

Stream 5

**The Global Human
Rights Context**



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About Stream 5



Time:
1 day

The context of our human rights work is constantly being altered by the economic, cultural, political and technological changes taking place at the global level. The “reduction” of distances between countries, regions and peoples has brought about a greater exchange of information, more exchanges between peoples, and a proportionally larger transfer of money, goods and services. Our societies are rapidly becoming more and more interconnected as our reliance on each other's resources is growing at an exceedingly rapid pace.

Globalization is the broad term used to refer to our current and ever changing global order, which is characterized by growing and increasingly powerful global connections, strengthened and organized “worldwide” networks and associations, and the emerging phenomenon of a global consciousness. Some view globalization as a liberating force while others see it as a new means through which those in power can continue to deny resources to fellow citizens. What seems to be consistent is that there are altered roles for nations, their policies, and their economies.

In particular, international economic organizations (such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO) and multinational corporations have gained tremendous influence over local economies and often wield more power than national governments. Corporate interests are redefining the landscape of power, “calling into question the state’s ability to secure fundamental rights for it’s citizens and preserve participatory democracy”. (Ishay, M. Globalization, December 2004, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 181-193)

Many countries, under severe debt bondage, are forced to accept financial conditions from the IMF and World Bank that further cause starvation, poverty and unemployment. These worsening conditions have had a profound effect on the lives of the general population. Heightened ethnic or communal tensions often result in bloody and severe internal armed conflict or large-scale riots.



Another factor that must be stressed is that the effects of globalization are experienced differently by men and women. Although new employment opportunities have been created for women as a result of globalization, current trends have exacerbated inequalities among men and women. Women are usually the most severely affected by changing conditions arising from globalization. As structural adjustments take effect, these conditions decline at home, and women's hardships intensify as they increase their workload to compensate for the cut in social services. Women are rarely consulted or considered when far-reaching development plans are formulated.

The perceived loss of sovereignty has increased the level of State anxiety, leading to the dislike and disregard for the international system and multilateralism, specifically, vis-à-vis the human rights system. Currently, the refusal by States to be challenged or sanctioned by any institution not under their control (e.g., international organizations, international criminal court) threatens the few successes achieved by the international human rights community in the last couple of decades. The security agendas instituted by many States today, greatly threatens our freedom.

This ever-changing state of the world poses new challenges to our work as human rights educators and activists. The events of September 11, 2001, and the increased security concerns resulting from the 'war on terror' in particular, continue to produce an entirely new set of social, economic and political challenges experienced worldwide. "Movements animated by universal human rights principles (or social forces)... have been weakened as a traditional buffer to state authority. Left increasingly paralyzed by market imperatives and post-September 11 security concerns, human rights activism has been gradually superseded by new authoritarian trends." (Ishay, M. Globalization, December 2004, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 182)

If our work as human rights educators and activists has traditionally concentrated on the roles and responsibilities of the nation-states, it is evident today that we must also consider the roles and responsibilities of all other actors if we seek to affect changes in the human rights situations in our communities

In the last decade, the work of human rights defenders in raising global awareness about human rights has benefited immensely from the increased availability and use of information and communications technology.

The rapid distribution of web-based news, research, and visual representation is creating a sense of interconnectivity among individuals in different parts of the world as never experienced before. As media reaches wider audiences in more remote areas worldwide, in particular radio and television broadcasting, so too does information and knowledge about human rights. New technologies, such as the Internet and cell phones, have also become a vehicle to raise awareness of human rights abuses enabling more immediate and wider coverage of specific human rights issues affecting people all over the world. This fast paced access to information has been instrumental in more readily moving people from indignation to action.

These new tools have enabled a ‘more egalitarian and participatory public space [for human rights activists] to access and distribute information that can promote the values and practices embodied in their human rights work without having to rely on corporate mass media’. However, these new technologies have not afforded them additional protection from harassment, attacks, imprisonment and death for publishing or broadcasting news and information, especially in countries where censorship and media control are the norm.

