

Avoiding loss and damage, facilitating locally-led approaches

Practical guidance from three different studies

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Positionality and acknowledgements

Positionality

- Research conducted in country with communities, locals and policy makers
- “Position of power” as a researcher from a developed country

Acknowledgements

- Australian National University
- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (study 2)
- Lowy Institute

Introduction: results from three studies

Study 1: planned relocation in the Pacific

- Avoiding non-economic losses (pre-relocation)

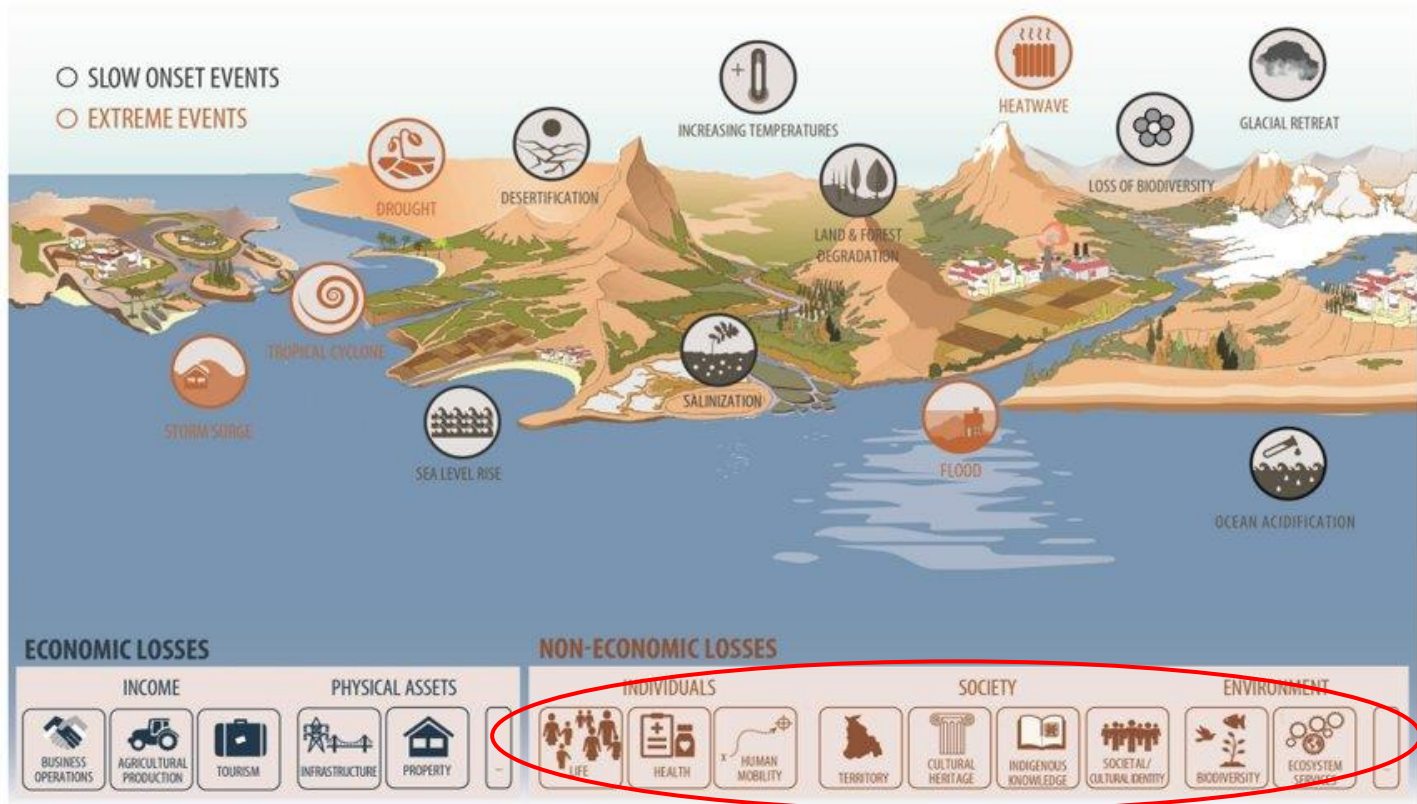
Study 2: locally-led adaptation principles

- Best practice implementation (during)

Study 3: ad-hoc relocation in the Caribbean

- Best practice rehabilitation (post-displacement)





Source: UNFCCC, 2018

Avoiding loss and damage, facilitating locally-led approaches

Non-economic losses – Why are they so hard to address?

