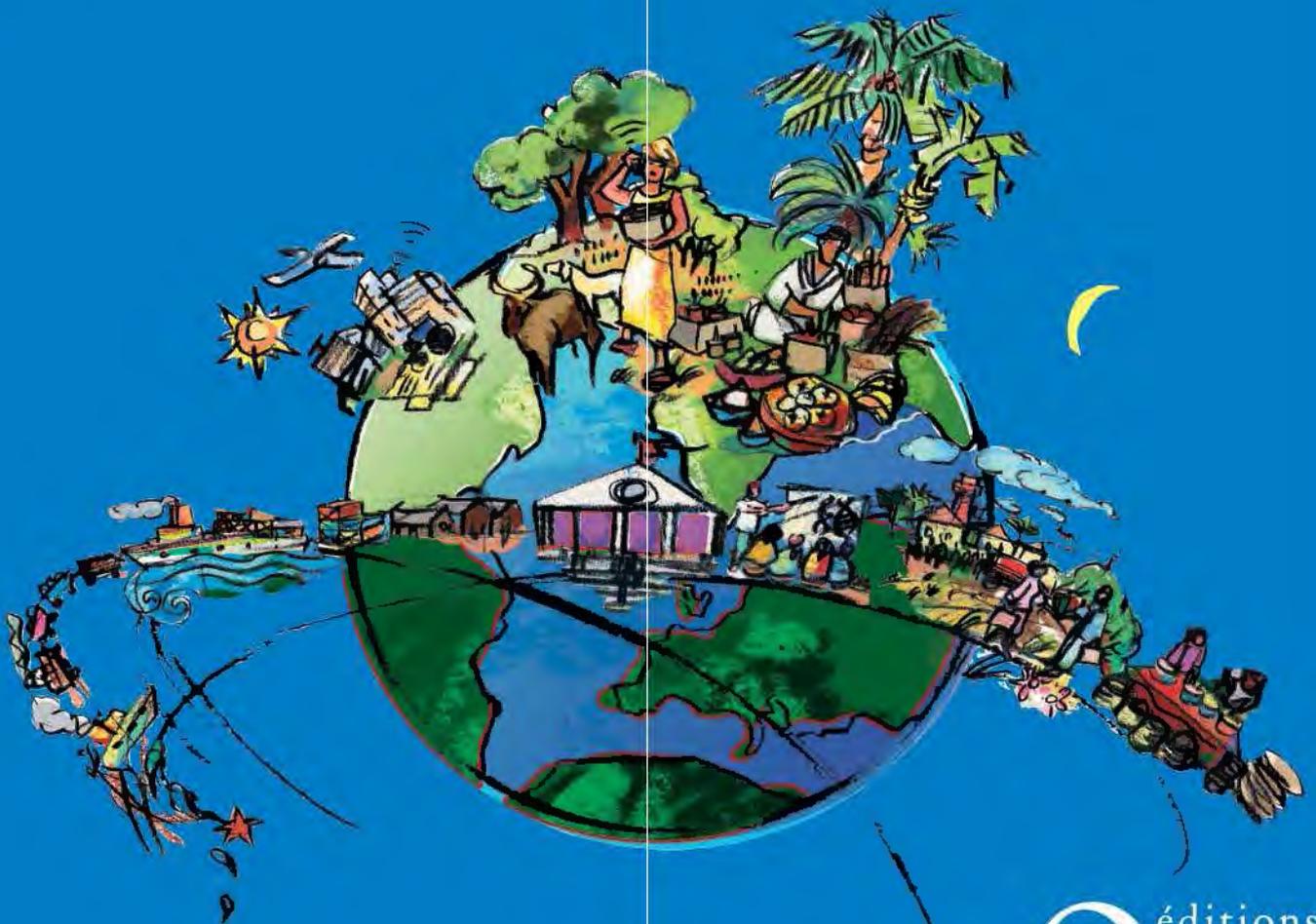




AGRICULTURES
ET DÉFIS DU MONDE
Collection Cirad-AFD

Living territories to transform the world

P. Caron, E. Valette,
T. Wassenaar,
G. Coppens d'Eeckenbrugge,
V. Papazian,
Coordinators



éditions
Quæ

Living territories to transform the world

Patrick Caron, Élodie Valette, Tom Wassenaar,
Geo Coppens d'Eeckenbrugge, Vatché Papazian,
coordinators

Éditions Quæ

The *Agricultures et défis du monde* (Agriculture and Global Challenges) collection publishes a book every year that showcases Cirad's research into the sustainable development of tropical agricultural systems. It is co-published by Éditions Quæ, AFD and Cirad. The collection is coordinated by Cirad's Patrick Caron.

