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**International migration, social change and local
governance in Ourosogui and Louga, two small urban
centres in Senegal**

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Introduction

In recent years, migration from Senegal has attracted much attention from researchers and policy makers. The sudden explosion in the number of clandestine migrants on the national and international scene, the large number of departures and the magnitude of the consequences, have attracted scientific interest and growing attention from politicians. Historically, the research emphasis has been on remittances.

Despite the importance of migration to everyday domestic life, and its impact on the development of Dakar and the towns of the interior, few studies have examined its effects on local governance and urban change. Yet, several small and medium-sized urban centres in Senegal have been able to grow and diversify their economic activities thanks to international migration. Rural households have also used remittances to fill the gap left by the crisis in agriculture that came about as a result of recurrent drought and the failure of groundnut agriculture.

Migrants' involvement in local governance is insufficiently documented. They are important economic actors, largely responsible for the rise in property values and the regeneration of urban areas in small and medium-sized towns and cities. They improve the living conditions of many households and contribute to the diversification of household incomes in a context where local financial capacity is absent.

This study, which is based on fieldwork in Louga and Ourossogui, contributes to our understanding of the impact of migrants' investments and of their potential participation in local decision-making. Although physical investments are more visible, the impact of migration on local governance can bring about the most sustainable political changes and deserves special attention from both researchers and policy makers.

Methodology

Field research focused on migrants' investments and their relationship with local economic actors, together with transformations in social inequalities between actors and in gender relations. The study began with an extensive review of the existing literature and secondary data. Field research was done through individual interviews, life histories and interviews with target groups, including local authorities, leaders of migrant associations, women's associations and civil servants. The duration of interviews varied depending on the interviewee, and usually took place in their workplace or home. Facilitators met with interviewees in advance and were present during discussions.

The interviews were carried out in Wolof or in Pulaar, the national languages, and sometimes in French. The major difficulty encountered during the research took place during focus group discussions with women. They were somewhat reluctant to share their stories and points of view because some issues were considered taboo, such as the absence of husbands and the behaviour of wives while husbands were away. The interview guide was amended after some testing and exploratory interviews. Also, methodological and sharing workshops were held regularly to bring the six members of the research team together.

Thanks to migration, small towns in Senegal have become connections between the local and the global. This is demonstrated by the strength of the links with the surrounding rural areas where many migrants come from. Increased social diversity is also a direct result of geographic and social mobility. Local urban centres play pivotal roles in enabling regional autonomy. They filter migration flows towards the bigger cities and abroad.

Research questions

Does the physical absence of migrants prevent them from participating in local politics? Do changes in their behaviour as a result of migration affect their families, the wider community or local institutions? Do their understandings of governance and management necessarily influence local governance? What political role can migrant workers take on in their home cities?

In Senegal, policies and their implementation promote participation in the management of local affairs. Migrants do not want to miss the opportunity to participate in the decisions made about their home towns. They also sometimes have political ambitions, whether clearly expressed or not, but their ability to participate and act is limited by their absence. Do new information and communication technologies overcome this constraint? Do decentralization and cooperation between the local governments of developed and developing countries offer opportunities for migrants to become more involved?

The persistence of the image of migrants as rich and powerful is hard to reconcile with their absence from local decision-making processes. How are political alliances between migrant workers and other actors constructed? What are the factors that influence these alliances? What are the determinants for political engagement of migrants? What specific roles do they play in cooperation with other groups? It is these and other questions we explore in this paper, in order to examine the effects that migrants have on the governance of small towns and cities in Senegal.

1. Urbanization in Senegal

1.1. The urban reality

Senegal's major urban centres are founded on sites that met the needs of the colonial authorities at the time, be they strategic military locations, maritime ports, coastal urban centres or railway junctions. Investment was concentrated where most of the high-ranking officials of the colonial government lived. Senegal emerged from this era with a low, albeit sound, level of urbanization, especially when compared to the rest of West Africa, which was still largely rural in nature. Under the colonial authority, Dakar, Rufisque, Saint Louis and Goree were fully fledged municipalities, where residents were recognized as citizens of France. In addition, Saint Louis and then Dakar were the capitals of French West Africa.

Small towns and cities in Senegal continued to gain municipal status throughout the period preceding Independence. They were recognized either because two or more small towns had come together to form one municipality or because a small town or city was able to gain status in its own right as an important place for the marketing and transport of peanuts, or as a centre for the marketing and transit of goods that had been manufactured in the interior of the country. These market towns are dotted along the main railway lines and, to a lesser extent, along the major river corridors. Their development has depended on groundnut agriculture, fishing, tourism and, for the past few years, on migration. Today, they make up Senegal's network of small and medium-sized towns.

In the early 1960s, the pace of urban population growth reached almost 5 per cent per annum. This growth has gradually slowed, and today it is in line with the general rate of population increase. Although there are still high levels of movement of people to urban centres, today it is better distributed as the big cities are no longer the sole destinations. Small and medium-sized towns are also attracting internal flows of migrants, drawn to employment opportunities in sectors such as fisheries, tourism and trade.

Table 1: Population distribution in urban Matam and Louga (Census, 2002)

Region	Urban population	Total population	Percentage of total population	Percentage of total national urban population
Louga	124,476	677,750	18.4	3.1
Matam	58,322	424,106	13.8	1.5
National total	4,007,590	9,855,338	40.7	100

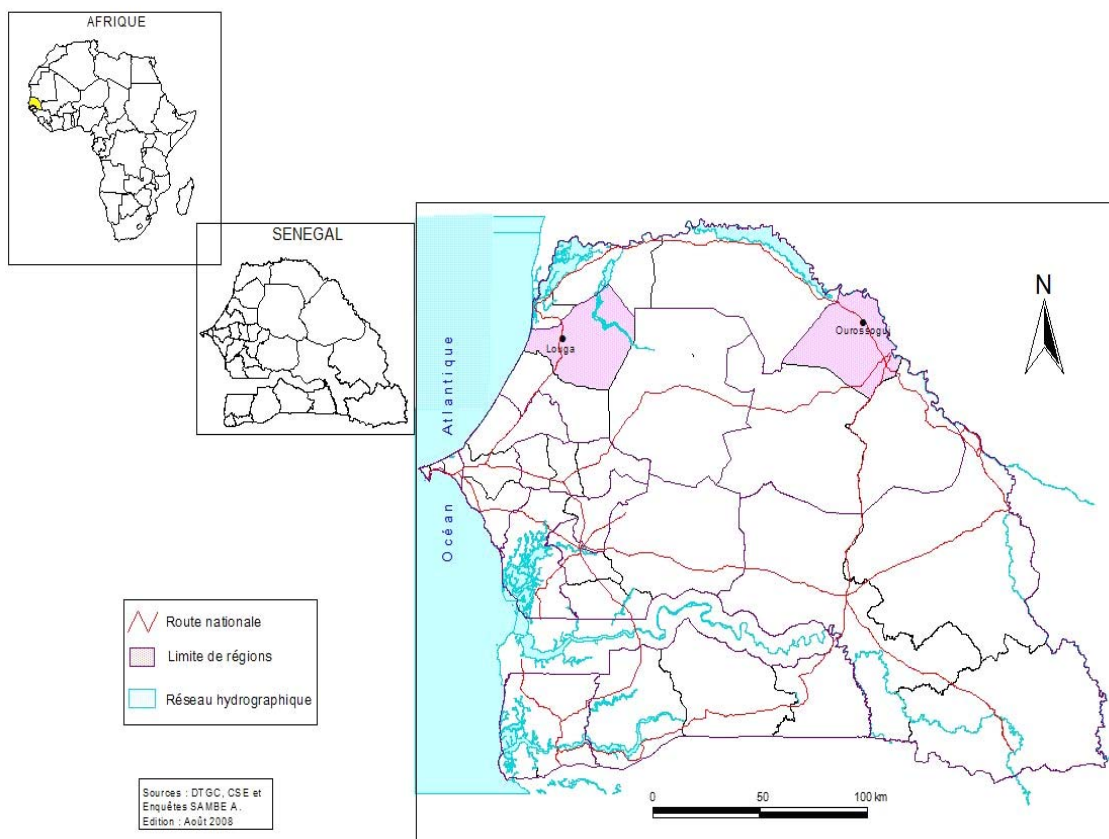
Source: Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de Démographie (ANSD) (2006)

In 1976, 34 per cent of the population of Senegal lived in a small town or city. This rose to 39 per cent in 1988 and 41 per cent in 2002. Between 1976 and 1988, the average annual growth rate of the urban population increased to 3.9 per cent (compared to the urban population in 1976). Urban residents are unevenly distributed among various regions in Senegal. Dakar, with an urban population of 97.2 per cent is the most urbanized region. Ziguinchor, at 46.9 per cent, and Thies, at 42.7 per cent, follow Dakar, while the regions of Fatick (12.6 per cent), Kolda (13.3 per cent) and Matam (13.8 per cent) remain largely rural. However, these general rates mask some important variations within regions. For example, the town of Ourossogui in the Matam Region is experiencing rapid urbanization rates as villages become municipalities.

1.2. A new trend: The rise of small and medium-sized urban centres

After the rapid decline in the groundnut industry, (observed during the 1980s), the growth and development of Senegal's regional capitals stagnated. Today, however, they are experiencing a new lease of life as a result of large scale migration to Italy and the economic benefits that this brings. Senegalese migrants typically come from small and medium-sized urban centres and they invest the money earned overseas back into their home towns. In this way, residents living overseas become a true driving force for change. The towns of Louga and Ourossogui are good examples of urbanization from below. The vibrant and dynamic nature of these cities is a direct result of migration and of the growing commitment by migrants to invest collectively and to become more involved in the management of public affairs.

Map 1: Location of the study sites



Sources: CSE and SAMBE, 2008

Migrants from the Senegal River Valley tend to leave their county in family and ethnic groups creating a strong sense of solidarity. It is this bond that helps them to integrate into their host countries. The strength of this spirit is demonstrated in the shared houses of Senegalese living in host countries. These shared houses are much more than just places to live while working. They are homes which provide a sense of community and are where contributions for the development of towns and villages in Senegal are raised.

Migrants from the Senegal River Valley have invested heavily in community infrastructure and utilities thanks to the dynamic nature of their village development associations (VDAs) and to the depth of their loyalty to their families and ethnic groups. Investments are made in

schools, mosques, health centres and post offices. These amenities improve tax revenues and enable villages to meet the necessary requirements to gain municipal status. Article 3 of the Senegalese Municipal Code authorizes “...any town whose population is at least 1,000 and which has reached a sufficient level of development enabling it to have adequate resources to balance its budget [to] become a municipality.” In the Senegal River Valley, the isolation of the region, its limited communication infrastructure, and the small scale of village economies normally mean that attaining municipal status is impossible. Yet since independence several villages have become municipalities.

The Saint Louis Region has the most municipalities in Senegal. It has 12, 10 of which are located in the Senegal River Valley, mostly in the regions of Podor and Matam, where many migrants come from. There are also many examples from elsewhere in the valley. In 1990, two villages, Ourosogui and Ndioum became municipalities. In 1996, five more communities followed suit: Thilogne, Waoundé, Kanel, Semmes and Golleri. Of the 21 villages in the country which became municipalities after 1990, one-third are located in the Senegal River Valley. A historically important region of migration, this area was the first to feel the financial impact of collective community investment and of small individual investments together with the consequent micro-urbanization these bring (Bredeloup, 1997). Although international migration is key for urban development in areas where it is the main if not the only source of income, this transformation is also facilitated by decentralization.

1.3. Decentralization in Senegal

Decentralization (the establishment of local government) began in Senegal in the eighteenth century in Saint Louis. After Saint Louis, the towns of Goree in 1872, Rufisque in 1880 and Dakar in 1887 followed suit. In 1972, to extend decentralization beyond cities and towns and to bring local government closer to communities and promote wider participation in rural development processes, a second type of local government was created. Law 72-25 of April 19, 1972 provided for the establishment of rural communities. Rather than representing one town these local government authorities represent a several small villages. They have legal status, financial autonomy and are run by an elected council.

Since 1990, the powers of local authorities have been strengthened. The sub-district officer (*sous-préfet*), who since 1972 had been responsible for rural community budgets, has ceased to play this role. A major reform of the institutional framework for decentralization was carried out in 1996 with the Law 96-06 of March 22, 1996. This last reform gave local authorities the power and autonomy necessary to manage the communities they represent. This law transferred authority over nine areas of governance.¹ A third category of local authority was created, namely the “region”. Regions follow the same rules as other local government bodies in that they are made up of an elected council. The region’s executive body is drawn from this council. The three levels of local government are, therefore, regions, towns and rural communities.

