

DRAFT

DÉRASINÉ: THE EXPULSION AND IMPOVERTISHMENT OF THE CHAGOSSIAN PEOPLE

The following is a draft. A final version of the report is forthcoming and may include revisions to the text and to any figures and statistics.

David Vine, M.A.
S. Wojciech Sokolowski, Ph.D.
Philip Harvey, J.D., Ph.D.
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Dérasiné is the word Chagossians most frequently use to describe their expulsion from Chagos. The Kreol word (pronounced *day-RASS-ee-NAY*), is related to the French *déraciner* and the English *deracinate*, and means “to uproot” or “to tear from one’s native land.”

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For more than 30 years the Chagossian people have lived in exile in what they call mizer—miserable, abject poverty. The Chagossians' poverty has not been accidental. It is the result of the Chagossians' expulsion from their homelands by the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom. It is the result of the Chagossians having been dérasiné—forcibly uprooted and torn from their native lands.

Between 1967 and 1973, the U.S. and U.K. governments forcibly expelled the people of the Indian Ocean's Chagos Archipelago from their homelands as part of the construction of a U.S. military base on Diego Garcia. This report documents the damage the expulsion has done to these people, who are known as Chagossians or Ilois. A forthcoming study to be integrated into this report will estimate the monetary value of the damage Chagossians have suffered, including the value of lost household land, property, income, and social welfare benefits.

Based on over three years of research, we conclude that as a result of their expulsion, Chagossians have, as a group, suffered severe, chronic impoverishment. Their impoverishment has extended beyond economic poverty to include material, physical, psychological, social, and cultural forms of impoverishment. The Chagossians' expulsion and impoverishment also appear to constitute continuing violations of internationally recognized human rights norms.

Ten Major Dimensions of Impoverishment

There are ten major dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment. Each dimension has meant a different kind of poverty for Chagossians, a different kind of diminished well-being, and the loss of different kinds of capital—economic, natural, physical, human, social, and cultural.

1. Traumatic Expulsion
2. Joblessness
3. Economic and Social-Psychological Marginalization
4. Homelessness
5. Landlessness and Lost Common Property
6. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition
7. Increased Morbidity and Mortality
8. Sociocultural Fragmentation
9. Educational Deprivation
10. Ethnic Discrimination

Human Rights Norms

The expulsion and subsequent impoverishment of the Chagossian people arguably violate a variety of human rights norms. These include:

1. The Right Not to Be Exiled or Forceably Removed from One's Homeland
2. The Right to Self-Determination and Self-Government
3. The Right to Maintain, Protect, and Develop One's Own Culture
4. The Right Not to Be Subjected to Ethnocide or Cultural Genocide
5. The Right to Own, Develop, and Control One's Homeland and Its Natural Resources
6. The Right to Control and Direct One's Own Political, Economic, and Social Development

- 6
7. The Right to a Nationality
 8. The Right to Education
 9. The Right to Health Care
 10. The Right to Work
 11. The Right to Social Security and an Adequate Standard of Living
 12. The Right to Be Free of Invidious Discrimination, Including on the Basis of One's Indigenous Identity
 13. The Right to an Effective Remedy for Violations of these Rights, Including the Restoration of Wrongfully Taken Lands

Background

The Chagossians are the people of the Chagos Archipelago. Beginning in the late 18th century, enslaved people from Africa and, later, indentured laborers from India created a unique society in Chagos, becoming a distinct people who numbered around 1,500 by the mid-20th century.

In 1965, Britain separated Chagos from colonial Mauritius to create a new colony for military use, called the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). Between 1967 and 1973, the U.S. and U.K. governments forcibly removed the Chagossians from Chagos to make way for construction of a U.S. military base on Diego Garcia, Chagos's largest island. Chagossians were deported to the western Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius and Seychelles 2,000 kilometers away. Upon arrival, most Chagossians received no resettlement assistance. According to numerous published accounts, most experienced severe difficulties in exile and quickly grew impoverished. Observers report that conditions for the Chagossians, who remain exiled and now number approximately 4,700, have improved little since the expulsion.

The Research

Numerous accounts have previously described the damaging effects of the expulsion. Until now however, there has been no systematic research documenting all the ways in which the expulsion has harmed the group. Since August 2001, at the request of lawyers representing the Chagossians in lawsuits in the United States and the United Kingdom, the authors have conducted research to provide this documentation.

The authors are an anthropologist Ph.D. candidate at the City University of New York (USA) with considerable ethnographic research experience, a sociologist specializing in quantitative survey research at Johns Hopkins University (USA), and a law and economics professor at Rutgers University (USA) with expertise in economic and social human rights.

To understand and document the effects of the expulsion on the Chagossians, we conducted more than three years of original quantitative and ethnographic research. Our study included four trips to Mauritius and England, three to Seychelles, and documentary research in the U.S. The lead author spent more than seven months living and conducting research with Chagossians.

The major components of the study were a 91-question, random sample quantitative survey of 328 Chagossians conducted by non-Chagossian interviewers; ethnographic participant observation in Chagossian communities; numerous qualitative interviews and informal conversations; documentary and archival research; and local research oversight. We believe our study is the largest, most comprehensive body of academic research on the Chagossians to date.

The Effects of Involuntary Displacement: Building on Scholarly Findings

The Chagossians are one of many peoples and groups who have been displaced against their will as a result of military action and war, development projects, famine, natural disasters, and other causes. Our study builds on a significant body of research examining how populations around the world have been affected by what is termed *involuntary displacement*. Most significantly, scholars have shown that the forced uprooting of people has remarkably similar effects no matter the source of displacement: Without proper preventative measures, involuntary displacement causes impoverishment.

Major Findings: Impoverishment and its Component Forms

Based on our research and scholarship on involuntary displacement, we found that as a result of their expulsion from Chagos, Chagossians have, as a group, suffered severe, chronic impoverishment.

First, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the living standards they enjoyed prior to their expulsion from Chagos. Although they lacked monetary wealth, Chagossians enjoyed lives of considerable resource wealth, security, and overall well-being, with all housing, food, health care, employment, recreational, and other needs secured on islands described by many as idyllic prior to the creation of the BIOT.

Second, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the living standards of other U.K. Overseas Territory citizens. Because Chagos became the BIOT, most Chagossians are citizens of a U.K. Overseas Territory – like citizens of Bermuda, Gibraltar, and the Falkland Islands. As citizens of the United Kingdom, had they not been expelled from Chagos, Chagossians could have expected progressively rising living standards from their already secure livelihoods to a level similar to that enjoyed in the other Overseas Territories. (The Falkland Islands enjoys full employment and a €20,128 per capita GDP; Bermuda has a per capita GDP of €42,233; even relatively poor Saint Helena has a 2% illiteracy rate and contributions from the U.K. Government accounting for two-thirds of its annual budget).

Third, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the living standards enjoyed by most citizens in Mauritius and Seychelles. Although Chagossians' impoverishment is primarily found in comparison to their lives in Chagos and to other U.K. Overseas Territory citizens, Chagossians have often felt their impoverishment in comparison to the living standards of Mauritians and Seychellois, which have consistently dwarfed their own. In Chagos, Chagossians formed the vast majority of society and did not feel poor. In Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians have become a marginalized underclass at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchies. This has created impoverishment both in their resource poverty and in Chagossians' awareness of their impoverished underclass status.

Fourth, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to other populations living in the vicinity of U.S. military bases. If Chagossians had been permitted to remain in their homes, their residence in the vicinity of a U.S. military facility would have afforded them abundant employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. As it is, they have been categorically denied the

right to work in Chagos, while thousands of civilian employees have been brought from other countries to work on the U.S. base. Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the value of these lost opportunities, which we estimate through comparison with local populations living near similarly isolated U.S. military facilities in Guam and Kwajalein, Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Fifth, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to evolving human rights norms. The populations identified above, in Guam and Kwajalein, have experienced their own human rights violations that have depressed their standards of living and which make them inadequate reference groups against which to fully measure Chagossians' impoverishment. Although no country guarantees all its residents the full measure of economic and social rights recognized in documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Chagossians' impoverishment is most fully measured by comparing their conditions to that ideal standard. We project this standard by statistically adjusting the living standards in Guam and Kwajalein to account for the full enjoyment of these rights.

Ten Major Dimensions of Impoverishment

Below we summarize the ten major dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment. We explore and document each of the ten in depth in the chapters of our full report.

1. Traumatic Expulsion

- Deterioration of living conditions in Chagos after the creation of the BIOT;
- Stranding in Mauritius as Chagossians were prevented from returning to Chagos;
- Coercion, verbal and otherwise, to leave Chagos;
- Extermination of pet dogs on Diego Garcia, as Chagossians awaited deportation;
- Forced deportation on overcrowded cargo ships;
- Depositing of Chagossians on the docks in Mauritius and Seychelles with no resettlement assistance except for 30 families who refused to disembark in Mauritius.

2. Joblessness

- 100% initial job loss from employment in Chagos;
- 45% and 40% current unemployment rates for the 1st and 2nd generations respectively (all figures: 16 and older), as part of chronic high joblessness and underemployment in exile;
- €59.97 and €81.13 current average monthly incomes for the 1st and 2nd generations respectively, in line with chronic low incomes since the expulsion;

- Transformation from universal employment in Chagos to structural barriers to employment in Mauritius and Seychelles and exclusion from national economic success.

3. Economic and Social-Psychological Marginalization

- Economic deprivation first in Chagos with creation of the BIOT and continuing in exile;
- Obsolescence in exile of coconut-processing and other human capital skills from Chagos;
- Downward socioeconomic mobility from structurally secure lives in Chagos to structurally insecure lives as a marginalized underclass in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- Chronic social and psychological damage, typical of groups with high unemployment, but including feelings of impotence, injustice, and vulnerability from being displaced;
- Non-enjoyment of specific human capabilities for personal development and fulfillment identified by some scholars as essential to human dignity.

4. Homelessness

- Loss of all homes in Chagos and initial homelessness in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- Initial and ongoing poor housing conditions characterized by corrugated metal and wood construction, overcrowding, the absence of basic sanitary services, and located in the poorest and least healthy neighborhoods of Mauritius and Seychelles;
- 40% of households now lack a toilet and plumbing in the home, 26% lack running water, 8% lack electricity, despite some overall housing improvements;
- 34% of households live in homes of some mixture of metal, wood, concrete, and brick;
- Feelings of homelessness in exile and of not being at home in Mauritius and Seychelles.

5. Landlessness and Lost Common Property

- Loss of personal and household land in Chagos, estimated at 700 meters² per household;
- Lost access to common property including fishing and seafood harvesting territories, coconut palms and other flora, beaches and other open space, and cemeteries;
- Lost autonomy and control over life as a result of these land and property losses.

6. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

- Food shortages and malnutrition in Chagos as food supplies were restricted and food production was interrupted during the expulsion;

- Lost access in exile to freely available food resources as in Chagos;
- Continuing bouts of hunger and undernourishment in exile;
- Significantly altered diets in exile.

7. Increased Morbidity and Mortality

- Declining health in Chagos after creation of the BIOT and continuing in exile;
- Deaths by suicide, miscarriage, and disease during or shortly after the removals;
- Elevated levels in exile of respiratory diseases, anemia, chronic colds, transmissible diseases like Tuberculosis; cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension, work accidents; domestic and sexual violence against women, as found by a WHO study;
- 85% report the need for more health care, providing new evidence of their limited access;
- 20% and likely even higher levels of substance abuse among those 16 and older;
- Feelings of profound loss and sadness in exile damaging physical and mental health.

8. Sociocultural Fragmentation

- Community division and dispersal because of the expulsion;
- Family dissension and conflict;
- Separation from ancestors' graves, damaging important ancestral ties;
- Diminished cultural identity and disappearance of some sociocultural phenomena, including e.g., a spirit of sharing and weekly communal dance gatherings.

9. Educational Deprivation

- Declining educational quality and school closings in Chagos after creation of the BIOT;
- Interruption of schooling by the expulsion and barriers to re-enrollment in exile;
- Discrimination and verbal abuse at school in exile;
- 36% illiteracy rate for the generation born and raised in exile;

- 47% of this 2nd generation not completing primary school and an additional 35.1% not completing secondary school;
- Systematic educational disadvantage because of Chagossians' poverty, schooling interruption, parents' illiteracy, and poor early schooling, and in Mauritius especially with its education system systematically discriminating against the poor.

10. Ethnic Discrimination

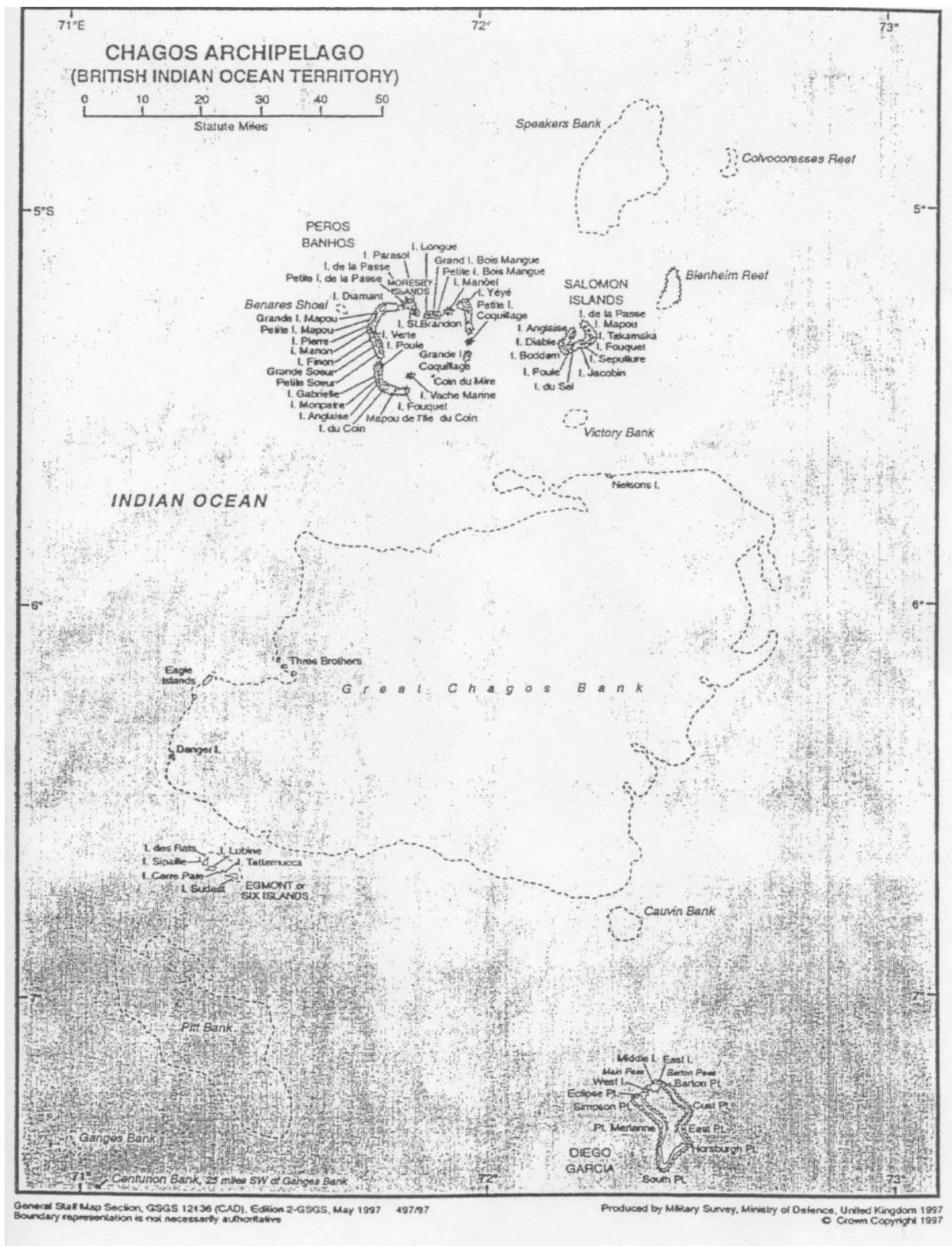
- 50% of 1st generation report job and other discrimination in exile;
- 66% of 1st generation report verbal abuse from host populations;
- Compounding discrimination for most Chagossians as people of African descent;
- Exclusion from employment on the military base at Diego Garcia, while Mauritians, Filipinos, and others work as civilian contractors.

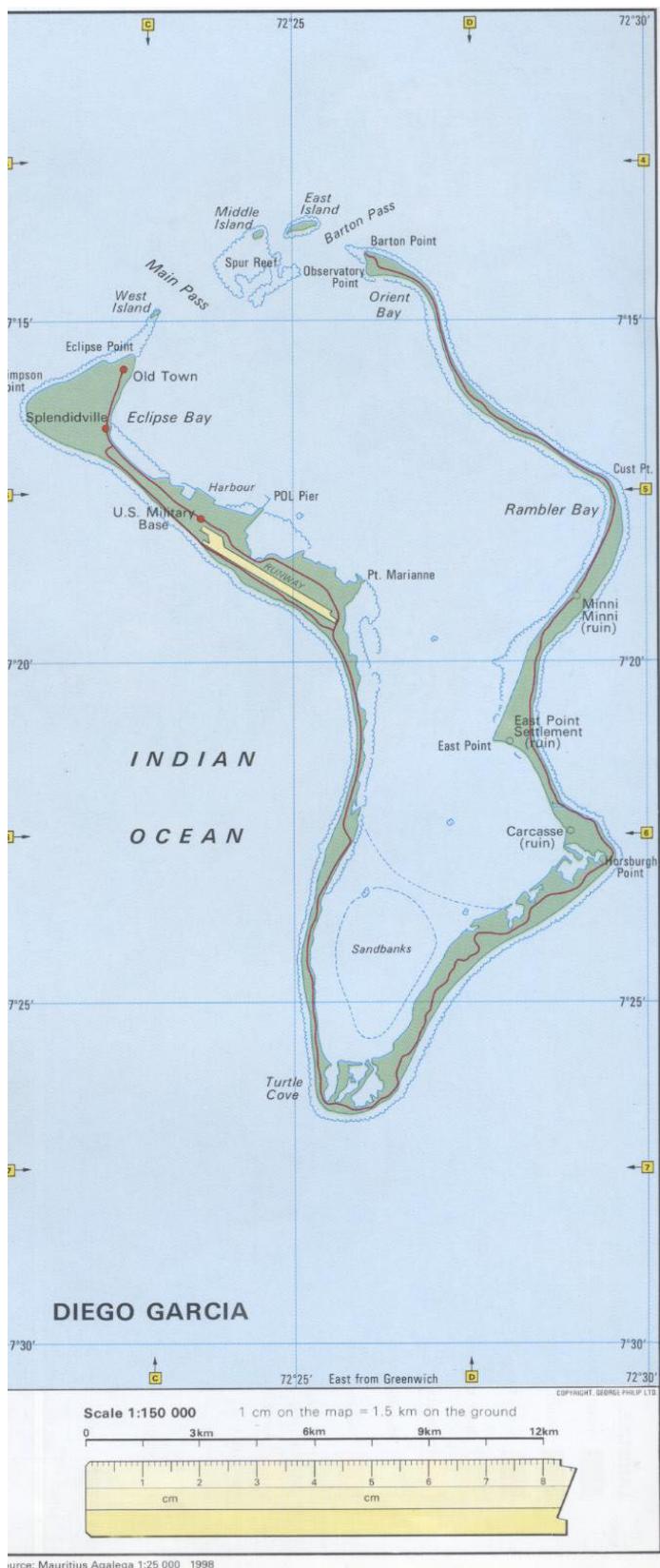
Summary

Other cases of involuntary displacement, including cases at other U.S. military bases, show that without proper preventative steps, involuntary displacement causes impoverishment. No preventative steps were taken to prevent the Chagossians from being impoverished. Given accumulated scholarly findings, it is not surprising that the Chagossians' expulsion—being dérasiné—resulted in their chronic impoverishment. More than three years of original research documented in this report confirms that the major consequence of the Chagossians' expulsion has been the severe, ongoing impoverishment of Chagossians' economic, material, physical, psychological, social, and cultural lives. This multi-faceted impoverishment also appears to constitute a continuing violation of Chagossians' human rights.

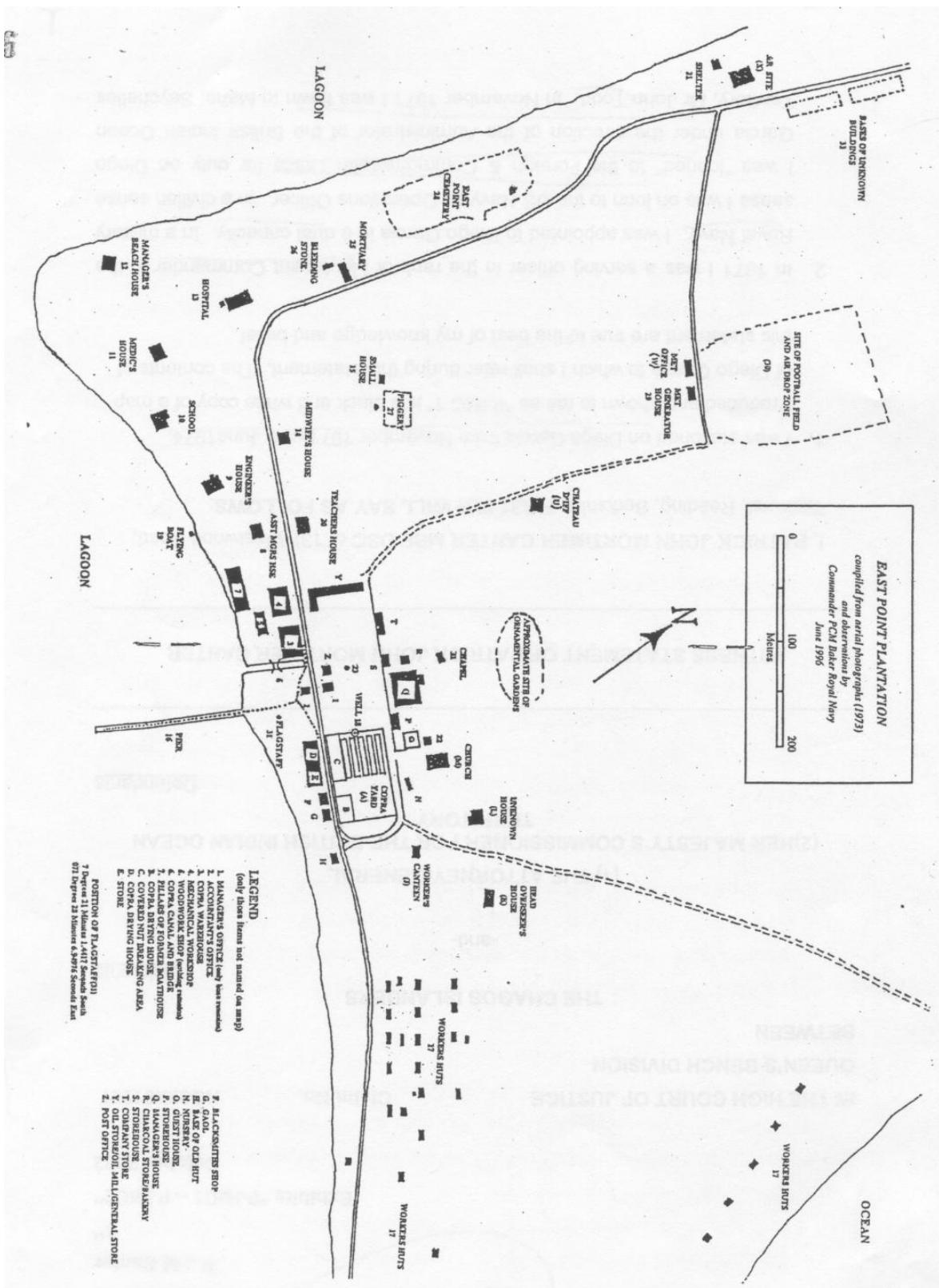
MAPS

Map 1. Indian Ocean with Chagos Archipelago at center.¹

Map 2. Chagos Archipelago.²



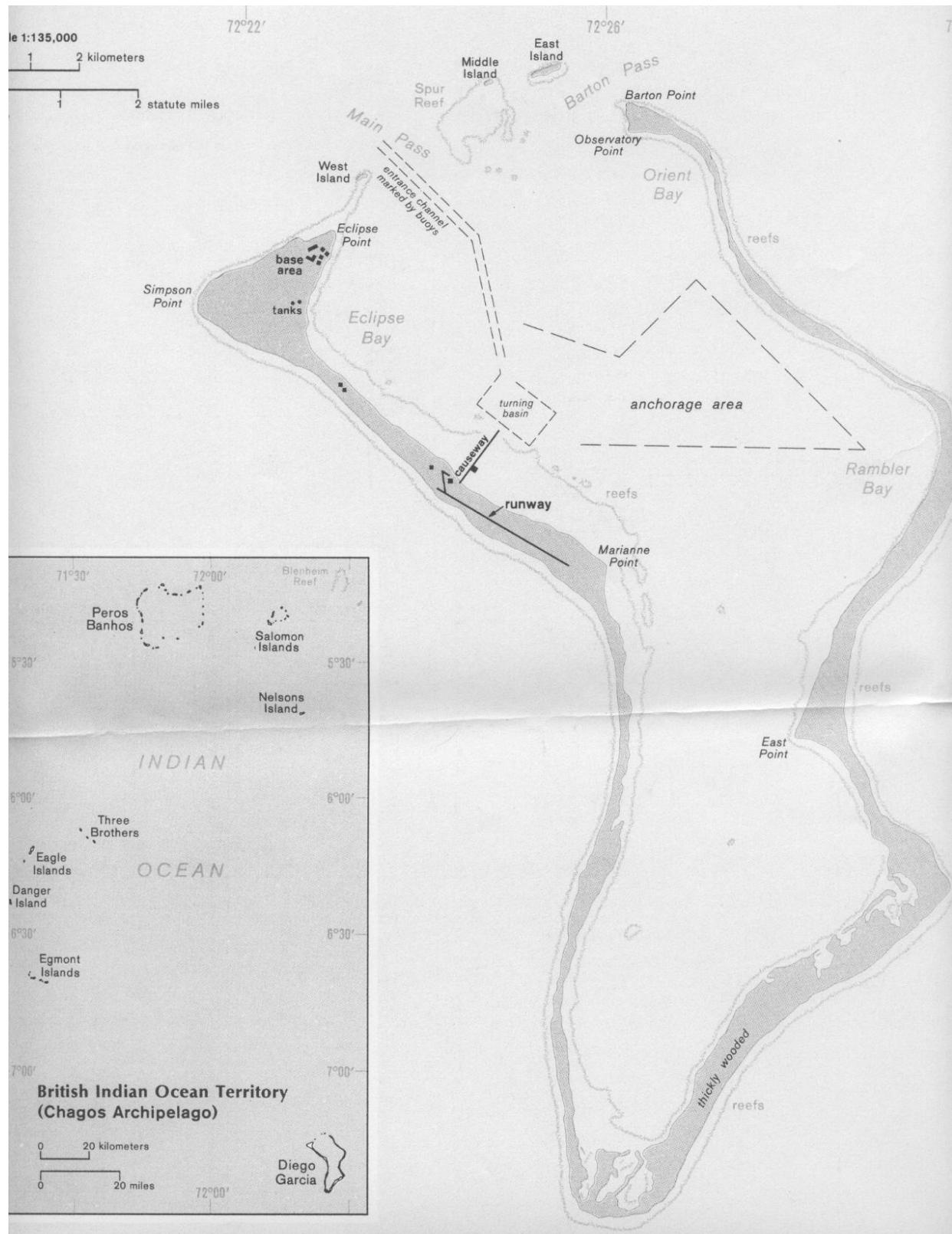
Map 2.1. Diego Garcia.



2.2. East Point/Pointe de l'Est, Diego Garcia.

Map

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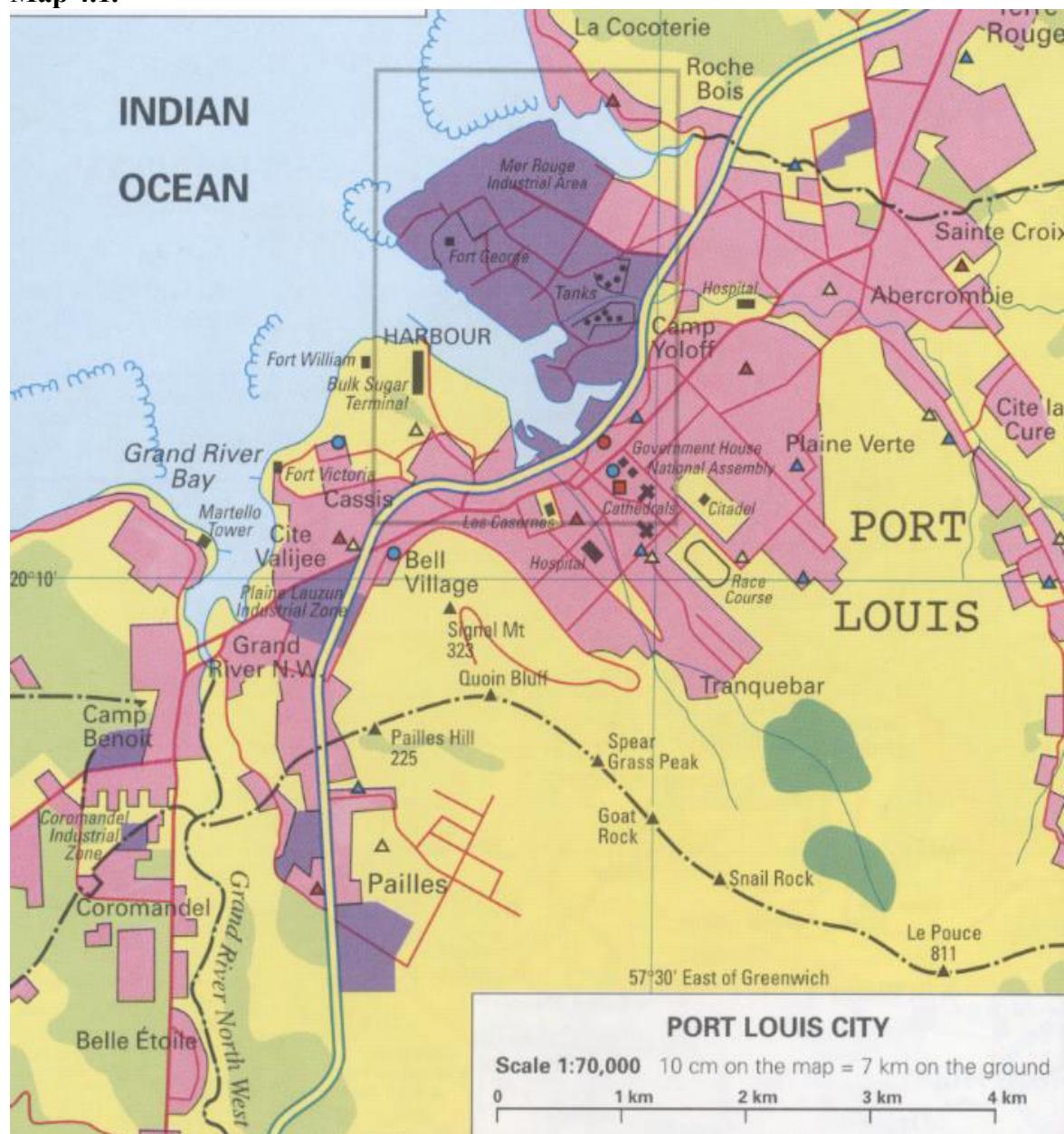


Map 3. Diego Garcia.³



Map 4. Mauritius.⁴

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Map 4.1.⁵



Map 5. Seychelles, with main populated island Mahé at center.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 1. Box used to carry possessions from Chagos, with owner in background, Cassis, Mauritius. 2002.⁶



Figure 2. House built by Mauritian Government as part of 1982 compensation, Cité Ilois, Pointe aux Sables, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 3. Chagossian housing, Cassis, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 4. Dirt pathway among Chagossian homes, Cassis, Mauritius. Note fence is at left, side of Chagossian home at right. 2004.



