



Human Development Research Paper 2009/01 Mobility and Human Development

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Abstract

This paper argues that mobility and migration have always been an intrinsic part of human development. Migration can be considered as a fundamental capabilities-enhancing freedom itself. However, any meaningful understanding of migration needs to simultaneously analyse agency *and* structure. Rather than applying dichotomous classifications such as between forced and voluntary migration, it is more appropriate to conceive of a continuum running from low to high constraints under which migration occurs, in which all migrants deal with structural constraints, although *to highly varying degrees*. Besides being an integral part of human development, mobility also tends to affect the same structural processes of which it is part. Simplistic positive-versus-negative debates on migration and development can be overcome by integrating agency-structure dialectics in the analysis of migration impacts. This paper argues that (i) the degree to which migrants are able to affect structural change is real but limited; (ii) the nature of change in sending and receiving is not pre-determined; and (iii) that in order to enable a more focused and rigorous debate, there is a need to better distinguish and specify different levels and dimensions at which the reciprocal relationship between human mobility and development can be analysed. A critical reading of the empirical literature leads to the conclusion that it would be naïve to think that despite their often considerable benefits for individuals and communities, migration and remittances alone can remove more structural development constraints. Despite their development *potential*, migrants and remittances can neither be blamed for a lack of development nor be expected to trigger take-off development in generally unattractive investment environments. By increasing selectivity and suffering among migrants, current immigration restrictions have a negative impact on migrants' wellbeing as well as the poverty and inequality reducing potential of migration.

Keywords: human development, human mobility, migration, poverty

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1. Introduction

There is a common failure in much research and, particularly, policy to analyse migration as an integral part of development and global transformation processes rather than a problem to be ‘managed’ or ‘solved’ by tackling its perceived root causes. Human mobility has always been an intrinsic part of human development. Human mobility plays a central role in global and local processes of social, economic and political change: it is both moulded by and helps to mould these global transformations. In order to understand how mobility is part of structural change, but can also affect the nature and direction of change or ‘development’, it is vital to explore the dialectics between structure and agency involved in human mobility.

On the one hand, mobility at the individual and group level cannot be dissociated from more general processes of social and economic change which constantly alter the spatial distribution of opportunity structures and, hence, mobility patterns. However, it would be erroneous to reduce migrants to pawns passively reacting to macro-forces propelling them around the globe. People have agency, and, on the individual level, the decision to migrate (or not) and the act of migrating can generally be seen as an *expression* of human development. People need a certain minimum of social and economic resources in order to be able to migrate. It is therefore no coincidence that wealthy people and societies tend to be generally more mobile than relatively poor people and societies.

Because people have agency, their mobility is also a potential force for structural change, because it can play an important part in altering the social and economic conditions in both in sending and receiving localities, regions and countries. Mobility – the act of moving – almost inevitably affects people’s differential access to social, economic and human resources. However, it is important to emphasise that all migrants face structural constraints and that the degree to which they can exercise agency is fundamentally limited. This also limits the extent to which migrants and migration can bring about structural change.

The fact that all migrants face constraints also upsets the conventional dichotomy between forced and voluntary migration. For instance, many migrants who *primarily* move for work do so

because they face severe constraints on personal development at home, and the range of migration options available to them tends to be constrained and structured by economic, political and social relations. Likewise, those who are usually characterised as forced migrants, such as refugees, exercise their agency as far as possible in the face of appalling circumstances. It is only with extreme movements such as slavery and deportation that agency may be discounted completely.

It is therefore probably more appropriate to conceive of a continuum running from low to high constraints under which migration occurs, rather than applying a dichotomous classification of forced versus voluntary migration to much more complex realities in which all migrants deal with structural constraints, although *to highly varying degrees*. The sharp distinction between forced and voluntary migration is primarily a policy and legal distinction driven by the interest of states in classifying migrants and – as other distinctions such as between regular and irregular migration – to determine migrants’ legal rights. Such policy and legal categories may be useful tools for states; they only become problematic when they are uncritically adopted as analytical categories and projected onto social realities. They seem to become even more problematic when they are applied to persons rather than to migratory phenomena. For instance, while certain forms of moves may be classified as ‘forced’, ‘irregular’ or ‘transit’, to apply such labels to migrants *themselves* is problematic because it obscures migrants’ agency and the fact that the motivations, aspirations, legal statuses and constraints they face tend to change over time and while they move.

A fundamental paradox is that human development increases people’s capabilities to be mobile over increasingly large distances but that, at the same time, people’s motivations to migrate can be expected to be higher when they face relatively high social, economic and/or political constraints in the places, regions and countries where they live. Put differently, development constraints are likely to motivate people to move to another place and country, but at the same time they need the resources to do so. For example, international South-North migration tends to involve high costs and may entail significant risk. It is therefore not surprising that South-North migration from many countries with low levels of human development – such as in sub-Saharan

Africa – tends to be low and more selective for the relatively wealthy and skilled. South-North migration from middle-income countries not only tends to be significantly higher but also less selective for the higher educated.

What is the significance of these reflections on how human development affects mobility for the debate on how mobility affects human development in its own right? First, the insight that people exercise their agency to move within constraining conditions also implies that the degree to which migrants are able to affect structural change in sending and receiving societies is real but at the same time fundamentally limited.

Second, it means that the *nature* of mobility-affected conjunctural and structural change in sending and receiving societies is not pre-determined. This impact fundamentally depends on (1) the way mobility affects individuals' capabilities, which is to a great extent dependent on the selectivity of migration and the socio-economic and legal position of migrants at the destination; (2) the general development context in (2a) sending and (2b) receiving contexts and (3) the migrants' own preferences and their relationship with their country of origin.

Thus, migration impacts tend to be highly heterogeneous depending on the specific circumstances in which migration occurs. For instance, if people migrate under extremely constraining conditions – such as in the case of refugee migration – migrating will often be the 'least worse' option, which may involve a real decrease in wellbeing and capabilities from the pre-refugee situation. In other cases, migrants may individually gain from their mobility but this will not automatically translate into macro-structural change and *national* development because their decision of where to allocate their activities fundamentally depends on how they perceive the more general opportunity structures in origin and destination societies. This means that, depending on circumstances, mobility can theoretically have positive, less positive or sometimes even negative implications for more general development processes.

If economic conditions are bad in origin countries or if political instability and distrust prevails, it is unlikely that migrants will make massive investments in their country of origin or that they

will return in significant numbers. For instance, in a country such as Somalia, while migrants' remittances may have enabled significant improvements in living standards for individual families and communities in some areas – in particular Somaliland (Kleist 2008) – there is no sign that they are able to generate take-off development in the absence of a central government, under circumstances of insecurity and under dismal investment conditions.

Third, this reveals the necessity to bring more precision into the debate by distinguishing and specifying the different levels and dimensions at which the *reciprocal* relationship between human mobility and development can be analysed. Dominant notions of development are centred on national (economic) growth. This tends to coincide with a relative neglect of the potential contribution of migration to development at the individual level.

Development is not only a complex multi-dimensional concept, but can also be assessed at different levels of analysis and has different *meanings* within different normative, cultural and historical contexts. It may therefore be an illusion that there can be a single, universal definition of development. For instance, dominant notions of development widely view rural-urban migration in poor countries and South-North migration as symptoms of development failure. In such approaches, by implication development tends to be seen as a remedy against migration. However, this *sedentary bias* on which such conventional understandings of migration and human development are based is challenged by empirical evidence pointing at the generally positive associations between levels of human development and mobility.

The aim of this paper is to further explore how mobility can be conceptualised as an intrinsic part of human development at both macro and micro levels. Although the focus will be on international mobility, there is no *a priori* reason why these cannot be applied to internal mobility. By focusing on the dialectics between structure and agency, it aims to improve understanding of how mobility it is both moulded by and helps to mould human development. First, this paper will briefly review how fundamental shifts in global mobility patterns over the last two and a half centuries have been intrinsically connected to structural transformation processes associated with modern capitalist development, urbanisation, demographic transitions

and a series of technological revolutions. Second, this paper will review evidence of the implications of migration for various dimensions and scales of development in sending and receiving societies. Third, this paper will explore how these insights into mobility may challenge conventional, sedentary notions of human development. It will conclude by outlining the policy implications of this analysis. Although this paper is general in its aims and scope, it will particularly draw on examples of African migration to illustrate its arguments.

2. Historical overview: shifting global mobility patterns as part of structural change

2.1. Capitalism, the nation state and the emergence of modern mobility

Current global migrations may be new in scale, nature and scope, but population movements in response to demographic growth, and the development of production and trade have always been part of human history. Warfare, conquest, formation of nations and the emergence of states and empires have all led to migrations, both voluntary and forced. The enslavement and deportation of conquered people was a frequent early form of forced labour migration. In many parts of Africa, pastoralism was often associated with long distance trade, cultural exchange and the regular settlement and uprooting of people (Bakewell and de Haas 2007).

However, current patterns of migration are fundamentally different from those in pre-industrial societies both in geographical scope and in intensity. While migration and mobility at large have always been part of human history, the nature and scope of migration has fundamentally changed over the past two centuries in response to revolutionary technological and economic developments and the incorporation of an increasing number of regions and countries across the world within international capitalism. This process of increasing global integration started with European mercantile and colonial expansion—some say even earlier—and accelerated after the Industrial Revolution.

From the end of the Middle Ages, the development of European states and their colonisation of the rest of the world gave a new impetus to international migrations of many different kinds,

including movements of soldiers, administrators and traders to colonised areas, forced movements of African slaves to the New World¹ and, later on, indentured workers from India and China to East Africa, the Caribbean and elsewhere. Beginning in the seventeenth century, North Sea countries, and further extending throughout Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the spatial diffusion of the processes of capitalist development and the associated demographic transitions resulted in large-scale rural-to-urban migration within Europe and North America (Castles and Miller 2009; Moch 1992; Skeldon 1997).

The wealth accumulated in Western Europe through production using the ‘unfree’ labour (Cohen 1987) of slaves, indentured workers and other forms of colonial forced labour provided much of the capital which was to unleash the industrial revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In turn, the Industrial Revolution and the associated concentration of economic production in towns and cities gave a major impetus to rural-urban migration within and across borders. At the same time, the mechanisation of agriculture led to declining demand for agricultural labour. Rapidly declining death rates following improvements in health care and hygiene resulted in accelerating population growth. The resulting surplus in rural labour subsequently migrated to towns and cities, further reinforcing existing urbanisation processes and the transfer from predominantly agricultural to industrial national economies. The technological progress which accompanied the rise of modern industrialist capitalism has been a key factor in facilitating large-scale migration, particularly through dramatic improvements in infrastructure and faster, safer and cheaper means of transport. So, migration played an important part in industrialisation, and was associated to significant international migration of, for instance, Irish to Britain, Poles and Italians to Germany, France and Switzerland, and Irish, Italians and Jews from various European countries to the USA.

While most international migration took, and still takes, place between adjacent countries,

¹ The slave trade is an extremely violent form of forced migration to be distinguished from contract laborers or other more-or-less voluntary labor migrants. It is believed that more than 11.8 million people were taken from Africa to the Americas (Lovejoy 1989). This slave trade ‘was the largest, enforced, mass migration of labor in human history’ (Nayyar 2000:2). Notwithstanding the massive scale of the trans-Atlantic slave trade set up by Europeans, African-European, African-African, and African-Arab slave trade as such is a much older phenomenon.

technological progress facilitated longer journeys. This became particularly apparent during the ‘first wave of globalisation’ (1870-1914), in which transatlantic migrants totalled over 50 million (Nayyar 2000) and there were similar, if not larger, migrations to South-East and North Asia (McKeown 2004). The interwar period (1918-1939) was characterised by increasing protectionism and also more restrictions on migration. After 1929, the Great Depression further restricted population mobility.

