

INTRA-AFRICAN HUMAN CAPITAL MOBILITY, MIGRANT COMMUNITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLUSTERS IN THE NICHE ECONOMY: Can NEPAD make it achievable?

Gabriel TATI, PhD

Senior Lecturer, Dpt of Statistics, University of Western Cape

KEY WORDS: Migrant community entrepreneurship, niche economy, Intra-African human capital mobility, Institutions, Networks, know-how, Clusters, artisanal fishery, wooden furniture making NEPAD developmental agenda.

Introduction

The proposed paper addresses the issue of promoting intra-African trade from the perspective of entrepreneurial migrant communities as a viable strategy for the development of clusters of enterprises in identified economic niches with high potential for exports, but which, for some reasons, remain out of the domain of conventional FDI fluxes. The paper build on some insights from a Central-West African based Model of investments from migrant communities from African countries to other African countries. Most recent debates on African development perspective have underscored the role NEPAD should play in boosting endogenous economic driving forces. Steps made under NEPAD towards this goal remain at the infant stage. In line with this concern, some of the conceptual frameworks proposed so far heavily emphasise a model of development driven by conventional FDIs in relation to which each individual state ought to promote the establishment of institutions that are conducive to economic growth. The question is not as such the viability of a model of this type as a pro-poor continental strategy for sustainable growth. The question is rather the extent to which it can work as a complement to the community-driven initiatives happening in the real African economies. My argument is that such a model falls short in tapping some of the underexploited niches that can, with appropriate incentives in place, promote trade and growth from the human capital perspective. The explanation to this limitation lies in its failure to capture the entrepreneurial dynamics at motion on ground, as evidenced by ways in which some migrant communities within Africa, using their collective skills and know how, have invested their assets and become the driving forces in the economic transformation of clustered industrial activities in the niche economies found across the continent. In some parts of Africa, the migrant economy has flourished in clustered enterprises in such sectors as costal fisheries, furniture making, transport and specialised services. The clusters possess some critical mass needed for considerable production to take off in economic niches such as fisheries, wooden furniture and be exported to other parts of Africa in need of some of the goods produced in those enterprises. The determining institutional and socio-cultural factors associated with the dynamics of these clusters remain mostly undocumented and the debate, regrettably, is not as such advanced as it should be on ways of integrating these intra-African investments in the strategies proposed by forums such as NEPAD.

The paper takes on board this important issue to propose an evidence-based conceptual framework on ways of incorporating and promoting intra-African entrepreneurship through the mobility of migrant communities that possess know-how needed for the industrial valorisation of resources available in most part of Africa. The model proposed in the paper focuses on options for co-operation between specific countries in West and Central Africa, two sub-regions in which this type of migrant economy has been observed from the 1960's to now, in quite a few economic sectors.

The importance of migrant community entrepreneurship is empirically explored in the paper and way in which it could be integrated in alternative development strategies for development available to NEPAD. Migrant community entrepreneurship is defined as a collective involvement of African migrants in developing cluster enterprises in a particular niche economy of the host economy. While ethnicity may be regarded as the major unifying attribute of such migrants, we emphasise commonality in both regional origin (within the Africa continent) and type of business within a localised economic space to qualify a migrant as member of a community entrepreneurship. Migrants described along these terms tend to develop enterprises producing the same goods and services in particular niches and enclaves using the skills they have and building networks of different types. The term of cluster is used to designate a regrouping of such enterprises in particular spatial locations.

Such clusters of enterprises owned by migrants are observed in many parts of Africa, especially in urban areas. The sectors of predilection for clustering are artisanal fisheries, furniture making, petty trading and services activities, to name but a few. Over the past years, community entrepreneurship has not received the attention needed in the numerous initiatives of regional or bilateral cooperation that have been promoted or implemented across the African continent. The top down approach giving prominent voice to state elites and technocrats (some analysts have described it as a narrowly defined concept of sovereignty) that characterised the defunct OAU throughout its existence failed to incorporate the high potential for know how transfer and small enterprises development embedded in the endogenous knowledge some migrant communities have. Most of those communities have settled, set up and sustained flourishing cluster enterprises on the margin of existing legal frameworks in individual countries. The goods and services generated from migrant enterprises, though uncounted in official statistics, are of great importance for the local development economy. Despite its importance, there have been few attempts to incorporate in concrete terms such knowledge in development strategies promoted so far by intergovernmental organisations including the OAU, multilateral or bilateral organisations, or through continental partnership such as the Lagos Plan. The establishment of NEPAD may indeed offer new opportunities for achieving developmental goals at the continental level, as it gives a certain high profile to civil society. However, the general observation one can make at the early stage of the existence of these institutions is the small place (if any) given to African migrant entrepreneurs and the role they can play in the national, regional and local economic development. There is a glaring lack of specificity in the general policy orientations proposed so far by these two continental projects. The challenge ahead to these two institutions are likely to be effective in promoting and monitoring the processes of transformation associated with the movements of those entrepreneurial human resources. How can this challenge be dealt with and implemented as part of policy instrument in inter-state cooperation actions are the main issues discussed in this paper.

The paper differs from most accounts that have rather tended to be general and unsupported by hard evidence on community entrepreneurship. As a starting point, the paper contains a great deal of theoretical input. This author believes that theory helps encapsulate the issues under investigation in an organised framework that is amenable to empirical observation, interpretation and intervention through policy. Drawing from the conceptualisation, the paper dwells heavily on existing case studies with reference to the context of Congo-Brazzaville, as case studies provide insights into real-life situations where this form of partnership has taken place, sustained and has had some tangible outcomes. This perspective suggests that the paper takes a deeper look into some market niches in which groups of migrants have successfully inserted. However, economic insertion is not enough to understand the social and political dynamics making it achievable. As is the case for any investment, a hosting space is required to make it operational. Therefore an important aspect of the migrant enterprising dynamics lies in the sub-processes associated with the social integration of African migrant entrepreneurs. The ways in which migrants negotiate a community identity through appropriation of space (housing enclaves), to consolidate their investment and collective actions are described in the paper. Understanding the sub-processes accompanying the negotiation process (resilience) can provide the instruments for addressing the issues associated with migrant community entrepreneurship.

It is my contention that such migrants collectively carry valuable know-how that has a potential for innovation as they develop investments in the host economy. On the other side, we look at them as

representing a missed opportunity for local development insecurity if the know-how they have is not properly valorised, monitored and internalised in the process of (local) development. Innovation and opportunity loss are both generated from different forms of exploitation of local natural and economic resources.

To support my contention, entrepreneurial communities of African migrants are examined in regard to their attitudes to developing clusters, appropriating space for housing in specific enclaves and to negotiating their local integration. The supporting evidence presented in the paper synthesises information that was generated from a longitudinal research this author conducted from 1995 to 1999 in Congo. Drawing from the evidence gathered, institutional issues were identified, assessed and some policy directions suggested from the perspective of host society, bilateral and regional cooperation. First, it seems important to review past African experiences with the issue of regional integration with special reference to the type of intra-African migration of interest in this paper.

The African experience with intra-trade through regional integration or multilateral cooperation.

The experience with intra-African trade through regional integration and cooperation dates back to the early years of political independence. The issue of regional integration in Africa is one that has been debated across the continent long before the one of debt, conflicts or HIV/AIDS. Yet it remains one these old debates, full of rhetoric, across the continent still lacking of clear cut vision and tangible outcomes. Time and again, regional integration is constantly presented as an unavoidable necessity for fostering the mechanisms required for the promotion of the development African countries. Let aside its contribution toward the lessening of reliance on international aid, regional integration, through trade relations of proximity, would support the building of real African economies. The argument has always been that African economies, at the individual country level, suffer from profound structural deficiencies that need to be overcome by bringing them together in regional blocks. NEPAD agenda on regional integration is framed along this line of establishing economic systems at the continental level. The political intentions are quite clear on this matter; regional integration is viewed as one of the major engines of the economic development of the 54 countries making the African Union. The pressing demand for achieving the economic integration was one of the highly emphasised recommendations during the inaugural session of the AU held in Durban (South Africa) in July 2002. Central to regional integration, the development of intra-African trade is viewed as one of the components facilitating this integration.

As one can observe the concern about regional integration is not a novelty attributable to NEPAD. Some political actions have even been implemented over the past years. However, an evaluation of the outcomes achieved from these actions strongly suggests that despite considerable political efforts, institutional and financial support allocated to this issue, there is still a long way to go. Tangible results are still below the expectations up to this date of NEPAD implementation. Some variations are observed from one region to another in terms of progress towards an effective and functional integration. Significant progress is noticeable for West and Southern African countries (Kwame, 1993). For the rest of the continent, tangible outcomes are still to come. Overall, the achievements before the establishment of NEPAD were far from success. To many observers, the situation of no progress prevailed throughout the many attempts aimed at boosting the regional organisations because of the uncertainty associated with their functioning (see, for example, Hugon, 1991). Inefficiency was strongly felt in the areas of financial transactions, trade relations and the free movement of people. The most informative failed attempt to set up an efficient intra-regional organisation was illustrated by the chaotic functioning of the defunct Central Africa Customs Union, UDEAC (in French Union Douanière des Etats d'Afrique Centrale) and its affiliated Economic Union of Central Africa States, CEAC (in French Communauté des Etats d'Afrique Centrale). These two organisations came to an end due to financial problems and lack of political vision among the leaders from the six countries (Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Cameroon, Chad, Central Africa Republic and Equatorial Guinea). To replace them, the CEMAC (in French Communauté Economique et Monétaire

des Etats d'Afrique Centrale) was put in place to serve as a monetary and economic union for the states in Central Africa of which Congo Brazzaville is part. Since its establishment, CEMAC has been facing the same financial problems and slow progress as was the case of UDEAC and CEAC. A lack of regional policy still affects the movement of people from one country to another.

