



Globalization, Wages, and the Quality of Jobs (World Bank Publications)

Raymond Robertson, Drusilla Brown, Maria Laura Sanchez-Puerta, Gaëlle Le Borgne Pierre

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Since the early 1990s, most developing economies have become more integrated with the world's economy. Trade and foreign investment barriers have been progressively lifted and international trade agreements signed. These reforms have led to important changes in the structures of these economies. The labor markets have adjusted to these major changes, and workers were required to adapt to them in one way or another. In 2006, the Social Protection Unit of the World Bank launched an important research program to understand the impact that these profound structural changes have had on workers in developing countries.

'Globalization, Wages, and the Quality of Jobs: Five Country Studies' presents the findings and insights of this important research program. In particular, the authors present the similar experiences of low-income countries with globalization and suggest that low-income countries' working conditions have improved in the sectors exposed to globalization. However, 'Globalization, Wages, and the Quality of Jobs' also highlights concerns about the sustainability of these improvements and that the positive demonstration effects on the rest of the economy are unclear. The empirical literature that exists, although vast, does not lead to a consensus view on globalization's eventual impact on labor markets. Understanding the effects of globalization is crucial for governments concerned about employment, working conditions, and ultimately, poverty reduction. Beyond job creation, improving the quality of those jobs is an essential condition for achieving poverty reduction. 'Globalization, Wages, and the Quality of Jobs' adds to the existing literature in two ways. First, the authors provide a comprehensive literature review on the current wisdom on globalization and present a micro-based framework for analyzing globalization and working conditions in developing countries. Second, the authors apply this framework to five developing countries: Cambodia, El Salvador, Honduras, Indonesia, and Madagascar. This volume will be of interest to government policy makers, trade officials, and others working to expand the benefits of globalization to developing countries.

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