

# EXCHANGE TO CHANGE

ECHANGER POUR CHANGER

IOB NEWSLETTER / MAGAZINE DE L'IOB  
N°18 - SEPTEMBER / SEPTEMBRE 2010



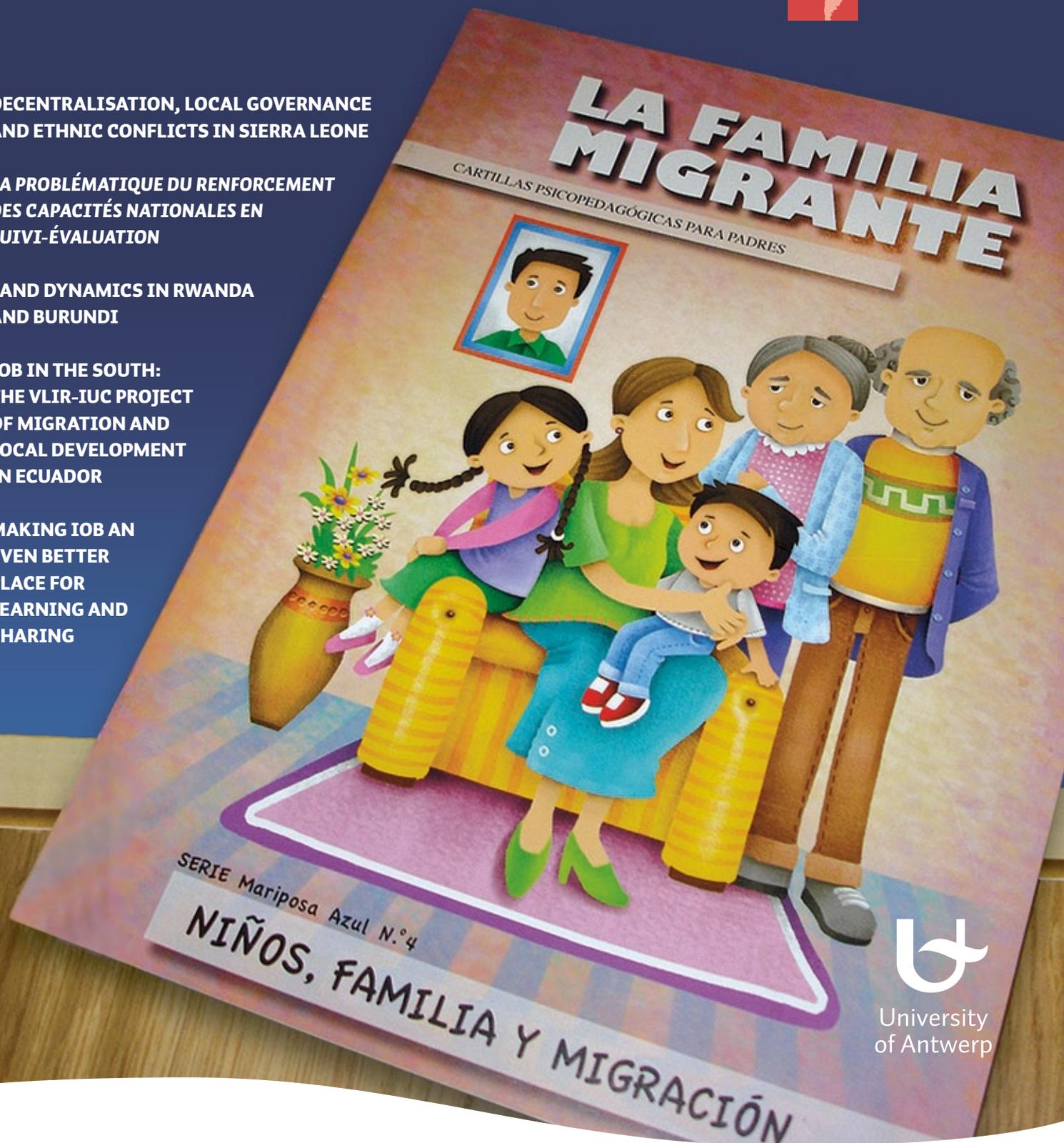
**DECENTRALISATION, LOCAL GOVERNANCE  
AND ETHNIC CONFLICTS IN SIERRA LEONE**

**LA PROBLÉMATIQUE DU RENFORCEMENT  
DES CAPACITÉS NATIONALES EN  
SUIVI-ÉVALUATION**

**LAND DYNAMICS IN RWANDA  
AND BURUNDI**

**IOB IN THE SOUTH:  
THE VLIR-IUC PROJECT  
OF MIGRATION AND  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT  
IN ECUADOR**

**MAKING IOB AN  
EVEN BETTER  
PLACE FOR  
LEARNING AND  
SHARING**



University  
of Antwerp



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT  
POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Editorial: A Stronger Alumni Policy	2
Dear Alumni	3
Decentralisation, Local Governance and Ethnic Conflicts in Sierra Leone	4
<i>La Problématique du renforcement des Capacités Nationales en Suivi-évaluation</i>	7
Land Dynamics in Rwanda and Burundi	10
IOB in the South: The VLIR-IUC Project of Migration and Local Development in Ecuador	12
Making IOB an even Better Place for Learning and Sharing	17
Portrait: Xitlali Sandino	21
Portrait: Gemechu Adimassu	22
IOB News	23

## A Stronger Alumni Policy

**IOB** fully understands the importance of maintaining strong relations with its alumni, with you. This is why we are working on a fully-fledged alumni policy. The online survey which we asked you to complete earlier this year was a tool to enable us to understand your needs better and to find ways to improve our communication with you and your communication with one another.

We were delighted to learn that an overwhelming majority of survey respondents (96 percent) are satisfied with their education at IOB; 52 percent even said they were very satisfied. We are very pleased to know that four out of five alumni would definitely encourage others to study at IOB. Moreover, an overwhelming 97.1 percent of the alumni indicated that they would like to be involved in alumni activities organised by IOB. We conclude from this that you have a very keen interest in almost all proposed alumni activities. The most attractive activities are clearly those that can be organised in the country of the alumni themselves (meeting IOB staff; participating in a conference, a refresher course or social event; face-to face meetings with other alumni) as well as attending an Antwerp-based conference/refresher course. Providing access to a digital library is another of the most widely appreciated proposals. Last but not least, it was most encouraging to discover that an impressive 80 percent of our alumni would be very interested in playing an active role, for example, by being a contact person for IOB's promotional activities or for its alumni networks, or by providing assistance to IOB students doing field-work.

We thank all of you for completing the questionnaire and for contributing ideas for an improved alumni policy. In the near future we shall update our alumni database and enhance our communication with you. So please pass on the message to other IOB alumni and ask them to update their contact data so that we can reach them and inform them about our activities and services. We are looking forward to your active involvement in our future alumni activities and if you have any other ideas on how we can strengthen our IOB family ties please let us know!

Eva Vergaelen, editor 

## Dear Alumni

**I**n any professional environment people come and go. But at IOB the pace of change seems particularly hectic. There is first and foremost the annual departure and arrival of our entire Master student population. In a typical faculty students start at Bachelor level and stay for three or four years, with some extending their stay in order to enrol for a Master's. Consequently, overall student turnover per year is much lower. In contrast, at IOB we start from scratch every year. Then there are the members of staff. In the case of research assistants, who make up one third of our staff, the maximum duration of the contract is six years, which means that there is regular turnover here too. We are like a small factory, attracting young researchers, working with them, helping them to complete their PhD dissertation and then directing them towards the labour market so that they can embark on a career elsewhere - exactly what we do with our students but in a somewhat longer time frame. Of course, IOB also has more permanent members of staff. In the beginning when IOB was growing fast, quite a few positions had to be filled. Now that we are cruising at almost full capacity there are fewer opportunities for long-term hiring. But even so changes do occur. At the end of the calendar year 2010 Professor Stefaan Marysse will retire. As we reported in an earlier newsletter, last year Professor Philip Nauwelaerts also retired. Both will be replaced. However, there are more changes in the pipeline. As a result of demographics and some delays in hiring, IOB will be able to recruit not two but six new professors in the coming five years. Recruitment regulations are strict: vacancies have to be advertised internationally and half of the members of the selection committee have to come from outside IOB. Thanks to the continuous inflow and outflow of researchers IOB is strengthening its relations with the international academic community as well as with the aid industry. In this way IOB is increasingly becoming both a breeding ground and a magnet for talented researchers. Ben D'Exelle, for instance, whom some of you will remember as a former research assistant, now has an academic post at the university of East Anglia in the UK. In addition, as from the beginning

of the new academic year 2010-2011 An Ansoms will be a full-time lecturer at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve in the French-speaking part of Belgium. Heidi Rombouts is now working for GTZ in Kenya while Eva Palmans has joined an international NGO in Burundi. All of them obtained their PhDs under the guidance of an IOB supervisor or co-supervisor. Several other research assistants, having likewise obtained their PhDs, have already left us or will be doing so shortly. Bjorn Van Campenhout is now associated with the University of Leuven although he will still do some teaching at IOB during the coming academic year. Jos Vaessen is in the process of considering several attractive options and we hope to be able to continue our collaboration with him in one way or another. So, if on a visit to Belgium you return to your former place of study and wander around the IOB premises, you will see both familiar and new faces, all committed to contributing to development research and the IOB family. So do feel welcome and also try to visit us regularly through the virtual reality of the internet. Moreover, reading this newsletter will keep you informed about IOB and its ever changing academic population.

