

U N E S C O

SOURCES



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**MAKING THE MOST
OF GLOBALIZATION**

MAKING THE MOST OF GLOBALIZATION

Our grandparents would be hard-pressed to recognize the world they grew up in. Technology and economics have rolled back all the familiar frontiers, including those bounding the nation-state, the unit or model that has largely structured the world and the identities of its peoples for the last three centuries. We have entered the age of globalization (see below and pp.12-13). But what sort of world is it shaping? How is it affecting peoples' lives? And how do we solve the new problems it is giving rise to? Finding answers to some of these questions is the goal of UNESCO's MOST Programme (Management of Social Transformations, p.16). This month's Focus looks at three of MOST's priority areas: migration, which is increasing at an unprecedented rate (pp.8-9); cities, where most people will live next century (pp.10-11) and isolated and rural communities, which risk being left by the wayside (pp.14-15).

Globalization, a multifaceted process with its complex interplay of networks and actors, both fascinates and frightens.

The optimists look on it as a new opportunity to generate more wealth and promote harmony between the peoples of the world through the advent of a uniform world culture. This is how it is seen by the individuals and organizations that already operate worldwide in areas such as finance, information technologies and trade. Some analysts even maintain that globalization and the economic and financial liberalization that goes with it are inseparable. They believe that the strategy of market deregulation advocated by the proponents of neoliberal ideology and applied since the 1980s by the major economic powers is, along with communication technologies, the driving force behind globalization.

Then there are the pessimists, who regard globalization with apprehension and are less than enthusiastic about a "brave new world" run by the financial markets and Internet. Three factors may account for their scepticism. First and fortunately, say the defenders of diversity - globalization does not lead to a uniformization of cultures. The global communications sphere, via satellites and the American television programmes watched the world over, does not stop people from claiming separate

identities, finding refuge in a sense of community or engaging in ethnic or religious conflicts. On the contrary, it would seem that these phenomena are all a reaction against globalization, which is seen as a threat to the established order.

Second, there is the problem of the nation-state, whose sovereignty and scope for action are seriously undermined by transnational players, processes and networks such as the multinational corporations, the flow of finance and information, environmental phenomena, mafias, ethnic and religious movements, migrations and diasporas. The nation-state has less and less control over them and they are often regulated on a regional (eg. European Union) or world (eg. United Nations, G7) level.

Third, citizens' living conditions and social benefits - normally guaranteed by the state - are eroded by the concentration of economic and financial power and the productivity race fuelled by the globalization of markets. And the weakening of the state undermines its capacity to stem the rise of poverty, exclusion and unemployment and to work for the improvement of education and health systems. This is felt most acutely in the developing countries where the situation can sometimes take a dramatic turn for the worse for the least

privileged groups. Inequalities within nations and between nations deepen, leading among other things to mass emigration either for economic reasons or to escape from intercommunal and inter-ethnic conflicts.

We need to ask ourselves whether these developments can all be attributed to globalization. Economists, sociologists and political experts dispute the extent to which the state's scope for action has been weakened, and the responsibility of globalization for unemployment and poverty, the assertion of specific cultural identities and the increase in intercommunal conflicts. As for politicians and decision-makers, they are, to say the least, uncertain about the effects of globalization and the appropriate measures to be taken.

One thing is beyond dispute: it is essential to identify and gain a better understanding of the different aspects of globalization through social science research, so as to apply national development strategies and policies which can make the most of the opportunities offered, or at least limit the harmful effects on globalization.

Ali KAZANCIGIL
Executive Secretary, Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)

THE MIGRATION BOOM

An estimated 100 million people now live outside their country of origin. More women are migrating than ever before. And work offered to migrants is increasingly temporary.

Migrations are as old as human history, but took on new forms from the 1600's with the emergence of European mercantile interests and the conquest of the 'New World'. Slaves and indentured workers were shipped between continents to work plantations, mines and construction projects in the Americas, Asia and Africa. Industrialization in Western Europe and North America last century saw new movements of settlers to build railways, ports and cities, and work in the new factories. Between 1860 and 1920, some 30 million people sailed to the United States.

However, with globalization has come a dramatic increase in the volume and scope of international migration: an estimated 100 million people now live outside their country of origin. This mobility is transforming societies and cultures, creating diasporas and developing transnational identities - the feeling of belonging to two or more societies at once. Community links are forming between people across the globe: family reunion is now the means by which the majority of migrants arrive in countries like France and Australia (65% in 1995), or Great Britain (85% in 1995). The cities of North America, Europe and Oceania have become multicultural, while new immigration areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America are rapidly following the same path. Formerly homogenous populations now experience a bewildering diversity of languages, religions and cultural practices.

SEEKING GREENER PASTURES

Many people do not move by choice: in 1995, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) counted about 18 million political refugees and asylum seekers throughout the world. However, the vast majority move in search of work and a better life.

Most of the world's migrants and refugees begin their journey as internal rural-urban migrants in developing countries, before moving on to other places where opportunities seem better. An estimated six million Asian migrants currently work abroad, many in so-called Free Trade Zones established to attract foreign investment, where labour standards and regulations are

often ignored and wages and conditions often appalling.