While globalization offers both great threats and opportunities, at present its costs as well as its benefits are very unevenly shared. There is a generalized recognition that developing countries and countries in transition face special difficulties in responding to the challenges stemming from a globalized world. Thus, the members of the United Nations recognized that only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable. These principles, expressed in the Millennium Development Goals, constitute efforts that include policies and measures, at the global level, which correspond to the needs and aspirations of developing countries and countries in transition and have been formulated and are to be implemented with their effective participation.

In the face of these global challenges, organizations defending



human rights face many obstacles. Human rights defenders must situate their actions within political framework, develop existing and new networks and forge alliances with the organizations engaged in achieving the same goal, in particular those of the alter-globalization movement.

As Clarence Dias put it:

What we need is “glocalization” - a combination of globalization and localization. We were taught to think global, act local. And when we did that, we invited the World Bank and the multinationals in. It’s time to think local, act global; to understand the impacts of globalization on us and the people we work with. And to try to work to address these impacts at the family level, at the school level, at the community level, at the national level, at the regional level and at the global level. To do this will involve new alliances, reliance upon new partners.

The purpose of this Stream is to provide participants with a framework that they can use to better understand their changing role in the global context. By listening to each other’s experiences, participants can begin to develop new strategies for action, and begin to anticipate the human rights implications of globalization. The obvious relationship between human rights and the Millennium Development Goals will provide a useful light for formulating those strategies for action.

Sources:

Hackett, R. (2004), *Media Development 2004*, Simon Fraser University; Carroll, W., University of Victoria

Government of Canada , Human Rights Program web site:
www.pch.gc.ca/progs/pdp-hrp/canada/free_e.cfm

Objectives

By the end of Stream 5, participants should be able to:

- describe the different dimensions of globalization and provide examples of their positive and negative impact on human rights in their societies
- determine strategies for using human rights education as a tool for addressing the impacts of globalization
- describe the relationship between human rights and the Millennium Development Goals

Participatory Training Techniques




- Power Mapping
- Triads

Unit 1 Understanding the Global Context

In this unit participants will examine the social, cultural, political as well as economic dimensions of "globalization" and their impact on the human rights situation in their societies. They will also examine the relationship between human rights and the Millennium Development Goals.

Activity 1 Spheres of Influence

 1 hr. 30 min

Globalization has had an undeniable impact on human rights everywhere. An array of “actors” some of which include intergovernmental institutions, multinational corporations, the communications industry, nation-states and individuals as well as civil society exert different degrees of influence on the process of globalization.

An understanding of power relations and structures at all levels of society (i.e., international, national and local) is an essential tool for the protection of human rights and social change. The aim of this activity is to identify the key actors and their influence on the globalization process in our societies.

This activity is divided into two parts.

In **Part A**, you will discuss the actors that have an impact on globalization.

In **Part B**, you will read a short text and discuss the questions provided.



Activity 1 cont'd

45 min

Part A Large Group Discussion

The facilitator will present the "Spheres of Influence" diagram on the next page, which maps out some of the main categories of actors involved in the current globalization process.

For each category, determine who the principal “actors” are and what has been their impact on the human rights situation in your society. The facilitator will record your answers on a flip chart version of the Spheres of Influence diagram.

Once the diagram is complete, discuss where you can put pressure on the different Spheres of Influence to effect positive change.