*Robrecht Renard, Chairman* 



# Decentralisation, Local Governance and Ethnic Conflicts in Sierra Leone

*Decentralisation continues to be advocated in many post-conflict countries not only as a key prerequisite for strengthening democracy and promoting good governance but also, what is even more important, as a crucial step in enhancing political stability and socio-economic development. Yet in emerging and multi-ethnic democracies such as Sierra Leone getting the policy and legislation with regard to decentralisation right may have a profound impact on social cohesion and overall political stability.*

Par Henry Mbawa Jr.\*



**\*Henry Mbawa Jr.** is a PhD research student at the University of Leeds. He is an IOB alumnus and the winner of the 2007 Antwerp Development Cooperation Prize. As part of his PhD research he is currently exploring the impact of decentralisation on inter-ethnic relations in his home country of Sierra Leone.

## POST-WAR DECENTRALISATION

In Sierra Leone post-war decentralisation has become the epitome of the hopes and aspirations as well as the apprehensions of a number of groups. The country's parallel systems of local governance on the one hand, and contradictory mechanisms of rights and privileges on the other, are posing a significant threat to the inclusion and accommodation required in multi-ethnic localities so as to be able to address the pressing problems of poverty, poor services and corruption as well as the thorny issue of the accountability of elected local officials. This brief article will examine some of the contradictions, emerging tensions and ethnic conflicts which are threatening the process of decentralisation in Sierra Leone. The article highlights recent findings from fieldwork in three multi-ethnic localities in Northern Sierra Leone.

## LOCAL COUNCILS

In 2004, almost 32 years after the elected Local Councils were abolished and after a decade of political turmoil and state collapse, Sierra Leone joined other developing countries to usher in a democratic transfer of state power to 19 elected Local Councils (LC). The Local Government Law passed in 2004 primarily devolved the responsibility for the delivery of basic services and other functions which had previously been carried out by the central state to LCs. Unfortunately, the Local Government Law failed to address questions of democratic participation and accountability as part of a holistic Local Government reform in a sufficiently effective manner. In view of the extant political institution of Chieftaincy this has become a major source of tension and conflict within local communities. Through the election of locally accountable officials Sierra Leo-

ne aims to reduce the gap in decision-making and to provide a voice and improved participation for a wide range of groups in order to enhance downward accountability.

## CHIEFDOMS

Despite the new democratic processes in the LCs many Sierra Leoneans continue to identify first and foremost with their Chiefdoms. Chieftaincy, which is a remnant of colonialism, is characterised by a wide range of undocumented customs and traditions derived from the dominant ethnic groups. Headed by a Paramount Chief elected for life by a small group of local residents representing twenty taxpayers each, the Chiefdoms maintain a political and administrative structure separate from that of the Local Councils. Comprising several villages and sections the chiefdom and its legal and political structures of court chairmen and sub-chiefs represent the first and often the only channel of interaction between rural citizens and the state. On the other hand, as the principal recipients of functions devolved by the central government, LCs whose jurisdiction covers several chiefdoms only bear responsibility for formal public and democratic processes. Issues such as land and the determination of nativity (rural citizenship) are the remit of the Paramount Chiefs. Essentially, chieftaincy remains the main prism through which the contours of ethnicity are shaped and the boundaries of exclusion are defined.

## LITTLE INTERACTION

Within the context of local governance there is limited opportunity for interaction between the Chiefdoms and LCs. Apart from cooperation in the collection of local taxes and the presence of a few chiefs as Councillors in the Council Assembly, the



An example of where decentralisation is confronted with local governance and ethnicity. Two ethnic communities cannot get together to remove this fallen tree from the road. The Local Council argues that it is the responsibility of the chiefdom whereas the chiefdom feels that the local Councillor should mobilise the constituents. However, the latter remain ethnically divided. This photo was taken by the author (also in the photo) during recent fieldwork in 2009/10.

two entities remain completely independent of one another. To make matters worse, the autonomy of both political structures, despite their operating within the same context of local governance, is actually guaranteed by law. In spite of the theoretical pre-eminence of LCs as the “highest political authority” in the various localities, the Paramount Chief is by law “a chief who is not subordinate in his ordinary jurisdiction”. While LCs can be abolished by the President, the Chieftaincy system remains an entrenched component of the national constitution. In essence, Paramount Chiefs are clearly not legally accountable to any authority other than the central government.

## ETHNIC CONFLICTS

This unfortunate situation in local government accounts for the emerging tensions and conflicts between various groups and, even more important, for conflicts between ethnic groups. Confronted by these two political structures, local groups have disparate views on what local democracy, governance and citizenship actually mean. The patterns of conflict which are emerging can be traced back to two main causes, namely democratic conflict and the restricted political processes in Chieftaincy. As regards the democratic arena, new conflicts between ethnic groups have occasionally arisen as a result of liberalised processes such as electoral participation. Recent elections have led to a resurgence of ethnic particularities in voting behaviour fuelled in part by the immense stranglehold of the established political parties but also by the ethnic struc-

ture of the chiefdoms, which form the basis for local constituency representation. As the chiefdoms are often populated by majority and minority ethnic groups, certain ethno-political entrepreneurs with a profound scepticism and fear of local democracy have been successful in eroding the traditional solidarity among rural communities. Consequently, Local Councillors have predominantly been elected from Wards where their ethnic groups predominate. Minority groups dispersed across various Ward constituencies have not been fairly represented on the Local Councils. Thus LCs relying on mass ethnic support and the popularity of the ruling party in the region have tended to be complacent and unaccountable while corruption is flourishing with impunity.

## CONFLICTS OVER OWNERSHIP OF LAND

Within the same context of local governance, patterns of ethnic conflict include land disputes, livelihoods (crop farmers vs. cattle farmers) and, most important of all, increasing challenges from minority groups with regard to equal chieftaincy privileges. While these conflicts are to a large extent the result of flawed colonial decisions, they have been intensified by the inconsistent changes brought about by democratic decentralisation. The local government system still applies antiquated colonial legislation which erroneously regarded minority ethnic groups as non-natives and thus made them tenants. Under the new Local Government system elected LCs do not bear major responsibility for the management of issues such as land tenure. These

>>>

&gt;&gt;&gt;

remain the responsibility of the poorly managed and unaccountable chiefdoms. Land is owned by so-called 'natives'; generations of settled minorities are still banned from owning land although informal exchanges have been the order of the day. Given the increasing demand for rural land as the main source of livelihood following the end of the civil war, conflicts about land have intensified. These stem from the growing awareness among large ethnic groups that losing control of the land to wealthy minority groups in the region will lead to loss of political influence.

### POWER CONFLICTS

Divisive democratic politics along ethnic lines has had a cascading effect on social cohesion in rural communities. As is the case with conflicts regarding land, the increasing livelihood conflicts are fuelled by the fears of landowning ethnic groups of the corrosive effect of democratic processes on the old rural power structure. The power relations between 'landlords' and minority ethnic groups or landless 'tenants' have been maintained by means of the colonial land tenure system. Yet with democratic decentralisation the concept of 'one man, one vote' has suddenly eroded the power relations between these two groups. Like their old landlords, minority ethnic groups have suddenly achieved equality in political participation. This 'polling booth' equality represents a fundamental threat to historically perpetuated perceptions of ethnic minority and majority, landlords and tenants.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONFLICTS

Given that most minority groups are engaged in profitable livestock farming while many landlord ethnic groups undertake subsistence farming, the unequal competences between the two as regards interacting with the new LCs have tended to drive a wedge between previously peaceful communities. As changing patterns of farming result in greater demand for grazing /farming space and water access, the increasing ability of wealthy minority livestock farmers to bribe corrupt local officials in such disputes has been the cause of deadly conflicts in many communities. These socio-economic conflicts within local government have penetrated the largely restrictive sphere of chieftaincy politics.

Whereas under chieftaincy only individuals with a pedigree which links them to colonially established 'ruling houses' are entitled to contest, with the introduction of new democratic processes through the LC system minority ethnic groups are now seeking to maximise their chances and to transfer newly acquired rights to the chieftaincy system. In many places this has given rise to violence, leaving previously cohesive communities ethnically divided.

### THREAT TO STABILITY AND DEMOCRACY

The impact of these conflicts on rural communities is huge and represents a fundamental threat to post-war political stability and democratic development in the country. In a sense these conflicts are symptomatic of a flawed local government system. Although many of the conflicts fall within the jurisdiction of the chiefdoms, these are clearly incapable of containing the communal tensions and ethnic conflicts in their communities, while the LCs are so busy with corruption that they are simply disinclined to help. As a result, a palpable sense of frustration and resignation among local citizens continues to undermine local attempts to ensure greater accountability of elected officials.