A key development in recent years has been the feminization of migration: about 1.5 million Asian women for example work abroad, most of them in jobs regarded as "typically female": domestic workers, entertainers (often a euphemism for prostitution), restaurant and hotel staff, assembly-line workers in clothing and electronics. Domestic service leads to isolation and vulnerability for young women migrants, who have little protection against the demands of their employers. In 1995, the execution of Flor Contemplacion, a

have coping with permanent settlement by workers or refugees. The unplanned shift from temporary sojourn to new ethnic diversity questions traditional ideas on culture and identity. Thus, developed countries with democratic traditions founded on individual freedoms are redefining who can and cannot belong. Citizenship is now a prized possession as it means access not just to the economy, but to broader social institutions which determine rights and freedoms. Post-colonial states such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Korea find it difficult to reconcile immigration and growing cultural diversity with the for-

TODAY THEY
ARRIVE BY
JUMBO
JET
(Photo ©
Harlingue-
Viollet).



Filipina maid in Singapore who was convicted of murder, made world headlines and highlighted the vulnerability of Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs).

However, few migrant-sending countries would be willing to hobble what has become an important commodity: estimates of migrant workers' remittances have been placed at more than \$67 billion annually, making labour second only to oil in global trade.

While economic globalization has made labour more mobile, it has also seen the work available become more temporary. The era of permanent settlement which characterized post-war migrations from Europe is over. Labour markets in many countries now look for workers, both skilled and unskilled to occupy specific jobs with a fixed duration rather than invite them to participate in the economy and infrastructure of a country. This is partly due to the difficulties migrant-receiving countries

of their own national identity. Deportation campaigns, stricter border controls and measures to prevent permanent settlement are increasingly the norm. However closing borders usually only turns a legal movement illegal. Trafficking of migrants has become a lucrative trade, with private agencies providing everything from information and travel assistance to forged documentation and direct smuggling of people across borders.

The rapid internationalization of economics and culture virtually guarantees that migration will continue to grow in the years ahead. The pressure for long-term solutions remains. Encouraging the mobility of labour to fit the needs of a globalized world is one thing. Managing immigration to admit only those who're "economically desirable" is something else again.

**Stephen CASTLES and Patrick BROWNLEE,
University of Wollongong, Australia**

A NEW COUNTRY, A NEW LIFE

Australia continues to draw migrants from Asia despite tougher economic conditions and strict selection criteria.

Walk through some areas of Sydney's western suburbs (Australia) and you could easily believe you were somewhere in Asia. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Chinese and Thai are as prevalent as English. The noodle restaurants are side-by-side with the sandwich takeaways and the fish n' chip shops, and shopping arcades are full of Chinese chess players and Vietnamese buskers. In heavily stocked fruit and vegetable shops the attendants speak English and an Asian language to suit the needs of their customers.

About 30,000 Asians migrate to Australia each year - some 37% of the total migrant intake. And their first port of call is usually western Sydney, whose former WASP identity has been transformed by the steady stream of arrivals over the past two decades. The majority are Vietnamese, who started arriving as political refugees after the fall of Saigon in 1975. Since the late 1980s, however, and despite strict selection criteria, the majority have arrived under Australia's family reunion programme - rejoining partners, parents and children in the hope of a more prosperous life.

LUCKIER THAN MOST

Nhu Tran and his family are a typical case. Nhu fled Viet Nam in 1977 to escape a re-education camp. His wife and three children followed six years later. They have since had four more children and have been joined by Nhu's two brothers and a sister.

He and his wife initially launched themselves into business running a service station. The profits were turned into setting up a clothes manufacturing company, successfully run by Mrs Tran. However, they found running a business and raising seven children too demanding, so they sold up. Nhu is now a liaison worker with a local council, helping other migrants and refugees settle into Australia. His three eldest children are working in computing and biomedical engineering. Nhu thinks he has been much luckier than most of his compatriots. *"In Viet Nam I was the principal of a school teaching maths and physics. I had some English and an education. The majority of other migrants have low education because of the war, or lived in*

isolated country areas. The lack of English is a big, big barrier to settling in Australia," he says. In western Sydney, 14.4% of the migrant population is jobless compared with the national average of 8.4%.

This was not always the case. The first refugees from Viet Nam were generally able to find work in manufacturing that didn't require much English. However, globalization has seen the restructuring of Australian industry, and migrant job seekers in today's hi-tech or service industry markets must have a higher level of skills and the ability to adapt quickly to their new environment.

The federal and state governments have established a range of free programmes aimed at briefing new arrivals on issues such as housing, health, domestic violence, government policies and social security benefits. Education programmes help their children adapt to the new school system, and to hone their job-hunting skills. Community workers provide information and counselling services, and a vigorous cultural arts programme preserves and promotes Vietnamese culture.

Nonetheless, lots of difficulties afflict these communities, not the least of which

**DUEL
IDENTITIES:
DOING
IT THE
AUSTRALIAN
WAY**
(Photo ©
Robin
Smith).



Nhan Tran, a Vietnamese community coordinator in the suburb of Bankstown, says that after English and a job comes the need to *"learn about the Australian way of life and its system of operation"*. The lure of a better life is a powerful one, but cultural adjustment remains difficult. For example, says Nhan, most Vietnamese newcomers find it hard to understand the lack of neighbourly concern Anglo-Saxons have for each other and their community. *"We miss the neighbourhood atmosphere and culture that we have in Viet Nam and the way people in a community care for each other,"* says Nhan. For Nhu Tran, young people's attitudes to their parents is one of the most prominent differences between Australia and Viet Nam. In Viet Nam, he explained, parents were the authority figures, but in Australia children are taught fairness, and right and wrong, and question their parents and teachers.

is a certain dose of "anti-Asian" sentiment amongst white-Australians who fear the country's "Asianization" and resent the support migrants receive. But there are also signs that the hurdles are being overcome. Inter-marriage is increasingly common. Migrants are increasingly participating in the political process.