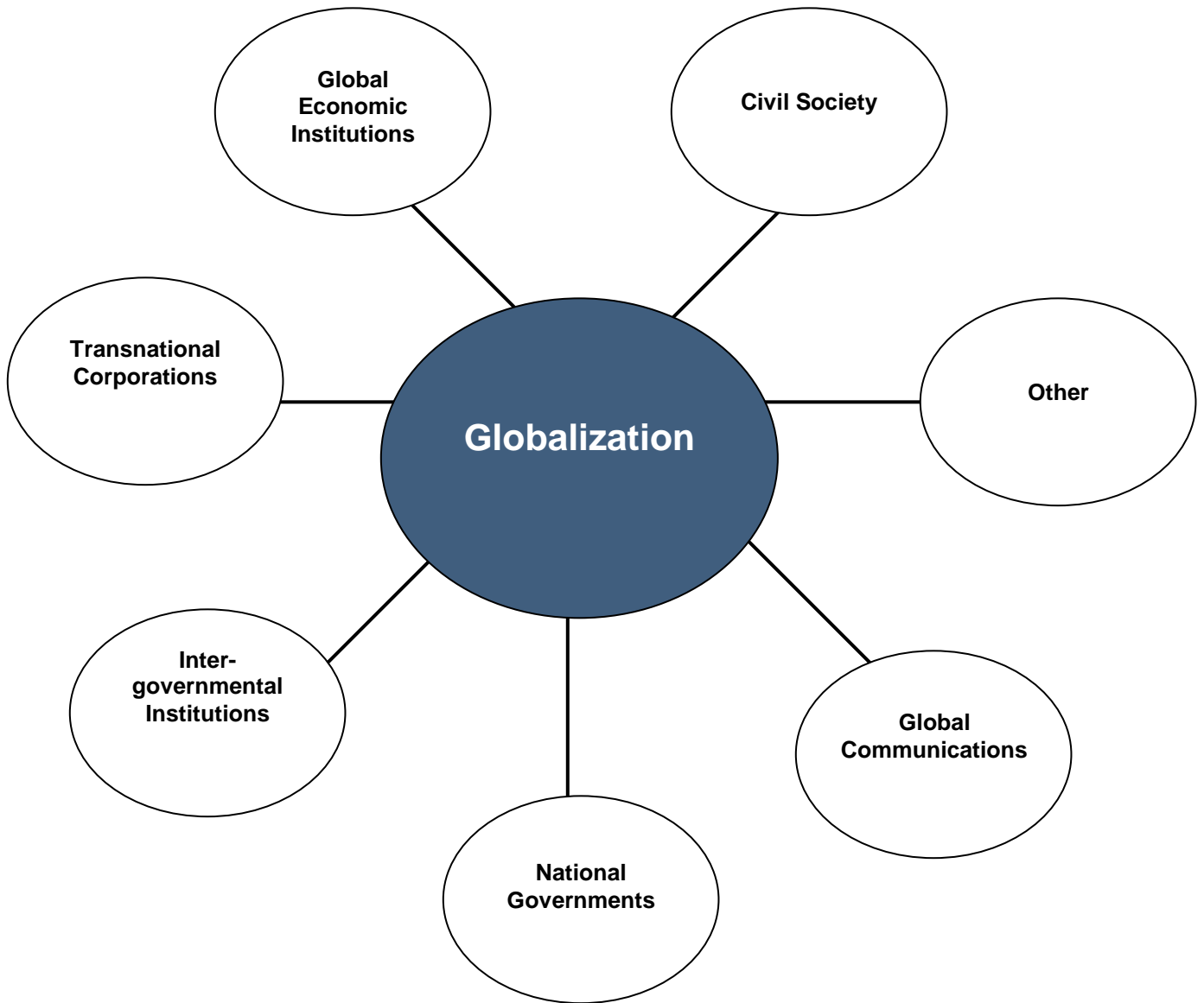
Questions for discussion:

- Are some of the actors you identified more accessible than others? If they are not easily accessible, what methods can be used to approach them?
- What strategies can be used to target these actors? Do the policies of these actors favour an equitable distribution of power, responsibilities, and resources between men and women?
- How is civil society being dominated by actions of the state (i.e., military, consumer, or security interests)? How can it influence the work of the state?

The results of the discussion may help generate ideas for your Individual Plan.

Spheres of Influence

Activity 1 cont'd





Activity 1 cont'd

Participatory Training Technique:



Power-Mapping

As problem solvers, we can look at any problem situation and understand it more clearly by identifying the forces at work and their relative influence on the situation. The technique of **power mapping** involves creating a visual diagram of these forces and then determining whether they have a positive or negative impact on the situation.

