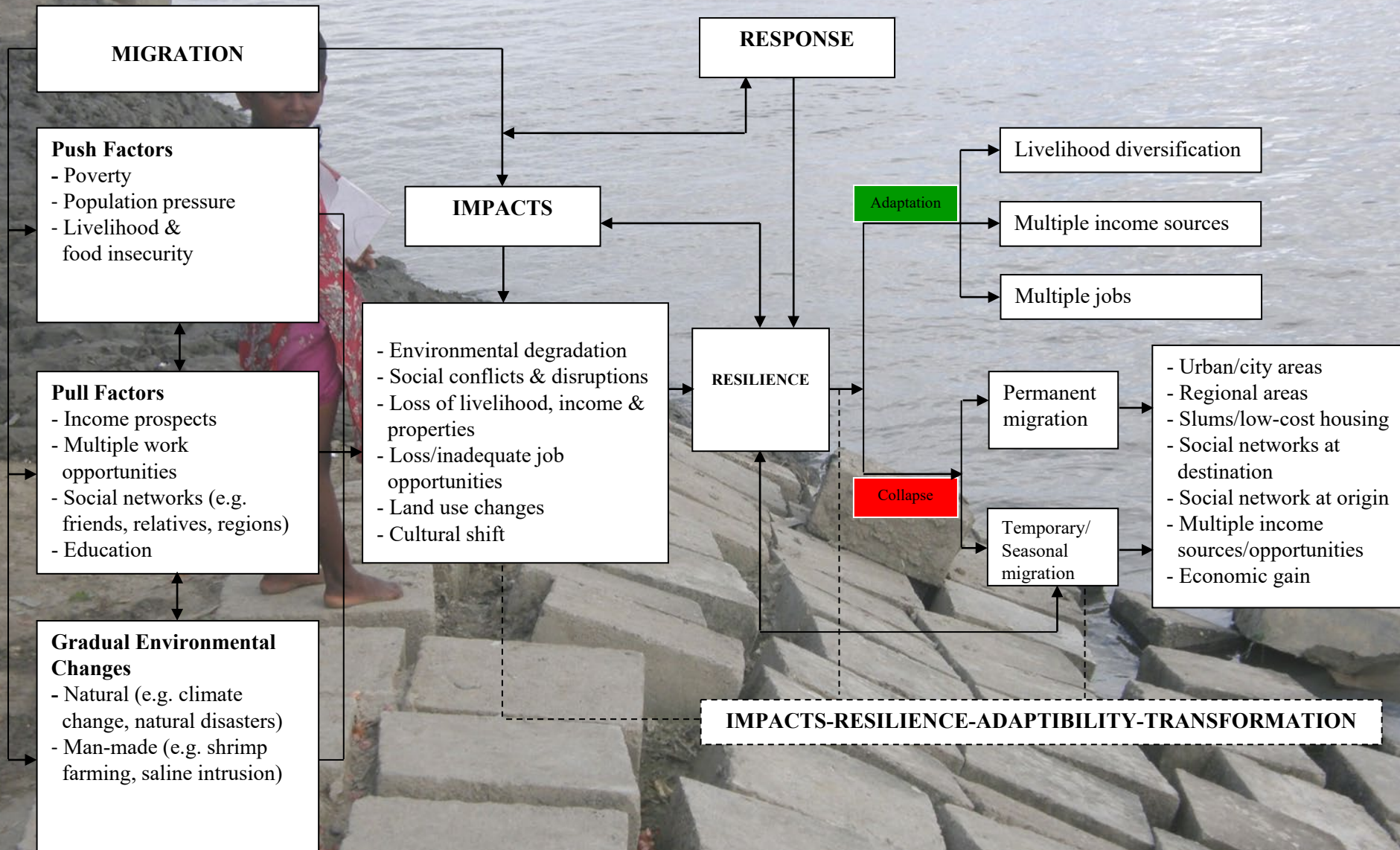
- Vulnerable to climate change
- Land use changes in 1980s>> agricultural transformation and ecological disaster
- People displacement and migration
- Existing research focuses on climate-induced displacement
- Migration drivers: Economic, failure of adaptation and livelihoods, climate change
- Post-Covid implications on livelihoods and food security