"There was no future for us in Viet Nam in terms of education and employment," says one family health counsellor who did not want to be named. She was 19 when she arrived in Australia, penniless and with no English, after an epic voyage with 55 others in a fishing boat built for six. Now she is an Australian citizen, married to another Vietnamese with Australian citizenship, and has two children, *"...half Aussie and half Vietnamese."*

Robin SMITH
Sydney

AN URBAN KALEIDOSCOPE

The peaceful homogenous city is a thing of the past. But it will take more than technological and rational planning to build a humane place where social ties flourish.

At the start of the 21st century, most of the world's population will live in cities. By 2015, nine of the 10 biggest cities will be in Asia, Latin America and Africa. According to United Nations statistics, cities in developing countries are growing by 62 million people every year. By 2015, the number of city-dwellers in these countries will double, and for the first time overtake the rural population. Growth of urban areas will account for 88% of world population increase, 90% of it in poor countries. While 28 of the world's 38 cities with more than five million people were in the South in 1995, as many as 59 out of 71 will be in 2015.

channels - a place which crystallizes current social transformations: like globalization, which brings a new global and local overlap in addition to changes in the nature of work, including higher unemployment, under-employment and job insecurity. Then there are the inequalities featuring marginalization and the resulting quest for social integration. Or multiculturalism and ethnic affirmation. Or urban violence, or the arrival of the information society and the scientific and technological revolution and ecology, etc. Cities must now be seen as places where diverse realities get mixed up. So in one we find the global city, the divided city, the multicultural city, the

as a socially useful initiative, has a key role to play. A look at different forms of city government shows that the new structure of local politics, strongly linked with both decentralization and globalization, parallels a new division of authority between the state, civil society and the market. Their contractual relationships are defined by competition and cooperation through the art of negotiating and managing the conflicts of interest between different elements of the local community for the common good.

INNOVATION

The final share of costs and benefits from solving social conflicts depends on the capacity of these coalitions and institutions to take action in the city's public spheres and on the speed at which institutions mature. By building partnerships between public sector, private sector and citizenry in many institutional forms, the state as protector can be transformed into one which serves as a driving force. Citizens are no longer just passive users but initiators, while companies leave their role as suppliers to become partners.

But current territorial units and their institutional expressions only allow citizens a limited role. The challenge next century is to humanize cities making them more active and creative in terms of civic ideals and mingling of cultures, and so more democratic. Three basic commitments are needed to achieve this - consolidating democracy, guaranteeing citizens' rights, and drawing up a new social contract.

The first condition of this new social contract is to redefine the pattern of development. The destructive "economic" model, which leads to "dehumanizing" urbanization, must be replaced by a more "social" version which treats the economy as an instrument and not an end in itself. Solidarity is not just a routine aspect of democracy but one which determines freedom, human rights and how long democracy itself lasts.

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'CREATING'
MORE LAND
IN
HONG KONG
(Photo ©
RAPHO/
Michael
Yamashita).

This urban explosion goes along with a very heavy "social debt," including inadequate housing, even in "globalized" cities (which are the motor of economic globalization), poor infrastructure and public services like water and garbage collection.

This emerging urban civilization faces head-on all the conflicts of a changing society as well as exacerbating and symbolizing them. Like mirrors, the cities of both the South and the North reflect ill-advised development and the cost of modernity. The overall impression is one of fragmentation, where social exclusion, spatial segregation and increasing violence are the norm. But these places are also centres of creativity and innovation.

A city is a physical, visible place where political decisions are made, where there are economic restraints and collective

governed city, the technological city and the ecological one...

The peaceful, homogenous city is no more. Ruptures and uncertainty are the rule, political plans for social change are a priority and rapid change in the most dynamic social areas is speeded up by technological innovations. The rationally-planned city with a technological future has to yield to a humanistic place where social ties predominate. This is why management of changes in social structure is vital for a city's future, because the city is both a place and an actor. Furthermore, city government should be seen as a complicated process of mutual coordination and adjustment between its various actors.

Comparative international social science research, such as that carried out under the MOST programme, conceived

COMMON GROUND ON DIVIDED TERRITORY

Instead of waiting for municipal authorities to respond, residents of a Dakar suburb install their own infrastructure despite more than one social divide.

A bowl balanced on her head, Awa Dniaye emerges from her family compound next to the small clinic. She pours water whitened from rice mixed with fish scales onto the soil. "What do you expect me to do when there's no drain?" she replies sharply to anyone who might want to tell her to do otherwise.

Like most women from Yeumbeul, Awa has more serious worries. "People here have nothing," explains Laye Seye Saer, deputy mayor of this former Lébou village (the Lébou were the original occupants of this region of Dakar, Senegal), set up as a municipality by Dakar's decentralizing administration in January 1996. "They drink polluted water," he says. "The young people are unemployed; they can't cultivate the fields because it doesn't rain enough, nor can they grow vegetable gardens because you have to drill 10 to 15 metres before finding water, instead of the two metres it used to take. Let's not even go into the lack of land and motorized pumps." Provided in theory by municipal authorities, the irregular rubbish collection is limited to two main roads.