Figure 5. "Advice to Public/Bathing Not Recommended." Peeling government sign on beach, across coastal road from Cité Ilois, Pointe aux Sables, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 6. Chagossian home, constructed over time by son opposite mother's government-built home received from Mauritian Government during 1982 compensation, Cité Ilois, Pointe aux Sables, Mauritius. 2004.



Figure 7. Chagossian home, Roche Bois, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 8. "Even when trying, you're stuck," (old Mauritian Kreol proverb), Roche Bois, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 9. Chagossian home, interior, with 2002 cyclone (hurricane) damage visible, plastic sheeting covering gaps in wall, Roche Bois, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 10. Chagossian home, interior, with plastic sheeting tied to ceiling to keep bed below dry during rain, Roche Bois, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 11. Flowers on table with tablecloth, drawing by young second-generation Chagossian, Roche Bois, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 12. Chagossian home, Mahé, Seychelles. 2002.

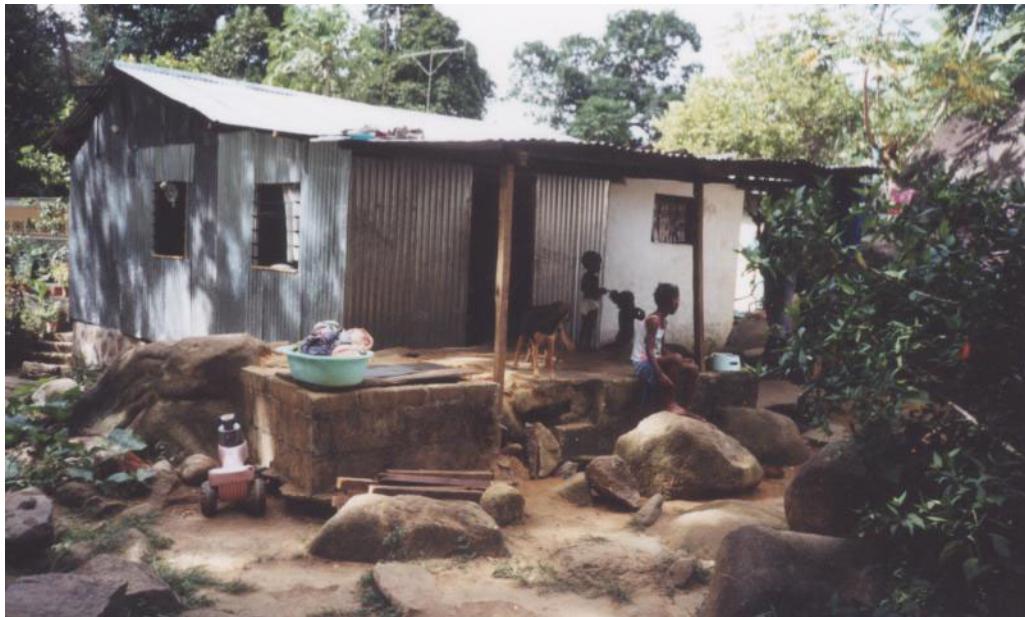


Figure 13. Chagossian home, Mahé, Seychelles. 2002.



Figure 14. Shower and washing area, inside Chagossian home in government housing, Mahé, Seychelles. 2002.



Figure 15. Chagossian home, built by Mauritian Government as part of 1982 compensation, Cité Ilois, Pointe aux Sables, Mauritius. Note visible structural damage and addition to house in wood (at right). 2004.



Figure 16. Chagossian woman prepares *roti chagossien*, for special event, Cassis, Mauritius. 2002.



Figure 17. Chagossian *seraz koko pule* [coconut chicken curry], prepared for special event, Cassis, Mauritius. 2002.

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This report concerns a people known as Chagossians (Chagossiens) or Ilois (Ilwa).⁷ The Chagossians are the people of the Chagos Archipelago, a group of about 56 islands near the geographic center of the Indian Ocean. Ancestors of today's Chagossians were first brought to Chagos as enslaved people from Africa beginning in the late 18th century. Life in the archipelago for these earliest inhabitants and their enslaved and free descendants revolved around coconut plantations owned by people from Mauritius of primarily French descent. Following the abolition of slavery in 1835, indentured laborers brought from India began integrating into growing communities in Chagos. Over nearly 200 years, a distinct society and people developed in the archipelago. By the mid-20th century, in exchange for their work on the plantations, Chagossians had virtually guaranteed universal employment, regular if small salaries in cash and food, land and housing, education, pensions, vacations, and basic health care.

Between 1967 and 1973, the Chagossians were forcibly expelled from Chagos as part of the construction of a U.S. military base on Diego Garcia, Chagos's largest island. Chagossians, who then numbered around 1,500, were deported about 2,000 kilometers from Chagos to the western Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius, which obtained its independence from Great Britain in 1968, and Seychelles, still a British colony at the time. Upon arrival, Chagossians received little or no resettlement assistance. Most became deeply impoverished. Or as many say in Kreol, Chagossians *tombe dan mizer*—they fell into miserable, abject poverty. More than 30 years later, most Chagossians, who now number approximately 4,700, remain impoverished.

Published accounts agree about the Chagossians' impoverishment, and many have described the negative consequences of the expulsion on the Chagossians.⁸ There has however

been little systematic research detailing the full range of ways—economic, material, psychological, physical, social, cultural, and others—that the expulsion has harmed the group.

In August 2001, lawyers representing the Chagossians in lawsuits in the United States and the United Kingdom asked the authors to conduct such systematic research and document the ways in which the Chagossians have been harmed as a result of their expulsion from Chagos. Since August 2001, we have conducted research to that effect as independent academic investigators. Major research for the resulting study was completed in October 2004. We believe our study represents the largest, broadest, and most comprehensive body of academic research on the Chagossians to date. This report presents the conclusions of the research.

1.1. Geography

The Chagos Archipelago consists of about 56 coralline islands located just above the equator, south of India and halfway between continental Africa and Indonesia (see Map 1 at the front of the report). The largest island in the archipelago is Diego Garcia. It lies about 200 kilometers from Chagos's other main (and formerly inhabited) islands, the Peros Banhos group and the Salomon Islands, at the archipelago's north (see Maps 2-3 at front).

Chagos forms one corner of an almost 2,000-kilometer-per-side equilateral triangle with the islands that most shaped its history, Mauritius and Seychelles. Closer geographically to the Maldives Islands, Chagos was instead tied politically, economically, and culturally to the scattering of islands of the western Indian Ocean from Réunion Island and Mauritius to the Seychelles archipelago. Like Seychelles before it became a separate British colony in 1903, Chagos was originally one of the Dependencies of Mauritius. Along with Mauritius's other dependencies Agalega and Rodrigues, Chagos was known as one of the Oil Islands. They were

so named for cultivating the dried flesh of the coconut, called copra, to make coconut oil, which defined the settlement and life of Chagos.

1.2. The History of Chagos

Prior to 1783, there was no permanent human habitation in Chagos, just as there was no permanent human habitation in Mauritius and Seychelles prior to the 18th century. Amidst competition with England for control of the Indian Ocean islands and trade routes to the East Indies, the French settled Mauritius (then called Isle de France) in 1721 (an earlier Dutch settlement was abandoned in 1707). The French settled the Seychelles archipelago by 1742.

French settlers built societies on the islands based around enslaved labor and, particularly in Mauritius, the cultivation of sugar cane. Under the direction of the French Company of the Indies, French settlers imported large numbers of enslaved peoples from Madagascar and the area of continental Africa known then as “Mozambique” (a larger stretch of the southeast African coast than the current nation).

In or around 1783, a French plantation owner from Mauritius transported 22 enslaved people to Diego Garcia and established a coconut plantation there. This settlement marked the beginning of permanent human settlement in Chagos. Other settlements followed on Diego Garcia and later in Peros Banhos, the Salomon Islands, Three Brothers, Six Islands, and Eagle Islands. The settlements revolved around the cultivation of copra for the production of coconut oil, exported primarily to Mauritius. Inhabitants remained overwhelmingly enslaved people of continental African and Malagasy descent, with small numbers of Franco-Mauritians and people of mixed European and African ancestry running the plantations.⁹

In 1814, France ceded Mauritius and its dependencies to Britain after the fall of Napoleon. Chagos remained a dependency of colonial Mauritius under the British, which maintained minimal oversight on life in the archipelago. As in Mauritius proper, the British allowed the French ruling elite, its language, culture, and customs (including enslaving Africans) to dominate life in Chagos.

This changed in an important way when in 1835 slavery was abolished in Mauritius and its dependencies (two years after its formal abolition throughout the British Empire). After emancipation, the plantation owners in Chagos began importing indentured laborers from India, while continuing to bring free laborers of continental African and Malagasy descent from Mauritius. Over the course of the 19th century, the plantations were controlled by an increasingly small number of Mauritian companies that amalgamated ownership of smaller individual plantations. The terms and conditions of employment that developed in Chagos appear to have been relatively favorable for laborers. In exchange for their work, Chagossians' received regular wages, free housing or the supplies to construct their own homes, medical care, food rations, and other work benefits. Through the end of the 19th and into the 20th century, Chagos developed increasingly large villages and complex communities, with hospitals, shops, jails, schools, infant crèches, and churches.

1.3. The People

Over the course of the 19th century, a people distinct from those in Mauritius and elsewhere in the Indian Ocean developed in Chagos. The people lived on the islands of Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos, Salomon, Three Brothers, Six Islands, and Eagle Islands. Although there were local differences among the islands of the archipelago, general similarities were the rule. The people

of Chagos became known as “Ilois.” They spoke their own creole French language, Chagos Kreol.¹⁰ By the end of the 19th century, most were officially Roman Catholic, although religious and spiritual practices and beliefs of African, Malagasy, and Indian origins have remained present to today. A distinct “culture des îles” [culture of the islands] developed, encouraged by the islands’ isolation. By 1900, Chagos’s population was nearly 1,000.

During the 20th century, contact with the outside world increased with the introduction of steam ships, wireless communications, and radio. Health and other conditions in the islands improved as the British colonial government in Mauritius focused more attention on the islands. Schools were introduced in the 1950s. By the 1960s, in exchange for their work, Chagossians had virtually guaranteed, universal employment, regular if small salaries in cash and food, their own land, housing, farm and domestic animals, education, pensions, vacations, basic health care, and other employment benefits.

1.4. Expulsion from Chagos

In 1965, the United Kingdom formally separated Chagos from colonial Mauritius to create the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT). The BIOT, which also included three island groups from colonial Seychelles, was a project of the U.K. and U.S. governments to establish an uninhabited military reserve for the construction of military bases in the Indian Ocean. A secret 1966 agreement between the United States and United Kingdom made provision for “those administrative measures” necessary to remove the local population in the territory.¹¹

Beginning in 1967, any Chagossians leaving Chagos for regular vacations or medical treatment in Mauritius were prevented from returning to their homes and left stranded in

Mauritius. Some Chagossians began leaving for Mauritius as food, medicines, and basic supplies began running low. Other Chagossians report being tricked or coerced into leaving.

In 1971, the U.S. military began construction of military facilities on Diego Garcia and instructed British officials to complete the removals. Later that year, the private company running Chagos for the British, with some assistance from U.S. soldiers, forced all remaining Chagossians in Diego Garcia onto overcrowded cargo ships. Chagossians were generally allowed to take with them a bedding mat and a small box of clothing and personal items. They were forced to leave all other possessions and property, their animals, their homes, and their land in Chagos.

The ships left some Chagossians in Chagos's Peros Banhos and Salomon islands, and others on the docks in Mauritius and Seychelles. During the removal, the company running the islands, with the help of U.S. soldiers, first poisoned, then shot, and finally gassed and burnt the islanders' pet dogs *en masse* in a sealed shed where the dogs had been lured.

In 1972 and 1973, the last Chagossians in Peros Banhos and Salomon were removed to Mauritius and Seychelles. They too were forced to leave behind most of their personal belongings and property, their animals, homes, and land. Since 1973, Chagossians have been barred from returning to Chagos by the laws of the BIOT (with the exception of partial access from November 2000 to June 2004).¹² Since this time, Chagossians have lived in Mauritius and Seychelles (independent nations since 1968 and 1976 respectively). The only people living in Chagos have been transient military and civilian contractor personnel working on the military base at Diego Garcia. Although Mauritians have been among the contractor employees, Chagossians have been barred from working on the island.¹³

1.5. Life since the Displacement

In Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians received little or no resettlement assistance. Most arrived unemployed, homeless, and with little money. They found themselves in rapidly transforming societies with economic, political, social, and environmental contexts dramatically different than those in Chagos. Most Chagossians quickly grew impoverished. In 1975, a journalist from the *Washington Post* described Chagossians in Mauritius as living in “abject poverty.”¹⁴ A year later, a British Government official found Chagossians to be “living in deplorable conditions.”¹⁵

In 1978, some Chagossians in Mauritius received compensation from the Mauritian Government. The payments came from £650,000 paid by the British Government six years earlier. No Chagossians in Seychelles received this compensation. The compensation came in the form of cash payments of Mauritius Rupees 7,590 for adults (€2,825.58 in 2004 euros) and between MRs1,000 (€372.30 in 2004 euros) and MRs1,500 (€558.42 in 2004 euros) for children 18 and under.¹⁶

Between 1982 and 1985, most Chagossians in Mauritius received additional compensation following negotiations with the United Kingdom. Most received some combination of land, housing, and cash payments totaling around MRs55,000 (€7,049.89 in 2004 euros) for adults.

Despite the compensation, conditions appear to have improved only marginally for most Chagossians. Many sold their compensation land and houses and used their compensation money to pay off large debts accrued since the expulsion. In 1997, a World Health Organization-funded report found that Chagossians were “still housed in tin shacks in the disadvantaged slums of Port Louis, without fixed incomes and without real and practical access

to education or health care.”¹⁷ A 2001 fact-finding study described the existence of severe long-term damage to the population and “perpetual insecurity” resulting from the expulsion.¹⁸ The findings of the literature on Chagossians are clear: Chagossians were impoverished by their expulsion and they have largely remained impoverished in the years that have followed.

1.6. The Effects of Involuntary Displacement

The Chagossians are one of many peoples and groups who have been displaced against their will as a result of military action and war, development projects, famine, natural disasters, and other causes. Our study builds on a significant body of research examining how populations around the world have been affected by what is termed *involuntary displacement*. In particular, we draw on the work of former World Bank anthropologist/sociologist Michael Cernea and his Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model. Based on findings from hundreds of cases of involuntary displacement globally, the IRR model has shown that the forced uprooting of people has remarkably similar effects no matter the source of displacement: Without implementation of proper preventative measures, involuntary displacement causes impoverishment.¹⁹

In the case of the Chagossians, no preventative steps were taken to prevent their impoverishment. Given the body of accumulated scholarly findings, it is not surprising then that the Chagossians’ expulsion led to their ongoing impoverishment. Similar negative effects have been documented in hundreds of cases of involuntary displacement globally as well as in comparable cases of involuntary displacement around U.S. military bases, including in the Marshall Islands; Vieques, Puerto Rico; Okinawa, Japan; and Thule, Greenland.²⁰

The strength of Cernea's IRR model is that it explains the processes through which involuntary displacement puts peoples at risk of and often causes impoverishment. Again based on accumulated research from hundreds of involuntarily displaced groups, the model has identified eight specific subprocesses leading to impoverishment. They are landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased morbidity and mortality, lost access to common property resources, and social disarticulation. These eight subprocesses form the core of the model and are the basis of two of its primary functions: to guide research on involuntary displacement and to diagnose the damage it causes. We have used the IRR model and its eight subprocesses of impoverishment in precisely this way. The IRR model serves as the intellectual framework of this report for diagnosing how Chagossians have been harmed by the expulsion.

1.8. The Research

To understand and document the effects of the expulsion on the Chagossians, we conducted more than three years of original quantitative and ethnographic research in a study entitled, "Research with Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles." All three authors designed the study, and the lead author conducted most of the research. All three were involved in data analysis and writing. The second author was primarily responsible for quantitative data processing.

The study included four research trips to Mauritius, three to Seychelles, and four to England, as well as documentary research in the United States. In total, the lead author spent more than seven months living and conducting research with Chagossians in Mauritius, Seychelles, and England during 2001-2002 and 2004.

As with most research into the effects of involuntary displacement, our study combined quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods provided a broad overview of the Chagossian population as a whole. The qualitative methods were useful in testing the quantitative findings, in exploring the subprocesses of impoverishment in more detail in the lives of individual Chagossians, and in understanding the complicated dynamics of how Chagossians' have been harmed over time.

The major components of the study were a 91-question quantitative survey of 328 Chagossians in Mauritius, Seychelles, and Europe; ethnographic participant observation by the lead author in Chagossian communities in Mauritius and Seychelles; 13 formal qualitative interviews and 14 genealogical interviews with Chagossians; additional interviews with politicians, journalists, and others knowledgeable about the Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles; scores of informal conversations and visits to Chagossian households; extensive research consultation with a Chagossian research advisory team, established by the study; archival and library research in Mauritius, Seychelles, England, and the United States, yielding thousands of pages of documentary evidence about the Chagossians; and presentation of initial research findings to Chagossians and others in Mauritius and Seychelles for feedback and comment before finalizing this report.

The Chagos Refugees Group (CRG) in Mauritius and the Chagos Committee (Seychelles) (CCS),²¹ two groups representing almost all Chagossians, facilitated the research in Mauritius and Seychelles. Two other groups in Mauritius, the Diego Garcia Islanders Council and the Chagos Social Committee, representing small numbers of Chagossians, and individual members of these groups also provided assistance and consultation for the study.

We are not and have never been employed or paid for this work. The U.S. legal team reimbursed most research expenses in the period August 2001-December 2002, and some research expenses in 2004.

1.9. Chagossians Today

The Chagossians now number approximately 4,700. We define a Chagossian as its members generally do: A Chagossian is a person born in the Chagos Archipelago (first generation) or the child of one born in Chagos (second generation). (Third-generation descendants of people born in Chagos are also generally considered Chagossians, but for the purposes of enumerating the population alone we exclude them here.) The population figure of 4,700 comes primarily from the lead author's examination of Chagossian registration forms and lists compiled by the CRG and CCS. In our population estimate, we have also included an estimated 65 to 210 additional Chagossians who are not members of the groups. We base this estimate on conversations with Chagossian leaders and ethnographic research in Chagossian communities. The CRG and CCS have also registered the names of at least 557 Chagossians not included in the other census born in Chagos and deceased since the expulsion.

The majority of Chagossians continue to live in Mauritius and Seychelles, although only about 600 live in Seychelles. Many know the two independent nations as luxurious beach destinations for wealthy tourists. Chagossians live far removed from these beaches and the tourist enclaves, except for the few who work in the resorts and tourist restaurants. As we will detail below, Chagossians have also largely been excluded from the impressive macroeconomic growth that Mauritius and Seychelles have enjoyed in the years since the expulsion, which has left the two among the wealthiest of sub-Saharan African nations.

Small numbers now live in Europe and Australia. Most are women who married foreigners, and their children. Some Chagossians have moved to England since May 2002, when many Chagossians received full U.K. citizenship and passports as a result of their connection to the British Indian Ocean Territory and changes in British citizenship law. (Prior to May 2002, many had U.K. Overseas Territory passports that did not include the right of abode in Great Britain.) Approximately 300 Chagossians now live in Britain.

1.10. Major Findings

1.10.1. Severe and Chronic Impoverishment

Based on more than three years of research and analysis, we conclude that as a result of their expulsion from Chagos, Chagossians have, as a group, experienced severe, chronic impoverishment. This impoverishment has extended beyond economic poverty to include material, physical, psychological, social, and cultural impoverishment. Based on the intellectual framework provided by the IRR model and our research, we have identified ten major dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment. The ten are:

1. Traumatic Expulsion
2. Joblessness
3. Economic and Social-Psychological Marginalization
4. Homelessness
5. Landlessness and Lost Common Property
6. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition
7. Increased Morbidity and Mortality
8. Sociocultural Fragmentation

9. Educational Deprivation

10. Ethnic Discrimination

Each of these dimensions of impoverishment is usefully thought of as a different kind of impoverishment. Each kind of impoverishment has meant a different kind of poverty for Chagossians, a different kind of diminished well-being, and, importantly, the loss of different forms of capital—economic, natural, physical, human, social, cultural. Together the ten have had a cumulative effect that is Chagossians' overall impoverishment.

1.10.2. Three Distinct Ways Chagossians Have Been Impoverished

Before we proceed, it is necessary to define “impoverishment.” Impoverishment is the process by which a person or group of persons is made economically poor and is depleted of other essential resources, strength, and forms of capital beyond those economic. Like poverty, impoverishment is a relative concept. Impoverishment implies both a comparison with others and a deterioration in relative position over time, from relative resource wealth (economic and otherwise) to relative resource scarcity.

Given this definition of impoverishment, we document Chagossians' impoverishment in the following five ways.

1.10.2.1. Impoverishment Relative to Chagossians' Lives in Chagos

First, as a result of their expulsion Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the lives they enjoyed in Chagos prior to the expulsion. Although they lacked monetary wealth, Chagossians enjoyed lives of considerable resource wealth, security, and overall well-being, with all housing,

food, health care, employment, recreational, and other needs secured on islands described by many as idyllic prior to the creation of the BIOT. In Chapter 5, “Pre-Expulsion Life in Chagos,” we will fully detail the lives Chagossians enjoyed in Chagos. In the chapters that follow we will continually contrast Chagossians’ lives in Chagos with their lives in Mauritius and Seychelles to demonstrate what was lost with the expulsion and the nature of this impoverishment.

1.10.2.2. Impoverishment Relative to Citizens of Other U.K. Overseas Territories

Second, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the living standards of other U.K. Overseas Territory citizens. Because Chagos became the BIOT, most Chagossians are U.K. Overseas Territory citizens.²² (There are a total of 14 U.K. Overseas Territories. They are: Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, The Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia in Cyprus, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Pitcairn Islands, Saint Helena and its Dependencies, South George and the South Sandwich Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands.)

Unlike other U.K. Overseas Territory citizens however, Chagossians have been denied entry to their territory and almost all the benefits of their citizenship. As citizens of the United Kingdom, and had they not been expelled from Chagos, Chagossians could have expected progressively rising living standards from their already secure livelihoods to a level similar to that enjoyed in the other Overseas Territories. Chagossians could have expected these progressively rising living standards because, for among other reasons, the United Kingdom is a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which commits nations to progressively secure for their residents an adequate and improving standard of living

(including adequate food, housing, and clothing), work, social security, the highest attainable health standards, education, cultural expression, and other rights.

With Chagossians' impoverishment thus understood in comparison to living standards enjoyed by citizens of the other U.K. Overseas Territories, we provide details throughout the report about those standards. Living conditions in the U.K. Overseas Territories are invariably better than those found in developing nations like Mauritius and Seychelles. All but six of the territories are economically self-sufficient (with the exception of defense costs). On the basis of per capita income and according to international standards, all of the territories are considered at least to be middle income.²³

We have been unable to locate any data treating the Overseas Territories as a group. Instead we will compare Chagossians' living conditions to those enjoyed by citizens in the three territories closest in population size to the current Chagossian population. These are the Falkland Islands, Saint Helena, and Anguilla (we exclude Montserrat, whose population has declined rapidly as it has suffered the effects of volcanic activity since 1995). For the most part, we rely on broad economic and social development statistics to paint pictures of living standards in the territories.

To introduce the general state of living conditions in these territories, we note that when the economy of the Falkland Islands (population 2,379, excluding over 1,700 working at military installations) was in "serious decline" in the mid-1970s, the United Kingdom injected £46 million for development projects. By 2002, the islands were economically self-sufficient, with a per capita GDP of €20,128, full employment, and an economy based upon commercial fisheries and agriculture.²⁴ Anguilla (population 13,008) depends economically on its tourism and financial services industries, enjoying 7 percent unemployment and per capita GDP of €9,605.²⁵

Saint Helena is probably the poorest and least economically developed of the territories. With a population (4,007) almost exactly that of the Chagossians, Saint Helena has an illiteracy rate of just 2 percent, an unemployment rate far lower than the Chagossians', and per capita GDP of €3,881.86. Saint Helena also receives roughly two-thirds of its annual budget from the U.K. Government, at least partially compensating for the poorer economic conditions there relative to other U.K. Overseas Territories.²⁶ To provide a better sense of the range of living standards enjoyed in the territories, we note that what is generally the wealthiest of the territories, Bermuda, has a per capita GDP of €42,233, average yearly employment income of over €40,255 per employee, and an unemployment rate of 5 percent.²⁷

We note that in total the British Government contributes over £25 million annually to support development in its Overseas Territories (almost all of the total goes to the six territories that are not self-sufficient; Montserrat alone has received around £180 million since it was affected by volcanic activity in 2003).²⁸ Even in the least economically developed of the Overseas Territories, the British Government describes conditions as, “relatively high in comparison to other countries receiving development assistance.”²⁹ Compared to any of the standards found among the Overseas Territories, the Chagossians have experienced severe impoverishment in ways that we will document in the rest of this report.

1.10.2.3. Impoverishment Relative to Mauritians and Seychellois

Third and finally, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the living standards of the societies to which they were forcibly expelled. Although Chagossians' impoverishment is primarily found in comparison to their lives in Chagos and to other U.K. Overseas Territory citizens, Chagossians have often also felt their impoverishment in comparison to prevailing

living standards among Mauritians and Seychellois, which have consistently dwarfed their own. In Chagos, Chagossians formed the vast majority of society and did not feel poor. In Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians have become a marginalized underclass at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchies. This status transformation has created impoverishment both in Chagossians' resource poverty and in Chagossians' awareness of their impoverished underclass status. In the chapters that follow we will continually contrast Chagossians' living standards in exile with prevailing living standards in Mauritius and Seychelles (again primarily through broad economic and social development statistics) to demonstrate the third way in which Chagossians have been impoverished.

1.10.2.4. Impoverishment Relative to Other Populations Living near U.S. Military Bases

If the U.S. military facility on Diego Garcia had been constructed without expelling the Chagossian population, it would have afforded Chagossians abundant employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Instead, they were not only expelled from their homes but were categorically denied the right to work in Chagos, while thousands of civilian workers from other countries were brought to the islands to serve the civilian needs of the U.S. military base located there. Chagossians accordingly have suffered impoverishment relative to the rising standard of living they would have enjoyed had they been permitted to remain in their homeland and take advantage of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities created by the construction and operation of the U.S. military base there.

To estimate the extent of these lost opportunities we have analyzed the economic condition of indigenous populations living near similarly isolated U.S. military facilities on Guam (a U.S. possession) and on Kwajalein Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. In an

unfinished section of the report that is not included in this draft we have used these reference groups to estimate the economic benefits Chagossians would have enjoyed had they been permitted to remain in Chagos and benefit from the economic opportunities created by the presence of the U.S. military base on Diego Garcia.

1.10.2.5. Impoverishment Relative to Evolving International Human Rights Norms

The development of universal standards for judging the actions of governments and individuals in protecting fundamental human rights is a singular achievement of the post-World War II era. This report draws on this evolving set of norms in assessing both the nature and severity of the harm suffered by the Chagossians as a result of their expulsion. Relying on declarations and agreements whose formal legal status varies but whose substantive content embodies widely accepted human rights norms and principles, we document the impoverishment that Chagossians have suffered, both as a people and as individuals, relative to standards and aspirations that increasingly are recognized as universal rights.

The agreements and declarations most relevant to assessing the Chagossians' rights in this sense are the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the International Labour Organisation's Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Populations. (In a separate report the lead author has argued that the Chagossians should be considered an indigenous people according to current understandings of the term in both international law and the social sciences.)³⁰

The Chagossians' expulsion and impoverishment offends a number of the principles and norms recognized in these documents, including the following.

1. The Right Not to Be Arbitrarily Deprived of One's Property and Not to Be Exiled or Forcibly Removed from One's Homeland³¹
2. The Right to Self-Determination and Self-Government³²
3. The Right to Maintain, Protect, and Develop One's Own Culture³³
4. The Right Not to Be Subjected to Ethnocide or Cultural Genocide³⁴
5. The Right to Own, Develop, and Control One's Homeland and Its Natural Resources³⁵
6. The Right to Control and Direct One's Own Political, Economic, and Social Development³⁶
7. The Right to a Nationality³⁷
8. The Right to Education³⁸
9. The Right to Health Care³⁹
10. The Right to Work⁴⁰
11. The Right to Social Security and an Adequate Standard of Living⁴¹
12. The Right to Be Free of Invidious Discrimination, Including on the Basis of One's Indigenous Identity⁴²
13. The Right to an Effective Remedy for Violations of these Rights, Including the Restoration of Wrongfully Taken Lands⁴³

1.11. The Report

Dérasiné, the word from which we take the title of this report, is the word that Chagossians most frequently use to describe their expulsion from Chagos. The Kreol word (pronounced *day-RASS-ee-NAY*), is related to the French *déraciner* and the English *deracinate*, and means “to uproot” or “to tear from one’s native land.” Immediately, Chagossians’ use of the word indicates Chagossians’ status as a distinct people who are native and indigenous to Chagos. It indicates their profound, *rooted* connection to the land. *Dérasiné* is also useful for understanding the consequences of the expulsion on the Chagossians. The word evokes a violent severing, like a tree torn from the earth, and the ongoing pain of the extraction and subsequent separation.

Dérasiné has another definition: “to eradicate.” This meaning adds a layer of significance in underlining how as a group who has been *dérasiné*, the Chagossians have had their existence as a

people threatened. Given their expulsion and the economic, social, psychological, and cultural damage it has done, the Chagossians are threatened with eradication as a distinct people.

The purpose of this report is to document the negative effects of the expulsion on Chagossians' lives. The report begins by reviewing the literature that has sought previously to document the expulsion's impact. We next describe the intellectual framework for our study and the methodology we employed in our research. To provide context for understanding Chagossians' impoverishment, we then present an overview of Chagossians' pre-expulsion life. The bulk of the report follows, with ten chapters detailing the ten major dimensions of the impoverishment experienced by Chagossians as a result of the expulsion. A concluding chapter reviews and summarizes the findings of the report.

2. PREVIOUS FINDINGS: LITERATURE ON THE CHAGOSSIANS

A wide range of journalists, professionals, students, and other observers have documented many of the negative consequences of the expulsion on the Chagossians since the final removals in 1973. The works make varying contributions of differing utility to our study. We review here this body of literature and its applicability to our task of documenting the damage experienced by Chagossians as a result of the expulsion.