Refugee movements go far back in history, such as the migration of Muslims and Jews to Morocco and the Ottoman Empire after the completion of the *reconquista* of the Iberian Peninsula in the late fifteenth century. However, it was the massive displacement of millions of people across Europe and Asia following the First and Second World Wars that stimulated the establishment of the global refugee regime (Karatani 2005; Marfleet 2007).

2.2. The integration of the global South into capitalist mobility systems

In most of the current global ‘South’, the structural political and economic changes brought by colonisation – and particularly capitalist expansion and urbanisation – deeply affected ancient migration patterns and created new forms of population mobility, in a way that does not seem to be *fundamentally* different from the earlier experiences in Europe and North America (Onyeonuru 1994; Skeldon 1997). Processes of large-scale rural-to-urban migration within and across borders gained momentum in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and were intimately linked to the connected and overlapping processes of colonisation, the progressive incorporation of peasant economies into the capitalist economy, and globalization.

These processes of colonisation and capitalist development created a new demand for cheap labour, which set in motion rural-rural and, particularly, rural-urban migration patterns which significantly differed from pre-colonial population mobility. In the Maghreb, for instance, traditionally circular and seasonal migration patterns were gradually replaced by more long-term forms of rural-to-urban migration (Berriane 1997). When the first Europeans arrived in West Africa in the fifteenth century, they disrupted traditional patterns of (trans-Saharan) trade and seasonal movement while the growing slave trade led to the transportation of 11-12 million

Africans across the Atlantic (Anarfi and Kwankye 2003; Bump 2006; Lovejoy 1989). Since the late nineteenth century, colonisation and the concomitant establishment of cacao, coffee and groundnut plantations, infrastructure works and the growth of cities such as Accra, Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Abidjan, Lomé, Dakar and Cotonou triggered major rural-rural and rural-urban migration (Arthur 1991a). Other factors that are believed to have stimulated such migration were infrastructure improvements, the introduction of colonial taxes (Arthur 1991a), organised labour recruitment (Bump 2006), and the expropriation of agricultural land for plantations (Amin 1974).

Since colonisation, intra-regional mobility in West Africa has been characterised by a predominantly North-South, inland-coast movement from Sahel West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad) to the plantations, mines and cities of coastal West Africa (predominantly Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, and in the West to Senegal and The Gambia) (Arthur 1991b; Findlay 2004; Kress 2006). Complying with pre-colonial patterns, much intra-regional migration is seasonal or circular, although an increasing number of migrants have settled in the coastal destination countries.

Although colonial administrators generally wished to restrict population mobility, they could not prevent increasing settlement of migrants in mining towns, major cities and other urban centres (Bakewell 2008). After decolonisation, rural-urban migration continued and often even intensified. Although many governments have tried to stop this 'rural exodus' (cf. De Soto 2000), they were not able to prevent this migration, which was driven by processes of economic restructuring, demographic growth and urbanisation.

Decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s created the conditions for new patterns of movement from former colonies to the mainly European metropolises at an unprecedented scale. This started with large-scale return migration of colonial settlers and their descendants, such as the *colons* or *pièdes noirs* from Algeria to France (de Haas 2008), but was soon followed by the migration of members of the majority populations of these countries. This postcolonial migration was facilitated by common historical and linguistic links. In most cases there were initially low migration barriers – for instance, in the British Commonwealth the people of former colonies

actually had British citizenship until 1983, and could therefore migrate freely at least until 1962, when restrictions were introduced with the Commonwealth Immigrants Act.

This increase in what came to be known as South-North migration was also facilitated by rapid post-war economic growth in northwest Europe and North America, which led to increasing shortages of mainly unskilled labour to work in sectors such as industry, mining and agriculture.² In some European countries such as the UK and France, part of this labour demand was filled by immigration from former colonies. However, over the 1950s and 1960s an increasing proportion of demand was met by migration from poorer, often neighbouring countries such from Mexico to the US and from southern Europe, the Maghreb and Turkey to northwest Europe (Castles and Delgado Wise 2008; Castles and Miller 2009).

2.3. Political-economic *forces majeures* and shifts in global mobility

Rather than migration policies per se, global political-economic *forces majeures* have tended to set the preconditions for major recent shifts in global mobility patterns. The 1973 ‘Oil Crisis’ was a major turning point in global migration patterns, in which fundamental shifts in the international political economy led to the emergence of new migration poles located outside the traditional ‘North’. On the one hand, the ‘Oil Crisis’ and the associated economic recession accelerated the decline of labour-intensive industries in Europe and North America and the subsequent delocalisation of labour-intensive industries to low wage countries. In Europe, the Oil Crisis heralded a period of economic stagnation and restructuring, resulting in rising structural unemployment and a lower demand for unskilled labourers. This hit the guest-workers from Turkey and the Maghreb disproportionately and led to their mass unemployment. This heralded

² An interesting question raised by one of the reviewers remains why South-North migration was not very prevalent during the first wave of globalization. This can perhaps be partly attributed to the low levels of development in the global south, but also the fact that within the current ‘North’, there was rather abundant supply of cheap labour due to the still high demographic growth, the expulsion of labour from the agrarian sectors and the fact that many Western countries were still relatively poor. During the current wave of globalisation, most Western countries have completed their demographic transitions, and dispose of an often shrinking pool of young, native workers. At the same time, international socio-economic inequalities between North and South have increased tremendously, while during the first post-independence decades, most Southern countries witnessed high population growth. The combination of these factors has boosted international South-North migration.

the end of the 'recruitment phase' and the onset of increasingly restrictive immigration policies pursued by European states, a trend that would persist until the present day.

However, these policies failed to stop immigration. European states and origin countries tried to encourage migrants to return. The failure of these return policies was primarily related to the lack of opportunities for economic reintegration in most countries of origin, which suffered much more than the European countries from the structurally higher oil prices and the global economic downturn, while both Turkey and Morocco were confronted with political instability. Consequently, these policies did not lead to the large-scale return of temporary workers to Turkey, Morocco and other Mediterranean countries, but rather to massive family reunification and the permanent settlement of migrant populations. Paradoxically, the increasingly restrictive immigration policies and in particular the introduction of visa restrictions had the effect of pushing migrants into permanent settlement rather than the reverse (Entzinger 1985; Fargues 2004).

Quite on the contrary, for the oil countries located around the Persian Gulf, the events of 1973 marked the *beginning* of massive labour recruitment. This caused a 'remarkable reversal of relative economic conditions' (Sell 1988:93) between Egypt and its Arab neighbours. Surging oil prices and massive investments of petro-dollars in huge construction, industry and infrastructure projects in Gulf countries led to large-scale labour migration. Fundamental change in Egypt towards more liberal, less protectionist economic policies and a shift from anti-emigration towards pro-emigration policies and unprecedented economic growth in the oil producing Gulf countries and also Libya coincided to cause unprecedented migration from Egypt and other MENA (Middle East and North African) countries to the booming Gulf countries.

Initially, the governments of oil-rich Arab countries preferred workers from other Arab countries because of geographical and linguistic proximity as well as solidarity motives. After 1983, the Iran-Iraq war, falling oil prices and declining demand for construction workers, led to a relative decline in the demand for Egyptian and other Arab workers in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) countries and Libya. Although Arab immigration never stopped, this led to increasing

immigration of cheaper South Asian, South-East Asian and also, often irregular sub-Saharan workers (de Haas 2008; de Regt 2006; Zohry and Harrell-Bond 2003). These workers were preferred as Arab workers were more and more seen as a political liability, in particular after official Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein during the 1991 Gulf War led to mass expulsions of Palestinians from Kuwait. What might also have played a role in increasing Asian immigration is the adoption of a pro-emigration set of policies in an increasing number of Asian countries (Abella 1995).

Although the 1991 Gulf War led to massive expulsions, it did not lead to a permanent change in migration trends, except that some governments (such as Kuwait) were keen to replace Arab migrants, who were seen as politically suspect, with Asian workers, who were generally seen as a more docile workforce. However, migration from Egypt, Sudan and other African countries to the Gulf has often been more persistent and permanent than the *temporary* migration policies intended. In fact, after the Gulf war, migration rates quickly resumed to pre-War levels (Zohry and Harrell-Bond 2003). Semi-legal migrants enter through intricate systems of visa-trading (IOM 2005), and undocumented labour migrants enter the Gulf through making the *hadj*, the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca (Bakewell and de Haas 2007).

In other regions, the sudden oil wealth led to the emergence of new immigration poles. In sub-Saharan Africa for instance, Nigeria emerged as a major destination for intra-African migrants in the 1970s and 1980s. However, misguided economic policies and a major decline in oil production and prices heralded a long period of economic downturn alongside with sustained political repression and mass expulsions of migrants. At the same time, rapid export-led economic growth in the 1980s and 1990s transformed several countries in East and South East Asia, such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and more recently Thailand into migration destinations in their own right (Castles and Miller 2009). At the same time, the new international division of labour and the associated shift towards service-based, knowledge intensive economies led to an increasing demand for high skilled sector workers in the global North. In addition, increased female labour participation, spectacular fertility declines, the demand for foreign marriage partners and population ageing have increased the demand for

lower-skilled service sector workers. Equally, certain jobs in industry, construction and agriculture cannot be outsourced and continue to attract low skilled workers.

There are two fundamental reasons why migration policies appear to have failed to curb migration. Apart from sustained labour demand in an increasingly multi-polar world of multiple migration destinations, mobility seems to have been further spurred by reduction of travel costs and the revolution of communication technology, connecting people over increasingly distant places (cf. Castells 1996). In particular since the late 1970s, advances in road and, particularly, air transport and communication technology and a gradual breakdown of trade barriers and international political integration have spurred a second wave of globalization. The enormous reduction in costs of transportation and communication have facilitated the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world, and the breaking down of barriers that have facilitated the increasing flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge across borders (Stiglitz 2002:9). However, curiously enough, this does not apply for the movement of people, and particularly those living in the global South. Paradoxically, over the same period of globalisation, wealthy countries have *increased* legal restrictions and intensified border controls on migration from poorer countries including ex-colonies. In addition, the effect of lower transport costs and greater communications technology on migration is not unambiguous. For instance, this also makes outsourcing more feasible and thus potentially diminishes the demand of more developed countries for immigrants.³ The combination of these factors perhaps explains why the global number of migrants as a percentage of the world population has hardly changed over this period.

Nevertheless, such restrictions have not been able to reverse the remarkable increase in South-North migration which has constituted the most fundamental shift in global migration patterns over the twentieth century. Following post-WWII decolonisation and rapid economic growth in Western societies, there has been a reversal of global migration movements, in which South-North migration has strongly increased. There has been an increasing concentration of migrants in developed countries. A large share of this increase can be attributed to increasing South-North

³ The author would like to thank one of the reviewers at UNDP for drawing his attention to this point.

migration. Between 1960 and 2005 the percentage of immigrants living in the developed regions has increased from 43 to 63 percent (UNDESA 2006). Recent estimates suggest that over half these immigrants originate from the developing world.⁴

It is important to note here that the current wave of globalisation is fundamentally different from the one that occurred between 1820 and 1914, because the initial conditions are different. Before the first wave, the largest part of the world population was agrarian and differences in human development were relatively small. When the second wave began, it was sharply divided between rich and poor nations (Baldwin and Martin 1999). Within this context, the recent surge in South-North migration does not come as a surprise, certainly if we take into account the fundamental improvements in transport and communication technology, which have increased people's capabilities and aspirations to move.

A second fundamental change has been the dramatic increase in global interconnectivity due to advances in information and communication technology. Although the relative number of international migrants has remained fairly stable over the past century, the overall mobility of people has increased. This has not only facilitated the massive growth in tourism and short-term business travel and commuter mobility, but has also vastly increased the scope for migrants to travel back and forth and maintain transnational social, economic and political ties with origin countries. Although the scale of these movements is much larger than for any other form of mobility, they are not usually covered in migration statistics (Iredale 2008). Moreover, non-migration mobility can give rise to migration, for instance to service tourist needs, and tourism and student migration can metamorphose into de facto labour migration (Hugo 2006). Business people are engaging in trade and other activities over long-distances, while other business people are moving as part of intra-company transfers or related arrangements (Iredale 2008).