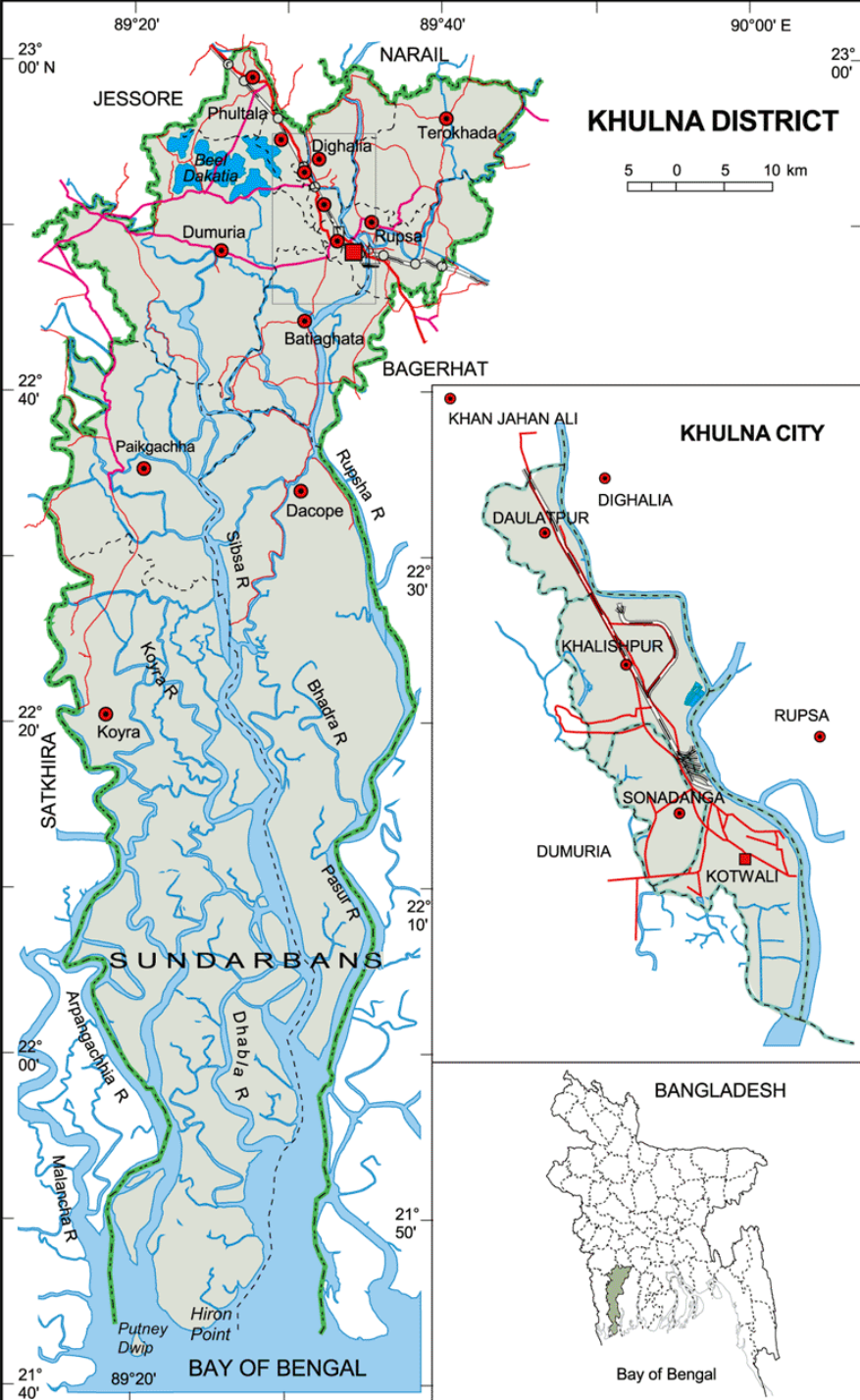
Research Questions

- Which factors influence migration from the coastal regions of Bangladesh?
- In which way has the social and economic status of the people in the coastal region of Bangladesh changed?
- How Covid-19 influence the existing pattern of migration, livelihood and food security?
- Which strategies and concepts could improve resilience?



