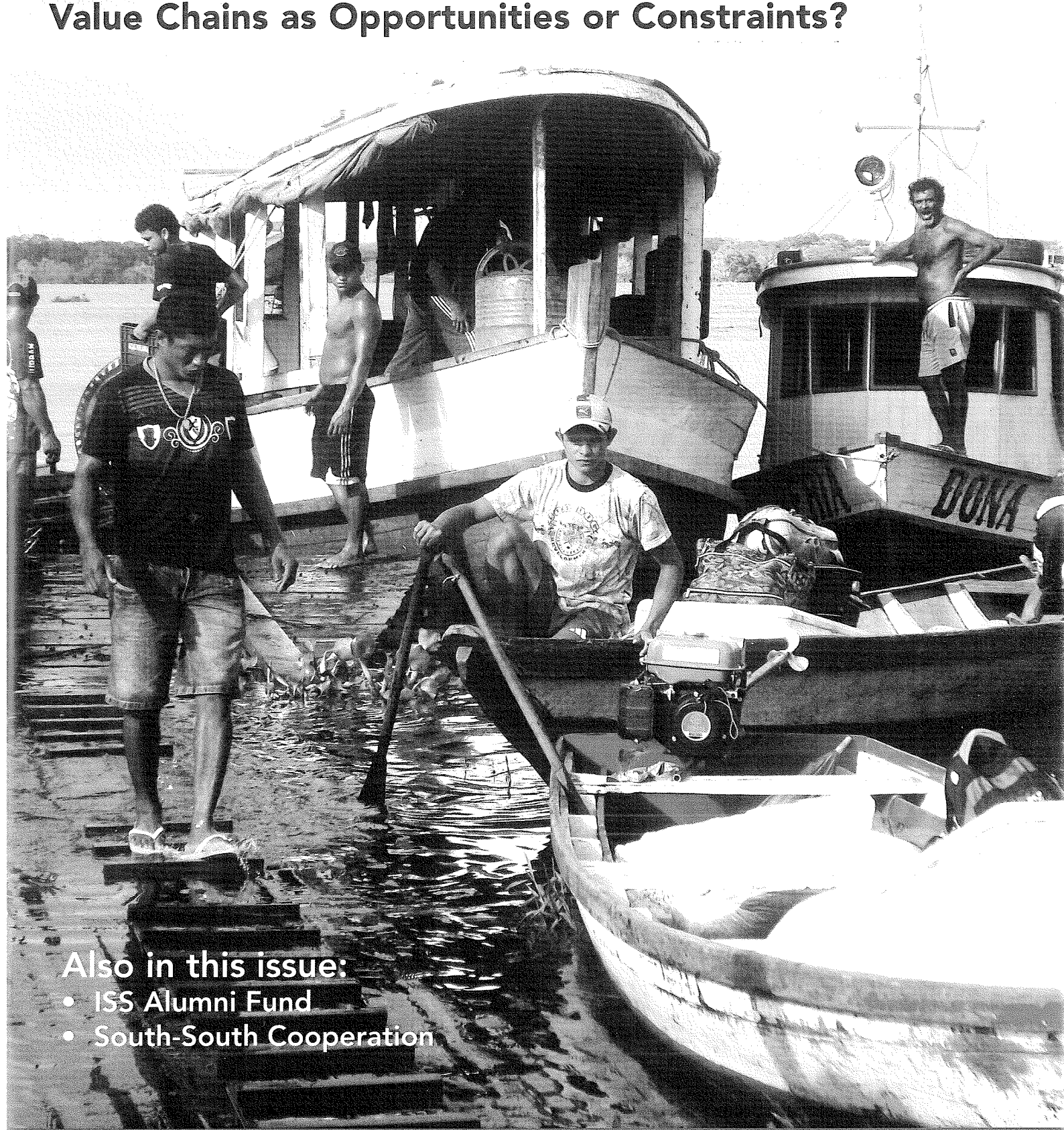# Human Security under Globalization:

Value Chains as Opportunities or Constraints?

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- ISS Alumni Fund
- South-South Cooperation

From the Editorial Board

HUMAN SECURITY UNDER GLOBALIZATION: VALUE CHAINS AS OPPORTUNITIES OR CONSTRAINTS?
Lee Pegler

In a recent (2011) seminar at the ISS, Professor Stefanie Barrientos reminded us that nearly 60 per cent of world trade goes through what we call 'Global Value Chains' (GVCs). This is significant as it underlines the degree of coordination of global production (by transnationals), production which involves massive numbers of workers in many countries. It also underlines a concern.

