

VOICE OF THE RURAL WORLD



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Lands eviction and migrants: What reality ?

VMR

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Cover-page : Migration of cranes (France)

Périodique, publié en quatre langues par la FIMARC, qui
donne un écho de la vie du monde rural et de l'action des
Mouvements membres ou non de la Fédération

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Boat people - Africa

Dear Friends and Readers of VMR,

Every year millions of people are forcibly evicted from their dwellings, leaving them homeless and, in the process, entrenching patterns of poverty, discrimination and social exclusion. Land evictions are becoming a common story in many parts of the world both in cities and in rural areas and most cases it is forced evictions throwing out rural communities from their land, properties and livelihoods and supported by private investors and even the governments causing a big migration of the affected people.

Almost 180,000 people (mainly young people) move into cities each day. 60 million people move into cities each year in developing countries. This rate of movement will continue for the next 30 years. As a result the rural areas are being deprived of a future while urban areas are overpopulated and unprepared for the rigors of city life and the requirements of urban employment.

This edition of VMR is bringing you a sound analysis on the topic of Land eviction and Migration. The major causes of forced evictions include the absence of formal tenure rights, development and infrastructure projects, foreign direct investment, urban redevelopment and “beautification” initiatives, property market forces, political conflicts and natural hazards.

The International law clearly prohibits illegal and arbitrary forced eviction, and has repeatedly declared this practice to be a gross and systematic violation of human rights. There is leading legal interpretation of the right to be protected against forced eviction called “General Comment 7” adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1997 even then forced evictions continue to take place in virtually all countries of the world.

Our movement has been supporting the struggles of people on the ground who are facing forced evictions ;Our campaign against POSCO (India) is an initiative to be strengthened. Let us join our hands against any forceful land evictions and build up a rural world which give new perspectives for people to live on.

Enjoy your reading

*George Dixon FERNANDEZ
Secretary general*



Lands eviction and Migrants : What reality ?

Migration flows are not only related to historical migration and it is difficult to identify them: economic, politics, climate change, family, ethnic, religious, individual and collective reasons.

But it is now increasingly more clearly that the 21st century will see migration flows accelerated by climate change and the phenomenon of the land grabbing, which deprives a significant portion of the population of its resources.

All migration do not go to OECD countries (only 2 on 5 migrants), many have to destination new prosperous countries and 47% of the migration of poor countries go to other poor countries.

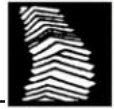


Egypt 2009

Let us precise some of the concepts

For demographers, a person is called "migrant" when she changes his/her home, "immigrant" when she lives in a place where she was not born (from the point of view of the host country), "immigrant" also when she left his country of origin (from the point of view of the country of origin). A "refugee" is a person who fled a situation that was becoming untenable for her physical and mental integrity, she may have also fled while the outbreak of political passions in her country or because of natural disasters; "displaced" is a migrant, forced to move in his own country, while that "the exiles people" have decided to continue their political action, where they are safe.

- ***6.5 billion of human beings on the planet***
- ***200 million of migrants around the world (3% of the world's population)***
- ***10% inhabitants in the EU (13% in the US)***
- ***70% money transfers are sent by immigrants in developing countries.***
- ***13 000 MIE (Foreign Isolated Minors) live in the EU in 2000***



The causes of migrations

Mass population migration due to global warming is an extremely worrying element of geopolitical tension.

In several regions of the world, we can already observe phenomenon related to climate warming: reduction of the arable land, decline of food and fish resources; increase of floods; longer period of dryness...

Another cause of migration, both internal and external is the growing phenomenon of land grabbing that we extensively discussed in previous issues of the VMR. It can be whether to grow crops for export or for the manufacture of agro fuels. More and more land are confiscated to the peasants when they are not expelled from their lands by their own Governments, developing special economic zones, occupied by national or international companies that do not hesitate to relocate entire villages.