- Context- dependent
- Incommensurable
- Anecdotal
- Value almost impossible to put into monetary figures
- Link to culture and land

Young woman on a beach in the Pacific (Julia Kim/ unsplash)



Study 1

Planned relocation: the intersection between loss and damage and adaptation

Planned Relocation from the Impacts of Climate Change in Small Island Developing States: The Intersection Between Adaptation and Loss and Damage



Melanie Pill

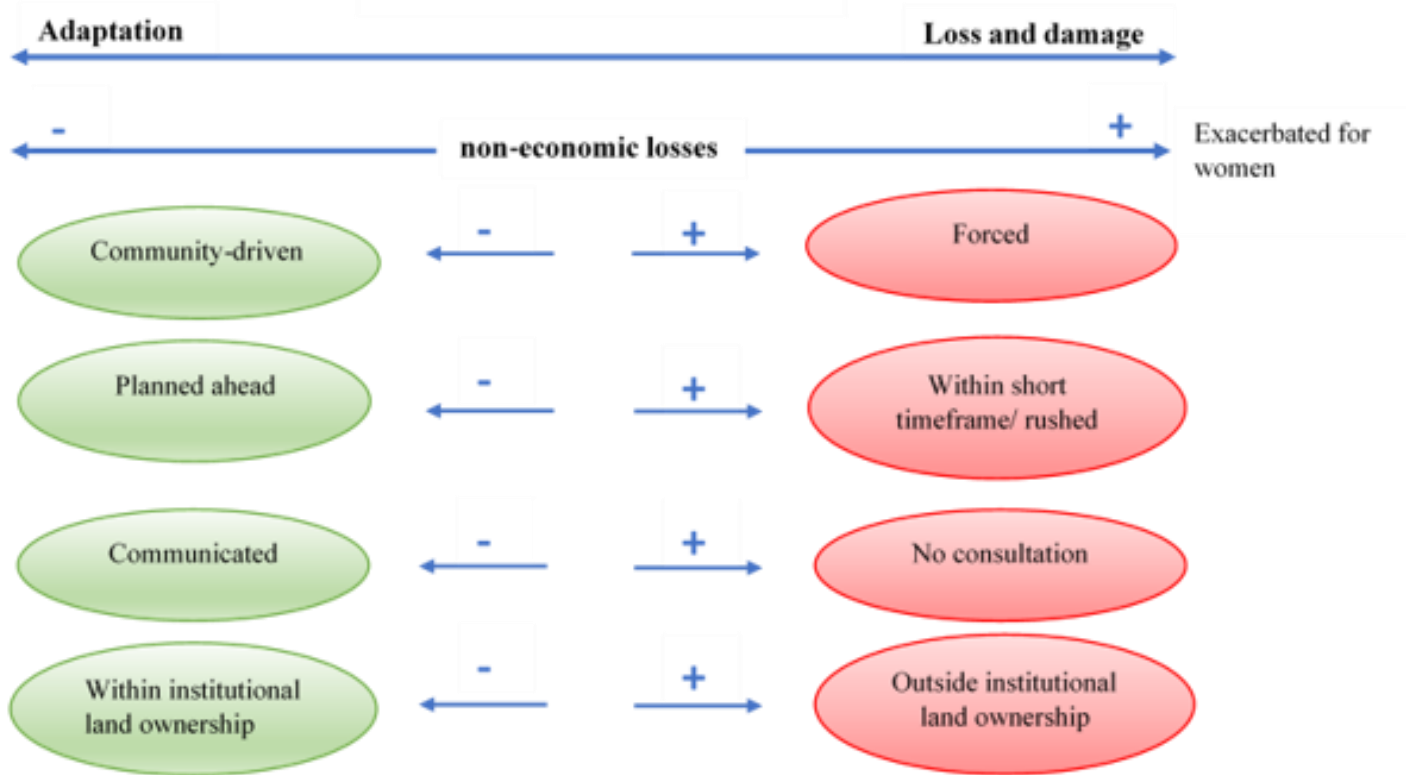
Abstract An increasing number of people have to abandon their homes and livelihoods due to the adverse impacts of climate change. Human mobility has always been part of people's lives, however, some movements, especially planned relocation in the context of climate change, have become involuntary. Non-economic losses occur and the question is whether the relocation of entire communities is still and adaptation response or falls under the realm of loss and damage (L&D) from climate change. This chapter explores the intersection between migration as an adaptation response and L&D with a focus on small island developing states. It analyses when human mobility can no longer be described as adaptation as non-economic losses become too high. It shows that existing frameworks are inadequate to assess community relocation in the context of L&D and non-economic losses. The chapter concludes that there is a spectrum leading from human mobility as an adaptation response to forced migration as L&D. It develops a new framework to assess planned relocation projects and provides concrete recommendations to reduce non-economic losses.