Framework





Study Area

- Southwestern Coastal Region
- Two Sub-districts: Paikgachha and Koyra



Research Methodology

- Observation and field research
- In-depth personal interviews with local people and FGDs
- Qualitative content analysis



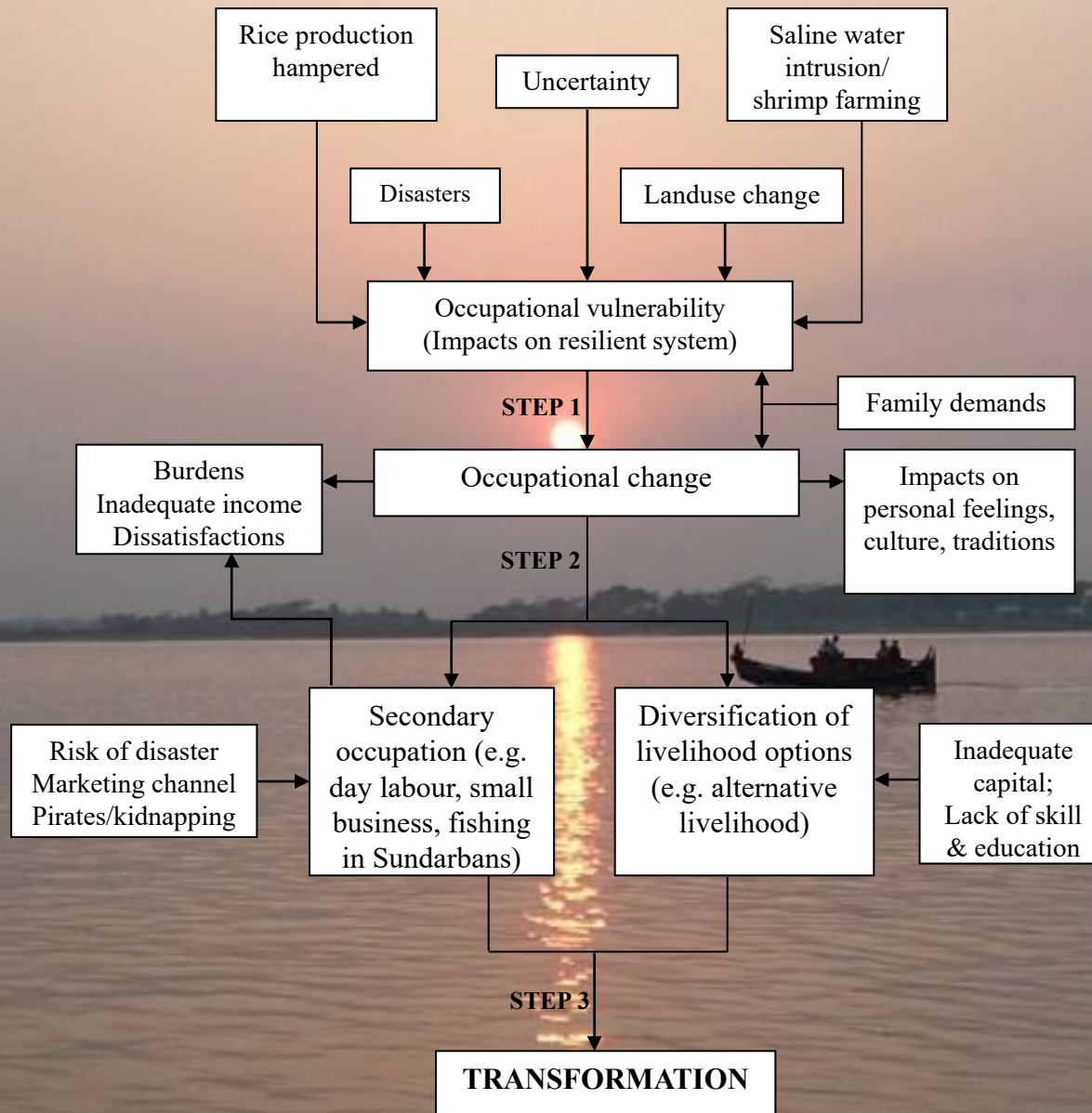
Land use change

- Transformation of self-sustaining agriculture e.g. rice production
- Commercial shrimp farming in 1980s
- Occupation loss, income discrimination, social conflicts, displacement, migration, food insecurity, drinking water, trees, livestock, and grazing place

