

## Editorial Introduction

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We are very pleased to revive the publication of *Regional Development Studies (RDS)* after a two-year hiatus, with volume 10 of this UNCRD journal. The revival of *RDS* is the result of an agreement between UNCRD and the University of Nairobi to collaborate jointly in the editing and publication of the journal. The new editorial committee will continue the journal's policy of publishing scholarly and refereed research work focusing on problems of regional development and planning in developing and transitional economies.

This tenth volume of *RDS* presents ten articles which cover a wide range of topical issues and research undertaken in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. The articles group themselves into three broad themes: the first two articles, by John Friedmann, and by Sergio Boisier, are of a conceptual and historical nature. They are followed by six articles which look at specific challenges of local and regional development policy at a time of intensified global competition in Mexico (industrial agglomeration), Caribbean countries (new international trade environment), Ethiopia (food marketing system and conflict over common resources), Ghana (experience with structural adjustment programme) and China (tourist development planning). The last two articles address the nexus between forced migration and governance and local power relations and institutional change.

The opening article by John Friedmann is a rapid overview of the last 50 years of urban planning and management in North America. It was presented as a commentary in the dialogue session of the WUF3 conference<sup>1/</sup> in Vancouver, Canada in 2006. The purpose of the dialogue was to focus on the new role of planning, by way of examining the past problems of planning and then look at current approaches and methods that overcome these obstacles. Friedmann's article, entitled "A Capsule History of Planning in North America, 1950-2005," examines by way of periodization of the changing ideology of the state and market, the role of planning and planners, and the competing views on environment and the urban space. Friedmann observes that over the subsequent decades urban planning has survived, but its role has changed. For long, the dominant model in the 1950s and 1960s, it fell into disfavour in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s under the new ideology of free market, neo-liberalism, and globalization. Over the period, planners have played varied roles as technologists, advocates, analysts, and mediators. Since the turn of the millennium, concern over the free trade doctrine and unfettered globalization has continued to rise. Cities have grown bigger and more diverse, but up to now, the tools of planning have been unable

to contain this growth in sustainable ways.

Sergio Boisier, in his article entitled “What if Development is Really the Emergence of a System?” presents a critique of the concept of development and puts forward a proposal for a more complex, humanistic, and constructivist paradigm — the emergency of a system, in which the subjective, the value related, the intangible, holistic, and other characteristics prevail. The author explores the concept of development in recent years and argues that more and more development is now understood in a much broader context, and in this sense economic growth is not synonymous with development. He identifies the local subsystems most relevant to generating development. These include values, actors, organizations, procedures, economic capital, and most important a broad set of specific factors referred to as intangible capital.

The third article is by María del Rosario Cota Yáñez entitled “The Agglomeration of the Clothing Industry in Zapotlanejo, Jalisco, Mexico.” The author utilizes the concept of industrial district to describe the dynamics of the local economy of Zapotlanejo that specializes in the production of clothing. The study was based on field interviews and observations, and a critical review of the relevant literature. The article is organized into four parts: an introduction; the definition and conceptual background; historical development of the clothing industry; and conclusion which looks at the problems faced by the business people of the town, how they have coped, and prospects for the future. The author argues that, unlike industrial estates set up by the government, often in collaboration with industrialists, the development of Zapotlanejo is more spontaneous or natural than formal, and obtains the necessary support for its existence not from government institutions but from social networks. However, the author observes that the current competition from cheap imports from China and the US poses a dilemma as to the future of the local economy. The article goes further to explore ways in which the local industry (economy) can be sustained through government support.

The fourth article in this volume of *RDS* focuses on regional economic challenges facing the small countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Written jointly by Nikolaos Karagiannis and Marie Freckleton, “The Relevance of Strategic Intervention Today: The Case of CARICOM Countries” examines the challenges faced by countries of the region in the new millennium and the strategic policy options open to such countries. The article is organized into five main sections including the introduction. Various economic development problems of CARICOM are analysed in section two while sections three and four outline the main features of the new trade environment and the Caribbean context, respectively. Finally, section five looks at the strategic options for the CARICOM countries. The authors argue that the new trade environment presents formidable challenges for the small vulnerable states of the Caribbean community. The intensified competition generated by multilateral trade liberalization and the emergence of regional trade blocs is increasing the risk of economic marginalization of the CARICOM countries. According to the authors, the Caribbean countries are characterized by small economies, highly dependent on the international trade environment. Following the recession in early 1980, the countries adopted neo-liberal policies, which were further consolidated in the 1990s. The consequences included attendant social costs, uneven development, dualism, unemployment, low productivity, and increased inequality. The new millennium and international trade environment have added new challenges such as sweeping technological

changes, powerful transnational corporations, and emergence of regional trading blocs. In the authors' assessment, the region's experience with neo-liberal economic policies over the last two decades suggests that the "invisible hand" alone cannot be relied on to promote the required economic adjustment. A strategic approach encompassing high quality state intervention, industrial targeting, production and operations quality, and environmental conservation are viewed as necessary to ensure the survival of the region in the face of unprecedented changes in the global political economy.

