

The Grdr “migration-citizenship-development”

Established in 1969, the Grdr is one of the rare associations that undertakes development actions in origin, transit and hosting countries. In West Africa, the Grdr closely works with local authorities and different stakeholders to strengthen their capacities in implementing territorial development projects in a concerted way. In France, the Grdr strives for the socio-economic inclusion of migrants. Since 2015, it has also developed activities in Algeria and Tunisia that are countries of origin, transit and destination for many “migrating” populations. Thus, in the field of the “double-space” of migration (that is, the continuum of origin, transit and destination territories), the Grdr promotes mobility as a sustainable resource for “inclusive territories”, through the “migration-citizenship-development” triptych. It aims to establish strong and sustainable economic, social and cultural links between actors here and there to address shared issues and common challenges.

Links between migration and development: a complex but innovative subject

Trying to establish a link between migration and development may seem complex due to the diversity of flows (emigration and immigration, internal and international) and of the diversity of profiles (nearly one billion “migrants” or an inhabitant of the planet out of 7!). Then, there is the insoluble issue of data: their existence, reliability, accessibility, usefulness... Moreover, several misconceptions stem from these uncertainties: “No poverty, no migration”; “To leave one’s country is to impoverish it even more”, “Opening borders is endangering our economy”; “Migrant associations do not get involved in local life in Europe”; “Migrant organisations investing in the field of international solidarity only care about their families”¹, etc. While in reality only 70% of movements take place within the continent, development does not slow down migration and migration does not engender poverty etc.

More generally, certain statistical categories seem unsuited to the dominant reality in West African and North African territories such as those of circular migration (especially seasonal), the outward and return modalities of which are very diverse, or even those of multi-localisation migration: Soninke or Peul villages in the Senegal river basin are said to be multi-located² because the nationals coming from these villages have developed forms of association networks (with headquarters in France or in capital city of the country and dismemberment in all areas of life) which are decisive for migration but also for the development processes of localities of origin.

1 - See Grdr, *5 idées reçues à déconstruire sur les liens entre migrations et développement* (<https://grdr.org/>), and oxymorons of the *Atlas de la Moyenne Vallée du fleuve Sénégal* (<https://grdr.org/>).

2 - Hamidou Dia, “Les villages ‘multi-situés’ sénégalais face à la nouvelle configuration migratoire mondiale”, *Hommes et migrations*, 1286-1287, 2010, pp. 234-244.

Through their membership of these associations, migrants are both from here and there, citizens of the “double-space”. It is urgent to answer this question: do populations circulate more than emigrate?

Faced with this issue that is described as “complex” by diplomats at international level, it is necessary to adopt a transversal approach in order to intersect issues related to different sectors – education, health, hydraulic, sanitation, housing, energy, vocational training, jobs, living together, social cohesion – with migration issues.

Migrations as levers of development, resilience and solidarity

The Grdr has developed a territorial approach to the dialectics of migration and development, under the political steering of local authorities and by mobilising all local stakeholders (civil society with a particular attention paid to the representatives of associations of migrant background, technical services, the market sector, cooperation partners, etc.) in order to answer two key questions:

- In terms of strategy: how to integrate internal and international mobility as a variable, as a factor and an indicator of territorial development processes?
- In terms of contribution: how to enhance opportunities and mitigate sources of vulnerability of migration in local development strategies?

The Grdr has produced a dozen tools of territorial animation³, including the “Radar of Skills of Migrants, Immigrants and Return Migrants”. It enables to differentiate the tangible (in orange, known by all) and intangible transfers (in grey, still unknown).

Tangible transfers primarily concern family solidarities. Remittances sent to the family back home represent three times the amount of official development assistance (ODA). Therefore, they are a crucial factor for territorial resilience. For instance, with regards to economic investments, we can note that in the agricultural sector, emigration generates immigration and leads to two trends: either the capital of family farming intensifies, or agricultural and non-agricultural activities fund one another⁴.