Fraudulent land grabbing by the state with the aim of the construction of an eco-complex on the coastal band- Sri Lanka 2011

Another problem causing migration is that of the special economic zones. A special economic zone (SEZ) is a geographic area in which economic laws are more liberal, that is more advantageous for companies, than in the rest

of the country. When a government creates such areas, it tends to attract foreign investments. To reach its objective he takes measures allowing companies to see their investment, financing and operating costs significantly reduced in regards to a "classic" economic environment. These incentives are most often tax cuts, but can also be direct aid to the installation. According to the estimates of the World Bank, in 2007 more than 3,000 SEZS already created or on project, exists and this in 120 countries.

- ***The Republic of Angola has formalized the creation of the Luanda Bengo in Special Economic Zone in 2009, on a 8.000 hectares area in the neighborhoods of Luanda de Viana and Cacuaco and areas of the province of Bengo in the North of Icolo-e-Bengo, Dande, Ambriz and Namboangongo***
- ***Since October, 2010, there are 114 operational Special Economic Zones in the following States of India: Andhra Pradesh - 30 ;Karnataka - 20; Kerala - 6; Chandigarh - 1; Gujarat - 10; Haryana - 3; Maharashtra - 15; Rajasthan - 1; Tamil Nadu - 18; Uttar Pradesh - 7; West Bengale - 2 : Orissa - 1. And more than 500 new areas are formally approved by the Indian Government.***
- ***Some facts and figures on the SEZ's in the Philippines: the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority covers 76,59 hectares, the Bataan Export Procession Zone (1.733,37 hectares), the Light Industry & Science Park I, II, & III: 272,22 hectares) Laguna Techno park (289,95 hectares) ...***

Questions for the groups and movements :

- *What is the situation of migration in your country?*
- *Does special economic zones exist? With what consequences for the rural population?*



Zambia 2007

What about the situation of the Southern countries ?

Migration responds to a set of mechanisms and factors that differ depending on the circumstances and people, their customs and social practices. In Africa, for example, but also for many indigenous and tribal communities, land was property of the community, divided in relation to the needs of individuals. But since a few decades, there is a relation to the property that differs from the one of ancestral customs. Nowadays more and more land is subject to title, plots have got commercial value that they had not until now; they are now exposed to the ferocious law of market economy.

This is why we can attend a less equitable land distribution because some have money to pay and other don't, without mentioning rampant speculation that pumped up first place awards in some regions and sometimes make access to the property simply impossible. As a result we can assist to the departure of peasants and their families to the cities.

Africa is doubtless the continent which suffers most combined effects of the neo-liberal crisis which lives our society. Impacts of the migration, climate change, land grabbing and common goods problems are severely felt by a big part of the communities. The chronic breach in adequate investments, infrastructures and in public utilities in all the countries of Africa is experienced in many countries for a long time. The informal traditional model does not generate taxes, and the exploitation of the resources, imposed by the multinational companies, fills for a very little part the cash boxes of States.

These combined factors destroy largely the united traditional societies, threatening massively the peasant agriculture and the common property of land, contribute in significant way to insufficient educational and health systems and create megalopolises which miss cruelly fundamental services.

And elsewhere in the world...

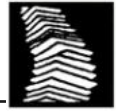
More than 50% of the world's population now lives in Asia, a high proportion which foreshadows the magnitude of the migration phenomenon in this region. Indeed, already in 1990, Asia had the largest number of international migrants with 49.8 million people. Fifteen years later, it is placed in the second position, just behind Europe, with 53.3 million international migrants.

If the economic factor remains the main driver of migration in Asia, other reasons such as the forced migrations related to the human trafficking, political instability or natural disaster are not to be overlooked. The strong feminization of migration flows is also a recent trend.

The migrant workers of the Asian region come especially from Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka or Vietnam. It is mostly about little qualified workers, generally less indeed paid than the local workers, and whose jobs are characterized by 3D: "dirty, dangerous and difficult". We can besides observe a brain drain which touches in particular India, as a part of the qualified migrants, even very qualified work in the medicine and the engineering or the Philippines, among whom the nurses and the doctors are to every day more numerous to leave the country.