⁴ Global Migrant Origin Database v4, Sussex University, updated March 2007, http://www.migrationdrc.org/research/typesofmigration/Global_Migrant_Origin_Database_Version_4.xls

2.4. Challenging sedentarist assumptions

The above overview has shown how migration has been part and parcel of more general processes of nation state building, capitalist expansion, national economic growth, national industrial development, demographic transitions and urbanisation. These processes all tend to be conditional on the transfer of labour from rural to urban areas both within and across borders, while such labour migration seems to further reinforce processes of capitalist accumulation and the increasing concentration of economic activities in urban centres. Together with the mechanisation of agriculture and the expulsion of labour from the agricultural sector, this further fuels migration. This suggests that migration and development are not just reciprocally linked, but part and parcel of the same process.

The above analysis seems adequate and it still seems useful for understanding currently occurring rural-urban migration in many parts of the global South. However it is based on a narrow view of development as process of incorporation into the capitalist global system entailing both industrialisation and urbanisation. Notwithstanding their radically opposed predictions in terms of development outcomes (factor price equalisation vs. deepening development disequilibria), both neoclassical and neo-Marxist migration theory see rural-urban migration within and across borders as an integral part of such a process of capitalist development, by which surplus labour in the rural sector supplies the workforce for the urban industrial economy (Lewis 1954; Todaro 1969).

Patterns of mobility have been frequently linked to specific stages of economic development and economic, technological and demographic transitions (de Haas 2007b; Skeldon 1997; Zelinsky 1971). Such ‘transitional’ models are very useful to understand how development processes tend to be linked to specific forms of mobility and also help to understand that development tend to coincide with increasing (and not decreasing—as is often assumed) mobility and migration. However, their main conceptual flaw is the suggestion that there is an unilinear path towards development, akin to modernization theory (Rostow 1960). Thus, much of mainstream migration theory is firmly entrenched in a ‘modernist ideology’ (Simon 2006: 11) – common to these various schools of development thinking, including modernization, dependency and world

systems theories – which holds to a fundamental belief in the concept of progress,

While this conception of development may appear to entail, or even demand, a high level of mobility, it creates two fundamental problems for the analysis of the relationship between migration and development.

First, it is based on the erroneous assumption that traditional, non-industrial societies are largely immobile. Perceptions that migration is a new phenomenon closely linked to modern capitalist development are based on the ‘myth of the immobile peasant’ (Skeldon 1997: 7-8), or the implicit assumption in much of (Western) popular and scholarly thinking that pre-modern societies consisted of relatively isolated, stable, static, homogeneous peasant communities, in which migration was fairly exceptional. Such false notions of stable peasant societies can be associated with a more sedentarist conservatism rooted in Western, or at least European, thinking (Bakewell 2008; McDowell and de Haan 1997). In particular, it was deeply embedded in the work of the early structural-functionalist school of anthropology whose conservative analysis of African societies portrayed them as homogeneous, largely unchanging and isolated from other groups (Evans-Pritchard 1951; Radcliffe-Brown 1952). Such ideas were already overturned by the Manchester School of anthropologists (e.g. Van Velsen 1960) in the second half the twentieth century for whom labour migration was an important and recurring theme of research. Migration scholars have also drawn attention to this fallacy, for example Skeldon (1997:32) argued that the idea that the Industrial Revolution uprooted peasants from their stable communities for the first time was in fact a romanticized elitist view of peasant life. Historical research on Europe and Japan and in present-day rural developing societies has shown that peasant societies are, and have generally been, highly mobile (Castles and Miller 2009)

Second, romanticized views of a sedentary past, however illusionary, have had a very profound influence on the very concept of development, as currently understood and practiced by many academics, donors and policy makers. The concept of development has its roots in the responses to the chaos of rapid urbanization and industrialization in the 18th century (Cowen and Shenton 1995). Large-scale rural-to-urban migration has almost universally been perceived as a threat. In

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European *citoyens* and urban-based governments perceived rural immigrants as a threat to their established lifestyles, in largely similar ways as urban-based elite groups in developing countries perceive them nowadays (De Soto 2000).

From the outset of the colonial period, the control of mobility was of critical importance. The functioning (and profitability) of the colonial state required that people move to work. It needed large concentrations of populations to come together to provide the labour for mines, plantations and the colonial administration. At the same time, with this large-scale movement of people there was great concern to ensure that such people did not settle permanently in these new centres (Rakodi 1997). Such concerns remained high on the agenda of the emerging field of development studies and practice from the 1950s (Bakewell 2008).

Thus, from the outset large-scale untrammelled migration has been cast as a development problem. While this view appears to have changed over the last decade, there remains a very strong sedentary bias in much of the development practice and literature (Bakewell 2008). It is indeed striking that many scientific studies and the overwhelming majority of policy documents seem to aim either implicitly or explicitly at stopping or at least decreasing internal and international migration (Todaro and Maruszko 1987:111). Most policies are implicitly or explicitly negative on migration and the control and limiting of migration remains a stated goal (McDowell and De Haan 1997). It is intriguing that such migration-decreasing aims are often formulated without explaining why this would actually be desirable. This exemplifies that migration tends to be put *a priori* in a strongly negative light (de Haas 2003).

3. Mobility as human development

The previous section has assessed the intricate links between the structural transformation processes at the macro-level – commonly referred to as ‘development’ – on the one hand, and population mobility on the other. The emergence of contemporary migration patterns is intimately linked to capitalist development, globalisation and the associated social, economic and demographic transformation or transition of both origin and destination areas. In the global South

and North, migration has been part and parcel of the associated processes of capitalist growth, industrialisation, urbanisation and demographic transitions.

Migration is an intrinsic part of that process rather than an independent cause or consequence of it.⁵ Thus migration is both a cause (among many) and a consequence (among many) of processes of social transformation, which underpin human development. Our analysis has also shown that recent changes in the global political economy have spurred South-North migration but have also given rise to increasingly complex and multi-polar migration patterns due to the rise of new migration poles in the Gulf, East and South-East Asia but also particular countries, for instance Ghana, Nigeria, Gabon, South Africa and Libya in Africa.

However, it would be misleading to represent human mobility merely as a derivative of structural transformation processes usually embodied in the term ‘development’, as such a view would reduce migrants to pawns that passively react to macro-forces, thereby ruling out their agency. As argued above, because people have agency, human mobility is as much part of such transformation processes as a factor affecting such processes. The previous section outlined how at the macro level mobility can be understood as an intrinsic part of structural change or ‘development’. In an attempt to further explore the dialectics between structure and agency involved in mobility-migration interactions, the following section will attempt to explore this relationship at the micro-level.

As argued above, it is difficult to analytically separate mobility and human development, because mobility is and has always been an intrinsic part of broader processes of structural change. The causality terminology in which much of the current migration and development debate is framed is therefore problematic. Another major factor that has hampered a transparent debate on the relation between human mobility and development is the common absence of

⁵ While this paper questions conventional cause and effect visions of the relationship between migration and development, we do obviously not question causal theory as such. The key point here is that the relation between migration and development is one of *bidirectional* or mutual causation. Migration does have an independent effect on human development and broader structures, and vice versa (the author thanks one of the reviewers at UNDP for drawing his attention to this point).

explicit definitions of development. While it is apparently taken for granted that there is a common understanding of the term, in fact different academic disciplines, ideologies and individuals attach many different meanings to the term development. The lack of explicit definitions of ‘development’ has rendered academic and policy debates on the connections between mobility, migration and development particularly muddled. Many disagreements in the migration and development debate and the seemingly contradictory results of empirical studies can therefore often be related to different implicit meanings attached to the term development and differences in level of analysis.

It is probably safe to say that the conventional understandings of development – and its relations to mobility and migration – focus on the nation state and that the most conventional yardstick to ‘measure’ development has been income growth at the national level. To a certain extent, this national focus is understandable if we realise the importance of nation-states and national borders in shaping current forms of ‘modern’ mobility. The nation-state focus also lies at the heart of conventional distinctions such as between mobility and migration, internal and international migration and legal and illegal migration.

While the nation-state perspective is vital for understanding current ‘modern’ human mobility, it becomes problematic when it becomes the main or only perspective through which the phenomenon is analysed. This has certainly been the case in much social scientific research into the phenomenon, which has been deeply influenced by governmental perspectives preoccupied by the desire to control mobility, i.e. to ‘manage migration’ (cf. IOM 2008) and harness migration for national (economic) development. Because of funding mechanisms, governments and multilateral migration agencies such as IOM have biased research agendas towards such state-centred perspectives.

In a seminal paper, Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) provided a fundamental critique of ‘methodological nationalism’ – the assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world. This assumption has deeply influenced social science research on the topic. They argued that there are strong parallels between nationalist thinking and

the conceptualization of migration in post-war social sciences. The focus on nation-states and the agency of states has also coincided with an overestimation of the role of migration policies in explaining migration and a concomitant neglect of supra-national and sub-national forces driving migration, such as global economic restructuring and the role of migrant networks in sustaining migration processes. This is unfortunate, because this leaves out of the picture the motivations and implications of migration for the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

Equally, concerns about the 'brain drain' reveal a single focus on the national level, leaving out of the question the progress individuals can make through migrating from environments which offer little prospect for work satisfaction and individual development. In the same vein, much pessimism about the contribution of migration to development in Mediterranean sending countries in the 1960s and 1970s originated in widespread disappointment among governments when initially (unrealistic) expectations that remittances and (return) migration would leverage national economic development were not realised (Bovenkerk 1978; De Mas 1978; Entzinger 1985; Hamdouch, Berrada, Heinemeijer, De Mas, and Van der Wusten 1979; Penninx and van Renselaar 1978). However, this focus on the instrumental function of migration for national economic development completely leaves out of the picture that migration might have improved livelihood security and overall well-being of migrants and their families (de Haas 2003). The other way around, a governmental focus on national economic growth as the only yardstick to measure the contribution of migration to development of the nation can provide justification for policies that harm the well-being of individual migrants and their families and exclude them from fundamental human rights, or even portray certain migrants as fundamental threats to social and physical security.

Classical views of migration and development also largely rule out individual agency, representing migrants as passive pawns being pushed around by economic macro-forces. It would therefore be useful to base our analysis of mobility and development on a broader, more inclusive and agency-oriented concept of human development as put forward by Amartya Sen, who defined development as the *process of expanding the substantive freedoms that people enjoy* (Sen 1999). In order to operationalise such freedoms, Sen used the concept of *human capability*,

which relates to the ability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have.

Sen argued that income growth itself should not be the litmus test for development theorists, but the question should be whether the capabilities of people to control their own lives have expanded. The fundamental assumption here is that the expansion of human capabilities is desirable because it adds to the quality of people's lives. Sen argued that freedom is central to the process of development for two reasons. First of all, there is the *intrinsic* importance of human freedoms as an objective of development, which has to be clearly distinguished from the *instrumental* effectiveness of freedoms of different kinds in also contributing to economic progress.

So, the value of freedoms should not only be judged in their income-generating capacity, but should first and foremost be seen as the principal ends of development in themselves. Sen's fundamental point is that freedoms, such as the opportunity to live long and healthy lives, being well-housed and well-clothed, having the right and access to basic education, enjoying the freedom of employment choice, being able to participate in public debate without fear, and so on, are intrinsic developmental virtues in themselves. Second, besides their intrinsic value, increasing individual freedoms (better education, skills, health, security and access to markets and politics) also happen to be instrumental in promoting economic growth and the further expansion of human freedoms.

