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DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND MIGRATION: 
LINKAGES AND POSSIBLE LESSONS 

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SUMMARY

Several ’Development Decades’ have shown that there is no ‘quick fix’ solution to ensure rapid and sustainable development. Following the strategies of the 1950s which focused on industrialization and import substitution, to the more recent adjustment strategies which stress a market-based, export-promoting approach, the time has arrived for an approach which seeks to identify where international action might help most to reduce migration. Such an approach may now be helpful in clarifying objectives and priorities for international development co-operation in general.

Durable development, according to the author, is primarily the outcome of efforts by the country concerned, with foreign aid, i.e. official development assistance, playing only a secondary role. However, effective international action to anticipate and prevent cases of serious human rights violations and inter and intra-state conflict would represent a powerful contribution to development, thereby reducing the incentive for migration. Related to this, efforts must be made to control arms transfers and military expenditures.

It is widely accepted that sound economic management policies constitute the first step in the development process; regional economic integration strategies can also be a highly effective tool of development. Both of the above tend to increase migration, at least in the short-term. The most useful contributions the developed countries can make include: further opening trade systems, extending technology flows, and responsibly managing their own fiscal and monetary policies as these have a major impact on the financial situation of developing countries.

Sound domestic, regional and international policies will lead to foreign direct investment which in turn, can encourage employment creation. Finally, development of human resources (including education, vocational training and promotion of women) is also crucial. There is no universal formula for development and it is probable that any development strategy will give rise to increased migration in the short-term, transitional phase. However, in the long-term, progress on durable broadly-based development will lead to a stabilisation and decrease in migration.
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND MIGRATION: LINKAGES AND POSSIBLE LESSONS

Bernard WOOD

1. Introduction

The research assistance of Maria Sievers on this project is gratefully acknowledged. The draft paper also benefited from comments by participants at a workshop at the OECD Development Centre on January 29, 1993.

This paper, like the conference for which it has been prepared, ventures into the largely unexplored territory where the broad global issues of development and international migration meet. It is important to specify that the focus here is on international migration -- primarily in its "South-North" and "East-West" contexts -- while recognising that the largest migration flows today are taking place within countries, and the next largest between neighbouring countries in the under-developed South. These greater "local" migration flows, of course, themselves have immense implications for development prospects.

Although there is much research at the micro-level on how aspects of the two phenomena interact, and some relevant surveys at the sectorial and regional levels, analysts and policy-makers in the two fields have generally remained at some distance from each other, and the connections have not been well mapped. Both fields are exceedingly complex ones where much is still only dimly understood, and thus to widen the scope of analysis is to risk over-reaching. A number of individual papers at this conference will represent important new efforts to analyse specific connections between migration and development, and the task of this paper is to attempt to set a broad context for the relationship, coming essentially from a developmental perspective. It would be desirable to illustrate each general observation with concrete examples from the diverse regional experience, but limitations of space dictate that such testing must be left to the individual reader.

The reason that this work is now so important is that the possible connections between migration and development have rapidly become of compelling public and policy interest. This has forced an accelerated dialogue and an effort to produce responsible guideposts for action, perhaps tempering as well some of the simplistic connections and faddish prescriptions that may be proposed. One objective here is to try to maintain a somewhat longer-term perspective, beyond the most immediate pressures of the moment.

At the most general level, it is right, as is now being proposed in some quarters, to try to reverse the Cold War-based global ethos on migration, focused so much on "the right to leave", and replace it by a powerful international commitment to "the right to stay." To be of concrete value, however, such a "right to stay" would have to assure both the protection of
basic civil and political rights, and reasonable economic, environmental and social conditions for people to survive and thrive in their own societies.

These in fact have been the accepted international goals of the development co-operation effort for several decades, and both the investment, and in many countries the result, have fallen far short. Especially with the huge addition of the former Soviet empires to the international development challenge, it must be recognised that giving practical effect to a "right to stay" -- and thus actually persuading significant numbers of potential emigrants that they can and should stay -- would require an unprecedented new commitment to the challenge of development co-operation, raising it to the superseding level of priority enjoyed by the Cold War at its height. If this is not realistically possible, the articulation of a "right to stay" may risk becoming another hollow promise (in a field which has seen too many) and could possibly be abused as a rhetorical cloak for highly restrictive migration policies which would otherwise be unacceptable.

Based on the record of evolving rationales and "strategies" for development co-operation over the past four decades, this paper holds cautious (but not pessimistic) expectations of both the mobilisation of international effort and the anticipated results. It recognises that the unfolding of development thinking and much development action over these decades has sometimes come far too close to a succession of fashions, with damaging effects. Viewed in a more positive light, this history can be seen as one of cumulative discovery, where simplistic ideological or technical prescriptions have been invalidated, and the sweep and interconnectedness of the factors involved in development has come to be better understood and better taken into account.

Both the debris and disillusionment, however, and the dominance of an overwhelming de-interventionist ethos during the past decade has given the term "development strategy" an almost arcane ring to some ears. The question of how, and how far, governments can play an active role in the purposive promotion of development, however, is always a serious issue. The public policy environment plays a range of vital roles in development, even in the most (laissez faire) system, and the adoption of a strongly de-interventionist approach in itself dictates important strategic parameters.

There is some risk that the accretion of so many new factors and so many layers of strategic thinking about development over the decades has led for some to a kind of "paralysis by analysis" or diffusion of focus and energy, where effective action has been made more difficult. The contention here is that this need not be the case, that the current recognition of the complexity of the development process -- and the shift to a focus on the system-level and institutional requirements of development -- is all to the good, and needs only to be matched by appropriate realism about what can and cannot be accomplished by any domestic development strategy or external intervention.

Every analyst and policy-maker must now form his or her own judgement of how to interpret and use the cumulative experience of the several decades of development strategy in response to particular development challenges. The interpretation that follows in this paper is that of its author alone, and it is fully expected that others will assess the various factors and lessons very differently.
One key element in the current, cumulative tableau of development strategies relates to the very definition of "development" itself, and the approach being taken to this issue should be clarified at the outset of this paper. As will be argued in more detail later, viewing development through the lens of people's incentives to migrate may be one effective way of clarifying what "development" and "underdevelopment" mean to the people affected, and this in turn may be a good test of any definition which may be advanced by others.