2.1. Introduction

Prior to the expulsion, there was almost no literature written about the group. The only major works were a survey of the small dependencies of Mauritius by its former colonial governor Robert Scott⁴⁴ and the writings of a Catholic priest, Roger Dussercle.⁴⁵ Since the expulsion, a small body of journalistic accounts, professional reports, and academic theses has described the displacement, Chagossians' impoverishment, and other aspects of Chagossians' lives.

Journalistic accounts have been most frequent. David Ottaway's 1975 *Washington Post* article—the first in the Western press to break the story—is representative in describing the “abject poverty” Chagossians faced in Mauritius after the removals.⁴⁶ Almost thirty years later, Carlson Anyangwe's fact-finding report found severe immediate and long-term injuries resulting from the displacement.⁴⁷ Within the literature, however, there has been relatively little academic analysis systematically detailing the state of Chagossians' lives. No doctoral dissertations or academic monographs have been written about the Chagossians (the only book-length treatment is a novella).⁴⁸ Importantly there has been almost no attention paid to Chagossians in Seychelles.

2.2. Journalistic Accounts

Writing two years after the final removals, Ottaway reports that the Chagossians “seem lost souls, living for the first time in a money economy where rent, food and clothing are priced far above their meager incomes and where they are either unsuited for the available jobs or discriminated against by employers who favor local Mauritians.”⁴⁹ Ottaway cites statistics showing that only 17 percent of family heads had full-time employment. He explains that the Chagossians “seem doomed to find only menial jobs, unless the local government undertakes some kind of special retraining program for them.”⁵⁰

The *Sunday Times* of London outlines a similar landscape in “Diego Garcia, the Islanders Britain Sold,” published 12 days after Ottaway’s report.⁵¹ The article finds that following the expulsion the Chagossians were, “as a result considerably poorer.” The *Sunday Times* describes cramped deportations from Chagos, arrivals in Seychelles involving temporary housing in a Seychelles prison, and the withholding of money for resettlement. In Mauritius, the Chagossians “have been living in squalor.” The article continues, “The fact remains that the islanders have to go begging to survive and live in shacks which are little more than chicken coops.”⁵²

One of the most widely known works on the Chagossians is John Madeley’s report “Diego Garcia: A Contrast to the Falklands,” commissioned by the London-based Minority Rights Group. Madeley describes the history and experience of the Chagossians within the context of the Cold War and the supposed end of British colonialism. In a concise summary of their experience, Madeley writes, “Between 1965 and 1973 the British government went about the systematic removal of its own subjects from Diego Garcia; it deposited them in exile in Mauritius without any workable resettlement scheme; left them in abject poverty, gave them a tiny amount of compensation and later offered more on condition that the islanders renounced

their rights ever to return home.”⁵³ Generally Madeley focuses on documenting the history of the displacement. He provides little original research about the Chagossians’ post-expulsion lives, primarily citing the work of others. Of particular relevance, he notes, a survey by the Comité Ilois Organisation Fraternelle [Ilois Committee Fraternal Organization] reporting 9 Chagossian suicides and 26 families “that had died together in poverty” since the displacement.⁵⁴

2.3. Survey Research

The most comprehensive studies of the Chagossians’ post-expulsion conditions are those of Hélène Siophe, A. R. G. Prosser, and Herve Sylva. In late 1974 and early 1975, Siophe, a social worker working with Chagossians in Mauritius, conducted a survey for the Mauritian Institut pour le Developpement et le Progres [Institute for Development and Progress]. Siophe surveyed 1,183 Chagossians displaced to Mauritius (representing a large percentage of the population). Of 277 total families, Siophe finds that only 78 heads of family had permanent work (28 percent). Another 100 were working on a temporary basis (36 percent). The vast majority of those working at all were employed in low-paid work as dockers, maids, fishermen, and truck loaders.⁵⁵ Most families depended on a monthly salary of less than 160 Mauritian rupees (€73.41 in 2004 euros).⁵⁶ Education for the Chagossians was similarly poor: At the time, only 10 Chagossian adults surveyed could “read a little.” More than one-quarter (27 percent) of children 6 to 16 years old were not attending school. And according to Siophe, only three Chagossian families owned their own homes, while 55 percent of families lived in houses in “bad condition.”⁵⁷

A year later, in 1976, A. R. G. Prosser, a representative of the UK Ministry of Overseas Development, visited the Chagossian community in Mauritius on behalf of the British and

Mauritian governments. In what became known as the “Prosser Report,” Prosser evaluated the conditions of the Chagossians and proposed a resettlement plan using the £650,000 Britain gave Mauritius for that purpose.

In his report, based on seven days of research, Prosser writes that “the most intractable problem” for the Chagossians is housing, especially in the wake of a 1975 cyclone [hurricane] that exacerbated an already severe housing shortage in Mauritius. Ultimately the conclusions of the report are contradictory. On the one hand, Prosser asserts, “that the majority of Ilois are reasonably well settled in Mauritius.”⁵⁸ On the other hand, after proposing a resettlement plan combining housing, occupational training, and welfare services, he concludes his report saying, “the Ilois are living in deplorable conditions which could be immediately alleviated if action is taken on the lines I have suggested.”⁵⁹ Prosser’s initially positive assessment of the Chagossians in Mauritius is unlike that of almost any other observer.

In 1981, the Mauritius Ministry of Social Security commissioned Herve Sylva, who had been a teacher among the Chagossians for ten years, to conduct a survey of Chagossian living conditions. Sylva sketches a rough sociological overview of Chagossian life in Mauritius. Surveying nearly all people born in Chagos and displaced to Mauritius, Sylva provides a useful set of ten data tables rivaled only by Siophe’s survey in 1974-75.

Like Prosser, Sylva finds that “housing is the most pressing problem that must be tackled for the proper resettlement of the Ilois.” Sylva reports significant overcrowding, families living in “refugee camps,” more than a quarter of families (27 percent) doubling up with other families, and others “living in ramshackle houses and in dire conditions.”⁶⁰ From Sylva’s employment tables, one can calculate male unemployment at 41 percent and female unemployment at 58 percent.⁶¹ Sylva writes that of the few Chagossian families who own land and a house and have

“satisfactorily remunerated jobs,” most are Chagossians who arrived in Mauritius prior to 1960 and married Mauritians. “It is a fact,” Sylva states, “that many Ilois are badly in need of money.”⁶²

2.4. Academic Theses

The findings in Francois Botte’s undergraduate thesis (University of Mauritius), “The ‘Ilois’ Community and the ‘Ilois’ Women,” accord strongly with the work of Sylva, Prosser, and Siophe, although the quality of Botte’s scholarship and writing is less reliable than her predecessors’. Botte focuses on the place of women in Chagossian society and on qualitative sociological description, while providing additional statistical data from a survey conducted for her thesis. Like the others, Botte writes that Chagossians live in “poor housing conditions in the sub-urban slums of Port Louis,” the Mauritian capital. She reports that 82.8 percent were living in two or three room “hovels” in the suburbs, generally with two or three families living together and sharing the rent.⁶³

“The economic situation of the Ilois community,” Botte continues, is characterized “by low wages, unemployment, [and] underemployment,” for people with skills ill suited for the Mauritian labor market.⁶⁴ Botte finds 85.8 percent of male Chagossians underemployed and 46.3 percent of women unemployed. 53.8 percent of families depended on women as the primary money earner and 62.8 percent of women were unmarried.⁶⁵ Botte’s thesis further details a range of problems faced by the Chagossians, including illiteracy, unemployment, prostitution, teenage crime, housing deficiencies, discrimination, and indebtedness.

Iain Walker’s master’s thesis (University of Edinburgh, U.K.) is the only formal work of ethnography in the Chagos literature, based on four months of research in Mauritius. Walker

however adds little to an understanding of the general socioeconomic condition of Chagossians. He describes the Chagossians as generally living under “conditions of extreme poverty” and draws instead on the original work of Sylva, Botte, Prosser, and others. Walker reports statistics showing 11 Chagossian deaths by suicide, 42 other deaths, and 15 Chagossian psychiatric admissions shortly after their arrival in Mauritius.⁶⁶

Although Walker’s focuses on “the problem of integration of the Ilois into Mauritian society,” he demonstrates some of the ways Chagossians have experienced discrimination in Mauritius.⁶⁷ He shows how Chagossians are discriminated against especially at school and at work, where they are easily identified as Chagossians.⁶⁸ Walker describes how Chagossians are widely subject to negative stereotyping by Mauritians as a group characterized by heavy drinking, antisocial and immoral behavior, and undisciplined spending habits. From an informal survey of non-Chagossian shopkeepers, Walker reports a range of reactions to Chagossians, “varying from savage and uncivilized troublemakers to pleasant and honest victims of circumstances.”⁶⁹

2.5. Recent Studies

In 1997, the World Health Organization (WHO) helped fund a report of health and education among Chagossians in Mauritius. The report, authored by Tania Dræbel, is based on eight weeks of data collection revolving around qualitative interviews and a survey of 90 Chagossians (though only 15 of the respondents were male). Dræbel describes the Chagossians as a community where most are living a marginal and precarious existence, significantly below the quality of life enjoyed by most others in Mauritius. Chagossians are, she explains, “still housed

in tin shacks, in the disadvantaged slums of Port Louis, without fixed incomes and without real and practical access to education or health care.”⁷⁰

Among those surveyed, Dræbel finds that Chagossian households have an average of 6.5 individuals. The average Chagossian home have 2.5 rooms (in addition to a kitchen and toilet and bathing facilities) and generally lacks electricity and running water. The average monthly household salary stood in 1997 at MRs2,933.60 (€132.05 in 2004 euros). Dræbel explains that of those Chagossians working, most are doing so in jobs at the bottom of the Mauritian pay scale and with considerable job insecurity.⁷¹

Dræbel’s study reports that the state of Chagossian health is characterized by elevated levels of chronic colds, fevers, respiratory diseases, anemia, and poor nutrition, as well as problems with cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension, and youth alcohol and tobacco abuse. Other significant health problems include work accidents as well as grief and other psychological problems related to their exile from Chagos.⁷²

Examining the state of education among Chagossians, Dræbel finds that more than half of the adults surveyed (34 of 60) had never attended school, and another 30 percent left school before obtaining the Certificate of Primary Education. With illiteracy and semi-illiteracy widespread among Chagossian parents, Dræbel reports that few children are growing up in an environment conducive to successful learning.⁷³ In line with other research about educational inequalities facing poor students in Mauritius,⁷⁴ Dræbel documents significant feelings among Chagossians of having unequal access to a quality education, of being disempowered in their relationship with the Mauritian educational system, and of being discriminated against by teachers. Although education is formally free in Mauritius, Dræbel explains how hidden costs of schooling—from paying for uniforms, books and supplies, transportation, snacks, and the private

tutoring especially crucial to educational success—become barriers to success among Chagossian children. The result for many adolescents, says Dræbel, has been their dropping out of school without being able to read or write.⁷⁵

Though far less detailed than Dræbel, Botte, or Walker, Carlson Anyangwe’s fact-finding report for the Southern African Human Rights NGO Network (SAHRINGON), “Question of the Chagos Archipelago,” provides a broad overview of the condition of the Chagossians. Anyangwe draws on an array of historical materials and contemporary interviews, primarily with political leaders, conducted over less than two weeks in Mauritius. Anyangwe describes the displacement and its effects as an array of trauma, destruction, and harm. Though he offers little new evidence to document these harms, Anyangwe’s report concisely summarizes accumulated knowledge about the Chagossians. Anyangwe concludes that,

The forcible eviction impacted negatively on the lives and livelihood of the evictees in other ways: individual and social impoverishment; physical, psychological and emotional trauma; insecurity for the future; loss of livelihood; loss of emotionally, spiritually and culturally significant sights; loss of personal possessions they were forced to relinquish.⁷⁶

2.6. Conclusion

Anyangwe’s fact-finding report and the work of the scholars and journalists who preceded his study provide an almost 30-year-long body of evidence upon which this report builds in the pages that follow. Before presenting the main findings of this report, it is important to point out a limitation of our work: This report focuses on how Chagossians’ lives have been damaged as a result of the expulsion. The report is neither an ethnography nor an attempt to capture all aspects of Chagossian life. Like any group that has been damaged, Chagossians’ lives are larger than the sum of the damage they have experienced. Because the purpose of this report is to document

Chagossians' injuries, there are other areas of Chagossian experience that we do not address.

We believe however that the report provides the most comprehensive documentation to date of the impoverishment that Chagossians have experienced as a result of their expulsion.⁷⁷

3. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF EXPULSION: THE ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

Literature on the phenomenon known as *involuntary displacement* provides useful models for understanding and documenting the impact of the expulsion on the Chagossians. Former World Bank anthropologist/sociologist Michael Cernea's "Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction" (IRR) model in particular provides the basic analytic framework for this report and its documentation. Contributions by other scholars of involuntary displacement have helped to deepen and strengthen the report's use of Cernea's model.

Among scholars, the term involuntary displacement has generally referred to the involuntary movement of populations as a result of large development projects, like dam construction. Involuntary displacement generally has not referred to the involuntary movement of populations involving the application of force and military occupation, as in the case of Chagossians. Many scholars in the involuntary displacement literature, however, have started to integrate their work with that of scholars studying refugees and other forced migrants to understand the similarities between involuntary displacees (as they are called) and forced migrants of all kinds.⁷⁸ With attention to how the Chagossian expulsion differs from other cases of involuntary displacement and forced migration, this growing literature merging scholars of involuntary displacement and refugees has proved useful to understanding the Chagossians' experience.

3.1. Understanding Involuntary Displacement: Michael Cernea and the IRR Model

For many, Michael Cernea has made the largest and most significant contribution to systematically understanding the effects of involuntary displacement. Cernea has been influential in international development policy and social science alike by accumulating evidence

from hundreds of cases of involuntary displacement caused by major development projects and then modeling the risks of involuntary displacement in a generalizable way. As the international development community became increasingly aware of the harmful effects of development projects, Cernea shaped the World Bank's first policies to prevent and mitigate the harms of involuntary displacement. Following the World Bank's example, other major international development institutions, including the Asian Development Bank, adopted similar policies on involuntary displacement. In academic anthropology and sociology, Cernea has been the major force in establishing important subfields and bodies of literature on involuntary resettlement. He has also helped formulate theoretical linkages between literature on involuntary displacement and the harms suffered by refugees and other displaced populations.

Cernea's work over the past 20 years has been a significant advance over earlier attempts to understand and model the dangers of involuntary displacement.⁷⁹ Cernea's contribution has been to develop a comprehensive, generalizable model of involuntary displacement's likely effects: the "Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction" (IRR) model. Drawing from a wide range of empirical evidence internationally, Cernea theorizes that a variety of displaced peoples have fundamentally similar experiences.⁸⁰ At base, he writes, involuntary displacement first puts people at risk of impoverishment, and second, without proper preventative steps, causes impoverishment. This is not simply a coincidental or accidental outcome. Impoverishment is a full-fledged "pathology of development," Cernea says, an outcome causing material, social, psychological, and cultural damage to affected peoples, an outcome that is to be expected without proper preventative steps.⁸¹

The core concept of Cernea's model is a set of eight "risks" or "subprocesses" of impoverishment. Each of the eight is significant on its own; together, the eight are

interconnected and have a cumulative effect that produces overall impoverishment. Cernea identifies the subprocesses as: 1) landlessness; 2) joblessness; 3) homelessness; 4) marginalization; 5) increased morbidity and mortality; 6) food insecurity; 7) loss of access to common property resources; and 8) the shattering of community ties, social capital, and communal life. Each subprocess will have varying intensities depending on the context, Cernea adds, and each will have differing impacts on groups within populations (e.g., women and children).⁸²

Cernea outlines four major functions of his model. Each proves useful in understanding specific cases of involuntary displacement, like that of the Chagossians. The model is:

1. Diagnostic and explanatory in identifying the major harms caused by existing development projects;
2. Predictive and preventative in identifying the likely effects of future projects that should be planned for;
3. Research-oriented in guiding data collection and helping to formulate future hypotheses; and
4. Rehabilitative in providing a reconstruction strategy built around reversing the effects of the eight subprocess.⁸³

In recent years, Cernea has increasingly sought to extend his model to populations other than those displaced by development projects—most importantly, to people turned into refugees by events like war and famine. Whether one is an “oustee” from a development project or a refugee, Cernea argues, one is a member of a “displaced population,” with eminently, if not entirely comparable experiences.⁸⁴

3.2. Applying Cernea's Model: The Report's Analytic Framework

Cernea's model and its eight subprocesses provide the framework around which we document Chagossians' impoverishment. This is precisely the diagnostic and explanatory function Cernea intends for his model. We use the eight subprocesses as the basis for our analysis and documentation of Chagossians' impoverishment. However based on an analysis and critique of the model, we have made several revisions that we believe improve both its theoretical strength and its applicability in the case of the Chagossians. We detail these revisions and our use of the IRR model below.

3.2.1. Terminology

Cernea places the eight risks or subprocesses at the core of his model. The eight are “impoverishment risks” prior to displacement, when each of the eight is a potential outcome at risk of transpiring and contributing to impoverishment. The eight are “subprocesses of impoverishment” after displacement has occurred and many or all of the risks have been realized as actuality.

We believe that after displacement has occurred it is equally useful and perhaps more precise theoretically to conceptualize the impoverishment subprocesses as what we call *dimensions of impoverishment*. The IRR model leaves the term “subprocesses” (at other times “processes”) ill-defined, adding a vagueness to the model that we think is unnecessary.⁸⁵ Cernea actually points in the direction of conceptualizing “dimensions” of impoverishment rather than subprocesses by making passing reference to the term.⁸⁶ The distinction may be subtle, but we believe the term dimensions of impoverishment has the advantage of keeping the focus of the

model on impoverishment, which Cernea identifies as one of its three core concepts (with “risk” and “reconstruction”).

3.2.2. Defining “*Impoverishment*”

Although impoverishment is one of the three core concepts of the IRR model, it too is left undefined. To strengthen our use of the model and our terminological revision, it is important to define “impoverishment” here. We define impoverishment as the process by which a person or group of persons is made economically poor and is depleted of other essential resources, strength, and forms of capital beyond those economic. Like poverty, impoverishment is a relative concept. Impoverishment implies both a comparison with others and a deterioration over time, from relative resource wealth (economic and otherwise) to relative resource scarcity.

Defining impoverishment improves the model by forcing those who would use it to identify precisely and systematically what involuntary displacement’s impoverishment is, beyond a series of negative consequences afflicting a group. Given our definition above, one must first specify the implied comparison against which one finds a group to be impoverished. Second, one must demonstrate how and to what extent a group is impoverished relative to the comparison, detailing the nature of the impoverishment involved (both for overall impoverishment and in its component dimensions). That is, one must identify the standard or standards against which a group might be found to be impoverished and then document how and to what extent the group’s condition constitutes impoverishment relative to the identified standard or standards.

(By contrast the IRR model only requires identifying the nature of the impoverishment without specifying systematically the implied comparison against which a group is

impoverished. The model generally assumes that impoverishment is in relation to a group's pre-displacement life but avoids discussing the relational and relative aspect of impoverishment or the possibility that groups could be impoverished relative to standards other than their pre-displacement lives.)

3.2.3. Defining and Specifying Chagossians' Impoverishment

Based on this approach, in our introduction (Chapter 1) we immediately identified at least three distinct comparison standards and ways in which we found Chagossians to have been impoverished by the expulsion. We identified how Chagossians have been impoverished 1) relative to the lives they enjoyed in Chagos prior to the expulsion; 2) relative to the living standards of citizens of other U.K. Overseas Territories, which Chagossians could reasonably have expected had they not been displaced; and 3) relative to the living standards of citizens in Mauritius and Seychelles. In the remainder of the report we will demonstrate how the standard of living Chagossians have enjoyed since the expulsion constitutes impoverishment relative to the three comparison living standards identified. We will do this by systematically providing details about each of these living standards. We can then make explicit how and to what extent Chagossians living conditions since the expulsion constitute impoverishment relative to these standards.

We document impoverishment in this way by returning to the core of the IRR model and its subprocesses of impoverishment, or what we call dimensions of impoverishment. Based on our research and analysis, we have identified ten major dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment that are constitutive parts of their overall impoverishment. Seven of these dimensions of impoverishment come directly from Cernea's model, though for reasons that we

will explain, we have combined “landlessness” and “lost access to common property resources” in one chapter and renamed a few of the dimensions for clarity. We have also extended our analytic framework beyond Cernea’s eight subprocesses (as he encourages) to identify three additional dimensions of impoverishment that have been particularly significant to Chagossians’ experience. These are 1) traumatic expulsion, 2) educational deprivation, and 3) ethnic discrimination. The ten major dimensions of Chagossians’ impoverishment that we have identified are:

1. Traumatic Expulsion
2. Joblessness
3. Economic and Social-Psychological Marginalization
4. Homelessness
5. Landlessness and Lost Common Property
6. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition
7. Increased Morbidity and Mortality
8. Sociocultural Fragmentation
9. Educational Deprivation
10. Ethnic Discrimination.

Beginning in Chapter 6, each of the following chapters addresses a dimension of impoverishment that has contributed to Chagossians’ overall impoverishment. For each dimension of impoverishment, we first identify the standards of living against which Chagossians’ relative impoverishment were judged (i.e., living standards in Chagos, in other U.K. Overseas Territories, and in Mauritius and Seychelles). Second, we detail the conditions of

Chagossians' lives in that area to demonstrate how and to what extent Chagossians have experienced that dimension of impoverishment.

We use comparative findings about other displaced populations and cumulative insights from Cernea's and others' examinations of involuntary displacement worldwide to deepen our documentation of Chagossians' impoverishment. More focused examinations of each of the IRR's eight subprocesses (see e.g., Downing on social disarticulation,⁸⁷ Fernandes on marginalization,⁸⁸ and Nayak on landlessness⁸⁹) and suggestions of other subprocesses (e.g., losses to education, public services, and civil rights) have particularly helped to improve and complicate our understanding of involuntary displacement's effects.

3.2.4. Additional Analytic Contributions: Time, Process, and Trauma

Another scholar provides additional perspectives missing from Cernea's model, which contribute to our analytic framework. Alistair Ager proposes understanding the experience of forced migration through a framework of distinct "phases" in which refugees move from a pre-flight phase to a phase of physical violence, to political oppression, to flight, to reception, to settlement, to resettlement, and, finally, to intergenerational conflict. Though Ager acknowledges that this model is only a starting point and that it pathologizes refugees as helpless victims, it does provide an important sense of *time* and the *process* of involuntary displacement missing from Cernea's model.⁹⁰

We use Ager's insight to emphasize in our documentation ways in which Chagossians' impoverishment has not been static. Most aspects of Chagossians' impoverishment (e.g., diminished emotional and psychological well-being) have varied considerably in intensity and by individual over time. The report thus emphasizes and demonstrates how different dimensions of

Chagossians' impoverishment have changed over time for different segments of the Chagossian population. While focusing on the impoverishment experienced by the majority of Chagossians (and as Cernea too suggests) we also document how subgroups within the population (e.g., Chagossians in Mauritius, those in Seychelles, first generation Chagossians born in Chagos, second generation Chagossians born in Mauritius or Seychelles, women, and men) have experienced impoverishment differently from one another.

Ager's emphasis on process also leads us to devote Chapter 5 to what Ager would call the "pre-flight" phase—that is, Chagossians' pre-expulsion life in Chagos. This chapter provides perspective on the transformation that occurred in Chagossians' lives with the expulsion and the larger context in which their subsequent impoverishment developed. It also helps to establish the first comparison against which Chagossians' impoverishment has been judged—that is, the standard of living they enjoyed in Chagos.

Chapter 6 then begins the presentation of the dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment by documenting the history of the displacement process itself, a period almost entirely ignored in Cernea's model. For Chagossians, being forcibly removed from Chagos was a traumatic experience that had immediate as well as long-term effects. The removals included periods of malnutrition in the final years in Chagos, overcrowding and disease on the transport ships, and miscarriages and other deaths possibly attributable to the removals and the deteriorating conditions in Chagos. We found the negative consequences of the expulsion process to be so significant in their own right that we believe the process to constitute a discrete dimension of their impoverishment. At the same time, in each of the remaining chapters we return to highlight relevant damage experienced during the expulsion that has shaped other dimensions of impoverishment.

The report dedicates Chapter 6 to documenting the dimension of impoverishment found in the expulsion itself because of another weakness in Cernea's model: Although Cernea has in recent years sought to expand the applicability of his model from its original context of involuntary displacement in development projects to refugees and other displaced peoples, this extension seems relatively undertheorized. Cernea's model has not accounted for the specific dynamics of refugee and other forced migration flows, often involving physical violence and other traumatic migration events, like those experienced by Chagossians. While it is a powerful step to stress the similarities between the experiences of various displaced groups and the wider applicability of his model, Cernea seems not to have explored the important differences between the groups, beyond stating that there are differences.⁹¹ Labeling the damage experienced in the expulsion as a distinct dimension of impoverishment helps then to emphasize the significance of the harm done during displacement and addresses this omission in the IRR model.

3.3. Conclusion: Beyond Models

The limitations of Cernea's model (like any model) mean that we have not automatically applied Cernea's model to the Chagossian case. Instead, and as per the diagnostic function of the IRR model, we have carefully examined the applicability of each of Cernea's subprocesses to Chagossian experience and used in-depth research about the Chagossians to understand the effects of their expulsion in more complex ways than any cross-case model could. In line with scholar Ranjit Nayak, ethnographic research in particular has allowed us to tease out the specificity and complexity of Chagossians' injuries (counterbalanced in our case by our quantitative surveying).⁹² Cernea's model and other scholars' revisions have served not as an

end point of understanding about the Chagossians but as a framework and catalyst for the analysis and explanation of the complex effects of the expulsion on Chagossians' lives.

We move now to detail the methodology we employed in our research. The chapters that follow reflect the analytic framework we have developed from Cernea's IRR model. After the methodological chapter, we start with a chapter on Chagossians' pre-expulsion life. We then continue with the bulk of the report and chapters on each of the ten major dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Background

In August 2001, we were invited to conduct research on the Chagossians by lawyers in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Mauritius, representing most members of the group.⁹³

We agreed to conduct two bodies of research:

1. To identify and document the ways in which Chagossians' lives have been harmed as a result of their displacement from Chagos; and
2. To evaluate if, anthropologically speaking, the Chagossians should be considered an "indigenous people."

The results of the first body of research are presented here. The results of the second body of research are presented in a separate report, "The Former Inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago as an Indigenous People: Analyzing the Evidence." We agreed to serve as expert witnesses on the Chagossians upon completion of their research.

Upon initiation of their collaboration, we designed the research and its methodology. The lead author was selected to conduct research in Mauritius and Seychelles. The lead author's work has since been overseen by his Ph.D. advisor, Shirley Lindenbaum, Professor of Anthropology in the Ph.D. Program in Anthropology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York (USA). (Subsequent to the start the project, the lead author made research on the Chagossians the subject of a doctoral dissertation. The dissertation draws on some of the research conducted for this project but is a distinct piece of academic work.)

We have completed our work as independent academic researchers. We are not and have never been employees of any of the lawyers or legal teams representing Chagossians. We have never been paid or compensated in any way for our research. Some of the research expenses we

incurred during 2001-2002 and 2004, especially those allowing research in Mauritius and Seychelles, have been reimbursed by the legal team in the United States. In 2003, the lead author received a \$10,000 Mellon Fellowship to support his research from the Inter-University Consortium for Security and Humanitarian Action at the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Affairs, Graduate Center, City University of New York.

4.2. Research Overview

The goal of the research presented in this report is to identify and document the ways in which Chagossians have been harmed as a result of their expulsion from Chagos. We designed a research methodology employing multiple social science research methods to carry out the work. These methods include:

1. Quantitative survey of Chagossians;
2. Ethnographic participant observation in Chagossian communities;
3. Qualitative interviews with Chagossians and others in Mauritius and Seychelles;
4. Archival, documentary, and statistical research on the Chagossians, their history, and their lives before, during, and after the removals, including a literature review of all the major works on the Chagossians;
5. The use of research advisors and oversight, including a Chagossian research advisory group, regular outreach to and dialogue with Chagossians and others in Mauritius and Seychelles, collaboration with local academics in Mauritius and Seychelles, and other oversight techniques.

We have employed multiple research methods to maximize the validity of the research. Multiple methods have allowed us to cross check data, observations, and findings from one research tool or data source with those of other tools or data sources to better ensure validity. Combining a quantitative method (the survey) able to encompass a large number of research

subjects with qualitative methods that focus on smaller number of subjects in greater depth has also allowed us to understand and document with both breadth and depth Chagossians' lives and the impoverishment they have experienced.

Below the report will describe and detail each of the above research methods in turn. First however, we describe the research approvals received for the project, the steps we employed to protect the subjects of the research, and the preliminary work we pursued prior to the start of the main research.

4.3. Research Approvals

Throughout the research, we followed all prevailing disciplinary standards within anthropology and related social sciences for the conduct of proper and ethical scientific research. The lead author received two separate approvals to conduct research from his university's Institutional Review Board for initial preliminary research and for the main body of research. The approval for the main body of research has been successfully renewed on a yearly basis to allow continuing research, analysis, and writing.

We received permission to conduct research in Seychelles from the Government of Seychelles, through Principal Secretary Patrick Nanty of the Ministry of Local Government, Sports and Culture. No formal approval was necessary to conduct research in Mauritius, although the lead author informed the then Mauritian Foreign Minister and current Prime Minister, Paul Berenger; the administration of the University of Mauritius; the Central Statistical Office; and the other government entities about the project.

4.4. Human Subject Protections

The core and the primary aim of Institutional Review Board research approval is the protection of humans involved in research. We carefully employed numerous provisions to ensure the protection of all Chagossians and any others involved in the research.

Because of low levels of literacy among most Chagossians, we used an oral consent procedure to ensure that each research subject knowingly consented to participate in the research. The oral consent described the research to all potential research subjects, explained the minimal risks and potential benefits involved, indicated the voluntary and confidential nature of participation, asked for permission to tape record interviews when necessary, and informed potential subjects about other aspects of their participation in the research. Researchers and interviewers delivered the oral consent in Mauritian Kreol, Seselwa (Seychelles Kreol), French, or English according to the preference of the potential subject.

At all times during the research, the lead author presented himself as an academic researcher and explained the purpose and background of his research. To assist this identification and to ensure that interested individuals were properly informed about the nature of the research, the lead author distributed research outreach cards about the project in Mauritian Kreol, French, and English. The outreach cards clearly identified the lead author, the purpose of the research, contact information for the lead author, and contact information for the lead author's advisor and other supervisory authorities for anyone with additional questions or concerns (see Appendix A for a copy of the English outreach card).

Confidentiality has been carefully protected through the use of code numbers and coded initials for all interviews and research conducted. We received a federal Certificate of Confidentiality from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to protect the

confidentiality of all research participants and any attempts to gain access to information about them.

4.5. Preliminary Work

We began the project with a thorough review of all major literature on the Chagossians, available data on the Chagossians, and documents from Chagossians' legal proceedings in the United Kingdom. The lead author also began a literature review of the history, politics, economics, society, and culture of Mauritius and Seychelles. (This literature review continued over the course of the research and culminated with the lead author's successful Ph.D. qualifying examination focused on the islands of the southwest Indian Ocean.)