“Only a few people are financially benefitted, most of them have nothing left to do.”



Change Mechanism



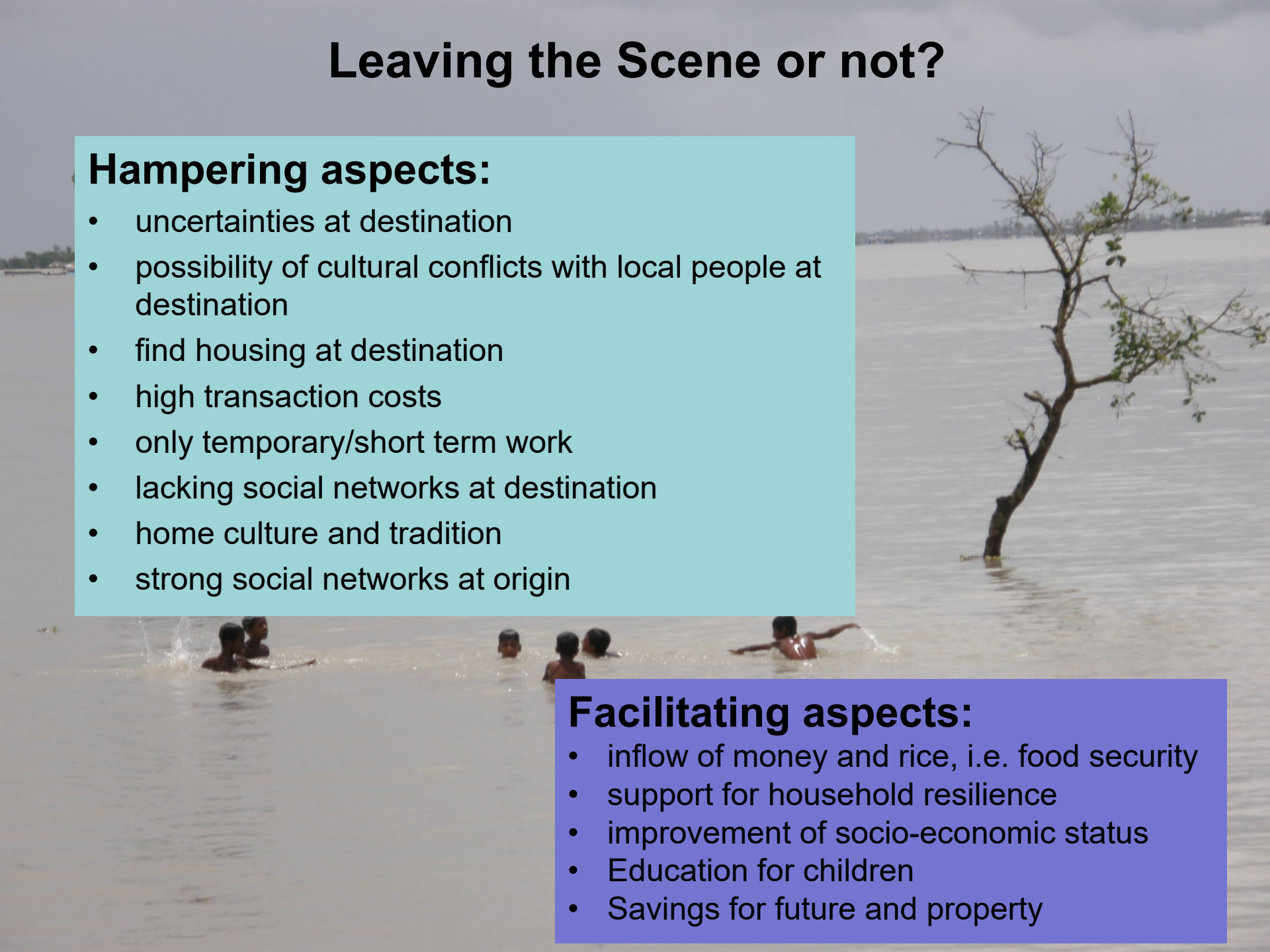
Leaving the Scene or not?