In principle, the autonomy given to local governments under decentralization should give them more leeway in the management of local affairs and the ability to respond to local realities. But throughout Senegal, the reality is that the actual transfer of authority is often difficult due to local government’s lack of capacity and resources. However, in Louga and Ourosogui, migration provides real potential for supporting local development. But this will only be realized if strategies to involve migrants to make the best use of their financial transfers, and to improve their levels of participation in the management of local affairs, are developed. Indeed, although the effects of remittances from migrants are noticeable in the

¹ These areas are: environment and the management of natural resources; health, population and social action; youth, sport and recreation; culture; education; planning; local development; urbanization; and housing.

high level of domestic savings and investment in property, migrants' contribution to social change and to local politics is marked by its absence and by local governments' lack of willingness to engage with migrants.

Nevertheless, migrants are positioning themselves as new actors in the political arena, despite a lack of political will, the weight of tradition and the entrenched nature of political power. They are asking questions about the renewal of political leaders and about better ways to govern. In Ourosogui as well as in Louga, migrants are asserting themselves as a new social group that must be taken into account. Even in their absence, migrants are able to influence indirectly the local political agenda through their families' political alliances and votes; and they are becoming more directly involved as political candidates, especially those who have gained experience of working in migrant associations abroad. Migrants are able to position themselves as leaders as a result of their active participation in charities and in development activities: building infrastructure, organizing free health care caravans, etc. Some can use financial means that far outstrip those of locally based candidates for their political campaigns, as is the case of the renowned diamond dealers of Ourosogui.

Decentralization is, therefore, an important factor in the development of small towns and cities. But for many towns in the Senegal River Valley, for the benefits of local government to be realized, strategies for involving migrants in local governance have to be put in place.

2. The case of Ourosogui

The town of Ourosogui is in the north of Senegal in the Matam Region, 420 kilometres from Saint Louis and 693 kilometres from Dakar. The town is located on the edge of the floodplain of the Senegal River, which forms the border between Senegal and Mauritania, and at the entrance to a vast unflooded area called the Diéri. Although it is far from any major urban centre, Ourosogui occupies a strategic position at the crossroads of National Highway 2 (the Diéri Road) and National Highway 3 (the Ferlo Road). Its location has facilitated its development as a transport hub where goods are traded and transited between ports along the river and small towns and cities along the national highways. In addition, because the city is located outside the floodplain, it does not suffer from floods. In contrast, Matam, the regional capital is flooded by the first summer rain.

As for all of northern Senegal, Ourosogui has a Sudano-Sahelian climate. The annual rainfall is very unpredictable and fluctuates around the 400 millimetre mark. Since the early 1970s, there have been several droughts, making rain-fed cultivation risky and the level of the annual flood unpredictable despite efforts to stabilize water flows at the Manantali and Diama dams. The unpredictable nature of farming in the Diéri outweighs agricultural production in more fertile basins (Kolda) and increases the threat of food insecurity. All of these factors have increased rates of migration.

2.1. Migration in Ourosogui

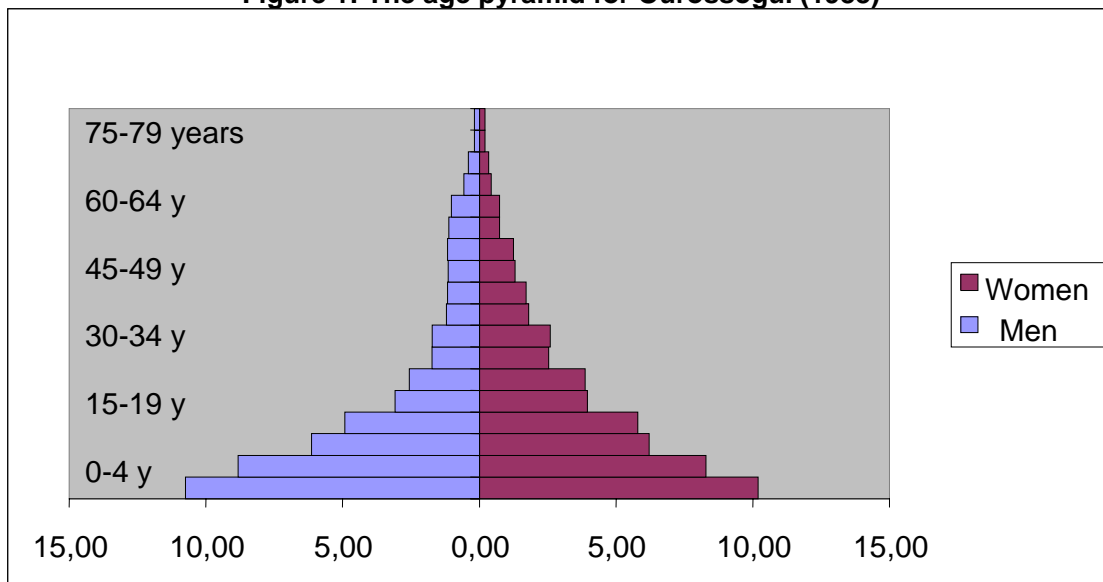
The migration of people from the Senegal River Valley has a relatively long history. Indeed, this region was the first to be affected by desertification and drought and, as a result, departures for other Senegalese cities and abroad began very early on. This is particularly true for people belonging to the artisan caste and those of low social standing. Ourosogui is a product of international migration and the demographic consequences of this migration are very apparent.

2.1.1. Demographic change

The Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat (RGPH) (2002) (General Population and Housing Census) showed that Ourosogui had 13,177 inhabitants. In 2007, the population was estimated at 15,614 (an increase of 18 per cent). This growth is linked to migrant investments, as these boosted the local economy and contributed to the influx of people from more remote areas. As is the case with most settlements in the Senegal River Valley, during the 1970s recurring drought and low agricultural yields exacerbated migration from Ourosogui. The first migrants left for Dakar where they held odd jobs before going to Abidjan to try their luck. The Ivorian capital has long been the preferred destination of Senegalese migrants. From Côte d'Ivoire, some of these migrants went on to work as waiters on ships, or to settle in the Congo and Sierra Leone, and later on in Southern Africa. Some even became diamond dealers, with some success, several of whom came from Ourosogui.

These high levels of migration have a marked impact on ratios between men and women. In 1988, the sex ratio in Ourosogui was 90.8 per cent (that is 90.8 men for every 100 women), compared to an estimated national average of 96.7 per cent, which shows that it was primarily men who migrated. A closer examination provides information on the number of men within certain age groups. From the 15-19 year-olds to the 45-49 year-olds, the number of women was much higher than for men. These groups correspond to the ages when migrants are overseas. They typically depart before the age of 20 and return at about 50.

Figure 1: The age pyramid for Ourosogui (1988)



Source: Sall (2004). Pyramid derived from Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat (RGPH) data (1988).

Investments by migrants have made the city of Ourosogui very attractive. Since the late 1990s, there has been an internal flow of people coming from the central-west of Senegal. The arrival of this tight community of Wolof people reflects the economic strength of the construction sector, which has been triggered by migrant investment. These Wolof newcomers are particularly active in the building materials trade and they are attracted by jobs in the construction sector: masonry, metal joinery, cabinet-making, etc. In turn, these new residents are the main customers in the property rental market, contributing to the emergence of a demand for rental housing in Ourosogui. This sector did not exist before their arrival and makes investment even more attractive. It is no coincidence, therefore, that

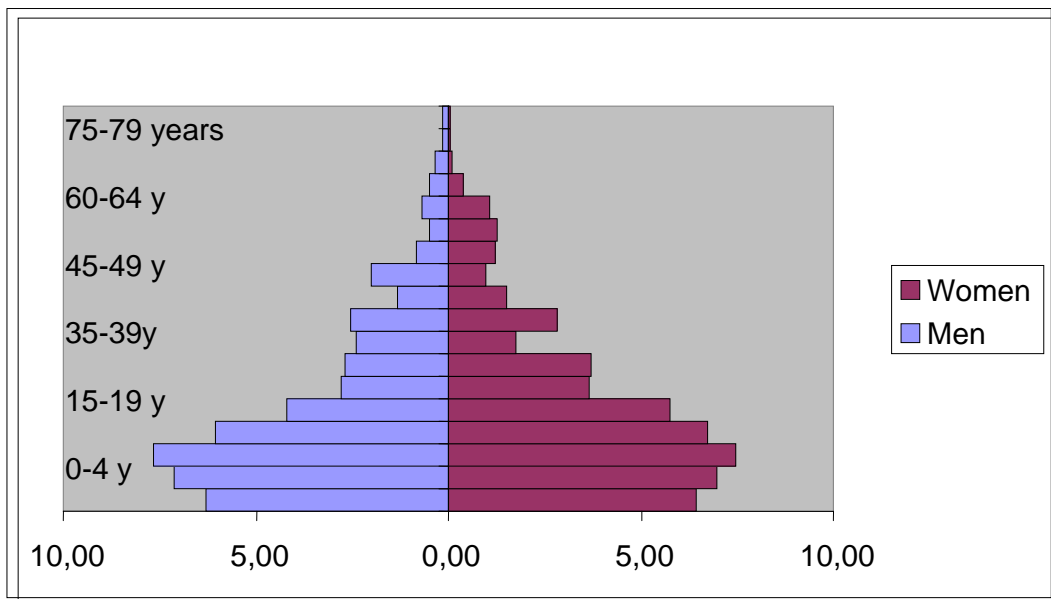
Modern, the district in Ourosogui where migrants have built rental houses, is also called *Legel djolfoubé* literally “Wolof district”.

The arrival of people from within Senegal can be seen clearly when comparing the population pyramids for 1988 and 2002 (Figures 1 and 2). The causes for the change in the sex ratio can be interpreted in two ways: either it is due to a decline in the high levels of male migration, or to an increase in the number of women migrating from Ourosogui. But male migration has increased tremendously over the past years and, unlike Louga, the migration of women from Ourosogui is still limited.

The reason for the change in the sex ratio is the arrival of men (merchants, labourers, freelance service sectors workers and also civil servants) from the interior of Senegal. The sex ratio curve in Figure 3 reaches its peak at around the age of 50, which corresponds to the age of retirement from international migration and a return to the homeland. The existing presence of men of the same generation who came there to work explains the overrepresentation of men in these age groups.

These new arrivals have an impact not only on Ourosogui’s demographics but also on its economy. Despite their recent arrival, the immigrant community has become indispensable. They play an important role in local political power, which was dominated by established residents. These residents are a far from homogeneous group, as political and social power is marked by social obligations and a strong caste-based hierarchy.

Figure 2: The age pyramid for Ourosogui (2002)



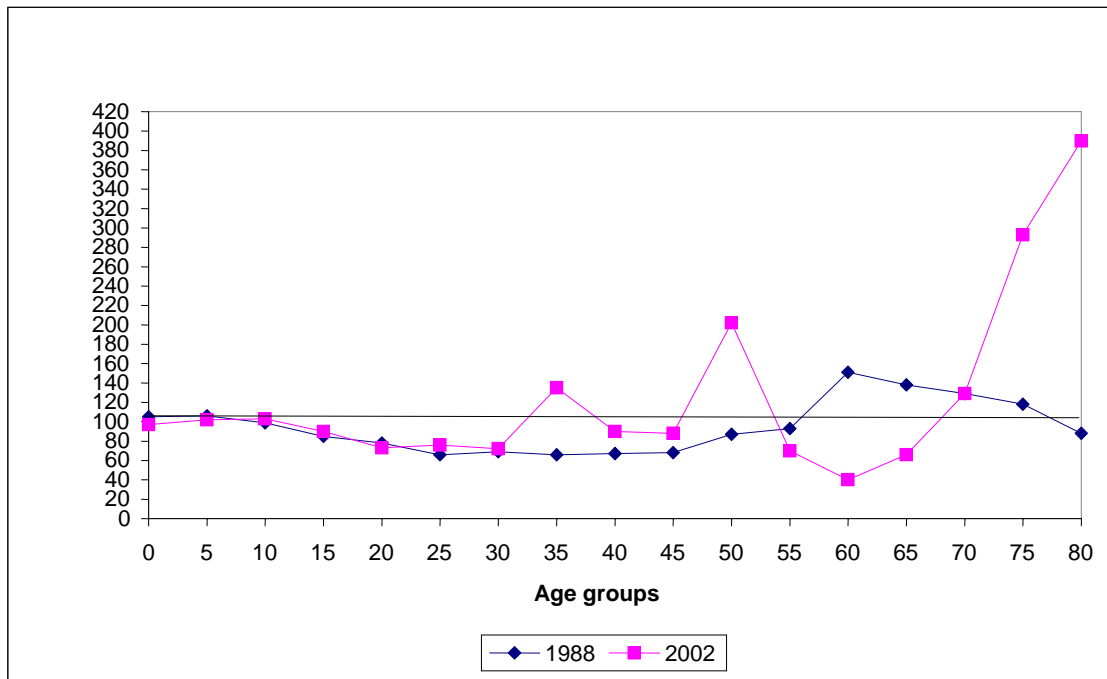
Source: Pyramid derived from Recensement Général de la Population et de l' Habitat (RGPH) data (2002).