After we completed the initial design of the research methodology, the lead author undertook an exploratory research trip to Mauritius over one month from December 2001 to January 2002. The exploratory research trip was designed:

1. To develop the rapport and relationships with Chagossians and other Mauritians necessary to conduct further in-depth research;
2. To develop a detailed research strategy for the in-depth research;
3. To explore the feasibility of conducting a large-scale quantitative survey during the in-depth research; and
4. To develop focused research questions and areas of inquiry based on initial informal conversations and investigations with Chagossians.

During this exploratory research trip, the lead author received official support for the research from the Chagos Refugees Group (CRG), the organization representing the overwhelming majority of Chagossians in Mauritius, and its lawyers in Mauritius. The lead author also established relationships with members of two smaller groups in the Chagossian

community in Mauritius, the Diego Garcia Islanders Council and the Chagos Social Committee. Shortly after this trip, the lead author received official support for the research from the Chagos Social Committee (Seychelles), now known as the Chagos Committee (Seychelles) (CCS), as well as from researchers at the Seychelles National Heritage Museum.

Before the start of research, the lead author received French language training to refresh old skills. (French is the second language spoken in Mauritius, after Mauritian Kreol, and allows one to communicate successfully with most Mauritian Kreol speakers. English is more useful in Seychelles). Beginning with the exploratory research trip and an initial trip to Seychelles in March 2002, the lead author began to study Mauritian Kreol and Seselwa (Seychelles Kreol). By the end of his third research trip to Mauritius, June-August 2002, the lead author was able to conduct research interviews in Mauritian Kreol and Seselwa. The lead author now has capable reading, writing, and speaking skills in French, Mauritian Kreol, and Seselwa.

4.6. Research Methods

The following methods were employed during four research trips to Mauritius, three research trips to Seychelles, and four research trips to England. The lead author made the trips in 2001, 2002, and 2004. The trips to Mauritius were of an approximate cumulative duration of six months and those in Seychelles were of an approximate cumulative duration of one month. Approximately five weeks were spent in England. The final trips to Mauritius and Seychelles, during July-September 2004, were focused on returning preliminary findings from the prior research to Chagossians, scholars, and others in Mauritius and Seychelles to inform interested parties about the progress and content of the research, to elicit feedback, and to find and correct

factual errors. The lead author dedicated some of this trip to a small amount of final data collection.

4.6.1. Quantitative Survey

The project used a quantitative household survey to provide a broad overview of the Chagossian population. The survey focused on asking questions with quantifiable answers about housing conditions, work and income, living expenses, education and literacy, and social service receipt. The survey consisted of 91 questions for first generation Chagossians born in Chagos and 70 questions for second generation Chagossians born in Chagos. The two surveys were identical except for 21 questions asked of first generation Chagossians about life in Chagos. Some of the questions asked respondents about their households (especially those concerning housing conditions and living expenses); other questions asked for individual responses (see Appendix B for the English version of the survey).

Basic data about the survey follows:

- N = 328 total Chagossian respondents, 16 years of age or older.
- 4,090 total population size 16 or older eligible for the survey. The sample thus represents 8.02 percent of the total survey population of Chagossians and almost 7 percent of the estimated total group population of 4,700.
- 257 respondents lived in Mauritius.
- 64 lived in Seychelles.
- 7 lived in Europe (6 of whom moved from Mauritius and 1 moved from Seychelles).
- 147 of 328 respondents (44.81 percent) were born in Chagos. Because we were interested in learning about life in Chagos and because there are relatively few Chagossians born in Chagos (31.14 percent), the survey oversampled among Chagossians born in Chagos. We corrected for this oversampling during data analysis.

- 3 individuals refused participation.
- Respondents were selected by a computerized random sample of Chagossians, from lists provided by the Chagos Refugees Group and the Chagos Social Committee (Seychelles).⁹⁴

The survey was administered between July 2002 and October 2003. Most of the surveys were administered while the lead author was in Mauritius and Seychelles during July and August 2002. After the lead author left Mauritius and Seychelles, Professor Satinder Ragobur, University of Mauritius, and Jean-Claude Mahoune, research scientist at the Seychelles National Heritage Museum, oversaw conduct of the survey.

4.6.1.1. Drafting the Survey

We initially drafted the survey under the leadership of the second author, an expert in the design, administration, and analysis of large quantitative survey tools. The lead author then translated the survey into French to share with a research advisory group in Mauritius (see below for a description of the group). During the lead author's second research trip to Mauritius, in March 2002, the research advisory group reviewed the survey to ensure that its questions were culturally and socially relevant and phrased appropriately to ensure valid and reliable responses. The survey was translated into Mauritian Kreol by a non-Chagossian Mauritian, Komadhi Mardemootoo, and reviewed again by the research advisory group to correct any translation errors. During the training of the (non-Chagossian) Mauritian interviewers who administered most of the surveys (described below), further corrections were made to finalize the translation.

In Seychelles, the survey was translated from Mauritian Kreol into Seselwa (Seychelles Kreol) by a research assistant at the Seychelles National Heritage Museum, Julianne Barra. The

research assistant and a senior research scientist at the museum, Jean-Claude Mahoune (both non-Chagossians), then reviewed and corrected the translation before conducting interviews.

4.6.1.2. The Interviewers and Administration of the Survey

Trained, non-Chagossian interviewers in Mauritius and Seychelles administered the survey. All of the interviewers had prior experience in social science research and all but one in Mauritius had previously administered surveys. The interviewers in Mauritius were primarily undergraduate social work students in the final year of their studies. Some had already received their undergraduate degrees and most were simultaneously working as professional social workers. The interviewers in Seychelles were the aforementioned researchers at the Seychelles National Heritage Museum. The lead interviewer in Seychelles was Jean-Claude Mahoune, who has an undergraduate degree in anthropology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison (USA). All of the interviewers were paid for their work.

The lead author personally trained all of the interviewers in the administration of the survey. The lead author delivered a special training session to the interviewers in the protection of human research subjects. This session replaced a U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) on-line training course, as the expense and logistical difficulty of arranging Internet access for all of the interviewers made on-line training impossible. The lead author's human subjects training was based on the NIH on-line course and additional human subjects protection materials. The lead author maintained continuing oversight and performed quality-assurance checks on the interviewers once the surveying had commenced. Part of the training for interviewers in Mauritius included several meetings with the research advisory group (described below), which

helped to introduce the interviewers to the Chagossian community and to sensitize them as to how best to approach potential respondents.

Subjects in Mauritius were contacted by the interviewers with the assistance of members of the research advisory group, who helped introduce the survey and the interviewers to potential respondents. Subjects in Seychelles were contacted by the interviewers with the assistance of members of the executive committee of the Chagos Social Committee (Seychelles). Prior to the start of interviewing, the lead author made several public announcements about the survey in Mauritius and Seychelles at public meetings, with distributed outreach flyers, and through television, radio, and newspaper interviews.

Most interviews in Mauritius were conducted at central locations (two Chagossian community centers and the office of the CRG) in neighborhoods featuring large concentrations of Chagossians. Some were conducted in respondent's homes or at other locations agreed upon by the respondents. The interviews in Seychelles were conducted in respondent's homes and at the National Heritage Museum.

In addition to the interviewers, the lead author administered several interviews in Mauritius and Seychelles, as well as seven interviews by telephone from the United States with Chagossians living in Europe. Two paid Ph.D. students in New York City performed data entry of the survey under the supervision of the lead author. The second author was responsible for data processing, data management, and generating data results. Before the completion of our final report, we will confirm all data results and perform additional analyses of the data. Thus in the final report we may make some revisions to the statistics reported in this draft. Any revisions are likely to be of minimal statistical significance.

4.6.2. Ethnographic Participant Observation

The quantitative survey provided the project with a broad overview of the Chagossian population and distinct statistical measures to demonstrate basic features of their life, including housing, work and income, and educational attainment. To complement this perspective and this method, the project employed ethnographic participant observation to understand Chagossians' lives and the injuries they have experienced in more depth and specificity.

Ethnographic participant observation is a method focused on attempting to understand the world, as closely as possible, from the perspective of another group of people. Whereas surveys and other quantitative methodologies generally provide an outsider's perspective, ethnographic participant observation attempts to provide an insider's perspective of a group. The method is based around living with the people being researched, participating in the daily activities of their lives as fully as possible, and systematically observing, reflecting on, and writing research notes about 1) what people do and say in the course of their lives, 2) the researcher's own experience of participation, and 3) the context in which people live their lives. Participant observation allows researchers to understand something of the fabric and experience of people's lives in ways more closely resembling their own experience and ways of seeing the world.

Throughout the lead author's time in Mauritius and Seychelles and during two visits to London when he was able to live with Chagossians there, the lead author conducted ethnographic participant observation among Chagossians. This entailed living with a series of Chagossian families and making numerous formal and informal visits to other Chagossians' homes. The lead author lived with families for as much as one month at a time, others for one to two weeks, and some for as few as one to four nights.

While carrying out other research for the project, the lead author attempted to live to the greatest possible extent as Chagossians live and as a family member would in each household. This meant eating as Chagossians eat, sleeping as they sleep, bathing as they bathe, dressing as they dress, and traveling as they travel. The lead author attempted to participate not just in these families but also in the wider Chagossian communities in which they lived. This meant accompanying and watching Chagossians at work, at school, and at play, in shops and on the streets. It meant participating in the daily and special activities of life, including everything from cooking, cleaning, praying, and watching television, to attending weddings, baptisms, first communions, public meetings, birthday parties, and funerals. It also meant watching the unexpected moments, the difficulties, and the dramas of life, small and large, play out for families, including illnesses, home repairs, daily disagreements, and the difficulties and successes of work and school.

In the course of these ordinary and extraordinary parts of daily life, participant observation also meant talking extensively with Chagossians, asking them questions about their lives, and engaging them in conversations about their personal and group histories. The questions asked by the lead author generally flowed from the course of conversations but were related to a series of prepared informal questions investigating several areas of Chagossians' experience. The areas of investigation included life in Chagos, the removal experience and arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles, work, education, health, and relations with others in Mauritius and Seychelles. As importantly, the lead author listened carefully to what Chagossians would say about their lives in the course of ordinary conversations, when not prompted by his questions.

Particularly at the beginning of the project and at other points during the research, the lead author made research visits to a series of Chagossian households in which he did not live. Other Chagossians generally introduced the lead author to these households. The visits allowed the lead author to engage with a wider group of Chagossians than just those with whom he lived. In line with ethnographic practice, the lead author assumed the role of a student being taught by the Chagossians. As with the informal conversations described above, the lead author used a series of prepared informal questions to probe for details about several areas of Chagossian experience. Contact with these households also allowed the lead author to meet yet other Chagossians, broadening the scope of Chagossian individuals and households contacted during participant observation.

Reflection on the above work and the systematic taking of research notes⁹⁵ was the final element to the lead author's participant observation. This writing yielded hundreds of pages of notes, which became a major source of data for the project. These notes, along with the interviews described below, were read repeatedly and coded for major themes as part of the analysis for this report.

4.6.3. Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative or ethnographic interviewing is generally a fundamental part of ethnographic research. Here the lead author conducted qualitative interviews with Chagossians with whom he had previously developed rapport to discuss their lives in greater detail than during more informal conversations. The interviews were guided but loosely structured and resembled life history interviews. The interviews used open-ended questions from an interview protocol (see Appendix C) to allow Chagossians to talk about their lives freely while still eliciting a wide

range of detailed information about Chagossians' experience in Chagos, in Mauritius and Seychelles, and the nature of any damage experienced since the expulsion.

The lead author conducted a total of 13 qualitative interviews lasting between 45 minutes and more than 2 hours. The interviews were audio recorded. The lead author conducted the interviews in Mauritian Kreol, French, and English. In one case a Mauritian student who translated some of the Mauritian Kreol spoken accompanied the lead author for part of an interview.

In conjunction with the qualitative interviews, the lead author conducted 14 loose genealogical interviews. These interviews, conducted separately from or during the course of qualitative interviews, asked Chagossians to help the lead author create a pictorial representation of the interviewee's family (known popularly as a "family tree"). To the extent possible with each interviewee, the lead author asked for additional relevant information about each individual mentioned, including place of birth, date of birth, place currently living, and place of death. While capturing genealogical relationships and biographical information was an important aspect of the interviews, the exercise was also a tool to initiate new and often unexpected conversations about family members, their life histories, and what the histories revealed about Chagossian experience.

The lead author also conducted numerous loosely structured qualitative interviews with non-Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles. These interviewees included journalists, politicians, social workers, academics, and others knowledgeable about Chagossians and their history.

4.6.4. Archival and Documentary Research

The project complemented the above quantitative and qualitative research with archival and documentary research on the Chagossians and their history. This began with the review of hundreds of pages of documents, primarily from the British Public Records Office, submitted as evidence during a legal case brought in 1997 by Chagossians against the United Kingdom. The lead author subsequently conducted additional archival and documentary research in repositories including the Mauritius Archives, the Mauritius National Library, and the Musée et Archives de la Photographie in Port Louis, Mauritius; the Seychelles Archives, the Seychelles National Library, and the Seychelles National Heritage Museum; the British Public Records Office in Kew, England; and the U.S. Library of Congress.

The documents located during this research included colonial government reports and records from Chagos, U.K. Government documents exchanged around the removals, and reports from other observers about the Chagossians. The documents have provided important documentation of life in Chagos, of the removal process, and of the initial years after the removals enabling confirmation and verification of accounts from Chagossians and others.

4.6.5. Research Advisors and Oversight

In line with recent trends in social science research, we believed it important to allow Chagossians and others in Mauritius and Seychelles 1) to have full information about the research, 2) to have free access to offer input, ideas, and other contributions to the research, and 3) to oversee the research to ensure its appropriateness and that it abided by all local ethical and cultural standards (in addition to the standards of social science research). We believe that this aspect of the research improved the design of the research, aided in its implementation, led to a

deeper understanding of the subject of study, and helped reduce errors and improve the validity of the research.

4.6.5.1. Research Advisory Group

During the lead author's first research trip to Mauritius, December 2001-January 2002, the lead author established a primarily Chagossian research advisory group to oversee the conduct of the project and to allow Chagossians to participate in the research. The aim was to make the group roughly representative of the Chagossian population at large: The group, which continues to meet, consists of 12 members, 5 male and 7 female. Three members are first generation Chagossians. Five are second generation Chagossians. One is a third generation Chagossians. Three are non-Chagossian Mauritians who have worked extensively with Chagossians.

The lead author held regular meetings with the research advisory group during all four research trips to Mauritius. The lead author initially explained the purpose of the research and its methods and received advice from the group on how best to conduct research with Chagossians in ways that were sensitive and respectful to Chagossians' lives. Members helped to introduce the lead author to other Chagossians and helped to coordinate several initial research contacts. The group provided regular guidance for the research, including coordination of the survey, the selection of survey interviewers, and the presentation of findings to Chagossians. As described above, the group provided crucial assistance in the revision and translation of the quantitative survey and in overseeing its administration. Organized discussions with the group also provided the lead author with important data for the project similar to that from focus group interviews.

With the help of the group, the lead author disseminated information about the research within the community and made public presentations about the research to open meetings of

Chagossians. These presentations and the relationship with the group gave the project legitimacy among Chagossians and made Chagossians comfortable with the lead author and the research. All of this and other assistance provided by the group repeatedly helped the lead author avoid mistakes and cultural insensitivities during research, improve the quality and conduct of the research, reduce errors in the findings, and improve the overall validity of the research.

Because the lead author spent less time in Seychelles, he did not form a similar group there. Instead, the lead author met regularly with leaders of the CCS and with Jean-Claude Mahoune, a leading social scientist in Seychelles, for similar oversight, guidance, and advice about conducting research among Chagossians in Seychelles.

4.6.5.2. Research Collaborations and Oversight

The project also received assistance and oversight from several research collaborations in Mauritius and Seychelles. Most important in Mauritius was a collaboration with Professor Satinder Ragobur, in the Department of Social Studies at the University of Mauritius. Like the research advisory group and given her knowledge of Mauritius and experience in conducting research there, Professor Ragobur assisted in the design and organization of the research, the revision of the survey instrument, the selection of survey interviewers, and the coordination of the survey in the absence of the lead author in Mauritius. Jean-Claude Mahoune provided similar assistance in Seychelles. Additional interviews and informal conversations with other academics, journalists, and professionals in the two countries provided important guidance for the project and important non-Chagossian perspectives on the research to complement the role of the primarily Chagossian research advisory group.

4.6.5.3. Community Meetings, Public Presentations, and Outreach

The lead author made regular contact with Chagossians and non-Chagossian Mauritians and Seychellois to keep interested parties informed about the progress of the research. The lead author employed several means for this communication:

1. Outreach flyers describing the research and inviting participation and comment;
2. Public presentations about the research to open meetings of Chagossians;
3. Public presentations to primarily Mauritian groups; and
4. Regular interviews with members of the television, radio, and newspaper media in Mauritius and Seychelles to describe the purpose of the research, its progress, and, later, some of its preliminary findings.

These outreach efforts were helpful in not just keeping Chagossians and non-Chagossians informed about the project, but also in attracting new research participants and input about the research that the lead author might otherwise not have gathered.

4.6.5.4. Research Feedback and Dialogue

The last round of public outreach took place during the lead author's research trip to Mauritius and Seychelles in 2004. The lead author held a series of public presentations to Chagossian and non-Chagossian audiences to present preliminary findings from the research, to gain feedback and correct any errors in the findings, and to engage in dialogue about the findings. In Mauritius, the lead author made a presentation to a large open meeting of Chagossians and to three smaller groups of Chagossians specifically invited to discuss the research in three neighborhoods where there are large concentrations of Chagossians. The lead author also made three public presentations to largely non-Chagossian audiences, at the University of Mauritius, at a large

research institution, and at a non-governmental social service umbrella organization. In Seychelles, the lead author made a similar presentation to the executive committee of the CCS and in a television interview.

5. PRE-DISPLACEMENT LIFE IN CHAGOS

Before documenting the impoverishment experienced by Chagossians as a result of their expulsion, it is important to outline life as it existed in Chagos prior to the expulsion. This establishes the most important of the three living standards against which we find Chagossians to be impoverished. It also provides a better understanding of what was lost when the Chagossians were forced from the archipelago, the degree of transformation in Chagossians' lives, and the quality of Chagossians' subsequent impoverishment.

5.1. Overview of the Island Groups

As described in the introduction, Diego Garcia was settled in or around 1783, when a French plantation owner from Mauritius transported 22 enslaved people to the island and established a coconut plantation. After other owners established separate plantations around Diego Garcia and the rest of Chagos, plantation ownership gradually consolidated over the course of the 19th century. By 1934 a single company owned all the islands.

Throughout settlement in Chagos, Diego Garcia was the largest and most economically significant island. The main settlement or capital in Diego Garcia was found near the middle of the eastern arm of the atoll, at East Point/Pointe de l'Est (see Map 2.2 at front). By the beginning of the 20th century, there were five other villages and two hospitals on the island.⁹⁶ From his time as Governor of Mauritius after World War II, Robert Scott described East Point as having the “look of a French coastal village miraculously transferred whole to this shore (and perhaps idealized in the process).”⁹⁷

The second most populous settlement was on Peros Banhos, a group of 32 islands encircling a large lagoon. Peros Banhos was settled in 1813. Diamond Island/Île Diamond and

later Île du Coin [Corner Island] served as the capital of the group. Permanent habitation existed on 8 of the 32 islands, although most of the others had rudimentary lodging facilities for rotating work crews collecting coconuts.⁹⁸ Scott and others report that most of the inhabitants of Peros Banhos were born in the islands, “priding themselves on being natives of Peros Banhos.”⁹⁹ “Most of the residents work on coconut extraction,” explains Scott, “and all may, if they please, go monthly to the Île du Coin for shopping and a dance. Transport between the islands, within the bay, is by sailing ship—the management has a fleet of three—or by pirogues [small dinghy-like boats].”¹⁰⁰

The third main group was Salomon Islands, also settled in 1813. Unlike the other islands, Salomon had a large timber industry for export and for Chagos’s highly regarded boat-building industry, based in Salomon. As in Peros Banhos, 5 or 6 of the 11 total islands supported permanent villages, with people typically visiting the “model village” in the Boddam Island capital once a month for their pay, shopping, and relaxation.¹⁰¹ As in Peros, most of the people in Salomon were locally born.¹⁰²

Trois Frères, Eagle and Sea Cow Islands, and Six Islands/Six Iles (also known as Egmont Islands) maintained permanent settlements periodically from 1808 until about 1935. The difficulty of navigating in the dangerous waters and winds around Trois Frères and Eagle and Sea Cow Islands seems to have limited their settlement.¹⁰³ The navigationally safest of the islands, Eagle Island, was, according to Walker, “a successful and well-managed estate.”¹⁰⁴ Says Scott, “Eagle Island must have come to be regarded by its inhabitants...as a real home,” with a “carefully tended” children’s cemetery and evocatively named places like Love Apple [Tomato] Crossing, Ceylon Square, and Frigates’ Pool.¹⁰⁵ In 1932, the owners closed the successful island for unknown reasons, only to reopen it unsuccessfully in each of the next two years.

Six Islands, which actually includes a seventh unnamed island, had a more troubled history than Eagle. After settlement began around 1808, Six Islands reportedly experienced periods of poor management, brief abandonment during the mid-19th century, and the killing of one of its managers. After 1861, however Six Islands went from being “little more than a labor camp” to, within ten years, a home to “families occupying the six large islands.”¹⁰⁶ Laborers continued to immigrate to the islands from Mauritius during times of prosperity and the islands seem to have been thriving by the 1930s. In 1935, the company that consolidated ownership of the entire archipelago closed the islands and transferred Six Islands’ inhabitants, along with those of Eagle Island and perhaps Trois Frères to Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos, Salomon, and, in smaller numbers, to Mauritius.¹⁰⁷

5.2. Chagossian Society

While there were always local differences among the islands in Chagos, general similarities were the rule for Chagos as a whole. Chagos Kreol, a kreol French language related to varieties in Mauritius and Seychelles, emerged among islanders.¹⁰⁸ People born in Chagos became collectively known by the name *Ilois* (also spelled *Ilwa*, *Zilois*)—generally translated as “islander.”¹⁰⁹ It is unclear when this name first developed, but the visiting priest Roger Dussercle used the term as early as his report from a 1933-1934 mission.¹¹⁰ John Madeley says that the term “has been used since the nineteenth century.”¹¹¹ (Although he provides no evidence to support this claim, Madeley is likely correct that the term was in use well before Dussercle’s arrival, probably dating to the 19th century.)

Laborers’ houses were generally laid out in rows along roads leading to a village green and the administrative center of each plantation. Here there were workshops, small oil mills,

drying sheds for the copra, artisan workshops, company offices, recreation grounds, a cemetery, and a church or chapel (in each of the three main settlements). Small dirt roads traversed the main islands and there were a handful of motorbikes, trucks, jeeps, and tractors. Various sailing vessels allowed travel around and among the islands and at least one motorboat provided transportation between neighboring Peros Banhos and Salomon. A regular garbage and refuse removal system was reported as better than that in rural Mauritius.¹¹² Water came from wells and from rain catchment tanks.

Over the course of the 20th century, Chagos moved from relative isolation to increasing connections with Mauritius, other islands in the Indian Ocean, and the rest of the world. Sailing and, later, steam ships from Mauritius and Seychelles stopped in Chagos about two or three times a year by the beginning of the twentieth century and four or more times a year by the 1960s.¹¹³ The boats delivered food and provisions, mail, visiting priests, government officials, and other passengers and loaded copra, other exports, and passengers leaving the islands. Copra and coconut oil exports were sold in Mauritius and Seychelles and through them in Europe, South Africa, India, and Israel. Wireless communications at local meteorological stations connected the main islands with Mauritius and Seychelles. Short wave radios allowed reception of broadcasts from at least as far off as Seychelles and Sri Lanka.¹¹⁴

5.3. Work and a Secure Life in Chagos

Everyone in Chagos was guaranteed work on the plantations and pensions upon retirement.¹¹⁵ The vast majority of inhabitants worked as laborers harvesting and processing coconuts into copra and coconut oil. They also worked in Chagos's other industries, which included guano, timber, honey, shipbuilding, pigs and cattle, seafood, maize and some vegetable crops, wooden

toys, model boats, and brooms and brushes made from coconut palms. A few male laborers rose to become foremen and *commandeurs* [overseers], organizing the laborers and delivering work instructions from the management (a few women were also commandeurs). Other men became artisans working as blacksmiths, bakers, carpenters, masons, mechanics, and in other specialized positions.

On each main island, a male administrator or manager seen as “white” or with lightly pigmented skin (i.e., of European or some mixed European and other descent) represented the companies that owned the islands. The companies also employed several other people of European, Indian, Chinese, or some mixed descent who were considered “staff.” Like the administrator and unlike most laborers, staff members generally worked for a matter of years before returning to their permanent homes in Mauritius or Seychelles. Staff positions included accountants, assistant managers, clerks, engineers, hospital dressers, nurse/midwives, and teachers. A few people from the laborer class worked privately as domestic and child care workers for members of the staff.

Wages for laborers were small and generally credited to a worker’s account on a monthly basis. Male laborers earned about 50 to more than 200 percent of what females earned. Artisans, foremen, and overseers earned as much as 600 percent of what female laborers earned and those in staff positions earned considerably more. Workers received rations of food that included rice or flour, coconut oil, salt, lentils, fish, wine, and occasionally vegetables and pork. In addition to this base salary, laborers had opportunities to work overtime, paid in cash. Laborers received free housing or construction materials to build a house that became their property. From the late 19th century, most opted to build their own houses. Staff members, and

some artisans, foremen, and commandeurs received additional benefits including larger houses and better housing materials.

Work benefits for laborers also included free firewood, free government crèches and schools for children, retirement pensions, regular vacations and free passage to Mauritius and Seychelles, burial services, and free health care and medicines. Workers were also given land near their homes. Many used the land for gardens, raising crops like tomatoes, squash, chili peppers, eggplant, citrus and other fruits, and for keeping farm animals including cows, pigs, goats, sheep, chickens, and ducks. Many workers also kept pet dogs and cats.

Work for laborers was generally on a task basis, beginning around sunrise. After the day's task was completed, often by noon, workers could work overtime, tend their gardens and animals, fish, or hunt for other seafood. Chagos's waters are still fished for their ample harvests, which include red snapper, tuna, and other fish, crab, prawns, crayfish, lobster, octopus, sea cucumber, and turtles. Fish in particular was an important part of Chagossians' diets, as were coconuts. Workers often shared their catches with neighbors or could sell it, as well as surplus crops and animals, to the plantation company for cash. The plantations operated company stores where workers bought clothing, tools, and other household items. Workers, if they chose to, could take vacations every two to three years in Mauritius (and to a lesser extent in Seychelles). They often used these trips to buy furniture and other items not available in Chagos.

5.4. Generations of Chagossians and a Unique Society and Culture

On the eve of the creation of the British Indian Ocean Territory in 1965, and the beginning of the closing of the islands, a society and culture unique to the conditions of Chagos was firmly in place. Mauritian historian Auguste Toussaint writes, "The insularity of this archipelago is total

and, in this regard, Chagos differs from the Mascarenes [Mauritius, Rodrigues, and Réunion] and the Seychelles, which are linked with the rest of the world. The conditions of life there are quite specialized and even, believe me, unique.”¹¹⁶ Communities were tightly integrated, and there was in Chagos what many refer to as a distinct “culture des îles” [culture of the islands].¹¹⁷ “It is a system peculiar to the Lesser Dependencies,” Scott describes in 1961, “and it may be fairly described as indigenous and spontaneous in its emergence, however shaky its early stages may have been.”¹¹⁸

In 1986 and again in 1993, social anthropologist Iain Walker analyzed the findings of Scott, of other observers, and of his own ethnographic research with Chagossians in Mauritius. He concludes that, “Leaving aside any real or apparent differences between islanders from different groups, a society peculiar to the islands had developed, and was judged to be noticeably different by observers.”¹¹⁹ For Walker, “It is clear from an anthropological point of view the Ilois constituted an indigenous population with a unique culture.”¹²⁰

A variety of sources (including representatives of the U.K. and U.S. governments) agree that at the time Chagossians were removed from Chagos, many of Chagos’s inhabitants could trace their ancestry across three to five or more generations born in the archipelago.¹²¹ Others agree overwhelmingly that Chagossians were born, raised, and died on the islands, and that they are the descendants of the enslaved people and indentured laborers brought to Chagos in the 18th and 19th centuries.¹²²

Scott provides the most authoritative discussion of the permanent and ongoing nature of habitation. Returning from a 1956 visit to Chagos, Scott writes, “I was surprised to find that... a relatively high proportion of residents regard the islands as their permanent home and they have their characteristic way of life, unlike that of those Creoles of Mauritius who most resemble them

physically.”¹²³ Later, after retiring from his post as Governor of Mauritius, Scott was less ambiguous, referring to “the true islanders” of Chagos who were well established in the islands and considered Chagos their home by the mid-to-late-19th century.¹²⁴

6. TRAUMATIC EXPULSION

In this chapter we move into the framework of Cernea's IRR model to document the first of the ten major dimensions of impoverishment experienced by Chagossians as a result of their expulsion. The expulsion process is not a dimension of impoverishment identified by the IRR model. We believe that the IRR model and many other works documenting the consequences of involuntary displacement artificially divorce displacement's harmful effects from the displacement process. In our examination of the Chagossians we found the damage caused by the expulsion process itself to be so serious as to constitute a dimension of impoverishment similar to that of the eight original dimensions found in the IRR model.

Clearly the expulsion process and specific harms suffered during the process are part of other dimensions of impoverishment (especially marginalization, increased morbidity and mortality, and sociocultural fragmentation). This is true though of all the dimensions of impoverishment: all the dimensions are overlapping and interrelated. Because we found the damage experienced during the Chagossians' expulsion process to be as significant as many of their other dimensions of impoverishment and because we found that involuntary displacement scholarship almost always overlooks the impact of the process of displacement, we identify it as the first dimension of impoverishment here. (It is the first dimension discussed for chronological reasons rather than to suggest that it has been the most harmful dimension of impoverishment.)

To demonstrate the nature of the impoverishment found in the expulsion process that displaced the Chagossians and all other inhabitants from Chagos we reconstruct and document its history here. This detailed history allows documentation of discrete harms suffered during the displacement itself (e.g., malnutrition, overcrowding and illness during the deportation) as well as an understanding of the traumatic nature of the displacement process (also often ignored in the

involuntary displacement literature). Finally, this chapter allows us to introduce conceptually how many other dimensions of Chagossians' long-term impoverishment were set in motion during the expulsion itself. We describe these processes in more detail in subsequent chapters.

This history is drawn from several sources. Many published accounts of the expulsion exist.¹²⁵ Most provide a broad overview of the expulsion and do not provide the careful (and verifiable) detail necessary for our purposes. We draw then on interviews and conversations with Chagossians and others in Mauritius and Seychelles; on court documents; and particularly on contemporaneous British Government documents detailing many of the events of the displacement as they occurred. Each of the sources helps to verify the other accounts. We believe the completed history to be the most authoritative available.