Hampering aspects:

- uncertainties at destination
- possibility of cultural conflicts with local people at destination
- find housing at destination
- high transaction costs
- only temporary/short term work
- lacking social networks at destination
- home culture and tradition
- strong social networks at origin

Facilitating aspects:

- inflow of money and rice, i.e. food security
- support for household resilience
- improvement of socio-economic status
- Education for children
- Savings for future and property



Temporary (seasonal) migration

Destinations: regional places, cities, hilly regions, India

Housing: slum environment, employer organized

Major fields of occupation at destination:

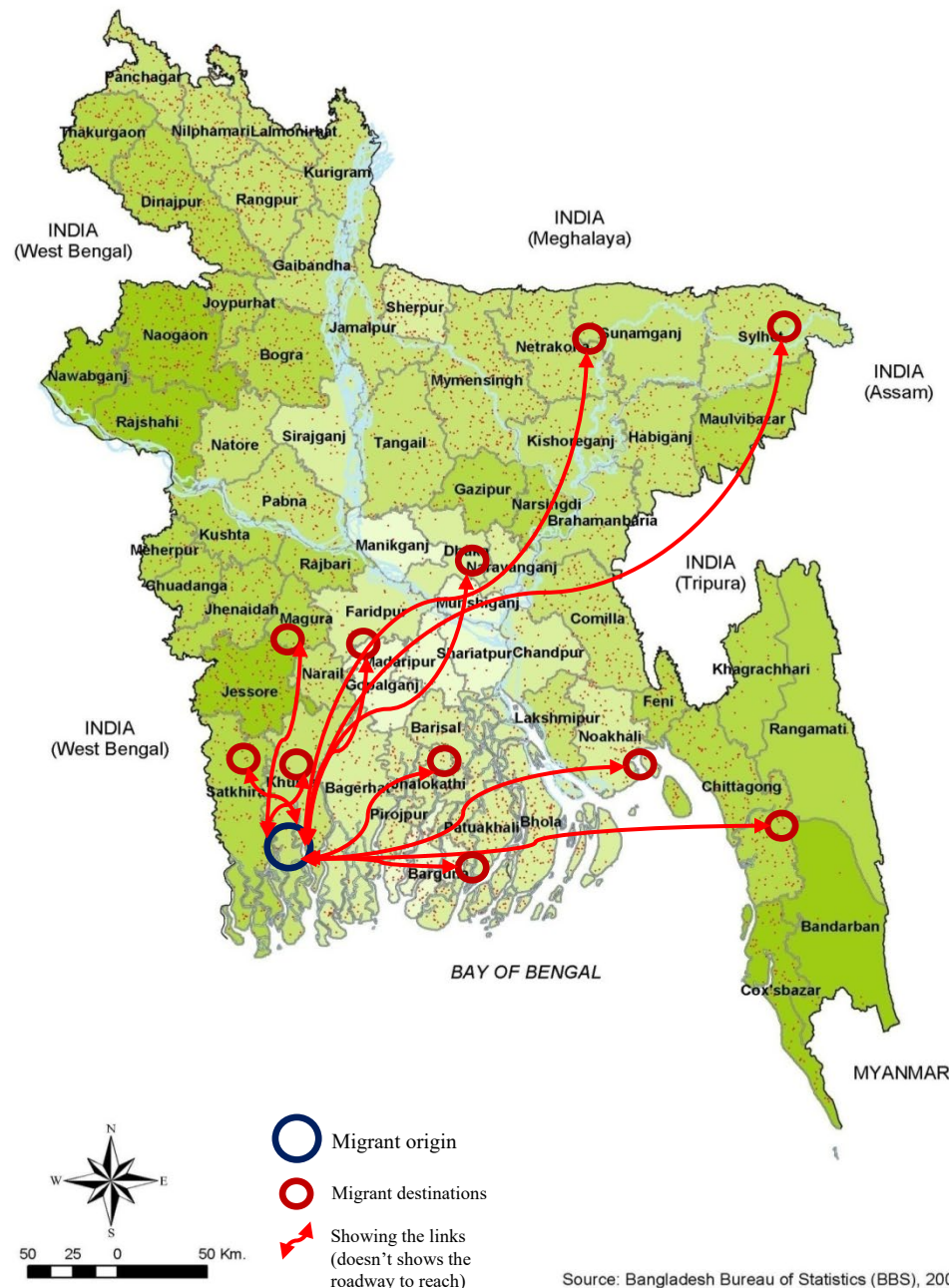
- rice (sowing and harvesting)
- transport (van puller/ rikshaw driver)
- brick production and garments industry
- wood processing
- infrastructure maintenance (earth works/ roads / embankments)
- shipyard