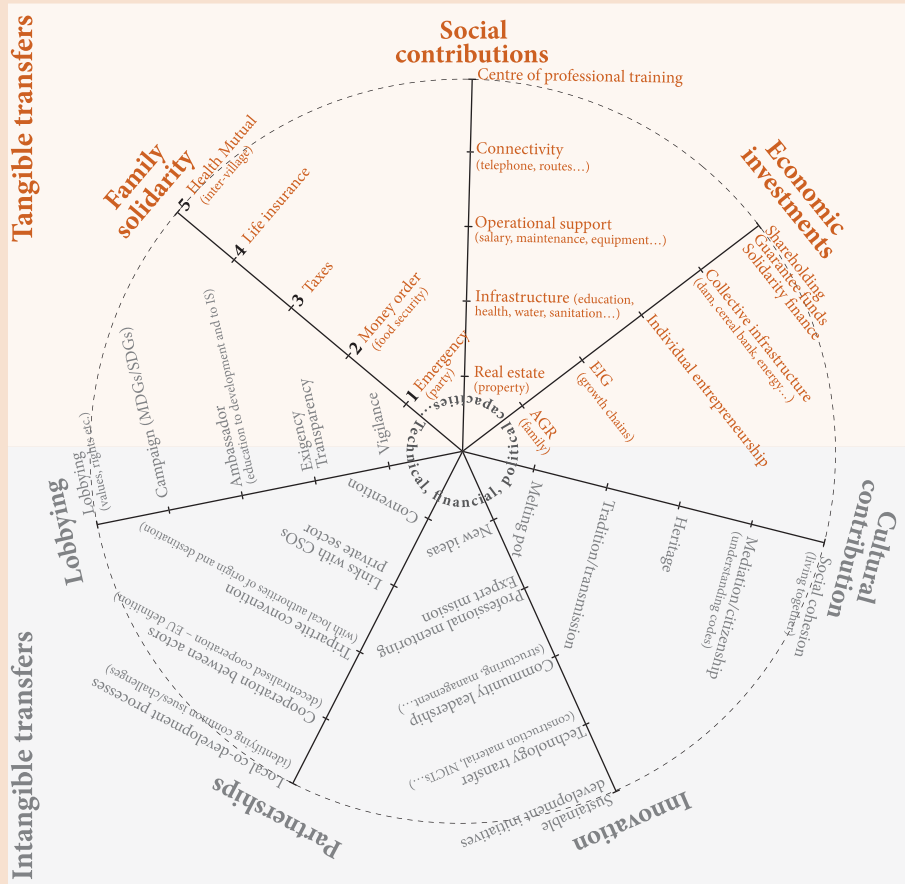
Intangible transfers are characterised, among others, by a strong potential for innovation (village irrigation systems, seed heritage etc.) thanks to the know-how of migrants. Another example, migrants are a driving force in terms of partnerships: more than 80 cooperation partnerships have been identified in the Senegal river basin between Sahelian (territories of origin) and French local authorities (host territories). Are the so-called isolated villages really that isolated? It seems that migrants connect territories to the world.

3 - *La Dimension locale de la dialectique migration-développement: le cas France-Sénégal. Rapport final*, Grdr-Ifan-UCAD-AFD, February 2015 (<https://grdr.org/>).

4 - Yvan Le Coq, “La mobilité humaine: une des conditions du développement agricole”, *Défis Sud*, 130, May-June 2016, pp. 22-24 (www.sosfaim.be/).

Figure 1 - Skills Radar of emigrants, immigrants and “return migrants”

What are the mobility impact indicators on the social, economic and cultural change of territories of origin and destination?



Note: the examples referred to hereunder are only used for illustrative purposes. This reading grid is proposed to broaden the scope of co-development. It is neither complete nor fixed, and should be subject to debate, analysed in depth and clarified during discussion with pluri-actors involving e/immigrants.

Family solidarity: *Over there:* Regular money orders of the “social safety nets” type (food security, emergency, party, taxes).
Here: for repatriation of bodies, subscription to a health mutual.

Social contributions: *Over there:* Infrastructure of access to basic services (education, health, water, sanitation energy...).

Economic investments: *Over there:* real estate, income-generating project, entrepreneurship, cereal bank, dam...

Here: entrepreneurship, commerce, transport...

Innovation: *Here and over there:* any type of new knowledge gained during the migratory route.

Cultural contribution: *Here and over there:* comprehension/understanding of cultural codes, heritage preservation and promotion.

Partnerships: *Here and over there:* Abilities to open up territories to the world, establish co-operation between actors (decentralised cooperation).

Lobbying: Campaign of dissemination of values (justice, democracy), of rights protection, of vigilance...

Ambassador for the promotion de thematic action plans (connectivity, regional integration...).

Source: La Dimension locale de la dialectique migration-développement: le cas France-Sénégal. Rapport final, Grdr-Ifan-UCADAFD, February 2015 (<https://grdr.org/>).

Migration: variables, factors and indicators of development dynamics

The link between migration and development entails the successive consideration of movements as development variables (population dynamics, barometer of the determinants of departure), development factors (resilience and interdependence) and, lastly, development indicators (attractiveness versus repulsion of the territory, choice of leaving or staying, integration or exclusion). This last point is also particularly sensitive since on a very large number of territories of the planet, there is a general tendency to oppose “those who are from here” to “those who are from elsewhere”. Nevertheless, we are here referring to citizenship with its many territorial faces.

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