Power mapping is a useful concept and technique for analysis that allows the user to better understand the status of a current phenomenon (problem, difficulty, area of concern) by identifying the underlying driving forces.

Source: Etington, J.E. (1996). The Winning Trainer, 3rd Ed. Houston: Texas, Gulf Publishing Company.

Activity 1 cont'd

45 min

Part B Large Group Discussion

Read the short text below. A question is provided to begin a discussion.

- How can human rights education be used as a tool in the context of globalization? (E.g., access to information, secure social environments, democratic development, etc.)

HRE and Globalization
<p>Human rights education should be approached in a way that includes the analysis, understanding and reading of power relations and social forces so as to enable a struggle to change those power relations that impede the full realization of human rights. This struggle for a change in power relations must be linked to struggles for an equitable division of resources; accessibility to knowledge; control over the preservation of land and indigenous cultures; access to employment and healthy conditions of work; demilitarization of society, elimination of weapons of mass destruction and land mines; reduction of arms transfers and trade; and economic self-determination of peoples, nations, and other groups. In the current international and national political economy, these obstacles are embedded in systemic processes, which human rights education should clarify, while inspiring the organization of action for the realization of all human rights.</p> <p>Among these processes, the globalization of the world economy is increasingly sapping efforts to achieve sustainable and people-centred development... The magnitude of this problem is such that human rights education must address it, because it not only marginalizes vulnerable people in the poor countries of the political "South" and in the industrialized North, but it affects negatively the lives of all but a privileged few. In the former socialist countries, the rush to embrace the ideology of capitalism and the abandonment of social programs under pressure from agents of globalization has distorted the popular aspiration to replace structures of arbitrary power of the party with a regime of human rights and democratic governance.</p> <p>Source: "Towards A Pedagogy Of Human Rights Education", International Consultation on the Pedagogical Foundations of Human Rights Education (CEDAL) 1996.</p>

<p>◀ ◀ ◀ Look Back</p>	<p>Look back at the definition of conflict in Stream 1, Unit 1, Activity 3.</p>
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Activity 2 Globalization and Human Rights



1hr. 30 min

In this activity, you will explore the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of globalization and their impact on human rights.

This activity is divided into three parts.

In **Part A**, you will work in a group to read and discuss an article on the topic of globalization and the impact on human rights.

In **Part B**, you will discuss the impacts of globalization in your own societies.

In **Part C**, you will discuss your work with the larger group.

30 min

Part A Work in a Group

1. Read and discuss the article “Globalization and Its Impact on the Full Enjoyment of Human Rights (E/ CN.4/ sub.2/ 2000/ 13)” by J. Oloka-Onyango and Deepika Udagama, which is an extract from the UN Press Release. See the **Materials** section for an abridged version of the article. A full version of the article can be found in the Documentation Center.
2. Based on your discussion of the article identify the factors, structures or systems operating on a global scale that are having an impact on the human rights situation in your society

Activity 2 cont'd

30 min

Part B Work in a Group

1. Together with the members of your group, review the factors of globalization identified in **Part A**.
2. Then, keeping in mind the snapshot you prepared of the human rights problems in your society, discuss how globalization has contributed to these problems and to your ability to address them. Remember to address social, political, cultural, and economic ramifications of these factors.
3. A chart is provided to record the results of your discussion.

30 min

Part C Large Group Discussion

Together with your facilitator look at the impacts each group identified and address the questions below.

- Were there any impacts identified by the group that you do not agree with?
- What are the gendered impacts of globalization? (i.e., effects of globalization that impact differently on the lives of men and women?)
- What human rights strategies should you and your community adopt in order to resist, limit the damage, and devise alternatives to unsustainable development initiatives?
- How would you try, in this context, to promote respect for human rights in your community and region?
- What strategies can be used to promote and protect the rights of women in the context of globalization?
- What role should you as a human rights activist play on the local and international level?