DIRTY WELLS

"How can things improve when everything is a priority?" laments Saer. Without public toilettes, how can you stop children urinating on the walls of their schools (with only one secondary and seven primary schools for a population of over 100,000 of which 52% are under the age of 20)? Even worse, insists the school director, Djiby Diouf, more than half of the population has no running water and just two solutions: fork out 25F CFA (about five cents) for a basin of water from the fountain (plus a monthly fee of 100F CFA per household) or go to a well. However, a recent study by UNESCO and the University of Dakar found that two out of three wells are contaminated by faecal coliform bacteria.

Yet, Yeumbeulans don't give up. "In the face of such precarious living conditions, they organize themselves into youth associations, residents' committees, businesses... Despite the number of these somewhat unstructured groups, these initiatives appear to be credible alternatives," notes Mohamed Soumaré, from the NGO Enda

Third World. But how can they get past square one of social mobilization to forming a solid local citizenry?

"Our theory is that collective well-being grows from concrete action," says Geneviève Domenach-Chich, responsible for UNESCO's Cities project. Concrete is the word: the "project supporting community dynamics and improvement in quality of life" undertaken at Yeumbeul consists of structuring and reinforcing local hygiene initiatives. UNESCO provides two-thirds of the budget while Enda coordinates the project. In 1996-1997, a budget of \$100,000 saw the construction of 44 sewage ponds, 32 toilets and five water stations plus three rubbish collection carts. Savings and credit facilities for 10 women's groups were also supported and



LAYING DOWN MORE THAN WATER PIPES
(Photo UNESCO).

local leaders, businesswomen, carpenters and handymen trained. Beyond that, the project has enabled the village to alter the balance of power between the different social groups as well as between the people and the municipal authorities.

The first lesson learnt is that in such an economically drained community, it is difficult to get people so consumed with individual problems to organize themselves as a community for the collective good.

The interpersonal conflicts are as bitter as resources are rare and they are multi-ethnic (Wolof, Toucouleur, Diola, etc.). Basically, three groups represented by three associations and corresponding to defined territories want the project to give their members preference. "Straightaway we noticed conflictual relations between the local organizations," underline those assessing the project, Pape Salif Seck and Abdsoul Karim Gueye.

GIVE & TAKE

Integrating new arrivals, rural Diolas for the most part, is also a problem. "They claim a right to participate in the decisions that the original members of the traditional village don't seem ready to give." Another divide arises as the Lébou see their traditional power giving way to second generation migrants (predominantly Toucouleurs) who are very involved in the project. Finally, the assessors note "seeing the creation of citizens' associations focused on the development of their village of origin." Indeed the very popular El Hadji Ibrahima Ndiaye of the Toucouleurs is impatient. "We need more equipment as we're organizing a hygiene campaign."

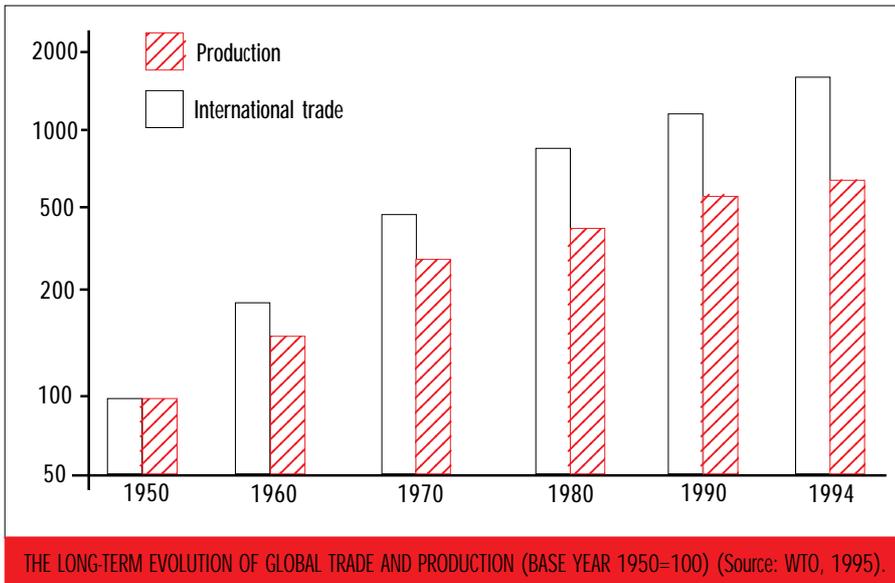
The population is starting to impose itself as a partner to the authorities who are totally overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problems. "We don't have the means, not even a vehicle to clear the streets when they're illegally occupied by street vendors and the like," laments Saer. "We're forced to hire clandestine taxis!" Despite the suspicion of some local politicians fearing competition from leaders closer to the population than they are, "exchange is beginning to develop between the associative and political worlds," says Domenach-Chich. "We are regularly consulted and I participate in municipal meetings," confirms Ndiaye. For Soumaré, the project's limits "show that the NGOs and community groups cannot replace the state and municipal authorities. Their initiatives should be considered as leads - legitimated by UNESCO's support - to follow up and be supported on the ground by the public service."

