

UNITED NATIONS RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

DP 91

**ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION,
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE
AND HUMAN SECURITY**

by Dharam Ghai

UNRISD Discussion Papers are preliminary documents circulated in a limited number of copies to stimulate discussion and critical comment.

November 1997



The **United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)** is an autonomous agency engaging in multidisciplinary research on the social dimensions of contemporary problems affecting development. Its work is guided by the conviction that, for effective development policies to be formulated, an understanding of the social and political context is crucial. The Institute attempts to provide governments, development agencies, grassroots organizations and scholars with a better understanding of how development policies and processes of economic, social and environmental change affect different social groups. Working through an extensive network of national research centres, UNRISD aims to promote original research and strengthen research capacity in developing countries.

A list of UNRISD's free and priced publications can be obtained by contacting the Reference Centre.

**United Nations Research Institute
for Social Development
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland**

Fax: +41(0) 22 917 06 50

E-mail: info@unrisd.org

www.unrisd.org

Reference Centre Telephone: +41 (0)22 917 30 20

ISSN 1012-6511

Copyright © United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). Short extracts from this publication may be reproduced unaltered without authorization on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to UNRISD, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. UNRISD welcomes such applications.

The designations employed in UNRISD publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNRISD concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by UNRISD of the opinions expressed in them.

◆ Preface

Recent years have witnessed a marked acceleration in the tempo of globalization. Its scope has also widened beyond the realm of economy to embrace the domains of social, cultural and political norms and practices. This powerful thrust has been associated with far-reaching consequences for economic well-being, social structures and political processes in countries around the world. The different parts of the world have become so interdependent in so many ways that it is no longer possible to understand their socio-economic problems, much less to do something about them, without taking into account the play of global forces. The process of globalization has been accompanied by major changes in the role and responsibilities of a wide range of institutions — families, communities, civil society institutions, business corporations, states and supranational organizations. One of the important consequences of the changes associated with globalization has been increased insecurity at the level of the individual and the family. This, in turn, not only affects individual welfare, but has broader economic, social and political impacts as well. This paper considers the sources and consequences of human insecurity and explores some of the policy and institutional alternatives for its mitigation.

The paper begins with a discussion of the concept and processes of globalization. It then looks briefly at the principal socio-economic, political and institutional consequences of accelerated globalization. These are brought together to assess their impact on human security. Some of the principal effects of increased human insecurity are outlined before considering policy and institutional reforms to ameliorate individual security. In view of the vast scope of the themes covered in the paper, it has been possible only to consider the broad picture, omitting important supporting evidence and necessary qualifications.

The paper was originally prepared for and delivered at a conference on “Social Movements in the Third World — Economy, Politics and Culture”, held at the Department of Sociology, University of Lund, in August 1993.

November 1997

Dharam Ghai
Director

◆ Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
CONCEPT AND PROCESSES OF GLOBALIZATION	2
ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES	4
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT	6
POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS	8
ACCELERATED GLOBALIZATION AND HUMAN INSECURITY	9
ENHANCING ECONOMIC SECURITY	11
CONCLUSION	14

INTRODUCTION

There has been a marked acceleration in the tempo of globalization in recent years. Its scope has also widened beyond the realm of economy to embrace the domains of social, cultural and political norms and practices. This powerful thrust has been associated with far-reaching consequences for economic well-being, social structures and political processes in countries around the world. The different parts of the world have become so interdependent in so many ways that it is no longer possible to understand their socio-economic problems, much less to do something about them, without taking into account the play of global forces. The process of globalization has been accompanied by major changes in the role and responsibilities of a wide range of institutions — families, communities, civil society institutions, business corporations, states and supranational organizations. One of the important consequences of the changes associated with globalization has been increased insecurity at the level of the individual and the family. This, in turn, not only affects individual welfare, but has broader economic, social and political impacts as well. This paper seeks to analyse the sources and consequences of human insecurity and explore policy and institutional alternatives for its mitigation.

The paper begins with a discussion of the concept and processes of globalization. It then looks briefly at the principal socio-economic, political and institutional consequences of accelerated globalization. These are brought together to assess their impact on human security. Some of the principal effects of increased human insecurity are outlined before considering policy and institutional reforms to ameliorate individual security. In view of the vast scope of the themes covered in the paper, it has been possible only to consider the broad picture, omitting important supporting evidence and necessary qualifications.