Kassahun Berhanu and Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher have written the fifth article "Conflict over Resources in the Awash Valley, Ethiopia: Continuity and Change." They investigate the nature of resource conflicts in the Awash Basin with a view to identifying their continuity and change in the pre- and post-1991 period.<sup>27</sup> The study is based on information reconstructed from empirical studies conducted in the study area and information from focus group discussion and key informants, community elders and local government officials in the study area. The authors present a detailed background on the movement and settlement of various communities around the Awash Valley since the sixteenth century, essentially in search of grazing and water points. Traditionally, the inter-group interactions were characterized by cooperation and conflict assuming varying dimensions at different times. With some variations, access to land and water was regulated by customs and norms anchored in tradition, and expedited through collective consultations. The study shows that increasing human population and herds, coupled with expanding development projects through land alienation for commercial farming led to shrinkage the resource base and heightened competition over resources and conflict among the communities. The pre-1991 period was marked by such inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts. The outstanding ones were between the Karrayu and the Afar, the Afar and the Issa, and the development projects. The authors observe that the immediate post-1991 period saw subsidence of conflict between rival groups but only temporarily owing to government intervention, including the strong presence of the defence forces. Conflict resumed afterwards over continued competition for resources. Development projects and commercial farms further exacerbated resource scarcity without any form of compensation or tangible benefits to the pastoralists and led to violent clashes with the project workers. A new dimension to resource conflict in the area was noted, the major one being the involvement of regional and local governments in conflict situations on the basis of polarized interethnic relations. The authors make a number of recommendations: first, the need to ease such tensions through policy interventions and attendant measures; second, territorial-based regional development that ensures the development of the locality by putting the interests of the local people as a priority; and third, to strengthen the co-management and utilization of resources in the basin by all concerned parties.

The sixth article entitled, "Investigating Underlying Relationships between Population Density, Food Insecurity, and Road Density in Ethiopia" is written jointly by Ayele Gelan and Haileyesus Dinka. The authors point out that while statistics show that Ethiopia's famine has considerably increased both in terms of the number of famine victims and also in geographical scale, there has been remarkably large surplus production in certain regions, particularly southern and western regions. The authors examine four key variables that are believed to explain the food security situation in Ethiopia, namely, population density, road density, number of people needing food assistance, and the proportion of land potentially suitable for crop pro-

duction. The study applied statistical analysis to identify underlying factors in accounting for persistent famine in the country for the past few decades. Using information from the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) statistical database, the authors reveal production and consumption food balances at national level for the period 1993 to 2000 with an average ratio of 0.99 for the period. This means that Ethiopia was nearly self-sufficient in food production during that period. They argue that, had there been a satisfactory food marketing system to distribute food across regions, from food surplus areas to food deficit ones, or across time via storage, from surplus periods to deficit periods, then drought would not necessarily cause famine. The study reveals that food deficit (northern) regions with relatively high food insecurity tend to have relatively better road conditions than surplus producing (southern and western) regions. This is likely explained by the fact that food-for-work programmes are implemented in food deficit regions so that emergency food aid can be rapidly dispatched. Improving road accessibility in the sense of linking food surplus and food deficit regions has never been considered as a key issue that needs to be addressed in fighting the hunger and poverty in Ethiopia. In the past, government policy in Ethiopia has tilted towards population resettlement. The study suggests an alternative to redressing the balance in favour of combining population resettlement policy with a policy directed to improving rural accessibility and an efficient marketing network in general.