Table 2: Sex ratio of the population of Ourossogui by age group (1988 and 2002)

Age group	Ratio of men to women (1988)	Ratio of men to women (2002)
0-4	1.0535	0.9720
5-9	1.0604	1.0215
10-14	0.9874	1.0292
15-19	0.8490	0.9026
20-24	0.7786	0.7326
25-29	0.6612	0.7592
30-34	0.6851	0.7157
35-39	0.6626	1.3562
40-44	0.6695	0.8957
45-49	0.6788	0.8793
50-54	0.8690	2.0227
55-59	0.9250	0.7000
60-64	1.5106	0.4000
65-69	1.3829	0.6597
70-74	1.2857	1.2857
75-79	1.1818	2.9333
80+	0.8846	3.9000

Source: Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de Démographie (ANSD) Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat (2002).

Figure 3: Sex ratio curves by age group, Ourossogui (1988 and 2002)



Source: Sall (2004). Data from the Recensement Général de la Population et de l' Habitat (RGPH) (1988 and 2002).

2.1.2. A very hierarchical and unequal society

Social organization in Ourosogui is based on two factors: the caste system and whether or not you belong to one of the founding families. The caste system applies to all Haalpulaar (people who speak the Pular or Peul language) from the Senegal River Valley, and comprises a ruling caste, freeman caste, artisan caste and servant caste. The structure is so rigid that movement from a lower caste to an upper caste is almost impossible. Migration and its economic gains can facilitate social mobility for members of lower castes, but even then, examples of this kind of social progression are few when compared to the other areas of high migration in Senegal.

The second factor is membership of one of the six original families who founded Ourosogui: the Dembéré nabé, the Diabidi amanabé, the Boubou Oumar, the Fulbe Yirlabe, the Diadiabé and the Niangniangbé. Until 1990, when the Ourosogui became a municipality, the first three families were royal families. It was from among these families that the village chief, the *elimaan*, was chosen. The Fulbe Yirlabe and the Diadiabé voted for the chief, while the Niangniangbé were responsible for enthroning him.

2.1.3. The political context: between continuity and change

Before it became a municipality in 1990, a political consensus, known locally as “Cartal Gotal”, literally “one single card”, prevailed. In other words, the whole village used to vote for one party, the Socialist Party, in presidential and legislative elections. This political control was called into question when the town gained municipal status. Now anyone is able to run for office, even if you do not come from one of the three former ruling families. In fact, a migrant who made a fortune by trading in diamonds and precious stones ran for and was elected to the mayor’s office. The economic and financial independence of returned migrants has opened up the political game.

2.2. Factors supporting migration

2.2.1. A strong cultural heritage of mobility

One of the factors influencing people’s willingness to migrate is a perceived culture of migration in Ourosogui, expressed through myth and folklore. The Fergo myth describes the historical mobility of people from the Fouta, an area in the Senegal River Valley. It is believed that the inhabitants of Ourosogui came from eastern Senegal, settling initially in Mauritania before crossing back into Senegal over the Senegal River. The people of Ourosogui, therefore, have a long tradition and history of migration. This Fergo myth is also very symbolic, as it is generally associated with the migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina.

Another cultural reference encouraging migration comes from a sermon. El Hadji Omar Tall, a great religious leader, undertook a major campaign of Islamization in Mali and many other west African areas. He reportedly said to the people of the Fouta: “Fuutankooobe, pere ndarjon”, which translates as “People of Fouta, migrate if you want to succeed”. The cultural and historical value placed on migration among the populations of the Senegal River Valley is, therefore, very strong.

2.2.2. Economic factors

The decline in agricultural production has made international migration a key means of economic and social advancement. Agriculture was the traditional foundation of the local economy but at the moment, international migration brings about more rapid upward mobility, making farming and land ownership less attractive. In the past, marginalized families had no other choice but to work as agricultural and manual labourers. Today, however, social status is dependent on the size of one’s real estate investments (Photo 1).

Photo 1: Construction of individual rental apartments



Source: Sall (2002).

2.2.3. *Social and psychological factors*

A model of economic success, the migrant is an important social actor. Indeed, for lower castes, succeeding as a migrant allows them to exact a kind of revenge. Although it is not possible to move from a lower to a higher caste, success in migration shows that economic independence can at least somewhat undo the hierarchical relations between people at the bottom of the social ladder and those at the top. Women interviewed in a group discussion in Ourosogui have stated that even if migrants had succeeded economically they would still be at the bottom of the social scale.

2.3. The challenges of migration

In Ourosogui, international migration and urbanization are interrelated. Migration has shaped the city on many levels: architectural, administrative, economic, social, cultural and, in recent years, political.

2.3.1. *Borrowed architecture and a vibrant city*

Revenue from the diamond trade was used to construct permanent buildings in Ourosogui. The permanence of buildings is symbolic as it eliminates the uncertainty inherent in living in mud houses during the rainy season, in addition to being a sign of success. Migrants who have succeeded in the diamond trade boast that their investments have transformed their community. Says one migrant: *“In 1976, I built a villa for 20 million West African Francs (US\$ 41,494) in Windé. For this, I sent for a contractor to come from Dakar and carry out the work. In 1980, I was the first to have a television set and a video. I bought a generator for 1,650,000 West African Francs (US\$ 3,423).”*

Ourosogui used to be a small village made up of two neighbourhoods, Windé and Mango. Migrants' investments in modern housing have been so high that the neighbourhood of Mango has been renamed Zaire District, as a tribute to the country where migrants accumulated large profits from the diamond trade. Bredeloup (1997) states: *“In the late 1960s, citizens of Ourosogui began to reinvest the money earned in the diamond trade. Large houses with brick walls coated with cement have replaced or compete with mud huts, and new architectural styles have appeared. The diamond dealers have actively contributed to the increasing population density of a new area renamed ‘Zaire District’.”*

This strong demand for residential land has prompted city authorities to carry out large-scale development projects. Migrants have taken advantage of land development schemes initiated by successive municipal teams to secure several plots of land, build on them and lease them out, especially in the Modern District where the modern nature of the building materials used has given the neighbourhood its name. There is a contrast in style and

stature between the modern buildings constructed by migrants and traditional homes. As noted by hostel manager HB: “*Eighty per cent of Modern District has been built by migrants. Other people also came to build houses here because the city is a crossroads. Here we have everything you can have in a modern city, banks and everything.*”

Map 2: Map of Ourossogui



Source: Map extracted from thesis of Mohamadou Sall

2.3.2. *At the centre of the region's economic challenges*

The economic effects of migration can be analyzed on several levels. At the household level, remittances sent by migrants cover daily expenses (food, health care, school fees, clothing) and ceremonies (weddings, naming ceremonies, funerals). Overall, households with one or more relatives abroad, particularly in developed countries (Europe, the United States), have a standard of living that is much higher than households who have no relative abroad. In this regard, SD stated that “...*there are real differences. Families with migrants working abroad are much more comfortable. I often say that ‘abroad’ feeds Fouta.*” This comparison shows the precariousness and the economic vulnerability of households who do not receive remittances. Living conditions in Ourossogui are becoming more and more dependent on external sources.

Managing money in migrant households is complex, involving the person living abroad, a merchant living in Ourossogui and the family. There has to be a great deal of trust between the person abroad and the merchant and this trust is largely a function of the merchant's financial resources, which act as a kind of insurance in case money goes missing. Migrants send money to merchants at regular intervals, who keep it and give the daily “food expenditure” to the household, that is to say, rice, oil and a sum of money to buy fish and/or meat, vegetables and other ingredients.

At the same time, the merchant receives an interest free loan, which provides cash flow for his business. The merchant AD explains the relationship: *“All migrants have a relationship with a merchant. For most part, they entrust them to manage their homes because, in general, it is women and children who are left behind. They prefer us to manage household expenditure and at the end of each month we assess the needs for the following month, we communicate this to them and they send us what is required.”*

International migration has contributed to the decline in dependency on subsistence food crops, by supporting the emergence of non-agricultural activities in rural areas. This is demonstrated by the fact that occasional flooding can bring water and fertile silt deposits to the agricultural basins, but the inhabitants of Ourosogui, the largest landowners in the area, simply leave their fields fallow unless they find sharecroppers. For people whose economy used to be based on food crops and who, in the past, were ready to die for their land, this attitude is very telling. The city of Ourosogui has grown from the collective investments made by migrants. The city's economic activity is now based on remittances and on construction, and it has taken economic leadership away from Matam, the region's city.

2.3.3. *Demographic, social and cultural change*

As discussed above, migration significantly alters the sex ratios of the population by age group, and the frequency and timing of fertility, because migrants do not live with their wives. Because of the prolonged absence of husbands, women often take on the role of household head. In Matam Region, the percentage of female-headed households is 22 per cent, compared to the national average of 17.1 per cent. Ourosogui reflects this situation. In a society where a person's role is largely defined by their gender, migration opens a small window of opportunity for changing the status quo. This has put women to a kind of test. Many successfully manage their households, giving them confidence in their dealings outside of the home. Their financial trustworthiness and discipline are recognized in the associations they lead. According to MDL, a retired migrant: *“Female leadership is very well regarded, especially in finance, women manage better than men [...] Migration contributes to the advancement of women.”* In the host countries, changes in the roles between men and women happen more quickly.

Migration can alter social barriers. A new-found tolerance of change, for example allowing a person of a non-noble caste to hold responsibilities within village governing bodies, may be related to migration. But the hierarchy remains and has not been fundamentally challenged. When answering a question about the caste system, MD answered bluntly: *“Here we have a social hierarchy (tooroobe/ñeeñybe; upper caste/lower caste). And whatever your wealth, you will always be what your parents were. Even if someone from a lower caste invests and succeeds in life that does not prevent people from always keeping this picture of him.”* This testimony is essential as it demonstrates that caste still defines a person. In practice, however, some changes are taking place.

Migration promotes openness and allows one to compare local values and norms to those of other cultures. One of the most visible examples of this in Ourosogui is marriage to foreign women. Many migrants have married in other African countries (Congo DRC, former Zaire, Zambia, etc.), and sometimes they return to Ourosogui with their wives. A regional and city councillor acknowledges that: *“Parents tolerate their sons returning with a white, a Congolese or Zairian wife. There are already some tremendous social changes; there is an obvious openness to other ethnic groups, other identities.”*

2.3.4. *Migration and health*

Migrants live in West African countries (Côte d'Ivoire), Central Africa (Rwanda, Burundi, Central African Republic, the two Congos, Gabon, etc.) or Southern Africa (Zambia, Angola), which have significantly higher rates of HIV/AIDS than Senegal. This puts them at risk of infection. Some migrants who carry the virus go back to Senegal and infect their wives.

Other migrants who have contracted AIDS come back home to die. As HL notes: “*There are also other effects, especially when migrants leave their wives and families behind. They sometimes return home with diseases.*” The leverate system, whereby the brother marries a migrant’s wife after his death, continues the chain of infection. Similarly, according to sororate practice, after the death of his wife, a migrant can marry her younger sister, thus also lengthening the chain of infection. But leverate and sororate practices have significantly declined.

Box 1: The fight against HIV/AIDS

The fight against AIDS: red alert in Matam

Every week, the hospital in Ourossoqui, Matam Region, detects four new people infected with HIV. This shows the urgency of the epidemic. In recent years, HIV/AIDS has been a real public health problem. According to data collected at health facilities, the situation has become alarming in the Matam Region. Up until now, Matam does not seem to have benefited from the multiple campaigns to fight HIV/AIDS. Indeed, in the city of Ourossoqui, the commercial centre, no concrete prevention initiative has been conducted in the last three years. In an area inhabited by a population deeply rooted in their traditions, the contraction of HIV/AIDS is still regarded as one’s fate and it could only happen to “frivolous” men.