CONCEPT AND PROCESSES OF GLOBALIZATION

In recent years there has been a good deal of discussion in academic circles, especially among sociologists, on the concept and defining characteristics of globalization.¹ In a fuller treatment of the subject, it would be important to review the variety of conceptualizations of and approaches to globalization put forward in the literature. For the purposes of this paper, it is sufficient to indicate briefly the sense in which this term is used here. In common parlance, globalization is often equated with growing integration of national economies. But as employed here, the concept also refers to the rapid spread, worldwide, of some dominant social, cultural and political norms and practices.

In the sphere of economics, globalization is reflected in the increasing acceptance of free markets and private enterprise as the principal mechanisms for promoting economic activities. Its growing importance is captured in such indices as trade in

¹ See, for instance, Roland Robertson, **Social Theory and Global Culture** (Sage Publications, London, 1992); Anthony G. McGrew et al., **Global Politics: Globalisation and the Nation-State** (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992); Mike Featherstone (ed.), **Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity** (Sage Publications, London, 1990); Peter Beyer, **Religion and Globalisation** (Sage Publications, London, 1994); Malcolm Waters, **Globalisation** (Routledge, London, 1995).

goods and services, private capital flows in different forms, foreign investment, technology transfers, operations of transnational enterprises, business travel and communications, and migration and remittances.² The social sphere comprises social relations and customs (family relations, social organizations, etiquettes of social behaviour) and consumption patterns and lifestyles (consumer goods and services such as consumer durables, fashion and designer articles, food and beverages). The cultural dimension includes the important domain of values, religion and identity. It also embraces such leisure pastimes as television, videos, popular music, dance, night clubs, sports and foreign travel. At the political level, globalization is reflected in the spread of pluralist systems, multi-party democracies, free elections, independent judiciaries and human rights.

It would be naive to argue that globalization in any of these spheres has proceeded in a smooth and uniform manner, or that it is anywhere near completion. On the contrary, it has proceeded by fits and starts, generated contradictory effects and can claim only partial achievements. In the economic domain, the financial markets come closest to achieving global integration. Despite impressive progress in removing trade impediments in the post-war period, world commerce continues to be subject to a range of tariff and non-tariff barriers. The largest contribution to trade liberalization in recent years has come from developing and the former centrally planned countries. Outside the framework of regional free trade areas, the trend in most industrialized countries over the past fifteen years has been towards imposition of various barriers to free trade, especially in their trade with developing countries. The conclusion of the Uruguay Round may reverse this trend and speed up trade in hitherto highly regulated markets such as textiles, leather products and certain agricultural commodities.

Another major exception to liberalization is provided by global labour markets.³ The growing volume of migration flows is often cited as another aspect of increasing globalization. It is, however, doubtful whether this popular perception is supported by empirical evidence. In the 1950s and 1960s, the booming economies of Western Europe fuelled large-scale immigration from the North African region, their former colonies, and countries such as Turkey and Yugoslavia. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the oil boom provided employment opportunities in the Middle East for millions from North Africa and Asia. Rapid economic growth in South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Malaysia has, in recent years, attracted a growing number of migrants from poorer Asian countries. The general trend in the past decade in most parts of the world has, however, been towards increasing restrictions on immigration from poorer regions. To the extent that migration of unskilled workers takes place, it is mostly of an illegal and clandestine nature. The few countries still retaining significant immigration quotas, such as the United States, Canada and Australia, give preference to relatives of nationals or to highly qualified or affluent applicants.

The pattern of global economic integration also displays some sharp inequalities. Whether measured in terms of trade, capital flows, foreign investment, technology

² John H. Dunning, **The Globalisation of Business** (Routledge, London, 1993); Keith Griffin and Azizur Rahman Khan, **Globalization and the Developing World: An Essay on the International Dimensions of Development in the Post-Cold War Era** (UNRISD, Geneva, 1992).

³ P. Stalker, **The World of Strangers: A Survey of International Migration** (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1994); Nigel Harris, **The New Untouchables: Immigration and the New World Worker** (I.B. Taurus, London, 1995).

transfers or activities of transnational enterprises, most transactions take place among developed countries. Linkages with developing countries have expanded significantly in recent years, but there is a marked concentration of direction: a handful of countries account for the majority of flows. The fact that this group includes some large Asian and Latin American countries means that in terms of population, the pattern of flows is distinctly less uneven. Nevertheless, most of the poorest and least developed countries are largely bypassed by the intensified circuits of trade, capital and investment.

