

regulation, supervision, and law enforcement rather than directly providing credit, housing, infrastructure, or agricultural production. The state should create an enabling environment for society to overcome its challenges. Instead of directly assisting the poor from the public budget, the state should develop and manage a safety net system based on zakat, ensuring wealth transfer from the rich to the poor. The Islamic perspective defines the state's role within the framework of hisbah (accountability), which involves enforcing laws, regulating markets, and supervising compliance. The state's role should be clearly defined within the context of providing infrastructure services. Islamic wisdom suggests that private provision is suitable for economic infrastructure, while the waqf model is recommended for social infrastructure. The government's role, grounded in hisbah, is to en-

sure accountability. Historically, state failures often stemmed from a lack of accountability and inadequate involvement in economic and social infrastructure.

The book deeply explores how Islamic finance principles can promote social justice and economic stability. However, its impact could be enhanced with more concrete case studies and empirical data to support the proposed policies. While offering significant theoretical and conceptual discussions, the book could have benefited from more detailed analysis of how financial policies influence social cohesion and contribute to overall societal welfare. This book is a valuable resource for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as policymakers, offering insights into the intersection of Islamic finance and socioeconomic challenges.

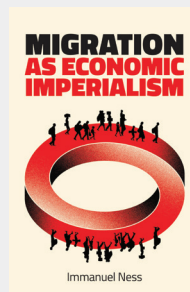
## Migration as Economic Imperialism: How International Labour Mobility Undermines Economic Development in Poor Countries

By Immanuel Ness

Polity Press, 2023, 265 pages, \$26.95, ISBN: 9781509553983

Reviewed by Miyanda Shamba, Social Sciences University of Ankara

Immanuel Ness's *Migration as Economic Imperialism: How International Labour Mobility Undermines Economic Development in Poor Countries* critically examines the relationship between international labour mobility and economic development in poor countries. The book disputes the belief that labor migration from the Global South to wealthier countries is mutually beneficial. Rather, Ness contends that this migration represents a contemporary form of economic impe-



rialism that perpetuates underdevelopment in poorer countries while benefiting the economies of wealthier nations. The book argues that migration is not merely a voluntary choice, but a necessity caused by economic conditions in the Global South, exacerbated by neoliberal policies implemented by international financial institutions. It illustrates the terrible reality that migrant workers confront, such as abusive working conditions, passport seizure, and a lack of

essential rights and services in destination nations.

The book is divided into six chapters, each examining various facets of labor migration and its effects on both the countries of origin and those of destination. The chapters concentrate on the effects of migration on destination countries, the influence of borders in intensifying these challenges, and the wider consequences of the migration-development relationship. The author examines neoliberal capitalism and imperialism, positioning labor migration within this framework. He defines neoliberal capitalism as an economic system that limits the state's role, prioritizing the interests of capital and private market solutions over the public good, perpetuating inequality in the Global South. Imperialism, he defines as a system of economic domination, specifically of developed capitalist nations over undeveloped nations. He contends that although official colonialism may have ended, wealthy countries continue to maintain economic dominance through practices like unfair trade and labour migration. By preventing significant development in less developed areas, this economic imperialism upholds a global order where core countries, mostly in the Global North, continue to exploit peripheral nations, mostly in the Global South.

The author analyzes the effects of global migration on poor nations using a critique-based methodology that examines empirical data and historical contexts. By examining the exploitation in labour migration and remittance models and contending that they are instruments of economic imperialism, he challenges mainstream narratives that migration and remittances drive economic development, that remittances are a sustainable solution for poverty and that social remittances bring beneficial cultural values. Ness critically

assesses the economic and social effects of labour migration, which serves as the basis for his contention that migration is ineffective as a development strategy.

Chapter 1 explores the relationship between neoliberal capitalism and imperialism, particularly concerning labour migration from the Global South to the Global North. The author criticizes international organizations like the World Bank for prioritizing market solutions to poverty, which often overlook the lasting negative consequences of migration-economic dependency, social disruption, erosion of local economies and social dislocation and reintegration issues for migrants returning home. He argues that encouraging migration as a solution to economic problems strengthens exploitative structures in the Global South, which aligns with dependency theorists' claims that the core gains from these policies are at the expense of the periphery. Chapter 2 delves into labour migration as a modern form of economic imperialism, arguing that it undermines the economic potential of sending countries. This is consistent with neo-colonial scholars like Edward Said and Andre Gunder Frank, who argue that global capitalism perpetuates underdevelopment. The chapter presents empirical evidence and case studies to support the claim that labour migration intensifies underdevelopment, such as the case of Nepal, where remittances account for a significant share of the GDP, which only provides individual poverty relief, but they fail to foster sustainable development. Rather, they perpetuate a cycle of reliance.

Chapter 3 discusses the impact of labour migration on the origin countries and destination states, highlighting the erosion of social and economic structures and the neglect of local industries and agricultural sectors.

Chapter 4 focuses on the countries that serve as destinations for migrants, arguing that they exploit migrant workers by offering lower wages and unfavourable working conditions. The author cites the Gulf States as an example, where migrant workers face harsh working conditions and limited rights. While not categorizing the Gulf States as part of the Global North, he compares their exploitation to that of the Global North, arguing that these governments are essential to the global system of labour exploitation, meeting labour shortages in high-income countries while maintaining low salaries and limited worker rights.

Chapter 5 delves into the role of borders in maintaining the unequal exchange between rich and poor countries. The author posits that borders function not merely as physical separations but as instruments of economic domination that hinder the free movement of individuals while facilitating the unrestricted flow of capital. He elaborates on how strict immigration policies in wealthy nations aim to keep labor costs low and simultaneously enhance profits. In the concluding chapter, the author advocates for dismantling the existing migration-development model, which he considers fundamentally exploitative. He urges a re-evaluation of global labor mobility that emphasizes nurturing local economies in the Global South instead of merely exporting labor. The author champions policies to foster sustainable economies in countries of origin, diminishing the necessity for labor migration.

The book critically explores the relationship between migration, labour, and global economic systems. It provides insights for scholars, policymakers, activists, and general readers interested in international relations, political economy, and migration studies. It also offers policy suggestions for sustainable local economies in underprivileged coun-

tries. Activists and advocates for labour rights will gain insights into the exploitative characteristics of global labour markets. The utilization of historical examples, such as the patterns of migration in Southern Africa, brings a valuable dimension to the book and shows that the problems raised by the author have longstanding historical foundations.

The author uses the ‘Global South’ and ‘poorer countries’ interchangeably throughout the book. This choice reflects a critical viewpoint toward traditional economic terminology. Using ‘poorer’ instead of “developing” to describe these nations fits his criticism of the international economic system of perpetuating underdevelopment. This language aligns with Marxist and dependence theories, which reject the idea that the Global South’s nations are merely ‘developing’ and instead highlight the structural injustices brought about by imperialism.

The book could have benefitted from greater depth in exploring migrants’ agency, exploring how migrants resist exploitative systems and create agency within them instead of portraying migrants as passive victims. It should have highlighted their proactive efforts to navigate complex situations and improve their lives.

Immanuel Ness’s *Migration as Economic Imperialism: How International Labour Mobility Undermines Economic Development in Poor Countries* is a potent and thought-provoking indictment of the global system of labor migration and its effects on the economic development of the Global South. The book’s critique of neoliberal capitalism is both urgent and vital. Ness’s work significantly adds to the body of knowledge on migration and development and will surely impact upcoming conversations on these crucial topics.