The Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing

invite you to a seminar:

“Rich(er) and miserable: The contradictions in the lives of Bangladeshi slum dwellers displaced by climate change”

by

Dr Olav Muurlink

When: 11:00am – 12:00 pm, Tuesday 12 October, 2010
Where: Room 0.05, Building N29 (Northern Theatres 3), Nathan campus
Food: Morning tea will be served; please RSVP

Abstract: The Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka is the fastest growing city in the world, with close to half a million new inhabitants squeezing into single storey housing so small that population density is close to that of Tokyo high rises. Many of these ‘immigrants’ have been displaced by erosion exacerbated by climate change. With as little as 24 hours notice, these ‘climate refugees’ lose not only their homes, but the land underneath their homes. A project conducted in conjunction with Dr Mohammad Zahirul Islam from the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), examined 40 families, half from the slums of Dhaka, matched with half from a ‘donor’ village in the southern delta region. While the refugees are wrenched from their homes under circumstances characterised by trauma and lack of choice, time, and government assistance, the upheaval, ironically, does not come without its benefits. This preliminary exploratory study provides an early snapshot on the psychological and physical impacts of displacement due to climate change.

Speaker: Dr Olav Muurlink is a research fellow at WOW, and in the early 1990s was a research assistant at the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. A former capsicum farmer and newspaper publisher, his PhD focused on the issue of avoidance of change in attitudes and behaviours.

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