Keywords Climate change · Loss and damage · Planned relocation · Adaptation · Small island developing states · Human mobility · Non-economic losses

Pill, M., 2020. 'Planned relocation from the impacts of climate change in small island developing states: the intersection between adaptation and loss and damage', in Leal Filho, W. (ed) *Managing Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific Region*, Springer, Cham, Switzerland



Planned relocation project X



Loss and damage and adaptation visualised as a spectrum for relocation projects, Pill, 2020

Study 2: Successful adaptation and planned relocation

Background: Study 2

- Identify characteristics of quality adaptation projects generally
- Extensive literature review on existing quality adaptation characteristics
- Interviews with 15 policy makers, practitioners and academics
- Observational data from SB56 and Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Characteristics for adaptation practice and finance

Practice

- Consultation
- Coordinated, collaborative and co-created
- Co-benefits and capacity building
- Coherent and contextual
- “Follow up”

Finance

- Predictable
- Sustainable
- Adequate



Parent and child walking in ocean at sunset, Sabine Ojeil/ unsplash

Ad-hoc relocation and rehabilitation: addressing non-economic losses

Pill M., 2022, "Reframing non-economic losses to non-economic impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean, *Climate and Development*, vol. 14, no. 8, 770-790.

RESEARCH ARTICLE



Re-framing non-economic losses to non-economic impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean

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ABSTRACT

Weather-related natural disasters such as hurricanes are becoming more severe and more frequent due to human-induced climate change. Small Island Developing States are particularly vulnerable to such events. These extreme events have economic impacts on people's lives but are also associated with non-economic losses (NELs) that are not easily quantifiable. The United Nations Convention Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has tasked the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage to find ways to 'address' these losses. While the UNFCCC and literature identify NELs, these remain broad and high-level examples, potentially not applicable in local contexts. Therefore, international climate change policies that are developed to address NELs are at risk of being inadequate and might not address the needs of people affected. This paper addresses this research gap based on interviews with residents from the Caribbean islands Dominica and Barbuda who survived hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017. Responses show that the categorization of NELs under the UNFCCC only partially aligns with those NELs identified by interviewees. Firstly, interviewees do not make a distinction between economic and non-economic losses and secondly the term 'non-economic loss' is best expressed as 'non-economic impact' in order to encapsulate the full breadth of NELs. Both terms should jointly be considered as fulfilling 'life-functions'.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The UNFCCC categories are not reflective enough of the broad range of non-economic losses (NEL) that exist.
- 'Non-economic loss' should be re-framed to 'non-economic impact' as a loss does not encapsulate the full breadth of losses identified by interviewees
- Another category for NELs is required as people do not always distinguish between economic and non-economic losses when economic items fulfil a life function
- The findings are detrimental for effective international and national policymaking

ARTICLE HISTORY
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KEYWORDS
Climate change; loss and damage; non-economic losses; small island developing states; UNFCCC; extreme weather events; Warsaw International Mechanism of Loss and Damage

1. Introduction

Loss and damage (L&D) is formally included under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in the Paris Agreement under Article 8 which recognized the need to 'avert', 'minimize' and 'address' L&D from climate change impacts.