Although Sen's use of the concept of freedom is not entirely unproblematic,⁶ his conceptualization of development as the process of expanding the substantive freedoms that people enjoy allows us to take a much broader and more universal view of the character of

⁶ It is important to note that the concept of freedom or liberty is not unproblematic and that there is no general agreement on the definition of the concept. This point was emphasized by Isaiah Berlin (Berlin, Isaiah. 1958. *Two Concepts of Liberty*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.), who made a basic distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' freedom. Negative liberty for Berlin is freedom from restraint, that is, being free from the interference of 'others'. Positive liberty is that which the state permits by imposing regulations that limit some freedoms in the name of greater liberty for all. There is a clear tension between both forms of liberty, but Berlin argued that both kinds of liberty were required for a just society. Equally, Sen (1999) implicitly includes both forms of liberty in his concept of freedom, although the tension is not explicitly resolved.

mobility. Within a capabilities framework, migration is an integral part of human development for two fundamental reasons. On the one hand, people can only move if they have the capability to do so and, thus mobility can be conceived as a way of exercising capabilities. This obviously excludes slavery and deportation, which are the very products of unfreedom, but may include almost all other forms of migration (including many refugee movements and trafficking) where at least some degree of agency is involved.

If people expand their social, economic and human capital this tends to coincide with increasing potential levels of mobility. Increased income, income differentials and associated relative deprivation as well as improved access to information and education tend to increase people's *capabilities* and *aspirations* to move. It is therefore no coincidence that highly developed societies also tend to be highly mobile.

The act of moving in itself *can* add to people's wellbeing. This is not only obvious in forms of mobility such as tourism, but the desire for adventure and curiosity seems to motivate youngsters around the world to discover new horizons. This is the *intrinsic* argument why mobility is an integral part of human development. The more *instrumental* reason is that the act of migrating – the move to a place offering more opportunities in terms of work, education, political rights, safety, health care – may also give people the capabilities to increase their social, economic and political freedoms, and that the prospect of acquiring such capabilities often strongly motivates people to migrate even if the act of migrating itself does not positively affect or even decrease their well-being. If people's capabilities are positively affected by migration, this may increase other people's capabilities to migrate through the effect of remittances, migration-related information and social capital in the form of migrant networks lowering the costs and risks of migrating. Alternatively, those whose capabilities are enhanced by migration may respond by attempting to close down the option for those who come afterwards, thereby reducing the capabilities of others.

However, there is an obvious danger in reasoning that mobility itself is a form of development. Although migration almost always includes some degree of agency, migration may also imply a

decrease in wealth and well-being, especially if such decisions are taken in highly constrained environments. The human capabilities perspective is an *agent-oriented approach*, as it stresses the capacity and responsibility of individuals to shape their own destiny. Nevertheless, it is important to bring structure back into the picture by stressing that the scope for human agency is often severely limited by structural constraints—especially in developing countries. The extent to which migrants are really capable of shaping their own lives (i.e., of acting as free agents) is extremely contingent on the wider institutional and natural environment in which people live. The vital argument migration scholars have been making is that South-North and South-South migration can be a livelihood strategy used by households to overcome developmental constraints such as imperfect markets, unemployment, and inadequate government services in order to reduce income risks (Stark 1991; Stark and Levhari 1982) and to access resources elsewhere that will enable them to increase their freedoms.

From a capabilities perspective it is possible to identify three general mechanisms by which migration and human development are interrelated. First, a certain minimum level of development is necessary for migration to occur in substantial numbers. People need certain freedoms and access to social and economic resources in order to be able to migrate. This relates to the intrinsic value of the very *freedom of moving and working* (Sen 1999). While acknowledging the potential intrinsic value of migration as a liberating experience in itself, it is highly important to stress that freedom of mobility also pertains to the freedom *not* to migrate. Therefore, if people move involuntarily because of political conflicts or if other people force them to do so (e.g., slave trade, governments resettling people, etc.) migration can be a direct expression of a *lack of freedom*. Such exploitative forms of forced migration may serve the direct economic interests of others, but often represent a clear decrease in the well-being of the migrants themselves.

Second, migration has the potential to affect the well-being of the migrants and the families, communities and nations they belong to. Migration-fuelled improvements in living standards and well-being through better housing, sanitation, food, clothing, and electronic household appliances have often been dismissed as ‘non-developmental’. Diatribes by academics and policy

makers against migrants for their profligate and unproductive ways of spending their money are often unfounded because of a failure to understand the complex, often indirect ways that such expenditure can improve the economic status of households and communities (Taylor, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Massey, and Pellegrino 1996:397+411). However, in a capabilities perspective, well-being aspects are intrinsically developmental as long as they increase the capacity of people to be more secure and live the lives they have reason to value. Such well-being aspects are to be considered developmental virtues in themselves, although they have to be weighed against the considerable psychological and social costs that migration may also entail.

Third, besides the intrinsic and direct well-being enhancing potential of migration as such, the freedom-enhancing *potentials* of migration may also have an *instrumental* value in increasing people's capabilities to improve their livelihoods and in contributing to general economic growth and social change, the benefits of which may also accrue to people in non-migrant households.

However, it is important not to jump to the conclusion that migration has 'thus' a direct positive impact on the overall well-being of people and their capabilities. The specific impact of migration on development is mediated by other contextual factors, which explain why there is nothing deterministic about the migration-development relationship. Migration may have widely diverging—positive or negative—concrete impacts on the lives of people, depending on the type and causes of migration, the selectivity of migration, and, above all, the broader developmental context in which migration occurs. This exemplifies the need to connect the analysis of agency and structure in order to understand the fundamental heterogeneous links between migration and human development. Based on a review of the empirical literature, the following sections will explore the diverse ways in which mobility affects human development in sending countries, thereby distinguishing impacts on individual, community/regional and national levels.

4. Mobility as a driver of human development⁷

4.1. Income, poverty and social inequality

Rather than a response to destitution, migrations tend to be a livelihood strategy pursued by social groups (typically households) in reaction to relative deprivation (cf. Quinn 2006; Stark and Taylor 1989; Taylor 1999) to spread income risks and, if possible, improve income levels. Registered remittances sent back to developing countries rose from \$31.1 billion in 1990 to \$76.8 billion in 2000 and to no less than \$240.0 billion in 2007. This surge partly reflects the surfacing of erstwhile informal remittances, improved recording of remittances and depreciation of the US\$.

There is little doubt about the importance of remittances in improving the livelihoods of millions of people. To put this into a perspective, it is claimed that remittances are close to tripling the value of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided to low-income countries (GCIM 2005; Glytsos 2002; Orozco 2002). Because many remittances are sent through informal channels, the actual importance of remittances is even higher than official figures show. Thanks to highly developed informal remittance systems, the economies of countries such as Surinam, Fiji and, particularly, Somalia, are in a much better state than official figures would lead one to believe (Gundel 2002; Pieke, Van Hear, and Lindley 2005).

Even relatively small amounts of remittances can substantially improve the livelihoods and wellbeing of migrants and their families in sending countries. A range of empirical studies have confirmed the positive contribution of international remittances to household welfare, nutrition, food, health and living conditions in migrant sending places and regions (de Haas 2007a; Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, and Taylor 1998; Rapoport and Docquier 2005; WorldBank 2001).

However, the extent to which households succeed in achieving these goals of livelihood

⁷ This section is partly based on an existing review of the relevant empirical literature: de Haas, Hein. 2007. Remittances and Social Development: A Conceptual Review of the Literature. United Nations Research Department for Social Development, Geneva; available online.

improvement critically depends on the destination and selectivity of migration, in which South-North migration generally yields greater increases in income and livelihoods security than internal or South-South migration. For instance, recent studies conducted in Burkina Faso (Hampshire 2002; Wouterse 2006) and Morocco (de Haas 2006a) suggest that internal and (South-South) migration within the African continent should primarily be seen as a means to enhance livelihood security through income diversification and that welfare gains are relatively small. From both countries, it was mainly migration to Europe that allowed household to accumulate substantially more wealth besides stabilising incomes.

Importantly, remittances tend to be counter-cyclical and, hence, have an important function in protecting families from income shocks caused by economic downturns, political conflicts or climatic vagaries and help household to spread income risks and smooth consumption (Alper and Neyapti 2006; Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo 2005; Blue 2004; Kurosaki 2006; Lindley 2006).

Migration and remittances are often ascribed a poverty reducing role. However, the fact that migration tends to be a selective process means that most remittances do not tend to flow to the poorest members of communities (CDR 2002; cf. Schiff 1994), nor to the poorest countries (cf. Kapur 2003; Kapur and McHale 2003). We should therefore be cautious about their poverty-decreasing role. However, there is some evidence that migration and remittances contribute to poverty reduction (Adams 2004; Adams and Page 2005; de Haan 1999). First of all, only a relatively small increase in remittance income can lift people out of poverty. When poor households receive remittances, this can have a large effect on poverty reduction (Adams 2004). Secondly, poor non-migrants may be affected *indirectly* through the economy-wide effects of remittance expenditure on wages, prices and employment in migrant sending communities and countries (Adelman, Taylor, and Vogel 1988; Durand, Kandel, Parrado, and Massey 1996).

Also the effect of migration on income distribution and social inequality is primarily a function of migration selectivity. A recent overview of case studies on migration and inequality across developing countries demonstrated how the relation between migration and inequality varies both between and within regions (Black, Natali, and Skinner 2005). If migrants mainly originate

from relatively wealthy households, which is often the case, migration is more likely to imply greater inequality in the community of origin. Increasing income inequality can exacerbate relative deprivation, and, hence, further increase aspirations to migrate among non-migrants.

Because South-South or internal migration is often less selective than the more costly and risky South-North migration, the effect of the latter form of migration is more likely to be inequality-increasing. A recent survey conducted in Mexico found that a 10 percent increase in international remittances increased rural inequality by 2.8 percent, and that a similar increase in internal remittances reduced rural inequality by 0.1 percent (cf. Taylor, Mora, Adams, and Lopez-Feldman 2005). However, on the intra-regional level, international remittances have the potential to decrease rural-urban income inequality. A study in Mexico found that in Jerez, a rural town in the region of Zacatecas, remittances led rural income to surpass urban income

However, migration selectivity tends to decrease over time, mainly because of the establishment of migrant networks, which diminish the risks and costs of migration (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998), and the flow back of information (Korner 1987). As a consequence, the often initially negative effects of remittances on social and economic equality can be dampened or even reversed over time (Jones 1998; Rapoport and Docquier 2005; Stark, Taylor, and Yitzhaki 1988; Taylor 1999). If migration becomes less selective through network effects or less restrictive migration policies, this can also increase its poverty reducing potential.

4.2. Remittances, investments, consumption and growth

Migration potentially enables migrants and their families to invest in places and countries of origin. Several studies suggest that households receiving international remittances have a higher marginal propensity to invest than non-migrant households (cf. Adams 1991; Lindstrom and Lauster 2001; Massey et al. 1998; Rapoport and Docquier 2005; Taylor 1999; Woodruff and Zenteno 2007), also when controlling for households' initial wealth. Empirical work also suggests the impact of migration on economic productivity in sending areas can initially be negative through the 'lost labour effect'.

However, it seems important not to automatically interpret any reduction in economic activity in rural areas as a negative consequence. After all, as has been argued above, migration is an intrinsic part of more general structural economic transformations and inevitable urbanisation trends. As societies develop they are likely to go through many shifts of specialization patterns in which some sectors, like agriculture, may become progressively less important, and the decline of a particular sector is not necessarily bad for the country's economic development. The same goes for de-population of very marginal rural areas, which seem to be rather a universal component of development processes, which may lead to more optimal allocation of production factors and increased overall welfare.