During the 1970s, a period of severe drought, many people in the prime of life migrated to other cities, such as Dakar, before going to Europe or to other African countries. Migration is a gateway for viruses. After several years abroad, some migrants who were infected with HIV/AIDS came home, married and infected their wives. Dr Gueye explains further: “*Many men are infected with HIV and, regardless of the existence or the results of screening tests, parents order their girls to marry. These girls are totally unaware of their new husband’s medical history. For the past 10 years, polygamy has contributed greatly to the spread of HIV. Several times, I have seen HIV-positive men married to four women. Imagine, when they leave Senegal and return to their host countries, they often leave behind pregnant wives, whose babies come into the world infected.*”

Migration, with the money it requires and the long absence of husbands, has also led to the “hidden” prostitution of married women. Some of these women, who are infected, lengthen the chain of HIV/AIDS transmission. The general practitioner at Ourossoqui hospital explains that: “*Migrants stay abroad for 6–10 years without sending money to their wives, because life abroad is often very hard. One has to acknowledge that the district health authority, not the hospital, has conducted awareness campaigns in connection with the National Alliance against AIDS (NCA). Extension agents have been trained to convey the message. But buying condoms is still a headache for people.*”

Source: Adapted from Aly Bandel Niang, *Le Soleil*, 6 July 2002.

2.4. Migration and new forms of local governance

Local government’s relationship with migrants is a central element of decision-making in Ourossoqui. More and more, migrants who have understood that financial resources are not enough for power at the local level are seeking elected positions through cultivating political allies and mobilizing networks.

2.4.1. Two authorities, two legitimacies, two different visions

In Ourossoqui, there are two different powers with two different legitimacies, which are more often than not in competition:

- municipal power is enshrined in the laws and regulations of Senegal and derives its legitimacy from the vote; and

- migrants' legitimacy comes from financial resources and from their efforts to promote economic and social development. This legitimacy is not formal and although still powerful, it has lost some of its former glory because the Village Development Association (ADO), which migrants helped to create, works in slow motion.

Using their different legitimacies, each of these actors is claiming a role in the management of local affairs. The line between these two groups is not watertight as they are interlinked. So far, Ourosogui's two elected mayors have been first, the brother of wealthy migrants and second, a returned migrant himself. Migrants are a specific part of civil society, a counter-balance, standing up to the abuses of power and mistakes made by elected officials. The relationship between these two groups is, therefore, slightly tense, as highlighted by SB, treasurer of a grassroots association: *"Migrants and local officials have different visions. Most of our elected officials are illiterate."* SD, a former migrant, states that: *"Sometimes, they believe that migrants interfere in the management of the city. Elected officials blame migrants for using the city to raise money abroad [...] Of course, there are tensions. Because there are those who think that migrants invest only crumbs compared to what is granted through decentralized cooperation."*² But in fact, conflicts between local government officials and migrants are linked to deeper tensions concerning the management of the municipality. Some elected officials suspect that migrants have hidden political ambitions, especially in the later part of their migration cycle. A few returned migrants, who have acquired respected positions in the community, foresee their election as mayor as the final fulfilment and achievement of their lives.

2.4.2. Returnees: political ambitions and economic power

Before Ourosogui became a municipality with an elected governing body, migrants did not and could not have political ambitions. Having succeeded in diversifying their economic activities first in Dakar (in land and property), they then extended their activities to Ourosogui, investing in land, property, bakeries, hotels, etc. But the continued success of their businesses required a certain level of political power, which posed a problem: they did not belong to one of the three ruling families. To address this, migrants decided to support a process of municipalization in their village. In his article on migration and exclusion, Sall (2008) highlights migrants' political motivations: *"They are investors in houses, modern bakeries, hotels, etc. These investments are often a stepping stone to taking on a leading role in managing local affairs. However, traditional authorities' tight control over power explains the efforts made by these returnees and their families to transform their village into a municipality. Indeed, economic and social capital won the office of mayor in 1990. The municipality has so far been led by mayors who are not from the traditional elite."*

This analysis reinforces Sylvie Bredeloup's thesis (1997) on the motivations behind former migrants' desire to go into politics: *"It is not anyone who can legitimately engage in politics in Fouta. One must be from a family of noble origin, have the support of many protégés and the support of a large number of voters. Sufficient financial or technical capital changes ballot results. Clearly, the B's family fortune, accumulated primarily through migration, played a significant role in the election of one of them as mayor [...] If a political candidate is successful, he can use this to his advantage. Access to markets, agricultural and urban land may become easier."*

Directly or indirectly, migrants participate in local politics. The first elected mayor did not migrate, but two of his brothers were diamond dealers. The second elected mayor is a former migrant who made his fortune by trading in diamonds and precious stones. His election was the result of a strategic alliance with intellectuals from Ourosogui who were

² Decentralized Cooperation means direct relationships between Senegalese and foreign municipalities. It is built by partnerships, cooperation programmes, exchange visits, and financial or expertise support.

living in Dakar. These intellectuals are believed to have started the initiative to elect a different mayor, and when they saw a way of achieving this, they supported the former migrant's mayoral campaign.

Migrants also fund political movements. HL explains: "*Migrants can use their financial and economic strength to enter politics. They can also support politicians who have no resources for their campaign.*" Misunderstandings between politicians and migrants do not preclude alliances. Politicians do work with wealthy migrants. For DC, a returnee: "*Any person involved in politics here is related to migrants. Their role is recognized by the people. Associations are seen as levers for local development. Directly or through strategic alliances and sponsorship of people on the ground, migrants have some influence on the choice of mayor. They hope this influence will have some bearing when their candidate is elected, either to secure their property or to access other sources of power or sometimes to ensure the implementation of local development projects.*"

2.5. Migration and local development

2.5.1. Projects and development activities

In the Senegal River Valley, migrants have invested in social sectors such as health, education, provision of drinking water, remittances during periods of drought, and financial assistance for mosques, etc. The Association for the Development of Ourosogui, along with the Thilogne Development Association (TAD), are among the most famous village development associations in Senegal. These migrant associations have stepped in where the State has failed. State investment has historically been concentrated in the larger cities and in the central–western regions of Senegal and has been largely absent from the Senegal River Valley. Migrant investment, therefore, has fuelled modernization and has contributed to local development. Investment and work in the city of Ourosogui has provided an example and has revitalized other remote areas in Senegal. It has also helped to reduce the impact of the collapse of the river transportation industry, and the crisis this brought to the cities along the Senegal River. Situated at a crossroads, Ourosogui has emerged as a new centre for regional development with corresponding benefits to the region's hinterland.

Migrants have collaborated with associations based in France to develop programmes for social development and health in Ourosogui. One example is Fouta Health Association, which organizes an annual health caravan (Box 2).

Box 2: Construction of health centres, schools and maternity wards

Migrants support development from afar

Migration is a source of pride for the people of Matam Region. Each year, migrants from this area invest several billion West African Francs in the development of their region. The Matam Region has always been an area with high rates of migration. Today, however, it is difficult to determine the exact number of people in European, African and even American countries, because the flow of young and old migrants grows each year. Their contribution to the development of the Matam Region is undeniable. Most health centres and maternity wards have been built thanks to their financial support.

The closest comparable example is the municipality of Thilogne, which is located a little over 50 miles from Matam. Here, 80 per cent of investment in the municipality has been made by migrants. This year, they have completely refurbished the health centre and maternity ward. New classrooms have been built in primary schools and in the city's high school, and the construction of a new training centre for women will enable women to undertake income-generating activities and help finance small projects.

Cont over

“Without migration, Fouta would become a desert” says Almamy Bocoum, one of the oldest local returnees who lived in France for more than 40 years. The first sponsor and initiator of the Thilogne International Festival adds that *“...the primary source of external and internal migration is Fouta, whose men and women have greatly contributed to the advancement of the region, by investing heavily and positively influencing people’s daily lives.”* It is clear that in this municipality of more than 12,000 people, migrants play a significant role as there are at least two overseas workers in each family.

Despite the benefits, migrants can experience real difficulties. Returnees to Fouta can face some enormous challenges. The MP for Senegalese expatriates, Amadou Ciré Sall of the PDS (the Senegalese Democratic Party), explains that there is no real policy for dialogue among the different people working for the development of the Matam Region: *“We are fortunate to have migrants from Matam and political leaders. We need to sit together around a table and talk about the future of the region”* suggests the honourable MP. He adds that his message is meant for all leading figures, in particular the Regional Council Chairman who comes from his village, Nguidjilone. *“Everyone knows that today it is the councils that govern the regions and if we want progress, we must bring together all the people involved.”* To do this, the MP asks that an inventory be done, and then depending on the results, an action plan be drawn up to examine issues related to health, education and other vital sectors. He believes the Matam Region is a strategic area with significant economic potential in handicrafts and agriculture, which is just waiting to be exploited. The Liberal MP says that he has noticed that *“...this cooperation is lacking and that is unfortunate.”*

Source: Amadou Issa Kane, *WalFadjri*, 10 September 2008

Box 3: The Fouta Health Association

French doctors in Ourosogui: hundreds of operations and examinations

The fourth Fouta health caravan was a true success. Thanks to the Association of Migrants from Matam Region, more than two dozen medical specialists visited the Ourosogui hospital and the Matam health centre. Over seven days, 3,637 consultations and 440 operations were carried out by the medical team. The people of Matam were very eager to welcome them, and as is the case every year, the number of visiting French doctors increased. During this fourth health caravan, there were 29 highly respected specialists consisting of ophthalmologists, gynaecologists, ear nose and throat specialists, dentists, general practitioners, etc.

A few days before the team arrived, there were already many patients at Ourosogui hospital. And surprisingly this year, there were more Malians and Mauritians than Senegalese patients. Fatoumata Ould Seydi, a lady we met the day before the start of the caravan, told us: *“We heard late last year that toubab (foreign) doctors highly specialized in their different fields, left Europe to come to Ourosogui to treat patients for free; that was incredible. This is why I left Nouakchott where I had taken my son who has eye troubles to come here. But I can assure you that you cannot imagine how many of my compatriots have left Mauritania to cross the river.”* Due to overcrowding in the hospital wards, the nearby shades strung from trees have become make-do shelters. One can easily distinguish the 700 Mauritians by their tents. In their enthusiasm, some housewives have improvised restaurants, while some unemployed people have rushed in to open *tanganas* (small restaurants).

Cont over

Four operating theatres were opened up for free, and patients were admitted to different departments. Most of the doctors are department heads at the Poissy hospital in France, as Mamadou Diaw, the president of the Fouta Health Association told us: “*This caravan will cost the Senegalese living in France more than 23 million West African Francs (US\$ 47,781). This money was raised from membership dues, as all the members are from villages in Matam, from dance parties and from other activities organized by our compatriots.*”

According to Malé Fall, Chairman of the ORCAM (Regional Organization for the Coordination of Activities in Matam): “*This is an important programme. In addition to government initiatives, this gesture has brought us some relief. I am sure that many of the patients do not have the means to go and see a specialist in Dakar and they want the caravans to continue.*” Ourosogui hospital director, Mame Alassane Seck, said that the Fouta Health Association should be an example for other Senegalese nationals abroad and for other sectors such as education or food security.

The hospital, which had spent 842,000 West African Francs (US\$ 1,757), gained 5.1 million West African Francs (US\$ 10,580) generated by consultations fees after the caravan. As a celebration prior to the departure of the French doctors, a dinner was offered by the hospital at the Ourosogui military camp and a *dance was organized* in a nightclub in Matam. People are now looking forward to next year’s caravan.

Source: Aly Bandel Niang, *Le Soleil*, 6 March 2004

This health caravan is an example of migrants mobilizing and finding partners in their host countries to work for the benefit of the communities they come from. Migrants and their associations play an intermediary role, establishing a bridge between Senegal and France. Health caravans quite often encourage highly skilled migrants to participate in the dissemination of knowledge in their countries of origin.

In addition to altruistic reasons, migrants’ involvement in charitable activities can be instrumental to fulfilling political ambitions. One of the main organizers of the Fouta health caravan is a migrant worker living in France. He was suspected of having hidden ambitions to be the mayor of Matam, and this proved to be the case as he was elected mayor in the March 2009 local elections despite residing in France. His election fuelled the distrust local political leaders have towards migrants and the charitable activities they undertake.