We summarize the impoverishment experienced during the expulsion as:

- The stranding of increasingly large numbers of Chagossians in Mauritius and their separation from remaining kin and community members in Chagos;
- Dwindling food, supplies, and social services (especially health care and education) and the general deterioration of living conditions in Chagos;
- Coercion, by words and actions, to leave Chagos;
- Extermination of Chagossians' pet dogs on Diego Garcia, as Chagossians awaited deportation;
- Forced deportation of Chagossians initially from Diego Garcia and later from the Peros Banhos and Salomon islands;
- Overcrowding and other deleterious conditions on the cargo ships used during the deportations;
- Depositing of deported Chagossians on the docks in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- Temporary housing of some Chagossians in a prison in Seychelles;
- Provision of no resettlement assistance for arrivals, with the exception of 30 Chagossian families who refused to disembark upon arrival in Mauritius.

6.1. Gradual Depopulation

On November 8, 1965, the U.K. Government created the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), beginning the displacement process. After this date, the British Government used several means to depopulate the islands. Four days after the founding of the BIOT, the U.K. Colonial Office sent the following instructions to its officials in Seychelles (where the BIOT's administration was then headquartered): “essential that contingency planning for evacuation of existing population from Diego Garcia...should begin at once.”¹²⁶

In the final days of 1966, the U.S. and U.K. governments signed an Exchange of Notes to allow for the military use of Diego Garcia and the other islands in the BIOT. In confidential agreements accompanying the Notes, the United States agreed to make \$14 million in secret payments to establish the territory, to pay Mauritius and Seychelles for the islands excised from their territories, and to take “those administrative measures” necessary to remove the islands’ inhabitants.¹²⁷

When it became clear that the U.S. military did not immediately require the depopulation of Diego Garcia, British officials oversaw the slow depopulation of Chagos. The British coordinated the removals through three companies running the islands: Chagos-Agalega, Ltd. and its two corporate owners, the Seychelles firm Moulinie & Co. and the major Mauritian conglomerate Rogers & Co.

Chagos-Agalega, Ltd. had purchased the Chagos Archipelago in 1962 from its nearly bankrupt previous owners.¹²⁸ Chagos-Agalega started making a profit on the islands by 1963 and had plans to expand operations and profitability further.¹²⁹ Following the creation of the BIOT, British officials began negotiating to purchase all of the islands in the territory that were privately owned. In March 1967, the United Kingdom bought the archipelago from Chagos-

Agalega for £660,000. The next month the British Government leased the islands back to Chagos-Agalega to continue running the islands on its behalf. At the end of 1967, Chagos-Agalega terminated its lease and one of its owners Moulinie & Co. agreed to manage the islands for 8 percent of the gross value of the archipelago's produce. Moulinie & Co. also agreed to act as agents of the British Government.

Until early May 1967, just after the British Government's purchase of the islands, it appears that at least some Chagossians were, as they were accustomed to, able to return to Chagos from regular visits to Mauritius for vacations and medical treatment.¹³⁰ After this date (and perhaps earlier for some), any Chagossians who had come to Mauritius for vacations, medical treatment, or other reasons were denied their customary free return passage to the islands. A group that left Chagos in May 1967 was prevented from returning when they attempted to secure transport in early 1968. The order to prevent these and other Chagossians from returning to Chagos came directly from the BIOT administration: The management contract Moulinie & Co. signed in January 1968, to manage the islands for the BIOT specifically established the number of workers allowed on the islands, working hours and wages, and crucially allowed no labor importation without BIOT consent.¹³¹

In February 1968, the Mauritian Government requested that Chagossians be allowed to return to Chagos on the next ship to the islands. Moulinie & Co.'s director Paul Moulinie cabled his old partner Rogers & Co., which operated the main steam ship travelling to Chagos: "Regret BIOT not in favour of further labour intakes for the time being until negotiations with the Ministry of Defence."¹³² When Chagossians arrived at Rogers & Co., they were told that they could not return to Chagos.¹³³ The steamer, the *M.V. Mauritius*, left for Chagos shortly thereafter with no Chagossians aboard.

This scene was repeated as additional Chagossians arrived in Mauritius and were denied their customary return passage. Some Chagossians report being tricked or coerced into leaving Chagos for vacations in Mauritius.¹³⁴ Because there was no telephone service in Chagos and because mail service between Mauritius and Chagos had been suspended, news of Chagossians being stranded in Mauritius did not reach Chagossians in Chagos. Many Chagossians explain that on going to Rogers & Co. they were told that Chagos had been sold or that the islands were closed. A growing number of Chagossians thus found themselves stranded in Mauritius. They were left with no access to their homes and their land, with almost all of their possessions and property still in Chagos and often separated from family members.

By 1969, there were hundreds of Chagossians stranded in Mauritius. Almost all of them were, as British officials put it, languishing “on the beach” around the capitol, Port Louis.¹³⁵ Mauritius had gained its independence from the United Kingdom in March 1968, and was unstable. Riots had broken out shortly after independence between Afro-Mauritians and Indo-Mauritian Muslims in Port Louis and continued for much of 1968. As Chagossians explained in a 2004 research feedback meeting, they had never seen anything like this “bagar rasial” [racial riot] in Chagos. Life had been turned upside down. Suddenly, as one put it, “Chagossien dan difé, nu dé lipié briyé”—Chagossians were in the fire, our two feet burning.

Most Chagossians were confused about their future and their status in Mauritius. Most were unemployed in a country with high structural unemployment. A secret British telegram discussing the situation acknowledged an unemployment rate in Mauritius of around twenty percent and “the near impossibility of [people from Chagos] finding suitable employment. There is no Copra industry into which they could be absorbed.”¹³⁶

With labor running low on the plantations, Moulinie & Co. requested permission from BIOT authorities to bring Chagossians back from Mauritius. BIOT authorities denied the request.¹³⁷ British officials understood that “if we accept any returning Ilois, we must also accept responsibility for their ultimate resettlement.”¹³⁸ That is, the more Chagossians evicted by denying their return passage, the fewer Chagossians the British would have to forcibly remove and resettle when required to do so by the United States. To keep the plantations running at a basic maintenance level, Moulinie & Co. recruited Seychellois workers to take the place of the stranded Chagossians (who numbered at least 259 adults plus their children in Mauritius by 1970).¹³⁹

The future of the islands remained uncertain as the U.S. military sought funding for construction at Diego Garcia. As such the BIOT and Moulinie & Co. gradually reduced services on the islands and made only basic maintenance repairs to keep the plantations running. At first Moulinie & Co. neglected the islands out of concern about making capital investments in plantations that it knew the BIOT might soon shut down. After the company sold the islands and then gave up its lease, this neglect was institutionalised in the contract Moulinie & Co. signed to manage the islands for BIOT: No improvements of more than MRs2,000 could be made without BIOT permission.¹⁴⁰

Reports from BIOT administrator JOHN Todd document the neglect and deterioration of the islands. In May 1967, Todd found, “The islands have been neglected for the past eighteen months, due to uncertainty as to their future.”¹⁴¹ Beginning in 1965 with the creation of the BIOT, Moulinie & Co. began importing three-month stocks of food with boats arriving in Chagos rather than the six-month stocks ordered previously.¹⁴² This left food supplies lower

than normal, as on Diego Garcia as early as 1968,¹⁴³ and at times made the islands and the Chagossians increasingly reliant on fish and their own produce to meet food needs.

According to Chagossians and confirmed by British Government documents, medical and school staff left the islands after 1967 (and perhaps as early as late 1965). At the hospital in Peros Banhos, the midwife left Chagos sometime between May 1967 and August 1968. She was not replaced, leaving only a single dresser at the hospital.¹⁴⁴ Around the same period in 1967, the school in Peros Banhos closed due to the lack of a teacher (it seems later to have reopened temporarily before closing permanently).¹⁴⁵ In the Salomon Islands, the midwife departed during the first half of 1969, leaving a single dresser employed there as well.¹⁴⁶ The teacher in Salomon left between July 1969 and July 1970, and the school there closed (permanently it seems).¹⁴⁷

6.2. Forced Removals

In December 1970, the U.S. military secured funding to begin construction on its Diego Garcia base. On the 23rd of January 1971, a nine-member U.S. reconnaissance team arrived in Diego Garcia with BIOT administrator JOHN Todd and Moulinie & Co. director general Paul Moulinie. The next day, Todd gathered the people of Diego Garcia for a meeting. He informed them that the BIOT would close Diego Garcia and the plantations but that the BIOT would move as many people as possible to Peros Banhos and Salomon. As Todd recounts, “This drew no comment from the Seychellois but a few of the Ilois asked whether they could return to Mauritius instead and receive some compensation for leaving their ‘own country.’”¹⁴⁸ According to journalist John Madeley, “One Ilois woman, Marie Louina, died on Diego when she learned she would have to leave her homeland.”¹⁴⁹ Most Chagossians ultimately chose to

remain in Chagos by moving to Peros Banhos and Salomon, about 240 kilometers away, while many Seychellois workers and their Chagos-born children were returned to Seychelles.

Many Chagossians tell of being promised that they would receive land, housing, and money upon reaching Mauritius.¹⁵⁰ Paul Moulinie's nephew and Moulinie & Co. employee Marcel Moulinie made a sworn statement that he "told the labourers that it was quite probable that they would be compensated." He continued, "I do not recall saying anything more than that. I was instructed to tell them that they had to leave and that is what I did."¹⁵¹

Within a few months, all the inhabitants of the western side of Diego Garcia, including the villages of Norwa and Pointe Marianne, were forced to leave their homes and their land for the eastern side of Diego to allow construction to begin.¹⁵² "Resembling an amphibious landing during World War II," describes former Navy officer Vytautas Bandjunis, Navy "Seabees landed on Diego Garcia in March 1971 to begin construction."¹⁵³ A tank landing ship, an attack cargo ship, two military sealift command charter ships, and two dock landing ships descended on Diego with at least 820 soldiers and equipment to construct a communications station and an 8,000-foot airstrip. The Seabees brought in heavy equipment and set up a rock crusher and a concrete block factory. They blasted Diego's reef with explosives, to provide coral rock for the runway.¹⁵⁴

According to many Chagossians, there were threats during this period that they would be bombed or shot if they did not leave the island. Children hid in fear as military aircraft flew overhead.¹⁵⁵ The first article to break the story of the displacement in the Western press reported in 1975 that "one old man...recalled being told by an unidentified American official: 'If you don't leave you won't be fed any longer.'"¹⁵⁶

Around this time the BIOT administration and its Moulinie & Co. agents began removing families from Diego to Peros Banhos and Salomon. Some Chagossians refused and were told they had no choice but to leave.¹⁵⁷ In August 1971, the BIOT dispatched its 500-ton cargo ship, the *M.V. Nordvær*, to Diego to remove the last families from the island. When the *Nordvær* experienced engine troubles before reaching Diego Garcia, the BIOT administration sent another ship, the *Isle of Farquhar*, to continue the removals.¹⁵⁸ By then food stores in Diego were running low and BIOT officials began contemplating emergency assistance. The Seabee contingent eventually provided some food and later medical supplies.¹⁵⁹

In the days before the last inhabitants of Diego Garcia were removed, BIOT administrator Sir Bruce Greatbatch ordered Moulinie & Co. to kill all dogs on the island, including those belonging to Chagossians as pets. Paul Moulinie's nephew Marcel was managing Diego Garcia at the time, and he was responsible for carrying out the extermination. According to Marcel Moulinie, he first tried to shoot the dogs with the help of U.S. soldiers armed with M16s. When this failed as an expeditious extermination method, he attempted to poison the dogs with the poison strychnine. This too failed. Moulinie finally gassed the dogs *en masse* by piping exhaust from U.S. military vehicles into a sealed shed for drying copra where the dogs had been lured. Setting coconut husks ablaze, he burnt the carcasses in the shed.¹⁶⁰

After the *Isle of Farquhar* took a load of Chagossians and Seychellois from Diego, a repaired *Nordvær* returned to remove the final inhabitants. As on other voyages, the passengers generally were allowed to take a small box of their belongings and a bed mat (see one such box in Figure 1 at front). Most of their possessions and all their animals were left behind.

No physical force seems to have been used to load people onto the boats. However, the BIOT's Moulinie & Co. agents told everyone in Diego Garcia that the island was closing and

that they should board the boats. There would be no more work, Marcel Moulinie and the other agents said. There would be no more transportation to and from the island, the food stores had run out, the pet dogs had been exterminated, and the boats were taking away most of the salvageable plantation infrastructure. U.S. military officials were present to observe at least the last boatload leaving Diego Garcia. By the end of October 31, 1971, all the inhabitants had been removed and, except for military purposes, Diego Garcia was closed.¹⁶¹

Marcel Moulinie describes the departure in testimony given in 1977 (re-sworn in 1999):

There was a crowd of people there and a lot of them were crying.... A few days before, all the family dogs had been exterminated and the donkeys killed. People were upset about this as well as being upset about having to leave the islands. I persuaded Marcel [Ono, a Diego Garcia overseer] that he had to go as there were no more rations on the island and the boat had not brought in any food. The stores had been removed and there was no way of feeding anyone. Again nearly all of the Chagossian adults and their families went to Peros Banhos and Salomon. I last saw him as he walked on to the boat. He was not forced or pushed on to the boat. He realized that he could not stay on the islands once the company left.¹⁶²

Chagossians and other observers report that conditions on the boats were overcrowded and the open seas were often rough. The *Nordvær* had cabin passenger space for 12 and deck space for 60, for a total of 72 passengers. There was more than twice this number during the last voyage of the *Nordvær*, which brought 146 passengers to Seychelles.¹⁶³ Most of the laborers made the almost 2,000-kilometer, four-to-six-day journey on deck or in the cargo holds on top of or next to copra, guano, horses, equipment, and other cargo taken from Diego Garcia. Many Chagossians report becoming ill during the passage. Again Marcel Moulinie describes the conditions on the last boat to leave Diego Garcia:

The boat was very overcrowded. The boat deck was covered with stores, the belongings of the labourers and a lot of labourers were travelling on deck. [BIOT Commissioner] Greatbatch had insisted that the horses be carried back to Mahé and these were on deck

with the labourers. The labourers also travelled in the holds. This was not unusual but there were more people than usual in them. The holds also held a lot of copra being taken out of Diego. When the boat finally arrived the conditions were filthy. They had taken four days to travel and many of the women and children were sick. The boat deck was covered in manure, urine and vomit and so was the hold.¹⁶⁴

When passengers from the *Nordvær* arrived in Seychelles, laborers were housed in a newly constructed prison block before most travelled onward nearly 2,000 kilometers to Mauritius.¹⁶⁵ Moulinie & Co. managers were housed in hotels.¹⁶⁶

After the emptying of Diego Garcia, around 370 Chagossians remained in Peros Banhos and Salomon. Like those who went to Mauritius and Seychelles, those who went from Diego Garcia to Peros and Salomon had been required to leave most of their possessions, their furniture, their gardens, and their animals in Diego. This meant that they needed to replant their gardens and buy animals and furniture for their new homes in Peros Banhos and Salomon. They received MRs500 (at the time about £38) as a “disturbance allowance” to compensate them for these costs (those going to Mauritius and Seychelles received none).

The neglect of Peros Banhos and Salomon by the BIOT and Moulinie & Co. continued and conditions worsened in 1972 and 1973. Food supplies declined and Chagossians report that their diet became increasingly dependent on fish and coconuts. Before the last removals in 1973, Chagossians say that there was no milk to drink. Women fed their babies a mixture of coconut milk and sugar in its place. Medicines and medical supplies ran out. People ate the spongy, overripe flesh of germinated coconuts. The remaining staff in each islands’ hospital left Chagos and the last school, in Peros Banhos, closed.¹⁶⁷

In June 1972, the *Nordvær* continued emptying Peros Banhos and Salomon. At least 53 Chagossians left on this voyage expressing the desire “to go on leave to Mauritius and return later to the islands.”¹⁶⁸ Again Chagossians say conditions on the ship were terrible. Marie

Therese Mein, a Chagossian woman married to the departing manager of Peros Banhos, describes the voyage:

Our conditions were somewhat better than the other suffering passengers since we were given a small cabin, but we had to share this between my husband, myself and our 8 children. We could not open the portholes since the ship was heavily laden, and the sea would splash in if we did. It was therefore extremely hot and uncomfortable. Many people were in much worse conditions than us, having to share a cargo compartment with a cargo of coconuts, horses and tortoises. Some had to sleep on top of the deck of the ship. No meals were provided, and the captain, a Mr. Tregarden, told the families to prepare their own meals. By contrast the horses were fed grass. The passage was rough and many of the passengers were seasick. There was urine and manure from the horses on the lower deck. The captain decided to jettison a large part of the cargo of coconuts in order to lessen the risk of being sunk. The whole complement of passengers suffered both from an extremely rough passage and from bad smells of animals and were sick and weary after the 6 day crossing.¹⁶⁹

Mein was three months pregnant at the time. She reports miscarrying one day after arriving in Seychelles.¹⁷⁰

A subsequent voyage of the *Nordvær* had 120 Chagossians on board, nearly twice its maximum capacity.¹⁷¹ By December 1972, BIOT administrator Todd reported that Salomon was closed and all its inhabitants moved to Peros Banhos or left in Mauritius or Seychelles. A small number of Chagossians remained in Peros with enough rations to last until late March or April.

Early in 1973, the U.S. Government delivered the final orders that the last islands should be cleansed of inhabitants. Moulinie & Co. agents informed the remaining Chagossians that Peros Banhos was closing and that they would have to leave. At the end of April, with food supplies again dwindling, the *Nordvær* left Peros Banhos with 133 Chagossians aboard.¹⁷² The *Nordvær* arrived in Mauritius on April 29. The British High Commissioner in Port Louis explained the predicament of the arrivees when he said they had “nowhere to go, no money, no employment.”¹⁷³ By this time the Chagossians had heard about the fate of other Chagossians

arriving in Mauritius. The new arrivees refused to disembark. They demanded that they be returned to Chagos or receive houses in Mauritius. Eventually 30 families received a small amount of money and dilapidated houses in a slum of Port Louis, amidst pigs, cows, and other farm animals.

A month later, on May 26, 1973, the *Nordvær* made its final voyage, removing 8 men, 9 women, and 29 children from Peros Banhos.¹⁷⁴ The displacement from Chagos was complete.

6.3. Conclusion

The broadest and most significant dimension of impoverishment created by the expulsion was the severing of Chagossians' connection with their homeland and their exile in Mauritius and Seychelles. The process by which Chagossians were displaced from Chagos also had numerous specific negative effects that constitute part of this dimension of impoverishment, including their stranding in Mauritius, deteriorating conditions in Chagos, coercion to leave, the extermination of pet dogs, forced deportation, and arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles with no resettlement assistance for almost all Chagossians.

In addition to these immediate effects, the expulsion process also contributed to Chagossians developing impoverishment in exile and its component dimensions. Beyond the lack of proper resettlement planning that might have prevented or mitigated Chagossians' impoverishment, the traumatic and disorienting nature of the expulsion exacerbated and sped up the onset of long-term impoverishment that has extended far beyond the duration of the displacement process. In the chapters that follow, we move to document the other nine major dimensions of Chagossians' long-term impoverishment, noting where appropriate the continued impact of the expulsion process.

7. JOBLESSNESS

In this chapter we turn to the impoverishment subprocesses identified in the IRR model to document the first of the ten major dimensions of impoverishment experienced by Chagossians as a result of their displacement. This chapter also provides additional background about the societies in Mauritius and Seychelles to which Chagossians have been exiled. These details, like the previous chapter on life in Chagos, again help establish another of the living standards in comparison to which Chagossians have been impoverished.

In Chagos, Chagossians had virtually guaranteed universal lifetime employment in the archipelago's coconut plantations. The expulsion from Chagos resulted in virtually universal joblessness for the Chagossians as every Chagossian lost the jobs that they and their ancestors had performed for almost two centuries. As predicted by the IRR model, unemployment and underemployment among both first and second generation Chagossians have "endure[d] long after physical relocation."¹⁷⁵ From our survey, the unemployment rate remains approximately 45 percent for the first generation and 40 percent for the second.

Forced from a life with near universal employment to lives in competitive capitalist economies where their skills were little needed, Chagossians, and especially those in Mauritius, were plunged into a position of structural economic and employment insecurity with few avenues for escape. This ongoing condition of joblessness and underemployment has had serious economic effects, leaving median Chagossian income at €59.97 per month for the first generation and €81.13 for the second generation. These injuries, which we discuss under the rubric of joblessness, have also, as predicted by the IRR model, had debilitating psychological effects across generations of Chagossians (which we discuss in the next chapter).¹⁷⁶

In this chapter we detail joblessness as experienced by Chagossians since the expulsion.

The injuries of joblessness can be summarized as:

- One hundred percent initial job loss for everyone employed in Chagos;
- Significant structural economic and employment disadvantage upon arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles given the transition from a plantation economy in Chagos based on coconut-processing skills to increasingly competitive capitalist economies in which most Chagossians' skills were of little use;
- High unemployment and underemployment immediately after arrival during times of high structural unemployment in Mauritius and Seychelles (though the experience of Seychelles Chagossians is less well documented) and accompanying psychological damage;
- Chronic high unemployment and underemployment across generations of Chagossians, with a current estimated unemployment rate of 45 percent and 40 percent for the first and second generations (16 and older).
- Chronic low incomes for most Chagossians, with current median monthly per capita income of €59.97 for the first generation and €81.13 for those in the second 16 and older;
- Significant exclusion from national macroeconomic success in Mauritius and Seychelles, which has the two ranked among the wealthiest of sub-Saharan African nations;

7.1. Employment in Chagos

From the beginning of settlement in Chagos in the 18th century, employment on the archipelago's coconut plantations was the economic basis for Chagossians' life, as no other paid employment opportunities existed with which a person could support oneself.¹⁷⁷ From adolescence, Chagossians were guaranteed work on the plantations and pensions after retirement. All but an exceptional handful through the years accepted this employment.¹⁷⁸

As described previously, for the most part Chagossians worked as laborers harvesting and processing coconuts into copra and coconut oil. Chagossians had highly specialized skills specific to copra production. Most performed one of two jobs: harvesting coconuts or extracting

coconut flesh. In the first job, men and women worked rapidly to harvest coconuts fallen from coconut palms. In one motion they would swiftly grab hold of a coconut with the tong of a long, thin, sharply pronged tool, called a *sabl*, and toss the coconut up into a basket balanced carefully on one's head. Once gathered, the laborers split the coconuts, one after another, on the sharp point of a spear-like tool, known as a *piké*, anchored in the ground, extracting the nut of the coconut at a rate of as many as one coconut every few seconds. In the second job, performed mostly by women, laborers sat on the ground, quickly splitting the nut of the coconut with the blade of a small knife, called a *kuto de koké*, scooping out its flesh, shells flying in one direction, the flesh in another for drying to become copra.

Scott captures the importance of the copra-processing jobs in Chagossians' lives, even if he underestimates some of their other skills and creative parts of life, when he writes, "Their sole skills and the rhythm of the islanders' lives are dictated and limited by the extraction of copra."¹⁷⁹ Images of the coconut basket, the *sabl*, the *piké*, and the *kuto de koké*, today form the emblem of the CRG.

While these primary parts of copra production dominated the lives of most Chagossians, there was other work in Chagos. A few Chagossians worked at later stages of copra processing. Some worked in Chagos's other industries, which included guano, timber, honey, ship-building, pig and cattle-rearing, fishing and other seafood harvesting, maize and some vegetable farming, and the manufacture of wooden toys, model boats, and brooms and brushes made from coconut palms. A few laborers worked as foremen and overseers. A few mostly female laborers worked privately as domestic or child care workers for members of the plantations' "staff."

In exchange for a basic Monday through Saturday schedule, laborers received their salary, opportunities to work paid overtime, food staples, free housing and land, firewood, free

government crèches and schools, burial services, retirement pensions, regular vacations and free passage to Mauritius and Seychelles, and free health care and medicines.

Wages were small and generally credited to a worker's account on a monthly basis. In 1969, the basic monthly wage for male laborers was MRs25 (around £2 at the time) and for female laborers, MRs11.55. Artisans made MRs60-75. All workers received rations of food that in 1969 included 10 ½ lbs. of rice, 500 grams of coconut oil, 125 grams of salt, and at least MRs2 of fish, and at times lentils, wine, vegetables, and pork. In 1969, the administrator of BIOT estimated the value of these rations at MRs40 per month.¹⁸⁰

Work was generally on a task basis. The day generally started around dawn, between 6 and 7 a.m., and was often completed by noon. Most workers had opportunities to work paid overtime, completing additional tasks or other jobs. Children generally started working early in life, first accompanying parents into the fields or to copra processing centers, and later receiving wages in their adolescence. Children could also earn small amounts of money trapping rats and beetles, which endangered the coconut palms. When workers retired they were guaranteed a small cash pension and the same food rations and other benefits given to regular employees.

7.2. Initial Job Loss

The expulsion from Chagos meant almost universal unemployment for Chagossians, losing the jobs that they and their ancestors had performed since the 18th century. The only Chagossians who would not have been left immediately unemployed were some of those who arrived in Mauritius before 1967. Some of this group was working in Mauritius during vacations or extended stays. When the BIOT began preventing Chagossians from returning to Chagos, they too lost the guaranteed job that remained for them in Chagos.

The bulk of Chagossians, who were part of the removal process found that they were suddenly unemployed almost 2,000 kilometers from their homes. They moved from a society with universal employment to one with high levels of structural unemployment and societal stress. Chagossians arrived in Mauritius either shortly before or after its tumultuous transition to independence in March 1968. Most who went to Seychelles arrived in the early 1970s, shortly before its independence in 1976. British Government officials noted at the time the “near impossibility of [people from Chagos] finding suitable employment,” given Mauritius’s unemployment rate on “the order of 20 per cent.” Economists confirm that Mauritius suffered from “high structural levels of unemployment (averaging close to 20 percent in the early 1970s).”¹⁸¹ Significantly, as officials pointed out, “There [wa]s no Copra industry into which they could be absorbed.”¹⁸² British statistics from 1969 indicate an “unemployment situation in Seychelles...even worse than that in Mauritius,” with an unemployment rate reported as high as 27 ½ percent.¹⁸³ In 1971, British officials saw unemployment in Mauritius as an even graver problem, which might lead to “outbreaks of disorder, perhaps comparable to those which in September 1970 led to appeals for British military assistance.”¹⁸⁴

Chagossians were described by British officials as “destitute”¹⁸⁵ and “‘on the beach’ in Mauritius.”¹⁸⁶ Around 1967, the Mauritian Government provided 120 adults and their children with public social assistance totaling MRs5,453 (about £409 at the time). By March 1968, Mauritian officials ceased providing aid.¹⁸⁷ Our survey confirms these difficulties upon arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles. Asked how they and their families supported themselves after arrival, only 53.2 percent of respondents said they were able to support themselves primarily with a job. Others survived primarily or in part with the help of family and friends, charity, loans from moneylenders, and other sources.

7.3. Ongoing Joblessness and Underemployment

7.3.1. *After the Expulsion*

After the final removals, observers began finding that Chagossians were having severe difficulty finding employment in Mauritius, with high rates of unemployment and underemployment as a group. There has been almost no reporting about Chagossians in Seychelles, but our research indicates that Chagossians there faced similar difficulties as Chagossians in Mauritius. Ottaway reports in 1975 the results of a private survey indicating that, “only 17 per cent of family heads had full-time jobs, 33 per cent were unemployed and 50 per cent worked part time. Unskilled and uneducated,” Ottaway continues, most Chagossians “seem doomed to find only menial jobs, unless the government undertakes some kind of special retraining program for them.”¹⁸⁸

Siophe offers similar findings in her 1974-1975 survey: Only 28 percent of the heads of families had permanent work. 36 percent of family heads were working on a temporary on-again, off-again basis and another 28 percent were receiving social aid pensions. 8 percent were entirely unemployed, yielding 44 percent of family heads with less than full employment and not receiving a pension. Most of those working were employed in low-paid jobs as dockers, maids, fisherfolk, and truck loaders. Most families depended on a monthly salary of less than MRs160 (€73.41 in 2004 figures).¹⁸⁹

By the 1980s, the employment situation was little improved. Botte’s survey found 85.8 percent of male Chagossians underemployed and 46.3 percent of women unemployed. “The economic situation of the Ilois community,” Botte writes, is characterized “by low wages, unemployment, [and] underemployment” for people with skills still ill suited for the Mauritian labor market.¹⁹⁰ Sylva’s 1981 survey indicates a male unemployment rate of 41 percent and female unemployment at 58 percent. Of the few Chagossian families who had “satisfactorily

remunerated jobs,” Sylva explains, most were Chagossians married to Mauritians who arrived in Mauritius prior to 1960. “It is a fact,” Sylva states, “that many Ilois are badly in need of money.”¹⁹¹

Dræbel’s WHO-funded survey does not calculate an unemployment rate but found that those who were working were doing so in jobs at the bottom of the Mauritian pay scale, which were subject to the instabilities of the labor market and which carried with them considerable job insecurity. In many households only a single adult was working. Often, however, a single job was insufficient to support a family and Dræbel found Chagossians having to supplement their income with a second job. The average monthly household salary for Chagossians, according to Dræbel’s survey, was MRs2,933.60¹⁹² (€132.05 in 2004 euros). (Put in local perspective, a Mauritian study from three years earlier found that the minimum monthly income necessary for a family of four to have a decent living was MRs5,129, or nearly twice as much as the average Chagossian family was making three years later.)¹⁹³

7.3.2. Current Findings

Our quantitative and ethnographic findings are consistent with the previous decades of research and show little improvement in Chagossians’ overall employment and economic situation. Our survey indicates a Chagossian unemployment rate among first generation Chagossians of approximately 45 percent for the 2002-2003 period (the second generation unemployment rate is closer to 40 percent). Just over a third (38.8 percent) of the first generation and less than two-thirds (60.6 percent) of second generation respondents were working at the time of the survey. The majority of those employed both in the first and second generations were doing so in manual labor jobs. The median monthly salary among first generation Chagossians was Euros 279.26.

For second generation Chagossians it was Euros 176.38 (see Table 2 below for a summary of our survey findings on employment.

Of those Chagossians who are employed, many have jobs that are characterized by high job insecurity, temporary duration, and informal employment commitments. As researchers found in previous decades, Chagossians are still primarily employed in manual labor, including as dockers and stevedores in the shipping industry; as janitorial, domestic, and child care workers; as informal construction workers and masons; and as factory workers. Others take piecework jobs, often to supplement other employment. Examples of these jobs include making decorative furnishings for a residential construction company, stitching shoes, or weaving brooms from coconut palms.

In general, Chagossians born in Mauritius and Seychelles or leaving Chagos at a young age have been more successful in securing employment and better remunerated jobs than their elders. Others though from this younger generation of Chagossians are still mired in insecure, low-paying irregular jobs.