Furthermore, initially negative effects on production can be reversed in the longer term through remittance expenditure and investment. Such positive local development effects seem to take at least two, three, or even more decades to fully materialize, as migrants have to save money before being able to invest. Taylor (1994) found evidence that the combination of lost-labour and remittances may affect production in migrant sending regions negatively initially but positively eventually. In a study of migration from five African countries to South Africa's mines, Lucas (1987:313) concluded that migration diminishes domestic crop production in the short run, but enhances crop productivity and cattle accumulation through invested remittances in the long run, and increases domestic plantation and farm wages.

However, the extent to which such investments occur, and *where* and in which sector they are allocated, fundamentally depends on migrants' rights, the household's income as well as the specific political and economic conditions in countries and regions of origin, factors which eventually determine their attractiveness for investments. This explains why remittances impact so differently in different countries and regions. Whereas in some cases remittances have enabled migrants to invest in land and cattle (de Haas 2006a; Taylor, Moran-Taylor, and Ruiz 2006; VanWey 2005) in other cases remittances have generally not been dedicated to agricultural improvements and have overwhelmingly been invested in housing and land (Jokisch 2002).

Whereas in some cases most remittance-driven investments have been allocated in sending regions (de Haas 2006a), in others cases migrants prefer to invest in urban areas (McCormick and Wahba 2003). This can even lead to sustained decline of economic activities in migrant-

sending regions. This seems particularly the case when sending regions lack adequate infrastructure, agricultural resources and urban centres providing opportunities to allocate such investments (Berriane 1997; Taylor et al. 1996). Internal migration and South-South migration is perhaps more often associated with rural and agricultural stagnation or even decline (cf. De Haas 1998; Regmi and Tisdell 2002) than international migration to wealthy countries, where much higher remittances potentially enable households to substitute the lost labour and to actually invest in agricultural and other sectors.

Consumptive expenses by migrants and their families are often dismissed as ‘non-productive’. However, local consumptive expenses can have highly positive impacts by providing non-migrants with labour and income through various multiplier effects (Adelman, Taylor, and Vogel 1988; Durand, Kandel, Parrado, and Massey 1996). The same holds true for ‘non-productive’ investments, in particular in housing, which can generate considerable employment and income for many non-migrants (Stark 1980; Stark 1985). In this way, expenditure on housing and consumption may have significant multiplier effects in the wider economy (de Haas 2006a; Djajic 1986; Russell 1992; Taylor et al. 1996).

Besides ignoring the indirect ways in which consumptive expenses and ‘non-productive investments’ expenses can contribute to economic growth, conventional views on migration and development also tend to rest on rather arbitrary definitions of productive investments (Conway and Cohen 1998), which also reflects rather narrow views on what actually constitutes development. Expenditure in areas such as education, health, food, medicines and investments in decent housing, as well as community projects in education, health and recreational facilities can greatly enhance well-being and people’s human capital. For instance, there is evidence that international remittances have a positive influence on (infant) health (Frank and Hummer 2002; Kanaiaupuni and Donato 1999). From an individual and capabilities point of view (Sen 1999) such effects comprise development, apart from the fact that increased capabilities can also be beneficial for economic growth.

Box 1: Impacts of migration on a Moroccan oasis

The Todgha valley is a river oasis located on the southern slopes of the High Atlas Mountains in

Morocco (de Haas 2006a). Since the 1960s, it has experienced large-scale migration to mainly France, but also Belgium, the Netherlands, and, more recently, Spain and Italy. Migration and remittances have had a profound impact on social, cultural and economic life in the region. Taken together, 40 percent of all households are international migrant households of some sort, 25 percent are internal migrant households, while only 35 percent of all households are non-migrant. This has coincided with an overall diversification and urbanisation of the region's economy. Only 4.3 percent of all households rely exclusively on agriculture. Even among non-migrant households, 86.2 percent have local non-agrarian sources of income.

Internal and international remittances account for an estimated 10 and 33.8 percent of the income of all surveyed households, respectively. Among households involved in international migration, remittances account for 53-59 percent of the total cash income. Remittances represent 36 percent of the total income of internal migrant households.

In general, international migration has positively affected economic development in the Todgha valley. The relatively high, stable and secure nature of international remittance income has enabled households to substantially improve living conditions and their well-being and to make various investments in housing, agriculture, enterprises, and education. Increased investments and consumption by international migrant households have significantly contributed to the growth, diversification, partial urbanisation of the regional economy and the creation of employment, from which non-migrants profit in indirect ways. This has even led to migration *towards* the valley by migrants from poorer regions.

International migration has also played a major role in the profound transformation of the physical landscape of the valley consisting of large-scale construction of an almost continuous stretch of houses along the paved roads running through the valley which has completely replaced the old nodal settlement patterns of fortified adobe villages (*ighermane*); and the creation of new farms in the desert through motorised pumping and land reclamation. Most migrants' investments remain within the valley and accelerate existing processes of intra-regional urbanisation; and the rapid urbanisation and the increasing concentration of social and

economic activities in Tinghir, the valley's rapidly growing urban centre where many migrants build second houses and allocate their investments.

Besides an effective way of accessing higher income, international migration has also been a livelihood strategy to overcome socio-cultural constraints such as ethnic and gender inequality for low-status ethnic groups. For youngsters, in particular, migration abroad is also synonymous with better educational opportunities and more freedom of personal expression and behaviour. While the income of international migrant household is more than double that of other household on average, income and living conditions of *internal* migrant households do not significantly differ from non-migrant households. Therefore, risk spreading through income diversification seems to be the main rationale behind internal migration. Internal migration also increases the chances of gaining access to better-paid jobs in cities and, eventually, to international migration.

International migration has given rise to a new socio-economic divide between households with and without access to international migration resources. Sustained inequality between international migration 'haves' and 'have-nots' seems to be reinforced by the mainly kinship-based access to migration networks. Recruitment and the absence of visas until the 1973 Oil Crisis meant that migration was accessible to the relatively poor. Due to increasing migration restrictions, access to migration has become more selective and mainly accessible for members of migrant families (through transnational marriages or other family migration strategies) and the relatively wealthy. Given the prevailing 'culture of migration', this has led to frustration among younger, better-educated and highly ambitious generations, who see themselves more and blocked from international mobility.

It would be wrong to assume that migration-driven development has led to a decreasing propensity to migrate. On the contrary, international labour migration, in particular, to southern Europe, experienced a resurgence since the 1990s. Although migration has arguably contributed to a substantial improvement in living conditions and to a decrease in absolute poverty, exposure to the relative wealth of migrants, along with drastically improved education and increasing media exposure, has spurred aspirations and increased feelings of relative deprivation among

non-migrants. In brief, the personal aspirations of oasis dwellers have increased faster than local and national livelihood opportunities, and migration continues. Despite the generally positive impact on people's livelihoods, there is also reason to believe that the development potential of migration is far from being fully realised due to unreliable economic growth, a slow and corrupt bureaucracy and legislature as well as an overall lack of trust in the state (de Haas 2006a).

4.3. Gain or drain? Migration, human capital formation and education

While remittances can bring substantial financial gains for individual migrants, their families as well as origin communities, the loss of human capital through the loss of 'brawn' (Penninx 1982) and 'brains' (Adams 1969) are often seen as undermining the economic development potential of communities and nations of origin. Although these concerns are valid, we should not forget that for *individual* migrants the brain and brawn drain often mean a chance to find meaningful employment, pursue a career and improve the livelihoods of their families. This exemplifies the importance of distinguishing individual, community/regional and national levels of analysis.

While the literature on migration and national development in sending countries has been more concerned about the emigration of the highly skilled ('brains'), the literature on migration and development in rural sending regions has traditionally been concerned with the loss of agricultural workforce ('brawn'). The massive departure of young, able-bodied men and women from rural areas (cf. Lewis 1986) has been typically blamed for causing a critical shortage of agricultural and other labour, depriving areas of their most valuable, able-bodied working force (Lipton 1980; Rubenstein 1992; Taylor 1984). The research literature indicates that large-scale out-migration from rural regions can disrupt economic production and lead to a decline of productivity in the agricultural and other traditional sectors (De Haas 1998). However, on the longer term this immediately negative effect can be counterbalanced by remittance-fuelled investments, provided that the regional investment environment is sufficiently attractive.

On the national level, migration is often believed to be an *obstacle* to development or even aggravate underdevelopment because it would deprive poor countries of their scarce human resources. However, there are various reasons to question the brain drain hypothesis. First, the

brain drain seems to be only truly massive in a minority of countries. Adams (2003) concluded that international migration does not tend to take a very high proportion of the best educated. In two-thirds of the 33 large emigration countries he surveyed, less than ten per cent of the best-educated (tertiary educated) population had migrated. The emigration of highly educated migrants seems to be only massive in a limited number of smaller countries and specific sectors, such as health care.

However, the real question is whether such skilled labour would have been productive if migrants had stayed. This is too often taken for granted. For instance, in poor MENA countries such as in the Maghreb, Egypt, Jordan and Yemen there is high unemployment among university graduates. Mass unemployment and frustration among a new generation of relatively well-educated youngsters has become a general social problem, and it is often suggested that their social and political exclusion is one of the major explanations for the radicalism in the region. Decades of government job guarantees for graduates have induced students to seek any degree, regardless of its utility in the production, since a degree, by itself, has long been a guarantee of a government job. Governments can no longer provide the necessary jobs, while statist policies impede private sector job creation (Richards 2003:6-7).

In Morocco, for instance, a large share of the new generation of generally middle class high school and university graduates form a frustrated new class of youth eager to emigrate. High unemployment, the lethargy of the educational system and state bureaucracy, and the general inaccessibility to stable jobs for those without good connections condemn many young people of this 'detached middle class' (Cohen 2001) to frustrating and humiliating inactivity (Davis 1989; de Haas 2003). The various associations of unemployed graduates and PhDs form a major social movement, which stages regular demonstrations in front of the national parliament in Rabat.

Although such a brain drain can further erode the skill base, and there seems to be a rather close correlation between high levels of brain drain and underdevelopment, it is important to disentangle cause and effect. Most high skilled individuals migrate because of a lack of meaningful employment and career opportunities. This led Lowell and Findlay (2002:30-31) to

observe that emigration of the higher skilled compounds the fundamental problems that led to skilled emigration in the first place. For instance, the migration of health workers is often claimed to be extremely harmful for sending countries, and is said to have created labour shortages in the health sectors in countries such as Ghana and South Africa. However, a recent study using a new database of health worker emigration from Africa suggested that low health staffing levels and poor public health conditions are the result of factors entirely unrelated to international movements of highly trained health professionals (Clemens 2007). Such factors include unattractive working conditions in the public health sector and the failure to provide basic health services (for instance, prevention of oral dehydration during diarrhoea, a lack of malaria prophylaxis and a lack of basic primary treatment for acute respiratory infections) which do not require highly trained personnel to deliver (Clemens 2007). This is corroborated by another study that concluded that migration is a symptom, not a cause, for failing health systems, and that most elite health workers would not provide basic health care to those most in need if they had stayed (DRC 2006).

Furthermore, there is evidence that brain drain can be accompanied by a significant long-term brain gain, because the prospect of moving abroad (brain drain) can encourage stay-behinds to study (Fan and Stark 2007; Stark, Helmenstein, and Prskawetz 1997). If the opportunity to migrate increases the economic returns to education, this can motivate non-migrants to invest in education with a view to emigrating (WorldBank 2005). This motivational effect is additional to the role of remittances in potentially *enabling* family and community members of migrants to study. Several studies have indicated that remittances increase educational expenditure in origin households (Adams 2006; Yang 2004), reduce the likelihood of children leaving school (Cox Edwards and Ureta 2003), and increase the number of children, in particular girls, who complete schooling (Hanson and Woodruff 2002, cited in; Rapoport and Docquier 2005). Fan and Stark (2007) theorised that the prospect of international migration can be an explanation of 'educated unemployment' in several developing countries, such as the MENA countries mentioned above. If the resulting brain gain exceeds the brain drain, a developing country may end up with more educated workers (Fan and Stark 2007).