Thus, "development," or the growing capacity to live a satisfying life and develop one's potential, is clearly defined by the economic, environmental, social, and political conditions which confront people. Different societies, groups and individuals may give different definitions and weights to these various conditions at particular times, but all are important. While stressing that not all decisions to migrate are explained by these "developmental" factors -- given migration traditions, historical and colonial links, family and personal traits, etc. -- it remains true that below some threshold of performance or potential in each of these areas of development, the conditions of life in a society will be sufficiently intolerable to impel many of those who can to take the agonising decision to emigrate.

To accept this multidimensional definition of development is not necessarily to accept any sectarian prescription for what constitutes acceptable development on any of these scales, or how, for example, political and economic development may interact with each other. The impulsion to migrate shows how many millions of people assess these questions, at least in relative terms, as they vote, or attempt to vote, with their feet.

The uneven distribution of development and its benefits has undoubtedly been a feature of human society from time immemorial, as well as a source of pressure for migration, and frequently for conflict. The related phenomena of comparative advantage, specialisation and widening economic exchange (including the mobility of the factors of production, which obviously embrace labour, a factor not always adequately recognised) have historically been motors of wealth generation and technological development, although there is still debate how much these processes necessarily tend to extend opportunity and benefit to all participants.

At the end of the twentieth century, development differentials between the wealthiest and poorest populations on the planet are probably wider than at any time in history. Increased interlinkages are marked within and between some regions, but others (including many of the developing countries) are starkly marginalised, and the integration of the former centrally-planned economies of Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union into the mainstream international economy has barely begun. Meanwhile, communications, transportation and popular expectations have been totally transformed in all parts of the world and these factors have undoubtedly contributed to flows of migration which may be unprecedented in both absolute and relative terms.

It should be recognised that even the elimination of wide development differentials, if that were to prove possible, would not end the flows of economically-motivated migration, an outcome which would be highly undesirable in any event. It does appear likely, however, as has been the experience between countries at similarly advanced levels of development, that with narrow differentials, overall flows would eventually assume a more modest scale, and
would be relatively easily and unobtrusively absorbed in "niches" within the receiving economies and societies. It is by no means certain that such stabilising impacts would be felt during the process of narrowing the development gap, as various types of development process may tend to accelerate migration pressures.

There is controversy, among some specialists in the field, as to whether the term "migration pressure" has analytical value, or perhaps carries some particular dangers. At the point of this writing, it is practically an unavoidable term, and better than an economistic one such as "migration demand." The concern over this terminology is to be treated by G. Tapinos and C.B. Kealey in a forthcoming article for the ILO.

There is even a fundamental question about whether reducing migration flows is in itself a legitimate or feasible objective, given the beneficial relationships that may prevail between migration and general development, as well as some of the vital human values involved. On the other hand, quite apart from the increasingly evident, and dangerous, indications of social and political absorptive limits in migrant-receiving societies, it is immigrants themselves who feel these limits most acutely and painfully. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that the option of emigration is itself such a traumatic and wrenching one for most human beings that the evolution of less agonising options for achieving their goals is an objective of great value.

Realistically, at the same time, given the numbers of people in the world who face desperate problems and prospects, and the huge gaps in people’s life-chances between countries, the wonder, as many analysts have noted, is not how much migration is now taking place but how little. In the light of some of the other factors at work, there seems little prospect of any reduced pressure in the short to medium term.

With these cautions in mind against any assumption of rapid and linear linkages between enhanced economic development and reduced migration pressures, there is both extensive past experience and current evidence that certain kinds of development progress could have substantial impact. On the basis of historical performance under different development strategies, this paper will attempt to reflect on realistic development steps which would be most likely to have a pronounced impact on migration flows.

2. Some key factors in migration and development

Much research on migration (both intrastate and international) has focused on identifying and weighting the different factors influencing migrants’ decisions. The findings suggest a huge diversity of both influences and respective weights for them, consistent with the vast variety of motivations for human groups and individuals. Such analyses must also untangle the subjective information base upon which migrants actually form their decisions and actions from the more dry data which may be available to the analyst.

In any event, to the extent that "developmental" factors impel and shape the decision to migrate, they evidently include both "push" and "pull" factors, and quite varied ones. Just as the early, mechanistic "stages of growth" theories of development vastly over-simplified the multi-faceted nature of the development process, so any mechanistic view of migration for development will prove inadequate.

It can reasonably be argued that a listing of the main problems or symptoms of underdevelopment affecting a community or society would also suggest many, if not most, of the "push" factors which may lead people to see
migration as an "escape" from that underdevelopment (once again recognising the
diverse and multi-facetted reasons for which people migrate). We now know as
well that any such catalogue should recognise the range of demographic,
environmental, political and social obstacles to human development as well as
the economic. The following checklist is designed to provide very general
background to more detailed discussion of how problems of underdevelopment and
"push" factors in migration (although not necessarily international migration)
may interact:

Table 1

Problems of underdevelopment/possible "push" factors in migration

1. Population-resource-environment imbalances

   Population growth
   Agriculture/land or other resource exhaustion, market glut, or obsolescence
   of economic base
   Environmental deterioration seriously threatening health or quality of life

2. Inadequate dynamism and/or diversity of economic base

   Fundamental problems of economic strategy, management and organisation
   Lack of employment opportunity - deriving from inadequate investment,
   technology, entrepreneurship and skills, infrastructure and/or markets
   Monoculture or narrowly-based economy

3. Inadequate social support and cultural life

   Gaps in health, education, training services and basic social safety-nets
   Lack of access to mainstream culture and modern amenities

4. Oppressive political/human rights situation or limiting class structure or
   social mores

   War or chronic, widespread violence, crushing military expenditure
   Gross violations of human rights and deprivation of basic political freedoms
   Systematic exploitation and impoverishment by a prevailing structure
   Discriminatory impediments based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion,
   class, etc.