All evidence considered, one cannot conclude that a total success was achieved up to the end of the 1990's (Nomvette, 1993). Many intergovernmental organisations established with the aim of making regional integration work failed in their mission because they had to face all types of problems to sustain their operations (Pouya, 1993). Some explanations to this lack of progress in achieving real regional integrated partly rested the heavy administrative structure, bureaucracy and, as Nomvette (1993) put it, conservatism in nationhood thinking. On top of that, the major cause of lack of progress is thought to be the absence of a clearly defined efficient strategy for achieving a regional integration building upon historical and local economic realities. The situation has tended to persist up to now. The approach to regional integration has been along the neo-classic model giving prominence to market integration. There has been little informed understanding of the structural and ideological mechanisms required by such a model for the achievement of expected outcomes (Langlammer, 1993). Such a model, as documented elsewhere, does not take in consideration the cultural and specificities that have secularly governed the dynamics of African economies and social structures at the bottom level. It has been established that market integration has failed to materialise in Africa because of the type of trading activities in place in the major exporting sectors of the countries. Against this background, one would envisage NEPAD tackling this issue with some commitment. The construction of a system of integrated African economies is one of the leading objectives pursued by NEPAD. However, the demarcation from the previous model is not as such significant. The formal Intra-African trade of goods (merchandises) and services has been given a prominent place in the discourse. The informal transfer of services, notably that of know-how embedded into African communities, through mobility of human capital, is less mentioned in the recommendations emanating from NEPAD circles of thinking. An equally emphasised aspect in the NEPAD agenda is put on the establishment of big regional blocks presented as institutions capable of speeding up the convergence of national economies towards an integrated economy at the continental level. The ultimate goal of this convergence would be to arrive at an integration of African economies into the main stream of the globalising economy. Given the so much politicised dimension of any strategy based on big regional groupings and a related tendency in giving too much voice to governing bodies in place, at the country level, in the decision making process, the civil society groups have very few chances of playing a major role in the regional organisations (Taylor 2003'). The concentration of power in the hands of the political ruling elites was strongly criticised at the time of African Organisation Unity.

On the front of investments for the valorisation of resources, the NEPAD agenda is quite silence about the possibilities of economic transformation through entrepreneurial African communities. By focusing on the creation of an environment conducive to attracting Foreign Direct Investments, the developmental agenda has tended to leave out the active participation of diverse communities and their specific identities in terms of know how for the creation of viable enterprises. The interpretation here would be investments of this type is of smaller importance than what one would expect from conventional FDIs. If it is the case, it is obvious that this is a misinterpretation of the real potential for growth embedded into such investments. Given the cultural diversity and their specific identities, such a participation could also serve as a basis for national unity in the establishment of peace and security; one of the objectives pursued by NEPAD at the continental level. According to Tadesse (2003), a fundamental problem underscored in the development debates around NEPAD is the coexistence of communities with different identities. To this author, the most vital problem facing any African country today is the absence of a socio-cultural contract for the governance of relations between diverse communities or groups within the state, giving recognition and fulfilling the needs of each community in terms of specific identity, security and participation. Regional integration is not only about trading goods. It also in terms of facilitating contacts, through the complex migratory mechanisms, between communities that have complementary interests in the exploitation and

management of resources. Any regional integration agenda at the continental should address this issue, to avoid some of the pitfalls encountered in the previous experiences.

Looking into the responses from the communities themselves, it is important to admit that though regional integration has made no major headway in many parts of the continent, the trends seems to have been different at the bottom level. A bottom like regional integration has been taking place over the years through informal mechanisms (Igue, 1993). Across the continent, movements of African entrepreneurs from country to country have been associated with vibrant forms of indigenous entrepreneurship in the host economy. Prospects for better money making opportunities in other places than the country of actual residence have always motivated many African citizens to migrate to other African countries, believed to be wealthier. Strictly speaking, long distance trip has never been seen as a deterring factor to this intra-African mobility. Pervasive situations of socio-economic and internal conflicts in which most of these countries evolve have to some extent exacerbated these population movements of which undocumented and forced migrations represent a considerable proportion. To most countries, paradoxically, intra-African migration is not often regarded as a contributing factor to national development. This perception, amplified in situation of crisis, has tended to perpetuate among nationals, xenophobia toward foreigners despite the fact most of activities run by foreigners tend to benefit the economy of the host country. In effect, many countries struggling to tackle the pressing problems of development do not perceive intra-African migration as a vehicle for innovations and transfer of know-how from one African society to another, making it possible to increase production in those untapped activities with high potential for growth. The human capital transferred through this migration opens up possibilities of developing sectors that could remain underexploited if left in the hands of nationals. Whenever African migrants are the main topic of media news, it is often in terms of expulsion or criminal undertakings in the host country. Situations of violent expulsion have been reported in many parts of Africa (Nigeria, Gabon, Libya, Congo, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mauritania, to name but a few. In only few cases the positive impact that intra-African migration could have is brought to the fore to show how some groups of African migrants exploit certain niches of the host economy. Ways in which the contributions from the migrant economy taken place are for obvious reasons underscored in the conventional models of regional integration and cooperation given preference by political decision takers. It is therefore important to use a different perspective on the opportunities brought about by this intra-African migration carrying with it a high potential for an informal transfer of competencies embedded into the African Knowledge Systems at the continental level. Because of its localised nature, such a transfer, where the context is appropriate, gives way to conditions that are conducive to local development in both the sending and the receiving countries.

From a general standpoint, field observations reported by several authors suggest that enterprises run by migrants have tended to proliferate in many parts of Africa, especially in urban area. The most visible activities are those involved in the selling of exotic products, petty trade of manufactured goods and small scale services. In most cases, the business is owned by an individual on the walk side of the street, or a public market place. Activities run under such circumstances have been classified by some analysts as part of the informal sector, falling mostly in the category of individual strategies for daily survival. Seen under this angle, these informal activities could not produce significant transformation at the local level in terms of enterprises development for increased production in the host economy. The same view with regard to business, like groceries or trading stores that have received formal authorisation from the local authority to operate. Break out of xenophobia in many African countries – Congo (Brazzaville), Ivory Coast, South Africa, Gabon, Libya to name but a few, found their roots in this popular thinking that African migrants “are there to grab the job opportunities and money that nationals deserve” and they cannot positively contribute to the transformation of the local economy.

Analysing the economic activities run by African migrants only from the perspective of those that have limited input in know how or technical knowledge capable of positioning the migrant as transmitter. Such a transfer of know how has a potential for technological transformation at the local level. The reason why such happens is partly related, on the one hand, to the skills migrants collectively have, and, on the other hand, on the capacity of the community they represent, to mobilise those skills and use them in collective enterprising. The interesting part of this is that in the process of

skills mobilisation within the migrant community, resources available locally are used to produce goods and services. It is therefore a valorisation of local resources that takes place in the transformation process.

The case-studies reported in the present paper show how this indigenous-based technological transformation has taken place in Congo (Brazzaville) and benefited to the local economy. Two sectors have particularly benefited from this indigenous socially and culturally constructed technological know how, notably that of artisanal fishing activities and that of wooden furniture making. What is really interesting to note in this process is that the development of migrant's enterprises is not the outcome of a purposefully designed programme or policy aimed at promoting these activities. It has been primarily driven through a social transformation that has been nurtured over years by migrants themselves to consolidate their livelihoods. This social transformation, spanning over national boundaries, is rooted in culturally-based networks, exchange of information and well-entrenched collective capability that, put together, allow migrants to sustain their livelihoods. This process give rise to the necessary conditions of social and economic production and reproduction, making possible for these migrant communities to reposition themselves, in a strategic manner, in the lucrative niches available in the market structure of the host country. Within the migrant communities, the conditions of this type are consolidated by the social institutions, of conjectural nature, built around a synergic combination of cultural values with negotiated relations with the host society. One could argue that the evolution and interplay of these institutions, of indigenous nature, determines the dynamism of enterprise creation within the migrant community. Taking into consideration these conjectural institutions is of great importance in the objective of incorporating the technological know how possessed by migrants in the strategies available to NEPAD for facilitating intra-continental trade.

The present study reports on the technological dimension of intra-African migration, by positing the analysis from the perspective of the host country. The aim is to establish the extent to which two communities of African migrants living in Congo (Brazzaville) participate in innovating and transferring know how in the host country. The sectors of interest for the analysis are those related to artisanal fishery and wooden furniture making. These sectors are those for which economic niches are being exploited at the interface of informal and formal institutions. Entrepreneurial behaviours at the community level are analysed to establish how African migrants, mostly from West Africa and Democratic Republic of Congo, have been at the fore front of magnificent mutations in the production of goods and services. Such mutations provide the foundations for the development of small and medium enterprises in these key activities of the local development. Going beyond the observations and analysis of empirical evidence, the analysis results in some propositions in regard to the necessity of putting in place appropriate institutions to facilitate intergovernmental cooperation and derive at the best the advantages associated with these mutations. A related component of such propositions is the need to manage conflicts that could come with this intra-African migration. To empirically lend support to these arguments, the two case studies are now examined.

Understanding the migrant community entrepreneurship from the perspective of intra-African indigenous investments: insights from the case studies

At the out start, it must be said that the two case studies are intended to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of informal entrepreneurship involving African migrants as they negotiate their claims for space in order to consolidate their livelihoods in the urban setting. The paper gives a prominent place to the sub-processes taking place at the interface between formal and informal urban institutions. Therefore, the role of the municipal authority in mediating the demands for economic space between the communities of migrants and other (powerful) corporations is critically assessed at the interface of formal and informal institutions. The city of Pointe-Noire provides the urban context to the analytical framework. This is the second major city of Congo-Brazzaville, with a population size estimated at 425000 inhabitants. The economic functions of Pointe-Noire are strongly driven the exploitation of important reserves of oil. The country itself, Congo-Brazzaville, is a major destination of immigrants from various

countries in search for better living conditions. Alike the neighbouring Gabon, this migratory attractiveness is strongly linked to the country's economic wealth propelled by oil exploitation. The growing demands for goods and services generated by a rapid urban growth have given rise to some niches of economic activity operating within the informal sector. Income-generating opportunities have gradually been opened up to foreign African immigrants as they encounter barriers to enter the formal employment sector. This international migration, as documented elsewhere, has been primarily driven by perceived rewards in sectors that do not require a high level of technology but for which the operation of ethnic-based networks contributes to individual's achievement (*see*, for example, Haris, 1995; Light, Bhachu and Farageor, 1993). This seems to have been the case in Congo-Brazzaville. Partly fuelled through chain migration associated with social networks and prospects of good fortune, African immigration entrepreneurship has been especially growing in the economic sectors of retailing, coastal fishery, carriage, housing construction and home-furniture making (Tati, 1996). In this paper, the focus is on two groups of economic actors, namely home-furniture makers and fishermen in the coastal zone. The substantial growth pattern happening in these sectors of economic activity is associated with an appropriation of space which operates through the development of informal housing in the physical environment where those economic activities are taking place.

More specifically, this study aims to provide new theoretical perspectives on the spatial and socio-economic dynamics of migrant networks exploiting niche economy in African urban context. It explains how clusters of migrant enterprises in artisanal fishery and furniture making drive informal occupancy of urban land for housing and business premises. In this study, a cluster is explicitly defined in geographic terms as a group of producers making the same or similar things in close proximity to each other (Schmitz, 1992). According to McCormick (2001), this definition seems appropriate to developing countries where geographic proximity can help to overcome barriers created by poor infrastructure and weak information systems, and where people favour face-to-face communication. The concept of network will be defined later.