On the other hand, there is some evidence that migration may also create *negative* incentives for education. This seems specifically the case in migration systems predominated by low skilled, often undocumented migration, where few if any positive externalities of education can be expected. For instance, a Mexican or a Moroccan cleaner with a university education in Spain or the United States is unlikely to earn significantly more than a colleague with only a primary education. There is indeed some evidence from Mexican household surveys indicating that international migration has a negative effect on the level of schooling of children (McKenzie 2006). Other empirical work suggests that schooling has no effect on incentives for international migration from rural Mexico, whereas schooling has positive effects on *internal* migration incentives (Mora and Taylor 2006; Özden 2006).

Furthermore, the departure of the highly skilled may have long-term beneficial effects in the form of a counterflow of remittances, investments, trade relations, new knowledge, innovations, attitudes and information in the medium to long run. Migrants have also played an important role as innovating and transnationally operating entrepreneurs and investors in countries such as Turkey and India (Castles and Delgado Wise 2008). Through such social and political investments migrants can contribute to shaping a better societal climate in countries of origin in general, although migrants can also destabilise countries, for instance through fuelling civil war (cf. Nyberg-Sorensen, Van Hear, and Engberg-Pedersen 2002; Van Hear 2003).

Many developing countries face mass unemployment among the highly skilled, which is the partial result of misguided education policies, which do not reflect the true skill and knowledge needs of developing economies. There is often over-investment in higher education and under-investment in primary and secondary education and vocational training. This all casts some doubt on the assumption that the emigration of the highly skilled would *automatically* represent a loss. In such situations, it may not come as a surprise that many higher educated people wish to emigrate to improve their overall well-being and that also many governments consider emigration as a useful economic safety valve in order to relieve political tensions (Castles and Delgado Wise 2008; Duany 1994; Heinemeijer, van Amersfoort, Ettema, De Mas, and van der Wusten 1977). In many cases, the long-term individual and collective gains may effectively

outweigh the immediate costs of migration. In fact, many governments consider skilled labourers to be an export product and thus willingly create surpluses of certain categories of the highly skilled (Castles and Delgado Wise 2008; de Haas 2005).

4.4. Social and cultural change

While the pivotal role of migration and remittances in social and economic reproduction of rural and urban sending communities has been widely acknowledged (Heinemeijer et al. 1977; Klooster 2005), migration also tends to affect socio-ethnic structures and culture in sending communities and even on the national level. Even more than with economic impacts, it is difficult to oppose negative and positive impacts, because they are often two sides of the same coin, and some members of families and communities may be affected more positively or negatively than others.

For instance, migration, particularly by women, often disrupts traditional care arrangements for children and the elderly (King and Vullnetari 2006) and causes long-term separation between spouses and parents and children (Pribilsky 2004). On the other hand, migration remittances may enable households to improve their livelihoods, children's education and to substitute family carers for paid carers. While international migration may deter personal relations while the migrants are abroad, after returning to their origin community, the remittances and savings accumulated by migrants also enable the purchase of housing, businesses, and land, which help provide the necessary capital to marry and start a family (Parrado 2004).

Box 2: Frustrated migration aspirations and involuntary immobility in rural Mali

Drawing upon five months of ethnographic fieldwork in a Malian Soninke village, Jónsson (2007; 2008) analysed the local meaning of migration and the experience of involuntary immobility amongst young Soninke men who aspired to migrate but were unable to do so. In Mali, people of Soninke ethnicity are defined by a 'culture of migration' and since the 1960s, a large number of men from the Kayes region of Mali have supported their rural families as labour migrants in France. After the Second World War, Soninke migrants were a welcome labour force in France; but from the mid-1970s, restrictions on immigration have increased, and today,

unskilled West Africans are generally considered a social burden that must be barred from entry, not only in France, but in most Western destinations. A young Soninke man's prospects of pursuing the trajectory of previous generations by making a livelihood based on international migration are therefore bleak.

As a thirty-something returned migrant said: "Today there are more young men in the village than before, youngsters who cannot go on *aventure*. They are hanging around, bored, because there is nothing to do. The rain usually does not last more than three months. There are no industries here where the youth can work. The government has done nothing here! If the French do not want us to go there, then they must come here and help us. We have to find the means for the youth to work. The youth is the misery."

The economy of most villages in the Kayes region can be described as 'assisted self-sufficiency', since farming is complemented by migrants' remittances. The money migrants remit to their relatives in the village is indispensable to the survival of most households. Moreover, the communal projects funded by migrants had done much to develop the local infrastructure. The Malian government and NGOs are conspicuously absent in Kayes, where most development projects are partially or entirely funded by emigrants, who, in a sense, act as substitutes for the State.

As a form of livelihood, migration to the Soninke people is not only a matter of money, but has also affected the social construction of the ideal life. Jónsson shows that transnationalism and migration are vital features of community life. Migration has become central to the 'social becoming' of young Soninke men and can therefore be considered as a 'rite of passage'.

Confronted with increased migration restriction, the young men in the village develop various strategies to cope with their current sense of immobility. One strategy of social becoming was to pursue alternative livelihoods, based on either education or local economic activities. Another reaction to immobility was to contest dominant notions of youth and social becoming, either through a form of 'youth rebellion' or by joining an imagined world community. Migration has

become an indispensable feature of the Soninke society and the ideal life trajectory of men. Therefore, the increased immobility of young Soninke men constitutes a social crisis.

Villagers' experiences of transnationalism and immobility are two main features of contemporary forms of globalisation. Not only migrants live transnational lives; so do the people living in the migrants' place of origin. But this does not mean that they participate on equal terms in the world of global flows. Globalisation is not merely defined by networks – real or imagined – but also by a hierarchy of mobility. And while villagers' enmeshment in global networks reinforces young men's migration aspirations, it makes the experience of immobility the more frustrating.

Migration and remittances can have profound consequences for social, class and ethnic hierarchies in sending communities if lower status groups manage to migrate internally or internationally, which may upset traditional social hierarchies (de Haas 2006a; Ilahiane 2001; Taylor, Moran-Taylor, and Ruiz 2006). While traditional elite groups might view such migration as a devastating process, lower or middle-class groups may have a more mixed or positive opinion. In San Pedro Pinula (Guatemala), for instance, the migration and return of Mayan residents has permitted them to slowly challenge ethnic roles that have developed over the last five centuries (Taylor, Moran-Taylor, and Ruiz 2006). Migration provides income for families which may undercut traditions of community service (Mutersbaugh 2002) and accelerate processes of family nucleation and individualisation (de Haas 2006a). On the other hand, remittances from migrants may benefit sending communities as a whole (VanWey, Tucker, and McConnell 2005).

In south Moroccan oases, internal and international migration has been an important avenue for upward socio-economic mobility for the *haratin*, a low-status social group mainly consisting of black sharecroppers. In this case, *new* forms of inequality, which are to a considerable extent based on access to international remittances, have been partly superimposed upon the traditional, caste-like forms of hereditary inequality based on kinship, skin colour and highly unequal land

ownership (de Haas 2006a). There are no objective standards for determining which form of inequality was worse. However, it is important not to construct an overly romantic image of traditional rural communities. For instance, traditional oasis society used to deny basic human freedoms to large sections of the population (including women, slaves, serfs and sharecroppers). In such cases, instead of increased inequalities per se, it is perhaps better to speak of new inequalities based on access to external monetary resources through livelihood diversification, a process in which migration has tended to play a preponderant role.

Levitt (1998) coined the term social remittances to describe local-level, migration-driven forms of cultural diffusion. Social remittances are the ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to sending-country communities. Levitt stressed the role of these resources in immigrant entrepreneurship, community and family formation and political transformations. The social and cultural changes affected by migration and remittances are themselves likely to affect future propensities to migrate. In this context, the literature refers to a ‘culture of migration’ in which international migration is associated with personal, social, and material success, where migration has become the norm rather than the exception, and staying home associated with failure (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, and Taylor 1993) (see box 2).

Migration can have a profound influence on life rhythm and ‘seasonality’. In many parts of rural Morocco, instead of the traditional harvest seasons in spring and/or autumn, the July-August months have now become the yearly economic and cultural peak season, when Moroccan migrants living in France, Spain, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands return to spend their summer holiday in Europe. Markets are at their busiest, and the summer holiday season has also become the peak season for marriages between migrants’ children and family or acquaintances living in their region of origin. This continues to propel chain migration through family formation (de Haas 2003; McMurray 2001).

Although the expression ‘culture of migration’ is widely used in relation to emigrant sending countries and areas – including the Philippines, various West African countries, Cape Verde, the

Caribbean and Mexico – the notion has not been sufficiently theorised. We can see a culture of migration as a ‘habitus’, which is ‘hard-wired’ or ingrained in the daily life of individuals, households, societies and nations. Bourdieu extended Marcel Mauss’s original concept of habitus focusing on ‘body techniques’ to include beliefs and dispositions, states of mind that are neither wholly voluntary nor wholly involuntary. In the case of migration cultures, those with a propensity to migrate will have forgotten, or mythologized, the reasons why earlier generations left. By the same token they may continue to migrate even though a rational choice may suggest that staying at home is more advantageous.⁸ The term ‘culture of migration’ can be misleading in the sense that it might suggest that the rising aspirations and outward-looking mentality is the exclusive consequence of the exposure of non-migrants to migrants’ wealth and their relative well-being. Other general processes, such as improved education and media exposure, also play an important role in opening people’s eyes to the wider world and other values and help raise aspirations (de Haas 2003). It is therefore difficult to disentangle the impact of migration from other general transformation processes affecting local, regional and national cultures

Migration by men and women also tends to affect gender relations in sending communities. Although it has been sometimes assumed that migration of men encourages the emancipation of women who stay behind (cf. Fadlollah, Berrada, and Khachani 2000), limited empirical evidence suggests that migration has no or only a limited structural impact on gender roles, and may actually serve to reproduce them (Day and İçduygu 1997; Hampshire 2006; Myntti 1984; Taylor 1984; Van Rooij 2000). When women migrate themselves, the potential for gender roles to change may be larger, but should also not be overestimated. Gammage (2004) found that, through migration and remittances, Haitian women have challenged traditional gender roles. However, a study of four Mexican immigrant communities in North Carolina, US, challenged the expectation that migrant women easily incorporate mainstream US behavioural patterns and cultural values. Rather, the authors observed a process of selective assimilation, in which some elements brought from communities of origin are discarded, others are modified and others are reinforced in this process (Parrado and Flippen 2005).

⁸ The author is grateful to Robin Cohen for raising his attention to this point and suggesting the reference to the concept of habitus.

It is important to disentangle the effects of migration and remittances from more general processes of social and cultural change affecting migrant-sending communities. The latter are often more important, although migration may play an accelerating or reinforcing role in such processes. Particularly in the longer term there might be (inter-generational) gains for women, such as the education enabling role of remittances and the role models migrant women might represent (Crivello 2003; Taylor, Moran-Taylor, and Ruiz 2006). Based on research in four Guatemalan sending communities, Taylor et al. (2006) concluded that migration and social remittances may permit an erosion of traditional gender and ethnic roles, but that such changes are gradual because migrants, despite their increased earnings and awareness, run into a social structure that resists rapid change. In the Moroccan Rif mountains, Crivello (2003) demonstrated that, by working abroad, women may enhance their roles as economic providers to the families left behind, which tends to diminish the potential stigma attached to female migration. Traditional gender roles are often maintained throughout the migration cycle, and transformations of patriarchal power structures are more likely to be generational (King, Dalipaj, and Mai 2006).

Courbage (1996) and Fargues (2006) hypothesized that – besides factors such as higher age of marriage, increased female labour force participation and improved education – the migration from north African to European countries – as opposed to Egyptian migration to conservative Gulf countries, where the effect would be the reverse – has contributed to the diffusion and adoption of European marriage patterns and small family norms, and so has played an accelerating role in the demographic transition. This shows how important it is to take into account the specific cultural context of destination societies and the relative differences with origin societies when assessing the social and cultural impacts of migration.