Even this general and partial catalogue gives a clear indication of the
diversity of factors involved. It also gives some suggestion of the complex
interactions that may take place between these factors, both in determining
whether or not a society will achieve and sustain developmental momentum and in
determining whether individuals or groups will feel impelled to escape in order
to develop their own potential.

Often lost from view in many discussions is the fact that much migration
always has been a powerful engine of development, not just for the migrants
themselves, but for the economies and societies which receive them, sometimes
with substantial benefits for the sending societies as well. In economic terms,
migration can be a vehicle for allocating the vital human factor of production (and consumption) more effectively among regional and national economies, and this can serve as a huge benefit to feed and reinforce economic development and growth. With the mobile human resource frequently serving as the bearer of technological transfer as well, it would be difficult to over-estimate the total impact of migration as an engine of development in history.

Depending on the character, level and prevailing conditions of the receiving economy, this benefit can be felt whether the influx of migrants is made up of highly-skilled, skilled, or even unskilled labour. So for example it can range from the "niche-filling" circulation of specialised skills which can be traced in all parts of the world throughout recorded history, to the waves of general migration which served to populate and build dynamic new societies in the New World, to the phenomenon of selective and originally temporary flows of substantial numbers of migrants who filled large demographic or skill gaps prevailing in particular societies at particular times (as in the "temporary" worker phenomena in Europe and the large migrant populations in much of the Middle East).

At this "pull" end of the development-migration link, the iron logic of the market has generally prevailed. Receiving economies and societies would attract, harness and reward those carrying skills and aptitudes which are needed as economic and social contributors, with little if any regard for the impact of their departure on the sending society.

Thus in the relationship between the "developing" and "developed" societies, for many decades there has been a pronounced and challenge of the "brain drain" from South to North, with most attempts to quantify the economic value of the transfer (at both the global and the national levels) suggesting that it exceeds by many times the total value of all transfers of official development assistance in the opposite direction. The "brain drain" issue, in fact, may be a critical illuminator of some of the wider questions now arising in relation to migration. For decades it has been acknowledged to exist and to represent a serious problem for developing countries, and a force undermining international efforts to promote development in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Unquestionably the migration policies of all the industrialised countries have formally and/or informally favoured highly skilled entrants whose talents were most in demand internationally, and usually in the home countries that had made such a huge social investment in their education and training.

At the same time, the brain drain has generally been considered to be beyond the legitimate right or capacity of either "sending" or "receiving" countries to control, except in limited areas such as attempts to require foreign students financed under aid programmes to return to their home countries. Proposals to restrict or "tax" skilled migrants from developing countries have generally been considered to conflict with their basic human rights, and proposals of government-to-government compensatory payments for the transfer of assets and loss of investment by countries of origin have been viewed as being unrealistic and infeasible. Yet the centrality of the human resource and the value of this transfer from poor to rich countries means that it cannot be ignored in any analysis of the relationships between development and migration.
On another underlying issue, it is also worth noting that the history of migrant movements is filled with examples of prejudice and hostility against one or other or many types of recent arrival as alien, unproductive, and/or (perversely) "unfairly productive" in competition with native workers. The rise and fall of such waves of anti-immigrant sentiment has often been almost laughably easy to correlate with the rise and fall of economic hard times in the receiving society, although the counter-tendency to recognise the economic and social contributions of immigrants even in good times is rarely commensurately strong, and the persistence and virulence of the hostile instinct counsels strongly against any complacency.

3. New conditions and pressures

While a relevant historical perspective is always helpful, there are serious reasons to believe that as the twentieth century draws toward its close the international community does face migration challenges of genuinely new types and scales. First, while the struggle continues to uphold the traditional, formal distinctions between forced and voluntary migration, and between economic migrants and refugees from war or political repression, in practice such distinctions have become increasingly blurred and perhaps unsustainable.

The stark political divide of the Cold War imposed an artificial clarity to such distinctions in the East-West context but, with the exception of cases like that of Cuba, the ready ideological framework for defining political repression is gone. Second, the distinction between "temporary" and permanent economic migrants has, in fact if not always in form, become similarly blurred, and the capacity to expand and contract an imported labour supply to meet economic needs in the receiving country has become much more limited. Third, the overall numbers of aspiring migrants, their prevalence throughout the world, and the willingness and ability of many to overcome any barrier of distance, discouragement or regulation means that the overall pressure of migration is already of a different order.

It is important to try to move beyond the few very broad generalisations most often advanced to help explain the underlying increase of migration pressure. These might be summarised as follows:

-- Prevalent conditions of underdevelopment in some regions coexisting with oases of much higher welfare in others, a situation obviously conducive to flows of migrants.

-- Greater knowledge of these disparities, together with greater access to communications, transportation, and knowledge about migration channels themselves, factors which have intensified the flows.

-- The "revolution of rising expectations" has taken on more universal scope and more universal content, in both material and non-material values, such as human rights, democratic participation, and group identity. The dissolution of the Soviet internal and external empires has further spurred such impulses.
-- The increased globalisation of economic forces, including major recessionary downturns, means that the past "counter-cyclical" self-regulating impact on migration of different economic growth patterns in different regions is reduced or eliminated. A world-wide slowdown, the heavy burden of past mismanagement in so many economies, and the evident bankruptcy of earlier-heralded models of development have probably all contributed to migration pressures.

In global terms, it is difficult to judge whether political, social, or economic "underdevelopment" (or indeed other, non-developmental factors) are now most influential in "pushing" emigration. At the extremes, any of the three is likely to be a decisive "push" factor for many types of people to flee however they can, and frequently the depredations of war or repression are accompanied by economic collapse, redoubling the impulse for flight. There are instances, however, where improved economic welfare and prospects may contain the impulse to leave quite repressive countries among all but the most politically dissident parts of the population, and there are also instances where countries achieving substantial economic success are still oppressive enough to impel large numbers of people to leave.