L&D from climate change impacts in Article 8 (UNFCCC, 2015). Prior to that, in 2013, the Conference of the Parties (COP), established the Warsaw International Mechanism of Loss and Damage (WIM) with an Executive Committee (Excom) whose task it is to 'address' loss and damage associated with impacts of climate change, including extreme events and slow onset events, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. (UNFCCC, 2014).

An important part of the WIM's work plan is non-economic losses and damages (NELs) which are included in work stream B but have so far received little priority. It is therefore timely to contribute to the work of the Excom and enhance the understanding of NELs and how to address them in the

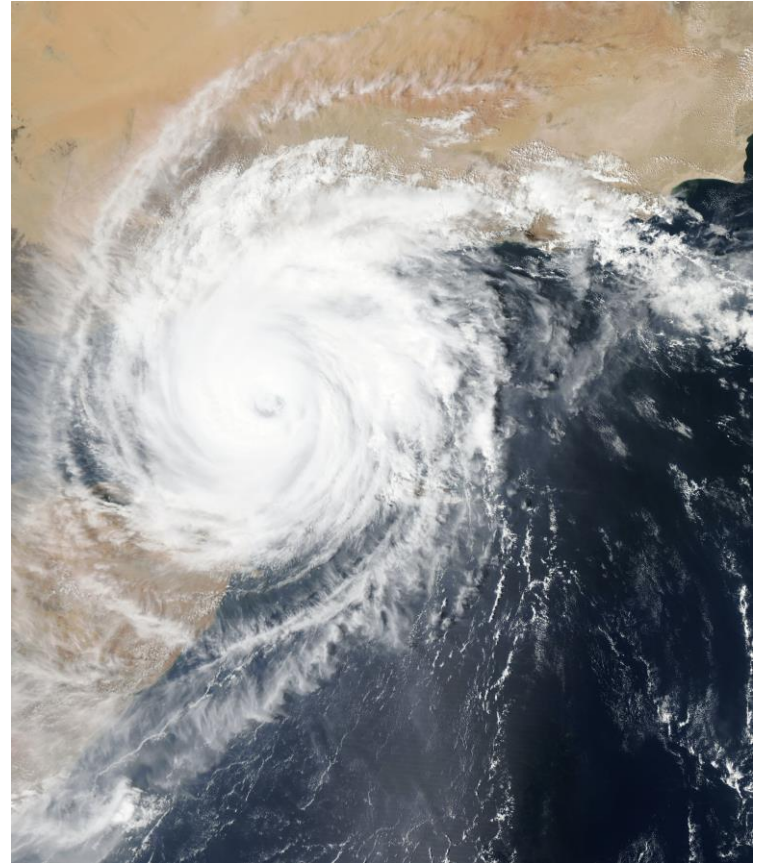
context of L&D. Currently, the UNFCCC provides a non-exhaustive list of NELs with three major themes: individuals, society and environment. A second category is economic losses which are divided into income and physical assets. Since their first categorization, no re-evaluation or validation of these themes has taken place despite the urgent need for policy action in this space. Further, while adaptation actions and disaster risk reduction measures indirectly 'avert' and 'minimize' NELs as stipulated in Article 8 in the Paris Agreement, the issue of how to 'address' NELs after they have occurred is largely neglected in international negotiations. The Caribbean is a region particularly vulnerable and exposed to extreme weather events caused by anthropogenic climate change (IPCC, 2014b; IPCC, 2019). The IPCC (2019, 2014b) outlines that it is likely that storms in the Caribbean basin will become more intense due to the warming of the ocean. Observational weather data in the Caribbean basin over the last four years show unusually frequent and severe hurricane activity. The hurricane season in 2017 was particularly severe for the Caribbean as two category 5 hurricanes, Maria and Irma, occurred in sequential weeks (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2017;