This concern stems from the fact that more and more of these chains are becoming what we call 'buyer driven' – ones where sourcing can easily shift, where workers' rights and communities' livelihoods are often based on precarious/insecure situations and where chain 'drivers' (increasingly including supermarkets) are highly influential. The link between local impacts and global processes thus remains controversial, as do the myriad of public and private sector responses to the issue of human security.

Equity and security in the development process are themes very much at the core of ISS activity. A large number of ISS staff, participants and our partners are involved in analyzing, debating and/or challenging the nature of these global-local processes, many of these from a value chain perspective. This issue of DevISSues is devoted to a selection of their views and experiences.

Two of these contributions are written by members of partner institutions in the 'South' (Brazilian NGO Peabiru - Fontoura; Federal University of Amazonas - Pereira), one is by an ISS alumni (Flinterman), one is by a member of an EU partner institution (University Utrecht - Jacobs), another is by an affiliated ISS researcher (Sinatti) and the other is by a current ISS staff member (Newman). The articles vary in theme – e.g. from financialization to ecotourism. They also vary in style and form – a few are more descriptive in nature whilst others take a more argumentative focus to their specific area. Yet all are useful in providing perspectives on how global processes relate to (local) outcomes such as security.

For example, the first article by Pereira describes the 'new wonder fruit' (açai) and the process by which this, still strongly domestic-based, product has entered international markets. What impact the evolution of the açai GVC may have on labour and livelihoods in the Amazon will depend on various factors, including the cultivation form and role of local and national agencies of support. Yet the memory of other Amazonian 'wonder' products (e.g. passionfruit; rubber; guarana) and their cycles of fame and decline/struggle suggest caution. Human security within the evolving açai GVC forms one part of an ISS Innovation Fund project (GOLLS).

On the other hand, the articles by Jacobs and Newman provide more detailed analyses of chain developments. Newman strongly argues that financialization has helped to further disconnect considerations of profitability and productivity from changes in the 'real economy' – that is, in production and jobs, thus threatening the rights and livelihoods of those producing goods and services. Jacobs provides, in contrast, a strong argument that logistics requires greater integration within value chain studies but that the different elements (e.g. shipping vs. port handling) are controlled by different actors and require specific policy responses. Logistics developments have particular social and employment implications which should be further studied.

The final three articles take more varied foci. Flinterman, for example, uses the example of the garment value chain to show the limits of many forms of governance of labour conditions (e.g. for child labour). This work reflects the results of other studies which note how 'top down' social compliance schemes may have limited impacts on labour precariousness at the beginning of chains. Local involvement, collective bargaining, freedom of association and genuine dialogue are necessary conditions within an environment where labour governance must be an active matter for both the private and public sector. Sinatti, on the other hand, provides a quite nuanced view of how migrants (via their Diasporas in wealthier regions) are being seen as an important link within policies on 'development'. Yet underneath a recognition that flows of resources and people (i.e. the migration value chain) are considerable and of development potential, remain questions as to the selection and nature of engagement with 'representatives' of these other 'civil societies'. Moving to a more locally centred perspective, the short piece by Fontoura on community-based ecotourism describes the role of Peabiru. What drives their activism is a concern with the negative work, livelihood and environmental impacts of the traditional tourism value chain – the way the services and characteristics 'on offer' (labour; the environment; lifestyles) are rewarded, managed and regenerated.

In conclusion, we at DevISSues hope you enjoy and are engaged by this selection of contributions on this theme. Each piece is concerned with GVC governance and human outcomes at a local level. From products (açai) to processes (logistics; migration) to services (tourism), questions are generated about the sense of wellbeing and security of people and resources within this spatial process we call globalization.

The guest editor of this issue of DevISSues works as a lecturer in 'Work Organisation and Labour Rights' at ISS. He also coordinates institutional agreements and participates in many projects on value chains, labour rights and human security for various national and international agencies on behalf of ISS, especially in relation to Brazil.