Objectives

The objectives pursued through this empirical presentation are to explore three interrelated issues. The first objective was to examine the mechanisms through which two groups of African migrant entrepreneurs use ethnic networks in the development of enterprises in fishery and furniture making and informally appropriate space for industrial and housing purposes in the city of Pointe-Noire, the second largest urban center of Congo (Brazzaville). The second objective was to explore the relationship between this transnational labour migration and economic networking within enterprises, and how linkages between migrant enterprises result in the formation of claims for rights to space ownership. The third objective is to scrutinize the sub-processes taking place at the interface between local institutions and the development cycle of clustered informal enterprises and housing owned by African migrants in the city of Pointe-Noire.

More precisely, the case studies examine the mechanisms through which the community of immigrant fishermen from West Africa and the one of immigrant wood-furniture makers from the Republic democratic of Congo (former Zaïre) have come to sustain illegal occupancy of space in relation to their successful exploitation of niche economy. The aim is to identify the relationships between the economic performance of these two successful economic groups of immigrants operating in the informal sector and the occupancy of urban space when both are used for income-generating and housing purposes, and, by so doing, to capture the mutual interplay forces that reinforce the respective dynamics of niche economy and informal housing. Simply defined, the concept of niche economy refers to a sectoral positioning for which both these foreign fishermen and wood-furniture makers, operating in groups, have progressively gained a leading economic position thanks to their technical know-how and their greater capability to adjust (or negotiate with) to the changing environment.

Some recent studies on informal activity have stressed the need to understand the spatial logic underlying this sector. For example, Kesteloot and Meert (1999) claim that although there has been a proliferation of studies on informal activities in cities, mirroring the growth of the phenomenon itself, few

firm conclusions have yet been reached in relation to the spatial patterns of these activities. A few years ago before this view was expressed, the research on which this paper is based was designed by the author with this concern in perspective.

The conceptual framework underpinning the analysis emphasises the importance of ethnic networks in reproducing the necessary mechanisms that drive the dynamics of enterprising and space appropriation. They also socially legitimate the process of space appropriation. Besides of being entrepreneurial, the mechanisms pertaining to this space appropriation are of diverse nature: demographic, social, cultural, informational and institutional. African immigrant entrepreneurs take possession of space according to resources and their power in the social framework either in the existing laws, rules and norms, or the laws and norms they elaborate specifically for a purpose. In doing this, African immigrant entrepreneurs build, produce, transform, and attach signification to their own territory and the national as well. Enterprising and appropriation of space discussed in the paper are both informal, but migrants involved in this process permanently negotiate the space as being their (legitimate) territory. This negotiated appropriation of space involves as well conflicts with more social and economic actors possessing a greater legal (formal) protection. Thus, informal enterprising is determined by a dialectic process through which migrant groups, individuals and organisations involved take symbolic possession of space through the cultural expression of community values or personal achievements. In the migrant communities under investigation, culture is one of the main dimensions reflecting in the appropriation of economic spaces. Another dimension reflects in the economic practices that take place in the space that is being appropriated.

The case studies provide analyses of the interactions between the economic life of the space, the social actors directly or indirectly involved in and community culture. These interactions produce or reproduce the formal/informal mechanisms through which the space for domestic uses and livelihoods is constructed and appropriated by African migrant entrepreneurs, and the legitimisation of this appropriation negotiated with the local authorities. For each community, the rapprochement between the growth pattern of economic activity and of housing space raise four interrelated questions. The first is how has the economic positioning through niche market exploitation allowed these potentially vulnerable groups (most of them are illegal immigrants) to negotiate or to claim some rights to appropriate space in the city? The second is what have been the institutional mechanisms involved in this "space-appropriating" process? The third question is whether the spatial expansion could be attributed to some weaknesses in the administrative enforcement of regulation from the public authority with regard to public space invasion or? (The fourth question) whether the apparent tolerance from the municipal authorities could be a reflection of an attitude privileging instead the benefits in terms of local development derived from these informal small-scale enterprises?

To answer these questions, the analytical approach is structured around four interrelated components. The first component documents on the prominent features of the settlement patterns within each community. The second component examines the ways in which each community has economically organised itself. It is therefore important here to examine the collective economic behaviours within each community that have contributed so far to their spatial expansion. The third component provides details on the role of assets in the transformation of the settlement of migrants. By so doing, a better understanding of the relationships between the expansion of economic activities and the dynamics of the settlement will be achieved. The fourth component builds upon the two previous and examines the types of social dialogue that have emerged between different partners, including the municipal authority, in the process of occupancy of public space. The various aspects of such a dialogue will be discussed in terms of conflicts resolution, formal and informal mediating instruments used in the process of space occupancy and growth prospects for those unregistered small-scale enterprise. For a reason of clarity, details concerning each community of foreigners are presented separately.

Contextual considerations

During the recent past years, African immigrant entrepreneurs from West Africa and Democratic Congo have been remarkably successful in the informal industrial sectors of coastal fisheries and

furniture making, respectively. These activities have rapidly developed as a consequence of migration flows resulting in large numbers of enterprises. African migrant entrepreneurs have taken advantage of niche economy in the city. This remarkable economic success has been paralleled with an appropriation of urban space for both economic and housing purposes. Fuelled by migration influxes, these communities have considerably grown in size. As one consequence of this demographic growth, the fishers and furniture making artisans' settlements have both spatially expanded and housing has significantly been developed on each site. Housing and economic activity have both developed so rapidly that the sites occupied by the two settlements of foreigners have been recently qualified as new wards of the city. This expansion is expected to intensify as the potential for (sustained) growth remains high as far as these informal industrial activities are concerned. The social integration of members of these two immigrant communities is impressive despite the illegal character of land property ownership and the volatile social environment. In effect, up to the mid of 1980's, the experience of foreigners with running business in Congo resulted in violent confrontation. In effect, as has been the case in many other African countries, African immigrant entrepreneurs have had in the past to deal with attitudes of open xenophobia. In some circumstances, they have been massively expelled from the country with use of violence. Their properties were either destroyed or confiscated by local populations. From the 1960s to the 1980s, events of this kind occurred frequently. Surprisingly, since the 1990s, the increasing entrepreneurship paralleled with illegal appropriation of public space seems not to generate similar attitudes. Instead, the prevailing attitude suggests a real change in the way African immigrant entrepreneurs are perceived from the local populations' perspective. A climate of tolerance has replaced exclusionist attitudes toward African entrepreneurs. These foreigners are regarded as integral members of the city deserving social consideration. One can even speak of a trend towards an inclusive city as immigrant communities are gaining access to land for housing. The central issue of concern in this paper is therefore the identification of mechanisms that have contributed to this illegal appropriation of public space by foreigners without strong opposition from local populations or authorities.

Background works to the issues under investigation

From a general standpoint, the dynamics of these two migrant communities have received very little attention in past research, if any, conducted locally. This is largely due to the general weak institutional research capacity that characterizes the production of knowledge in the country. Despite the public recognition in regard to the growing size of African immigrant population in the city of Pointe-Noire, and the politicized handling of its importance, knowledge of how the migrant economy operates in conjunction with the informal appropriation of urban space is still thin.

Significance of the issues investigated for NEPAD agenda on intra-African trade and cooperation

Locating the issues within the frame of NEPAD developmental agenda, the interest of studying the dynamics of African migrant entrepreneurs resides in four aspects. First, there is a need to understand, from a theoretical perspective, the dynamics of informal economic spaces, and their relationships with entrepreneurship in African urban context. In spite of the increasing population movements across the continent, theoretical investigations on this relationship is still under developed as far as urban policy is concerned. In Congo, there is a growing public recognition that these migrants considerably contribute to urban economy. Besides, enterprises run by migrants present a strong capacity of transformation and adaptability to local conditions. Second, the sites where those migrants have settled have a high potential for rapid population growth, while being at the same time the terrains of conflicts and environmental degradation. Information from empirically based research is needed in order to guide public authorities and non-governmental organizations in the management of those conflicts and environmental hazards. Third, intra-African migration has always been presented in international fora as a vehicle for the transfer of endogenous know-how, especially endogenous technology required for the development of small enterprises. This claim is not however supported by empirically based case

studies. Fourth, at the international level, there is a growing interest and debate around the dynamics of small firm networks (Bartlett and Franke, 1999) and, more importantly, the role of the milieu (Christopoulos and Konstadakopoulos, 1999), but this interest seems to leave out small enterprises operating in the informal sector as is the case in African urban context. In this latter, the community of entrepreneurs itself or/and larger enterprise related to their activities can serve as milieu. In line with this, Pedersen (1993) has suggested the use of network approach to the small enterprise. He argued that though in most developing countries, the small enterprise sector has increasingly been taken seriously, partly under pressure from the World Bank and the large aid donors, there is a great deal of uncertainty about how the small enterprise or informal sector should be taken. To address this issue, Pedersen has underscored the suitability of a network approach to small enterprises showing high level of specialization. This is the case for the types of enterprises investigated in this research. Interestingly Pedersen argued that enterprise of this kind rely not only on the economic network of enterprises but also on the family and social network of the entrepreneur, and sometimes also of his employees. The author has claimed that only policies which recognize the duality in the networks in which the small enterprise operates are likely to succeed. It is the demonstration of this duality that will be the main concern of the present research.

With respect to artisanal coastal fishery, its importance for the urban economy of African countries is increasingly recognized. For some countries in Western Africa (like Senegal or Mauritania), artisanal coastal fishery represents more than 40 percent of total exports. Social research in this type of fishery is also gaining in interest due to its economic importance. An authoritative anthropological collection of studies has been very recently published on this issue with special reference to West-African canoe fisheries (Chaveau et al, 2001). The study underscores the remarkable economic persistence and growth of the canoe fisheries in the region. The evidence reviewed in this publication strongly suggests, according to the editors, that the analysis of canoe fisheries requires investigations of institutional dynamics related to three essential aspects:-the political in the sense of regulation of access to, and control over biological, material, social and institutional resources;-the geographical and professional mobility of individuals and groups, sometimes not even involved in the fisheries themselves, and the economic caused by the very strong integration of the canoe fisheries in various types of markets (local, regional and world market). The regulation of fishing practices must be understood with reference to elements of power and of rules which derive from a much broader base of city life. It is emphasized in the collection of studies that ethnic, professional and gender identities constitute important assets used by the various actors (individuals and groups) in developing active strategies for negotiating their resource access; in other words: before being managed by individual and communities, fisheries must be socially constructed.