2.5.2. Decentralized cooperation

Migrants play an important role in facilitating cooperation between the municipalities of their home town and their host cities. The most important collaboration currently underway is between Ourosogui and the Ardeche (France), which was established through the Local Ourosogui Development (PLD) initiative and which has funded many projects at the local level, such as the health post and the new market.

Box 4: The new market in Ourosogui: an example of decentralized cooperation

After 10 years, Ourosogui market was officially opened in June 5, 2007

Ten years ago, ADOS (the Association for the Development of Ourosogui) and the municipality discussed the possibility of building a new market. Ten years is both a long and a short time in view of the various challenges. Market traders had to be brought together in an association so that the city could deal with a body that represented their diversity. The construction of the market also had to meet building regulations, and the allocation of space within the market had to be done transparently. Finally, it was essential that the necessary funding be in place.

Cont over

The project brought together several partners to support ADOS and the municipality, namely Rhône Alpes, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Senegalese Agency for Municipal Development, who all contributed towards a total budget of 500,000 Euros (US\$ 679,810). Today, the market is totally different from how it used to be. The removal of all the temporary buildings that lined the sidewalks along the main road was something quite unthinkable a few months ago. More than 600 people, shopkeepers, petty traders and runners work in the 6,000 square metre market, which is now equipped with 380 stalls, 51 shops and 83 kiosks. The municipality manages the market, and collects taxes and maintains the infrastructure. The money collected broadly covers operating costs and will help to increase the municipal budget.

Source: The Association for the Development of Ourosogui Bulletin No 61, March/October 2007.

Migrants fostered the link between Ourosogui and the Ardeche, through partnership between ADO (Association for the Development of Ourosogui) and the Ardeche, which led to the creation of ADOS (Drôme-Ardèche Ourosogui Senegal). This has become an international NGO, with the national NGO headquarters located in the regional capital of Matam, where the association works directly with local leaders.

2.5.3. *Migration without local development: the tip of the iceberg*

The fact that international migration is perceived as the only path to success has led to the devaluation of agro-pastoral activities in the region, the backbone of the local economy. This means that domestic economies are heavily dependent on remittances and, as such, international migration can lead to social exclusion. The acquisition of land and property is a good example. Migrants buy parcels to build rental accommodation, which can undermine the objectives of land development projects that aim to decongest the old crowded neighbourhoods of Windé and Mango. Indeed, most people who have been allotted plots of land in the Modern District sell their land for short-term, speculative gain to traders who re-sell the land to migrants from Ourosogui or its neighbouring villages. Thus, traditional neighbourhoods remain overcrowded and congested, exacerbating the sanitation and hygiene problems.

The consequence of this land speculation is the gradual disappearance of the Diéri farmlands and the disappearance of land along municipal boundaries, leading to tensions with the neighbouring rural community of Ogo and villages such as Thiambès. AD states: “*I worry for future generations to come. In only five years, the entire city has been restructured and parcelled off. Migrants bear a large responsibility for this situation.*”

2.5.4. *Conclusions*

Frameworks and spaces for migrants and other stakeholders to participate in local development must be created. Migrant associations certainly offer the opportunity to participate in the management of local affairs, but people often join these associations because they want to make tangible contributions rather than participate in and monitor governance issues. A reduction in the tensions between migrants and local officials would enable them to work together and pool resources for local development. But for this to happen, migrants must be represented on municipal bodies and, despite their absence, they could have representation on the council. Migrants are represented on national bodies and they can get overseas voting rights for presidential and legislative elections. They should certainly be able to vote in local elections in areas where more than one-tenth of the population is abroad. In the opinion of returned migrant BK: “*Imagine for instance a councillor who is also a migrant, this would give a big boost to decentralized cooperation and benefit his community.*”

International migration enhances the attractiveness of small and medium-sized cities through housing development and a growth in the rental housing sector. Rural migrants from surrounding areas come to the city in search of jobs and incomes, thereby increasing local financial resources, social innovation and highlighting political and governance issues.

3. Case study of Louga

Louga is the capital of Louga Region and is located 200 kilometres north of Dakar, about 30 miles from the Atlantic coast. It is at the junction of National Road II and the east-west regional road between Potou and Linguere, and is crossed by the rail network. Because of its strategic location in terms of transport, historically Louga has played an important role in regional trade. The city covers a vast sandy and gently hilly plain, with the potential to expand in all directions. The only obstacles to this expansion are municipal boundaries.

Louga's relatively flat geographical site does not require any levelling work. The sandy soil is coarse and highly permeable, which facilitates drainage, and is of low agricultural value due to high levels of erosion. The climate is Sahelian, with high temperatures, averaging 28°C, and large amounts of sunlight (approximately 8.5 hours/day). Annual rainfall ranges between 200 and 500 millimetres, and varied between 250 and 300 millimetres in the last five years. The rainy season usually lasts three months (July, August, September), while the rest of the year is marked by a long dry season (October to June). The distribution of rainfall is very unpredictable from one year to the next, as shown in Table 3.

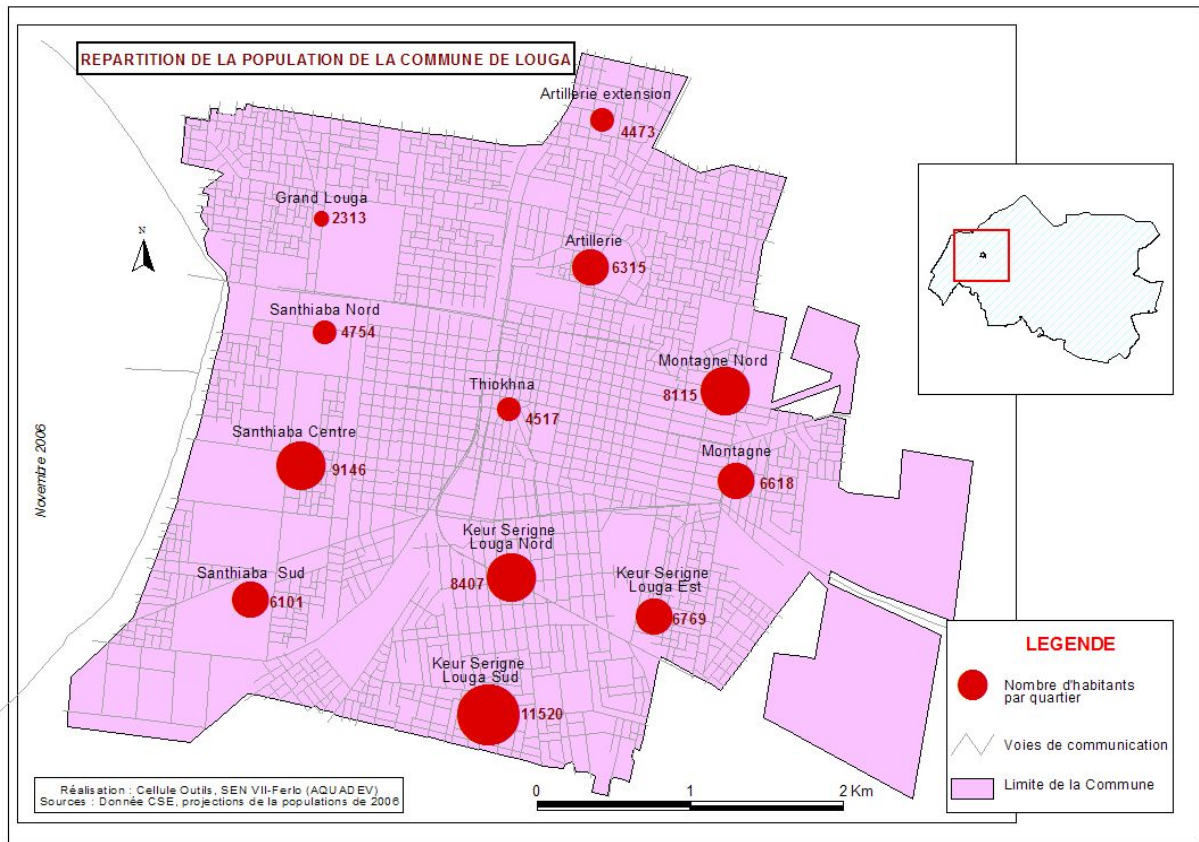
Table 3: Average rainfall in Louga

Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Mm rainfall	334.2	274.8	270.1	348.3	296.8	330.2	462.1	426.1	383.3	249.3	352
Number of days	21	21	24	23	22	24	30	31	28	20	27

Source: Direction Régionale du Développement Rural, Louga (2004).

Access to groundwater is very good, with a well recharge rate of up to 250 cubic metres per hour, and it is of good quality (salinity is less than 0.5 g/litre) despite its depth (60 to 100 metres). Surface water is non-existent apart from a few ponds in the rainy season.

Map 3: Population distribution in Louga



Source: CSE AQUADEV Louga (2006).

In terms of demographics, widespread drought led to a massive increase in the town's population, which reached 33,400 in 1976, the year Louga Region was established. Louga also experienced an urban growth rate of 4.7 per cent, which was well above the 1976 national average of 2.7 per cent. The city's population rose to 38,900 inhabitants in 1978, an increase of 8.2 per cent. This urban growth was the result of two combined factors: rural-urban migration and high fertility rates. The 1988 General Census of Population and Housing (GPHC) put the population of the city of Louga at 53,429, a growth rate of 3.2 per cent between 1976 and 1988.

Table 4: Population estimates of the Municipality of Louga 2007–2010

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010
Population	82,613	84,529	86,490	88,497

Source: Regional Service of Statistics and Demography of Louga (2004).

Like other cities in Senegal, the population of Louga is predominantly young. In 1988, children under the age of 15 made up 47.5 per cent of the population. The sex ratio is marked by a predominance of women over men (53.6 per cent against 46.4 per cent in 1988), a result of male out-migration. The economic consequences of the severe drought, including unemployment and underemployment, have led to migration first to major urban centres in Senegal and then to foreign countries. At the same time, people from surrounding villages relocated to Louga because they were hit hard by the deteriorating climate and the depletion of soils as a result of groundnut agriculture.

3.1. Urban sprawl

Several historical administrative reforms have meant that Louga has been a provincial capital, a district capital and an intermediate municipality during colonialism period. Today, it is a fully fledged municipality. The town's current boundaries, which cover an area of 1,800 hectares, were set by Decree No 7840 of 2 November 1954. They have expanded considerably as a result of the land developments undertaken to accommodate the large influx of people. Urban expansion has crossed municipal boundaries, encroaching on surrounding village land. This is a source of recurring conflict between the municipality and the rural community of Nguidila, which encircles the city. Today, the municipal boundaries cover an area of approximately 3,035.25 hectares, that is to say an increase in surface area of 75 per cent. The municipality of Louga is divided into 12 neighbourhoods, of which 11 are administrative districts, plus Grand Louga, which is a separate body.

3.1.1. The development of urban space

Migrants both leave and arrive in Louga. The arrival of people, combined with the proliferation of municipal land development projects, has contributed to rapid urban expansion. The spatial development of the city is marked by four phases:

- Phase I (1894–910): The first land development project was completed in 1894 by the colonial authorities. It set the current boundaries for the central districts, where there is provision of infrastructure and where the commercial and administrative centres are located.
- Phase II (1949–1975): Following Independence, the policy of creating sub-divisions continued and was reinforced in an effort to decongest the city centre. New districts were created to the south and east of the old neighbourhoods. Developments have also regulated traditional neighbourhoods such as Keur Serigne Louga 2, Ndiang Khoulé, Keur Serigne Louga 3 and Artillery Extension in 1972.
- Phase III (1977–1983): The administrative district of Grand Louga was created as a result of a programme to equip regional capitals with new facilities, to enable them to host Independence Day festivities. The celebration of Independence Day rotates among the capitals. Almost all the infrastructure and utilities have been built in this area.
- Phase IV (1980s): Large estates in the north, east and south of the city were established, and this period was characterized by the proliferation of property investments by migrant workers in these new neighbourhoods. In the late 1990s, pressure on land gave rise to the emergence of informal settlements known as “*Fàkk Dékk*” meaning “clear and live”. These slums on the urban margins are the most visible example of growing land problems and the exclusion of vulnerable groups.

3.2. The economy

The agricultural economy is in crisis because of the failure of groundnut cultivation. The most vibrant economic sectors in Louga, namely, tourism, housing and construction, are linked to international migration.