Because of the multiple influences involved, the difficulties of measuring some of these influences and tracing causation -- as well as the weakness of basic data on migrants themselves -- it is not possible to make accurate empirical generalisations on the links between different levels of migration pressure under different conditions of development and underdevelopment. Even more difficult, and perhaps ultimately more important, would be to attempt to understand dynamically the impact of development trends and prospects on migration pressures. In any such analysis, it is probably also important to try to distinguish between different types of potential migrants whose motivations, mobility and developmental impact may differ as well: skill and education levels may be one useful categorisation. In thinking further about these relationships, it is important to consider not only the likely incentives for people to migrate but also their likely ability to do so.

If there is any tendency to expect rapid and linear reductions in emigration as a result of development advances, two contrary possibilities should be considered. The first is that, from a low base of general development and welfare, both substantial and credibly sustainable improvement are likely to be necessary before the incentive to migrate declines very much for most people -- even quick improvements in development conditions and prospects (however these are measured and reflected in a "confidence" level) cannot necessarily be counted upon to bring quick, across-the-board reductions in the desire to emigrate. Second, the incentives for migrating (as well as its feasibility) are likely to remain disproportionately strong for the most highly skilled and educated people until high and credibly sustainable levels of development are secured. In a classic "vicious circle" this "brain drain" is likely to contribute significantly to undermining the development which would be its cure.

4. Development strategies and excessive migration

If even relatively rapid improvement in development conditions and prospects is unlikely to be a "quick fix" for stemming what may be excessive
and unsustainable migration flows, it is also soberingly clear after several "Development Decades" that there is still no "quick fix" available, in any part of the world, to ensure such rapid and sustainable development itself. In fact, the history of development strategies and development co-operation policy over the past four decades has been marked by great uncertainty and inconstancy, with predictably disappointing effects on the results in many parts of the world.

As John Lewis has pointed out, however, in tracing this evolution, "... one set of mainstream doctrines is never totally abandoned. Elements are sloughed off or revised, but others are retained." F

John P. Lewis, "Development Promotion: A Time for Regrouping," in John P. Lewis and Valeriana Kallab, eds. Development Strategies Reconsidered (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, for the Overseas Development Council, 1986) p.6 Lewis' analysis, and that in this paper, is geared primarily to the challenge of "Third World" development, although it is interesting to reflect on how, accurately or otherwise, the experience of the Communist societies provided constant "off-stage" background to this unfolding plot.

F He provides a thoughtful, concise account of the progression of emphases over the decades, a brief summary of which will provide a good background for the remaining discussion here.

Dominant themes in the 1950s included the focus on industrialisation, capital transfers, and import substitution, with a widely-shared acceptance of the need for government planning and extensive intervention. In the 1960s, the "reaction" included a rediscovery of the value of the market, a de-emphasis of planning and controls, more attention to agricultural and export promotion and the policies required to achieve those goals. The 1970s saw a "new shift in conventional wisdom" to give much greater weight to targets of equity rather than pure growth, a kind of "Populist movement" (prominently espoused by McNamara as President of the World Bank) stressing the targets of combating poverty and meeting "basic human needs."

By the mid-1970s, as Lewis shows, flaws in the prescriptions (and perhaps, we might add, the effects of some of the fickleness of direction itself) were beginning to be felt just at the time when the exertion of OPEC power, and the first oil shock, had transformed the economic and political climate at the international level. These upheavals led in fact to a sharp "differentiation" of development strategies among developing countries, depending on how their economic fortunes had been affected. They also led to a new political and diplomatic campaign to try to negotiate for a sweeping "new international economic order" which, it was hoped, would somehow bring changes in the international environment of a character and scope to greatly improve the prospects of all developing countries.

With the second oil shock, as Lewis shows, and a series of related policy decisions and related financial fall-out, the development field was pushed into the long "era of adjustment" in which

Arguments over the appropriate goals of development strategy -- growth or equity? or what balance between them? -- were pre-empted. Both goals had to yield priority to adjustment. The inescapable, non-postponable need of any country not prepared to retreat into complete economic isolation is to "adjust" -- that is, to bring the excess of its imports over its exports into line with the maximum inflow of capital (concessional or otherwise) it is willing and able to obtain. F

Lewis, "Development Promotion", pp.8-9

The "era of adjustment" in development strategies dominates to this day, even if in some circles and countries the original rationale of stark and urgent necessity has been replaced by a conviction that market-based, de-interventionist, export-promoting approaches are not just a current
necessity, but an enduring virtue, and the key to any enduring development progress. While there has been further refinement and nuancing, the strategic landscape in 1993 is still dominated by this basic approach, described by Lewis in 1986 as the "new orthodoxy" and viewed as a victory for impulses which had long prevailed in the World Bank. Also still valid is his concluding comment on the general issue, which helps set the tone for the remaining discussion in this paper:

There is, however, currently a fair amount of disarray in the ranks of mainstream development economists. The orthodox ones are sure of their heading. But many of the rest of us - and...I think we account for a majority of all the mainstreamers - sense a good deal of unsettled and/or unfinished business.F

Ibid

5. Development, migration impulsions, and policy options

Because the decision to migrate is such a difficult one for most people, it can often be taken as an indicator of extreme development needs. At a time when the rationale, objectives and priorities for international development co-operation are the subject of great doubt and debate in so many quarters, an approach which seeks to identify where international action might help most to relieve some of the most extreme migration pressures may now be quite helpful in clarifying objectives and priorities for international development co-operation in general.

When the challenge of combating underdevelopment is seen in the context of the extreme symptoms represented by today's global migration pressures, and in the context of several decades' experience, successful and unsuccessful, two overriding principles emerge. First, durable development is always primarily the outcome of the efforts and organisation of the society concerned, rather than a result of any external actions or circumstances, although the external environment (and especially the evolution of the most powerful economies in the system) unquestionably shape the range and immediacy of development options available to the particular society. Second, within the overall external environment affecting development, the role played by development assistance or "foreign aid" is a secondary one: at its best it can catalyse and complement internal efforts and assist in capitalising on fundamental international opportunities; at its worst, aid can distort and divert productive development endeavours.