As for the informal space occupancy, its importance to clusters of informal small enterprises has been also underscored in the literature. In a very authoritative publication, Rakodi (1996) has recently claimed that not only economic activities occupy different areas of economic space; they also have a physical manifestation. The author reckons that whereas the organized employment centers of industrial areas and central business districts (CBDs) are well established in most African cities, and informal activities have been ubiquitous in most African countries, the concentration of clusters proliferation throughout the city regardless of zoning, are more recent phenomena in many African countries, as liberalization of both economic policies and restrictive regulations has proceeded. The significance of site and location to large-scale and formal enterprise is reasonably well understood, but the role of site, location, and proximity to companion or competing enterprises and customers for small-scale enterprises has been little studied. Associated with this issue of public space appropriation is therefore the growing interest in clusters of producers in urban African areas and the understanding of their dynamics in order to implement appropriate policy action (McCormick, 2001). Recent international literature suggests that operating in clusters enables small enterprises to improve their performance through collective efficiency (Schmitz, 1992). However, McCormick's survey of African enterprise clusters underscores that most African clusters remain at a very low level of development (McCormick, 2001). The probable reason of this stagnation, according to McCormick, lies in the inability of African clusters to reap strongly positive benefits from labour market pooling and

technologically spill-overs. This author argues that clustering in Africa takes place in the context of an overabundance of labour. Instead of drawing workers from a pool of specialized labour, cluster firms rely on unskilled labour and trainees. These poorly paid workers, the author concludes, often go on to set up their own firms, adding to the already intense competition. The rapid creation of ethnic migrant enterprises in canoes fishery and furniture making, operating as clusters, offers an ideal setting for ascertaining this important claim made by McCormick as the development cycle of clusters of enterprises.

Overall, it is hoped that the findings produced by the case studies contribute, both theoretically and empirically, to action research on the relationships between ethnic migration networks and entrepreneurship in the process of African development. More specifically, it is hoped that they will also guide policy addressing informal investments for the development of informal enterprises in canoe fisheries and furniture making as viable export sectors for the host country. In relation to this policy issue, the research findings may be particularly useful in correcting discrepancies between objectives and actual results in local development projects, as those discrepancies will be understood through the confrontation of norms, of logics and of 'rules of the game' between the various local actors-among fishers, furniture makers as well as among development agents (local authority, NGO, donors, multilateral agency and private investors) and continental organisations like NEPAD..

Review of some theoretical considerations and relevance to the developmental agenda

Beyond the policy concern, the issue of migrant community entrepreneurship must first be understood from the theoretical perspective. Theorising is a necessary step for bringing together the social dynamics affecting the entrepreneurial sub-processes at work, namely adjustment and formation of migrant entrepreneur identity in the host environment. The field of migrant entrepreneurship in the developmental process be it at local or national level, has received a great deal of attention from a large number of social scholars with special reference to developed countries. Thus the issue is not specific to Africa. The many faces of ethnic immigrant entrepreneurship have been reviewed in Bun and Hui (1995) drawing on the experiences of developed countries. These authors documented the different theoretical and empirical perspectives on the dynamics of ethnic migrant economy in the opportunity structure, particularly markets that are underserved or abandoned by local entrepreneurs. Their review of literature on ethnic entrepreneurs provides an understanding of a significant form of adaptation by various ethnic migrant groups. These authors however underscored that most past research has been focused on those who have migrated to established societies (United States, Western Europe, Canada, Japan, Australia...). The review of literature done by Bun and Hui identified two pressing questions confronting research in the ethnic enterprise. The first problem relates to understanding the dialect-based networking and how this functions across international borders. According to the authors, this is crucial to ascertaining empirically if reliance on family, kinship and clan ties in business transactions is central to the dynamics of migrant enterprise or not. The second question concerns the hows and whys of observed similarities and variations in entrepreneurial type, size and performance within and among different immigrant groups in the opportunity structure. As formulated in the research core question above, these two concerns are very central to the conceptual policy framework.

In its more general form presented in Light *et al* (1999), the theory conceives of migration as embedded in social networks that span continents and decades and that arise, grow, and ultimately decline. A network approach fits individual decision makers within groups, and it interposes groups between macroscopic social and economic conditions and actual migrations. By linking populations in origin and destination areas, a migration network create self-sustaining migration flows that become partially independent of the pushes and pulls that cause to develop in the first place. In relation to international migration, networks fit within assumptions of a risk-diversification strategy model. According to this model, international migration strategically diversifies risks because international borders create discontinuities that promote independence of earnings at home and abroad. Migration networks reduce the economic risks of migration, thus rendering the strategy more attractive from a

risk-diversification perspective. Several scholars have documented the ways international migration restructures both sending and receiving economies, thus affecting subsequent migration flows in the very process of migration (see, for example, Hugo, 1981; Massey, 1988). Most analyses put emphasis on remittances and return migration in restructuring the sending economy (see, for example, Stahl, 1989; Massey, 1988), and the role that migrant networks play in facilitating and encouraging the creation and expansion of employment opportunities for prospective migrants in the host society. It has been argued that migrant networks are most significantly crucial in the setting up and development of migrant enterprises and enclaves (Boyd, 1989) and in the concentration of migrants from ethnic groups and localities in particular occupational and ecological niches in destination societies (Hugo, 1981). Some empirically-based studies have been produced to support those arguments with special reference to developed countries.

The general conceptualization of the network theory has been criticized by Light et al (1993) and Light et al (1999). According to these authors, the network theory as framed by several prominent scholars (Massey was the most quoted among them) suffers some self-imposed limitations. The theory concentrates upon facilitation and efficiency, slighting structural changes caused by immigration networks in the destination economy. In its facilitating function, networks make it easier for immigrants to find housing, jobs, protection, and companionship in city (Lin and Dunin, 1986). This is, according to Light et al (1993), the *raison d'être* of networks as framed by most prominent scholars. When this function is efficiently performed, available jobs and housing that exist in the immigrant-receiving locality are subjected to decline, leading to *economic saturation*, a term used by the authors. Such saturation poses the obvious limit to the general conceptualization of network theory in the sense that in the locality there will be no more job opportunities or housing to be taken up by new migrants. At the point of real economic saturation, a saturation crisis exists. In this latter, a migration network cannot locate the jobs or housing that provide its *raison d'être*. The resulting migration outcome of this crisis is that migration fluxes to the locality are tremendously reduced. Framed along these lines, Light et al argue that networks become just a competitive ethnic resource of the immigrant population as it helps immigrants to obtain jobs that natives were also trying to locate and would have accepted. Under these circumstances, migration networks help to exclude natives from vacant jobs and housing in their own economy.

Light et al (1993) and Light et al (1999) depart from this limited theoretical framework, and suggest instead another theoretical perspective on migration networks theory that emphasizes the function of increasing the aggregate supply of local opportunities. This perspective is very central to the presently proposed paper. Light et al argued that this function adds new opportunities and through it the migrant network modifies the economy in the destination region or locality. Economic saturation is therefore postponed or possibly even avoided. It follows that not only they relocate co-ethnics from one nation to another, the migrant networks have or can assume a role in developing and increasing the migrant's earning and housing opportunities in the destination economy. According to Light et al, the method that encourages this result reside in immigrant entrepreneurs creating new firms or expanding existing ones in the locations of destinations, creating new jobs and housing for co-ethnics without reducing the supply available to non co-ethnics. The authors view this process as the operation of the immigrant economy that consists of self-employed immigrants and their co-ethnic employers. This important role related to the creation of an immigrant economy, according to Light et al, has been overlooked by contemporary network theory. They claim that migrant networks are entrepreneurial resources that expand the economic opportunities immigrants confront in the destination economy, thereby increasing the saturation threshold of this latter. The relationship between ethnic network and immigrant entrepreneurship is theorized by the authors in three principal ways. It can serve as a feeding mechanism in the supply of low cost co-ethnic labour to immigrant entrepreneurs in the same way it occurs in the case of non-immigrant entrepreneurs in the destination economy. The rates of co-ethnic employment by immigrant entrepreneurs are vastly above chance levels because of mutual trust established along ethnic lines.

Technical knowledge sharing among established and aspiring migrant entrepreneurs is another way the relationship operates. Information is fed through migration networks, and it concerns the

procedures to set up an enterprise, pricing, technology, business methods, and the like. In other words, the migration network is a frequently-used channel of communication along which business information easily and inexpensively flows. The management of this business information is in many cases mixed with some ethnic chauvinism that encourages participants to hoard information while concealing it from outsiders to the benefit and advantage of ethnic group participants. The enhancing relationship may also operate through the well documented various kind of mutual aid and assistance other than and in addition to information-credit, acquisition of initial training in the course of an apprenticeship passed in the business of a co-ethnic, enterprise consolidation and management, acquisition of premises, dealing with local bureaucrats, business capital-that is made available through social relationships.

The arguments developed by Light et al (1993) and Light (1999) represent important advances in the study of relationships between migration networks and entrepreneurship under the circumstances of non-economic saturation. Put in the context of the present paper, such circumstances are comparable to those prevailing in the localities where migrant enterprises are being developed. Both employment and housing obey the hypothesis of non-economic saturation regime discussed by the authors. The arguments, however, present some important conceptual omissions. First the operation of migrant network is taken as given in most case studies in reference to individual migrant entrepreneurs from a specific citizenship in the host country. The dynamic relations between those entrepreneurs and the new migrants prior to their move were surprisingly absent from the different analyses though concerned with the role of network. How did new migrants get where they were in the continuum origin country-host country is a question that has been insufficiently explored in studies on migrant networks. In other words, the works presented in Light and Bachu (1993) did not investigate how settled migrants in the host country resort to collective action through community-driven development. Equally neglected in this work is the resilience of community migrants to sustain their livelihoods and consolidate their assets in a contested institutional urban environment.

Second, the relationship between employment created by migrant and housing is not at all documented by the authors of the different examined in Light *et al* (1993), though the creation of housing is elusively presented as a prominent feature of the immigrant economy. Light and his associates' empirical focus was limited to migrant entrepreneurship concerns and ignored other salient processes that dictate the sequential logic embedded in the housing acquisition by migrants. For example, the case studies produced in Light and Bachu (1993) to support the arguments on immigrant economy did not allow for empirical examination of entrepreneurs' trajectories in the acquisition of premises for setting up in business, or the formation of home-based enterprises that were generally depicted in Eastern European or Asian migrant communities settled in western industrialized countries. The literature on those communities has emphasized the tendency towards the creation of enclaves where migrant enterprises have concentrated. And this concentration of enterprises, be they small, is not space neutral, it increases the demand for space in the locality and it increases its geographical area. If evidence was produced in most case studies collected by Light and Bachu (1993) to support the hypothesis that the migrant community in the place of destination act as incubator for new enterprises in the migrant economy, those case studies produced no hard evidence as to how migrant enclaves came to expand in terms of new housing under the circumstances of non-economic saturation. From a general standpoint, entry is easier in the migrant employment market than it is in housing market. This latter is extremely subjected to regulation in established societies presented as case studies in Light and Bachu (1993).