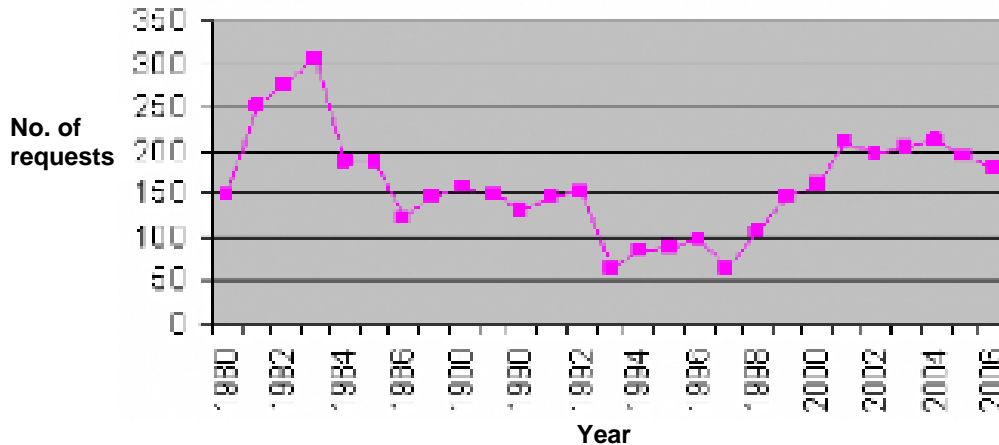
3.2.1. An emerging service sector

Statistics from the Ministry of Labour show that 35.1 per cent of jobs in the region are provided by government. Tourism and banking represent 11.5 per cent and 8.2 per cent of regional employment, respectively, and have started to gain importance as a result of international migration. The banking sector relies mainly on remittances from migrants. Tourist facilities are built by migrants or by their partners. The Popular Folklore and Drumming Festival (FESPOP) is an international event on the city's cultural agenda. Louga is a business city that relies heavily on the trade in building materials to supply the property development sector.

3.2.2. The land and housing sectors

The rapid development of the housing sector is due to migrant investment. Building a house is an element of success, a source of pride and a sign of upward social mobility. It shows that families who have a relative abroad are cared for. The importance of housing is demonstrated by the increasing number of building permit applications.

Figure 4: Requests for building permits (1980–2006)



Source: Louga Regional Planning Department (2007).

Rural migrants build informal houses with recycled materials on the outskirts of the city and on pockets of land. Since 1997, the town has undertaken a resettlement and regulation programme on the outskirts of “Fàkk Dek” in order to limit informal housing. Settlement projects have made 2,270 plots of land available, of which 900 are for rural migrants and 500 for international migrants. But there is no more land available within Louga. Land encroachment onto other municipalities limits expansion to the east, and the national road blocks the expansion of municipal boundaries to the west. The rural community of Nguidila lies south of Louga, and future expansion to meet migrants’ demands is only possible in this direction. But first, Louga must deal with existing encroachment onto Nguidila land.

3.3. Migration issues in Louga

3.3.1. Characteristics of migration

Louga is one of Senegal’s most important migrant sending areas. However, the last general population census gives little information about the magnitude of this phenomenon. Many estimates indicate that 18 per cent of Louga’s population, i.e. 12,418 migrants, is spread around the world (Western Europe, USA, Africa and even Canada). But these figures are far below the reality, as travel abroad is increasingly subject to secrecy.

Departures from Louga are organized through social and family networks. Traditional community life and brotherhood-based affinities have been the main factors that have shaped “solidarity networks” or “groupings of people, who share common goals, create conditions conducive to community life based on mutual help” (Awa Ba, 1996).³ A departure is the result of preparations often involving relatives who live abroad or elsewhere in Senegal. Funding is provided by the family. Money sometimes comes from individual savings collected through hardship and enormous sacrifices. To ward off bad luck, travel preparations are kept secret. Smugglers, the true brokers of this kind of travel, facilitate the

³ BA Awa, 1995-1996, L’impact de l’environnement socioculturel et politico-économique sur les stratégies d’accumulation et d’utilisation du profit chez les acteurs de l’informel : l’exemple des «Modou-Modou» du département de Louga. Mémoire de Maîtrise, Saint Louis, UGB.

journey by obtaining visas or providing access to illegal departure networks. Depending on the type of travel, this service can cost 2–4 million West African Francs (US\$ 4,150–8,300) or 400,000–500,000 West African Francs (US\$ 830–1,307) for travel by boat.

Access to these networks is becoming more expensive, but only the first departure is funded by the family. Once abroad, the migrant funds the travel of other family members (brothers, cousins, etc.) either for free or on credit, depending on the degree of kinship. The financial burden of supporting families back home is reduced considerably when the remittances of brothers or cousins who have joined migrants overseas are included. In addition, migrants will have more opportunity to save money and build houses or invest in other sectors such as trade and livestock. Networks, including those based on religious brotherhood, organize the reception and housing and/or socio-professional integration of the migrant. Brotherhoods are constructed rather than inherited identities that can overcome social inequalities within the same village, the same neighbourhood or the same family. They are socially very important to young migrants, in contrast to older migrants who prioritize values related to family and ethnicity.

3.3.2. *Reasons for migration from Louga*

Poverty, underemployment, unemployment and the crisis in the agricultural sector (lack of arable land, soil depletion, growing desertification, water shortages, an unpredictable climate) all contribute to increasing rates of migration from Louga. Finding new opportunities for social upward mobility and individual advancement is the basis for departures. The quest for “success” and to be seen to succeed in the eyes of relatives and society is the primary motivation.

Chronic unemployment and low incomes

Louga, like many other cities, has endemic unemployment. The return to agriculture, which was announced with great fanfare by the current government in 2005 with the REVA project (Retour Vers l’Agriculture or Going Back to Agriculture) does not address the question of how to improve poor soil quality and low yields. The majority of the youth in the city are inactive and waiting for visas to foreign lands. Certain public sector workers share this expectation, as they are poorly paid. Some migrants from Louga leave not because of a lack of employment but rather because they cannot achieve their goals on their current incomes. The departure of professionals such as civil servants, teachers and workers, who previously did not migrate, is becoming more frequent. According to S. Sissoko: “*The civil service offers no career opportunities. What is worse is that after 15 years of devotion to my work, I am unable to save the money to at least have a house; on top of that, we are left with a meagre pension. Because of this, I decided to leave the civil service and migrate.*”

In the face of migrants’ rapid earning capacity, the status of public official, which was once a symbol of success, has lost its prestige. It is as if social success can only be achieved through migration. According to O Fall, a photographer: “*Migration is the only solution. It is a boon to the country’s youth who do not earn a living at all or who live from hand to mouth with precarious jobs and low pay.*” These low incomes, combined with the ever-increasing cost of living, encourage many workers to leave, despite having a steady job.

Social and psychological factors

A popular Wolof perception is that going to the West means assured success. This is expressed through the 4 Ts: *tukki*, *tekki*, *tedd* and *terale* which literally translate as “travelling, making it, social success, and helping family and friends”. This over-estimation of the potential for success in Europe means that people are much too enthusiastic about migration. It is seen as the only way to succeed. Despite the uncertainty of living conditions abroad, the craze for migration is rampant. A K Cisse, a cyber cafe manager in Louga, says: “*Migration is better for me than anything else I can have on earth. Here I have only my body but my heart and my mind are already in Europe. I can see nothing other than to leave the*

country. *I must leave because here if you have no money nobody respects you.*" People are willing to give up everything and go to Europe. This is perceived as the only path to social success.

Migration: a model for upward social mobility?

The ambition to migrate is reflected in people's role models, or *nawle*. A *nawle* for the Wolof is someone to imitate, to ensure that you make the right choices. In this respect, it is not uncommon to hear a mother rebuking her son, telling him to do as his *nawle* does and migrate to become a local role model. Pressure from one's own family, and particularly from one's mother, is a decisive factor in migration. Dimé, a worker, describes the situation before his departure, saying: *"A day did not pass without my mother showing me the building that my friend had constructed for his mother."* The role of women is crucial in influencing a son's or husband's decision to migrate. The pressure they can bring to bear can lead many a son or husband to use clandestine channels, thus endangering their lives.

3.3.3. Differences between families with and without migrants

Money earned abroad is used primarily to meet the basic needs of the migrant and those of his family back home. Apart from the monthly transfers to meet the food needs of their relatives, migrants save a portion of their income to build houses. The house is the most visible sign of financial success, and social status is made visible through it. Mr Sylla states: *"The difference is first apparent by the visible house; your neighbour next door, who has just returned to Europe, begins to construct floors in lieu of the thatched house. This is the result of migration. But in actual fact, other differences are also noticeable: houses, cars, equipment."* The households with electronic appliances and other accessories, and that own a number of cars, are also differentiated from families without migrants. Beyond cultural realities, people are moving towards a restructuring of social hierarchies that are no longer based on caste but, rather, on the presence or absence of a migrant in the family. From one family to another, and even within households, migration redefines social status and roles.

3.3.4. Migration and social hierarchies

Migration challenges traditional sibling hierarchies. Formerly, status within the family was determined by birth order, and older children occupied the top of the social ladder. Cissé explains that now: *"It is money that gives migrants social prestige. All family members line up behind their decisions. The birth order is no longer respected, bowing to financial power."*

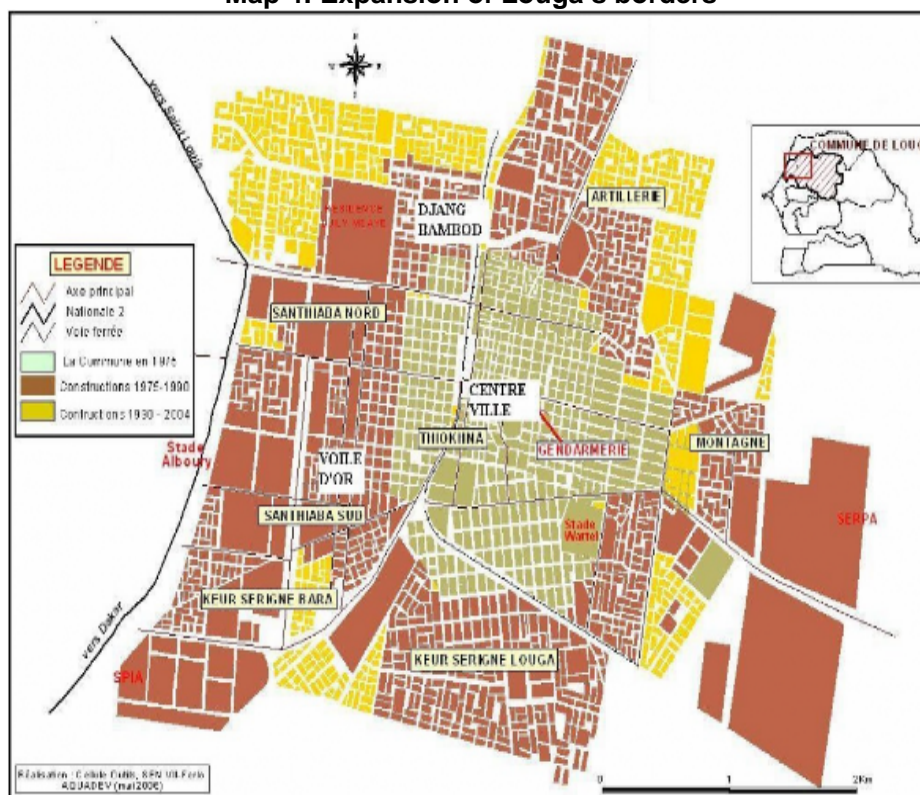
These changes affect social relations between castes. Because of their financial and economic power, migrants can break the barriers of caste affiliations. Endogamy (marrying within one's caste) was unavoidable a few years ago. Abdoulaye Bara Diop (1981) called it "the most tenacious archaism". Although still relatively uncommon, as a result of migration there have been more mixed marriages, and sometimes even marriages outside caste affiliations. Many husbands and wives meet through audiovisual tapes sent to and from Italy. These inter-caste marriages, even if few in number, show that a slow and irreversible change is taking place.