Cirad (Centre for International Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development) is a French research centre which, in association with countries of the Global South, tackles international issues of agriculture and development. In partnership with these countries, it generates and disseminates new knowledge to support agricultural development and to inform the debates on the major global issues concerning agriculture, food and rural territories. Cirad has a global network of partners and regional offices from which it conducts joint operations with stakeholders in more than 90 countries.

Cirad
42 rue Scheffer, 75116 Paris
www.cirad.fr

AFD, the French Development Agency, is a public institution that has been working for 70 years to fight poverty and promote development in countries of the Global South and in French overseas departments and territories. AFD implements the French government's development aid policies.

With a presence in more than 50 countries and nine French overseas departments and territories, AFD funds and supports projects that improve the living conditions of local populations, promote economic growth and protect the planet. These projects concern education, maternal health, support for farmers and small businesses, water supply, preservation of tropical forests, the fight against global warming, etc.

Agence française de développement
5 rue Roland Barthes, 75598 Paris Cedex 12, France
www.afd.fr

Éditions Quæ
RD 10, 78026 Versailles Cedex
www.quae.com

© Éditions Quæ, 2017

ISBN: 978-2-7592-2731-0

Version française : « Des territoires vivants pour transformer le monde »

© Éditions Quæ, 2017

ISBN : 978-2-7592-2654-2

This book is published by Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Licence. You may not use the material for commercial purposes. You may not distribute the modified material 2.0 France.



Territories and global challenges

Élodie Valette, Denis Pesche and Jean-Philippe Tonneau

Territories and their interdependencies are experiencing a reorganization in the wake of globalization. Traditional North-South divides are becoming blurred and new dynamics are at work in the context of pressing global challenges, such as climate change, and of structural changes such as population growth, urbanization and their impact on resources.

This chapter presents an overview of the main global challenges that are currently affecting territories and their evolutive trajectories, whether local, regional or national. We focus in particular on Africa, illustrating how economic dynamics are accompanied by the emergence or reinforcement of territorial disparities.

A RECONFIGURATION OF TERRITORIAL HIERARCHIES AT A GLOBAL SCALE

Contemporary territorial dynamics can be viewed in part through the prism of globalization. The increasing flows of goods, products, people, capital and information are reinforcing the links between sectoral economic dynamics and territorial transformations. The reorganizations brought about by globalization are also resulting in new territorial disparities. In many cases, territorial balances constructed over the long term are threatened.

In particular, the traditional distinction between the Global North and the Global South is being blurred not only by the process of differentiation within the former category of developing countries but also by the increase in inequalities, including in industrialized countries. The OECD has expanded to include Mexico and South Korea, along with some countries in Eastern Europe. The Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), spread across all continents, have begun to emerge as new economic powers. The Arab countries of the Gulf, whose revenues still largely come from oil, are rapidly diversifying their economies and consolidating their strategic position between Asia and Africa. The current composition of the G20 illustrates the gradual abandonment of a vision of development based on the North-South divide, also seen, for example, in the challenging of the industrialized countries' hegemony in international negotiations, such as on biodiversity or climate change.

Despite an increase in global wealth, many countries still remain on the margins of economic development, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. In both the Global North and South, strong disparities are asserting themselves and inequalities are increasing at all levels: regional, national and intra-national. Urban, coastal and tourist areas, well connected to global flows, can be found in close proximity to isolated and marginalized ones. The feeling of exclusion engendered by these dynamics of differentiation can manifest in identity-based and occasionally political tensions, whose consequences in terms of security are still difficult to assess. The growth-based development model is being called into question but an alternative model is yet to emerge.

GLOBAL CHALLENGES FOR TERRITORIES

Demographic growth, particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, is one of the main challenges for development in the future. According to the UN, most of the additional 2.4 billion people projected to be added to the world's population by 2050 will live in the least developed regions (UN, 2014). The basic challenges for these populations are and will remain access to education, health, and food security. This population growth is being accompanied by strong dynamics of urbanization, in increasingly large and numerous cities, even though, in Africa as in Asia, the majority of the population is still rural.

Demographic pressure is contributing to increased strain on natural resources (energy and minerals, land, water, wood, etc.). Since the food crisis of 2008, agricultural land has become an increasingly scarce resource, whose acquisition and expansion, including as part of international transactions, has become a major issue. Similarly, the sharing of water resources is a source of tension both locally and internationally. These disputes around land and water resources are set to increase under the expected impacts of climate change. The combined effects of these processes are a challenge to the adaptive capacity of territories, especially of the most vulnerable amongst them.