My review of literature has identified two aspects that seem to have attracted little investigation in the perspective suggested by Light et al; migrants' attitudes toward appropriation of public space (or housing production as termed by Light et al (1993), and the relationship between differentiation among migrants within the group and the expression of rights to citizenship through acquisition of land for housing. For example, the problem of economic behavioural competition between co-ethnic enterprises within the market niche, and how this interacts with space appropriation among migrants, is not conceptualized in the migration network theory. Taken as such, the theory is of little help in distinguishing the rationality of the system (the ethnic community as a whole) from the individual

enterprise's rationality. There seems to be a presumption that the migrant entrepreneur within the system becomes irrational once in the community. Proliferation of ethnic enterprises in the market niche leads inevitably to a certain level of crowding, and this results in competition between enterprises. Competition determines the development cycle of the migrant enterprise. Recently, Dobrev *et al* (2001) in their analysis of the dynamics of Niche width and resource partitioning have demonstrated how competitive pressure not only increases the hazard of disbanding but also prompts organizational transformations that give to processes of resource partitioning. Crowding intensifies competition, which, in turn, elevates mortality hazards. However, it is also argued that crowding induces enterprises working in a cluster to try to modify their niches, meaning inevitably change in niche width or change in niche position. In its very nature, an informal enterprise, be it driven by ethnic concern, is an institution driven to some extent by rationality, and workers involved in operate along the same line (Godelier, 1972). The locational choice is an expression of entrepreneurial rationality. This aspect is not discussed in the migration network theory. The new institutional economics theory can help to fill this gap by referring to the explanation of social institutions (Knight and Sened, 1998). Both enterprises owned by migrants and space where they have settled to run their activities are informal social institutions. However, there is a process of urban land ownership "legitimization" going on, and this is largely the outcome of network dynamics operating through collective action. From a general standpoint, North (1998) claims that competition forces organizations (ethnic enterprises in the context of this paper) to continually invest in skills and knowledge to survive. North adds that the kinds of skills and knowledge individuals and their organizations acquire will shape evolving perceptions about opportunities, and hence choices, that will incrementally alter institutions. However, the analysis of social institutions as proposed in the new institutionalism framework attributes less emphasis to the influence of cultural focus, and how this relates to the interpretation migrant entrepreneurs give to their activities and the space where they have settled. Networks are said to be cultural as they are the product of ideologies and beliefs (Light et al, 1993). Practice and discourse theory provides a framework for understanding the ways migrant entrepreneurs (and their families) are coping in the urban context, and migrants' interpretation of defining themselves socially and culturally. Dwelling on this theory, Robben (1989), in his piece of work on economic practice and discursive conflict among fishermen communities in Brazil, claims that practices are the rock bottom of humanness and therefore cannot be reduced to underlying beliefs, laws, rules, scenarios, or cognitive processes. To Robben, the most crucial and defining quality of people is to be found not in what they think but in what they do and how they do what they do, namely, attending to the everyday things, tasks and demands of their social world. The conflicting interpretations of practice are properly encapsulated within an analytical approach emphasizing cultural foci, as done in the present research. All these three theoretical backgrounds will be brought together into a single conceptual framework that will guide the proposed research.

Conceptualisation of the migrant community entrepreneurship with reference to African context

Put in short, the basic proposition of my conceptual framework is that ethnic networks (re) produce the necessary mechanisms that drive the dynamics of urban space appropriation and socially legitimate as well this process. These mechanisms are of diverse nature: demographic, social, cultural, entrepreneurial, informational and institutional. Social actors (African immigrant entrepreneurs) take possession of space according to resources and their power in the social framework either of the existing laws, rules and norms, or the laws and norms they elaborate specifically for a purpose. In doing this, African immigrant entrepreneurs build, produce, transform, and attach signification to their own territory and the national one as well. Appropriation of space discussed in the paper is illegal, but social actors involved in this process permanently negotiate the space as being their (legitimate) territory. Interestingly, this negotiated appropriation does not involve conflict. The paper demonstrates that this space appropriation, while being a dialectical process, is as well a process by which groups and individuals take symbolic possession of space through the cultural expression of community values or personal achievements. In both migrant groups, culture is one of the main dimensions

reflecting in the appropriation of space. Another dimension reflects in the economic practices that take place in the space that is being appropriated.

The paper analyzes the interactions between the economic life of the space, the social actors directly or indirectly involved in and community culture. These interactions produce or reproduce the formal/informal mechanisms through which space is constructed and appropriated by African immigrant entrepreneurs, and the legitimization of this appropriation negotiated with the local community.

Methodology for data collected and analysis

The paper is based on a research that necessitated several site visits conducted by this author from 1992 to 2002. The collection of data for this research heavily dwelt on the methodology of an ethnosurvey defined as a multi-method data-gathering technique that simultaneously applies ethnographic and survey methods within a single study. Massey (1993) emphasized the advantages of this methodology in the collection of information on the process of migration (even though the author referred to the migration from Mexico to the United States). He importantly argued that the methodology is particularly adapted when the research concern is about the role played by migrant networks. Thus, both quantitative and qualitative components were used separately, but were carried out simultaneously, to yield the necessary information.

The qualitative part of the research was an in-depth investigation covering informal enterprises run by African foreigners from two communities in the city of Pointe-Noire; a community of Fishermen from West Africa and a community of furniture makers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire). As said earlier, the first community is located in the coastal area, almost sharing the same space with a multinational oil company. The second community is located between popular residential areas and the trading and business center of the city. Both sites offer locational advantages to migrant entrepreneurs who have informally settled there. In-depth interviews will be in the form open-ended questions discussed conversationally, in a predetermined sequence. The respondents were key informants with information (and interpretation) on a variety of topics to be discussed. Consent was obtained in the first place before interview. My concern in qualitative data collection was to ground the insights in the views and experiences of community entrepreneurs. By so doing, this author examined the range of differences and similarities between individuals and enterprises configurations within the communities.

Quantitative data were collected at both community and individual levels. The collection of data was conducted using both retrospective and prospective approaches. Information to collect covered topics on socio-demographic and family characteristics, history and project of migration, housing conditions, individual's assets, locational choice, work experience and skills, socio-economic relations within the enterprise, and with similar enterprises within the community, individual's attitude to social mobility and to competition, associational life. These data were collected from a convenient sampling survey of enterprises. The unit of observation was the enterprise (the fishing canoe or the furniture making workshop), and all individuals working in the enterprise were interviewed, using a semi-structured questionnaire.

Information at the community level consisted of general field observations. The site observations helped to elaborate a detailed description of the physical setting, activities pursued to gain a livelihood, the social setting, and contacts within or outside the community. Observations included descriptions of organized events (meetings, ceremonies) and informal interaction among people as they go about their daily routine activities. Informal conversations and photos were used as parts of this information collection at the community level. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered for the interviews.

Case study 1: The Community of fishermen

The settlement patterns

The population size of the settlement formed by the fishery community (comprising men, women and children) is difficult to establish as no recent census has been conducted locally for that purpose. For the same reason, the exact number of fishermen operating in the coastal zone of the city of Pointe-Noire is difficult to establish at the present time. However, a fairly estimate of their importance as indicated by the 1984 national population census is 449 individuals classifiable as active workers. Based on the information derived from my research fieldwork conducted in April 1998, an estimation of the fishermen population is about 1100 individuals. However these figures obviously underestimate the real number of persons participating in the fishery economy, as women are not counted. In effect, even though they are not involved in fish taking in the deep sea, they are active operators in the chain of fish production (the work conducted by Bøe (1999) to which I will come later, provide strong evidence of the role played by foreign women in the vitality of the coastal fishery industry).

From a historical standpoint, it is difficult to trace back in a quantitative manner the trends of the settlement patterns within the fishermen community. However, oral sources tend to establish that the first stages of settlement go back to the end of the 1960s. These sources are matched by cutting across specific historical events, which tend to establish that the first contingents of migrant fishermen arrived about that time. The immigration flows were small in numbers, and this pertains to a slow rate of demographic growth of the community. Besides the composition of flows was entirely composed by male migrants as this labour-related mobility was primarily viewed as a temporary move. With the years passing, the fishermen community has considerably grown, fuelled by continuous arrivals of new migrants in the area. These migrants were attracted by lucrative prospects offered by the fishery activity. As stipulated by some scholars (see, for example, Kwok Bun and Jin Hui, 1995), information transmitted by settled migrants to their counterparts left at the place of origin might have also contributed to this demographic growth by inciting new migration flows. The economic success of first settlers motivated others fishermen to migrate to Pointe-Noire. Indirectly, the oil boom, which steadily gained in force in the 1980s, also encouraged that chain migration, as the city became an ideal destination for economic migrants. The demographic structure also changed in the composition of recent migration flows. The age structure became younger due to the increasing participation of young people in the migration. The sex composition also changed partly due to family regrouping. Within the community, family formation through marriage with women of the same place of origin gained in force, reflecting thereby an attitude towards a more permanent residence in the area. Such a family regrouping itself contributed to natural increase within the fishermen community. In fact, both the arrival of new fishermen and family formation became indirectly accompanying demographic mechanisms of the appropriation of the physical economic space in line with the well motivated view that "the larger the size of the community, the stronger the community's voice for any claim". The fishermen community has considerably expanded from the small coastal bay in the north of the present site where the first contingent of migrants settled, locally named *Mbou MvouVou*, nearby the actual presidential palace, the spatial occupation has over the years considerably expanded to the *Songolo* stream, further south. The coastal space occupied by those fishermen offers some locational advantages in terms of proximity to the main market places in the city, besides of providing community security, the site also allows to residents to take large advantage of some facilities such as the road infrastructure leading to the other major places of the city, the supply of drinkable water and the local primary school which are available in the vicinity of the area where they have settled. The grammar school and of two military posts closely located in the same were to be counted among the public services close to the settlement of fishermen. For security reason, the military posts including a *gendarmerie* base were viewed as places where they search for protection in the situation of xenophobic violence as it happened in 1977.

Some of the locational advantages offered by the site probably motivated a multinational oil company to choose it for the development of its industrial activities. The implementation of this development was initiated in 1980. During the early first stages of implementation, some negotiations over space occupancy

took place between all the resident groups in the zone and the oil company. The public authorities mediated the negotiation process. The major aspects of this latter are examined now.

