

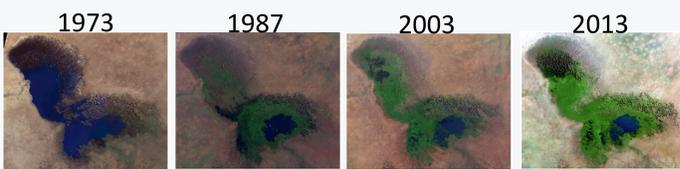
Assessing the impacts of water crisis and climate change on human displacement in the Congo Basin

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Overarching goal

Water vein of Central Africa, the Congo basin's management of water resources remains uncoordinated. Derived from the UN-Water's outlay of Water Security (2013), an integrated framework will be outlined to capture the multi-faceted aspects of the water-climate-migration nexus at basin, national and provincial level. In-depth literature review and mixed tool methodology (primary & secondary data, quantitative & qualitative indicators and indexes) will be used through different sub-studies. One is presented here, based on the Democratic Republic of the Congo's case where around 74% of the population lack access to safe drinking water, almost exclusively through women's chore (UNEP, 2011).

Context and challenges



Satellite photos of the lake Chad (above) located north of the Congo basin, and DRC within Africa (below)



Sources: Google Map DRC; US Geological survey Lake Chad

Potentials

- Abundance of **resources**: water - the Congo basin being the 2nd largest of the world after the Amazon, timber, gas, minerals, gold...
- As many resources that could:
 - Supply hydropower from South Africa to Egypt,
 - Restore the ecosystems and livelihood of the neighboring Chad basin,
 - Feed a billion people,
 - Provide work to its entire population;
- Evolution of the mobility trends, from rural outward to cross-border **migration** with positive impacts on the regional economic integration of central African nations
- Women are seen as victims of the **gender inequalities**, though they could be the key to solving the situation

Struggles

- Poor governance, low technical capabilities, little infrastructures, **social and cultural conflicts**, lack of regional collaboration and integrated management
- The Congo basin is understudied (Alsdorf et al., 2016) and subject to regional migration coming from the shrunk lake Chad's sometimes violent pastoralists communities, putting even more pressure on the region
- DRC – main territory of the basin, is in high poverty (70% of its 84-million population according to the UN), leaving **women and girls especially vulnerable**
- Rural-urban migration**: overpopulation in urban areas, less workforce in rural areas
- Cross-borders migration** bringing instability between communities

Policy-driven research

The Congo basin water resources research center (CRREBaC in French), University of Kinshasa and UNU-INWEH (the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health) are conducting the overarching project:

“Addressing climate and water-driven migration and conflict interlinkages to build community resilience in the Congo basin”

Launched in 2019, it is examining the emerging spatial and temporal patterns of water-related conflicts and migration, their impact on human development for groups and individuals living in vulnerable situations. In addition, it aims at mapping gaps and challenges to address the social, economic and political implications of water-triggered migration. A field work has already allowed the team to build a database of primary and secondary data on the nexus water-climate-migration-conflict-gender in North-East-DRC: Ituri, Bas-Uélé and Haut-Uélé.

My phd - at UNU-CRIS and Ghent University's faculty of Economics – focuses on **attitudes towards migrants which might ultimately contribute to conflict**:

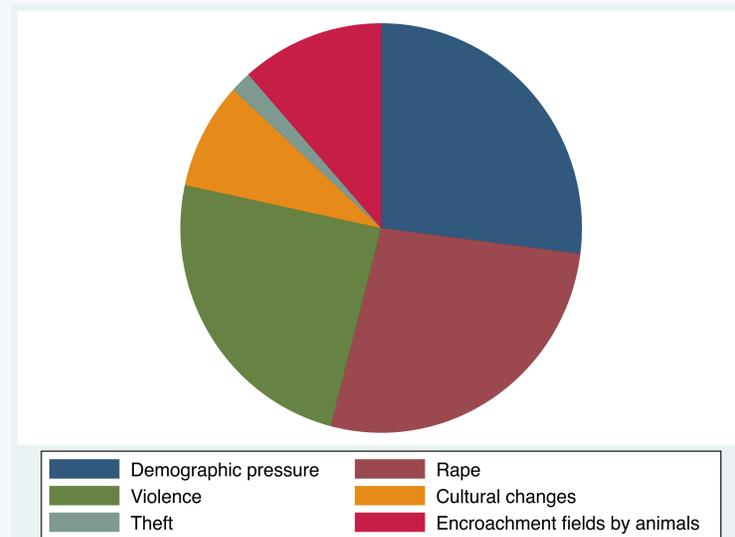
- 300-participant surveys in Haut-Uélé and Bas-Uélé
- mixed methods approach, quantitative and qualitative analysis
- gender-specific adaptation and mitigation strategies

Our hypotheses are based on the following assumptions:

- welfare concerns and cultural prejudice play a predominant role in determination of attitudes related to migration (Dustmann & Preston, 2007)
- women's attitudes are impacted by concerns on social integration and economic assimilation (Amuedo-Dorantes & Puttitanun, 2011)

« Women & younger people are less likely to express negative attitudes » McHugh-Dillon, 2015

Impact of migration on women's activities



Perspectives

Beyond protecting women from violence, empowering them and favoring their access to decision making will accelerate the achievement of not only Sustainable Development Goal number 5 (gender equality)

but also SDG 6 (clear water and sanitation)

13 (climate action)

16 (peace, justice and strong institutions)

17 (strengthening partnership for the goals)



Expected results:

- The analysis will promote enhanced understanding of multi-faceted aspects of the water-climate-migration nexus and climate adaptation, water management and migration-related programs and policies
- Actions and policy-relevant decision framework will be drafted
- Research is a first step towards community resilience and regional integration in DRC and the Congo basin

References

Alsdorf, et al. (2016). Opportunities for hydrologic research in the Congo Basin. *Rev. Geophys*
Amuedo-Dorantes and Puttitanun (2011) 'Gender Differences in Native Preferences toward Undocumented and Legal Immigration', *Contemporary Economic Policy*
Christian Dustmann and Ian P. Preston (2007) "Racial and Economic Factors in Attitudes to Immigration," *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*

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