S.B. and Daniel BEKOUTOU
Dakar

A MOBILE, BORDERLESS WORLD

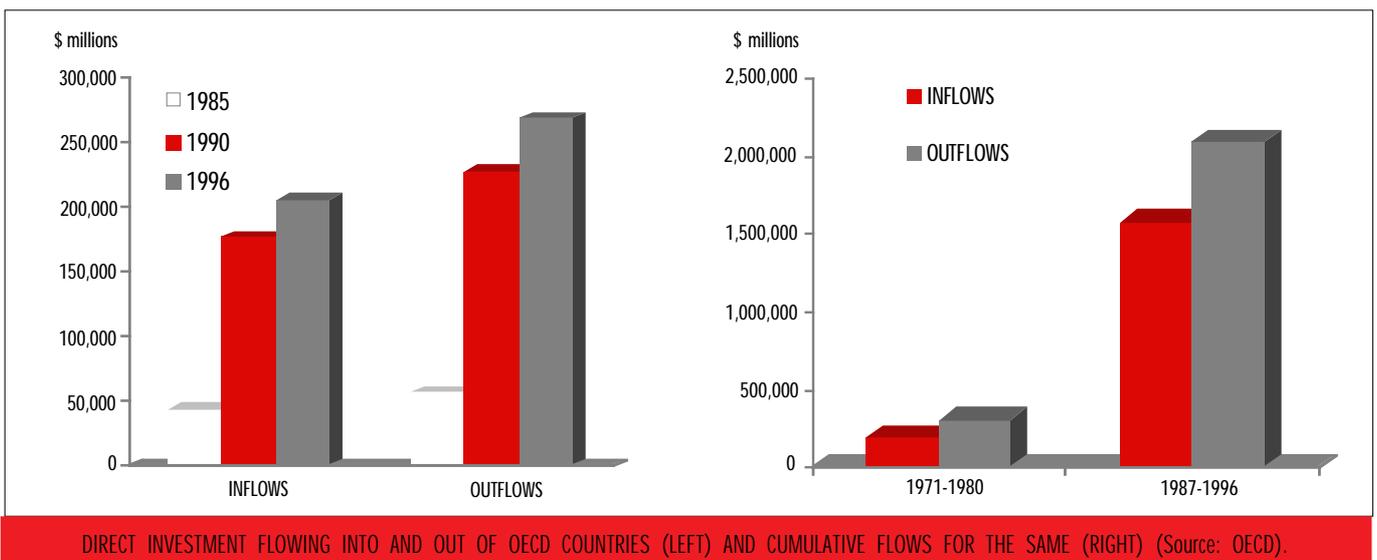
One of the main characteristics of our globalized world is movement: of goods, money and people. This is not new in itself, but the speed with which it is happening and the sheer volumes involved

TRADE GROWTH OUTSTRIPS PRODUCTION INCREASES



The constant growth in world trade over the past 50-odd years is clearly shown in this graph. Until the mid-70s this growth was fairly closely matched by increasing production. With the rise of the market economy and the spread of liberalization policies aimed at lowering real exchange rates, stimulating exporters and reducing quotas and tariffs, trade began to leap ahead. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), between 1984 and 1994 world trade increased by 5.3% annually as against a mere 1.9% rise in production. Between 1990 and 1994, the rate was 5% as against about 0.5%. The World Trade Organization (WTO) reports that in 1996, the total value of exports topped \$5 trillion for the first time ever.

RIVERS OF MONEY



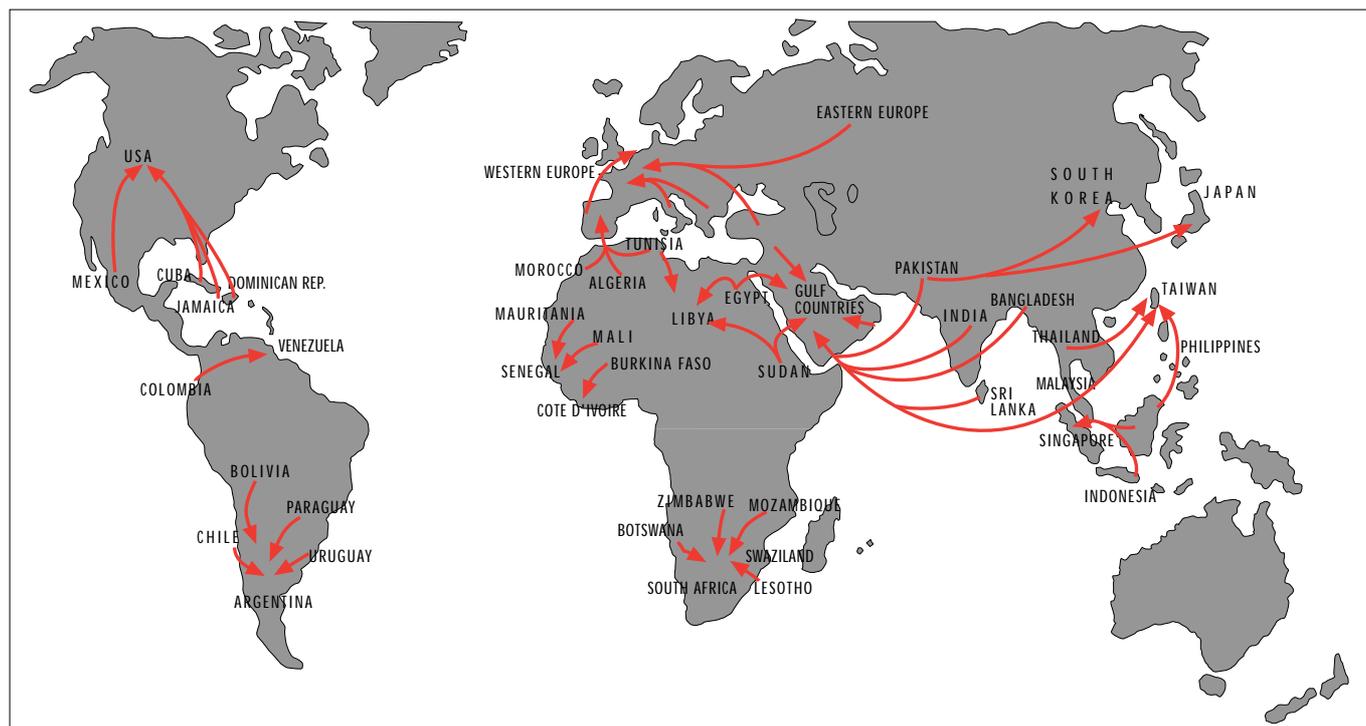
Money is also moving in far greater volumes. This graph, although incomplete because it only deals with OECD countries, is nonetheless a telling example. As