The development of coastal artisanal fishery

Indisputably, this increasing participation of fishermen from West African countries has been triggered by three factors. The first factor is related to both the poor performance of the state-owned enterprises and the incapacity of the private companies in the fishery industry to satisfy the demand. The second factor is itself related to this demand that has significantly grown as a consequence of the rapid increase of the population living in the city of Pointe-Noire as well as the one living in other major cities of the country. For Pointe-Noire, it is estimated that the population has been increasing with an annual rate of during the last recent years (Tati, 1993). Sea fish is the main source of animal protein for the urban population. The third factor is to be found in a combination of strong commitment to individual success with an efficient organisation that obviously characterise fishermen from West Africa. I will elaborate with more details on this third factor later.

With regard to the two first factors mentioned, it should be pointed out that for several years; a few companies owned by French or Portuguese nationals drove the modern sector of the industrial fishery. Thereafter, state-owned companies operated and the sector was almost monopolised by their activities. The monopoly was dictated by a form of ownership inspired from Marxist Leninist ideology that Congo politically followed from 1963 to 1989. Despite its high potential for growth, the modern fishery industry run by the state poorly performed. The productivity of the state-owned companies experienced a steadily decline despite substantial public subsidies to maintain their cash flow. Government attempts to rescue these companies by improving productivity constantly failed. Over the years, the performance of the modern industrial fishery remained below the objectives pursued, failing to satisfy the national demand in fish. As previously indicated, this demand has significantly increased largely because of the rapid population growth experienced by cities, especially the city of Pointe-Noire.

A few figures on fish production provide evidence on the differing patterns of evolution between the modern and the artisanal fishery sector. For example, data made available by the *Direction des Statistiques Agricoles* (1989) on fish production indicate that in 1980, the volume of fish produced by the modern sector did not exceed 13100 tons while it was 14000 tons in 1978. For the other years, the production of fish remained below 10000 tons whereas national imports of fish steadily increased, with volumes exceeding 50000 tons. As for the artisanal coastal fishery, a more positive trend is displayed. The same source of data shows that for both 1985 and 1986, the volume of fish produced by the artisanal industry exceeded the volume of fish produced by the modern industrial fishery. In 1985, the production reached 8429 for the former against 7907 for the latter. In 1986, the gap was slightly reduced as the artisanal fishery produced 7340 tons whilst the modern fishery produced 7287. It remained that the contribution of the artisanal fishery to the national production of fish was considerable. In terms of satisfying the national demand, one can speak of complementary relation between the two types of fishery. The informal enterprises obviously remedy the shortages in the satisfaction of the demand by the formal enterprises in the fishery industry. Thus, the fishery activities run by immigrants perform a vital function with regard to the provision of fish at the national level.

The poor performance of state-owned enterprises and the rapidly growing population in the major cities indisputably favoured the economic repositioning of the fishermen from West Africa. However, associated with the poor performance, the factor that boosted the repositioning is the closing down of state-owned and private enterprises in the fish industry during the 1990s. In effect, several enterprises that were operating in the sector ceased their activities because of bankruptcy. As no take over occurred, most of those enterprises were liquidated. For example, the liquidation of two state-owned enterprises in the fishery industry took place in September 1995 and was concerned with the *Office Nationale de Pêche Continentale* (ONAPEC), a state-owned company for continental fishery, and the *Société Anonyme de Gestion et d'Armement de Pêche* (SAGAP), another state-owned fishery company. The liquidation of these two enterprises, viewed as strategic instruments in the fishery policy of the state, illustrated the increasing commitment of the government to leave the modern fishery industry in the hands of the private

operators in line with the economic restructuring of the public sector advocated during the experience of Structural Adjustment Programmes.

In the course of time, fishermen from West Africa have been the major actors in the spectacular development experienced by the production of sea fish in the artisanal fishery. Nationals from Benin dominate the active population of immigrants though it is not easy to establish origin for particular individuals. The 1984 census indicated that nationals from Benin represent 93 per cent of West Africans working in the artisanal fishery industry. However, it is worth pointing out that there is a small community of Congolese fishermen from the local ethnic group *Vili* which participates in the fishery. But the importance of their participation in terms of catches is of lower level as compared to the production from West African fishermen. The gap in the performances of these two communities is likely explained by the number of the number of individuals participating and the economic organisation in the running of the fishery activity in each group. In a case like another, West African fishermen are in a better position, a larger number of active individuals and a well elaborated organisation. The techniques of coastal fishery used by these fishermen are more adapted intensive than the ones used by Congolese fishermen. Those techniques allow them to achieve large catches of fish. Canoes are wider and can generally reach a length ranging between 8 and 15 metres. Various types of nets are also used in order to take advantage of the possible locations of near off-shore or deep sea fish grounds. Variety in size of nets also allows them to catch specific fish that appear seasonally like harangues or those found in the edge of the continental shelf. In contrary Congolese fishermen use canoes which cannot contain more than two persons. Their nets have a more limited capacity of fish intake, in addition of poorly maintained. Because of the fragility of the canoe, they are constrained to fish near shore. This seriously limits their capacity to increase the volumes of fish catch. Beach seining is the widely used fishing method among Congolese fishermen. They can take turns rowing; and the catch is large enough to buy some food and some glasses of local beer. Among Congolese fishermen, an average workday takes only two to four hours; whilst it can take 12 hours among foreign fishermen. On contrary, foreign fishermen view their activity as being rewarding. As claimed by Robben (1989) in his study of fishermen in a locality of Brazil, fishing yields potentially the highest income of any manual work available and gives fishermen the freedom to avoid the often authoritarian organisation of salaried employment. He added that given the rigid social hierarchy of agriculture, fishing has traditionally been a viable alternative to unrewarding plantation work for those living in the coastal regions. Marine resources are not inherited. One cannot buy titles to fishing grounds, and fishermen cannot be denied access to the sea with laws or other instruments of power used by the ruling class to maintain their privileged position. Fishing seems to place fewer structural and institutional obstacles in the path of poor but ambitious and enterprising men. Hardin (1968) added support to this claim by saying that the common property of the sea is the greatest attraction of fishing. All These views hold true in the case of foreign fishermen operating on the beach of Pointe-Noire. Although fishing is dangerous and, physically demanding, it is financially rewarding from the point of view of foreign fishermen when the catch has been good, a canoe team can end up earning between 2,000,000 and 6,000,000 CFA Franc. On average, some fishermen earn four or five times the wage of the highest qualified civil servant in Congo.

Although operating in the informal sector, the management of a canoe's activity reveals an impressive level of socio-economic organisation. The number of workers ranges between 5 and 8 persons. The system of tasks and catch division is equally well elaborated. Individual's attitudes are more favourable to both saving, which in the end is transferred to the country of origin, and investment in the improvement of the existing technical capital. Marriage links is perceived as a mechanism participating in the labour force reproduction and in the gender division of labour. While Congolese fishermen prefer to work alone, fishermen from West Africa work in groups led by a leader selected on the basis of experience in the area and the fishery industry. Group formation often requires calling upon skilled fishermen from the country of origin by financing trip costs to Congo. The labour division is also visible between men and women or between age groups within the community of foreign fishermen. Family formation and marital relations contribute considerably to this division of labour. In a large proportion, fishermen from West Africa are heads of household carrying responsibilities for wives and children. Women and children participate in tasks that are different from the fishery in sea. A different pattern is observed among Congolese fishermen

with regard to marital status. Apart from a few cases of married individuals, they are overwhelmingly single, and the majority is of an age over 40 years old.

Within the foreign community, women example are actively involved in smoking fish which they sell to the central market place of the city. Smoked fish is also wholesaled to Congolese traders who retailed it in other urban centres or rural localities. The fish is generally sold on a daily basis either on the beach or in the market places of Pointe-Noire. But, with the increase in the production, the practice of smoking fish has been advocated within the community of West African fishermen. This practice allows the transformation of the excess of fresh fish into a product that can be conserved longer. By so doing, the fish is not wasted while the added value is increased. Teenagers participate as well in the smoking of fish. But they are more involved in seine fishing than in this kind of activity. The seine fishing allows them to fish occasionally and prepare some of them to eventually becoming professional fishermen. This is a mechanism of professional learning, which also serves to reproduce the labour force within the community.

It is important at this stage to mention two social changes which reflect how positive has been the impact of the participation of West African fishermen in the artisanal fishery economy. The first relates to the use of labour force supplied by young Congolese in the multiple tasks associated with the fishery activity. Young people are generally job seekers who are dropped out the educational system without getting any qualification. They are daily recruited at the beach to provide casual labour force in manual tasks such as filling wood boxes with fish before it is sold at the city market, smoking fish, cleaning boats or nets. Such a labour force is remunerated either in nature (a measurable quantity of fish), or in cash. After a certain period of involvement in this casual work, some of those young people are employed for mending nets under the supervision of more experienced fishermen. This stage generally constitutes the beginning of a learning process or apprenticeship regarding the profession of fishermen for many young Congolese. Few among them have ended up by becoming professional fishermen in order to make their leaving. But this option is quite difficult to accomplish as it requires a capital investment in equipment like net, boat or canoe or others. The easiest option for young Congolese who want to practice fishing is to join a team of West African fishermen managing a boat. The only barrier in this case is of cultural nature and this impedes the social integration. In the running of fishing activity, the community of West African fishermen behaved with a strong attitude of conservatism with regard to the intrusion of Congolese in their groups. The preservation of cultural homogeneity within each group of fishermen affiliated to a boat prevails even though a certain degree of openness has been taking place these last years. This conservatism has led some Congolese to work in group and to adopt the methods of fishing used by West African fishermen. In this respect, a boat with a powerful water-proof motor is used in stead of a canoe guided with a paddle; gill nets of bigger size are adopted in order to take advantage of all types of fish grounds either in near shore or high sea. The organisation of tasks within the group aboard ship and on shore is also heavily inspired from the foreign fishermen; they are all members of a local ethnic group *Vili*. To illustrate this transfer of know-how, it suffices to refer to the case of a group of Congolese fishermen that have named their boat *Sala-Biaku*. The closest translation of this name in English is "Follow the example". During my recent research visit in the area, I was informed that this group of fishermen is one of the prosperous in the area.

All evidence considered it is obvious that fishermen from West Africa have been the source of organisational transformation in the artisanal fishing industry. More importantly, a transfer of know-how has accompanied this transformation from them to Congolese fishermen. They have also considerably contributed to the supply of fresh or smoked sea fish and to the creation of job opportunities related to fishing. In definitive, their participation in the artisanal coastal fishing has benefited the development of a sector that was under exploited by Congolese fishermen. In a remarkable way, fishermen from West Africa share the concern for the chances of status climbing the fishing offers, and the various ways in which it relates the fishing economy to other realms of society, particularly the occupancy of the coastal space strategically used for housing.