### REFORMS

Considerable and comprehensive reform is needed within local government so as to be able to reduce tension, address people's fears and manage the demand for inclusion of multi-ethnic communities. The contradictions between the two distinct components of the local government system that grant 'universal rights' to people and then take them back from some of them must be addressed if democratic good governance and political stability are to become the norm in Sierra Leone. Minority ethnic groups must be able to enjoy the same rights, privileges, and opportunities of equal citizenship if democratic decentralisation is to achieve its widely vaunted aims. Without these much needed reforms to integrate both components of local governance, including reforming the colonial land tenure system and increasing democratic participation and downward accountability, Sierra Leone's efforts to eradicate poverty and implement sustained democratic governance will have to be continued for some time yet. 

## L'exemple de la Côte d'Ivoire

Par Kobéhi Guillaume Toutou\*

*L'analyse des réalisations dans le cadre de la préparation des programmes de la plupart des agences du Système des Nations Unies (SNU) en Côte d'Ivoire a montré la faiblesse de la fonction suivi-évaluation dans les projets mis en œuvre. Cette situation serait imputable à au moins trois causes fondamentales : (i) La faiblesse des capacités en suivi-évaluation des partenaires de mise en œuvre des projets (gouvernement et organisations non gouvernementales) ; (ii) La faiblesse de la production statistique nationale et (iii) L'instabilité du personnel dans les administrations publiques partenaires.*



**E**n l'absence de structures publiques de formation en suivi-évaluation, la faiblesse des capacités nationales est un véritable problème. La plupart des personnes qui peuvent revendiquer le statut de « personnes formées » ont soit participé à des formations de courte durée à l'extérieur du pays ou ont été formées à l'occasion de séminaires au niveau national.

La faiblesse des capacités de production statistique indispensable pour les données de base est liée à la non-opérationnalisation du Schéma Directeur de la Statistique. Ce cadre organique conçu depuis la fin des années 90 et qui place l'Institut National au cœur de la production, de la validation et de la diffusion des statistiques n'a pas été mis en œuvre. Récemment il a même été revisité et remplacé par une stratégie nationale dite de « développement de la statistique » plus globale.

La mobilité du personnel dans les administrations serait le fait de l'absence de grille de traitement salarial spécifique pour le personnel en charge du suivi et de l'évaluation. Il n'existe pas en effet un corps de métier dévolu à ces fonctions. Les formations reçues ne sont pas reconnues systématiquement en vue d'un changement quelconque dans le statut de l'apprenant. Il n'est pas non plus rare de constater une inadéquation entre les profils et les postes de direction de la planification dans les Ministères sociaux qui sont censés être l'interface de la direction générale en charge du Plan. Ce sont là des sources de démotivation du personnel formé en suivi-évaluation qui travaillent dans les structures publiques.

### LES LIMITES DE LA PRATIQUE ACTUELLE

Jusqu'à maintenant, des activités de renforcement des capacités techniques sont prévues dans les plans de travail des agences du SNU et d'autres partenaires au développement. Celles-ci prennent surtout la forme d'ateliers de formation et du paiement de frais pédagogiques de participation à des conférences et ateliers internationaux de courte durée. Les bénéficiaires de ces prestations concernent principalement quelques agents d'une direction de l'administration centrale ou de certaines ONG ou Organisations de la Société Civile (OSC) particulièrement actives.

Au moins deux raisons peuvent expliquer la faiblesse des formations externes : (i) En dehors d'une lettre de couverture pour une demande de prise en charge, les formations ne font pas l'objet d'approbation systématique par les supérieurs hiérarchiques directs comme besoin réel de la structure d'appartenance du candidat et (ii) La restitution systématique des acquis de ces formations n'est pas institutionnalisée comme bonne pratique de reddition de compte vis-à-vis de l'institution de financement et des directions. Le premier problème subsiste parce qu'il n'existe pas de plan de formation dans la plupart des directions de l'administration et des ONG/OSC. Même là où ces plans existent, il n'y a pas de stratégie de mobilisation de ressources cohérente avec les besoins de formation identifiés ou suggérés par les candidats potentiels. Il en résulte

**\*Kobéhi Guillaume TOUTOU** (EGD 2006) est originaire de la Côte d'Ivoire. Il était le Président du Comité des étudiants de l'IOB en 2005-2006. Au moment où il rejoignait l'IOB, il occupait le poste de "programme Assistant M&E" au Bureau de l'UNICEF d'Abidjan. Après ses études à Anvers, il a connu deux promotions successives. Il est aujourd'hui Administrateur chargé de la Planification au sein du Bureau de l'UNICEF.

>>>

&gt;&gt;&gt;

que dans la plupart des cas, le financement de telles formations est tributaire de l'influence de quelques directions du service demandeur sur la structure de financement. Dans le deuxième cas, tant que l'institution qui finance les formations ne fait pas obligation explicite au candidat de restituer aux autres membres de sa structure les acquis de la formation, celui-ci n'en perçoit pas toujours la nécessité comme relevant d'une bonne pratique. C'est certainement pourquoi les bailleurs de fonds assujettissent le restant des pertes (en général 20%) ou le bénéfice futur d'un autre financement à la conditionnalité de restitution immédiatement après les formations. Même dans ce cas de figure, il n'est pas rare de recourir encore au bailleur pour un financement de l'atelier de restitution fut-il à petite échelle. Cette dernière requête est bien entendu symptomatique d'une faible appropriation des formations par les directions desquelles émanent les candidats.

S'agissant des formations en interne, le principal problème est le ciblage des personnes à former. Lorsque celles-ci sont choisies par leurs structures –et c'est généralement l'exception– il n'est pas rare que les personnes désignées ne soient pas la cible visée initialement par l'initiateur de la formation. Cette situation entraîne des modifications dans les modules proposés pour tenter de prendre en compte une mise à niveau des candidats qui ne sont pas au fait de la discipline proposée. Le second problème concerne l'absence d'une intervention cohérente des partenaires au développement en matière de renforcement de capacités nationales. Il en résulte que (i) les mêmes personnes/structures sont formées dans les mêmes domaines et au cours de la même année ; (ii) Les partenaires reçoivent la même formation au niveau modulaire mais avec des différences significatives de courants liées aux mandats respectifs des agences de financement. L'exemple le plus éloquent en date est le « langage de la gestion axée sur les résultats » qui est aux prises avec celui de « la planification par objectifs » sans que l'on se demande si l'avènement de l'un consacre la fin de l'autre ou s'il y a une « coexistence pacifique » entre les deux. La multiplicité voire la divergence de notions à (re)tirer de ces formations n'est pas de nature à faciliter la pratique. Cette situation s'ap-

parente donc plutôt à un gaspillage de ressources financières et de temps.

En attendant de trouver une solution durable aux problèmes que pose le renforcement des capacités des partenaires nationaux, L'UNICEF a mis en place depuis 2006 un mécanisme de diffusion de connaissances sur les principaux développements dans le monde de la gestion des projets. C'est ainsi que trois consultants internationaux ont été recrutés tour à tour pour former un pool de « Champions » en matière de Gestion Axée sur les Résultats (GAR, 2006) ; Programmation Basée sur les Droits Humains (APBDH, 2006) et Genre et Budgétisation Axée sur le Genre (PBSG, 2007). Après cette première série, une équipe de formateurs s'est dégagée et des formations basées sur le modèle de la démultiplication au niveau central et local ont été mises en œuvre. D'après le rapport de la revue annuelle 2008, après deux années de mise en œuvre, les personnes formées dépassaient déjà le chiffre de 300. Afin d'optimiser les ressources (les coûts logistiques notamment) l'UNICEF et la Direction Générale du Plan se sont accordés en 2008 pour adjoindre deux autres modules qui se donnaient par ailleurs (DEV-INFO et Collecte et Analyse de données). De cette sorte l'ensemble des modules constituerait un paquet jugé pertinent pour la mise en œuvre, le suivi et l'évaluation des interventions. Ces formations se sont poursuivies en 2009 et elles sont prévues dans le plan de travail de 2010.

## RÉSULTATS PRÉLIMINAIRES DES ANALYSES COMPLÉMENTAIRES

Deux études portant sur (i) l'évaluation des capacités évaluatives nationales et de (ii) l'évaluabilité des politiques sociales ont été réalisées. Ces deux études devraient permettre de disposer d'une cartographie des capacités par domaine de compétences, par secteur d'activité, par structure, par région et tout autre démembrement pertinent. Le résultat obtenu devrait être mis en rapport avec la qualité des politiques élaborées et des programmes opérationnels qui en découlent.

En attendant la finalisation des rapports de ces études prévues d'ici fin septembre, les résultats préliminaires font ressortir les constats suivants. La plupart des formations reçues sont très peu utilisées. En témoigne la qualité des documents majeurs de planification sectorielle élaborés depuis 2006. Des requêtes reçues spécifiaient clairement en effet que telle ou telle dimension n'était pas suffisamment prise en compte dans les dits documents et qu'il fallait les intégrer. L'autre argumentaire se fonde sur la qualité des rapports de missions d'évaluation réalisées sur le terrain pour documenter l'efficacité et la performance des interventions. Ces rapports ont été jugés dans leur grande majorité de mauvaise qualité. Ils arriveraient en retard et les recommandations ne seraient plus d'actualité au moment où elles sont transmises. Il serait aussi fréquent que les structures d'exécution des projets reprochent souvent aux équipes d'évaluation de ne pas suffisamment maîtriser les problématiques qu'ils viennent évaluer. Au niveau même de ces structures le système de collecte de l'information sur les projets serait parfois défaillant.