4.5. Migrants' participation in civic and political life

Migration does not only affect processes of human development through individual social and financial remittances. Migration also affects social and political life in countries of origin in a

broader sense. Migrants and their descendants often tend to remain involved with origin countries through business investments, frequent return visits or collective initiatives to promote the development of places of origin.

Migrants often play an important role in the civil society of countries of origin, but many states have had ambiguous attitudes towards emigrants. While many states see migration as an effective safety valve to reduce unemployment, poverty and political unrest, they also regard migrants as potential political dissidents. From this, one can argue that migration and remittances can become an instrument to diminish pressure for structural domestic reform and can effectively sustain the position of elite groups rather than lead to change and emancipation of minority groups (Castles and Delgado Wise 2008; de Haas 2007c; Gammage 2006; Kireyev 2006). In other cases, migrants themselves are often from middle-class or elite groups (see Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003) and, therefore, might not necessarily represent the view of the poor and the oppressed, but instead effectively sustain oppressive political systems.

Box 3 Migration for development or instead of development: the Philippines

Since the 1970s, successive Philippine governments have encouraged emigration of workers. Millions have gone to the Gulf oil countries or the fast growing economies of other Asian countries. Women from the Philippines are important as domestic workers, nurses and other service employees in many parts of the world. Filipino men work as seafarers under many flags. Millions of others have moved as long-term or permanent emigrants to the USA, Canada or Australia. But has emigration done much to overcome economic backwardness and achieve development?

Today, the Philippines is the world's labour exporter par excellence (rather like Italy fifty years ago). Eight million Filipinos are abroad, roughly 10 per cent of the country's 85 million people. Remittances grew from US\$103 million in 1975 to 12.8 billion in 2006 (CBP 2007). In 2004, remittances were equivalent to 11.8 per cent of the Philippines' GDP (World Bank 2006). The state has hailed overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) as the country's new heroes (*bagong bayani*)

(Asis 2008). But for many this degree of dependence on emigration is problematic: not migration for development, but migration instead of development.

Filipinos are to be found all over the world. Permanent settlement in the USA, Canada and Australia grew from the 1960s. Under the Marcos martial law regime of the 1970s, export of labour became a key element of economic policy. Since then, ever-increasing numbers of OFWs have been officially deployed overseas on a temporary basis: first to the Gulf States and then to other Asian countries. Filipinos also have an increasing presence in Europe, particularly in Italy and Spain. Emigration has become part of normal life for millions of Filipinos and their communities, leading to the emergence of a culture of migration, in which even 10-12 year-old children have the expectation of working abroad (Asis 2008).

The Philippine Government takes an active role in migration management:

- Prospective migrants have to register with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) within the Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE). POEA is also responsible for licensing recruitment agencies.
- The Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) was established in 1977 to foster the welfare of migrants and their families left at home. It sends welfare officers to destination countries, and is responsible for reintegration programmes and workers' education.
- The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) was established in 1980 and is primarily concerned with permanent emigrants. Its purpose is to nurture the ties between emigrants and the Philippines. It also provides courses for departing emigrants. Measures taken in 2003 to maintain links with the diaspora include the right to vote in national elections for Filipinos abroad and the right of Filipinos who have acquired another citizenship to reacquire or retain their Filipino citizenship (Asis 2008).

DOLE is also responsible for sending labour attachés to the 34 Philippines Overseas Labour Offices attached to Philippines consulates abroad (Asis 2008). However, Philippine officials often find themselves powerless against unscrupulous agents and abusive employers, who may have the backing of the police and other authorities in receiving countries. In June 1995,

following strong public calls for better protection for migrants, the Philippine Parliament passed the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act – the ‘OFWs’ Magna Carta’. This Act claimed to represent a shift in philosophy away from the primacy of economic goals, in favour of protecting the dignity and human rights of Filipinos. Specific policies included selective deployment favouring certain occupations and destinations; measures to improve information for prospective migrants; and a ‘country-team approach’ to improve cooperation between government agencies (Go 1998).

But as Asis points out, the passing of the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act ‘was important for what it signified rather than for what it has actually achieved’ (Asis 2008). There is no evidence of dramatically reduced migration of female entertainers or domestic workers, nor of substantial improvement in the conditions of Filipino OFWs. A major difficulty is the unwillingness of many labour-recruiting countries to cooperate by entering into bilateral agreements with the Philippines, or by adhering to multilateral instruments such as ILO Conventions and the 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

The Philippines is an important test case: the country has become a primary source of workers and skilled personnel in the global labour market. Remittances have improved the lives of many poor families and communities. But there is little sign of significant developmental impacts. Indeed the Philippines has fallen behind other countries that were economically comparable a generation ago, like Korea, Thailand and Malaysia. Long-term – and indeed deepening – dependence on labour export and remittances is not a recipe for sustainable economic and social development. As Asis states: ‘None of the Asian countries that had made the transition from country of origin to country of destination made it on the strength of deployment and/or remittances’ (Asis 2008).

On the other hand, the dependence of states on remittances for maintaining domestic stability and financing trade deficits can increase their willingness to engage with emigrant populations and increase their voice in internal political affairs. Migrants’ considerable political and

economic weight can therefore eventually create a push for political and economic reforms, democratisation, increasing transparency, and the emancipation of minority groups in sending states (Eckstein 2004; Massey et al. 1998; Newland and Patrick 2004; Van Hear, Pieke, and Vertovec 2004). Recently, more and more states have embarked upon ‘diaspora engagement policies’ through extending political and economic rights to emigrants and allowing dual citizenship (cf Gamlen 2006)

For instance, the Moroccan state has long attempted to maintain tight control on ‘its’ subjects living in Europe. Since the 1960s, the state actively discouraged migrants’ social and political integration because this was seen as endangering the flow of remittances and creating political opposition from outside. However, the failure of these ‘remote control’ policies and an ominous stagnation in remittances prompted the state to change course over the 1990s. On the surface, repression has given way to the active courting of the rapidly expanding diaspora. Along with policies to facilitate holiday returns, remittances and to co-opt former exiles, the state adopted a positive attitude towards migrants’ dual citizenship and integration. Despite the apparent success of these policies, the recent spectacular increases in remittances and holiday visits could only be achieved because of continuing emigration and because these targeted policies were an integral part of a more general process of reform. However, reform has only been partial and the state has not given up a number of instruments to control and foster links with ‘its’ emigrants. While the state tries to strike a delicate balance between courting and controlling the expanding Moroccan Diaspora, some European politicians see these policies as running counter to integration policies. This can result in conflicting sovereignty claims made by Moroccan and European states (de Haas 2007c).

The Turkish government, aware that the Turkish migrant communities contribute important ‘political’ remittances, has actively promoted programmes and policies to encourage migrants’ involvement in Turkey. Most initiatives offer financial incentives. These include allowing tariff-free imports for the channelling of remittances and inviting the conversion of foreign currency savings into Turkish lira to establish Turkish Workers Companies. Other policies offer a mixture of financial and civic incentives, such as the reduction of the compulsory national service period

in exchange for a payment in foreign currency to the government. The experiences of migrant communities in destination countries can also prompt legal changes. In response to Turkish immigrants' concerns regarding property ownership, political rights and the military service, the Turkish government modified its citizenship law in 1981 to allow for dual citizenship. This at once recognised that Turkish immigrants abroad were not guest workers and therefore needed to secure their rights abroad, but also allowed them to retain citizens' rights such as the ability to operate businesses and to work in Turkey like any Turkish citizen (Avci and Kirişci 2008).

Box 4: Diaspora associations and development: evidence of impacts on origin communities in Ghana and Senegal

Migrants frequently establish associations, often referred to as Hometown Associations (HTAs), with the aim of pooling their resources in order to promote development projects in communities of origin. Although such 'collective remittances' are very limited in comparison to individual remittances, such initiatives have the potential to overcome at least some structural obstacles to development, such as lack of roads and potable water distribution systems. Migrants' collective development initiatives have featured centrally in recent debates on migration and development. They also form the focus of 'co-development' policies adopted by France and other European countries (de Haas 2006b). To increase the impact and sustainability of projects, migrant associations have created partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as the private sector (Orozco and Rouse 2007).

There is not much knowledge on the actual impact of such development projects due to weaknesses in project monitoring and assessment (Orozco and Rouse 2007). However, such assessments exist for some projects supported by the Migration for the Development in Africa (MIDA) programme in Italy and Ghana/Senegal. This programme, which started in 2002, has been implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Rome. The 18 rural/local development projects supported through this programme aimed to establish partnerships to channel collective remittances of Ghanaian and Senegalese migrant associations based in Italy to origin countries. Such collective remittances spent by the migrant associations were matched by IOM and Italian government agencies and non-governmental organisations as

well as local, provincial and regional government agencies. The projects promoted included infrastructural and technological development, agricultural development, responsible tourism and entrepreneurial activities, or a combination thereof (Stocchiero 2008).

Project evaluations led by CeSPI (Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale) found that the projects implemented had positive outcomes, notably through improvements in the quality of life of origin communities and of the migrants themselves. However, the observed impacts were limited, both due to the small scale of the projects and to the structural constraints that exists at the local levels in areas of residence and at the national and international level, such as immigration restrictions. Contrary to mainstream migration and development discourse, most migrants do not transfer skills to origin countries, mainly because many migrants in the Italian labour market frequently find themselves in conditions of low skilled employment and underemployment, which do not allow them learn new skills (Stocchiero 2008).

Comparison between the Senegalese and Ghanaian projects also yielded interesting findings. The Senegalese associations, which were typically composed of young and single males, were more conducive to forge local partnerships than the associations of Ghanaian migrants, whose communities were not so open due to their close association with Pentecostal churches. In the end, a local community's interest in participating in political life, the (positive or negative) opinion of migrants in communities of residence, the availability of intermediaries to facilitate relationships were found to play an important role in migrants' ability and confidence in approaching partners and the success of projects.

The study highlighted the instrumental role of migrant associations' leaders in creating the social and financial capital needed to promote development projects in the origin communities. Their ability to bridge cultural landscapes by negotiating within the migrant community and with the various stakeholders in the destination country *and* in the origin area was essential for the success of projects (Stocchiero 2008).

Depending on who migrates, migration can be seen as either a force of change or maintaining the

current power status quo. Because migrants can have all possible political colours as well as religious, ethnic and class backgrounds, the political impacts of migration cannot be easily predicted. And, evidently, there is no objective, scientific yardstick to determine which direction of political change is ultimately desirable. Migrants can be a potential force for structural political change in poor and fragile states. In some countries, (return) migrants who studied and worked abroad have played an important role in reforming domestic policies (cf. Massey *et al.* 1998). On the other hand, migrants may also contribute both to sustained conflicts, for instance by providing support for warring parties (Nyberg-Sorensen, Van Hear, and Engberg-Pedersen 2002; Van Hear 2003). Migrants are often from middle-class or elite groups (Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003) and, therefore, might not necessarily represent the views of the poor and the oppressed.

Beside individual remittances, ‘collective remittances’ are sent by groups such as hometown associations to be used for development projects for the benefit of the community of origin (Goldring 2004; Lacroix 2005). These usually take the form of basic infrastructure and communication projects such as the construction of roads, bridges, potable water systems, drainage, wells, electrification, telephones, and so on. Nonetheless, collective remittances are only a fraction of those sent back individually to families (Orozco and Rouse 2007) and therefore their potential development impact should not be overestimated (see also box 4)

4.6. Migration, remittances and national economic development

Whereas studies on the impact of migration on the human development of individuals, communities and regions incline towards the positive side, studies on the effects of migration and remittances on *national* economic development tend to be more ambiguous. An important caveat is that most of the long-term and indirect impacts of migration on national economic growth – such as the impact of migration on the entrepreneurial climate, skill transfers and political reform – are almost impossible to measure. Almost all macro studies have therefore focused on remittances. Macro-studies on the impact of remittances on national economic growth have yielded contradictory findings (Chami, Fullenkamp, and Jahjah 2005; Leon-

Ledesma and Piracha 2004). While some studies find positive effects, others find none or negative effects, but most studies that do find significant effects also observe that these effects are generally small. It has also been argued that remittances can contribute to undesirable currency appreciation (Dutch disease) (Lopez, Molina, and Bussolo 2007), create disincentives for domestic savings and support private consumption of (imported) goods instead of financing investment, which can potentially hamper competitiveness and increase trade deficits (cf. Kireyev 2006).