Case study 2: The community of wood-furniture makers

The development of the artisanal wood-furniture manufacturers

As indicated in the introduction, immigrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaïre) are the main operators in this sector of activity where their leadership has gained in force over the recent years. The manufacturing of wood-furniture in the city of Pointe-Noire has experienced a significant rise following the occupancy of an urban zone which offers locational advantages from their economic perspective. During the last years, wood-furniture makers have settled in an area which serves as a junction between the trading and business center and the rest of residential districts of the city. It is a strategic zone from an economic standpoint, for not only it is very close to the central market place of the city but also it offers a real commercial visibility with regard to the selling of furniture. Furthermore, the location is also close to the major sawmills in activity in the city, and which supply the furniture makers in a large variety of planks. Frequent flooding from the nearby stream has not discouraged the furniture makers to use the area for housing purpose. Housing construction is prohibited by the municipal law, and occupancy has proliferated in an informal way in the area.

Foreign furniture makers have taken advantage of large opportunities of income-generating opportunities generated by the rapidly growing demand from households in the city. Such a demand was largely unsatisfied by Congolese furniture makers due to both low productivity and poor organisation. The economic behaviour of foreign furniture makers differentiates on three aspects. The first relates to the anticipation of the demand by making available in advance and in large numbers the most needed products by the public, namely beds, tables, chairs, cupboards, armchairs, sofas, wardrobes, drawers, and so on. During week days, furniture of varying type and quality are exhibited publicly on the side of the largest avenue in the city in the area occupied by the community of immigrants. Prices are clearly indicated on each furniture. On week-ends, furniture is exhibited for sale in a special space allocated for that purpose to all furniture makers of the city by the municipal authorities. However, foreigner furniture makers seem to prefer selling their products at their actual place of activity (which is also their housing place) because this avoids both direct competition with Congolese furniture makers and losing customers who may not have time on Sunday. From a general point of view, the pattern of production among Congolese furniture is driven by effective demand, in the sense that they actually respond to orders of furniture. Anticipation has never been their concern, and whenever this option is adopted, the number of furniture made available tends not to exceed one. From the consumer stand point, the anticipation of the demand through a serial production as it is operated by foreign furniture makers offer the advantage of finding a ready-use product. This readiness save the time generally required by frequent visits a customer has to pay to the furniture maker before the work is completed. Congolese furniture makers have got the bad reputation of taking too much time to complete a work ordered by a customer. This reputation has turned out to be true in the majority of cases. On contrary, furniture makers from the Democratic Republic of Congo are appreciated for their celerity in the completion of work. The second aspect relates to the price for different types of furniture. From a general standpoint, individual prices are relatively low as compared to those for furniture made by Congolese. Prices are also flexible in the sense that a price as displayed on a furniture is negotiable. This flexibility in pricing is locally termed *prix Magondo* (this term is derived from the popular language in the former Zaïre). As a way of comparison, the price ratio between a given furniture made by a Congolese and a furniture made by a foreigner is about 2:1. This price competitiveness has been favourable to foreign furniture makers in terms of attracting customers. The third aspect has resided in the organisation of the work in team of three to six persons. By working in group, foreign furniture makers can manage to overcome constraints production with regard to celerity and continuous supply of products. It is a practice which also increases the enterprise's productivity and its volume of profits. More importantly, the working in group is a distinctive mode of organisation which differentiates foreign furniture makers from Congolese furniture makers in the sense that the latter prefer to work alone. Finally, the diversity in the supply can also be regarded as a fourth aspect which characterises the economic positioning of immigrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The same furniture is often supplied in several models which are very attractive. This diversity reflects the creativity

that generally emerges whenever an economic activity is conducted in group. Models change periodically, and their names sometimes are inspired from France's history. For example, the terminology in the models of armchairs on the market includes names like *Louis XIV* or *Louis XVI*. Change in the models has also a marketing function in the sense that it reinforces the anticipation of the demand previously mentioned. Some models are even adopted by Congolese furniture

The combination of all these aspects has resulted in the dominant position occupied by Immigrants from the Democratic Congo in the sector of furniture making. One can not speak of competition between Congolese and foreign furniture makers as the latter are by and large performing successfully. The 1984 census showed that immigrants from the democratic Congo represent 84 per cent of the total population of immigrants involved in the manufacturing industry. Customers prefer to buy ready-made furniture supplied by immigrants, attracted by low prices and the time saved in the delivery of the item. In the past, this ready-made aspect was equated with poor quality, and customers tended to avoid buying furniture produced by immigrants. However, this fear turned out to be unfounded. Customers were increasingly attracted by the good quality of the furniture supplied by immigrants was of good quality in addition to its value for money.

All evidence considered the participation of foreigners in the production of furniture has contribution to the emergence of innovations in the activity. Progressively, as is observed in the coastal, there is transfer of know-how taking place as more and more Congolese furniture makers are adopting group organisation in order both to produce in a larger quantity and to reduce the time taken for the delivery of an order. The spirit of creativity as reflected by the supply of different models for an item is also profitable to Congolese furniture makers as some of these models are adopted by them. This transfer of know-how in the methods of organisation has forged a more positive public image toward their activity, as it has contributed to the appropriation of the space where they are housed. We turn to this point now.

Implications for policy within the framework of NEPAD

The two case studies examined have provided insights into the relationships between occupancy of public space by operators in the unregistered economy and insertion in a niche market in the city of Pointe-Noire. By so doing, it has shed light on the mechanisms governing public space appropriation in relation with livelihoods. Beyond the specificities associated with the contextual logic underlying the dynamics of this appropriation, it is yet possible to discern some patterns which are similar or which differentiate these two communities.

First, a temporal dimension is very present in the process of space appropriation in the sense that it is not predetermined sequentially in time by the actors involved. The appropriation is inextricably associated with the variation in local circumstances, which themselves dictate to the actors which strategy or strategies to adopt in order to take advantage of these circumstances. The settlement of foreign fishermen has been for instance shaped by some events for which they could not predict the timing. Yet fishermen moulded their aspirations in relation with the stakes linked to the spatial relocation.

Second, the capacity of adaptation or adjustment showed by each group of actors to take advantage of the actual or changing context with respect to their livelihoods. Each community responds actively in its own way according to constraints and opportunities arising in its livelihoods environment. Adjustment in behaviours reflects in the adoption of new fishing methods, the sexual division of work and the transactions associated with,

Third, the housing space is an integral part of the space where the economic activity is conducted. This integration is not just expressed in physical terms but should be seen as a notion which cuts across boundaries of cultural, social and economic domains through which actors are interrelated. In this respect, the financial reward gained from the positioning in the niche economy depends upon the occupancy of a particular public space which offers some locational advantages in addition of being used for housing purpose. In turn, the domestic life is improved through the preservation of a productive exploitation of the niche market into which the actors are inserted.

Fourth, the positive public image derived from the good performance of the economic activity is an important facilitating factor with regard to the space appropriation. It attenuates tension which may generate from considerable expansion of both housing space and economic activity.

The relations between the public authorities and the actors at the city or local level are social construction reflecting the aspirations or the objectives pursued by each party involved in the negotiation over the space occupied. While the former perceive the relations in short-term financial gains (payment of taxes or fees to pay for occupancy), the latter perceive these relations in long-term spatial and economic positioning. However, this perception is not purely a matter of rational or free choice but it is strongly influenced by the culture into which people have been socialised and the modes of expression that are available to them. In fact, both communities studied are permanently involved in the construction of their livelihoods space their economic and social behaviours. To them, the housing space is neither static nor neutral as it also obeys to locational advantages. The linkages between domestic, economic, cultural and social spaces identified in this study lend support to the view expressed by Kalepini and Zelaza who claimed that "in Africa, spaces are produced socially and they produce the social; in as much as space is socially constructed, the social is spatially constructed too". This mutual effect has been highlighted in the paper. And further research should be devoted to documenting the spatial logic of informal activities

Before focusing on the implications for NEPAD, it is important to refer to the experience of European countries to highlight the significance of intra-African migration could bear in the new development strategies within the running of NEPAD. Throughout the construction of European Union, immigration has remained a highly politicised issue giving rise to hotly debated issues around the questions of regulation and enforcement. On this matter, the issue Immigration policy has generated a massive body of literature and laws, resulting in various forms of regulation and public policy instruments within the European Union, as well as its relation with the rest of the world. Despite restrictive measures, immigration of non-nationals has been an instrument of public policy in the development process of countries within the European Union. Through quotas or laws regulating the immigration of skilled or semi-skilled, unskilled non-nationals, those countries have been capable of making the necessary adjustments in their labour markets, thereby addressing appropriately the issues of labour shortages and meeting specific sectoral demands even in terms of local investments through self-owned enterprises. For the sake of space, this paper cannot provide fully details here to substantiate the significance of immigration for the development of different countries within the Union. It should be said that immigration has always presented a certain ambivalence for policy makers among countries of the European Union. From the readings available, a great deal of studies have been produced to inform that, on the hand, immigration has been viewed positively, first in nation building, then in promoting economic development, and later in building a multicultural society. On the other hand, concerns were raised about immigrants using some countries as a passage to others, then about immigration undermining the position of labour and always about the different "stock of people" that arrive with "strange habits" and "life style". While the economic implications are hard to measure in a precise manner, the summary of economic impacts of immigration points to a number of positive results including the mobility of capital, job creation through business formation, economic expenditures of all kinds, and asset accumulation. It is generally claimed that although specific economic concerns can be raised, appropriately controlled immigration is likely to present a net economic benefit, if only because the majority arrive at the most productive stages of the life cycle endowed with skills that could benefit the host society.

On a more continental level, the reading of documents and discourses reflecting the developmental strategies set out within NEPAD suggest to some degree that the questions about immigration of human capital has been neglected, and more specifically the questions of intra-continental mobility of potential African investors have been left out. There seems to be some heavy reliance upon foreign direct investments from outside the continent. It must be said that although immigration of African migrants has always been visible in the population profiles of countries, immigration policy at continental level has represented a matter of policy importance during the existence of Organisation for African Unity. If it is correct that one cannot look at all kinds of intra-African immigration as automatically associated with investments. The immigration of policy interest

here could be that one involving communities of migrants that use indigenous skills and know how to set up and develop clusters of small enterprises to take advantage of income opportunities that are available in particular sectors of the local economy. These clusters are those described in the two case studies reported in this paper. They induce innovation and transfer of know how at the local level through trans-national migration within the African context. The situation of Congo Brazzaville is not unique. This induced innovation, resulting in local economic transformation, has taken place in other parts of Africa. The situation of Congo is purposefully used to evidence the contribution of the African migrants, settled as communities, to the development of small firm clusters in the sectors of coastal fisheries and furniture making. In this process of community driven entrepreneurship, indigenous technology and institutions are collectively and resourcefully used by migrants to exploit resources and transform local economies.