Table 2: Survey Findings: Employment and Income

First generation unemployment rate:	45%		
Second generation unemployment rate:	40		
First generation median monthly income:	€59.97		
Second generation median monthly income:	€81.13		
Median hours worked per day among respondents currently working:	8		
Median days worked per week among respondents currently working:	6		
Amount worked by first generation respondents, excluding those retired or unable to work, in the last 12 months:			
Never:	51.4%	Only a few months:	10.1
All the time or almost all:	21.0	Only a few weeks:	2.2
Most months:	14.5		
Amount worked by second generation respondents, excluding those retired or unable to work, in the last 12 months:			
Never:	29.1%	Only a few months:	15.6
All the time or almost all:	27.4	Only a few weeks:	5.6
Most months:	19.6	Only a few days:	2.2
Type(s) of work for first generation respondents currently working:			
Manual labor, agriculture:	51.9%	Child care:	3.7
Service sector:	9.3	Supervisory:	3.7
Culinary:	7.4	Driver:	1.8
Office, clerical:	7.4	Other:	9.3
Type(s) of work for second generation respondents currently working:			
Manual labor, agriculture:	49.6%	Child care:	4.4
Culinary:	8.8	Driver:	1.8
Office, clerical:	5.3	Supervisory:	0.9
Service sector:	4.4	Other:	12.4
Percentage first and second generation respondents owning own business:	5.8 and 5.1		
(Half of these businesses had no employees other than the business owner; the largest had 5 employees.)			

Note: Figures may not add to 100 percent because of “Don’t know” and other responses.

On the whole, Chagossians in Seychelles have been able to secure more stable and better paying jobs than their counterparts in Mauritius. In large part this seems to be the result of significant demographic differences between the two groups: most in Seychelles arrived with Seychellois-born parents at a young age, whereas Chagossians in Mauritius arrived at ages across the age spectrum. In this way, many Chagossians in Seychelles have been better positioned to benefit from a higher national standard of living, from what appears to be a relatively higher quality and more egalitarian educational system, and from more opportunities for social and employment mobility in Seychelles.¹⁹⁴ Whereas almost no Chagossians have secured government or white collar jobs in Mauritius, Chagossians in Seychelles work for the Ministries of Health and Education, the police and the armed forces, local district administrative offices, an insurance parastatal, and the state grocery company, to name a few.

7.4. From Universal Employment to Structural Disadvantage

The initial loss of employment in Chagos's coconut plantations accounts for part of the chronically high rates of joblessness and underemployment Chagossians have experienced since the expulsion. As importantly, Chagossians experienced a complete transformation in the economic context of their lives: Chagossians moved from enjoying lives of virtually guaranteed universal employment complete with an array of social services and other employment benefits to lives in increasingly competitive capitalist (Mauritius) and quasi-capitalist (Seychelles) economies, where the skills they possessed were generally not in demand, where the formal education, which most did not have, was increasingly important to securing employment, and where most found themselves lumped socially into a dark-skinned Creole group facing employment discrimination in stratified societies allowing little socioeconomic mobility.

The Mauritian economy that most Chagossians found themselves in during the late 1960s and 1970s was undergoing massive transformation. Since the 18th century, the economy and life of Mauritius had been dominated by sugar cane production. By the 20th century, Mauritius was the epitome of a mono-crop economy, dependent on the fluctuations of the sugar market and its colonial rulers in Great Britain. With one of the highest fertility rates in the world and the structurally high levels of unemployment discussed above, Mauritius was, according to experts, on the verge of “catastrophe” as it gained independence. At the time of Chagossians’ arrival, increasing numbers of working-age people were entering a labor market dominated by a sugar cane sector that could not absorb additional workers.¹⁹⁵

In 1970, following examples in Hong Kong, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, and Jamaica, the Mauritian Government began attempts to diversify its economy with the establishment of an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) to lure foreign investment and create new jobs in the production of cheap exports. EPZ factories and employment boomed over most of the 1970s and 1980s (one of the few successful examples in the world). During the same period, Mauritius further diversified its economy with a major expansion of its tourist industry. While sugar cane remained a dominant part of the economy, the two new sectors grew, largely on the basis of Mauritius’s large supply of cheap, relatively well-educated female labor. In recent years, the government has attempted to diversify the economy further, encouraging “offshore” foreign financial investment, higher-end export development, and information-based technology industries, following the Indian model.¹⁹⁶

The economy of Seychelles underwent a similar transformation. Prior to the 1970s, Seychelles had a stagnant colonial economy dependent on a handful of agricultural exports. In 1971, Seychelles opened its first international airport (built by the United Kingdom as

compensation to Seychelles for taking three of its island groups for the BIOT). This began the explosion of a previously tiny tourism industry that continues to drive much of the Seychelles economy to this day. More recently, Seychelles has tried to develop its substantial fishing resources and to become, like Mauritius, a center for offshore finance and high-tech services, while continuing to expand its tourism industry.¹⁹⁷

Although the economic booms in Mauritius and Seychelles have made both nations more economically prosperous on a per capita basis than almost any other nations in sub-Saharan Africa, Chagossians have not generally shared in this prosperity. The expulsion left most Chagossians structurally disadvantaged in Mauritius and Seychelles in ways that largely prevented their benefiting from the wider economic prosperity. Perhaps most significantly, Chagossians arrived in Mauritius and Seychelles before the major economic changes were underway or before they had taken hold. Chagossians arrived in one country, Mauritius, that had a sugar cane mono-crop economy unable to absorb additional workers and in another, Seychelles, described by the Benedictines as a “rundown plantation,”¹⁹⁸ with even higher unemployment than Mauritius. And they arrived for the most part with few employable skills other than those specific to the production of copra. Mauritius had no copra industry (except for a small one in its dependency of Agalega, where a few Chagossians relocated). Though copra has been the main export in Seychelles since the 1840s, the industry was diminishing rapidly in the period when Chagossians were arrived (overall agricultural employment declined 10 percent from 1971 to 1977, by which point just 2.8 percent of households were earning their primary income from farming).¹⁹⁹

Some of the other skills Chagossians brought with them were also rendered economically useless or bore significant costs in their use. The talents of Chagossian marine carpenters and

boat builders were of little commercial use in Mauritius and Seychelles where wood-based boat construction had grown largely obsolete. Chagossians' fishing skills were relatively more useful after the expulsion, and fishing has remained a source of employment for Chagossians to the present. A 1975 article however explains the difficulty for Chagossians of making a living from fishing in Mauritius: "Michel tried to become a fisherman when exiled, but the local fishermen, themselves unable to compete with the new fishing fleets with refrigerated holds, do not welcome further competition."²⁰⁰

With such competition, earning a profitable living in the fishing industry in Mauritius (and to a lesser extent in Seychelles) has increasingly meant working for long-distance fishing vessels that cruise away from Mauritius for several months at a time. Employment on such ships has thus resulted in additional (temporary) displacement and the separation of families for significant parts of each year. Just one example is that of one Chagossian man who leaves his family for six months at a time to work on a fishing boat and then works in informal jobs for the rest of the year, mostly as a mason.²⁰¹

"Certain occupations taken up by the resettlers," Nayak explains of displaced peoples generally, "may involve further expulsion. These occupations are taken by the chronically landless not by choice, but because of compulsion to earn their livelihood."²⁰² In this way two of the most economically successful Chagossians gained their starts on relative prosperity by winning jobs in the merchant marine. This came at the cost of separation from their families for far longer periods, over more than a decade. One explained that he sacrificed 11 or 12 years of his life away from his parents, sending a portion of every paycheck back to them in Mauritius.²⁰³

The conventional, and idealized, view of the economic boom in Mauritius is that the nation achieved full employment by the late 1980s. Though unemployment decreased

significantly as a result of the growth in EPZ and tourist industry employment, unemployment and underemployment have remained problems. For many in Mauritius and especially for Chagossians, moving from unstable, insecure jobs to stable employment has proved impossible.²⁰⁴ Even near the height of Mauritian employment growth, in 1986, more than 30 percent of the labor force was working in the informal sector.²⁰⁵ In this light, Chagossians economic difficulties become even less surprising.

7.5. Discrimination and Exclusion from National Economic Success

Being primarily of African or mixed African and Indian descent, Chagossians in Mauritius are viewed as part of the Creole (Afro-Mauritian) community, which has benefited least from Mauritian economic success. Anthropologist Rosabelle Boswell explains, “While Mauritius made remarkable economic progress in the 1980s and a majority of Mauritians benefited from the island’s development, a significant heterogeneous minority of Mauritians, known locally as Creoles, have not profited from Mauritius[’s] economic success.”²⁰⁶ Being put in a setting where they are considered part of this discriminated against minority group, Chagossians have faced additional barriers to their economic success and have been unable to benefit substantially from the Mauritian economic boom.

We can attribute some of this inability to benefit from the boom to structural and individual discrimination faced by Chagossians, both as Creoles and specifically as Chagossians. The expulsion put Chagossians in a position of structural disadvantage by making them vulnerable to discrimination in ethnically hierarchical societies. In Mauritius, Creoles are “overwhelmingly working class” and generally remain at the bottom of a socioeconomic

hierarchy, where as historian Larry Bowman explains, “In most, but not all, cases, higher income and social status are closely associated with lighter skin color.”²⁰⁷

Chagossians are generally placed within a small subset of Creoles, known as *ti-kreol* (literally, “little Creole”), who by definition occupy the most marginal and lowest-paying occupations. Eriksen describes in stark and commonly held racist terms the place in the national hierarchy of the *ti-kreol*: They are, “perhaps [the] most stigmatized category of people in Mauritius; that is, the segments of Creoles …comprising fishermen, dockers, unskilled workers and artisans.... As an ethnic category, the ‘ti-kreol’ are known by outsiders as lazy, backward and stupid people, as being too close to nature and resembling Africans in a not particularly flattering fashion.”²⁰⁸ With the *ti-kreol* at the bottom of Mauritian society, Chagossians are widely considered to be, along with people from the Mauritian dependency of Rodrigues, among the bottom of the *ti-kreol*.

The socioeconomic hierarchy in Seychelles is likewise organized around skin-color (though without a large population of Indian descent). There too Chagossians form a stigmatized minority within a majority Creole society generally dominated mostly by the wealthiest and lightest-skinned people of some or all European descent.

These hierarchies are not just a matter of perception. They reproduce themselves in ways that have maintained Mauritius and Seychelles as relatively rigid hierarchical societies organized around class and ethnic stratification. As indicated above, Boswell and Eriksen point to the ways in which Creoles have remained at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy in Mauritius. Increasingly in Mauritius there is recognition that a proportion of the population marked primarily by their ethnicity, class, and residential geography—i.e., mostly Creoles—have been excluded from the economic prosperity of the nation as a whole.²⁰⁹ Similarly in Seychelles,

wealth and high status have generally remained relatively closely related to the lightness of one's skin.²¹⁰

Arriving in Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians were thus left in positions most vulnerable to ethnic and racial discrimination both as Creoles and as Chagossians. This positioning has been detrimental to their economic success. Many Chagossians contacted during our research reported being the victim of discrimination—many when it came to finding work. Nearly two-thirds (65.5 percent) of first generation Chagossians and almost half of second generation respondents (44.7 percent) said that they had been the victim of verbal abuse because they were Chagossian. 49.6 percent of the first generation and 33.5 percent of the second said they had suffered job or other discrimination as a Chagossian. Other research supports Chagossians' claims of discrimination²¹¹ and in Chapter 15 below, "Ethnic Discrimination," we will thoroughly document the discrimination they have faced.

7.6. Educational Disadvantage

The expulsion also placed Chagossians in a position of structural disadvantage because of their low levels of education. Most of the new employment created in Mauritius and Seychelles was, as explained above, in the EPZ and tourist sectors. Most of these jobs demanded at least some educational background. At the height of the EPZ boom in Mauritius, "the availability of cheap, *literate and skilled* labour" in addition to financial incentives and infrastructural facilities encouraged "a massive flow of foreign direct investment" (emphasis added).²¹² Almost all Chagossians who were adults at the time of the expulsion left Chagos illiterate. Most of those who left as children arrived having received a low quality formal education that worsened in the last years in Chagos and that was interrupted, at best temporarily, by the expulsion. Many

Chagossian children, whether born in Chagos, Mauritius, or Seychelles, were forced to abandon their schooling to help their parents by working outside the home. If children managed to finish primary school, most could not afford secondary school, which only became free in Mauritius in 1976—three years after the last displacements and eight years after the first. Universal, free secondary school in Seychelles only became fully available in 1981.

In her 1974-1975 Mauritian survey, Siophe found that only 10 Chagossian adults surveyed—or 2 percent of the total—could read a little. More than one-quarter (27 percent) of children 6 to 16 years old were not attending school.²¹³ Even those Chagossian children who attended school in Mauritius found themselves structurally disadvantaged: Living for the most part in the poorest areas of Mauritius, they attended the worst schools with the worst teachers, and with illiterate parents, they had little help in their studies. (For more details on Chagossians' education, see Chapter 14, "Educational Deprivation.")

In Chagos, low levels of formal education and illiteracy were insignificant to performing the vast majority of jobs. In Mauritius and Seychelles, having little formal education and being illiterate or nearly so were significant impediments to securing an increasingly large number of jobs and to achieving upward job mobility. Even in jobs outside the EPZ and tourist sectors, Chagossians had to compete against Mauritians and Seychellois who in most cases would have received more formal education than what Chagossians received in Chagos.

7.7. Some of the Effects of Joblessness and Underemployment

The most obvious effect of Chagossians' joblessness and underemployment has been their low incomes, as detailed above. In part because of the difficulties adults have faced in finding employment and earning income, children have often left school to seek employment and

contribute their earnings to their households. As described above, many other households had to depend and still depend on government financial assistance, pensions, the aid of family and friends, and charity.

7.7.1. Indebtedness

From their earliest days in Mauritius in particular, many Chagossians fell into debt to support themselves, often to the owners of small neighborhood grocery stores.²¹⁴ Since the economic boom of the 1980s, buying furniture, electronics, and other household items from department stores with high-interest credit is now a widespread phenomenon among the poor of Mauritius.²¹⁵ Many Chagossians are active participants in this kind of indebtedness, representing a significant and ongoing drain on their incomes.

7.7.2. Illegal Income Generating Activities

Not surprisingly, some Chagossians have also been engaged in illegal activities to earn income, including prostitution, theft, and trafficking in illegal drugs. When the CRG surveyed almost the entire population in Mauritius to register Chagossians for its lawsuit in London, CRG interviewed 38 Chagossians in prison (a rate of approximately 809 per 100,000).²¹⁶

With women especially limited in opportunities to earn income, prostitution appears to have been a particularly acute problem in Mauritius. Botte's 1980 study of Chagossian women found at least 23 Chagossian women engaged in prostitution. ("Prostitution as a trade did not exist" in Chagos, she explains.)²¹⁷ Madeley cites similar findings.²¹⁸ Although prostitution is not a subject that most Chagossians are eager to discuss, our research found (in Mauritius) that prostitution remains a realm of employment for some Chagossian women.

7.7.3. *Abuse*

Limitations on women's ability to find jobs and earn income have also pushed some Chagossian women to marry Mauritian and Seychellois men in the search for financial security. As we will describe in Chapter 9, "Homelessness," to avoid homelessness, Juliette Bernard moved in with a Seychellois man who soon began drinking heavily and beating her. Likewise, Josiane Selmour described how as a teenager in Mauritius she was pressured by her mother and stepfather to marry a Mauritian man with a good, well-paying, secure job. The man, she explained, was not her true love. Fearing that her stepfather would hit her if she refused, she married the man. After they were married, Mrs. Selmour's husband began to beat her. He only stopped after she reported him to the police and took him to court.²¹⁹

7.7.4. *Chagossians Abroad*

A few women have followed husbands to Europe and Australia in search of work in the years following the expulsion. Although wealthier than their counterparts in Mauritius and Seychelles, telephone and other interviews indicate that most are living relatively precarious lives among the working poor in these new countries.

In recent years, larger numbers of Chagossians have left Mauritius and Seychelles in search of work and better lives. In May 2002, Chagossians became eligible for full U.K. citizenship and passports. Since then, approximately 300 have saved money for passports and airfare and attempted to move to Great Britain. They have met mixed success. In July 2003, around 30 Chagossians arrived with little or no money and what they believed were promises of work. The group soon found themselves stranded and homeless, sleeping for more than a week

on the floors of London's Gatwick airport. Others have with time found housing and low-wage service sector jobs, for the most part near London.

Marie Mireille Louis, a 27-year-old who arrived in London and eventually found work, described the difficulty of leaving her parents and the rest of her family in Mauritius. "You know, I am here," Ms. Louis explained, "but it is not with joy." It has been hard to be away from her family for so long, she said, especially because her mother has breast cancer. Ms. Louis planned to send money back to her family after finding a job and to search for medical care for her mother. "I heard that there is a qualified doctor here," she explained in English, as one of the few Mauritian Chagossians who can speak the language with some proficiency. So Ms. Louis decided, "I will come. Even if I am very close to her, I will sacrifice myself to come, to find [a] job, to get a house. And then I will take her here...to see a qualified doctor, to help her. But when I arrived, the situation was not the same. I got difficulties [she was facing sleeping in a London-area homeless shelter].... I knew that my dream, maybe it cannot be—I think that my dream, maybe, should not be realized."²²⁰

7.8. Employment for Other U.K. Overseas Territory Citizens

At this point we introduce details about the citizens of other U.K. Overseas Territories and of Mauritius and Seychelles, in comparison to which Chagossians have been impoverished. As explained in our introduction, for the citizens of the U.K. Overseas Territories, we have selected the three territories closest in population size to the Chagossian population: Falkland Islands, Anguilla, and Saint Helena. In this section and in subsequent chapters, we describe living conditions in the territories for the relevant dimension of impoverishment under discussion.

As described in the introduction, the economy of the Falkland Islands was, according to its local government, in “serious decline” in the mid-1970s before rebounding by the turn of the century. By 2002, the islands had a per capita GDP of €20,128 and full employment requiring the import of foreigners from Britain, Saint Helena, Australia, and New Zealand to fill open jobs. The local government says, “salaries are comparable to the UK.”²²¹ Citizens receive old age pensions from age 64.

In Anguilla, with its economy based on tourism and financial services, there is a 7 percent unemployment rate and per capita GDP of €9,605.²²² Saint Helena is generally the poorest and least economically developed of the Overseas Territories. Still compared to Saint Helena’s unemployment rate of 12.7 percent and per capita GDP of €3,881.86, the severity of Chagossians’ impoverishment is clear when one considers their unemployment rates of up to 45 percent and median monthly income as low as €59.97 for the first generation.²²³

7.9. Employment for Other Mauritians and Seychellois

As we have described, Mauritius and Seychelles have enjoyed periods of rapid macroeconomic growth since independence. For 2002, Mauritius enjoyed €11,470.06 per capita GDP and median monthly household income of €398.07 (approximately €209.51 per household income earner). Unemployment in 2003 was estimated at 10.3 percent.²²⁴ In Seychelles in 2002, per capita GDP was €19,345.25 and average monthly earnings were €689.82. The unemployment rate for 1997, the latest year available, was 10.2 percent.²²⁵

7.10. Conclusion

After enjoying generations of near universal guaranteed employment in Chagos, Chagossians faced universal unemployment upon losing their jobs with the expulsion. Since arriving in Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians have experienced chronically high rates of unemployment and underemployment and corresponding low levels of income. Many of Chagossians' employment difficulties have been the result of the expulsion having placed Chagossians in a position of structural economic and employment disadvantage in Mauritius and Seychelles. With the shift from the plantation economies of Chagos to the developing capitalist economies of Mauritius and Seychelles, most Chagossians have been not benefited from the macroeconomic growth that occurred around them. Most have remained economically impoverished.

Losing their work and the basis for their lives in Chagos as well as their ongoing joblessness since the expulsion has led to other dimensions of their impoverishment beyond their unemployment, underemployment, and economic poverty. Most significant of this other impoverishment is the psychological, social, and cultural impoverishment stemming from the problems of joblessness. We move to document these and related impoverishment in the following chapter discussing Chagossians' marginalization.

8. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL MARGINALIZATION

With the term *marginalization*, the IRR model describes two related phenomena. First, marginalization refers to an economic marginalization that is a dimension of impoverishment directly related to joblessness, decreased economic power, and lost skills. The IRR model predicts that, “marginalization occurs when families lose economic power and spiral on a ‘downward mobility’ path,” that decreases their standards of living. Second, marginalization refers to the ways in which involuntary displacement causes social, cultural, and psychological marginalization related to socioeconomic difficulties and other negative effects of expulsion. This marginalization includes damage done to self-esteem and self-image, to displacedees’ confidence in society and themselves, and feelings of increased vulnerability, injustice, stigma, and anomie.²²⁶

We summarize and then document the impoverishment of marginalization in two parts—first, economic marginalization and, second, social, cultural, and psychological marginalization.

Part I: Economic marginalization:

- Economic deprivation and marginalization beginning in Chagos with the creation of the BIOT in 1965, prior to arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- The general obsolescence of coconut-processing and other human capital skills that were fundamental to life in Chagos but which became largely valueless in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- Male employment difficulties leading to an increasing burden on women to support households and men financially (and accompanying psychological burdens detailed in Part II);
- Downward socioeconomic mobility in relative and absolute terms from a structurally secure life in Chagos with guaranteed employment, food, income, housing, health care, and education, to structurally insecure lives in Mauritius and Seychelles, where Chagossians became marginalized foreigners at the bottom of social and economic hierarchies with insecure or nonexistent employment, housing, and income, and where most qualified only for marginal, low-paid jobs;

Part II: Social, Cultural, and Psychological Marginalization:

- Ongoing negative psychological effects across generations as a result of joblessness and economic difficulties and other forms of undermined psychological and social well-being;
- Alcohol and substance abuse, particularly among men and youth (documented in detail in Chapter 12, “Increased Morbidity and Mortality”);
- Lowered social status and stigmatization;
- Feelings of powerlessness, vulnerability, and injustice from being displaced;
- Feelings of exclusion and isolation.

8.1. Part I: Economic Marginalization

The first element of marginalization in the IRR model is an economic marginalization featuring decreased economic power and a spiral of downward socioeconomic mobility and worsening living standards. This marginalization also features the obsolescence of skills and human capital acquired prior to expulsion. We documented most of the elements of Chagossians’ economic marginalization in the previous chapter. We review these facts here to show how their cumulative effect has been economic marginalization and an accompanying social, cultural, and psychological marginalization.²²⁷

Among Chagossians, as predicted by the IRR model, “relative economic deprivation and marginalization beg[an] prior to actual expulsion, because new investments in infrastructure and services in condemned areas [we]re discontinued long before” the actual expulsion. After the creation of the BIOT in 1965, as described in Chapter 6’s history of the expulsion process, the company running the islands ceased making capital and other improvements to the islands and gradually decreased available services. Work fell to a basic “maintenance” level. There were

shortages of food and other supplies. The schools closed and eventually the hospitals closed as well. After the final displacements in 1973, a representative of Moulinie & Co. described the period from April 1971 to June 1973, as a process of “abandoning the islands.”²²⁸ Overall, health and other basic living conditions appear to have declined significantly during the expulsion process, beginning many Chagossians’ marginalization even before the departure from Chagos.

We have documented above how upon arriving in Mauritius and Seychelles Chagossians’ copra-processing and other skills that were the basis of life in Chagos were rendered largely insignificant and valueless. Losing the utility of these skills and Chagossians’ low levels of education and literacy played an important part in Chagossians’ economic marginalization. Most were left outside the economic mainstream in Mauritius and Seychelles, qualifying only for the most menial and marginal of jobs—in terms of skills required, job security, and pay—primarily as laborers and domestic servants.

For most Chagossians this had immediate economic effects, with most living off small monthly incomes. Many Chagossians fell heavily into debt to pay their basic living expenses; others depended on charity or public welfare funds. As the IRR model predicts, the “downward mobility” was stark: Chagossians found themselves displaced from a society where they and their ancestors had worked and lived for generations with guaranteed employment, food, income, housing, health care, and education, to societies where they were foreigners at the bottom of social hierarchies, with no jobs, housing, or income, and where most qualified only for marginal jobs in labor markets with structural unemployment of at least 20 percent.

In Chagos, Chagossians were not wealthy in economic terms, given the low cash salaries most received. They were, however, enjoying lives of structural security in the guaranteed

provision of all their economic and other basic needs. Displaced to Mauritius and Seychelles, most Chagossians found themselves by contrast in positions of structural insecurity and marginalization beginning with the decline in their economic status. In one of the first reports of the Chagossians in exile, Ottaway writes that Chagossians in Mauritius “seem lost souls, living for the first time in a money economy where rent, food and clothing are priced far above their meager incomes and where they are either unsuited for the available jobs or discriminated against by employers who favor local Mauritians.”²²⁹

Over time, most Chagossians’ incomes have increased in absolute terms. For most though, their position of economic marginalization, impoverished at the bottom of society in Mauritius and Seychelles, has remained. An important element of this relative deprivation has been the changed economic expectations and ambitions of being among the poorest of the poor in nations undergoing economic booms that have multiplied materialistic desires. That many of these new desires have gone unfulfilled for most Chagossians or have come at the cost of increased indebtedness points to just one of the psychological and social injuries of economic marginalization.²³⁰

8.2. Part II: Social, Cultural, and Psychological Marginalization

Beyond economic marginalization, Chagossians have experienced a social, cultural, and psychological marginalization as a result of the expulsion. Some of this marginalization stems from their economic marginalization. Other social, cultural, and psychological marginalization has more diverse roots, most notably in the expulsion experience itself and in Chagossians’ position in their new societies.

8.2.1. Changes in Gender Relations and Their Injuries

Men appear to have been particularly affected by their economic marginalization in ways that have in turn injured women and families to which men are related. During our research, many Chagossians explained that since the expulsion men have had more difficulty finding work than women. Men have generally found work in temporary and unstable informal jobs as dockers, construction workers, basic laborers, truck loaders, and small-scale fishermen. Some Chagossian women have had relatively more and relatively more secure economic opportunities in factories, as household domestic servants, and to some extent in the tourist sector. (This experience corresponds to the structural changes in the Mauritian and Seychellois economies, where job growth from the 1970s to the present has been concentrated in mostly female employment in the factory and tourist sectors.)

As a result, after the expulsion, many Chagossian households grew dependent on women's wages as their primary source of financial support.²³¹ This is in direct contrast to life in Chagos where male laborers (discriminatorily) earned a higher base wage and had opportunities to work in artisanal and other positions earning even higher wages. With gender relations upset, many Chagossian families in Mauritius and Seychelles grew fragmented, as men often left the household of their children for the children's mothers to care for them. Botte reported in 1980 that 62.8 percent of Chagossian women were separated from their husbands and unmarried. Other Chagossian men became "dependent" on Chagossian women, "liv[ing] a marginal life." This burden on Chagossian women has led to its own forms of psychological and social injury for women.²³²

Among many Chagossian men there appears to be a deep pessimism about their economic and employment prospects. The lead author asked Jacques Victor, an out-of-work 40-

year-old mason from Diego Garcia who at the time was working weekends as an informal clothing vendor, if he thought it would be possible to find a better paying job. “In Mauritius, no. In Mauritius, no,” Mr. Victor responded in English. “Ilois have the qualifications. But they [Mauritian employers] say, ‘How can they have this kind of qualification?’ They much prefer [to keep us] lower than low. It’s like that.” When asked at the end of the interview if there was anything he wanted to add, Mr. Victor said, “I want to return to my land. Be there now—[to] get our lives that we [we]re living, yesterday [before the expulsion].... Maybe our children will get jobs.”²³³

This sort of pessimism about their economic prospects extends beyond men. Many Chagossians repeated to the lead author variations on the French aphorism, “Ceux qui sont riches seront toujours riches, ceux qui sont pauvres restent toujours pauvres” [The rich will always be rich; the poor will always be poor]. A 24-year-old Chagossian born in Mauritius who was working in temporary off-the-books construction jobs described no longer hoping for a better life. “Asterla mo aksepte lamizer,” he explained—Now, I accept a life of miserable poverty.²³⁴

Alcoholism, drug abuse, and other addiction (described in more detail in Chapter 12, “Increased Morbidity and Mortality”) appear as manifestations of these psychological and social injuries, although their roots extend beyond joblessness and economic marginalization. Again Botte describes men becoming “hard alcoholic,” (as well as spending “all their wages” on gambling).²³⁵ Sylva explicitly connects male unemployment and substance abuse problems, saying, “unemployment among men...is another factor causing distress. It gives way to idleness and leads to sluggishness, drunkenness, gambling and finally larceny.”²³⁶ Alcohol and drug abuse among Chagossian youth is also a problem, as reported by Chagossians and scholars alike.²³⁷

8.2.2. Lowered Social Status and Stigmatization

The IRR model describes social and psychological marginalization as being, “expressed in a drop in social status.... and they are often perceived by host communities as a socially degrading stigma.”²³⁸ One sees the kind of drop in social status described by the IRR model among Chagossians from the outset of the expulsion. In Chagos, though most Chagossians were laborers at the bottom of a hierarchical plantation society, Chagossians formed the vast majority of society and were seen as the legitimate indigenous people of the islands.²³⁹ In Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians have been widely seen as outcast foreigners, as a marginalized underclass, and as the lowest of the low in the societies. As described in the previous chapter, Chagossians generally occupy a status among the lowest of the ti-kreol in Mauritius and the most darkly-pigmented in Seychelles, groups at the bottoms of the two societies.

This drop in social status is an element of Chagossians’ marginalization in two ways. The drop in social status indicates the literal social marginalization of Chagossians from a position as the majority group considered native to Chagos to a position as an outsider underclass not belonging in Mauritius or Seychelles. The drop in social status also represents a kind of psychological marginalization in Chagossians’ and others’ awareness of their position as an outsider underclass and their impoverishment. Prior to the expulsion, Chagossians never saw themselves as poor. After the expulsion, it became nearly impossible for most not to think of themselves as others in Mauritius and Seychelles did: as impoverished outsiders.

In this position, Chagossians have experienced and been vulnerable to discrimination and abuse (which we detail in Chapter 15, “Ethnic Discrimination”). Chagossians have been mocked as savages and as uncivilized for coming from the isolated “outer islands” of Chagos. They have

been belittled for their accents and use of Chagos Kreol. As the IRR model predicts, “the cultural [and social] status of displaces is belittled when they go to new relocation areas, where they are regarded as ‘strangers’ and denied opportunities and entitlements.” That many faced and still face discrimination is indicative of their degraded social status since the expulsion. The term *Ilois* alone, particularly when pronounced *Zzeel-wah*, has such stigmatizing resonance in Mauritius that it is used as a pejorative slur against not just Chagossians but against non-Chagossians as well.

8.2.3. Feelings of Exclusion

As a widely stigmatized minority, many Chagossians describe feeling excluded from mainstream life in Mauritius and Seychelles. These feelings are related to those of psychological homelessness described in Chapter 9, “Homelessness.” As several in Mauritius put it, Chagossians are “eksklu de lavi Moris” [excluded from Mauritian life].

Much of this sense of exclusion seems to stem from feelings among Chagossians that they are not part of Mauritius as a nation. These feelings stem in turn for many Chagossians from the founding of the nation and the bargain by which the “father of the nation,” Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, is understood to have “sold” Chagos and the Chagossians to the British Government in exchange for Mauritian independence. Given this history, many Chagossians feel that Mauritius is, as they say, not a nation for them. Even further, like many Mauritians of African descent, many Chagossians feel that Mauritius is ‘for the Indians’ or ‘for the Hindus’ (the majority ethnic and religious groups in Mauritius). Mauritius is not, they believe, ‘for the Creoles,’ and it is especially not ‘for Chagossians.’ In this way, many Chagossians in Mauritius feel a double exclusion: first, as Chagossians who gave up their

homeland so the rest of Mauritius could have its independence, and second, as members of the minority Creole population.