Conflicting empirical findings on the economic macro-impacts of remittances are not necessarily at odds on a theoretical level: The macro-economic impact of remittances is disparate across countries because it is ultimately contingent on the social relations and structures in which the remitted foreign currency becomes embedded (cf. Eckstein 2004).

Can migration and remittances *alone* trigger economic growth? Probably not. Although migration and remittances play a vital role in securing and actually improving the livelihoods of millions of people in the developing world, it would be naïve to expect that remittances alone can solve more structural development obstacles, such as an unstable political environment, misguided macro-economic policies, lack of safety, legal insecurity on property, bureaucracy, corruption and deficient infrastructure. A recent longitudinal analysis on determinants of GDP growth in sub-Saharan Africa found that the impact of remittances was much more negative in countries with low scores on governance indicators than in countries with better governance structures (Ahoure 2008).

With regards to the Dutch disease, it has been recently claimed that Dutch disease is less likely to occur with remittances than with natural resource booms, primarily because remittances are distributed more widely and are less likely to be associated with exacerbating strains on institutional capacity that are often associated with natural resource booms (WorldBank 2006).

In unfavourable investment environments, remittances might significantly improve livelihoods of migrant-sending families and communities, but do little to promote growth while provoking

passive dependence on remittances and even decrease economic growth. However, if development in origin countries takes a positive turn, if countries stabilise and economic growth starts to take off, it is also highly likely that migrants will be among the first to join in and recognise such new opportunities and, reinforce these positive trends through investing and, to some extent, returning to their origin countries. This has happened in the past decades with several former emigration countries as diverse as Spain, Taiwan and South Korea, and might currently be happening in a country like Turkey, where many Turks living in Germany are active as transnational entrepreneurs. In such contexts, migrants' social, economic and civic activities are likely to accelerate such growth and reinforce overall development.

4.7. Conclusion

Empirical evidence indicates that migration is a vital part of risk-spreading livelihood strategies pursued by households and families in developing countries. In particular, remittances have the potential to improve well-being, stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty directly and indirectly, while their effects on inequality are much more ambiguous, and primarily depend on the selectivity of migration. The impressive body of empirical evidence available highlights the fundamentally *heterogeneous* nature of the ways in which mobility affects processes of human development. Depending on the specific context in which migration occurs, the level of analysis and the dimension of development considered as well the selectivity of migration, migration can affect human development both positively and negatively, and such impacts tend to vary across different classes and population groups and are also contingent on spatial and temporal scales of analysis. This should forestall any blanket assertions on this issue.

Box 5 Migration as a force for change or for reinforcing the status quo?

A recent book based on studies of the experiences of five major emigration countries – India, Mexico, Morocco, Philippines and Turkey – sought to examine whether migration had in fact helped bring about sustainable development in these countries (Castles and Delgado Wise 2007; Castles and Delgado Wise 2008). With regard to economic remittances, the country studies

showed a diversity of experiences within and between countries of origin. The general lesson from the comparison was that remittances did not automatically lead to economic and social changes of benefit to the population of emigration countries. The claimed positive link between remittances and economic growth only applied if appropriate policies were put in place to encourage legal transfers and productive investment, to reduce corruption and unnecessary bureaucracy, and to provide an investment-friendly infrastructure.

The experience with technology transfer and return of the highly skilled was rather similar: positive effects were only realised if opportunities and structures in emigration countries changed in such a way that emigrants did return before the end of their working lives. A further precondition was that skilled migrants were able to enhance or at least maintain their qualifications while away. This was often not the case, since skilled migrants might be employed in low-skilled jobs.

Social remittances could also have varying effects. The message coming back to origin communities from migrants could be that new ways of working, investing and running public affairs can bring prosperity, but it could also be that emigration was the only way out of a hopeless situation. The emergence of migration as a 'rite of passage' for young people could lead to a loss not only of productive workers, but also to the absence of agents of change.

The social and economic costs of emigration can be high: the country studies drew attention to the distress caused by long-term separation of families (such as the 'Gulf wives syndrome' in India); the distortion of education systems re-shaped to meet the needs of destination countries (mentioned in the studies on India and the Philippines); the risks and dangers encountered by migrants; the potential loss of skills and human resources that can block development (mentioned for Mexico, Philippines and Turkey); and the 'de-accumulation of Mexican wealth' and its transfer to the USA. Overall, emigration of labour – whether skilled or less skilled – could lead to serious loss of potential growth for the country of emigration. The question is whether this loss can be outweighed in the long run by positive effects.

Recognition of the role of diasporas in development did seem an important step forward. This new discourse in the international migration field follows changes of perceptions in emigration countries and the introduction of a range of measures and institutions to involve the diaspora in bringing about positive changes in the homeland. Although all five country studies described such efforts, there was insufficient data and research evidence to assess their success. Collective remittances for community investment by hometown associations and similar groups are still very small in comparison with private flows. Knowledge transfer networks (like India's Diaspora Knowledge Network or the Philippine's LINKAPIL) seem positive, but quite small compared with individual remittances and commercial transfers.

The general conclusion on migration and development was therefore that there was great potential for outcomes beneficial to sending country populations, but the conditions for realising these were complex and difficult. Strategies of 'remittance-led development' seem simplistic and naïve. Migration alone cannot remove structural constraints to economic growth, social change and greater democracy. There is a need for broadly-based long-term approaches that links the potential benefits of migration with more general strategies to reduce inequality and to improve economic infrastructure, social welfare and political governance.

The potentially positive impact on human freedoms is neither automatic nor uniform. Under unfavourable conditions, migration may actually decrease the capabilities of people, and even when its aggregate impacts are judged to be positive, the fruits of migration are not always equally distributed among different members of households and communities. Depending on the selectivity of migration, it may both increase and decrease inequality. Notwithstanding the often considerable blessings for individuals, households and communities, migration is no panacea for solving more structural development constraints. Migration can neither be blamed for a lack of development, nor be expected to trigger take-off development in generally unattractive investment environments.

5. Conclusion

This paper has analysed the intricate, reciprocal connection between mobility and human development. The analysis has shown that migration has always been part and parcel of more general, interrelated social and economic transformation processes and that modern forms of rural-urban and international migration cannot be dissociated from the interrelated, more general processes of capitalist accumulation, economic specialisation, urbanisation, colonial expansion, and, more recently, globalisation. In addition, migration is not just a result of social transformation but is in itself a form of social transformation, which has feedback effects on the societies involved. We have also argued that, from a capabilities perspective, migration can be considered as a fundamental capabilities-enhancing freedom itself.

However, the inherent danger of focusing on individuals' agency is that we lose sight of the importance of structural constraints. These are essential to understand why both the nature and development impacts of human mobility tend to be so diverse.

So, any meaningful understanding of migration needs to simultaneously analyse agency *and* structure. Rather than applying dichotomous classifications such as between forced and voluntary migration, it is more appropriate to conceive of a continuum running from low to high constraints under which migration occurs, in which all migrants deal with structural constraints, although *to highly varying degrees*.

Besides being an integral part of human development, mobility also tends to affect the same structural processes of which it is part. Simplistic positive-versus-negative debates on migration and development can be overcome by integrating agency-structure dialectics in the analysis of migration impacts. This paper argues that (i) the degree to which migrants are able to affect structural change is real but limited; (ii) the nature of change in sending and receiving is not pre-determined; and (iii) that in order to enable a more focused and rigorous debate, there is a need to better distinguish and specify different levels and dimensions at which the reciprocal relationship between human mobility and development can be analysed. A critical reading of the empirical literature leads to the conclusion that it would be naïve to think that, despite their

often-considerable benefits for individuals and communities, migration and remittances alone can remove more structural development constraints.

For instance, migration occurring under extremely constraining conditions (e.g. that of refugees) is unlikely to contribute to national development in origin countries, at least in the short term⁹. Despite their development *potential*, migrants and remittances can neither be blamed for a lack of development nor be expected to trigger take-off development in generally unattractive investment environments. If states fail to implement general social and economic reform, migration is unlikely to contribute to nationwide sustainable development. On the other hand, if states do create favourable conditions for broad-based national development, migrants are likely to reinforce or perhaps even accelerate such already positive trends by investing and returning (temporarily or permanently) to their origin countries.

Therefore, policies aimed at increasing people's welfare, creating functioning markets, improving social security and public services such as health and education are also likely to enhance the contribution that migration and remittances can make to development. Because migration impacts on development depend on broader political and economic conditions, the leeway of *targeted* policies to 'improve' migration impacts seems extremely limited. Targeted policies are unlikely to succeed if not accompanied by a more *general* process of structural political and economic reform.

For instance, it is difficult to imagine that sending and receiving states will be able to stop migration of highly qualified medical personnel as long as structural conditions and working circumstances in origin countries do not substantially improve and as long the demand for such personnel remains high. In the same vein, it is unlikely that migrants from rural areas will invest money in agriculture as long as title deeds on land are extremely difficult to obtain or not legally

⁹ Current work on the role of refugees and diaspora groups in post-conflict societies Kleist, Nauja. 2008. "Mobilising 'The Diaspora': Somali Transnational Political Engagement." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34:307 - 323, Van Hear, Nicholas 2003. "Diasporas, Remittances, Development, and Conflict." *Migration Information Source, June 1, 2003*. suggests that the long-term contribution of refugees to reconstruction and rehabilitation can be significant (for better or worse).

secure. It is also likely that many 'temporary' migrants will become permanent settlers if economic and political conditions in origin countries remain negative and if immigration policies of destination countries become more restrictive.

Whether migrants will return and/or contribute their money, knowledge and networks to the development of the country fundamentally depends on (1) the political and economic conditions in origin countries, (2) the extent to which migrants have acquired financial, social and human capital in the destination countries, and (3) the migrants' own preferences and their relationship with their country of origin. The importance of the first, macro-contextual set of factors fundamentally limits the effects of targeted migration and development policies, such as those encouraging migrants to send remittances through formal channels. The second set of variables tends to be positively correlated to migrants' sustained stay and successful integration. This undermines the idea currently popular in policy circles that temporary (or 'circular') migration would somehow be more positive for the development of origin societies. The third set of variables is perhaps the most challenging to capture as they are embedded in the migrants' agency. It is often assumed that migrants from developing countries will want to, or should want to, contribute to their 'homeland' if they have the capability. It is an assumption which would be open to much more question if applied to migrants from the 'North'.

Migration policies of receiving countries condition selectivity, access to rights and socio-economic mobility of migrants. The evidence strongly suggests that creating more legal channels, also for lower-skilled, migration could decrease costs and, hence, selectivity of migration, with limited, but potentially positive outcomes for poverty reduction and redistribution in origin countries. The corollary of this argument is that current, restrictive immigration policies and marginalisation of regular and irregular immigrants do not only involve considerable risk and suffering for the migrants involved, but are also likely to have a negative impact on the poverty and inequality-reducing potential of migration. The current claim that temporary or 'circular' migration represents a 'win-win-win situation' for destination countries, origin countries and the migrants themselves should therefore be treated with reserve. Governments of labour-importing countries may well prefer temporary migration of the lower-

skilled (partly for political reasons in view of the unpopularity of immigration), but it is far from clear that this is beneficial to migrants themselves or to the development of their origin countries.

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