Permanent Migration from coastal region is more or less negligible

Migration period	Type of work	Length of Stay (week)	Destinations
December-January	<i>Boro</i> paddy sowing	3 to 6	Gopalganj, Faridpur,
April- May	<i>Boro</i> paddy harvesting	3 to 6	Madaripur, Narail, Netrokona, Sylhet, Noakhali, Jessore, Regional locations
July-August	<i>Aman</i> paddy sowing	3 to 6	Jessore, Magura, Narail, Regional locations
October-November to April-May	Brick field	20 to 24	Dhaka, Barisal, Narail, Khulna, Faridpur, Noakhali, Delhi (India)
November-December	<i>Aman</i> paddy harvesting	3 to 6	Jessore, Magura, Narail, Regional locations
November-March	Wood processing work (with handy chainsaw)	4 to 8	Bagerhat, Barguna, Gopalganj,
January-May	Earth work (e.g. embankment, pond excavation)	2 to 12	Khulna, Bagerhat, Sathkhira
Any time of the year but mostly during rainy season (June-August)	Day labour e.g. rickshaw pulling	1 to 12	Dhaka, Khulna
	Garments factory		Dhaka, Chittagong
	Sea port		Chittagong
	Day labour		Dhaka

Migration Mapping (Existing/pre-Covid)



Post-Covid Implications

- Lockdown/restrictions till May 30, 2020
- Return of seasonal migrants
- Loss of livelihood
- Engage in short-term occupation locally
- Cyclone Amphan (on May 20, 2020) > 8 months
- Inadequate food support/relief operation
- Food shortages



Migration Mapping (Current/post-Covid)