In Seychelles, similar feelings of exclusion are widespread, especially given Chagossians' exclusion from Seychellois citizenship. Chagossians in Seychelles frequently describe feeling excluded from job, housing, educational, and other opportunities as a result of being Chagossian. There is a widespread sense of being discriminated against and of being the last served in a nation with widespread wariness for any public dissent (even since the establishment of multi-party democracy).

8.2.4. Feelings of Impotence, Powerlessness, Vulnerability, and Injustice

As predicted by the IRR model and a wider body of literature, many Chagossians have experienced feelings of impotence and powerlessness since the expulsion. The IRR model explains that one generally sees, "resettlers' loss of confidence in society and in themselves, a feeling of injustice, and deepened vulnerability. The coerciveness of expulsion and the victimization of resettlers tend to depreciate resettlers' self-image."²⁴⁰

Some of the earliest literature on involuntary displacement emphasizes this aspect of the expulsion experience. Thayer Scudder explains that being moved against one's will is to have suffered a "terrible defeat." He writes that it is "hard to imagine a more dramatic way to illustrate impotence than to forcibly eject people from a preferred habitat against their will."²⁴¹ Scudder's frequent collaborator Elizabeth Colson likewise holds that expulsion causes increased dependence and, just as importantly, an awareness among displacees of this increased dependence. Involuntary displacement, she says, is a clear demonstration to a group and its members that they have lost control over their own destiny, that they are powerless.²⁴²

We found considerable evidence of Chagossians feeling this powerlessness and impotence. Some of these feelings revolve around pessimism about Chagossians' employment and financial prospects, as we described above. Other such feelings stem, as Scudder and Colson explain, from the experience of the expulsion itself and from the fact of being involuntarily displaced from Chagos. Many Chagossians (both first and second generation) have been left asking why the expulsion happened, why they were victimized and displaced, and why Chagossians cannot live in their natal land. Others self-deprecatingly question how Chagossians could have allowed themselves to be exiled. They ask why they did not resist and protest their expulsion more vigorously to stop it from happening. In these questions one can see how Chagossians have often internalized the expulsion, blaming themselves for its occurrence.

Many Chagossians similarly describe feelings of shame about being Chagossian since the expulsion. Many explain that they have only felt proud to be Chagossian and willing to identify themselves as Chagossian to others since Chagossians won a court ruling against the U.K. Government in November 2000, and after they were given the right to full British citizenship rights as of May 2002. These feelings of shame have many sources. Some derives from Chagossians' degraded socioeconomic position and the discrimination they have faced in Mauritius and Seychelles. Some too seems to stem from having been forcibly removed from Chagos and from having been powerless to stop the removal.

Many Chagossians also describe feeling ashamed to be Chagossian, especially in the first years after the displacements, because of their material poverty. Many tell of feeling shame at having had to attend school barefoot when their classmates wore shoes or in wearing second-hand and tattered clothing. Lisette Volfrin, who was removed from Diego Garcia and then Peros Banhos as a teenager in the 1970s, described feeling "ashamed" and embarrassed that her family

could not afford nice clothing to wear to church like other children. Mrs. Volfrin said that their neighbors would throw apricots and yell taunts at her and her siblings as they walked to school. The Seychellois said that Chagossians were not vaccinated and would make them sick. Mrs. Volfrin explained that she has never felt at home in Seychelles. ‘Why can’t we have our homes [in Chagos]?’ she wondered aloud.

Mrs. Volfrin’s sister Marie Ange Pauline provides a telling example of the shame and impotence that Chagossians have felt. For years after arriving in Seychelles Mrs. Pauline hid her identity as a Chagossian for fear of being deported by the government in a one-party state where she held no citizenship. For years she felt ashamed to identify herself as a Chagossian in school when teachers asked where she came from. For years, while some Chagossians in Mauritius were protesting their removal, she and other Chagossians in Seychelles felt powerless to argue for their rights in the one-party state. Finally in the late 1990s (after the start of a multi-party democracy), Mrs. Pauline decided that she was no longer going to hide her identity. She described this as her “coming out” as a Chagossian. But despite this assertion of pride and growing political involvement, Mrs. Pauline described asking herself still, ‘Why didn’t we resist?’ Even though she remembers that people in Diego Garcia were scared of the U.S. military forces arriving on the island and the possibility that they might bomb them if they had resisted, even though she remembers her father protesting the removals, she often asks herself, ‘Why did we let it happen to us?’²⁴³

8.3. Conclusion

Chagossians’ marginalization encompasses a constellation of harms. It begins most obviously with Chagossians’ economic marginalization centered around job loss, chronic employment

problems, and the obsolescence of their skills. Economic marginalization has in turn helped to engender a subtler but no less profound social, cultural, and psychological marginalization that also has roots in the expulsion itself and in Chagossians' lowered social position in Mauritius and Seychelles. We have pointed to many of the signs and expressions of this latter form of marginalization. Still, it is difficult to capture fully the extent to which this marginalization has subtly shaped Chagossians' aspirations, self-image, and ways of being in the world. Ultimately the two forms of marginalization are intertwined and mutually reinforcing: Economic marginalization has engendered social, cultural, and psychological marginalization, which in turn has helped reinforce and perpetuate Chagossians' economic marginalization.

9. HOMELESSNESS

In Chagos, Chagossians had universal guaranteed housing. Chagossians lived either in homes passed down from parents and grandparents or in homes they built from housing materials provided free as work benefits or in homes provided by the plantation company. As a result of the expulsion, Chagossians lost their homes in Chagos and nearly all the population was left homeless upon arrival in Mauritius or Seychelles. Most Chagossians moved to other families' already overcrowded shacks in the poorest neighborhoods of Mauritius and Seychelles around the capitol, Port Louis. Other Chagossians squatted on other people's land. Only a few families received housing assistance in Mauritius when they protested their removal; some were temporarily housed in a prison in Seychelles. Housing for most Chagossians remains overcrowded and located in the poorest and most unhealthy neighborhoods of Mauritius and Seychelles. For a considerable segment of the population, housing remains structurally deficient and lacking in basic sanitary services.

The IRR model explains that literal homelessness is usually temporary but that, “for some, homelessness or a worsening in their housing standards remains a lingering condition.” Beyond material injuries, the IRR model says that “In a broader cultural sense, loss of a family’s individual home and the loss of a group’s cultural space tend to result in alienation and status deprivation. For refugees,” like the Chagossians, “homelessness and ‘placelessness’ are intrinsic by definition.”²⁴⁴ In this chapter we document how worsened housing conditions have remained a lingering condition for most Chagossians and how Chagossians have experienced broader cultural and psychological homelessness feelings of alienation and placelessness. Chagossians’ injuries from homelessness can be summarized as follows:

- The loss of all homes in Chagos;

- Near universal initial homelessness in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- Almost no assistance in securing replacement housing; some received temporary housing in a prison in Seychelles;
- Initial post-expulsion housing in the poorest neighborhoods of Mauritius and Seychelles, usually in shacks and in other structurally deficient and overcrowded homes of other households, or squatting on other households' land;
- Ongoing housing conditions that are overcrowded, located in the poorest and least healthy neighborhoods of Mauritius and Seychelles, and for a considerable section of the population, remain structurally deficient, often dangerous, and lacking in basic sanitary services (despite most families securing their own housing over time and improving their housing after the receipt of government compensation in the early 1980s);
- About 40 percent of households currently lacking a toilet or plumbing in the home, 25.9 percent lacking running water, and 7.6 percent lacking electricity;
- 34.4 percent of households currently living in homes made of some mixture of metal, wood, concrete, brick, and other materials;
- Vulnerability to further homelessness and other injuries related to substandard housing;
- Homelessness in a broader cultural and psychological sense, with feelings of alienation and of being outsiders who are not at home in Mauritius and Seychelles.

9.1. Housing in Chagos

Chagossians received housing in Chagos as a regular part of their employment compensation dating to the 19th century. Chagossians could choose to receive a fully constructed house or the materials to construct a house. The latter option began in the second half of the 19th century when, according to Scott, the manager at Diego Garcia's East Point "introduced the system of allowing labourers to build their own houses, if they so opted, the management providing all the materials." The system apparently proved a success, creating "'quite superior dwellings' and a

sense of proprietorship” over the homes. “By the middle of the 1870’s,” writes Scott, “the people of East Point, Diego Garcia, were showing a marked preference for building their own houses, instead of looking to the estates for accommodation.”²⁴⁵

When families went on vacations or other trips to Mauritius, their houses were locked and remained waiting for their return. Alternatively, vacationing families allowed other family members or friends to live in their homes in their absence. Younger Chagossians inherited houses from elders or, because of the ease with which houses could be built, constructed their own.

The houses were simple, sturdy structures that remained cool in Chagos’s equatorial heat and were similar to ones common in Mauritius.²⁴⁶ Most were constructed of wood and thatched coconut palm leaves with a thatched roof. In the 20th century, some began installing concrete floors. Most had two to five rooms including an attached kitchen. Some houses had a shaded area in front. Some Chagossians, because of their elevated work rank, had larger houses of stone or brick. Senior management had large multi-level houses with as many as 11 bedrooms, wrap-around verandas, guesthouses, and wine cellars. During the 1960s, management began building houses of concrete for Chagossians but stopped after the future of the islands became unclear with the establishment of the BIOT.

9.2. Initial Homelessness

When Chagossians visited Mauritius on periodic vacations or trips for medical care, they typically made temporary arrangements to stay with relatives, friends, or in rental accommodations. When in 1968, Chagossians in Mauritius were prevented from returning to Chagos, they were instantly made homeless. Suddenly they had lost their homes and almost all

their possessions. Suddenly they were forced to find new permanent housing. They did so having just lost their jobs and source of income. Many had little or no savings.

More families became stranded and homeless in this way as the decade ended. When the forced removals began in 1971, Chagossians were deposited homeless at the docks of the Mauritian capitol, Port Louis. Madeley describes their search for housing: "The Ilois walked bewildered off their ships and tramped through the slums of the capitol Port Louis to try to find a relative or friend who would offer accommodation."²⁴⁷

Chagossians arrived in Mauritius to an overcrowded island that population experts were warning might become a "catastrophe" given what was then one of the fastest population growth rates in the world.²⁴⁸ Conditions in Port Louis, where most Chagossians settled, were particularly bad. Writing when Chagossians were first being stranded, Richard Titmuss and Brian Abel-Smith explain:

The housing conditions in parts of Port Louis are worse than anything we saw in the villages [in rural Mauritius]. Hundreds of people are crowded into tin shacks hardly fit for animals. Not surprisingly, Tuberculosis and other diseases are very common in these slums, and a large proportion of the families depend on the help, regular and irregular, of the Public Assistance Department. Urban rents are relatively high and there is a serious shortage of housing in the towns; a situation made worse by the cyclone damage in 1960.²⁴⁹

Life in Port Louis grew more difficult in 1968 when large-scale unemployment in the capitol contributed to gang violence and riots between Muslims and Creoles.²⁵⁰

The experience of Arlette Lamb's family was common. The family initially traveled from Chagos to Mauritius to seek medical treatment for Mrs. Lamb's infant sister. When they tried to return to Chagos in 1968, the family was denied return passage and found itself stranded in Mauritius. After some searching, the best the family of eight could manage was to rent a

small single-room corrugated metal shack near the cemetery in Cassis, one of the slums of Port Louis.²⁵¹

For the first time, Chagossians needed to pay for their housing: Unlike in Chagos where housing was inherited or was a work benefit, in Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians needed money to secure an adequate place to sleep. When they could not pay their rents, Chagossians describe evictions and harassment from owners. As one Chagossians said in a research feedback meeting, “Propriéter kone zis kas”—The landlord only knows [accepts] cash. One can see the dramatic change that this entailed for what was once an unquestionably secure aspect of life.

As Chagossians were deported to Seychelles, their experience there was similar. Many were forced to crowd into the homes of relatives or to squat on the land of others. Some families lived “*anba lakaz,*” or underneath another family’s house on stilts. One family lived in a vacant cowshed, slowly transforming it into a formal house over many years.

Juliette Bernard was one of the last to leave Peros Banhos. She explained that she followed her Seychellois husband to Seychelles with her daughter and three sons. There they were initially able to live with relatives of her husband. When her husband left the family after only two years in Seychelles, Mrs. Bernard and her four children had to find a new place to live, with few connections in a foreign country. Eventually Mrs. Bernard found a woman who would let the family live in a single-room shack behind her house. The walls were made of straw and the roof of corrugated metal. They had a small cooking area outside the shack. There was no toilet, so they used other people’s toilets. The family bathed and got their drinking water from a nearby river, carrying the water on their heads back to the shack. Mrs. Bernard’s son Claude described the difficulty of these first years, especially after his father left the family: “It was not nice, you see. You came to a place. You don’t know anyone. You see. And where will you go?

You don't know where you will go [to live]. Left? Right? Front? Back? Up? You don't know.”²⁵²

In late 1971, some of the last Chagossians deported from Diego Garcia were housed for two to three weeks in a new prison block in Seychelles, while high-ranking staff from the island stayed in hotels. The *Sunday Times* quoted one of the Chagossians, Marie Vencatassen, who lived in the prison: “We were vaccinated and went through customs.... We asked for Mr. Paul Moulinie...and we walked about one and a half miles to his office. He tried to get us somewhere to stay but he couldn’t, and he told us the only place that was empty was the prison. We slept in cells on prisoners’ mattresses. The prisoners served us food. It was bad. The doors were locked at nine o’clock.”²⁵³

The only Chagossians initially to receive permanent government housing assistance were a group of about 30 families on the last boat from Peros Banhos. These families protested their removal and refused to leave the boat unless returned to Chagos or given housing. Some received abandoned dock workers’ housing in the Dockers Flats area of Port Louis’s most notorious slum, Roche Bois. Marie Claudine Louis described how she entered the house given her in Dockers Flats and found a goat and a cow sleeping on the floor. “When we entered [the house], we found it was a trick. Understand?” she said. “There was grass [in the house]. We entered and there was a goat sleeping...a cow too...sleeping on the floor—living in the house.... The windows were broken. What could we do?”²⁵⁴

9.3. Continuing Housing Problems

As predicted by the IRR model, poor housing conditions remained prevalent over the first decade after Chagossians became refugees in Mauritius in 1968. In 1975, the *Sunday Times of London*

reported that, “the islanders have to go begging to survive, and live in shacks which are little more than chicken coops.”²⁵⁵ Hélène Siophe, a social worker who worked with Chagossians, provided a formal survey of Chagossian housing conditions in Mauritius. Siophe’s survey shows that as of late 1974 and early 1975, only 3 Chagossian families of 277 surveyed owned their own homes, with another 11 renting land where they had constructed small corrugated metal houses. Most Chagossians rented inexpensive homes and lived in overcrowded conditions. Around 59 percent lived in one-room houses with as many as 9 people in a single room. In Cassis, Siophe found a single courtyard where 7 Chagossian families were living with 10 other families and sharing one water tap, one toilet, and one shower among them. According to Siophe, more than half of all Chagossian families were living in housing that she classified as in “bad condition.”²⁵⁶

The continuation of these poor housing standards left Chagossians vulnerable to new displacements and homelessness. In 1975, Cyclone [hurricane] Gervaise struck Mauritius, damaging the homes of poor families and displacing many from around the island. The hurricane severely damaged many Chagossian homes, made some homeless, and increased the community’s overall housing problems. British Ministry of Overseas Development advisor A. R. G. Prosser describes the vulnerability of the Chagossians and Cyclone Gervaise’s effect: “As might be expected, the most intractable problem for the Ilois has been housing. There is a grave shortage of housing in Mauritius for those at the bottom end of the economic scale, and this has been further aggravated by the recent cyclone which destroyed a great number of houses in the existing housing pool.”²⁵⁷ Siophe confirms Gervaise’s damage saying, “After Cyclone Gervaise many houses have been flattened. Families tried to repair them, to the extent that their resources would allow. As of September 1975, there are still 7 families living in Refuge Centers.”²⁵⁸ Making conditions even worse, housing costs rose approximately 500 percent in Mauritius

between late 1972 and 1976.²⁵⁹ A 1975 interview with a Chagossian from Diego Garcia, provided by the Church World Service for U.S. Congressional hearings, describes the damage of the cyclone on a family of nine:

The five [chickens] that were left and the coop were lost in February in Cyclone Gervaise. She also lost during the cyclone her two coconut-straw mattresses that she brought from Diego. She tried to save them, but the wind became too strong and she and the children had to flee to a neighbor's house. When she returned, the mattresses, and most of the iron sheets from the house, were gone. Now she has to gather grass for the children to sleep on.²⁶⁰

Later academic surveys confirm that housing remained a serious problem among most Chagossians. In 1980 Francoise Botte found the Chagossians living in "poor housing conditions in the sub-urban slums of Port Louis." She reports that 82.8 percent were living in two or three room "hovels" in the suburbs, generally with two or three families living together and sharing the rent.²⁶¹ A year later, Herve Sylva again found that "housing is the most pressing problem that must be tackled for the proper resettlement of the Ilois." Sylva reports significant overcrowding, families living in "refugee camps," more than a quarter of families (27 percent) doubling up with other families, and others "living in ramshackle houses and in dire conditions."²⁶² Our research shows and Chagossians confirm that families continue to live doubled up with other families, with children and adults often sleeping on floors without beds.

9.4. Land and Financial Compensation

In 1978 and again between 1982 and 1985, many but not all Chagossians in Mauritius received financial and (in the 1980s) land compensation as a result of their expulsion. No Chagossians in Seychelles received compensation. 1978's compensation was payment from a total of £650,000 transferred by the British Government in 1972 to the Mauritian Government to resettle the

Chagossians. Although a majority of Chagossians requested that this compensation come in the form of housing, eligible Chagossians instead received cash payments of MRs7,590 for adults (€2,825.58 in 2004 euros) and between MRs1,000 (€372.30 in 2004 euros) and MRs1,500 (€558.42 in 2004 euros) for children 18 and under.²⁶³

Between 1982 and 1985, many but not all Chagossians in Mauritius received land on one of two plots around Port Louis and cash payments totaling around MRs55,000 for adults (€7,049.89 in 2004 euros). In part these payments were to pay for government construction of a home or to build one's own home. Many Chagossians received land and concrete-block houses built by the Mauritian Government. The houses were located in what became known as a *Cité Ilois* in either another slum Baie du Tombeau or in Port Louis's brothel district, Pointe aux Sables. Most of the houses built are the same basic model with two-rooms, a kitchen, and small toilet and shower rooms attached to the exterior of the house. The houses are approximately 60 square meters in area and include running water and electricity. They are laid out in irregular grid patterns along dusty dirt roads adjacent to other residential areas of Baie du Tombeau and Pointe aux Sables (see one compensation house in Figure 2 at front).

Many other Chagossians who did not opt to receive these houses used their compensation money to purchase new housing or to improve preexisting homes. Many Chagossians report using both compensation payments to pay off substantial debts incurred since arriving in Mauritius. Others told of having to sell their new land and houses to pay off debts. Unscrupulous brokers enabled many of these sales, which according to Chagossians and non-Chagossians undervalued the land and houses significantly. Previous research indicates that housing conditions for the community as a whole improved as a result of the second compensation in particular but remained rudimentary at best.²⁶⁴ Our research and the continuing

habitation of some Chagossians in government and other homes in Pointe aux Sables and Baie du Tombeau suggest a similar conclusion.

9.5. Current Housing Conditions

Before presenting our findings about Chagossians' current housing conditions, we note the most recent study to address Chagossians' housing: Dræbel's 1997 WHO-funded report. In the report, Dræbel describes Chagossians' housing as falling into two basic categories that "vary between the decent and the flimsy."²⁶⁵ The "decent" housing is the housing built by the government as part of the 1980s compensation. The "flimsy," explains Dræbel, is similarly small but more frequently consists of a corrugated metal roof; construction involving a mix of concrete, sheet metal, and wood; kitchen and sanitary facilities located outside the house; and generally lacking running water and electricity. In her survey of 90 Chagossians, Dræbel finds that Chagossian households had an average of 6.5 individuals. On average, homes had 2.5 rooms (in addition to a kitchen and toilet and bathing facilities).²⁶⁶

Our findings concur with the basic conclusions of Dræbel's report. Housing conditions improved on the whole as a result of the 1980s government compensation. Even with the improvements some enjoyed in gaining a basic concrete-block house, most Chagossians still live in the lowest tier of housing quality in Mauritius and Seychelles and some live in conditions that are among the worst in both nations. Chagossians housing conditions are essentially unknown in the United Kingdom and the United States. They are more closely comparable to those found in the townships of South Africa.

Most of the population as a whole (including those who gained houses from compensation) still live in overcrowded conditions and are concentrated in the poorest, least

desirable, most disadvantaged, and most unhealthy neighborhoods in Mauritius. Many also live under more dilapidated housing conditions with dangerous structural deficiencies and limited access to basic services including electricity, running water, and sanitary facilities. Generally housing problems are more critical for Chagossians in Mauritius than in Seychelles, in line with wider national differences.

From our 2002/03 survey, one finds among Chagossians surveyed:

- 76.6 percent of households now own their own home, though only 61.6 percent own the land on which their homes are located.
- A median 5.0 persons per household, living in an average 3.0 rooms per home, for an average of 1.7 persons per room (this calculation includes living and dining rooms; hence a more accurate average assuming at least one room is a living or dining area is that there are on average 2.2 persons per bedroom).
- Compare this to an average 1.4 persons per room and 1.75 persons per bedroom in Chagos.
- Homes with a median area of 88 meters square and surrounding land with a median area of 240 meters² (based on the estimates of Chagossian respondents and affirmed by our interviewers if the interview took place in the home).
- More than a third (34.4 percent) of housing construction of some mixture of concrete, corrugated metal, wood, and other materials, while about two-thirds is constructed of concrete or brick.
- 41.2 percent of households lack toilet facilities inside their homes and almost as many (39.6 percent) lack plumbing.
- Just over one-quarter (25.9 percent) of households lack running water in their homes.
- 22.3 percent of households do not have interior kitchen facilities.
- A significant 7.6 percent of households lack electricity. Compare this to the United States and the United Kingdom where electrification is universal or to Mauritius and Seychelles where less than one and five percent of households lack electricity respectively.²⁶⁷
- Whereas 77.9 percent of households in Chagos had homes with views of the water, only 11.6 percent now can see the water from their homes. (These and additional survey findings on housing are summarized in Table 1.)

Table 1: Chagossian Survey Findings: Housing

Median number of persons per household in Mauritius/Seychelles:	5.0
Median number of persons per household in Chagos:	7.0
Median number of rooms per home in Mauritius/Seychelles:	3.0
Median number of rooms per home in Chagos:	5.0
Average persons per room, Mauritius/Seychelles:	1.7
Average persons per room, Chagos:	1.4
Median number of rooms per home in Mauritius/Seychelles:	3.0
Median number of rooms per home in Chagos:	5.0
Current home construction materials:	
Some mixture of metal, concrete, brick, wood, and other materials:	34.4%
Mostly concrete or brick:	65.6
Percentage households without:	
Toilet inside home:	41.2%
Plumbing:	39.6
Bathing facilities in home:	36.6
Running water:	25.9
Kitchen inside home:	22.3
Electricity:	7.6
Percentage households with homes with view of the water now:	11.6
Percentage in Chagos with homes with view of the water: (11.8% too young to remember)	77.9
Percentage households owning home:	75.7
Percentage renting or other:	23.1
Median monthly home rent among households renting:	Euros 67.02
Median size (area) of current home:	88 meters ²
Percentage households owning land on which home rests:	61.3
Percentage renting land or other:	38.1
Median land rent for households renting land on which home is located:	Euros 17.64
Median land size (area) on which home is located:	240 metres ²

Note: Figures may not add to 100 percent because of “Don’t know” and other responses.

9.5.1. Neighborhood Conditions

Regardless of the quality of their housing, most Chagossians live in the least desirable and economically poorest areas of Mauritius and Seychelles. In Mauritius, such areas are known popularly as “endroits défavorisés,” or disadvantaged places. Most are the same peri-urban slums around downtown Port Louis, where many Chagossians have lived since the expulsion, including Roche Bois, Cassis, Pointe aux Sables, Baie du Tombeau, Cité la Cure, and Sainte Croix. In Seychelles, many Chagossians live in what are known as “Red Districts,” like Anse aux Pins, Les Mamelles, and English River, known for traffic in illegal drugs and high crime rates (see Maps 4-5 at front).

9.5.1.1. Roche Bois, Mauritius

We provide sketches of several of these neighborhoods to demonstrate the kind of environment in which many Chagossians are housed (see also photographs at front). Roche Bois is the largest and probably the most notorious²⁶⁸ of Port Louis’s slums. It is known stereotypically and with some accuracy for the use and trade of illegal drugs and for high rates of theft, violence, and other crime. One academic observer explained that, “Roche Bois is perceived as a locality outside the law, where it is not very prudent to venture.” Living in Roche Bois is itself stigmatizing (see Figures 7-11 at front).²⁶⁹

9.5.1.2. Cassis, Mauritius

Cassis is another neighborhood where Chagossians have lived since the earliest days of the expulsion. Cassis is the closest of Port Louis’s slum neighborhoods to the commercial and government center of the city, located just to its west. Four major cemeteries dominate the

landscape. Most of Cassis is a maze of rusting, corrugated metal fences lining small passageways, dirt paths, and roads, with surrounding houses and shacks usually cobbled together from mixtures of concrete block, metal, and wood. Trash is often smoldering in empty trash-strewn lots. Piles of corrugated metal sheets lie waiting to be used for home repairs. From above, one sees a tightly packed clutter of corrugated metal roofs, often weighed down with bed springs, broken-down bicycle parts, wood scraps, odd pieces of metal, and bricks, with an occasional palm tree or two-story concrete-block house jutting up from below. An open drainage sewer runs through the middle of Cassis, past one of the cemeteries and toward the ocean.

Cassis is encircled by two major highways, several large industrial facilities, a diesel-burning power plant, and a beach where a government sign strongly recommends against swimming. On Cassis's south, the two highways bring congested and exhaust-filled lanes of traffic to and from the capitol. Cars and trucks find a shortcut between the two highways by using the streets of Cassis, adding additional exhaust and noise pollution and the danger of large vehicles to the neighborhood. A large industrial dry cleaning plant, a major bus depot, and a local bus station stand nearby.

On the west of Cassis lies the Fort Victoria power station. Another diesel station lies a little more than one kilometer to the south. On the east, closest to Port Louis, Cassis is bounded by the Bulk Sugar Terminal, a sand processing plant, large petroleum tanks of the Fort William Storage Facility, and other industrial buildings (which, with a cemetery, surround one of the only green areas in Cassis, a park known as Les Salines).

Although Mauritius is known internationally for its beautiful beaches, and although most of Cassis is surrounded by the Indian Ocean, there is very little water and beach access in the

neighborhood: Between the Fort Victoria power station and the sand plant, a small stretch of beach remains. A large white sign with red lettering announces a landing area for fisherfolk; their small wooden boats dotting the water are anchored near shore. About five to ten meters of beach are covered by coral, broken shells, and seaweed, as well as scattered broken bottles, rusted cans, tires, lost shoes, splintered wood, plastic bags, rusting car parts, and broken-up Styrofoam. At the end of this stretch of beach one finds a sulfurous stench, a mountain of sand, and nine pipes leading from the sand into the ocean (and perhaps explaining why bathing is not recommended). (See Figures 3-4 at front.)

9.5.1.3. Pointe aux Sables, Mauritius

Another area where Chagossians are concentrated and where one might assume that residents have good ocean access is Pointe aux Sables, southwest of Cassis and Port Louis. Indeed beach bungalows, small hotels, and rental houses line parts of the coast. Some of those beach-front properties, however, help give Pointe aux Sables its reputation as a center for prostitution. And most of Pointe aux Sables' inhabitants, including Chagossians living in Cité Ilois, live on the other side of the coastal road, at a distance from the water.

A single road leads in and out of Pointe aux Sables, isolating the area from the rest of Port Louis and Mauritius. A sign near the beginning of the road reads, "Pointe aux Sables Dit Non à la Drogue" [Pointe aux Sables Says No to Drugs]. Along the road, large factories manufacturing textiles, paint, and other products dominate the horizon inland from the coast. A bus depot, sugar cane fields, and rows of multi-story public housing blocks stand nearby. At the far end of the road sits one of the two public beaches in Pointe aux Sables and a nearby prison. In 2002, scientists found the beach at Pointe aux Sables to be the most heavily contaminated

among beaches sampled in Mauritius. The scientists discovered fecal-origin coliforms and streptococcus and concluded that the beach should be closed to the public and swimming banned (see Figures 5-6 at front).²⁷⁰

9.5.1.4. Seychelles

Neighborhood and broad environmental conditions in Seychelles are generally better than those in Mauritius. With a population of around 81,000 and little industrial or commercial development outside the capitol, Victoria, most of Seychelles' main island Mahé remains covered in trees and other flora. Most houses scattered up and down the mountains that rise from Mahé's coasts are surrounded by vegetation. Some Chagossians live in some of the least desirable neighborhoods in Seychelles, known to police and others as Red Districts. These neighborhoods are distinguished not by their (natural) environmental conditions but by the interlinked factors of residents' socioeconomic status, the quality of the housing, and (perceived or real) levels of crime (see Figures 12-14 at front).

9.5.2. Overcrowding

As our survey findings indicate, overcrowding remains a significant problem across the Chagossian community. In addition to the finding that on average there are 2.2 individuals per room in Chagossian homes, about one-third (34.5 percent) of households have 7 or more individuals and almost one-quarter (22.9 percent) have 8 or more. More than half (51.6 percent) of households have homes with three or fewer rooms and more than one-quarter (27.3 percent) have two or fewer.

Our ethnographic research confirms this statistical data and illustrates some of the common overcrowding found among Chagossians. Most significantly, the doubling up of families in single homes and people sleeping on floors without beds remain common. In one household visited in Cité Ilois, Pointe aux Sables, residents reported that 16 people lived in a corrugated metal shack consisting of one open room and a small corner for cooking. A single woman in the household was working. The rent of MRs800 was half her monthly salary working in a factory.²⁷¹

Not far away, in neighboring Grande Riviere Nord-Ouest, a family reported its six members sharing a room with one bed, a thin bedding mat rolled up under the bed, and newspaper pages lying on the floor. The family explained that the newspapers were used to keep the floor clean for the children who slept there at night.²⁷²

On the other side of Port Louis, in Cité Ilois, Baie du Tombeau, the lead author slept in a home with 5 couples and a total of 21 people across three generations crammed into a 7-room home. The living and dining rooms doubled as bedrooms: The two grandparents in the house, who once worked in the coconut fields in Chagos, slept together on a small mat in the living room, separated from the dining room by thin white curtains. In the dining room, a 9-inch-by-18-inch shelf surreptitiously stored personal hygiene products. Originally the house had three rooms with a toilet, bathroom, and kitchen. Over time the family saved money and added four more rooms. A stack of concrete blocks lay in the front yard and a pile of grayish gravel was mounded next to the front gate: The family was hoping to add another floor to the house but was saving to have enough money for the construction. More than two years later, there was no second floor and the concrete and gravel still lay in front of the house, largely untouched.²⁷³

9.5.3. Housing Amenities and Sanitary Facilities

Though a majority of Chagossians has basic sanitary facilities and electricity inside their homes, a sizable minority lacks basics like running water, interior plumbing, a toilet and bathing facilities. According to our survey, 25.9 percent of Chagossian households surveyed lack running water in their homes. This leaves such households dependent on filling containers of water from communal taps, from rivers, from neighbors' taps, and from other sources. Because most Chagossians in Mauritius live in poor communities where water is sometimes unavailable for parts of each day, even those with running water sometimes have limited access.