### STRATÉGIE PROPOSÉE ET MÉCANISMES D'OPÉRATIONNALISATION

Actuellement il n'existe pas de structure spécialisée dédiée à la formation en suivi-évaluation des futurs cadres ou des cadres en activité. C'est certainement parce que l'Etat n'en a pas fait un corps de métier. Certaines écoles privées ou des centres de formation de quelques entreprises du secteur public ont développé des modules initialement à l'attention de leurs cadres mais ces formations se sont peu à peu ouvertes aux autres structures. Dans tous les cas, les modules dispensés sont souvent dépassés et ne font aucune référence à certains développements majeurs récents dans le domaine de l'aide au développement comme « la déclaration de Paris » ou « la gestion axée sur les résultats ».

L'UNICEF est convaincue que si les futurs cadres de l'administration reçoivent la formation initiale au cours de leurs études, celle-ci sera moins coûteuse en termes de coûts récurrents et favoriserait des économies d'échelle tout en étant susceptible d'être

utilisée. C'est pourquoi en liaison avec le Bureau de UNFPA et les partenaires du Gouvernement, des modules harmonisés ont été développés courant avril 2010. Ils couvrent les thématiques suivantes : Prospective-Planification-Programmation-Budgétisation et Suivi-Evaluation. Afin d'assurer la viabilité de ce processus, les différentes parties prenantes ont recherché à chaque étape le consensus. Il s'est agi de débattre des questions relatives à l'identification exhaustive des institutions capables de dispenser le suivi-évaluation comme formation initiale, de la mise en place d'un pool de formateurs, de l'examen critique des modules existants, d'un mécanisme d'évaluation de l'efficacité des formations reçues, des dispositions pour réduire l'instabilité des personnes formées et de toute autre problématique susceptible d'influencer la stratégie.

Sur cette base, les modules qui feront l'objet de validation par un public plus large, seront intégrés à la rentrée 2010-2011 à titre expérimental dans deux écoles qui forment actuellement plus du tiers des cadres ivoiriens : L'École Nationale d'Administration Publique et L'École Nationale de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée. Il convient de noter que ce système n'exclura pas les formations dispensées aux cadres en activités pour le renforcement de leurs capacités. Sur ce segment de la cible, les partenaires auront l'avantage de disposer des modules harmonisés et adaptés à leur niveau.





# Land dynamics in Rwanda and Burundi



**Jude Murison** works on land policies and social dynamics in Burundi and Rwanda. She is member of the thematic group "Political economy of the Great Lakes Region"

For the next two years Jude Murison and Dominik Kohlhagen will be working on a research project within the context of the IOB theme group Political Economy of the Great Lakes entitled: *"Empowering the poor or protecting the powerful? Externally induced reforms and the agency of local actors. A case study on land dynamics in Rwanda and Burundi"*. Using land dynamics as its prism the project aims to establish how opportunity structures interact with local ways of life and the agency of local actors and how externally induced reforms may impact upon this interaction. The project adopts an actor-oriented approach that aims to reveal the complex interaction between human agency and the local institutional environment.



**Dominik Kohlhagen** works on land policies and social dynamics in Burundi and Rwanda. He is member of the thematic group "Political economy of the Great Lakes Region".

The project focuses primarily upon the perspective of the local rural population, which is poor. In order to be able to build on existing expertise at IOB Rwanda and Burundi will be analysed as case studies. Both are post-conflict and potentially pre-conflict countries which are confronted by extreme scarcity of land and which share other significant similarities. In both Burundi and Rwanda the economy relies heavily on agriculture and much depends on foreign aid. In both countries the progressive transition from a communal to a more individualistic use of land was accompanied by rapid population growth and thus led to the increased subdivision of land plots. Today the size of most plots is less than a hectare.

The history of Rwanda and Burundi is also characterised by repeated outbreaks of violence and massacres during which great numbers of people were displaced or sought refuge in neighbouring countries. The land which they left behind was generally occupied by other people or was reallocated by state officials, which resulted in many competing claims over the same plots of land. About 70 % of all conflicts that go to court in Rwanda and Burundi are directly related to land. The official land policies of the state thus have to address pressing social and economic problems.

For the moment the Rwandan government seems to be better equipped for the introduction of reforms than Burundi. At the end the 1990s Rwanda implemented a policy under which returning refugees could under certain conditions claim the right

to share the land which they had previously owned. It also started local "villagisation" programmes with a view to grouping the traditionally scattered homes in newly created villages surrounded by farmland. In the agricultural sector Rwanda's land policy provides for regional crop specialisation. In order to prevent the excessive subdivision of farming land it limited the minimum size of land plots to one hectare. According to the government the current policy is intended to consolidate land holdings and to promote a more effective use of the country's limited land resources. Critics, however, point to the forced implementation of the Rwandan policy and its negative effects on local livelihoods.

Burundi adopted its first ever national land policy in 2009. Several measures have directly been borrowed from Rwanda. The policy document provides for "villagisation" programmes and defines the minimum surface for land holdings. In order to reduce demographic pressure on the land, measures for birth control have also been announced. At the same time the Burundian policy incorporates ideas from a culturally and geographically very different country, namely Madagascar. Based on positive experience from Madagascar the Burundian policy provides for the establishment of local "land desks" to give formal recognition to customary land law. In many regards this objective is at odds with the very directive measures inspired by Rwanda. For the moment it remains unclear whether the Burundian land policy is coherent enough to allow of full implementation. Since the adoption of the policy docu-

*It aims to provide answers to the crucial questions of how to deal with extreme resource scarcity in a conflict-prone environment with a pressing poverty problem and how to fully grasp the dynamics that externally induced interventions set in motion at the local level.*

ment none of its recommendations have actually been put into effect.

Despite the differences in the strength of the central state in both countries state officials are very involved in everyday land management. Whereas in Rwanda most interventions are coordinated at the national level, in Burundi it is mainly the communal administrators who decide questions such as the allocation of public land or the use of marshland and pasture. The state, however, is only one actor amongst others since pre-colonial traditions still play an important role in both Burundi and Rwanda. Although neither country has had any customary land authorities since the 1960s, customary law and local land arrangements based on custom still play an important role. Especially in the field of dispute resolution traditional mechanisms such as mediation and conciliation clearly prevail over adjudication under state law.

Using a bottom-up, micro-level perspective as a necessary complement to a macro-level analysis the research project aims to understand the complex interactions between the different layers of land dynamics. The project is based on a multi-disciplinary framework that builds on a number of disciplinary approaches: development anthropology, development economics, and law and development.

At the micro-level of local communities where land systems and regulations are subject to externally induced changes the anthropological component of the research will analyse the nature, perception and participation of local actors in practices with regard to land dynamics. Against the disciplinary background of development economics the research project will link land dynamics at the local level to patterns of rural development at the broader national or regional level and will analyse how this interaction is influenced by externally induced agrarian reforms. The law and development component of the research will analyse the role of law in the interaction between local actors and their opportunity structure. Law will be the subject of analysis, both insofar as it is an indicator and an outcome of power relations and insofar as it constitutes a possible tool for the empowerment of local people.

The various disciplinary components will be strong-

ly linked and will be integrated within an overarching multi-disciplinary theoretical framework and research methodology. This combination of disciplinary approaches will make it possible to determine the relevance of land dynamics in the broader conflict cycle and in more broadly-based developmental processes in both case study settings.

The project creates a unique opportunity to combine and integrate a number of relevant research questions - usually dealt with in isolation - into one multi-disciplinary research effort which aims to be both scientifically and politically relevant in its attempt to develop a holistic approach that combines micro and macro research in a single research project. It aims to provide answers to the crucial questions of how to deal with extreme resource scarcity in a conflict-prone environment with a pressing poverty problem and how to fully grasp the dynamics that externally induced interventions set in motion at the local level. Blind spots and missing links in existing research on issues related to rural development, social structures, post-conflict reconstruction, governance, and law and development will be addressed.

In addition, thanks to its explicit methodological focus this research will contribute to the design of an appropriate multi-disciplinary research methodology that will facilitate future academic research on the impact of externally induced reforms on local dynamics and on the socio-political processes which they may set in motion. It will also contribute to an improved understanding, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of external interventions on local communities.



## The VLIR-IUC Project of Migration and Local Development in Ecuador

*Migration is a global phenomenon which, despite being as old as civilization itself, is attracting special attention from researchers and policy-makers because of the challenges and opportunities that it creates in both the societies of origin and destination. Ecuador, and especially the Austro Region, has become an important labour force exporting area. As a consequence remittances have increased enormously but their effects in terms of development are questionable. Do we understand the development potential of remittances? Do we understand the social costs of international mobility? How can we contribute to enhancing the potential benefits of migration? These and other questions encouraged Prof. Germán Calfat, a member of the IOB theme group Impact of Globalisation, to embark on long-term cooperation with the University of Cuenca (Ecuador) in the context of the Migration and Local Development Project.*



**Geovanna Benedictis** is a member of the theme group “Impact of Globalization” and a member of the Flemish team of the “Migration and Local Development” IUC-VLIR Project with the University of Cuenca – Ecuador. Her research focuses on the impact of remittances on human capital accumulation in Ecuador.

### HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

**T**hree years ago the University of Cuenca embarked on an Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programme with the VLIR in order to strengthen its institutional and research capacity in areas of common interest with a development-oriented focus. Six academic development projects involving a total of forty local researchers and a large number of Belgian counterparts were approved.

The Migration and Local Development Project came into being for two main reasons: firstly, the importance of the international migration phenomenon in the Austro Region (of which the city of Cuenca is the capital) and, secondly, the recent interest of the newly elected government in engaging actively in the design and coordination of policies aimed at protecting migrants and their families.

In 2009 Prof. Gemán Calfat was appointed as the Flemish leader of this Project. He was at the time already supervising the PhD project of one member of the theme group at IOB (Geovanna Benedic-

tis) on the impact of remittances on human capital accumulation in Ecuador. This previous experience provided the Project with a novel starting point. “North” teams are usually mainly composed of Flemish researchers/students and “North” national members but in this particular case the Flemish team consisted of a majority of members coming from the South; in fact one of them, Geovanna, originally came from the partner country, Ecuador. This fortunate starting-point has provided the project with extra momentum: the so-called “Experts from the North” are in fact mainly from the South and the Migration Project benefits not only from theoretical concepts but also from the experience of its immigrant participants. Moreover, having an Ecuadorian member on the Northern team facilitates communication because she shares the same language and communication culture with the members of the Southern team.

### THE MIGRATION PHENOMENON IN THE ECUADORIAN AUSTRO REGION

In the late 90s Ecuador suffered one of the most severe economic and political crises of all times and

witnessed the largest migration exodus in its history. While the latter phenomenon was relatively new in some areas of the country, the Austro region had already experienced significant emigration to the United States in the 70s and 80s. The expansion of the migrant networks at destination and the expectations of material success (the so-called “American Dream”) generated the social pressure and monetary incentives which together gave rise to a new and sustained emigration process. The crisis of 1999 accelerated this mobility trend but modified it in three important ways: firstly, the migration phenomenon now involved inhabitants of all regions including those living in urban centres; secondly, Spain became the main destination rather than the US in view of the lower costs and the reduced risk of being denied access upon arrival, and third, the participation of women increased as labour markets at the destination required greater female participation.

As a result of migration, remittances started to provide the Ecuadorian economy with vast resources to help support the new adoption of the dollar in the year 2000. Thousands of Ecuadorian households benefited either directly or indirectly from these funds but the impact they had on the receivers remains ambiguous.

Migration from the rural area of the Austro region has significantly changed the living conditions of the migrant families<sup>[1]</sup>. The high incidence of migration from this area has reduced traditional agricultural practices as a consequence of the departure of young labourers and the increasing dependency of household income on remittances. Although remittances seem to have provided families of migrants with more opportunities to accumulate assets - as witnessed by the remarkable difference between the new homes built by them and the modest constructions erected by non-migrant households - in terms of human capital accumulation little change has been experienced in the areas of education and health. In fact, traditional farming practices, such as keeping animals in the house, have not changed significantly, either for the families of migrants (despite the clearly massive investment in enlarging the size of houses), or for the others.



Prof. Germán Calfat discusses the yearly working plan with the local team in Cuenca.

In urban centres the effects are also mixed. While the additional income has provided some families with the financial means to start entrepreneurial activities, to invest in better education for their children or to improve patterns of consumption, the social costs of migration - and thus of remittances- can be very considerable. The change in family composition, the separation of children from their parents, the transfer of parenthood responsibilities to older people and the existence of lower incentives for adolescents to study or work are only a few examples of the changes which are commonly observed in areas of high migration.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Despite the long tradition of migration in the Austro region, academic research in this domain remains disparate. In fact, most of the locally available analyses of the effects of migration focus first and foremost on the macroeconomic effects of remittances rather than on the impact at the level of families or society.

Moreover, official databases hardly ever explore the phenomenon of migration from an angle other than that of income. National and local authorities thus lack consistent information for the design of policies and programmes. As a result policies to improve the conditions of migrants and their families can end up being ineffective.



[1] The term “migrant family” refers to a family in Ecuador, one or more of whose members have migrated.



Geovanna Benedictis and members of the local team during the seminar “Migration studies: theory, data management tools and applications for developing countries”

In an attempt to understand the dynamics of the international migration phenomenon and its impact at the local level and to create a knowledge-based community of experts in this domain, the project focuses on three main areas: Education, Research and Extension.

The educational projects include training courses focusing on the use of tools for the analysis of the impact of migration at various levels and from various areas of expertise, scholarships for MA or PhD Cuenca students to attend Flemish Universities and the inclusion of ‘migration’ related topics in the curriculum of the local partner institution. The research component aims to collect and analyse systematic, updated and relevant information for the study of the impact of migration on a range of factors significant for local development. The main research lines are jointly defined by North and South teams and take into account the various fields of expertise of their members (economics, sociology, psychology, history and anthropology). Finally, the extension activities aim to impact on society via continual dialogue with the stakeholders, the evaluation of public policies and the diffusion of the research output to the community.

## OUR ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

### **Remittances, educational supply and human capital accumulation**

Children of migrant parents are believed to perform worse at school or to show higher non-attendance rates than children living with their parents. We conducted a survey and a joint analysis with the heads of schools in the rural area of San Fernando to determine whether this conventional conviction could be empirically confirmed. In terms of performance (school grades) there is no significant difference between the children of migrants and non-migrants. However, the distance to school (level of accessibility) affected school attendance more considerably for female than for male adolescents, especially for families without access to remittances.

### **The role of the extended family as a factor in the probability of migration**

Until the late 90s migration in the Austro region was mainly limited to men. After 1999, however, the participation of women increased significantly regardless of their marital status. Children were sometimes left with older relatives who were expected to assume parental responsibilities until the parents were able to return. A different type of data collection process was conducted to determine whether the existence of a larger network of relatives facilitated the decision of the parents to migrate and under what circumstances. The analysis of the infor-



mation is still in progress but the preliminary results reveal the considerable effect of the family network on the migration decision, mainly when the mother intends to migrate and in areas where migration is more common.

### **Building status: The symbolic use of remittances in Ecuador**

One interesting feature of the migration phenomenon in the Austro is the clear difference that can be observed between the homes of migrant and non-migrant families. Huge American-style constructions (some even inhabited) stand side by side with modest traditional rural houses. The urge to possess the more impressive home has nothing to do with better investment opportunities - if this were the intention it would be more advantageous to build these houses in urban centres - rather, they seem to bear witness to the level of success achieved by the migrant at his or her destination. From an anthropological point of view this ongoing research aims to determine how the importance of symbolic status affects the use of remittances.

### **Comparison of migratory policies: The case of Mexico v. Ecuador**

The so-called “return plan”, which aimed to encourage the return of Ecuadorian migrants by providing them with partial loans to finance entrepreneurial activities, was expected to attract huge interest during the financial crisis of last year but actually

the opposite was observed. The official information about the results of the programme is scarce and very general. Other initiatives proposed by the government have also been criticised in the press and by public opinion. The question as to what type of policy would be able better to channel the development potential of migration and remittances has prompted us to compare some of the policies which countries implement in this context. With the support of the Colegio de la Frontera de Mexico (a research unit specialised in this domain) a comparative study is being conducted in order to shed some light on policy design and implementation.

### **Migration and the effects of discrimination at school**

Children and adolescents whose parents have migrated face several challenges. Not only do they suffer from the absence of their parents but they can also be regarded as less disciplined or less interested in school activities than their counterparts who are living with their parents. Perceptions tend to be negative and these perceptions influence the behaviour of teachers and classmates. How can these conflicts be avoided? By educating both the children and their teachers! This study explores the conflicts arising at school as a consequence of migration and analyses the use of psycho-pedagogical tools to address them.

Left picture: Pedagogical material, developed by the local team, to be used as guidelines to discuss migration challenges with children and adolescents at school.

Right picture: Contrasting scenes in the Austro: Modern constructions (left) vs traditional farming practices (center & right)





Community interviewer gathering information on the field – San Fernando rural area.



Participation of the Local Leader in the “Social Forum on Migration” – Quito 2010

### Conference on Migration studies

After the first year of the project some research output has already been generated. An International Research Conference will be organised in November 2010 with a view to sharing the findings of the current studies conducted in the context of the project and benefiting from the experience of participants and experts in the field.

### WHEN YOUR MAIN CHALLENGE IS YOUR MAIN OPPORTUNITY

#### A truly multidisciplinary environment:

The project brings together members with a wide range of backgrounds. We have economists, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, an expert in computer science and a historian on the team and thus the ways of approaching the tasks ahead and analysing problems were different for each member. Although this was quite challenging at the beginning, there was and is a great level of mutual respect. We all benefit from the expertise of members working in different disciplines and we are proud that we have been able to draw up a joint research agenda which enables every member to exploit his or her capacities and at the same time learn from others.