A further cautionary note is needed with respect to the approach of increasingly looking to, and using, aid or official development assistance (ODA) as a "lever" to influence recipient authorities to adopt particular development policies favoured by the donors. The basic strategy of attempting to use aid for political and economic leverage is far from new, but the range of economic and non-economic policies now being suggested as targets for "conditionality" is far wider, more diverse and complex than ever before, even though the size and value of the aid "lever" wielded by most donors has stagnated or shrunk. A valuable brief review of the experience, and the realistic limits, of aid conditionality has recently been provided by Joan Nelson, and it merits careful consideration by all who are concerned with setting the future goals for aid.F


F
In an attempt to keep in mind the range of factors involved, the following list reviews the breakdown from Figure 1 of development problems which are also likely to constitute "push" factors in emigration, and tries in a very general way to distinguish those which are most likely to be amenable to improvement through international co-operative action in general (**) and those which are most likely to respond to the use of official development assistance or ODA (*). It also incorporates a rough estimation of the timeframes in which improvements might realistically be expected.

Table 2

Possible areas for international co-operative action

1. Population-resource-environment imbalances
   Excessive population growth (* long term)
   Agriculture/land or other resource exhaustion, market glut, or obsolescence of economic base (** medium to long term)
   Environmental deterioration seriously threatening health or quality of life (* & ** medium to long term)

2. Inadequate dynamism and/or diversity of economic base
   Fundamental problems of economic strategy, management and organisation (** & * short, medium and long term effect)
   Lack of employment opportunity -- deriving from flawed policy environment and inadequate investment, technology, entrepreneurship and skills, infrastructure and/or markets (** and selective *, medium to long term)
   Monoculture or narrowly-based economy (** medium to long term)

3. Inadequate social support and cultural life
   Gaps in health, education, training services and basic social safety-nets (*)
   Lack of access to mainstream culture and modern amenities

4. Oppressive political/human rights situation or limiting class structure or social mores
   War or chronic, widespread violence, crushing military expenditure (** short to medium term possible)
   Gross violations of human rights and deprivation of basic political freedoms (** and some * short to medium term possible)
   Systematic exploitation and impoverishment by a prevailing structure (improvement gradual and derivative)
   Discriminatory impediments based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, class etc. (improvement gradual and derivative)

* Most likely to be amenable to action through ODA.
** Most likely to be amenable to treatment through other international measures, including possibly some use of ODA for leverage.
While it is clear from the summary above that no development/emigration problem is likely to offer quick or easy solutions, it also emerges that, particularly in post-Cold War conditions, there may be relatively immediate possibilities for alleviating some of the most severe "development" problems outside the economic domain.

{Non}-{economic development}

Wars, endemic violence, chronic human rights violations and the deprivation of basic political freedoms are among the major contributors, both directly and indirectly, to intolerable conditions of life and pressures for emigration in many parts of the world. While the ending of the Cold War by no means ended these problems, and in some ways may even have removed a measure of discipline that forcibly restrained outbreaks in parts of the world, the end of dominant bipolar confrontation has made these problems fundamentally more amenable to remedial action, if the international community is willing and able to seize the new opportunities. The proxy wars spawned by the Cold War have lost their raison d’être, although much of their legacy of militarization, destruction and dislocation remains to be resolved.

The Cold War’s capacity to obscure, overlook or rationalise human rights violations is just as surely gone, and in its place is a deepening recognition that a set of universal human values does exist and should be respected. Similarly, the international community’s instruments for responding to these concerns (and especially the United Nations) so long paralysed by Cold War divisions, have been unfettered, and in some cases have even been carried into new areas, beyond the traditional barriers of state sovereignty.

On the other hand, the ending of the Cold War, and the dissolution of the former Communist states and some others, have released a new set of challenges to human rights, as well as virulent conflicts, and threats of conflict, particularly centred on resurgent ethnic assertion and nationalism. The actual and potential conflicts and abuses are exacerbated by past and continuing flows of weaponry, still largely supplied by the major powers.

Without underestimating the difficulties involved -- which the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Cambodia now amply demonstrate -- there can be little doubt that effective international action to anticipate, prevent, and treat cases of serious human rights violations and inter and intrastate conflict would now be one of the most powerful contributions to development progress and to countering many pressures of forced emigration. To maintain the "window" for progress in these areas will require both skillful handling of the complex crises already unfolding and consistent responses to others, as well as the strengthening of relevant international machinery and regimes, including the capacity for emergency response.

In an East-West context, the norms for minority rights, disarmament, and peaceful change of frontiers established under the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe need to be maintained and elaborated to meet new challenges, and may also provide models adaptable for progress in other regions.
Another clear and vital test is that of the control of arms transfers, where arms reductions by the major powers now provide legitimate ground for pressing reductions by others, where the Cold War rationale for many arms transfers has disappeared, and where the developmental waste and dangers of excessive arms spending and widespread war and armed disorder in many countries have long been a cause of great concern. With a general slowdown in the world economy, continuing competition among all producers for shrinking markets, and desperate straits among some of the traditional arms exporters, an effective arms transfer control regime will be extremely difficult to negotiate and implement, but the failure to do so now would certainly signify a lack of will to grapple with the even more obdurate problems on the global agenda. Direct multilateral action to limit the flows of weapons to developing countries, combined with firm multilateral commitments to regional security-building and conflict prevention, could now make important contributions to reducing conflict and combating military expenditure as a development problem. Such steps might usefully be complemented by measures to "condition" aid on self-restraint by arms-importing recipient governments.

The possibilities for aid linkage on security issues have recently been subjected to an interesting review by Nicole Ball in Pressing for Peace: Can Aid Induce Reform? (Washington: Overseas Development Council, 1992)

(Domestic, regional, and global economic management)

At the economic level, in line with the recognition that, regardless of the economic strategy pursued, development is primarily internally-driven and market-driven, improved domestic economic management is now widely accepted as the appropriate first goal for development improvements and the appropriate first target for the international community in providing assistance.