Migration also generates tensions between migrants and non-migrants regarding access to land: *"With migration, there is a wave of uncontrolled rural exodus. These arrivals, combined with the poor management of municipal lands, have helped to exhaust land availability. The rural community of Nguidila has restructured and distributed the plots of land that surround the city of Louga [...]"*(Diop G.) Nguidila distributed this land because it wanted to prevent the town of Louga from grabbing it. People in Louga are against the ownership of some land by migrants. For example, young people have opposed the proposed construction of a shopping centre by a migrant in an area called "the green strip". In reality, the problem is that people in Louga are used to seeing land earmarked for the construction of public infrastructure being allocated to migrants, who then simply divide it up either for sale or to hold onto for residential purposes.

3.3.5. Changes in the urban landscape

The enthusiasm for building has led to the construction of many modern villas. Initially, homes are built to replace original family dwellings that are made of traditional materials, which means that traditional thatched mud houses are gradually disappearing. The appearance of new “modern” homes has contributed to the improvement of urban landscapes. In addition to construction quality, migrants also want different kinds of architecture, an effect of their stay in their host country. With increasing investments by migrants from the surrounding rural areas, one can see the beginnings of the construction of a logical combination of commercial and residential buildings. People choosing to build close to markets and major roads, and the construction of commercial premises on the ground floors, all contribute to the intensification of the use of space. The modernization of housing and improvements in households’ standards and living conditions are factors that make the migrant a key player in the urbanization of Louga. Yet this role is still under question because of migrants’ absence and other socio-cultural factors.

Map 4: Expansion of Louga’s borders



Source: AQUADEV, Louga (2007).

3.4. Migration and new forms of local governance

Research on Senegalese migration is most often concerned with transfers of funds and property purchases. Recently, there has been new scientific interest in governance and the political participation of migrants in their places of origin. At first, migrants were rural and illiterate people, with no qualifications other than some experience with handicrafts or agricultural labour. Today, migration affects all segments of society. The relatively high social status of new migrants requires a re-examination of their relationship with local political leaders. The absence of dialogue and consultative mechanisms reduces migrants’ ability to participate in the management of local affairs. Lack of consultation can make their involvement less constructive and more rebellious. Long and repeated periods of absence

exclude migrants from policy debate and from participating in mechanisms that could help them to get elected.

“In Louga, many migrants are illiterate! They are wary of politics and they have a negative view of politicians [...] we need to get inspired by migrants’ work ethic based on rigour, reliability and punctuality! Take Italy for example, it is a country that has become developed thanks to money from its migrants. Not only the region of Louga, but the whole of Senegal could develop; yet we need to set out good migration and investment policies. I think we should create and foster trust, and in this respect the State has a very important role to play [...]” (Dimé, a migrant from Louga living in Italy).

Municipal bureaucracy and the lack of flexibility or ability to function outside the parameters set by the city council are barriers to wider participation in the management of local affairs. A migrant could make significant contributions if new forms of participation were put in place. Although, they do not yet know the exact role they could play, they have significant economic importance and families back home depend on them. Some local leaders believe that migrants are unlikely to contribute effectively due to their lack of skills. Unfortunately, this mistrust is mutual. Returnees who are active in politics are more interested in partisan politics and in benefiting from the opportunities offered by elected position rather than in the interests of other migrants. There is no framework enabling migrants to coordinate and defend their interests. Their absence on the local council is due to the long periods they spend away from Louga and the fact that elected officials cannot miss more than three municipal meetings. But this requirement applies to all politicians, and some are often absent because they have chosen to live in Dakar. As Bamba, a municipal councillor, told us: *“Migrants are often required to live in their host countries for a given period of time to qualify for a residence renewal permit, so they are not often able to engage in politics in Senegal, which requires their presence here.”*

An analysis of the relations between politicians and migrants highlights the following:

- Politicians fear competition from migrants, even more so as the latter have the financial resources to enable them to acquire social prestige, which they use to their advantage in the political arena.
- Many migrants believe that “politics is unhealthy”. The comparison of the political practices of their country of origin with those of their host country is a real obstacle to their engagement.
- Local political authorities do not encourage the emergence of new forms of local governance. There is no real political will or courage to promote the integration of migrants into decision-making processes through more flexible mechanisms for participation.

Despite their absence migrants do take part in political debates. They raise awareness on issues of good governance, denouncing practices that are not transparent (corruption, abuse of authority), and use information and communication technologies (participation in discussion forums and radio talk shows, etc.) to share their points of view.

Flyer 1: RTS International (available on the internet)



Flyer 2: Seneweb.com enables people to read Senegalese newspapers and listen to radio programmes



Some migrants do seek political power, as in the case of the Circle of Friends and Natives of Louga (CANAL), an organization set up in Toulouse, France, and also of “and Suxali Louga” (For an Emerging Socioeconomic Louga). The political ambitions of these associations are a function of the high level of education of the majority of their members.

Box 5: The CANAL demonstration as reported by the press

Cheikh Seck Yérém on exploring ways to modernize the city of Louga

On Friday, the journalist Cheikh Seck Yérém of *Jeune Afrique* urged people from Louga “...to change their outlook, to rethink their local leadership and to industrialize...” to make the city culturally, economically and politically attractive. Seck hosted a conference on Louga and the “Challenge of Modernity and Democracy”, stating that the city “...should have a modern culture, passing through renewal and a revolution in attitudes... This requires the reassessment of our understanding and perceptions of men, money and time. The city of Louga continues to fail to provide lighting and sewerage. It will never be modern without spaces and infrastructure for citizens to set up small business and create wealth.” Economic modernity begins “...with the construction of infrastructure including communication because to produce wealth, people have to be able to circulate without any obstacles” said Mr Seck who also stressed that “...creating the conditions for business development in the city should be seen as the lasting solution to the problem of unemployment. This will put an end to the migration of Louga’s sons, who live in promiscuous homes in Europe.” Another challenge is “political modernity” and more efficient public services. Mr Seck urged the people of Louga to put more emphasis on a leader’s competence when deciding who to vote for: “To get the most out of our institutions we need righteous and well-trained men with good contacts in order for Louga to attract investment.” He also called for the involvement of the diaspora “...to meet the challenge of modernity and local democracy. There must be political change, a chance for democracy to express itself and the opportunity for the council fully to play its role of monitoring the mayor’s actions.”

Source: www.seneweb.com (accessed 17 August 2008).

3.5. Migration and local development

To address the lack of engagement with migrants by the authorities, a new partnership approach has been developed. The regional council has organized a Migrants Forum to enable the citizens of Louga to better share the benefits of migration, as generally only families with a member working abroad profit from investments.

To date, there is still no direct interaction between development programmes and migration. Yet given migrants' importance, development initiatives should take them into account.

Box 6: The migrants forum

The organization of the migrants forum

Most migrant investment is only in building houses. Therefore, the regional council has worked hard to organize this forum. During the first session, various city departments and migrants were involved [...] The goal was to identify the potential of the region in terms of fishing, livestock, agriculture, crafts, etc., to guide migrants who had project ideas [...] For the Director of Regional Planning, it was no longer possible to sit back while migrants continued to invest in Dakar, when there were opportunities in Louga. If properly targeted, migrant investment could be beneficial to the whole city. At the forum, migrants and partners were put together, and they decided to find focal persons among migrants from Louga who were living in Italy, Spain, etc. These people would be used as information relays, enabling migrants to organize themselves and think about how to invest their money productively.

Source: Interview with the Regional Director of Planning, Louga, 21 February 2008.

Photo 2: Banner prepared following the Migrants Forum in Louga



Source: Samba photo, October 2008.

In addition to the Migrants' Forum, and with decentralized cooperation support, the political authorities of Louga have developed a Business Desk "...to boost investment through creating synergies between overseas financial partners and local authorities." After the establishment of this service, the Deputy Governor of Louga said that the Business Desk would help secure migrant investment.

Photo 3: Business desk in the decentralized cooperation office



Source: Sambe, October 2008.

By initiating the Migrants' Forum and the Business Desk, elected officials are seeking to involve migrants in the development of Louga and its environs. But these initiatives would be more effective if migrants participated in all the phases of organization and implementation. They should have been the main facilitators of this forum but they were only invited to attend as regular participants. In addition, rather than this first session hitting the headlines, the launch of the national fight against illegal immigration stole the spotlight. The dates of the forum were postponed twice, which meant that international partners from the Italian cities of Faenza and Milan and the region of Piedmont and many others were unable to attend. The absence of these partners meant that the forum did not meet expectations.

3.5.1. Migration and the local economy

As noted above, migrants generally invest in property and small businesses. As a result, a regional market is emerging, stimulated by the movement of goods and trade.

Current consumption

Remittances from migrants are used mainly to meet household needs, expenditure on daily items accounted for 82 per cent of remittances sent to the city of Louga (Tall 1996). Our investigations equally reveal that money received by families is almost entirely used for household consumption. Remittances are, therefore, crucial to people's daily lives; and while they do benefit, families become dependent and live from one transfer to the next. According to the ESAM II Survey (Enquête Sénégalaise Auprès Des Ménages) many households escape poverty through receiving money from remittances and from property investment.

Land and property: migrants' preferred investment

Investment in land and property is a sign of social success and it has symbolic value. The construction of a house provides security for the migrant on their return. Thus, symbolic and social goals are twinned with economic ones. From the houses, one can see that Louga is a city of migrants: "*Louga migrants only invest in housing and land [...] They do not invest in risky sectors or in sectors with complicated management structures, as most of them are illiterate.*" (Mr Dieng, an emigrant from Louga residing in Italy).

But this assertion should be taken with a pinch of salt, as most businessmen in Senegal have not been to school either yet this has not reduced their willingness to invest. Land and property account for any leftover money once the family's daily needs have been met. S M Tall (1995) asserts that the reasons why migrants invest in property are manifold. Profit is not the only goal. Recognition by the family is also important, so money is reinvested to earn social prestige. Some migrants invested in businesses run by either their brothers or other relatives, but which failed because of a lack of strict management. This underlies the preference for investing in land and property, which is secure. According to Dimé: "*Migrants*

invest in real estate to secure their funds [...] most of them have lost a lot of money by investing in businesses run by brothers or nephews [...] and more often than not money has been embezzled or the business has been poorly managed."

Land speculation and rising rents make real estate investment more attractive. According to returnee Mbodji: *"Real estate offers guarantees to migrants because, if we build a house with five apartments, and each apartment is rented at 50,000 West African Francs (US\$ 104), after 10 months we will have 2,500,000 West African Francs (US\$ 5,187), which will allow the migrant to support his family."*

The multiplier effects of a strong property market are seen in the vibrant enterprises and related trades and in the growth of a network of small businesses (building materials, carpentry, blacksmithing, etc.). Property investments have helped to reduce inequalities between the central districts and the suburbs. The periphery is becoming more attractive.

Migration and the informal sector

Migrants contribute to the development of the informal sector.⁴ Migrant investments in Louga are mainly in the retail trade, hardware, the sale of spare parts, old clothes, cosmetics and appliances. In Dakar or Louga, these investments employ young people, who become integrated into the migration channels. B Diedhiou explains: *"It is through these often precarious jobs that we have the opportunity find out more about illegal migration. I am keeping this job as a parts vendor so that I have the time to find a way to leave the country."*

Transportation (taxis, buses) and businesses (importation of vehicles and spare parts, particularly used ones) are growing enterprises. To meet the demand generated in the city, some migrants have also invested in livestock, poultry and, to a lesser extent, in market gardening in neighbouring rural areas.

Private investment

Migrants have also invested in the agri-food and music industries. Several farms in the rural community of Keur Momar Sarr are funded by returnees from Louga. According to the Deputy Governor: *"As part of our technical support and mentoring programmes, we have helped to set up farms comparable to those found in Europe in Keur Momar Sarr, a community where forest-grazing was the main activity. We have played the role of mediator to enable investors to access land in addition to providing technical support from the Regional Local Development Department's staff."*

One returnee to Louga, who has always worked in the artistic community and has become a show-business organizer, has opened a recording studio called SSF to help support the emergence of young talented artists; the studio currently employs 11 young people from Louga. To this end, Mr Fall, the Director of SSF, explains that: *"...not a single day passes without us meeting young talented artists. And apart from singers, there are many theatre and dance groups."*

⁴ The informal sector is defined by the International Labor Office (1997) as: "[...] very small units of production and distribution of goods and services located in urban areas of developing countries: the units belonging mainly to self-employed people who often employ family members, and even a few employees or apprentices. They sometimes have only very modest capital.

Photo 4: Recording studio fully funded by a migrant from Louga



Source: Sambe, October 2008.

Barriers to investment by migrants in sectors other than real estate include low levels of education, the risk of the misuse of funds by relatives and friends responsible for managing the businesses, and the illegal status of migrants who cannot return frequently to monitor business management.