Background: Study 2

- 26 interviews with residents in Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda (in person and via phone)
- Non-economic losses from ad-hoc relocation after the 2017 hurricane season

Hurricane image: NASA/unsplash



Interview responses: non-economic losses

- Memories as the top mentioned NELs
- Long-lasting emotional impacts (e.g. trauma, depression)
- Compensation: inadequate and inappropriate (in the context of climate change)
- Financial distress
- Economic losses are and result in non-economic losses

Cyclone affected houses in a community Carl Kho/ unsplash



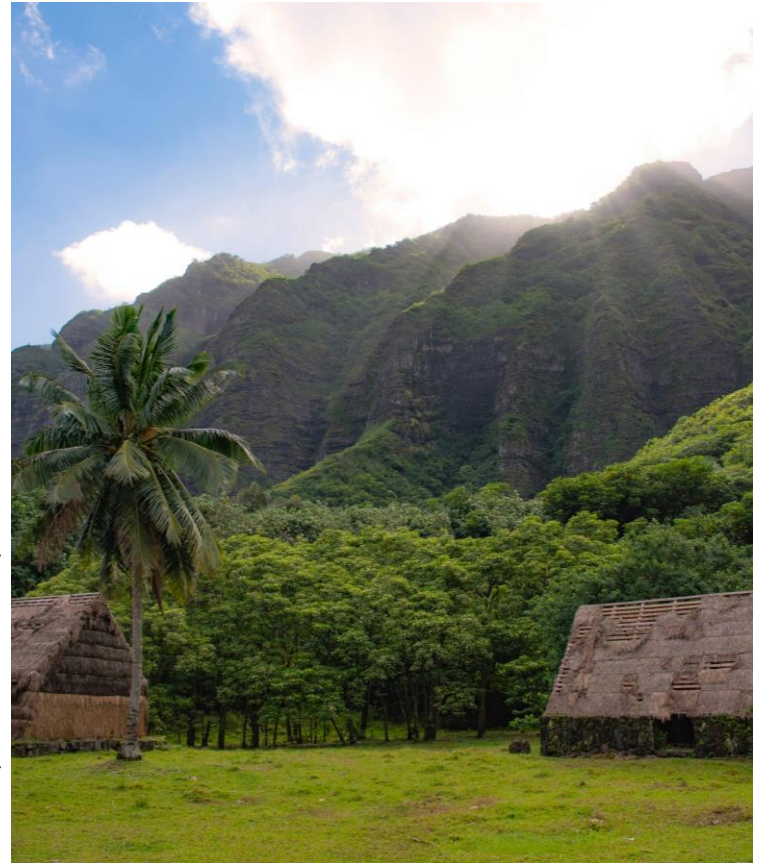
Non-economic “losses” not captured

- Colonial history
 - Criminal activity
 - Political favouritism
 - Missed education and job opportunities
 - Environmental grief
- No gender distinction

Implications

- NELs are inaccurately captured
- Expansion is required
- Requires re-framing and re-naming
- Some economic losses fulfil a **“life function”**
- **“Impacts”** instead of “losses”
- Has major implications for projects when addressing NELs in planned relocations

Huts in Polynesia: Jason Miller/ unsplash



Addressing non-economic losses



Human hands on tree log, Shane Rounce/ unsplash

- Long-term assistance and follow-up
- Swift “back to normal”
- Counselling programs (long-term) and recreational activities
- Tapping into local institutions
- Creating opportunities
- Creating a safe environment
- Consider political influences and vested interest

In summary

Study 1: the intersection between loss and damage and adaptation

- Loss and damage (NELs) occurs, no matter how much we mitigate
- Identifying NELs at the beginning is key

Study 2: Characteristics of successful adaptation responses

- Approaches need to be locally-led and emphasise consultation, co-creation, co-benefits and contextuality

Study 3: addressing non-economic losses

- There are more NELs than we have currently identified
- Economic and non-economic losses are connected



Thank you!

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