Joseph Mensah has written the seventh article, "Insights into Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and their Outcomes: Evidence from Ghana, 1983-2003" in which he examines Ghana's experience with SAPs from the 1980s. The author seeks to discover why the government of Ghana embarked on SAPs, what kind of reforms were undertaken, and how the country performed under SAPs. The study has relied on empirical and theoretical analysis, focus group discussion, and review of relevant literature. According to the author, Ghana was among the first nations to embark on a comprehensive SAP in Africa, in 1983, at a time when the Jerry Rawlings Government was facing a dire economic crisis. The author argues that other factors besides a domestic crisis led to SAPs in Ghana not least of which was pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the presumed lack of viable alternatives, and the authoritarian advantage enjoyed by the Provincial National Defence Council (PNDC) government at the time. The key components of Ghana's SAPs were composed of fiscal reforms, public sector and civil service reforms, privatization, and reforms in the primary economy (agriculture, forestry and mining). Ghana's SAPs were entailed currency devaluation, trade and financial liberalization, privatization, removal of subsidies, and retrenchment of public sector employment. Ghana was among the first few nations to institute a compensatory initiative such as the programme of action to mitigate the social cost of adjustment. While the IMF/World Bank and several studies have touted Ghana's case as a success story, the author points out that available evidence indicates that while adjustment programmes have helped improve many of Ghana's macroeconomic indicators, including her Gross Domestic Product (GDP), industrial capacity, and domestic investment, they have also aggravated the nation's debt, unemployment, and compounded income polarization problems. The author observes that the benefits and negative consequences of Ghana's SAPs were found to vary not only from industry to industry and from place to place, but also on the basis of social locations such as gender and ethnicity.

The eighth article in this RDS volume is written jointly by Robert Shipley and Dana Svihlova, and is titled, “International Expert Advice on Regional Tourism Development Plans: Two Chinese Case Studies.” In this article, the authors examine the merits of international expert advice in regional tourism development planning using two Chinese case studies in which they were involved. The basic question explored was whether such consultation is merely window dressing or whether it can be useful in achieving the desired goals of regional development such as sustainability, equity, and local self-reliance. The authors begin by highlighting the growing importance of tourism in the developing world, the critical issues, and the factors affecting planning and growth of tourism. Among the trends evident in the development of tourism, the authors identify the tendency towards group tourism, cultural heritage attractions, and ecotourism. As consultants giving expert advice on proposed tourist plans for the Jining City Region in Shandong Province and Yili Prefecture in the far western province of Xinjiang, the authors discuss their dilemma in advising on such aspects as tourist sites (temples, museums, and scenery), systemic issues (on infrastructure development, skills development, and equity matters, and organizational and environmental conservation. In conclusion, the authors outline the need for long-term research on international expert consultation and the main principles that should guide such professional undertaking.

The ninth article is titled, “Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa: A Governance Perspective” by Peter Wanyande. The author discusses the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa and notes that the phenomenon remains a major challenge to African governments and societies. After examining the large number of refugees in Africa, the author argues that the causes of the refugee phenomenon as well as those of internally displaced persons can best be understood by examining the nature of governance in Africa. In this regard, the article examines the major refugee producing situations in the continent of Africa and attempts to demonstrate the relationship between these situations and the nature of governance. The author observes that in the 1960s and 1970s, the forced migrants were mostly a product of liberation wars and self-determination struggles. The post-cold war period has been marked by a decline in the number of refugees, but an increase in internally displaced persons, largely due to conflicts associated with state failure. The article points out the limitations of current multilateral (UNHCR) and regional (Africa Union) institutional frameworks for addressing the phenomenon of forced migration. The author recommends that the solution to the problem of refugee and internally displaced persons in Africa lies in improving the governance in the affected African countries.

The final article in this RDS volume is written jointly by Sunil Ray and Jagdish Sharma and is entitled, “Social Capital, Local Institutions and Entitlement: A Case of Pastureland Development in Singhariya Village.” In this article, the authors examine the extent to which interventions aimed at initiating collective action in social relations within local institutions tend to reproduce same relations of unequal power and authority. Based on a case study of Singhariya village located in Ajmer district, Rajasthan, India, the article examines how a local renovated institution while managing its village pastures despite “entitlement failure” of the subordinates. Before examining the dynamics of social relations, the authors describe the resource base of the village: land, population size, livestock, and education. The authors provide an account of an intervention by a local nongovernmental organization (NGO) aimed at

initiating a collective action for improved practice in managing the village common pastureland. However, the initiative to improve the practice became a context to reproduce the unequal power relations in the community. The authors show, for example that the leadership for initiating collective action emerged from the same powerful households with relatively higher education while women's representation was negligible and merely symbolic.

It is hoped that the ten articles included in volume 10 of the revived RDS journal will rekindle the interest of readers on regional development studies. Whether reflecting on urbanization, globalization, or sustainability, the regional context is ever re-emerging as an analytical construct and development challenge, hence the need for further research into regional development. The brief insights contained in this editorial introduction are meant to stimulate readers into delving deeper into the rich contents of the articles assembled in this volume.

### **NOTES**

- 1/ The World Urban Forum (WUF) is an international conference sponsored by the UN Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS-Habitat). It is held every other year; WUF3 was held from 19 to 23 June 2006 in Vancouver, Canada.
- 2/ The post-1991 period marked the latest change of government in Ethiopia.