is shown here, the amount of direct investment flowing into and out of the OECD has multiplied five times over in the past 12 years. Similarly, cumulative inflows

increased from \$191b between 1971-1980 to \$1.5 trillion between 1987-1996 while cumulative outflows rose from \$304 b to just over \$2 trillion.

are unprecedented, making such movement a chief agent of change that societies everywhere are searching for ways to deal with.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

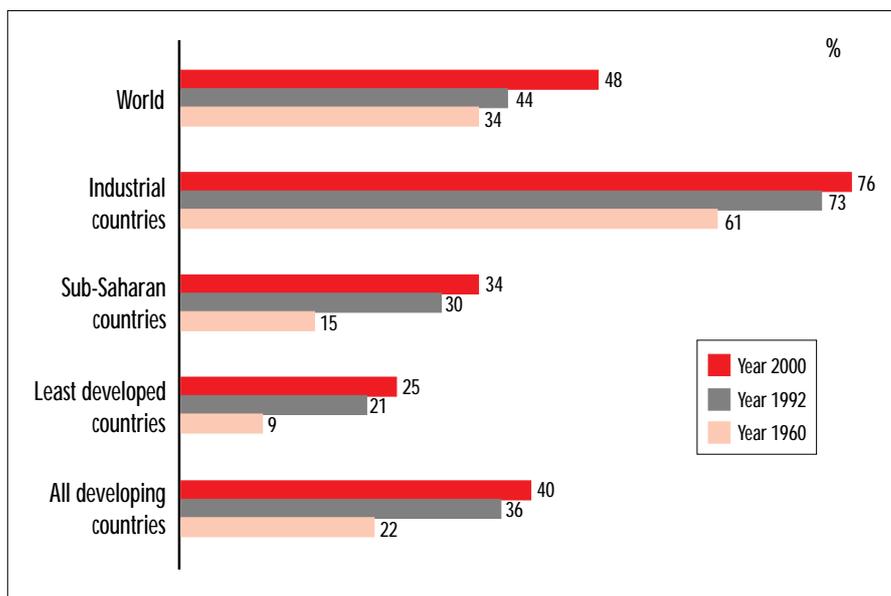


MAJOR CURRENT LABOUR MIGRATION MOVEMENTS (Source: International Labour Office).

According to the International Labour Office (ILO), people move mainly from “south to south”, from “south to north”, and from “east to west”. The World Bank estimates that annual remittances from these migrants amount to some \$67 billion. In Yemen, remittances early this decade were valued at 150% of the country’s total exports. In Pakistan and Egypt, they were worth 75%.

The region most affected by migration is Sub-Saharan Africa, where some 30 million migrants are concentrated mostly in West and Southern Africa.

People are also moving within their own countries, with the bright lights of the city serving as a powerful magnet. In all countries, in all regions, the number of urban inhabitants continues to swell faster than the capacity of cities to provide jobs, homes, water, sanitation and other basic services for them.



URBAN POPULATION AS A % OF TOTAL POPULATION (1960-2000)
(Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1995).

LESS TO THE "HAVE-NOTS"

The growth opportunities offered by globalization are not extended to all. Isolated rural societies risk being left behind, but losing the little they now have.

Economic and commercial globalization is a process in which national economies and markets are gradually opened up more widely to competition, capital, technology and information. But it also involves the general introduction of market rules and laws to regulate the economies. This situation springs from the determination of a large number of countries to become part of the global economy in order to reap whatever benefits it may offer.

Along with national authorities, the multinationals and the international monetary organizations have played a key role. The IMF and the IBRD have orchestrated the liberalization of developing countries'

so in the social groups making them up. Its effects may vary according to a country's capacity to take advantage of the spinoff from world growth and how open its economy is. It would seem that the bulk of the increase in international trade (50-80% according to estimates) is likely to be concentrated in the hands of the developed countries, followed by the newly industrialized countries of Asia and lastly by the other developing countries, which will be gathering but crumbs from the globalization cake. At national level, the regions best integrated into the international economy and with the best infrastructures will thus improve their economic performance.

and shielded from foreign competition will, as the European Commission coyly puts it, have employment costs. According to Ravenel, "we know that bringing the Moroccan and Tunisian industrial sector up to scratch means shedding 40% of businesses and the jobs that go with them. The political choice of free trade will, by aggravating local, regional and national inequalities, make the public well-being a political issue." The rural population, with its low skill level, is the first to be affected. We are also witnessing a decline in the purchasing power of workers in general and agricultural workers in particular, of as much as 20-40% in countries like Tunisia, Morocco or Egypt, over the past decade. This is particularly true of rural populations because their income partly depends on sectors other than farming.