We believe that our main challenge in analysing the effects of migration, a complex and extensive task in itself, is to acquire a better understanding of the problem by examining it from very different angles. There is no need to achieve a uniform way of thinking or to share the same methodological preferences provided that the opinions of the various members are treated with respect and a vision of common interest. Human mobility is a topic that interests us all and a phenomenon to which we are all increasingly exposed. In the end, as a publicity spot in Ecuador says: “We are all migrants”.



## for learning and sharing

*We, the IOB students, proudly confirm that IOB really brings together people from all over the world in a single room. How? Well, the wide range of students in the Master's programmes in 2009-10 provides more than enough evidence. Participants from twenty-three countries spread across four continents work together in a single room. All of them have come to IOB to acquire additional knowledge and skills so as to be able to contribute to the development and prosperity of mankind. In short, IOB is one of the best institutes committed to practice-based development studies in Europe.*

In order to help create a friendly and pleasant environment in which the students can learn and share their experience a number of mechanisms have been put in place. One of these is the student committee. It has seven members; a president, a secretary, three class representatives (one for each of the three Master's programmes) and two representatives who sit on the IOB board. The Members of the committee were elected at a special event organised in Brussels on 24th of November 2009. The procedure for electing committee representatives was based on democratic principles, which was in itself a learning process for many students.

Since assuming its responsibility the 2009/10 student committee has organised quite memorable events with the aim of bringing students together to understand and support each other better while also enjoying each other's company. Here are some of this year's activities.

### **MINI-FASHION SHOW AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**

The first event organised by the committee was a mini-fashion show at the Agora on 11th of December 2009. The aim of this event, entitled "Palette of Colours", was to show and celebrate the wonderful diversity of the student body.

The objective of the event was to bring the members of the IOB family together at a mini fashion show featuring traditional clothes from different

countries, celebrate the birthdays of eight students born between September and December and say goodbye to the year 2009. IOB professors as well as students and their families attended and greatly enjoyed the event.

Representatives from 23 countries spread across four continents; Europe (Belgium), Africa (Ethiopia, Cameroon, Nigeria, Uganda), Asia (Vietnam, the Philippines) and Latin America (Nicaragua), a total of 12 students (four male and 8 female) took part in the fashion show. Although all were winners, Christe Jones and Fekadu Nigussie ultimately won the Ms and Mr IOB contest via a voting system which combined the votes of three independent judges (60% of the points) with the result of the popular vote (which constituted 40%). Organising the event would not have been possible without very generous funding by IOB and a contribution from the students themselves.

### **ATTENDING THE COLOGNE CARNIVAL**

Having learnt that the Cologne Carnival is one of the best-known street festivals in Europe the Student Committee organised a trip for IOB students. The bus trip to and from our destination was so enjoyable and memorable that we all consider ourselves lucky to have taken part in it. Each "student tourist" was equipped with a map of Cologne and a little guide to the city prepared by the Student Committee. In Cologne students took pictures and enjoyed themselves. It was amazing to see people





Mini-fashion show,  
'Palette of Colours'

in all sorts of unusual costumes; some were dressed up as cows, puppies or bees, some as American Indian tribespeople, some as the Jackson Five. All the people were enjoying themselves, fortified by traditional German songs and Cologne beer, and we joined in with great gusto.

The trip took place on the day just before Saint Valentine's Day so it was also impressive to see the many love padlocks placed on the Hohenzollern bridge. Some of us made a point of visiting the 4771 house where Eau de Cologne originated. It was interesting to learn that the perfume got its name from the original house numbering introduced by Napoleon's army.

The trip was also made more special because we had the company of the participants in the IOB Training Course on Governance for Development. Let us just say that a very good time was had by one and all on a very cold winter's day in Cologne. As usual the event was made possible thanks to generous funding by IOB. This enabled the students to enjoy the Cologne Carnival at the very modest price - the whole trip only cost students a mere 3 Euros.

## DEMONSTRATING OUR SOLIDARITY WITH THE HAITIAN PEOPLE

In the early days of February, Haiti suffered a devastating earthquake which measured over seven on the Richter scale and affected over three million people. All over the world people were shocked by the scale of the disaster and in what one might call a 'quite phenomenal' wave of support people from all corners of the globe offered financial, material and technical help as well as their sympathy. The one positive element in this tragedy is that people everywhere came to the rescue in Haiti's hour of need.

One of the IOB students, Jean, who comes from Haiti, suffered great psychological distress as his family, friends and fellow countrymen and women were affected by the disaster. To show our solidarity with the Haitian people in general and Jean in particular the Student Committee organised a series of events which raised about 1,400 Euros. The money was donated to the Red Cross to help the victims of the disaster. Our efforts were successful for a number of reasons, especially the voluntary help and support



Football game for Haiti

provided by many as well as by results-oriented collaboration and networking between IOB, USOS, and the Antwerp University Club. The initiative to work together with the other partners was taken by the IOB student committee. All of the work was carried out by a team of student volunteers coordinated by the committee and obtained the full and continuous support of the IOB Student Secretary.

Three major activities were planned. Firstly, donations from students and staff totalling 500 Euros were collected. Secondly, a 'football game with bets' co-organised by USOS raised over 900 Euros. Thirdly, in the evening after the football game there was a film show and a brief presentation on Haiti. This event was attended by over fifty students from various institutes and departments of the University of Antwerp and by invited guests from the Red Cross.

### CULTURAL FOOD NIGHT AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Among other things, studying at IOB has enabled the students to share their experiences of life and have fun together formally and informally. As the saying goes, "killing two birds with one stone" the students have managed to combine studying and socialising (thus perhaps creating international social capital?).

Recognising the fact that our students have a rich cultural heritage that they should make others aware of, the student committee organised an IOB Cultural Food Night on the 29th May 2010. The theme of the event was "Taste of Cultures". The main objective was to share some of our culinary secrets and also to have a good time. Different nations have various ways of preparing the same food. Differences in the ingredients and in the ways in which the ingredients are mixed and cooked can make the same food taste quite different. Tasting and sharing each other's food is a very enjoyable way of learning about each other's culture.





Mini-fashion show,  
'Palette of Colours'

After the student committee had announced its plan for the event most students were very happy to prepare a typical national dish and so the IOB community was fortunate enough to be able to taste recipes from a wide range of countries, for example, Ethiopian chicken sauce with and without chili and Shiro sauce eaten with special Ethiopian bread called Injera; Chicken Adobo from the Philippines; Rolex chicken and Roasted Chapatti chicken from Uganda; spring rolls (or "nem") from Vietnam; Biryani from Bangladesh (beef, aromatic rice, potato, ghee, yogurt and Biryani spicy mix consisting of garlic, onion, ginger, green chili); stoofvlees (beef stew) from Belgium; Nshima from Zambia; Ekwang from Cameroon and the rice with chicken typical of Latin American countries.

During the event the IOB community - both students and staff - enjoyed wonderful food from various countries, built new friendships and strengthened their social networks. Moreover, the IOB Cultural Food Night encouraged cross-cultural learning and enabled the students to promote their countries. We hope that some students have already planned to visit each other's countries and indulge in more of each other's culinary delights. Should we not add this to the list of objectives of development studies?

*Contributors:*

*Mai Thanh Tu (IOB Board representative),  
Birhanu Tadesse (DEM programme representative), and  
Gemechu Adimassu (President of the Student Committee)*



*A woman with a message. Xitlali Sandino knows exactly what she is talking about - having grown up in the lush greenery of Nicaragua she is firm in her commitment to fight for its survival.*

**X**itlali's father is an agronomist who raised her to value natural resources and the environment, which is one reason why she decided to study biology. For a while she conducted research on genetics but the long days in the laboratory suffocated her. In combination with doing an MBA she started working as an environmental consultant, mainly focusing on waste management. Thanks to her experience in national and regional policies she was accepted as an assistant at the Centro Humboldt, a leading NGO in the field of environmental development, management and advocacy. She worked in planning, monitoring and evaluating projects. Although her work was greatly appreciated by the NGO, she herself felt a need for sounder theoretical knowledge. She is eager to contribute to the development of her country and wants to be able to do so in a very professional way, which is why she applied for enrolment in the Master's programme in Development Evaluation and Management at IOB. At the same time her husband applied for the programme in Globalisation and Development and both of them were accepted. Both are deeply committed to raising awareness of environmental problems and climate change. Xitlali finds it disappointing that only few people link the effects of climate change with development. With the failure of the last Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen she has put her hopes in a bottom-up approach towards environmental development.

"In Nicaragua the impact of climate change is enormous. We are increasingly confronted with destructive hurricanes, earthquakes and mudslides as well as by a growing scarcity of water resources. Governmental efforts to deal with these effects of climate change through mitigation and adaptation projects are disappointing because there is a lack of long-term vision and capacity. Since there is no institutional presence at the field level it is up to the people

*"I truly believe in a bottom-up approach to address climate change."*

themselves to take initiatives. Those working in the fields suffer daily and realise that there is no time to lose. For example, rural communities do not have access to public water services so they have started organising themselves in local committees in charge of managing access to fresh water. Those who are elected to the committees work as volunteers, but they are trained by NGOs such as Centro Humboldt in how to collect fees and disperse the water efficiently and they also learn about technical support and acquire environmental knowledge. These committees have emerged almost everywhere and are networking as a means to playing an advocacy role in environmental policy. Thanks to significant success in advocacy the members of the committees have also been given legal power to manage water resources, thus enabling them to carry out their work much more efficiently."