Bangladesh 2008



In 2010, the total number of the migrant population in Latin America is estimated to 7.5 millions of persons. Latin America is a region of net emigration, with a flow of emigrants more important than immigrants' flow. Mexico is the first country of emigrants to the world, with 10.1 million persons living abroad. Colombia, Porto Rico, Cuba, Salvador, Brazil and Jamaica follow it closely as country of emigration in the region, mainly towards North America, and in the case of Europe, towards Spain.

The Argentina and the Venezuela are the main countries of destination in Latin America, with 1.4 million and 1 million immigrants in 2010. Migration flows within the Latin America develop more and more and they take place mainly between border countries as in the case of Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay to Argentina, and Nicaragua to Costa Rica. The integration of migrants in Latin America is a new issue, especially for the recently new countries of destination that have already implemented various policies.

The feminization of migration: a growing phenomenon

In 2005, Asian women accounted 44.7% of the total of migrants from the region. In the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, they are even more from the men. In 2002, the Sri Lankan women accounted for 65.3% of migrants from the country, in 2003 the Philippines women accounted for 72.5% of migrants and the Indonesian women 72.8%. These women are mainly employed as domestic workers or as care givers assistants.

In addition, there is also a high proportion of women in South East Asia who works in the manufactures in Taiwan, South Korea or Singapore. All these women suffer from various discrimination.

All across Asia, human beings trafficking touch all the women and girls who are either married force, or constraints to prostitution. The under region Mekong is one of the privileged for trafficking. Many of them are also sent in South East Asia to marry. There is both an internal and transnational trafficking.

The key issues related to these migratory flows

Women are not the only ones to suffer the effects of discrimination. This phenomenon concerns the whole of migrant workers. In regards with the low-skilled jobs that they perform, but also with the illegal entry of many of them, these migrants are often more vulnerable than local workers.

The problems encountered by illegal immigrants (breach of the contract of employment, reduction or non-payment of wages, ill-treatment) are legion.

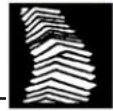
But all is not negative....

For decades, the hard work of solitary migrants contributed to relieve families and whole communities to poverty. Their gains have built houses, provided health care, equipped schools, laid the foundations for commercial activities. They have built a global network by passing ideas and knowledge from one country to another. They were the dynamic human link between cultures, societies and economies. Economic, social and cultural progress and the welfare of developed countries migrants are everywhere evident. Their cultures, their values and their traditions not only enrich our societies, but allow us to adapt to a rapidly changing world. They have created companies without number, which some, like eBay, Mittal, Google and Intel, have names that are familiar to us. And they have been at the cutting edge of research at the service of innovation.

Less skilled migrants also play a crucial role for the success of our economies. Every hour of every day, they take care of our patients, our elderly, and our children. They clean our homes, provide our crops, and work in our industry. They perform many of the more essential tasks at the base of our well-being. However, they work in sectors of the economy where they are exposed to exploitation, discrimination or worse.

Questions the groups and movements :

- *Can you cite a negative point of migration in your country?*
- *Can you cite one of its benefits?*



Ways to improve the situation

Some propose to give climate migrant, refugee status under the 1951 Geneva Convention. What seems difficult to apply for the time being. What should be in the immediate future is build a platform of international dialogue, coordination and promotion of exchanges and cooperation between States and other actors. But, above all, we must persuade ourselves that migrants covered by the Geneva Convention are not the only ones in need of international assistance. Many others, who did not have refugee status, are also in a situation of great vulnerability and their ranks are even growing under the effect of climate change. Countries already unable to meet their international obligations in the protection of vulnerable migrants will have to rely even more on international assistance. Which, in the international community, will assume this responsibility, and with what resources?

Resistances occur across the world against land grabbing operations, against Special Economic Zones that move entire populations. We must try to block the negotiations, and multiply the alternative experiments that demonstrate the ability of familial agriculture to feed the world's population by respecting the environment and even developing its potential.





Asian Seminar, June 2011 - Colombo (Sri Lanka)

We have to use international law that condemns the principle of land grabbing, but does not impose the modalities of its implementation. Although often violated by States as well as banks and multinationals, it provides the resistance movements, arguments and references to their claims and can be invoked in court proceedings.