RETURNING TO THE LAND

Increased urban unemployment has, moreover, brought about a return to rural areas of people who are now reverting to subsistence farming. We are seeing a levelling out or even an increase in the number of farms and landless peasants, with a rise of over 25% in Tunisia, for example, between 1989 and 1995.

However, this option is not for all. In Egypt, after a freeze of 40 years, a property counter-reform has made land and water marketable again, letting owners raise rents and cut small farmers adrift.

In short, globalization, which offers growth opportunities for all countries taking part in the process, seems to spell increased insecurity for the most vulnerable fringes of rural society, mainly on account of lower welfare payments and dwindling income and employment opportunities in sectors other than farming. What needs determining then is how far participation in the management of natural resources and rural development, which is presented to these populations as an alternative to globalization, will in fact be able to offset some of its adverse effects.



GATHERING
THE CRUMBS
(Photo ©
Béatrice
Petit).

economies by prescribing structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). For agriculture, this has meant privatizing formerly state-owned lands, freeing production prices and aligning them with international rates, abolishing input subsidies and relieving the state of its obligation to provide specific facilities for farmers. With regard to agricultural produce, the GATT agreements regulating international trade should lead to an increase in the volume of trade, keener competition, a slight opening up of the import markets and, above all, a heftier food bill for importing countries.

Globalization is going to result in big changes to national production systems and the labour market. It will induce a reorganization of businesses into small networks and the flexible management of production and labour. However, its impact will not be the same in all countries, nor even in all regions within the same country; still less

On the other hand, the less privileged regions run the risk of even greater exclusion because of increasing competition and a rat race they are less able to cope with. In the developing countries, according to the researcher Bernard Ravenel, "globalization turns production systems more and more outwards, thus widening the hiatus between them and countries' internal economic and social realities and needs." This applies above all to rural society, which in most developing countries still has considerable weight on account of the size of its population and its contribution to national income and employment.

As globalization weakens the nation-state, it reduces its capacity for financial intervention, especially for vulnerable population groups and fringe regions.

The dismantling of the industrial system which had been established through policies of state-administered development

Mohamed ELLOUMI
Research Institute
on the contemporary maghreb, Tunis

SEEKING THE KEYS TO SUCCESS

A MOST research project in the icy northern polar region tries to understand why globalization succeeds for some and proves fatal to others.

Finnmark, lapped by the freezing waters of the Arctic Ocean and the Barents Sea, is Norway's northern-most county. With its week-long blizzards in winter and hordes of mosquitoes each summer, it is probably one of the world's most inhospitable places to live. Its largest town, Batsfjord has a population of 2,500.

This remote area's strategic importance during the cold war ensured that it was equipped with such infrastructure as airports, roads, hydro-electric dams and even cellular telephone reception in the most remote valleys. But since the fall of the Soviet Union, political interest in the area has declined - along with the population.

The sight of a luxury liner cruising along this frozen, desolate coast laden with tourists could therefore seem somewhat incongruous. Yet international tourism is a growing industry there.

Likewise, fishing is an international affair. Batsfjord's four locally-owned fish processing plants export their products mostly to the European market, but also as far afield as Japan. Their profits are turned back into the local industry - and the community: the Batsfjord volley-ball team, which regularly tops Norway's first division, has been coached, for example, by foreign professionals paid for by the plants.

SATELLITE GUIDED REINDEER

Storfjord, in neighbouring Troms county, has also worked out ways of improving its lot by tapping into the globalized market. Situated close to the Norwegian-Finnish-Swedish border, this town of 1,800 people has built its wealth on the export of hydro-electric power. The profits in this case feed a fund created by local authorities to finance smaller, local business projects.

The other main industry in both counties is reindeer herding, which is mostly in the hands of Norway's indigenous Saami people. And even here, the herders ride snowmobiles and refer to information provided by navigational satellites to find the best grazing sites.

"Even the most peripheral communities and regions in the north now find themselves in a situation where they must learn to live in a globalized world. Isolationism

will hardly suffice as a strategy for survival," says Nils Aarsaether, the coordinator of the Circumpolar Coping Processes Project (CCPP), established under the auspices of MOST at the University of Tromsø. The project has set up a network of researchers in Russia, Canada, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Greenland, Iceland, Faeroes and Sweden, to study how remote communities cope with the impact of globalization. *"Instead of lamenting the negative effects though, we have deliberately*



A TRADITIONAL SAAMI REINDEER HERDER
(Photo © Rosine Mazin).

selected case communities, like Batsfjord and Storfjord, in which coping strategies are being developed and/or implemented, to try to maximize the benefits from some of the globalization processes."

When fish stocks collapsed in the 1980s, for example, Batsfjord imported fish from Alaska to save jobs. They now regularly buy from Russian trawlers as well. Conscious of the destabilizing effect the loss of women could have, these far northern communities have made a real effort to ensure equal opportunities for them. In the late 1970s, when their numbers fell, the welcome mat was laid out for Finnish women who were offered jobs in the fish plants. Many of them stayed and married Norwegian men there. In an effort to

overcome the chronic shortage of workers for the plants, the door has also been opened to Tamil refugees, who have even established a cricket team in this frozen outpost!