The tension is constant between standardised prescriptions for stabilisation and the particular problems experienced by countries which are pressed to apply these prescriptions. The question is also beginning to arise as to how long the imperative of adjustment is going to continue to pre-empt positive development momentum, and what kinds of development strategies are going to be appropriate for particular developing countries as they recommence a normal development path, recognising that their "strategy" cannot and should not be one of pure {laissez faire}.

Given the focus of this paper, it is worth recalling that the austerity measures which governments frequently must implement in the pursuit of stabilisation may tend to promote at least short term increases in the pressure for emigration. While there will always be much room for debate about the appropriateness of particular economic reform packages being recommended and applied, there is now still a broad consensus on the inescapable need for such reform measures in many countries in order to grapple with development
Among others, the OECD Development Centre has in recent years produced an important series of studies, at the country-level and the more general one, on these adjustment programmes. Moreover, the leverage of foreign aid programmes is being called upon extensively to help encourage them, and to some degree to support the needed adjustments.

Bearing in mind the general caution made earlier about the sometimes excessive confidence placed in the leverage of aid -- and noting the general finding that conditioning aid on economic policy change seems mainly to be effective in shaping longer-term sustainment of sound policies in countries whose governments are already committed to them -- the ways in which this "policy dialogue" is pursued should be part of the general reassessment of development co-operation strategies. What shares of aid is it appropriate to continue directing to the co-ordinated advocacy and conditional support of stabilisation programmes in recipient countries, and how should donors react when the stabilisation prescriptions either fail to be adopted or fail to have the intended effects? Are the total amounts of aid support being provided large enough to be considered responsible, given the prolonged social pain and de-stabilizing political strain which the prescribed austerity has produced?

Even assuming that their governments are doing everything possible to pursue sound economic management policies at home -- including the adoption of open trading regimes -- it seems highly likely that most countries grappling with serious development problems will need further rationalisation of their place in the international economy in order to achieve substantial progress. When regional free trade areas, common markets and economic unions are seen as essential for major parts of the industrialised world in upgrading their own efficiency and competitiveness, the continuing fragmentation of most of the less-developed countries of the East and the South in small, truncated and stagnant markets seems a clear prescription for them to fall ever further behind.

Developing country governments, while recognising that a rules-based multilateral trade system is a necessary condition for the economic welfare of their countries, must also see that it is not secure and will never be designed with their particular concerns as a first priority. Even if the multilateral system were secure, it would still not provide a sufficient condition for their development. It is also clear to all that flows of foreign aid will never conceivably reach volumes that would eliminate the need for maximum economic rationalisation, and that for most of these countries, full acceptance into any of the best-endowed regional economic groupings (such as the EC or NAFTA) is likely to be a long-term opportunity at best. Probably the most effective international self-help measure now within the hands of developing country authorities in the East and the South would be to initiate or intensify arrangements for economic integration among their own regional groups, and
A number of such experiments do appear to be gaining momentum in some regions or sub-regions.

Here again, it must be stressed, even after the thorny negotiating problems around the costs and benefits of regional economic co-operation to a wide range of vested interests in all countries concerned, a transitional period of adjustment will be involved as regional rationalisation takes hold. This is very likely to cause at least major sectorial dislocations and unemployment of a kind that might stimulate emigration before new opportunities are created.

Of course, if new regional arrangements include provisions for labour mobility, much of this new migration can be expected to take place within the area. If, however, arrangements are restricted to free trade provisions, without labour mobility, the forced search for improved opportunity by many individuals is likely to have to follow the present paths until the general economic benefit of free trade and rationalisation begins to generate wide new activity within their countries.

With this effect in mind, for example, Doris Meissner has criticised the impending North American Free Trade Arrangement between the US., Mexico, and Canada as "missing a historic opportunity" for its failure to treat the issue of labour migration in conjunction with free trade, and bemoans the influence of the 10 to 1 wage differential in the EC’s reluctance to grant membership to Turkey.

See Doris Meissner, "Managing Migrations," Foreign Policy (No. 86, Spring 1992) p.82.

She cites the experience of Italy and Spain, whose integration in the European Community has ultimately equipped them to become labour-importing rather than migrant source states, and looks to a similar effect for Mexico, rather than what she fears may become a permanent status as a "low-wage mecca". In response to this concern, it must be said that in some cases, the prospect of full labour mobility would almost certainly render politically impossible any forward movement on regional economic integration, and that free trade arrangements with investment mobility, while more gradual and limited in their effects, should be expected to have many similar impacts in ultimately reducing disparities of income and opportunity between participating countries.

At the level of the global economic system, there are clearly no panaceas for the problems of under-development and mal-development and their migration fall-out. In fact, as suggested above, the intensification of the world-wide struggle for competitiveness and the felt needs of even the advanced economies to pursue deeper regional economic co-operation suggest that successful integration into the system by the less-advanced economies will be more demanding on them than ever. Moreover, the fiscal and policy stringency which is almost certain to continue to prevail in the advanced countries will severely limit the scope for public policy initiatives aimed primarily at assisting the successful adaptation and integration of developing countries. The remaining holdovers of the debt problem will still remain a major obstacle for a good many countries.

By the same token it remains true that probably the most useful contributions that can be made by the authorities in the advanced economies will be through the better management of their own economic policies, particularly through protecting and enhancing open regimes for trade, finance
and technology flows and through responsible management of their own fiscal and monetary policies which have such fundamental and far-reaching impacts on the financial fortunes of all other countries.

Neither the continuing commitment to open economic regimes nor that to responsible fiscal management by industrialised countries is a platitudinous or assured goal, given the pressures of adjustment and the burdens of past mismanagement to which all are now subject. In particular, the immense difficulties and protracted delays in securing a successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations do not bode well for either continued open policies among the major economic powers nor for the long-overdue measures to integrate developing countries more fully and, in particular, bring to an end some of the discriminatory barriers facing them, for example through the Multi-Fibre Arrangement that has governed trade in textiles and clothing.