"I truly believe in a bottom-up approach to address climate change. I hope that I will be able to continue to work for environmental institutions which aim to empower local committees and raise awareness. Before I started at IOB I called myself a development worker from the heart. With the theoretical knowledge that I have now acquired I feel much more confident and I am eager to share what I have learned with my colleagues in the field. To have had the opportunity to share insights and experience has been the greatest benefit of my year at IOB. We were constantly encouraged to apply our newly acquired knowledge to field cases which we had to present to the whole group. By learning about other people's experiences and approaches and about the differences and similarities between them, I began to understand my own country better. Thanks to the diversity among both students and staff and the wide range of knowledge and ideas to which I have been exposed I have been enriched as a person and as a development worker."



**Xitlali Sandino** (Nicaragua),  
Development Evaluation and  
Management





**Gemechu Adimassu** (Ethiopia),  
Governance and Development

*Gemechu Adimassu talks passionately about his home country, Ethiopia, when discussing the link between development and good governance. He is absolutely committed to doing all he can to increase people's awareness of the importance of governmental accountability on the road to overall development. However, when asked whether he is optimistic about Ethiopia's future, he wisely quotes Desmond Tutu: "I am not an optimist, but I am a prisoner of hope."*

**"I** started applying for enrolment in the Master's programme of Governance and Development at IOB five years ago. Last year I was lucky- I was accepted and granted a scholarship. My expectations were, of course, high and all in all I am very satisfied. I wanted to attend this Master's programme very much because I strongly believe in the crucial link between development and good governance and I wanted to understand better how both these components influence each other. IOB is one of the few institutes that devote a whole Master's programme to this topic. In addition, some friends of mine studied here and they were very enthusiastic about both the experience and expertise of the academic staff and the interaction among students. I do indeed learn so much from sharing grassroots experience with my fellow students. Our stories from 24 countries and four continents really help us to understand the diversity of development. We all define and implement development in different ways, yet we all share the same goal: to improve the conditions of life of people everywhere. Before enrolling in this Master's programme I had already worked in the development field, for example, as a social development planning expert for the Planning and Economic Development Bureau, as a programme coordinator for the international NGO Action Aid and as a moni-

toring and evaluation advisor for the Ireland-based international NGO GOAL. With the knowledge I am acquiring in this Master's programme I can make a useful contribution to the development of my country. The way the curriculum is designed, you start with the bigger picture by, for example, determining what the terms development and poverty actually mean; then you proceed to their multiple dimensions - state, law and development, conflict, development and governance - and then to local governance and service delivery issues. I have understood that, however long it takes, development is a process that reaches its goal step by step.

I strongly believe that a democratic and accountable government is crucial to development. In Ethiopia thirty-five million people, that is to say about forty-four percent of the population, live below the nationally defined poverty line and over 10 percent rely on food aid every year. Eighty-five percent try to make a living in agriculture on land that is state owned. Ethiopia is among the very few countries in the world which have suffered famine continuously in the 21st century. My thesis analyses why the 2008-2009 famine was not prevented. I believe that the lack of democratic governance is the major culprit. For instance, the population in the Shashemenne district of Oromiya National Regional State requested aid in approximately February 2008 whereas aid only reached the region six months later. Even then the number of beneficiaries of aid fell by one third. Despite the regime change in 1991 and the endorsement of a multiparty system in the constitution Ethiopia is still not a democracy. Electoral authoritarianism characterises the country's political regime.

I have never participated in elections because to me they are meaningless. Here in Antwerp I have witnessed elections that have resulted in significant policy shifts and a referendum about a bridge over the river for the ring road around the city. I was surprised that so many people went to vote and that their vote really made a difference. In Ethiopia elections are still little more than a regular ritual to con-

*“We all define and implement development in different ways, yet we all share the same goal: to improve the conditions of life of people everywhere.”*

firm those already in power. During the last election - the fourth - held in June 2010 the ruling party won by a spectacular margin of 99.6%, a result second only to the victory claimed by the late dictator Saddam Hussein, who scored 100 % in a referendum in 2002. All of this shows that there is still a lot of work to be done.

The experience of recently developed countries reveals that an improvement in the situation of their human capital is a decisive element in these nations' efforts to raise the level of development. In spite of having made some quite remarkable progress in this regard Ethiopia still has its work cut out to bring about a change for the better for the massive labour force in the country. IOB plays a hugely important role in helping young professionals such as myself to acquire the necessary new skills, knowledge and experience to fill this gap in particular and to further the overall development of my country. On my return to Ethiopia I hope to become involved in academic research and teaching activities and to share my newly acquired insights and skills with my colleagues.”



## WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION ONCE IT REACHES IOB?



Application opening session

Each year in the months of January to March IOB receives approximately 800 applications for admission to its Master's programmes. Around 33% of these will be accepted and ultimately approximately 60 people of about 20 different nationalities will enrol for one of the three programmes on offer.

All application files are kept together and during an 'application opening session' in the first week of April all envelopes, each containing many more envelopes, are opened and added to the lists for the various Master's programmes. Each file is prepared by the student secretariat.

All applications are assessed by an academic selection committee composed of IOB staff. Scores ranging from one to three are given according to the following five selection criteria:

- Appropriateness of the applicant's field of study
- Quality of the applicant's previous studies and results/grades obtained
- Relevance of the applicant's professional experience
- Motivation of the applicant
- Matching of the content of the programme with the expectations of the applicant

Among the accepted applicants suitable scholarship candidates are selected by a joint commission consisting of IOB and VLIR-UOS staff. For each Master's programme ten effective scholars and ten substitute scholars are selected. All applicants are informed about the final decision during the months of April and May.



## KICK-OFF WEEKEND: A COMMUNICATION GAME



Art creations by IOB students,  
'Manneke Pis'

At the beginning of the academic year many students feel somewhat lost and lonely. IOB tries to provide as much help and support as possible, for example, by organising a kick-off weekend. The students of the academic year 2009-2010 participated in several cultural activities in Brussels. They spent the weekend in a youth hostel and explored the city from an artistic perspective, which resulted in some very innovative art created by the students themselves.

But most important, the weekend was an opportunity to meet one another and to become familiar with the diversity within IOB. Students not only have varying academic and professional backgrounds, they also come from a wide range of countries and cultures. They get together at IOB to learn from each other and to discuss development issues. Good communication is the key word in this process. However, communication is not just about words but also about shared values and habits. This is why IOB organised an intercultural communication game at the beginning of the academic year. Two groups were formed: a group of external experts in building bridges and a group of local inhabitants who are in dire need of a bridge. The members of this community have their own language and values so the experts have to learn to communicate with them by observing and experiencing the way they communicate. The members of the local community have to be aware of their own specific values and must realise that these may not be universally accepted. The exercise was an eye-opener for many participants and proved to be a thought-provoking introduction to communication in a culturally diverse group.



Intercultural communication game

## 25 YEARS OF USOS

**2010** marks the 25th year of USOS, the association for development cooperation at the University of Antwerp. USOS and IOB have a shared partnership with several universities in the South, which has turned out to be highly conducive to engaging in joint research and collaborating on development projects and activities. The partnership also creates opportunities for the exposure of Flemish students to the South, one of the main aims of USOS, and for the academic training of researchers of the South, hence contributing to the ongoing research and development activities of partners in the South. The partnership also organises exchanges of researchers with a view to facilitating fieldwork in the South on the one hand and access to the literature and exposure to other countries' experience in the North on the other. Moreover, the partnership provides opportunities for the exchange of lecturers and scholars with regard to academic teaching, research and policy advisory work.

Many founding and board members of USOS are also members of the IOB staff. USOS was created in 1985 by Stefaan Marysse and Louis Van Bladel. Its aim was to involve the University of Antwerp in the South. In practice this has resulted in the organisation of seminars and frequent exposure for both students and staff. Such exposure is not only an experience in cultural diversity but also a way of involving people in a global solidarity movement or even of encouraging further research. After all, this kind of exposure can help people to acquire a broader-than-usual perspective when committing themselves and/or making (professional) judgments. To mark its 25th anniversary USOS has published a study entitled 'The Narrow Road towards the South' which focuses on its history, achievements and future goals. One of the chapters in the study contains the results of an 'alumni survey'. Since 1985 over 350 people have experienced some form of exposure to the South thanks to USOS. Over 200 of these have replied to the survey, which examined the impact of the exposure on the intercultural abilities and social commitment of the alumni. The survey clearly shows that the exposure has a positive effect on



USOS alumni during the 25th anniversary celebration

intercultural capacities because it takes place in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The exposure also results in a sustained social commitment, often in a professional context.