Unit 2 Human Rights in an Era of Globalization

Recap and Triads



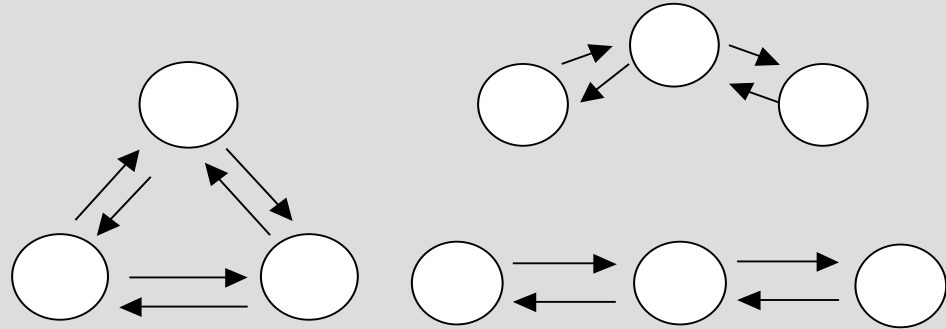
Fifteen minutes of this recap will be allocated to the discussion on methodology issues. The aim of this activity is to demonstrate methodology issues that are important to designing and developing educational events. The facilitator will lead you through the discussion using the Triads training technique



Participatory Training Technique



Triads



Effective Arrangement

Ineffective Arrangement

This technique is an important arrangement in small group work. One interesting aspect of the triad dynamic is that any exchange between two people is automatically subject to observation by the third person. Since the pair is aware that there is an observer, they become more aware of their own behaviour, and thus more likely to behave with reasonableness and courtesy.

The triad provides an intimate setting that allows participants to express multiple viewpoints on an issue. There are other advantages to this technique: if a conflict arises, the third person can act as a mediator for the other two. In addition, one person can reduce their involvement/participation and take a break without stopping the conversation. A triad arrangement is most effective when the participants are positioned in a very tight circular arrangement and everyone can maintain eye contact (see the picture of an Effective Arrangement on the left). This encourages a more profound effort at team building.

At the same time, the triad carries a risk of creating conflict. If two people decide to team up, it creates an “odd person out” situation by excluding the third person. One method of dealing with this issue is to have all three people honestly discuss possible reasons for this conflict in their interpersonal relationships.

Source: Etington, J.E. (1996) The Winning Trainer, 3rd Ed. Houston: Texas, Gulf Publishing Company.

Activity 1 Briefing Plenary Presentation – “Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals”



30 min

Read over the description of the presentation provided in Activity 2.

Questions to consider as you listen to the presentation:

Read over the questions before you listen to the presentation. You will discuss these questions in your group after the presentation.

- How are development, human rights, and democracy linked?
- How has development become a major source of human rights violations? Examples?
- How can achieving the MDGs contribute to mitigating the negative impacts of globalization?
- How can human rights contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals?
- How can achieving the Millennium Development Goals contribute to fulfilling human rights?
- What are some of the key challenges regarding the contribution of human rights to the MDGs ?



Activity 2 Plenary Presentation – “Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals”



1 hr. 30 min

The aim of this presentation is to explore the links between human rights and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as some strategies for adopting a human rights based approach to the MDGs agenda. There will be two resource persons for this presentation.

Some of the issues the resource persons will address are listed below. Relevant examples from different regions of the world will also be provided.

The first resource person will provide an overview of the links between human rights and the MDGs and address some of the following questions:

- What are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)?
- In what way are human rights and MDGs interdependent and mutually reinforcing frameworks? What are the key differences between these two frameworks?
- What are the benefits and challenges of adopting a human rights based approach to the MDGs
- What is the role of human rights workers (educators, activists) in achieving the MDGs?

The second resource person will provide concrete examples of ways to strengthen civil society participation in efforts to achieve the MDGs using a human rights based approach.

Question and Answer Period

Activity 3 Presentation by the Raging Grannies



The Raging Grannies share with participants some of their mobilization and advocacy techniques

Activity 4 Individual Plan for Putting My Learning into Action



Continue working on your Individual Plan. Remember that your colleagues are often times the best resources available for completing this project. Draw upon their knowledge, expertise and experience to help develop your work.