Under these conditions, the idea of sustainable development leads to doubts over the merits of the dominant economic model, which remains a heavy consumer of resources. Other options, more efficient in their use of resources, have emerged but are often judged to have lower economic performance. And yet, the idea of sustainability requires revising the modalities of evaluating performance to include other criteria. Given this context, the territorial approach is liable to constitute a path towards a more sustainable society (Chapters 1 and 3).

THE EMBLEMATIC EXAMPLE OF AFRICA¹

In the context of a globalization that has engendered serious tensions, Africa offers an emblematic example of contemporary dynamics. After two decades of structural adjustment policies, Africa has undergone further transformations since the early 2000s: continued demographic and urban transitions, sustained economic growth driven by expanding domestic markets, rising prices of commodities it produces, and renewed foreign investment. These changes inspire optimism, despite worsening

1. This section draws heavily from Losch *et al.* (2016).

conflicts in some parts of the continent and recent slowdown in growth due *inter alia* to the fall in international oil and other commodity prices and to periods of drought in its southern and eastern parts.

The expected addition of 1.35 billion inhabitants to the continent's population by 2050 will affect not only cities. They will indeed continue to grow rapidly but the rural population is expected to remain in the majority until the 2040s due to a continued densification with 350 million likely new residents by 2050. The result will be an increasing overlapping of the urban population with those of rural areas and small towns. The unprecedented extent of various sorts of mobility – goods and people, of course, but also ideas – is shaping new territorialities, stimulating innovation and contributing to the reorganization of spaces.

In Africa, the explosive growth of telephony, the progress – albeit still hesitant – towards access to energy and the construction of major transport and irrigation infrastructure has greatly increased the attractiveness of certain territories, sometimes to the detriment of others that are less well endowed. The expansion of mining and other extractive activities and the attraction of local and foreign investors to the most fertile agricultural lands are often highlighted as new levers for development. But the integration of the African continent into globalization remains weak, with exports consisting mainly of primary products with little or no processing (minerals, timber, agricultural commodities). While these activities inflate growth in absolute terms and, in some countries, stimulate dynamics of investment, they rarely have real knock-on or multiplier effects, create few jobs and do not benefit the majority of the population.

Another aspect of rural transformations is no less important, though less visible because of its fragmented nature and lack of exposure. Rural families are often forced to combine multiple revenue-generating activities, both in town and in the countryside, sometimes taking advantage of the resources of migration, in order to maintain their viability in sometimes isolated territories.

Africa will not develop merely through its insertion in the markets by the production of commodities, nor through the dynamics of urbanization and metropolitanization. The rebalancing of territories will also depend on the support extended to rural dynamics and the growth of secondary cities. Otherwise there is a great risk that the phenomena of rural exoduses and large-scale migrations to the most populated urban centres will not only continue but increase, creating in the process large areas of spatial marginalization. The absence of significant compensatory financing, the disengagement of public authorities and the abandonment of the territories are an open invitation to lasting instability. Tackling these challenges requires reliance on all available territorial resources and on those of cities and rural areas in order to leverage the diversity of existing spatial dynamics.

CONCLUSION

The global dynamics presented here are far from leading to a homogenization of territories at a global scale. Indeed, far from an 'end of the territories' that was once predicted (Badie, 1995), we are witness to growing differentiation and the emergence of multiple models of development.

Are we seeing the end of a model based solely on economic performance in favour of a pluralistic vision? Is this vision oriented towards the new objectives of sustainable development which, unlike the Millennium Development Goals, concern the countries of the Global North in addition to those of the Global South?² Without falling into the trap of a dogmatic localism, we can assert that a combination of locally rooted strategies that emphasize the development of territorial resources and better control of global flows and changes can be a path to territorial development.

References

- AfBD, OECD, UNDP, 2015. African Economic Outlook 2015: Regional Development and Spatial Inclusion. Paris, OECD, available online <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/aeo-2015-en> (retrieved 20 February 2017).
- Badie B., 1995. *La fin des territoires : essai sur le désordre international et l'utilité sociale du respect*. Paris, Fayard.
- Losch B., Pesche D., Magrin G., Imbernon J., 2016. Se réappropriier le développement des territoires. *In: Une nouvelle ruralité émergente : regards croisés sur les transformations rurales africaines* (Pesche D., Losch B., Imbernon J., eds.). 2nd revised and improved edition, Montpellier, Nepad/Cirad.
- UN, 2014. The World Population Situation in 2014: A Concise Report. New York, UN.

2. The UN General Assembly adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) consisting of 169 specific targets between them on 25 September 2015 in New York. They formally take over from the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were launched in 2000 and expired in 2015. The SDG agenda for 2030 focuses in particular on the fight against poverty, inequality and injustice, and action against climate change.