Several members of IOB staff have taken part in exposure visits to the South via USOS. For them such visits were a major factor in their decision to build a career in the development field:

*“During my exposure visit to Nicaragua it was agreed with the Universidad Centroamericana that I would pursue research with a team of 15 people for two years. When I came back I started working at the Third World Centre in Antwerp, which later became IOB.”*

Tom de Herdt

*“My exposure visit to India not only changed me on the personal level, but also influenced my professional path. India made me realise that I wanted to carry out research on poverty. Now, ten years later, this topic has become a true passion. For over eight years I have worked at IOB as a researcher on poverty in the Great Lakes Region and as from next October I will continue my academic career at the Catholic University of Louvain-La-Neuve.”*

An Ansoms

*“Although I was already very interested in the topic of North-South relations, my exposure visit to Cameroon greatly influenced my way of looking at it. Before my visit I wanted to ‘help’ the Africans but during my exposure I lived with and talked to the locals and I realised that they do not need my help. I am now a researcher attached to the IOB theme group ‘Poverty and Well-being as a Local Institutional Process’.”*

Inge Wagemakers

The study ‘The Narrow Road towards the South’ was presented at the USOS celebration event which was held in the Antwerp cultural centre ‘Zuiderpershuis’ last May. It was attended by hundreds of alumni and sympathisers who were also invited to participate in several workshops and to share reminiscences of their own exposure experiences.



Professor Stefaan Marysse, founding member of USOS and IOB member of staff

## IOB AT THE WORLD BANK

**L**odewijk Smets is an IOB researcher attached to the theme group 'Aid Policy'. The topic of his research is how donor agencies can influence the process of institutional change. Since 1980 the World Bank has been engaged in providing conditional financing, the so-called Development Policy Loans, to recipient governments in order to support specific policy and institutional reforms. The World Bank also keeps a database of all policy loans which have been awarded since 1980, including an evaluation of their success rate. Since this is sensitive information, it is generally not available to the public. However, Lodewijk succeeded in obtaining a three-

month internship with the Research Group of the World Bank in Washington under the supervision of Stephen Knack, a World Bank Lead Economist, and was given permission to use the database for his research. Lodewijk will investigate which factors make a development policy loan successful and whether the new aid paradigm affects the probability of success. The World Bank database is of great use to Lodewijk in his examination of these questions. While previous research has found a positive effect of democracy and electoral competitiveness on the success of reform in the 80s and 90s, Lodewijk has found preliminary evidence that democratic regimes had considerably more difficulties when trying to implement donor-driven reform programmes.

## ALUMNI SURVEY 2010

**IOB** recently carried out an online survey among its alumni. The information on the identity, careers, needs and concerns of its alumni was used to acquire a better insight into the ways of assisting them and of improving services intended for them. In addition, IOB aims to improve interaction with and among alumni and thus wishes to invest more in its alumni relations and policy.

### General data:

The survey had a response rate of 42.21 percent. Survey respondents originate from 55 countries all over the world. The top five countries of origin are Ethiopia (32 alumni), Uganda (20 alumni), Cameroon (18 alumni), Vietnam (18 alumni) and Belgium (13 alumni). The average age of the alumni is 34; 42 percent is female.

### Satisfaction:

An overwhelming majority of the alumni (95 percent) are satisfied with their education at IOB. 51 percent even say they are very satisfied. The results of the recommendation question are even more impressive. Four out of five alumni would definitely encourage others to enrol for studies at IOB.

### Exchange to Change:

Of those alumni who actually read the newsletter (77 percent; 37 percent do not receive it), most tend to browse through the newsletter and only read

certain articles. 15 percent of the alumni read all issues in their entirety. The most popular articles in the newsletter are the development articles, the IOB news, the portraits of IOB students and the interviews with IOB professors. The vast majority of the alumni (74 percent) prefer the electronic version of the newsletter.

### Other means of communication between IOB and alumni:

There are considerable differences regarding the various available types of contact between the alumni and IOB. The consultation of the website and contacts with other alumni or students are clearly the most widely used contact channels. About ninety percent of all alumni have consulted the IOB website and have been in contact with an IOB student or other alumni at least once in the last year.

### Communication among alumni:

Alumni clearly keep in touch with one another, mostly with alumni of the same graduation year. E-mail is a crucial instrument for inter-alumni contact. Social network sites are also frequently used by alumni to contact each other.

### Eagerness to participate in alumni activities:

Overall an overwhelming 97.1 percent of the alumni indicated that they would like to be involved in alumni activities organised by IOB. Roughly four groups of alumni activities can be distinguished: online activities, Antwerp-based activities, in-country

This might make sense since externally imposed policy changes that thwart the domestic electoral majorities are more difficult to consolidate. One example of the way in which electoral competitiveness may hamper reform is provided by the recovery programme for the Polish economy implemented at the beginning of the 1990s. With the assistance of the IMF and the World Bank the Balcerowicz Plan intended to transform the Polish economy into a liberalized market economy. Although public support was initially considerable it steadily waned during 1990 and 1991. By the end of 1991 a new wave of economic difficulties as well as the results of democratic parliamentary elections led to the formation of a new government that opposed further economic

reform. As a result, the Balcerowicz plan was abandoned.

If democracy and electoral competitiveness indeed have a negative effect on the success of development policy loans a new issue has to be investigated. If the resistance in democratic regimes is due to inconsistency between the donor-driven reforms and local preferences and, consequently, a lack of wide-scale commitment of the recipient country, the question is whether the negative effect will disappear once the shift in the development policies underlying the new aid paradigm is explicitly taken into account. Lodewijk will be conducting further research into this by making use of the World Bank's database and his own field experience.

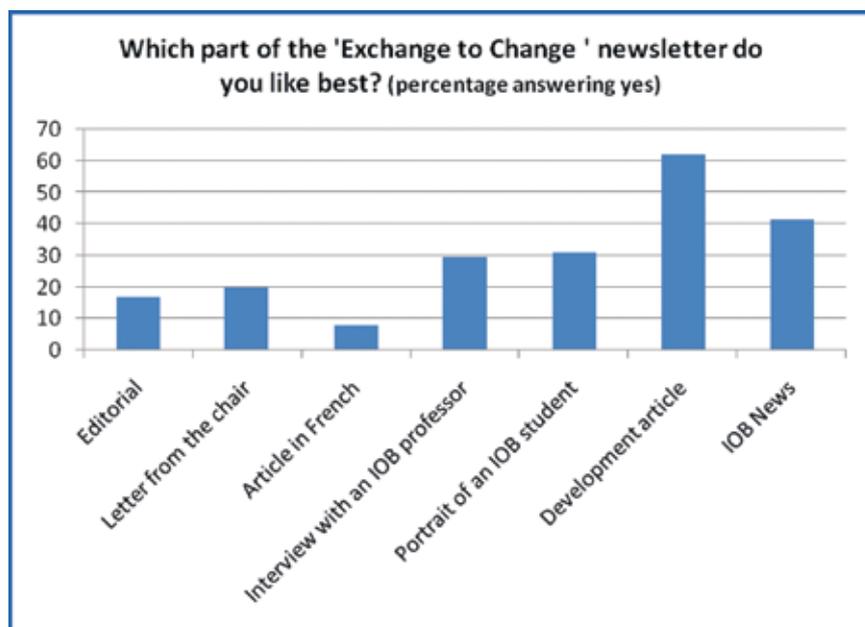
activities and activities requiring an active input from the alumni to the benefit of IOB.

- The group of online activities comprises participation in an alumni platform, a Facebook group, watching online seminars, participating in online refresher courses or accessing a digital library. Of this group, access to a digital library is by far the most popular option for most alumni. Both the online seminars and the online refresher courses are also quite attractive options for the alumni. In comparison, the social network communities appeal to fewer alumni.

- A second group consists of activities in Antwerp, namely participating in a refresher course, attending a conference or giving a guest lecture for IOB students. The prospect of returning to IOB for refresher courses/conferences in particular seems to appeal to most alumni.

- A third category, which groups the in-country activities, is actually the most attractive option for the overwhelming majority of the alumni. This group consists of four different activities within the alumni's own countries and even though the activities are quite different, all four are rated very positively. The four activities are: attending a conference in the country, meeting IOB staff on a mission, attending a face-to-face meeting with other alumni, attending a social event with alumni. For all four activities at least ninety percent of the alumni expressed an interest in participating!

Finally, a last group of activities requires an active input of the alumni for the benefit of IOB: being a country representative of the alumni for your country, being a contact person for IOB students in relation to their fieldwork, being a contact person for the promotion of IOB programmes and writing an article for the newsletter. Although this group of activities is less popular with the alumni there is still a very pronounced interest in these more 'duty'-based activities. It is excellent news that IOB can really count on the help of large numbers of alumni all over the world!



## IOB

Institute of  
Development Policy and  
Management  
University of Antwerp

Postal address:  
Prinsstraat 13  
B-2000 Antwerpen  
Belgium

Visiting address:  
Lange Sint Annastraat 7  
B-2000 Antwerpen  
Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)3 265 57 70  
Fax: +32 (0)3 265 57 71  
E-mail: [dev@ua.ac.be](mailto:dev@ua.ac.be)

### Website:

<http://www.ua.ac.be/iob>

Editor: Eva Vergaelen,  
[eva\\_vergaelen@hotmail.com](mailto:eva_vergaelen@hotmail.com)  
Publisher: Robrecht Renard  
Layout: Ward De Pelseneer  
[ward@visual-design.be](mailto:ward@visual-design.be)



University  
of Antwerp



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT  
POLICY AND MANAGEMENT