To understand the dynamics of such a community, explains Aarsaether, *"we try to ask simple questions like, why does this municipality keep its population while others experience decline. The answers we get tend to lead us deep into very different fields and the possible interaction between them, such as production, distribution, household processes, gender relations, religious life, ethnicity and cultural identity, education, electronic communication and the like."*

IMBALANCE

So far the story sounds very positive and these coastal communities appear to be very open, dynamic and positive. But there is another side. *"While in some places, and at certain periods, globalization offers new employment opportunities and increased social welfare, the more common pattern is of increasing socio-economic and ecological imbalance,"* said Aarsaether. *"One effect is the concentration of power, capital and information in 'successful' urban regions, coupled with the economic and demographic decline of rural regions. Indeed, many rural communities in the north now find themselves on the brink of extinction, with the natural resources they have relied on in the past exhausted. In fisheries for instance, a fleet of trawlers operating outside territorial borders is largely responsible for the crisis afflicting many coastal communities. This is clearly the case in Newfoundland (Canada) for example."*

Through its research, the CCPP hopes to help explain why some communities, like Batsfjord, succeed under the new conditions imposed by the globalized world, and why others don't. Their findings should, in turn, help policy and decision-makers - and most importantly, these communities themselves - to devise strategies to deal with the problems, and play their part in shaping the world they live in.

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UNDERSTANDING WHAT'S HAPPENING

A wide-ranging research programme studies the changes brought by globalization that are affecting societies around the world.

At the end of the cold war the profound social changes that had been slowly gathering momentum throughout most of the 70s and 80s moved into top speed. Consequently, major challenges such as the development of the South, the rise of unemployment in the North, social exclusion and poverty, the widening breach between rich and poor countries and within societies, the multiplication of internal ethnic and religious conflicts, and the diversification of public and private actors in the international arena, needs to be re-evaluated, analyzed and understood.

This task is essentially one for social scientists. But it requires new ways of organizing research, especially on the international level, to take the new context into account. It also requires the reinforcement of the links between social science research and socio-economic decision-making, to translate knowledge gained into development policies that are more relevant and efficient.

To this end, UNESCO in 1994 created an international social science research programme, known as MOST or the Management of Social Transformations. Its two main goals are to promote research on today's major social issues and make the resulting knowledge known to policy makers. The programme establishes a framework for international scientific cooperation and a source of expertise for policy formulation, as well as for the implementation of development projects in the field. These diverse activities are carried out by teams of researchers, government or

municipal authorities, elected representatives and/or non-governmental organizations working as closely together as possible.

MOST is guided by the priorities identified by the United Nations world conferences organized this decade, including the Rio Earth Summit (1992), the population conference in Cairo (1994), social development in Copenhagen (1995), women in Beijing (1995) and cities in Istanbul (1996), focusing particularly on poverty and social exclusion, international migration, the future of cities and sustainable development.



These issues are tackled through the perspectives of the democratic governance of multicultural and multi-ethnic societies, social problems and citizenship in cities, and the interaction between national problems and the process of globalization. Research is being carried out on such themes as growing up in the city, urban industrial growth and the global economy in South Asia, citizenship and multiculturalism in Europe, social transformation and drug trafficking, globalization and the transformation of rural societies in the Arab countries, institutional reform of social policy in Latin America, ethnicity and conflict in Africa, and migration and ethno-cultural diversity in the Asia-Pacific region.

Apart from its research arm, MOST has a number of field projects underway promoting local or national development, such as the adaptation of cities to the needs of children and adolescents being carried out in eight countries or, in Burkina Faso and Laos, improving the quality of life for poor women in rural zones, and in Kyrgyzstan, providing training in the democratic management of a multicultural society.

The programme is also involved in training young researchers, by encouraging their participation in its projects, and via courses conducted through the 30-odd UNESCO chairs in the social sciences and sustainable development that have been set up in universities in 20 countries.

A MOST information exchange centre also exists on the Internet at <http://WWW.UNESCO.org/MOST>. It comprises specialized data bases on best practices in the struggle against poverty and exclusion, as well as a discussion forum on the ethical questions raised by social science research. A thematic data base is in the works.

The programme is led by an intergovernmental council composed of 35 UNESCO Member States, and an independent steering committee made up of nine high-level researchers nominated for their individual achievement. Activities are coordinated by a small secretariat based at Headquarters, and MOST national liaison committees that have so far been established in 40 countries.

Ali KAZANCIGIL

TO FIND OUT MORE ...

CITIES OF THE FUTURE: MANAGING SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS: (No. 147 of the International Social Science Journal, March 1996) presents a series of articles looking at the main social transformations shaping tomorrow's cities.

MOST POLICY PAPERS: present policy implications of research results. Titles include:

Searching for New Development Strategies - The Challenges of the Social

Summit, by Ignacy Sachs, 1995; **From Social Exclusion to Social Cohesion: a policy agenda**, by Sophie Bessis, 1995; **Cybernetics of Global Change: Human Dimension and Managing of Complexity**, by M. Mesarovic, D. McGinnis and D. West, 1996; **Multiculturalism: A policy Response to Diversity**, by Christine Inglis, 1996; **Democracy and Citizenship in the 21st Century City**, by Céline Sachs-Jeantet and **Sustainability: a Cross-Disciplinary Concept for Social Transformations** by

Egon Becker, Thomans Jahn, Immanuel Stiess and Peter Wehling, 1997.

THE MOST NEWSLETTER: published twice yearly, it provides an update on programme activities.

MOST DISCUSSION PAPERS: this series publishes contributions from specialists in the MOST research fields. Fifteen papers are available to date.