3.5.2. Migration and community action

Driven by a sense of commitment, migrants from Louga formed Ndiambour Self-Help Association. Since 2001, when it was established, the association has been working towards the development of the region. It had 3,000 members when it was founded, and membership contributions are set at 36 Euros per year (US\$ 49) or 23,580 West African Francs. Table 5 presents the achievements of this self-help association.

Table 5: Achievements of Ndiambour Self-Help Association

Activity	Beneficiaries	Items	Value in millions of West African Francs/US\$
Prevention of cholera	Religious families, regional medical authority	Bleach, sheets	FCFA 0.15/US\$ 31
Provision of equipment and materials	Health posts	21 beds	FCFA 0.63/US\$ 1,307
	Linguere health post	1 ambulance	FCFA 1.22/US\$ 2,531
	Towns of Louga and Linguere	2 hearses	FCFA 4.64/US\$ 9,627
	Regional hospital	1 ultrasound machine: FCFA 1.417/US\$ 2,940 1 automatic developer: FCFA 5.07/US\$ 10,519 152 medical smocks: FCFA 1.32/US\$ 2,739 Cleaning equipment: FCFA 2.936/US\$ 6,092 Retinography: FCFA 97.5/US\$ 202,282 Birthing bed: FCFA 0.325/US\$ 674	

Drugs and medication	Regional council Regional hospital Associations Linguère health centre Kébémér health centre Rural communities Towns Prisons <i>Madrassas</i>	Anti-retroviral and other medicines	FCFA 26.437/ US\$ 54,849
	Total (millions West African Francs/US\$)		FCFA 141.645/ US\$ 293,870

Source: Activity Report of Ndiambour Self-Help Association (2006).

The Ndiambour Self-Help Association has invested FCFA 35,000,000 (US\$ 72,614) in agriculture with the help of the Municipality of Faenza in Italy. Their other projects include:

- a project with the Emilio Romagna Region of Italy;
- cooperation between the hospital in Bergamo (Italy) and the Louga Amadou Sakhir Mbaye regional hospital;
- the proposed construction of a medical and social health service centre; and
- the construction of a health centre at Ndièye Satouré in the rural community of Sakal, with support from the Italian International Cooperation Agency.

The association, with support from the co-development project, is seeking to guide its activities, which so far have been limited to the health sector, towards other areas such as education, training, village water and income generation.

Photo 5: Headquarters of the Ndiambour Self-Help Association



Source: Cliché Sambe, October 2008.

In addition to working through associations, some migrants are able to invest in their community on an individual basis. The Academy Inspector of Louga states that: "...some migrants carry out activities of paramount importance for schools and the youth. For instance, Keur Serigne Louga South School has received a computer room with 20 computers from a migrant worker who teaches at a French high school and who came with his students to install the machines." Many similar examples could be supported "...if there were a synergy of efforts among migrants, local authorities and other potential development partners."

3.5.3. Migration, co-development and managing the flow of people

Policies to assist workers to return to Senegal have had mixed results. The co-development approach began in the mid 1990s, and now a new element has been added to the development agenda, namely managing migration flows. The objective is to improve economic conditions in sending countries so that potential migrants choose to stay home.

The city of Louga, through its migrant associations, has benefited from a number of improvements in health, education and agriculture. But investment by migrants in other productive sectors is not taking place. In order to revitalize local economies and give potential migrants a reason to stay home, policies for the efficient use of migrant resources must be developed. Programmes to return migrants through co-development initiatives are only a partial response in the face of the much larger number of departures.

3.6. Women and international migration

Women are at the heart of the migration process. It is women who enable men's departures by assuming responsibility for all the work at home, continuing to work the fields or managing the market stalls. Wives who have only ever stayed at home often assume men's roles for many months if not for years, while they wait for the possible return of their husbands. Even if women do not migrate themselves, they are an important cog in the wheel that enables their husbands to work overseas. In this way, migration can lead to the redistribution or rearrangement of roles within households.

3.6.1. Why women migrate

Female migration from Louga is becoming increasingly widespread. The result is the creation of new role models of entrepreneurial migrant women. Historically, it was only wives who migrated in order to join their husbands. The return of and the investments made by these women have shown those left behind that migration provides a way to access social opportunities and responsibilities that were previously unattainable. This has made migration attractive to more women. Today, single and unmarried women are deciding to travel to Europe on their own, sometimes even using dangerous means of transport such as dugout boats.

According to councillor P S Sissokho: "*Local culture, namely dance and theatre, has also played an important role in the advent of this new form of migration. It has allowed woman to discover Europe through their folklore.*" These dance troupes criss-cross Europe and have played an important role in facilitating women's migration from Louga. Indeed, after international tours, most female performers stay abroad, as do the male artists. Although migration rates among women are still lower than among men, some are choosing to migrate and are challenging traditional gender roles.

3.6.2. Links with the country of origin

Some women leave to find work abroad in order to improve their family's living conditions. They are the breadwinners and sometimes the only providers for their relatives. A mother explains: "*When you have only daughters, one is sometimes obliged to let them go so that they can try their luck.*" Women, like their male counterparts, buy cars and invest in real estate. They also contribute to the modernization of Louga. Indeed, Senegalese women tend to invest in the same kinds of businesses back home as the jobs they hold in Europe, generally modern hair salons and restaurants. And if they cannot afford to cover a brother's migration costs, they invest in shops and businesses for them, so that they can earn the money to pay for their own trip. Migrant women are involved in decision-making processes concerning the lives of their family members and have won the respect and consideration of the community.

3.6.3. Greater empowerment of women back home

Migration helps to break down traditional gender roles, constraints and expectations. By providing equal opportunities for children of both sexes, migrants are breaking the taboos that often hold back women in their working lives, in Senegal as well as abroad. Many parents are placing more and more emphasis on the education of girls, as they are less inclined than their brothers to migrate. Sylla explains that: "*Of my four children who were in*

school, both boys have dropped out, while my girls continue their studies. One is in computer training and the second is reading for the baccalaureate.”

Although many wives take on the role of household head when their husbands depart, this does not mean that they are necessarily obliged to support the family. This task is still the husband's responsibility, which he meets through remittances. Women do, however, manage daily expenses such as paying water and electricity bills, and monitor house refurbishing works. This gives them experience of organizing and running activities in both the private and public spheres.

In addition, many migrants' wives are active in the business sector. Housewives increasingly feel the need to engage in activities to help their families, and rivalry between women can spur them on. For example, if one woman starts up a small business, another might follow suit. Indeed, in a society where reference to *nawle* or role models is pervasive, behaviour is often shaped by copying others. Ms Diop, a migrant's wife said: *“I was a businesswoman for two years [...]. In actual fact, the decision to start a business was triggered by the advice of my friends; so I asked my husband to lend me money.”* Success in business enhances their social and family status. Women have become household heads and economic actors. In addition, the efforts made by migrants to educate their girls herald more important and perhaps more fundamental social change.

4. Conclusions: A comparative approach

These two case studies highlight some important differences and similarities with regard to the effects of migration on the governance of the small towns of Louga and Ourosogui. Several aspects of this are analyzed below, including the impact of migration on social relations, on urbanization patterns and on local governance.

4.1. Migration, gender and social relations

Rates of male migration are higher in Ourosogui than in Louga, and the proportion of female-headed households supports this assertion. Twenty-two per cent of households in Ourosogui, or one in five, are run by women. This figure fell to 10.8 per cent, or one in nine, female-headed households in Louga (Census, 2002). The long history of migration in Ourosogui could account for the differences in the rates of migration.

The international migration of women from Louga is well established. They travel to Southern Europe (Spain, Italy) and to the United States. This pattern of female migration is reflected in the sex ratios, which are 95.1 per cent in Louga Region and 90.8 per cent in Matam Region, where Ourosogui is located (Census, 2002). Different attitudes towards, and the consequent higher rates of, female migration probably stem from the greater openness of social structures in Ndiambour (the geographic region of Louga), which means that people are more ready to accept and facilitate the economic empowerment of women.

The absence of men gives women the opportunity to participate more fully in the public sphere. In Ourosogui, this has enabled women to strengthen and demonstrate their financial management skills. These skills also come in handy as some women have established small businesses and have started various income-generating activities to supplement remittances from their husbands.

The impact on social relations varies from one area to another. In Ourosogui, it is clear that migration has not facilitated social mobility from a lower caste to a higher one. This contrasts with Louga, where migration has brought a certain level of flexibility within this hierarchy,

allowing marriage between castes. Again, this is due to the stronger rigidity of social organization among the Haalpulaar in Ourosogui, compared to that of the Wolof society in Louga.

4.2. Migration and urbanization

The urban development of Louga dates back to colonial times, when it was a transit point with an important role in the groundnut trade. Although international migration is more recent, it continues to contribute to the urbanization of the town. In contrast, in Ourosogui, it is migration that is the cause of urbanization: migrants have built villas and buildings and have turned a village into a town. It is they who mobilized their networks to convince the authorities to make Ourosogui a municipality in 1990.

4.3. Migration and local governance

The two case studies show that Ourosogui provides a specific example in terms of the relationship between migration and governance. Indeed, migrants from Ourosogui who were successful in the diamond and precious stones trade were excluded from the management of local affairs while the village remained a chieftaincy. They had to usher in a new administrative framework (the municipality) in order to take part in the management of local affairs. According to Crozier and Friedberg⁵, control of municipal power by former migrants or by members of migrant families illustrates the ability of these actors to set goals and achieve them. These skills have been developed during migration to arenas where it is necessary to combine strategies and cunning to succeed. Analyzed from this perspective, international migration can be understood as a school. It gives those who attend a huge comparative advantage, making all the difference when migrants compete with non-migrants to reach set goals. It also allows a better understanding of some of the arguments made by people interviewed in Ourosogui. They say that the lack of participation of migrants in local decision-making is due to the lack of spaces and frameworks within which they can express themselves and implement activities. It is clear from our analysis that migrants can create spaces of their own, where they can contribute to the management of local affairs; but to realize the full potential of their involvement, local government must also be engaged.

4.4. Synergies of actions for the implementation of local development

The two case studies show that development activities have been carried out in parallel, if not in isolation, by different actors (migrants, the municipality and others). This is a result of mutual suspicion and misunderstanding. On the one hand, municipal authorities perceive international migrants as potential and future rivals in the quest for power. And indeed, migrants often have the economic capital necessary to acquire and retain political patronage. On the other hand, migrants are often very critical of the council's economic and social projects. They consider the lack of transparency in local government as inadequate and suspicious. This mistrust and misunderstanding is evident in both case studies and has a negative impact on local governance.

Elected representatives undertake actions without consulting migrants. Migrants also bypass the city authorities. In 2001, when the city council of Ourosogui, with the support of ADOS, developed and validated its Local Development Plan (LDP), migrants were not involved. However, had they participated in the LDP process, they could have played a significant role in mobilizing resources for its implementation. They could have made their own contributions, or they could have presented the plan to potential partners in their countries of residence. Good governance requires the development of consensual management in

⁵ Michel Crozier et Erhard Friedberg, *L'acteur et le système : Les contraintes de l'action collective*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1981. First published in 1977, in the series "Sociologie politique".

consultation with migrants, elected officials, NGOs, development support associations, the private sector in host countries and decentralized cooperation agencies. The two Migrant Forums that took place in Louga are a good starting point, and serve as examples that should be encouraged and institutionalized.

Migrants have a relationship with their country of origin. Departures from Senegal are increasing despite the closing of borders in Europe and America. Rising remittances are prompting authorities to look at ways of linking migration and development. Towns are central to the economic development of their surrounding regions. They are centres of innovation and entrepreneurship, places of contact and gateways to the world. The development of small towns in Senegal is linked to several factors, namely:

- rural migration;
- natural population increase;
- municipalization or urbanization; and
- the impact of international migration, which also affects the above factors directly and indirectly.

The question of how to improve the participation of migrants in the development of their home towns can be tested in small and medium-sized cities. Indeed, the problems posed in small towns offer opportunities to explore new approaches for the better use of migrant remittances. But these transfers cannot be a substitute for public funding. The construction of multi-stakeholder partnerships is then a pre-requisite for the better use of these transfers. There is great potential for achieving development and governance objectives if migrants and local authorities can work together. The evidence from Louga and Ourosogui provides some examples of how to achieve this, but it is up to governments (local, national and foreign) and citizens to make it happen.

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