About the cover

Villagers and traders delivering their crops of açai to a local factory (Codajas, Amazonia) for processing and sale to clients, many of whom were international prior to the plant's recent loss of certification credentials. Thanks to all workers, families and Government officials for their help during recent field work there. (Photo – Pegler, 2012)

ISS is the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam

From Global Migration to Local Development: Reflections on Diaspora Engagement for Effective Development

Giulia Sinatti

According to the most recent estimates, 214 million people were international migrants in 2010, accounting for over 3 per cent of the world population. In leaving their countries of birth to reside elsewhere, migrants establish connections between places of origin, transit and destination. Transnational migrant communities and diaspora groups are formed that span the borders of nation-states. The rise of established migrant networks that support all sorts of cross-national activities has been defined as a form of globalization 'from below'. Alongside its global reach, in fact, migration originates from specific sending communities and it has important implications also at this local scale. Forecasts for 2012, for instance, indicate a remittance flow of $377 billion to developing countries, an amount that is pivotal in ensuring a better livelihood to millions of people worldwide. In addition, migrants are shown to transfer other important non-financial resources that can trigger positive change in sending communities, such as knowledge, skills, networks, ideas and values. This article looks at how increased awareness of migrants' influence over their homelands is reflected in important transformations in development policy and practice, and at the resulting implications for development at the local scale.

THE EMERGENCE OF 'DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT'

Since the turn of the millennium a consensus has emerged within development circles about the positive contributions that migrants can bring to the development of their homelands, which has given rise to the so-called migration-development debate. This acknowledgement was made in the 2003 edition of the World Bank's Global Financial Report. It shows that migrant remittances are at least three times larger than global investment in Overseas Development Assistance. In addition, the establishment of a Global Commission on International Migration (launched in 2003 and active until 2005), the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (in 2006), and a series of annual Global Forums on Migration and Development (since 2007), have led the community of international institutions, governments, development agencies and donors to largely acknowledge the important contributions that migrants make to development.

The development industry has increasingly turned to migrants as potentially complementing its efforts and has devised concrete strategies to actively involve them as development agents. In this attempt to leverage migrants' development potential, various trends have emerged. Earlier enthusiasm for remittances as the new development mantra subsided as awareness rose that governing resources is very difficult when they are essentially individual and private. 'Diaspora engagement' therefore emerged as a new tendency that

identifies migrant associations as appropriate interlocutors that are *collective* and *civically* engaged. Development agencies reach out to migrant groups undertaking aggregate actions and seek active collaboration with them as partners or allies.

The idea of 'diaspora engagement' reflects the philosophy behind the so-called 'human' approach to development, and extends it to the field of migration-development. Rooted in the thoughts of Amartya Sen, the human development approach sees development as a goal that can only be achieved with the direct involvement of the people it concerns. Rather than speaking of development *aid* and *assistance*, we should advocate development *cooperation*: this is geared towards the empowerment of communities and individuals so that they can themselves forge their own development. Participatory frameworks should make resources and opportunities available that enable community members to contribute actively in development. In alignment with this reasoning, 'diaspora engagement' puts forward a human-centred and participatory understanding of development, and it indicates migrants and their associations as strategic actors in development processes thanks to their dual engagement in countries of origin and residence.

In fact, these associations are seen as having the ability to promote transnational actions that rest upon the bridges they have built across different localities. At the same time, migrant associations occupy a privileged position as potential brokers of change, which is at the centre of any development process. Development processes also challenge existing practices and established interests that may rupture, leading to conflict and competition. Migrants may bring from the outside innovative ways of doing things and ideas that might otherwise generate resistance but that could become acceptable when introduced by migrants who are also effective members of families and communities. In a human development perspective, it is therefore, beneficial that migrants should be included as important actors for making better changes to local development.

The extension of this participation paradigm to the field of migration-development has led various actors to experiment, over the last few years, in practical ways of fostering the formal inclusion of migrants in development work. Key actors in the development scene such as governments, international agencies and large NGOs have thus adopted 'diaspora engagement' policies and programmes, in order to facilitate the active involvement of migrant associations. Concrete opportunities have been generated this way, ranging from programmes specifically designed to target diaspora groups, to pre-existing programmes that have been revisited in order to include diaspora participation. Donors in countries of migrant residence, in particular, have become preoccupied with pursuing the participation of migrant associations by providing them with the (presumed necessary) skills and frameworks to engage in the development field.

> 'The possible range of actions undertaken by migrant associations in favour of the country of origin is vast.'

Governments of home countries have also increasingly reached out to their diaspora communities and supported migrant associations. Despite some variation, diaspora engagement initiatives worldwide are based on very similar core activities. The following are predominant: consultation with migrant associations in the design phase of policies and programmes, delegation of specific functions within larger programmes to migrant associations, training in development skills, support for the establishment of platform and umbrella organizations and direct funding for the projects promoted by migrant associations. These initiatives reach out to migrant associations that are extremely diversified - in their representativeness of a given migrant group; their organizational strength and capacities and in their ability to liaise with and mobilize relevant actors in home and host countries.

'DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT': IMPLICATIONS FOR HOMELAND DEVELOPMENT

The widespread agreement that 'diaspora engagement' is desirable has sparked the diffusion of many diaspora engagement initiatives. The critical mass of such efforts currently offers a good basis for learning. This can bring, on the one hand, greater clarity about the most efficient strategies and the difficulties of incorporating the actions of migrant associations in formal development. On the other hand, there is a need for a more realistic understanding of what 'development' migrants are explicitly expected to contribute to development in their localities. As discussed in the rest of this article, in fact, it is primarily at the *local* scale that migrants' role can have a significant impact.

The engagement of migrant associations towards their country of origin is a largely spontaneous action. Although the existence of frameworks encouraging and supporting the action of migrants might artificially incentivise the birth of associations, for the most they are rooted in the emotional attachment that migrants maintain with their homeland. This solidarity is particularly strong towards communities and families of origin. As international migrants usually move from clearly circumscribed sending localities and regions to specific countries and cities of residence, village and hometown associations are linked to the particular places from which migrants have departed. Their actions therefore often aim at providing support to precise local communities. As an expression of collective action, migrant associations allow for the channelling of individual efforts towards shared goals and organize them around concrete projects with communal development outcomes.

The possible range of actions undertaken by migrant associations in favour of their country of origin is vast. Hometown associations may provide material support to improve local services and infrastructures. Across Africa, Asia and Latin America the living conditions in many villages and small towns have improved due to migrants' projects. For instance by supporting rural electrification, road

paving, the construction of schools, the equipment of health posts, the realisation of boreholes, etc. Elsewhere migrant associations may engage in advocacy campaigns, for instance making the situation of exclusion or exploitation of a home community known to the world. The nature of migrant interventions, of course, depends on the specific development needs of their communities of origin. However, for most effective development, processes of economic growth must accompany them too.

The improvement of infrastructural facilities and services in a given community may in fact have the immediate effect of responding to basic needs and improving the quality of life locally such as better health and household consumption. Unfortunately, rarely does this process generate permanent jobs; nonetheless, improved infrastructures might encourage other actors to engage in individual and/or private forms of investment that could trigger sustainable growth and allow the achievement of further development goals.

The examples just outlined suggest that development is a lengthy process: it calls for change in established systems, as well as shifts in power relations that are unlikely to happen overnight. Triggering economic growth, empowering women, etc. are goals that many development projects and programmes struggle to achieve within their given timeframes. Migrants and their associations have the advantage of an engagement that is not constrained into the set calendars imposed by the logics of 'formal' development. The engagement of a migrant towards one's home country is life-long and this facilitates continuity and follow-up.

The localized nature of the initiatives of migrant associations may generate impacts that are strongly felt at the local level, however their capacity to influence development processes at a global scale is likely to be extremely limited. In fact, whereas migrant engagement promotes development in home localities, these may not necessarily be the ones in most urgent need of being 'developed' On a broader scale, migrants cannot resolve the structural conditions that characterise their home countries as failed states or economies. Nonetheless, migrant actions can still constitute local

At work in a vocational training centre set up by the Senegalese migrant association Sunugal in a neighbourhood of Dakar
Sunugal migrant association http://www.sunugal.it/

contributions that may feed coherently into broader processes when they are aligned with national, regional or international development plans.

'...migrants cannot resolve the structural conditions that characterise their home countries as failed states or economies.'

CONCLUSION

Migrant associations are a complex and extremely diversified reality. 'Diaspora engagement' tools and schemes should therefore be tailored to their needs on a case-to-case basis. Within the migrant groups, some of which might be weak or have fragmented organizational life, alternative avenues may be more effective. Moreover, instead of exclusively focusing on the involvement of migrant associations, flexible criteria may be identified to draw the line between migrant associations that are eligible for participation in a given programme and those which are not.

Migrants' agency alone cannot be expected to make a difference in development processes. The actions of migrant associations in favour of their

home countries are, in fact, embedded in broader systems that largely influence their outcomes. The ultimate development impact of migrant actions is therefore framed by existing constraints and potentialities. Governments in home and host countries, in particular, play an important and necessary role in supporting the actions of migrant associations through public policies both at local and national level. Local authorities, for instance, can boost the development potential of migrant associations' contributions when these are channelled into institutionalized processes. Central governments can also enhance migrant contributions for development through decentralized policy frameworks that set general development aims and priorities whilst encouraging bottom-up initiatives. Through these and other measures, authorities can facilitate the alignment of locally rooted migrant initiatives with regional and national development needs and goals. This enhanced coherence between local and broader development can only stem out of collaboration and synergy between actors at all levels.

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