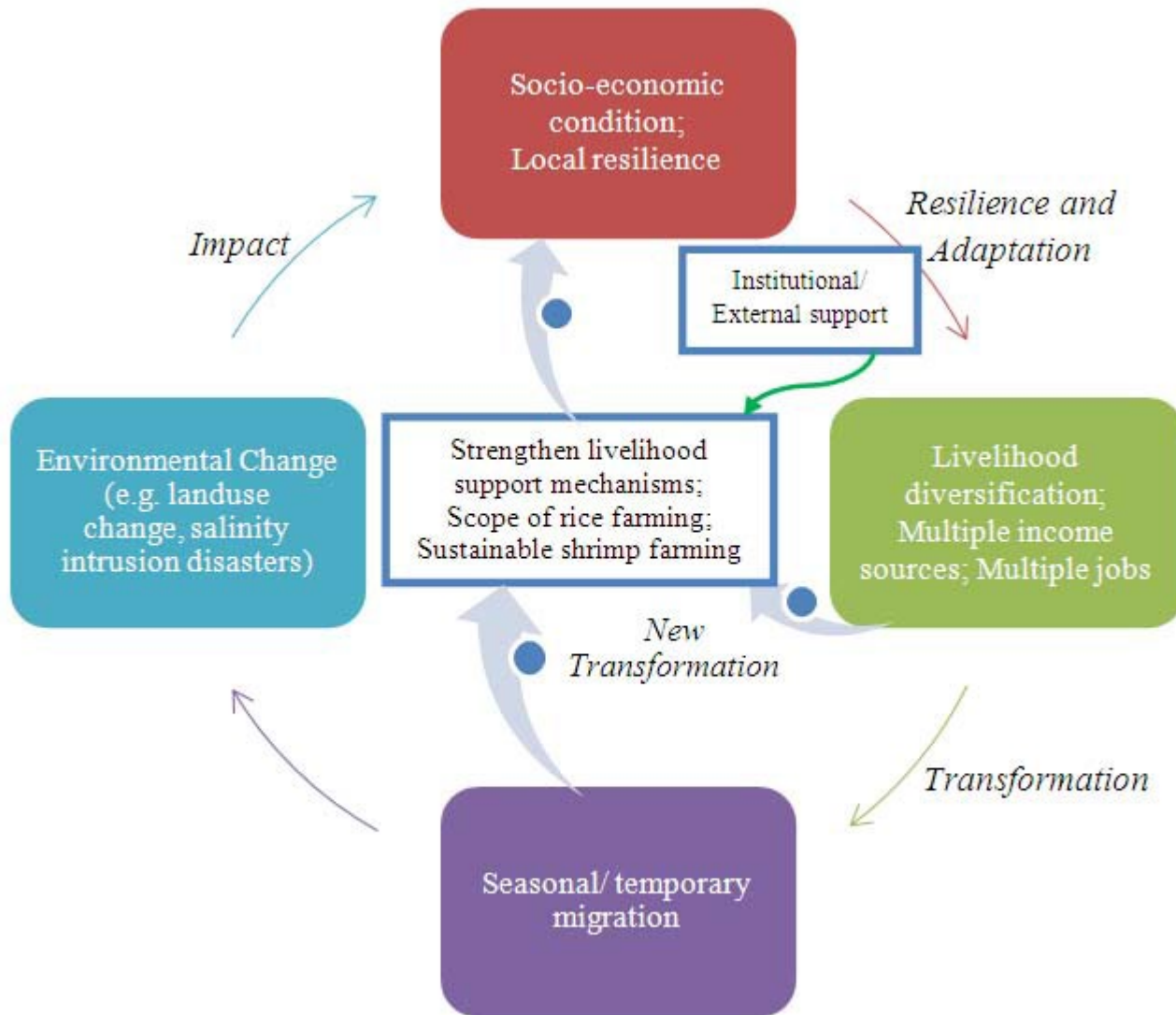
- Seasonal migration resumes in October 2020
- Support livelihood and refill food shortages
- Rapid increase and for longer period
- Impacts on existing disaster management plan

Migration period	Type of work	Length of Stay (week)	Destinations
October-May	Brickfield	24 to 28	Sathkhira, Bagerhat, Narail, Sylhet, Rangpur, India (Kolkata)
January-February; August-September; November-February	Paddy Sowing	8 to 10	Sathkhira, Bagerhat, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Narail, India
April-May; December-January	Paddy Harvesting	8 to 10	Sathkhira, Bagerhat, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Narail
November-February	Deep Sea Fishing	24	Bay of Bengal
Any time of the year (multiple visits) but majority during rainy season (June-August)	Day labour e.g. rickshaw puller	8 to 12	Dhaka, Khulna
	Day labour and Earthworks		Regional destinations, India

Conclusion

- People are shifted away from their land by shrimp farming industries and lose their base of self-sustaining agriculture that existed before 1980.
- Climate change, natural disasters and pandemics exacerbate an already existing problem.
- Seasonal migration: Livelihood adaptation strategy due to failure of local resilience and ecological disasters.
- Covid-19 has intensified the vulnerable situation, leading to widespread seasonal migration.
- The study suggests an integrated transformational mechanism that brings people back to the self-sustaining agriculture systems, encourages sustainable shrimp farming, strengthens livelihood diversification and job opportunities.

Governance of Migration





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