Globalization in the social and cultural spheres has also been marked by discontinuities and contradictions. The consumption patterns and life styles of the middle classes in rich countries have penetrated only a thin layer of the affluent minorities in poor countries.⁴ In most manifestations of cultural and social life — dress, food, music and dance, social relations, personal beliefs and values — the vast majority of populations in the non-Western world continue to adhere to inherited traditions. Even where Western forms have taken root, they have often been adapted to the indigenous style. In the domain of politics also, the ideals of liberal democracy have not been uniformly embraced. In some cases where this appears to be the case, the underlying reality may be quite different. Furthermore, the conceptions and content of democracy and human rights show wide variation, even among countries generally accepted as falling in the camp of liberal democracy.

The processes of globalization have been driven by a number of forces. Worldwide expansion of capitalism and technological progress are at the core of the dynamics of globalization. These forces have been in operation for centuries but have increased in scale and intensity in recent decades. The new spurt in the expansion of capitalism has found expression in the shift towards greater reliance on markets and private enterprise in all parts of the world. Almost everywhere there has been a reduction in state intervention in the economy, privatization of public enterprises, deregulation of the economy and liberalization of foreign trade and capital flows. The collapse of communism in Europe is only the most dramatic manifestation of this global phenomenon. Economic reform in China and other communist countries in Asia and elsewhere is further striking evidence of the global reach of free markets and private enterprise.

Transnational corporations have played a central role in this process through internationalization of production, transfer of technology, managerial and technical skills, foreign investment, marketing, international staff recruitment, promotion of trade and advertising.⁵ The rapidity of technological change, especially in transport, communications and information processing, has been a decisive element in the acceleration of globalization. The increasing competitiveness of a growing number of countries, through market friendly policies, infrastructural investment, development of technical skills and entrepreneurial abilities, has further boosted globalization through rapid economic growth and expansion of trade and other economic links with the outside world. Likewise, the rapid expansion of media — the press, radio, television and videos — has made a powerful contribution to globalization in the political, social and cultural domains. Enormous growth in

⁴ Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh, **Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order** (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1994).

⁵ Dunning, *op. cit.*; United Nations, **World Investment Report 1992: Transnational Corporations and Engines of Growth** (New York, 1992).

communications, travel and tourism has been critical in advancing globalization along all fronts.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

The processes of globalization have been associated with wide-ranging socio-economic consequences. In many cases, these have been aggravated by the fact that the current phase of accelerated globalization — since the 1970s — coincided with a period of low growth in most industrialized countries and of stagnation and decline in many Latin American, African, Middle Eastern, and some Asian, countries. These years have also witnessed a systemic change in the former centrally planned countries in Europe. At the same time, as mentioned above, globalization has been associated with a number of other changes, such as technological progress, liberalization and deregulation. It is quite impossible to separate out the economic impacts of globalization, however defined, from those of the preceding factors. There is the further difficulty arising from the time period over which the analysis is carried out. The immediate and short-term impacts may turn out to be very different from those of the medium and long term. Despite these qualifications, it is important to stress that the processes of globalization tend to produce certain socio-economic effects.

Concentrating first on the economic impacts, among the key issues are the effects of globalization on efficiency, growth and distribution. It is clear that globalization has promoted efficiency gains in a number of ways. Static gains accrue whenever market distortions are reduced or eliminated. Globalization has been associated with wide-ranging reductions in barriers to the movement of goods, services and factors of production. The greater competition brought about by globalization has also produced dynamic efficiency gains through improvements in management and technology. Likewise, the replacement of state enterprises by private corporations has in many cases resulted in efficiency gains. The value of efficiency gains is clearly greater when they occur in periods of full utilization of resources than when they merely add to unemployment and excess capacity. Unfortunately, the coincidence of globalization with economic crisis and stagnation has meant that in most countries the efficiency gains due to improved resource allocation appear to have accentuated the problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality. It may be argued that these reforms have laid the basis for more rapid and efficient growth in the medium to long term, but this remains to be seen.

With regard to growth, there may again be conflict between short- and medium-run

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_21619