Complete Worksheet 5 of the Individual Plan keeping in mind what you have learned throughout the Streams.

End of Stream Evaluation/Debriefing



After completing the End of Stream Evaluation, discuss as a group the benefits of the day's events if time permits.

Questions to keep in mind:

- Has your understanding of globalization changed? If so, how?
- What issues discussed do you feel are most relevant for the work of your organization?
- What were the different human rights education methods and techniques used? Were they effective?
- How can these activities be adapted to your own HRE needs?

Materials

Unit 1 Activity 2

Glossary of Organizations, p. 5-27

Globalization and Its Impact on the Full Enjoyment of Human Rights, p. 5-29

Glossary of Organizations

Unit 1 Activity 1

African Union (AU)

The African Union is made up of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity which calls for the establishment of an African Union, with a view to integrate the continent and enable it to play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems compounded as they are by certain negative aspects of globalization.

Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok by the five original Member Countries, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam joined on 8 January 1984, Vietnam on 28 July 1995, Laos and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999. The Association represents the collective will of the nations to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom, and prosperity. (The ASEAN Declaration, Bangkok, 8 August 1967)

Council of Europe (COE)

The Council is the main decision-making body of the European Union. The ministers of the member states meet within the Council of the European Union. Depending on the issue on the agenda, each country will be represented by the minister responsible for that subject (foreign affairs, finance, social affairs, transport, agriculture, etc.).

The presidency of the Council is held for six months by each member state on a rotational basis.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Originally proposed at the Bretton Woods meeting in the U.S. in 1944 together with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) - which later became the World Bank (WB) – and the International Trade Organization (ITO), was finally set up in 1946. It was intended to solve problems related to international finance.

The IMF is an international organization of 184 member countries, established to promote international monetary cooperation, exchange stability, and orderly exchange arrangements; to foster economic growth and high levels of employment; and to



provide temporary financial assistance to countries to help ease balance of payments adjustment.

Organization of American States (OAS)

The Organization of American States brings together the countries of the Western Hemisphere to strengthen cooperation and advance common interests. It is the region's premier forum for multilateral dialogue and concerted action. These member States meet periodically to examine common interests and priorities at events such as the Summit of the Americas.

World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Multilateral trading organisation comprising of 148 countries (as of May 2005) who accede to four major treaties governing almost every area of trade. Ascension into the WTO binds all members to all treaties and all provisions within the treaties (subject to a few minor exceptions) although grace periods are granted to individual members states as to when implementation of treaty provisions take place. The four main WTO agreements are: the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS); Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS); and Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS).

World Bank (WB) (See also IMF)

Was originally the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) which was set up in 1947. The IBRD, which was intended at that time to help the reconstruction of Europe, expanded its scope to cover other countries, and became the World Bank. It is a development Bank which provides loans, policy advice, technical assistance and knowledge sharing services to low and middle income countries to reduce poverty.

Globalization and Its Impact on the Full Enjoyment of Human Rights

Unit 1 Activity 2

UN Press Release, E/CN.4/Sub.2/2000/13 June 15, 2000
Revisiting the Contested Meanings of Globalization

Since coming to the fore as one of the most talked-about issues of the late twentieth century and the new millennium, the phenomenon of globalization has captured world attention in various ways. From the information superhighway to the international trade in drugs and arms, to the phenomenal impact of MacWorld, Nike and the global media, the subject of globalization has come to concern all and sundry. At the core of most discussions of the issue is the extraordinary explosion of both technology and information, in ways that have considerably reduced the twin concepts of time and space. In particular, information and communications technology (ICT) has emerged as perhaps the most dominant force in the global system of production, albeit with significant ramifications in all other spheres of contemporary human existence.

Too much of a focus has been placed on the economic aspects of globalization, overshadowing the social, cultural and political aspects of the phenomenon.