Given that innovations and technology are key to economic progress, it would be important to know how immigration of African communities contributes to innovation and transfer of know how. This is obviously difficult to measure without elaborating a sound conceptual framework the framework used in this paper articulates the dynamics of migrant economy and its linkages with social networks and culture. The empirical material used suggest that African migrants in Congo-Brazzaville, settled in what could be called economic enclaves, would appear to produce a net positive result in this regard. Being motivated to make a major change in their lives and to overcome the various barriers of migration itself, communities of migrants under examination in the paper, are selective of people with creativity and drive. The fact that those immigrants are mostly self-employed might be used as an indicator of their achievement orientation. Arriving at the age of greatest physical and mental vigour, African immigrants tend to bring in unusually high degree of indigenous skills, ethnic resources including organisation, self-reliance and innovative flair. The different forms of contributions to the local economies, through enterprise development, must be understood within a sustainable livelihoods framework in which migrants, through collective reliance and enterprising, use their know how and indigenous technological capacity to develop groups of enterprises of the same nature. The resulting outcome of the development is gradual, sustained but significant transformation of the local economies. One would say that without small fishery enterprises set up by the migrant communities, the small fisheries along the coastal line would have disappeared at this date.

There is not doubt that this form of intra-African migration should be central to new developmental strategies within NEPAD. This organisation could use its continental developmental agenda to promulgate the institutional mechanisms required for the promotion and facilitation of the insertion of such migrants in the host countries. In its leading role of supranational or continental programme, NEPAD can serve as an engine for identifying through commissioned research action, market niches in the economy of particular countries, less-endowed in human capital, for which such migrants could use their skills to exploit existing opportunities in a sustainable way that could benefit both the community of migrants and the host country. NEPAD has a potential for fostering dialogue between countries involved in such forms of intra-continental mobility. The role of NEPAD is to work towards the creation of an enabling environment for bilateral cooperation from the economic perspective of both sending and receiving countries of migrants. In the long run, these small enterprises could result in a critical mass of small and medium enterprises for the establishment of a vibrant export industry for the goods produced to other countries. Foreign Direct Investments, from outside Africa, could be directed in to make the clusters more productively viable than they are now to create the conditions for growth and industrial transformation. The translation of this induced-innovation and transfer of know how into a developmental strategy would require NEPAD to work towards the formulation of migration policy at the continental level. Issues of property rights and human security can have some importance in such a policy. These are just some of the directions that can be taken up within NEPAD to promote a continentally-oriented strategy for investments.

References

- Boyd, Monica (1989) 'Family and personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas' *International Migration Review* No.23: 688-70.
- Bøe, Turid 1999 *Access Regime and institutions: The Economic Organisation of the Migrant Popo Fishermen of Pointe-Noire, Congo*. Working paper, 8. Bergen: Chr.Michelsen Institute
- Bartlett, Will, and Vojmir, Franièeviaè (1999) *SME Policies in South West England and South Wales*. Paper prepared for the seminar on "Regional Networks to support Innovation in Southern Europe", Centre for Mediterranean Studies, School for Policy Studies, 26th November 1999.
- Bun, K., Chan and Hui, J.Ong (1995) 'The many Faces of Immigrant Entrepreneurship' in Cohen, Robin (ed.) *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 523-531.
- Chaveau, J. Pierre, Jul-Larsen, Eyolf and Chaboud, Christian (eds.) (2001) *West African Canoe Fisheries. Institutional dynamics: powers, mobility, markets* Bergen and Paris: CMI-IRD-Khartala.
- Christopoulos, Dimitrios and Konstadakopulos, Dimitrios (1999) 'Innovative Milieus and Regional Networks: The governance of Technological change and Learning in Five European Regions' in Domansky (ed) *The Changing Map of Europe-The Trajectory Berlin-Poznan-Warsaw* Warsaw: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Chan, Kwok Bun and Ong, Jin Hui 1995 "The many faces of Immigrant Entrepreneurship" in Cohen, Robin (ed.) *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.523-531
- Dobrev, D., Stanislav, Kim, Tai-Young Kim, and Hannan, T.Michael (2001) 'Dynamics of Niche Width and Resource Partitioning' *American Journal of Sociology* Vol.106, No.15:
- Guha, R 1989 *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya* Dehli: Oxford Univresity Press
- Godelier, Maurice (1972) *Rationality and Irrationality in Economics* New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Hugo, J. Graeme (1981) 'Village-Community Ties, Village Norms and Ethnic and Social Networks: A review of evidence from the Third World.' In Gordon F.De Jong and Robert W.Gardner (eds.) *Migration Decision-Making* New York:Pergamon.
- Igué, J.O (1993) 'Commerce informel et integration régionale ' . *Le Courier* No.142.
- Jul-Larsen, Eyolf (1994) *Migrant Fishermen in Congo. Tradition and Modernity* Bergen: Chr.Michelsen Institute.
- Kalipeni, Ezekiel and Zeleza T., Paul (eds) (1999) *Sacred Spaces and Public Quarrels. African Cultural and Economic Landscapes*, Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc.
- Kouamé, B.B (1993) 'CEDEAO: progrès certains, mais beaucoup de questions importantes' *Le Courier* No.142. 81-82.

Knight, Jack and Sened, Itai (eds.) (1998) *Explaining Social Institutions* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Langhammer R.J (1993) 'L'intégration par le marché :coûts et risques déchec élevés'Le Courrier No.142, 55-58.

Leitmann, Josef and Bahatoglu, Deniz 1998 "Informal Rules! Using Institutional Economics to understand Service Provision in Turkey's Spontaneous Settlement". *The Journal of Development Studies* 34 (5), pp.98-122

Lewcock, Ronald and Gerald, Brans 1977 'The Boat as an Architectural Symbol?' in Paul, Oliver (ed.) *Shelter, Sign and Symbol* pp.107-116.

Light, Ivan and Bhachu, Parminder (eds.) (1993) *Immigration and Entrepreneurship.Culture, Capital, and Ethnic Networks* New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.

Light, Ivan, Bhachu, Parminder , and Karageorgis, Stavros (1993) 'Migration Networks and Immigrant Entrepreneurship' in Ivan, Light and Bachu, Parminder (eds) *Immigration and Entrepreneurship. Culture, Capital, and Ethnic Networks* New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers. 25-49.

Lin, Nan, and Mary, Dumin (1986) 'Access to Occupations Through Social Ties' *Social Networks* No.8:365-385.

Massey, S. Douglas (1989) 'Economic Development and International Migration in Comparative Perspective' *Population and Development Review* No.14:383-413.

Massey, S. Douglas (1993) 'The Methodology of an Ethnosurvey' In Donald J.Bogue et al (eds) *Readings in Population Research Methodology* Illinois: Published for United Nations Population Fund by Social Development Center Chicago.

McCormick, Dorothy (2001) 'Enterprise Clusters in Kenya. Urban production, upgrading strategies and joint action' *Africa Insight (Special issueThe future of Africa's cities)* Vol.31.No.1: 3-11.

North , C. Douglas (1998) 'Five Propositions about Institutional Change' in Jack, Knight and Itai, Sened (eds) *Explaining Social Institutions* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Nomvette, B D (1993) 'Intégration Regionale en Afrique: une route pleine d'obstacles'Le Courrier No.142, 78-80.

Pedersen O.Poul (1991) 'A Network Approach to the Small Enterprise' in E M Bergmen, G. Maier, and F.Tödtling (eds) *Regions Reconsidered: Economic networks, innovation, and local development in industrialised countries* London: Mansell Publishing: 79-99.

Peluso, H L 1992 *Rich Forests, Poor People: Resource Control and Resistance in Java* Berkeley: University of California Press

Pouya A M (1993) 'Les difficultés financières des organisations interafricaines'. *Le Courrier* No.142

Robben, C.G.M., Antonius 1989 *Sons of the Sea Goddess. Economic Practice and Discursive Conflict in Brazil* New York: Columbia University Press

Rakodi, Carole (1996) 'Conclusion' in Carole, Rakodi (ed.) *The Urban Challenge in Africa: Growth and Management of its large cities* Tokyo and New York: United Nations United Press: 553-594.

Robben, C.G. Antonius (1989) *Sons of the Sea Goddess. Economic Practices and Discursive Conflict in Brazil* New York: Columbia University Press.

Schmitz, H (1992) 'On the Clustering of Small Firms' *Institute of Development Studies Bulletin* Vol.23, No.3.

Stahl, W Charles (1989) 'Overview: Economic perspectives (On International Migration)' in Reginald, Appleyard (ed.) *The Impact of International Migration on Developing Countries* Paris: Development Centre of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development: 361-380.

Taylor L (2003) "The African Union: The challenges for civil society". Extracted from <http://www.ossrea.net/publications/newsletter/jun03/article8.htm>

Tadesse, M (2003) "What will take to create an effective african Union". Extracted from <http://www.ossrea.net/publications/newsletter/jun03/article9.htm>

Tati, Gabriel (1996) 'Migration Inter-Africaine, Transfert de Savoir-Faire et Developpement Local en Afrique: le cas du Congo, Paper presented at the International Colloquium on *The Work of Cheikh Anta Diop: Africa's Renaissance on the Threshold of the Third Millenium* 26 February-2 March 1996 Dakar-Caytu.

Tati, Gabriel 1993 *Migration, Urbanisation et Développement au Congo* Cahiers de l'IFORD n05, Yaoundé: IFORD and CePeD

Appendix Names of canoes enumerated on the beach during a research visit day (some canoes who were on fishing trip are not included)

CFAO	La vie est belle
Roro Americain	Niapa
Kpata	Soto
Thanks to be	Cyiyap
Tanpis pour les jaloux	Believe in god
God bless me	Huegnima wua-la France
Africa n01	Petit marteau n01
Cameleon	Petit marteau n02
God is good	Accra-Thanks to god
Abdelaziz	God loves
Jesus-la-croix du sud	Ani djme
Dieu seul sait	anuc joiu d
Dieu est grand	Oh god! sea never dry
God-la-main dans la main	Tout change-c'est l'avenir
Mercedez-bens x-mile home	God time
Sea never dry	Benin Zhataheko
Kotobabi	God time is the best
Ehla	Coraf
Technique n01	Mila, ya pas match
Technique n02	Sagboo
Fear tomorrow	Elemawusi
Moye à wowie	Ako-delmas
Goat adinor	Prince of peace
Love all	Lord bless me
Delmas Laurent	Blague à part-Alla
Necessary before agreable	Patahoundji