Preserving the open multilateral trading system and maintaining the forward momentum of liberalisation is a superseding prerequisite for the global economic environment to offer any realistic chances of progress to most of the developing countries. Failure to achieve these goals could open the doors to new waves of protectionism, exacting huge costs in global economic efficiency and increasing the possibility of dangerously-closed regional economic blocs. Such outcomes would leave most of the developing countries even further marginalised from the system and/or exposed to perilously narrow options for their development strategies -- where the powerful export-promotion tool would become much less usable and where their international economic relationships could much more be dominated by a kind of sphere-of-interest framework.

(Other international influences and options)

All too often, some observers take the term "development strategy," and even more so that of "international development co-operation," to be more or less synonymous with the strategies applied by foreign aid programmes from outside the target countries. The foregoing listing of some of the most important domestic, regional, and global determinants of development progress and reduced emigration pressure, in both the non-economic and economic spheres, has attempted to put aid and its uses back into their appropriate -- limited but still significant -- context.

If the slender instrument of aid has in recent years become overburdened with unrealistic expectations as to the leverage it may permit on a wide range of the policies of recipient authorities, it had already been over-loaded to the breaking point with a multiplicity of purposes (some mutually inconsistent) and a set of implicit targets which has been wholly excessive. It is vital to recall here the guiding principle that aid at its best can catalyse and complement domestic development efforts, and to note that, even for purposes of sustaining this activity and expenditure in many of the donor countries today, a much more clear and focused rationale and record of accomplishment will be essential.

To the extent that governments of countries seeking development are able to adopt sound policies that will encourage viable economic activity, and especially if they can capture the benefits of wider markets and higher
efficiency through regional co-operation, the instrument of private foreign
direct investment is likely to be increasingly available to them. Most
governments now seem to have reached the conclusion that on balance such
outside investment is beneficial and to be encouraged, with many fewer
reservations than often applied in the past. One effect of such investment,
with special relevance to migration pressures, can be the flows of
organisational and technological "know how" that can accompany such investment,
although this benefit is not to be taken for granted, since key managerial and
research and development functions may often tend to be disproportionately
concentrated near the centre or metropolitan base of investing corporations.

In order to strengthen their capacity to derive maximum benefit from
their existing and potential economic activities, there is good reason for many
countries to view measures to strengthen their technological capacity as a
top-priority strategic investment, even if the measures concerned are mainly
limited to adaptive work on technologies for their mainstay industries, to
specialised education and research in appropriate areas, and to building the
capacity for making technology policy itself. These areas can also be
appropriate ones for the strategic direction of fairly modest amounts of
foreign assistance. The medium to long term economic benefits are quite evident
and the particular impact on emigration pressures can be to increase job
creation, both through deriving more activity from existing endowments, through
seeking out productive, labour-intensive adaptations of prevailing
technologies, and offering greater career opportunities to some of the more
highly-educated and skilled people in the labour force. Even though some of
these benefits will undoubtedly be offset by the emigration of a significant
share of this pool of mobile personnel, the net gains for development are still
likely to be substantial.

With respect to the roles of foreign development assistance in general,
the current reassessment now underway among policy-makers and specialists
provides a much-needed opportunity to review the results of some of the
changing experiments and sometimes "fashions" of the past four decades and form
some operational conclusions on what limited aid can do most effectively in
various kinds of development situation. There is much detailed evaluative
documentation, from multilateral, national, and independent sources on the
effectiveness of aid, and on measures to make it as effective as possible. It
presents a very wide menu of possible co-operative actions to help meet
development needs.

At the risk of gross over-simplification, however, it may be possible to
suggest that one form of assistance, while its ultimate effects are as
difficult to monitor and measure as any others, may have the most indisputably
beneficial impact on the capacity of a society to mobilise and sustain its own
development. It is the same investment which has now come to be accepted as the
key to productivity and competitiveness among the advanced countries. This is
the investment in the development of human resources -- healthy, educated and
skilled thinkers, workers and entrepreneurs who alone can generate and carry
development in a society, and ultimately make it possible to build and maintain
all the other infrastructure of progress.

It remains true, as the "brain drain" problem underlines, that in some
developing countries the key problem is not a lack of trained human resources,
but the incapacity to manage and use these resources effectively. Moreover,
there may be an especially painful paradox in the suggestion that human resource development should enjoy a pride of place among goals for development assistance, in the context of concern for reducing excessive emigration from the societies concerned. This is because, if all development progress may at an initial stage tend to exacerbate emigration pressures, successful efforts at developing the human resource itself may be especially prone to spurring larger numbers of emigrants until a sufficiently broad base of opportunity takes hold in the society that most will find adequate challenge and reward at home. Certainly measures to target training and education to be appropriate to the particular conditions and needs of the country should enhance its capacity to retain its skilled people, and other questions may arise in relation to immigration policies, as discussed below. On balance, however, planners of development and development aid will have to live with this most pronounced form of the development-migration paradox.

At a very different level of development and migration pressure lies the issue of unsustainable population growth in many countries. Even allowing for all the complexity of this question, and its cultural sensitivity in some countries, it remains true both that it is a critical, long-term component of the development/migration problématique and that it has received much less attention and action internationally over the past decade, largely for ideological reasons in some key countries. As is well known and obvious, the momentum of demographic growth is slow to turn around, but the sooner a concerted effort is made on the scientific, behavioural, and societal aspects of the challenge, the sooner beneficial results will be felt. In general terms, much available evidence suggests that many social and economic measures that serve to enhance the status and empowerment of women in their societies (such as literacy programmes, for example) are prominent among the most effective means of enabling people to control the size of their families.

The example of measures to improve the daily lives and opportunities of women, still a systematically disadvantaged half of the population in most societies, is representative of a legitimate continuing target for development efforts with a likely impact in reducing excessive migration. While even the world’s wealthiest and most productive societies are today hard-pressed to maintain social services at the levels desired by their citizens, the stark inadequacies of such services in most developing societies constitutes a source of hardship and insecurity which is a serious "push" factor in their emigration.