While recognizing the contribution of ICT and the attendant forces of the global economy to the emergence of globalization as we know it, too much

has been made of the phenomenon of globalization in its economic dimensions. In a sense there is a new orthodoxy or ethos about the economic dimensions of globalization that exalts it above all other human values or phenomena, indeed even above the basic condition of human beings themselves. The unfortunate consequence of this has been to denigrate (or mask) the social, cultural and especially the political roots and ramifications of the

Globalization is the result of market forces and power relations. The rules of these power relations are determined by very few actors, but with effects on many people.

phenomenon.

As Brazilian President Enrique Cardoso argues, it is a serious mistake to think of globalization as the result of market forces alone: "The boundaries within which the market operates are defined politically, in direct negotiations between governments in multilateral forums, such as the World Trade Organization. The power game is always present in such negotiations." Moreover, it is a power game the rules of which are dictated by very few actors. However, its impact affects the vast majority. Consequently, understanding the political and other dimensions of the phenomenon of globalization is essential to the development of a rational and considered response to it.



Because of globalization's multifaceted nature, it is essential to grasp the different motivating forces that are impelling these developments aside from the purely economic, and also to recognize the different directions from which they are coming. As Paul Streeten has pointed out, there is a globalization that can come "from above" in the form of multinational firms, international capital flows and world markets. Intrinsic to this form of globalization is a growing legal and institutional framework within which the regimes of contemporary international trade, finance and investment are being conducted. The

Grass-roots organizations can help bring the theoretical concepts of globalization to a practical level for the majority of people. More importantly, these activists can help organize resistance to the overwhelming force of globalization.

legal dimensions of that framework are best captured within the context of international economic law generally speaking, while the Bretton Woods MLIs and the WTO are the specific institutional mechanisms within which it is organized.

Another form of globalization can come from below (such as the environmental, women's and anti-nuclear movements, or in the case most relevant to this discussion, human rights struggles). The human rights movement has long laid claim to a universalizing (indeed some would say a globalizing) mission. This is evident in the assertion that the regime of rights and freedoms established through the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights - and the numerous other instruments that have since been promulgated in the same spirit - extend beyond the arena of purely national concern. The globalization-from-below activists have the potential to add a democratic dimension to the debates about globalization from above. In this way, globalization can be brought down from the rarefied and glorified atmosphere of corporate boardrooms, and home to the daily realities of ordinary human beings. Especially important, it can help them mobilize in resistance against the hegemonizing tendencies that globalization from above may present.

A bias exists in the thinking surrounding globalization, where global means capital, space, history and the power to transform while local is equated with place, labour, tradition and, not infrequently, women, indigenous people, peasants and others who are "still attached to place".

Notwithstanding the above, a clear bias is manifest in the dominant modes of thinking that abound about globalization. Describing such thinking as "globalitarian" and "globalcentric", Arif Dirlik argues that such definitions of globalization are biased against both place and locality. Thus, the global is equated with "capital, space, history and the power to transform 'while the local is equated with' place, labour, tradition and, not infrequently, women, indigenous people, peasants and others who are 'still attached to place'".

The implication is that the latter are marginal to the discourses on globalization, and that their knowledge

and practices are unhelpful in the construction of a truly global contemporary world. Dirlik urges for review of this prejudiced approach to alternative visions of the manner in which the world can be constructed, and for mobilization of all the movements that feel they have a stake in the issue. Indeed, there is a need for a recommitment to a bringing together of all the world's peoples around an agenda that does not seek to stifle the very productive and revolutionary

innovations that technological development has unleashed. However, it is essential that in so doing we do not forget basic and fundamental obligations that have been recognized and honoured for decades as essential to a wholesome human existence. Technology and economic development must be put to the service of humankind as a whole. In particular, such developments should not marginalize, discriminate or systemically deny access to the majority of the world's populace.

Source: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/socecon/un/wtonite.htm>,
[http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.Sub.2.2000.13.En?Opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.Sub.2.2000.13.En?Opendocument)