For example, the International Pact related to the economic, social and cultural rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966 and entered into force 3 January 1976 stipulates in its article 2: "In no case a people cannot be deprived of its own means of subsistence".

In the same sense, the United Nations Declaration on the indigenous People rights adopted by the General Assembly on September 13th, 2007 guarantees their rights on the land, their right not to be chased away by force, to protect their specific spiritual relations with their territories and establishes the principle of a "free, preliminary and informed" agreement above all collective displacement.

To lessen migratory movements, we should think to a more equitable redistribution of benefits of technological progress in the world, a fairer redistribution of socio-economic equipment, a more balanced access to freedom of opinion, religions, a more equal chance to share all this all over the world.

	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p><i>We regret to announce the death of Georges HUGUET, the ancient chaplain of FIMARC during 1985 onwards.</i></p> <p><i>Georges had a heart to link the 2 dimensions of his mission: To listen rural groups of the entire world and to live with the teams of Mission of France and the associated rural teams here.</i></p> <p><i>May his Soul rest in peace .</i></p>
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Some news from FIMARC

The world food day to be celebrated every year on 16 October has the main theme "Food Prices - from crisis to stability". He was chosen to attract attention to the evolution of this phenomenon and what can be undertaken to mitigate its negative effects on the most vulnerable populations. On world day of the 2011 food, we must seriously consider the causes of the fluctuations in the prices of foodstuffs and do what is in the world to reduce its effects on the weaker members of society.

Be attentive to your email in the next few days because you will receive a specific letter of the Secretariat to celebrate our way this JMA and undertake actions of solidarity.

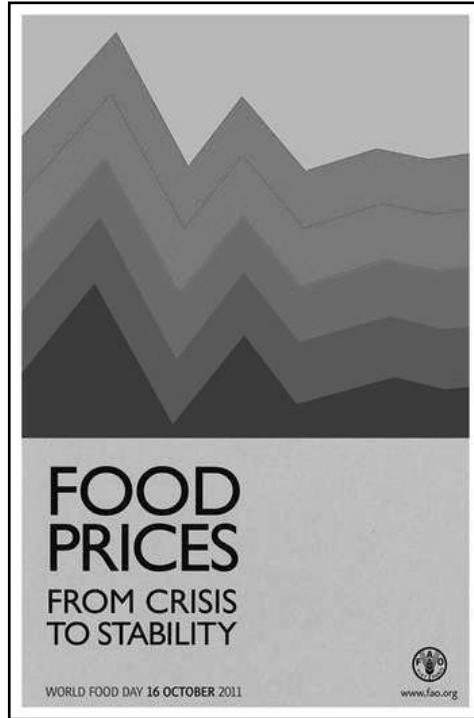
The Asian seminar was held in Sri Lanka from 1st on June 9. The main theme of this seminar is focused on the threats of development for local communities for their access to land. The main objective was to develop a common understanding on the issues of access to land. How the hoarding of land in Asian countries is greatly endangering their food sovereignty and the solidarity economy, causing serious impacts on farmers, fishermen, indigenous peoples, Adivasis, Dalits and tribals, categories of population that are

often neglected and held away from the mainstream of development.

3-day immersion program was organized for 3 groups. The first visited the Islands Kalpityia to learn more about the struggles of the fishermen who oppose a tourism project undertaken by the national Government (in which national and international companies already have contracts); the second group met the indigenous movement of peasants for the right to land and the third group visited the peasant Badulla ecology centre.

All participants agreed that control of the Earth is a prerequisite to realize the right to food for all. Without control of the land, the peasants are marginalized and many of them become "landless peasants". This impoverishes native and local communities: destruction of Earth, loss of productive resources, accelerating the destruction of the ecosystem by the introduction of monoculture and worsening of the climate crisis.

The Earth is our mother, in which we have been trained and which we will return to our eternal rest. If we have the power to control, we must also honor. Earth defines our social status, it is our source of food, education and health. Do not have land, is not having life.



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