In all societies, the provision of even minimal social services to the population depends on the availability of the services themselves, and on accessibility either through adequate income and/or various forms of subsidy. While the phase of development thinking is past which laid such dominant stress on directly attempting to meet the "basic human needs" of the population, progress in achieving this target (including access to education and the other basics to equip people for productive roles) remains a vital component of any serious strategy for development or development co-operation.

Particularly when prolonged regimes of stabilisation have imposed, as they inevitably will, disproportionate hardship on the poorest sections of the population, and when growth-centred strategies may "trickle down" their benefits far less evenly in developing than developed countries, a specific and
focused concern with the distribution of gains, opportunity, and hope to a wide
section of the population is highly necessary. This is probably especially
relevant to achieving any substantial impact on migration pressures.

One further emphasis of current thinking on development strategies
deserves special attention in relation to emigration pressure -- concern for
the environment and environmentally-sustainable development. It is true that
environmental disaster-areas, on the order of Bhopal or much of what prevails
in the former Soviet empire, must have a superseding priority for action among
the many challenges of underdevelopment. It is by no means as clear, however,
that some of the large-scale causes of "environmental refugee" flows, or the
assurance of high environmental standards on much-needed development projects,
will be as amenable to priority attention and action in many countries. The
general debates about priorities and the allocation of costs and
responsibilities are familiar, especially after the long process surrounding

The authorities in most developing countries probably need no convincing
of the importance of major environmental deterioration which sets huge numbers
of people on the move, since most of these environmental migrants and
"refugees," like others, remain within their own countries and regions. What is
in question is whether these authorities feel that they have any real capacity
to counter some of the most profound changes such as desertification,
salination, deforestation, or local climate change, or whether they have real
alternatives to pursuing some of the controversial projects which they see as
yielding net benefits, even with major environmental and human dislocation
costs. Given the consuming growth and employment imperatives in developing
countries, on global level issues, such as global warming and the upgrading of
environmental standards to "First World" levels, there is no serious prospect
that most activities in developing countries will be brought into line without
substantial subsidy and/or special access to the "state of the art"
technologies.

(Targeting development co-operation at migration?)

All of the preceding discussion has been based on the operating premise
that excessive emigration pressure is usually symptomatic of, among other
things, serious failures in economic, social and/or political development.
The operating corollary has been that progress on durable, broadly-based
development in a society will, after some probable transitional increase in
emigration pressures, lead to a stabilisation and decrease in those pressures.

A review of the experience over recent decades with different strategies
for development and development co-operation yields impressive examples of
success at local, national, and regional levels (and in some global indices)
but it certainly does not suggest that there is any uniform, universal, or easy
formula for development success.

Pressures of migration may legitimately add new impetus to the
international concern for development, and perhaps (as the foregoing treatment
implies) lead to a sharper focus on the concrete "pay-offs" of development in
the lives and prospects of millions of individual actors. Such an orientation would be quite a healthy one, and would proceed logically enough from the cumulative growth in understanding of development strategies.

This discussion also warns, however, that quick results in reducing migration pressures are unlikely and also, implicitly, that any sweeping attempts to "target" development or development co-operation to achieving short-term decreases in migration would probably be ineffective. Worse, because they might deflect or distort efforts at durable development, as well as engendering resentment, any such approaches could well prove seriously counter-productive.

There may be changes in immigration and refugee policies and in their international co-ordination which could help to moderate pressures in the short and medium term but in general these are beyond the scope of the present paper. From the perspective of development, however, we must return to one related theme which has been on the agenda since the nineteen-sixties, but has never received the attention and action it deserves -- the huge development loss represented by the "brain drain" from the less-developed to the more advanced countries.

To illustrate the importance of the issue, if it were hypothetically now possible to restore to their home countries all of the highly-skilled emigrants from less-developed countries who are contributing so much in their roles in the advanced world, the prospect for widespread development would unquestionably be transformed overnight. Such a step is of course unthinkable in practice, from many points of view, but the illustration underlines the huge stakes involved in this continuing and perhaps increasingly damaging drain.

It must be recognised that the most skilled, talented, and motivated people represent a wholly disproportionate share of those who succeed in migrating internationally from most of the less-developed countries in the South and in the East. This skill-skewing is generally the case, whether the group of migrants is formally labelled as "asylum-seekers", or permanent or temporary migrants, and there are many natural reasons why this is so. Similarly there are many compelling reasons, ranging from individual rights and fairness to the (often competitive) self-interest of receiving countries, why it remains extremely difficult for the international community to act to control this hemorrhaging which does so much to widen the development gaps between societies and regions.

In addition to the positive measures touched on earlier (such as consciously targeting development activities to create an environment for highly skilled people to stay) and the limited existing controls (such as offering greater in-country training and obliging aid-financed trainees to return for a period to their home countries) is it now conceivable that the international community could consider co-ordinated changes in migration policies that would make it more difficult for highly-skilled people, except for clearly endangered refugees, to be accepted as migrants? As noted, any such proposition would be fraught with difficulties, and would call into question the underlying rationale for migration policy and practice in most, if not all, receiving countries. On the other hand, the continuing failure to acknowledge
the importance of this problem, and to debate possible remedies, would bespeak
a serious lack of will to address either the underlying links between migration
and underdevelopment or the problem of excessive migration itself.

There have been constructive, if modest, proposals and efforts if not to
reverse the brain drain, at least to try to return some share of its benefits
to migrant-source countries. These have included projects to encourage
expatriates to return with skills and capital to launch enterprises in their
countries of origin, and to try to maximise the developmental benefits of
expatriate remittances. Sometimes, although not always, expatriates may also
have especially useful parts to play in development assistance work in
countries where they have special familiarity. The record of narrowing
development gaps, and improved political or social conditions in other contexts
(such as the European Community or inter-regionally in the United States) does
also offer some encouragement that emigrants may often be inclined to return,
without the "development gap" being entirely closed, for reasons of familiarity
and what they consider a more congenial quality of life.

END-OF-TEXT