Around 40 percent of Chagossian households have no toilet and shower facilities in their homes (41.2 and 39.6 percent respectively). Most instead have small rooms, separate from the home, for a flush toilet or pit latrine. In similar rooms, many have fashioned a shower from a spigot drizzling a small stream of water from the ceiling. Some of these rooms have concrete walls and metal roofs but many are simply dark, dank, rust-filled corrugated metal shacks. Although more frequent in the earlier years of exile, some families in Mauritius and Seychelles still have no such facilities and must use nearby public facilities or those of neighbors.

More than one in five Chagossian households (22.3 percent) lacks a kitchen inside the home. Most instead have an adjacent three or four-sided corrugated metal shed with a table and a gas stove for cooking. The walls of these kitchens (and some interior kitchens, which are also often made of corrugated metal sheets and rarely have much ventilation) are almost always blackened with a thick coating of burnt cooking oil. Most have a distinctive stench from these oily accumulations. 7.6 percent of Chagossian households still live in homes without electricity and at least some rely on informally routing electricity from a neighbor's home. Compare this to the United States and the United Kingdom where electrification is universal or to Mauritius and

Seychelles where less than one percent and five percent of households respectively lack electricity.²⁷⁴

9.5.4. Structural Deficiencies

The two-thirds of Chagossian households living in homes of concrete or brick generally do not face serious structural problems in the quality of their housing. Structural problems may become an increasing problem for some of these households however as those who received concrete-block government-built houses during the 1980s are now living in homes 20 or more years old, with some showing signs of water damage and cracking walls (see Figure 15 at front).

Structural deficiencies are a serious problem for many of the more than one-third of Chagossian households (34.4 percent) who live in homes constructed of corrugated metal or a mixture of metal, wood, concrete, and other materials. The heavy reliance on corrugated metal sheets, which are generally recycled from other uses, and wood of similarly variable quality and origin creates structurally fragile homes that almost always display visible signs of damage or structural weakness. These homes are particularly vulnerable in the environment of Mauritius where heavy rains, tropical storms, and cyclones are common.

One example helps illustrate some of the problems faced by those living in structurally deficient housing. Rosinette Jaffar was born in Mauritius to a mother born in Six Iles. Now she lives in the slum of Roche Bois where she is responsible for a small 4-room house shared among 11 people. Mrs. Jaffar explained that she receives a pension of MRs1,600 (€57.12) per month and cares for an infirm and bed-ridden aunt living in an adjacent house in the same courtyard.

When one of the lead authors visited Mrs. Jaffar's home there were five households in the courtyard sharing a single pit latrine, a metal shack shower, and a water tap. Adjacent to the

courtyard was an auto mechanic's shop ringed by a tall, glass-shard-topped wall. Around the corner was a truck depot and an open lot dotted with piles of debris, burnt refuse, and scorched ground.

Mrs. Jaffar's home had a frame of wood; the walls and a roof were of corrugated metal. The wood beams were irregularly sized and shaped. Many were cracked and rotting; some were held together with tape where, Mrs. Jaffar explained, 2002's Cyclone Dina had damaged them. The metal walls and roof were pocked with holes, some filled or covered with pieces of aluminum, tape, and even chewing gum. Cracked planks of wood were nailed to the underside of the roof as reinforcement. Heavy plastic sheets hung from the roof above two bunk beds to try to keep the beds dry in the event of rain (see Figures 9-10 of similar homes at front).

On the day of the lead author's visit, there was a heavy rainstorm. The mattresses on the bunk beds were folded in half to keep them dry where rain was leaking onto the beds. One of Mrs. Jaffar's granddaughters kneeled on the floor, mopping up rain off the cracked concrete floor with a torn rag, squeezing it out into a pail filling rapidly with reddish-brown water the color of the dirt outside.²⁷⁵

9.5.5. Vulnerability to Subsequent Homelessness and Other Injuries

The substandard housing of many Chagossians makes many vulnerable to more bouts of homelessness, worsening housing standards, and other injuries. Housing affected by cyclones in Mauritius (cyclones do not hit Seychelles) provides the most dramatic example of this phenomenon. As with all severe weather, housing that is least sound structurally generally suffers the most damage from cyclones. Since the start of the expulsion, major cyclones have struck Mauritius in 1975, 1981, and 2002. These cyclones left many in Mauritius homeless,

including some Chagossians.²⁷⁶ The cyclones often also meant the destruction of considerable property and personal items purchased since the expulsion and considerable housing damage for households who were not left homeless. In 2002, a charitable organization in Great Britain, the Ilois Support Trust, donated money to help Chagossians suffering from the effects of Cyclone Dina.

Two examples help demonstrate the ways in which poor housing conditions and general housing insecurity can lead to additional injuries. When the lead author visited Marie Alexina Ramdas, she was living along a row of metal shacks near an open dumping ground in Roche Bois. Mrs. Ramdas's home was a sparse five-by-ten-meter one-room corrugated metal shack. She had a single bed on one side of the room for herself and a thin mat for her adult son on the little floor space remaining. The shack had another attached room but the room had been so damaged in Cyclone Dina that she had been unable to make it habitable. The sheet metal walls of her home were ripped open in places and patched with sheets of plastic. In other places there were holes as big as a square meter through which the inside of the home was exposed. Some of the beams supporting the corrugated roof were draped in plastic. Mrs. Ramdas wore a white piece of cloth wrapped around her throat. When the lead author asked about the scarf, Mrs. Ramdas explained that she was sick with pneumonia because of the air coming in from outside.²⁷⁷ Whether or not the air caused her illness, Mrs. Ramdas's exposure to the elements as a result of the cyclone damage illustrates one's susceptibility to further harms when living in substandard housing.

Juliette Bernard became susceptible to other kinds of injuries after her husband left her and her children within two years of their arrival in Seychelles. After living for about two years in their straw and metal home in Belvedere where they were bathing in the river, Mrs. Bernard

remarried and moved her family into her new husband's home. Before long though, the new husband began drinking heavily and beating Mrs. Bernard. Over time, he broke her nose and both her arms. Claude Bernard, her son, said of the family's situation, "You see, we cannot do nothing because we don't have a place to stay. You see, you have to accept this. You know, [if not] we will be left on the street."

When Claude Bernard turned 19, he found his father and moved in with him to escape the stepfather's abuse. Eventually Mrs. Bernard escaped the home as well, moving into a small government-owned home in a Red District after petitioning and meeting personally with the now ex-president of Seychelles.²⁷⁸ Mrs. Bernard's experience demonstrates how the expulsion created a state of housing insecurity for many Chagossians, which has led to a vulnerability to domestic violence and other injuries in Chagossians' attempts to ensure that they remain housed.

Mrs. Bernard's experience also points to some of the differences in housing quality between Chagossians living in Mauritius and Seychelles. To get housing or land in a nation of approximately 81,000, which was ruled as a one-party state until 1992 and is still dominated politically by the same party, people generally accepted that one must write letters to and meet personally with longtime President France Albert René. Many Chagossians believe that as Chagossians and outsiders in Seychelles they have been the victims of discrimination by the government in such requests.

Claude Bernard, now 31 and still living with his father, described applying for government housing since 1998, as well as writing letters to and talking with President René about his application. Claude said that housing officials told him that the government had to serve Seychellois families first. "I say, 'Why?' I'm in a school. I'm studying. I'm helping Seychelles," Claude said. "But why am I not entitled—why do they help the Seychellois first?"

The lead author asked Claude that question and he replied, “Because they look on my identity card.” Claude’s identity card, like those of other Chagossians and others born outside Seychelles, indicates that Claude was born outside Seychelles (we discuss this phenomenon in more detail in Chapter 15, “Ethnic Discrimination”).

Those Chagossians that have been able to rent government housing, like Mrs. Bernard, now are generally well housed. In some cases, housing appears to be larger and more structurally sound than government and other Chagossian housing in Mauritius. Other Chagossians in Seychelles, however, live in corrugated metal shacks like those found among Chagossians in Mauritius and at the lowest end of the housing spectrum in Seychelles.

9.6. Psychological and Social Dimensions of Homelessness

Beyond the material deficiencies of their housing and as a result of their exile, most Chagossians have been left homeless in a broader cultural and psychological sense. Like other refugees, Chagossians’ home, their “ter natal” [natal land], as many say, has been taken from them. Many, including Chagossians born in Mauritius and Seychelles who have never been able to visit Chagos, have been left with feelings of alienation. They have been left with feelings of being outsiders in their new homes. Many speak of never feeling “at home” in Mauritius and Seychelles.

One of the first scholars to study the effects of involuntary displacement anthropologist Elizabeth Colson describes the importance of home and a familiar environment to humans. Home, she writes, provides a refuge that is crucial to people’s sense of self, while the place people inhabit similarly gives meaning to one’s identity. Destroy people’s home, take away their familiar environment, and people are likely to suffer from this loss, both materially and

psychologically, becoming disoriented and insecure.²⁷⁹ Without automatically assuming a psychological and cultural dimension to Chagossians' homelessness or a universal experience of this homelessness, we outline here the complicated ways in which this phenomena manifests among many Chagossians.²⁸⁰

9.6.1. *The Connection with Chagos*

Like many peoples, Chagossians had and have a strong connection with the land on which generations of their ancestors were born. The very term *Chagossian*, literally meaning of or belonging to Chagos, stresses the connection between the people and their land, the islands of the Chagos Archipelago. Though Chagossian is a relatively new term, the older terms used to (self-) identify the people of Chagos similarly stress connection to the land. These terms are *Ilois*, defined as “Islander,” and *Creole des Iles*, or “Creole of the Islands.” To understand why these terms are specific to the people of Chagos, one must understand that generally, people on Mauritius and on the main island in Seychelles, Mahé, do not instinctively refer to themselves as living on an island (just as most people in the United States instinctively see nothing incorrect about calling themselves “Americans” and referring to their country as “America”). Instead most in Mauritius and on Mahé think only of people living in the smaller island dependencies of Mauritius and Seychelles as living on islands.

Since the expulsion, Chagossians have both publicly and privately declared themselves to be the indigenous people of Chagos and to have a special connection to the islands unlike any other group of people. Evidence of this assertion is widespread.²⁸¹ When the administrator of BIOT announced that Diego Garcia would be closed and all its inhabitants displaced, some Chagossians protested against leaving, as the administrator wrote, “their ‘own country.’”²⁸²

Shortly after the final removals, a group of Chagossians delivered a petition to representatives of the British Government in Mauritius saying, “We, the inhabitants of Chagos Islands—Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos, Salomon, have been uprooted from those islands because the Mauritian Government sold the islands to the British Government to build a base. Our ancestors were slaves on those islands, but we know that we are the heirs of those islands.”²⁸³

A shirt worn by many Chagossians and created by the Chagos Refugees Group, displays an emblem depicting the basket and tools used in harvesting coconuts in Chagos. The front of the shirt reads, “Proud to be Chagossian,” while the back displays a color photograph of a coconut-palm-lined beach from the islands and the words, “Our Unforgotten Island/Chagos Archipelagos.” With the assistance of supporters in Switzerland, Chagossians have created their own flag, featuring three horizontal stripes of orange (representing the fiery sunrises and sunsets in Chagos), black (representing the exile and the pain of being exiled), and aquamarine (representing the waters in the archipelago, the protection of its environment, and hope for the future). In referring to Chagos when speaking among themselves, Chagossians need only say the word *laba*—Kreol for “there.”

For many Chagossians, the intimacy of their connection to Chagos is closely related to the fact that their ancestors are buried on the islands. One of the earliest documented records of this connection comes from a sworn court statement from 1977 in which the manager responsible for supervising the population removal on Diego Garcia, Marcel Moulinie, recalled the reaction of one of his most trusted overseers Marcel Ono to news of the “evacuation”: “He was a bit shaken and talked about his forefathers having lived on the island and his having been born there. He accepted that if I told him he had to go he would have to go. All the same he was very upset.”²⁸⁴

Repeatedly since the expulsion, Chagossians have requested permission to visit the islands to clean and tend to the graves of their ancestors. In the 1975 petition to the British Government, Chagossians write, “Allow two or three persons from among us to go clean the cemetery at Diego Garcia where our forefathers, brother, sisters, mothers and fathers are buried, and to enable us to take care of the Diego Church where we were baptised.”²⁸⁵ In 2000, the British Government allowed three Chagossians to visit Peros Banhos and Salomon Islands where they paid respects to and cleaned the graves of ancestors (they were not permitted to visit the cemeteries on Diego Garcia). Marie Ange Pauline, who was forced to leave Diego Garcia for Seychelles as an adolescent, said she can especially see in older Chagossians the pain of not going to the graves of their ancestors. Visiting the graves of one’s ancestors and bringing them flowers, she explained, is an important part of the Creole culture of which Chagossians form a part.²⁸⁶

9.6.2. Feeling Homelessness and Alienation

With their connection to their land and to their ancestors severed, most Chagossians suffer painful feelings of homelessness and alienation. Mrs. Pauline said she thinks sometimes about what life would be like if they had not been removed. ‘Maybe Diego would be like Seychelles is now,’ she said, referring to the ways in which Seychelles has developed economically since she arrived in 1972.²⁸⁷ ‘I would be more at ease there,’ Mrs. Pauline continued. ‘I’ve never felt comfortable here in Seychelles. We are treated as foreigners in Seychelles,’ she explained, ‘and in Seychelles they don’t like foreigners. We have always been treated as foreigners here.’²⁸⁸

Chagossians arrived in Mauritius and Seychelles as refugees and have remained refugees, not just in being geographically separated from their homelands but also in a cultural and

psychological sense. It is what Thayer Scudder pointed to among those involuntarily displaced as the “grieving for a lost home” syndrome.²⁸⁹

For many Chagossians, especially those in Seychelles, feelings of alienation have been based on material grievances. Unlike Chagossians in Mauritius who became Mauritian citizens under the first 1968 Mauritian constitution, many Chagossians in Seychelles had no Seychellois citizenship for years and were unaware of the U.K. citizenship for which many were eligible. Most eventually had to purchase their Seychellois citizenship at significant cost or petition the government for a reduced or waived fee.

Mrs. Pauline described having a photograph of the Queen of England on the wall of her family’s home in Diego Garcia and being confused about their nationality once in Seychelles. ‘Were we British? Were we Mauritian?’ she wondered at the time. She and other Chagossians were left asking, “What are we?” In both Mauritius and Seychelles Chagossians became a people without a country, without a homeland. And many non-Chagossians treated them this way, as a people apart unlike others in Mauritius and Seychelles (detailed below in Chapter 15, “Ethnic Discrimination”).

Ranjit Nayak captures some of Chagossians’ alienation in describing injuries that India’s Kisan people experienced as a result of being involuntarily displaced. “In essence, they suffer from profound cultural and landscape bereavement for their lost origins,” he writes. “Stress and depression trickle up and down the generations, affecting people almost irrespective of age or gender. An example of this effect can be seen among the children brought up in the resettlement colonies. The children can narrate the expulsion and resettlement experience in minute detail as if they had themselves experienced the process.”²⁹⁰

Among Chagossians born in Mauritius and Seychelles there is this same kind of awareness of life in Chagos and the expulsion. Many born after the final removals can narrate the story of life in Chagos and the expulsion just as one who was born there. Maxwell Albert is one such Chagossian born in Mauritius who feels a sense of pain for not having been born in Chagos and being unable to live there now. Mr. Albert was the only one of his siblings who was not born in Salomon; he was born shortly after his parents arrived in Mauritius in 1968 and were told that they could not return to Chagos. Often he asks himself and God why he was not born in Chagos. And yet he spoke freely of the experience of those born in Chagos: It is a very different thing to come here by force as compared to coming to Mauritius by choice, he said. It is much harder to adapt when you come by force. "My father," he said emphatically, "came by force. By force he came."²⁹¹ (This also shows how many Chagossians consider being prevented from returning to Chagos to be equally as "forced" as those removed by boats during the final years of the expulsion.)

When the lead author asked Mr. Albert if he distinguishes himself, as some sometimes do, as being an *enfant Chagossien*, a child of one born in Chagos, rather than a Chagossian, he replied, "I, truly, I am Chagossian. I am Chagossian because my mother was born in Chagos. My father was born in Chagos. All my family was born in Chagos. I am a Chagossian. On paper perhaps [it says that I was born] in Mauritius, but I am a Chagossian. Honestly. I am proud to be Chagossian." Asked about his hopes for the future, Mr. Albert responded, "I would like to dream that one day I will be able to have a life definitively able to change in one sense—in one sense [i.e., to go to Chagos]. But it is difficult for me to forget my history, my origin. Because there is an enormous silence about it—a lot, a lot of silence.... All my family was born there—only I was born here. I would like to tell this story."²⁹²

9.7. Housing for Other U.K. Overseas Territories Citizens

We have been able to find little information about housing conditions in the Overseas Territories but there are indications that housing in the Falkland Islands, Anguilla, and Saint Helena is of a consistently higher quality than that enjoyed by Chagossians. In the Falklands, for example, over half of all households have a computer, nearly half have a fax machine, and 42 percent have internet access.

9.8. Housing for Others in Mauritius and Seychelles

A few statistics from Mauritius and Seychelles suggest the significantly higher housing standards enjoyed by most citizens in the two countries relative to the Chagossians. In Mauritius and Seychelles, 9.7 percent and 21 percent of households respectively do not have homes with concrete or brick walls compared with the 34.4 percent of Chagossian households without walls of such sturdy materials.²⁹³ In Mauritius and Seychelles, 14 and 15 percent of households respectively lack running water in their homes compared with 25.9 percent of Chagossian households.²⁹⁴ Flush toilets are found in 88.8 percent and 94 percent of households in the two nations but in only 63.4 percent of Chagossian households.²⁹⁵ Less than 1 and 5 percent of households lack electricity respectively in Mauritius and Seychelles, while 7.6 percent of Chagossian households are without electricity.²⁹⁶ And at least in Mauritius (statistics are not available for Seychelles), households are significantly less crowded among Mauritians than among Chagossian households: compare the national average number of persons per room of 0.9 to the Chagossian average of 1.7.²⁹⁷

9.9. Conclusion

Homelessness afflicted almost all Chagossians upon their arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles and housing problems have lingered for most of the population. Although compensation arrangements helped to improve housing conditions, significant portions of the population remain with substandard housing, living in shacks cobbled together with corrugated metal, wood, and concrete, and often lacking basic sanitary facilities. Homelessness has also extended to the entire population in a psychological and cultural sense: No matter the material conditions of their housing, Chagossians feel homeless in their separation from Chagos and their alienation from life and feeling “at home” in Mauritius and Seychelles.

10. LANDLESSNESS AND LOST COMMON PROPERTY

In Chagos, Chagossians controlled land around their homes that they often used for gardens, crop rearing, and keeping livestock. This practice had roots dating to Chagossians' enslaved ancestors and the earliest settlements in the islands. In many cases, Chagossians occupied the same land for decades and generations, farming and working land passed down from their elders. In addition to these personally and family-held lands, Chagossians enjoyed communal access to a wide range of Chagos's resources from its seafood-rich waters to its coconuts and other fruit-bearing trees to its open-space and cemeteries.

Cernea identifies "landlessness" and "lost access to common property resources" as two distinct subprocesses of involuntary displacement's impoverishment. We combine the two in our analytic framework because for Chagossians the two have been closely intertwined and are best discussed in tandem.

As a result of the expulsion, Chagossians lost significant land assets including the land on which their homes were built and surrounding areas used for gardens and raising crops and livestock. Chagossians also lost significant property assets enjoyed communally. These included fishing and other seafood harvesting territories, coconut palms and other flora, beaches and other open space, potable water, and cemeteries. Finally, we introduce a new element to Cernea's discussion of landlessness and lost access to common property assets: environmental damages. Chagossians' land and common property assets have experienced environmental damage since the expulsion, constituting an additional element of their impoverishment. We document this environmental damage in the last section of this chapter.

10.1. Introduction

Cernea's IRR model says of "landlessness," that "Expropriation of land removes the main foundation upon which people's productive systems, commercial activities, and livelihoods are constructed. This is the principle form of decapitalization and pauperization of displaced people, as they lose both natural and [hu]man-made capital."²⁹⁸ The model assumes that most displaced people were previously farmers or otherwise dependent on land for their livelihoods. Unlike many displaced peoples, Chagossians were not primarily farmers or dependent on their own personal land for their livelihoods. The foundation of Chagossians' livelihoods for generations was Chagossians' employment on the coconut plantations in Chagos: Contrary to many displaced peoples, the loss of that employment—not their land—was then the main form of their pauperization. (We documented this pauperization and the loss of employment in Chapter 7, "Joblessness.") Still, losing land has been a significant dimension of impoverishment. A significant part of this impoverishment comes from the lost monetary value of Chagossians' land for which they were never compensated (which we are estimating in a separate report to be released later in 2005).

The IRR model also recognizes that for some peoples, losing access to common property assets can be as significant as losing land. Losing assets like pastures, forests, bodies of water, burial grounds, and quarries, among others, "results in significant deterioration in income and livelihood levels."²⁹⁹ Chagossians have experienced such a deterioration in income and livelihood as a result of losing their access to common property assets, like the sea and flora, as well as their personal land. We summarize the impoverishment from landlessness and lost access common property as follows:

- The loss of personal and household land, estimated at 700 square meters for each household living in Chagos;
- The lost, uncompensated monetary value of that land (for which we will provide an estimate in a separate forthcoming report);
- Lost access to common property assets including fishing and other seafood harvesting territories, coconut palms and other flora, beaches and other open space, potable water, and cemeteries;
- Additional injuries to Chagossians' diets, health, incomes, sociocultural life, and psychological well being as a result of their landlessness and common property asset losses;
- Lost autonomy and control over their lives as a cumulative result of the above injuries;
- Environmental damage to Chagossians' land and common property assets as a result of the construction and ongoing operation of the major U.S. air and naval base at Diego Garcia.

10.2. Land in Chagos and Landlessness

10.2.1. *Land Losses and their Economic Value*

Based on our survey of Chagossians, our qualitative and informal interviews, and analysis of photographs and documentary evidence, we estimate that Chagossian households possessed an average 700 square meters of land in Chagos.³⁰⁰ The tradition of laborers possessing land for gardens, crops, and livestock had roots in slavery and the earliest years of habitation in the islands. Often Chagossian families occupied the same land for decades and generations.

When Chagossians were displaced from Chagos, they were not compensated for the value of this land. The loss of this land and its economic value represents a discrete and measurable injury. We are completing an estimate of the value of this lost land based on the value of comparable land. We will release a report detailing these findings later in 2005.

10.2.2. Food and Income Losses

The loss of land created additional harms beyond the economic value of the land. Garden and crop produce and livestock were important food sources with which Chagossians supplemented the rations that formed part of their work compensation. From our survey of Chagossians, we found that 72.7 percent of those born in Chagos kept gardens, growing and eating crops including tomatoes, squash, carrots, chili peppers, eggplant, cabbage, lettuce, citrus and other fruit. The same percentage reported raising livestock, usually for consumption and sale, including cattle, pigs, chickens, ducks, sheep, and goats.

Produce and livestock were also an important source of supplemental income and capital for some Chagossians. Chagossians producing more than their families consumed had opportunities to sell produce and livestock to the company running the plantations. Others sold, bartered, or gifted their production to others on the islands. Although it is difficult to estimate the economic value of this loss, it is not insignificant.

10.2.3. Psychological Damage

Chagossians also used their lands for gardens. The loss of these gardens has meant psychological harm. Like gardeners around the world, gardeners in Chagos derived significant aesthetic and psychological value from raising vegetables, fruit, and flowers. Despite difficult soil conditions on some of the islands, many Chagossians carefully tended their gardens, taking pride in the beauty of their work and its contribution to their homes. At least one island manager in Chagos encouraged this sort of care by sponsoring a flower planting competition. Mauritian governor Robert Scott remarked on the tradition on visiting the capitol of Peros Banhos in 1961: “The people of Île du Coin were exceptionally proud of their homes. The gardens usually

contained an arrangement of flower-beds and a vegetable patch, almost always planted with pumpkins and loofahs trained over rough trellis-work, with a few tomato plants and some greens.”³⁰¹

One can see the continuation of this tradition among many Chagossians today, although in a much more limited manner. Even among some of the poorest Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles, living under the most decrepit housing conditions, one often finds a fastidiously kept and unusually varied garden of plants and flowers, growing in small beds and in every manner of container from old coffee and paint cans to the bottoms of plastic soda bottles to tiny yogurt cups. This gardening represents a continuation of a tradition from Chagos but also, in its divergence from Chagossians’ larger gardening and crop rearing there, an indication and reminder of the psychological blow dealt by losing their gardens in Chagos.

10.3. Lost Access to Common Property Assets

In addition to their gardens and other small plots of land, Chagossians had access to a wide variety of resources around the islands that formed important elements of their lives. The loss of these assets produced additional injuries to many Chagossians’ diets, to their health, to their incomes, and to their psychological well-being. Two common property assets were particularly significant in Chagossians’ lives: the ocean and lagoon waters around the islands and the coconut palm. Other resources included additional trees and flora growing on the islands, beaches and open space for play and social activities, and freely available water from wells and rain-collecting cisterns.

10.3.1. Food Losses

We will detail the full extent of Chagossians' food losses in Chapter 11, "Food Insecurity and Malnutrition." Here we provide an overview of these losses to show how food resources have been an important common property asset lost as a result of the displacement.

The waters of Chagos provided what by all accounts was an "abondans" [abundance] of seafood (commercial fishing companies still fish the waters under agreement with the BIOT). Fish and other seafood was a widely and freely available food resource upon which Chagossians could depend as a basic (and healthy) part of their diet. Chagossians could also sell fish to the plantation company (the going price in the 1960's was between 2 and 7 Mauritian cents per kilo, attesting to its abundance) or share their catch with neighbors.

Coconuts, which Chagossians were also able to harvest as freely as they wished, played an equally significant role in Chagossians' lives. Along with seafood, the coconut formed the foundation of Chagossians' cuisine. Other trees on the islands provided additional freely available fruit, including papaya, breadfruit, citrus, and mango, further supplementing Chagossians' diets.

Food in Mauritius and Seychelles is by contrast a costly expense of daily life. As we will detail below in Chapter 11, "Food Insecurity and Malnutrition," having enough to eat is now, for many, often in doubt. Many Chagossians have gone hungry since the displacement and many still go hungry when food and money run low. The quality and nutritional value of the food that Chagossians now consume has, in almost all cases, decreased significantly from their former protein-rich, fish-based diet.

In Mauritius and Seychelles, without their land and its produce and their access to common property assets, Chagossians have for the first time had to buy almost all their food.

Only in rare instances do Chagossians have the land and the financial means to raise crops or animals for subsistence or commerce as many once did in Chagos. (Some keep small numbers of chickens, primarily for rare household consumption). In Chagos no matter how much money one had, one always had food because of their food rations and access to Chagos's free food resources. Since the displacement, Chagossians have lost the assurance that they will always have enough food to eat. For the first time, Chagossians have had to spend money on food. They have had to ensure the availability of sufficient income to prevent the onset of hunger.

This represents a profound change in Chagossians' lives far beyond its economic impact. Satinder Ragobur, a local advisor for our research from the University of Mauritius, explained how based on her own interviews with Chagossians and coming from a rural background in India, she understands the impact of this change in suddenly having to pay for one's food. When you grow your own food, she said, you have a mentality whereby, "one doesn't spend money frivolously.... The food is grown. You're producers of the food. And that's an asset.... To produce it, you have control over it." Losing this control, Ragobur added, "I think they would have some sense of bewilderment." And this bewilderment, she suggested, may have led to "maladaptive adaptations," like alcoholism, that one sees among Chagossians. One can see how losing the produce of their land and control over their diets has meant a wider loss of autonomy and a profound unsettling and upsetting of Chagossians' world at a psychological level.

The abundance of food in Chagos also contributed to what many Chagossians describe as an *espri partazé* [spirit of sharing] in the islands, where Chagossians would regularly share extra food with neighbors and kin. Given the expense of food in Mauritius and Seychelles, many Chagossians are saddened by the loss of this *espri*. This constitutes another injury as a result of

lost common property. (We will discuss the loss of this *espri partazé* in more detail in Chapter 13, “Sociocultural Fragmentation.”)

10.3.2. Other Losses

Other common property resources have also been lost. In Chagos, water for cooking and drinking was free from wells and cisterns. In Mauritius, Chagossians pay for their water based on consumption. Many live in areas where water is unavailable for significant parts of each day.

In Chagos, children and adults were free to play and roam on pristine sandy beaches, in open recreation spaces and village greens, and amidst coconut palms and other groves of trees. In the slums of Mauritius, where most Chagossians live, open space exists only in the form of a few rocky soccer fields and scattered basketball courts. Where there is access to public beaches and the water, one finds pollution and some of the dirtiest waters in Mauritius (detailed in Chapter 9, “Homelessness”).

In Chagos, Chagossians also had access to the graves of their ancestors in cemeteries dating to at least 1811.³⁰² In exile, Chagossians have lost access to these cemeteries. They cannot visit their ancestors’ graves or pay homage to them by leaving flowers at the graves in accordance with Chagossian traditions. Chagossians cannot clean and care for the cemeteries as they would like. (We will discuss losing access to ancestors’ graves in more detail in Chapter 13, “Social Fragmentation.”)

The significance of losing access to these common property assets extends beyond the dietary, the monetary, the recreational, and the spiritual. With so much of society organized around the coconut plantations and the production of copra, the free availability of coconuts influenced many parts of life in Chagos. In Chagos Kreol, Walker explains, there is an

“extensive vocabulary pertaining to the coconut palm and the copra industry, reflecting the importance of the coconut to the islanders in daily life.”³⁰³ As already discussed, the coconut played an important role in Chagossian cuisine, where coconut milk and flesh once featured prominently. Parts of the coconut palm were similarly important to the production of Chagossians’ material culture, including brooms, musical instruments, rope, cooking utensils, and other tools, and in house construction.³⁰⁴ Some of these skills and traditions remain among a small number of Chagossians, but for the most part, they have been lost in Mauritius and Seychelles. The tools of copra production remain part of the emblem of the CRG, the main group representing Chagossians. The almost complete absence of the coconut from Chagossians’ lives except in this symbolic sense and in consumption during special events points to an additional injury to Chagossians’ identity as a people.

In sum, as a result of losing access to their land and to multiple common property assets, Chagossians have lost a significant degree of autonomy and control over their lives. With the ability to control land for gardens, crops, and animals, the availability of seafood, coconuts, water, other food and recreational resources, and access to their ancestors’ graves, Chagossians could expect and ensure for themselves a healthy and plentiful diet, supplemental income, the ability to produce tools and household items, and the satisfaction of many of their aesthetic, recreational, and spiritual needs. The expulsion took these resources from Chagossians and left Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles without the benefit of important components of their livelihoods and their society. Over time, as we will document in the next section, some Chagossians purchased or received small plots of land as a result of receiving compensation from the British and Mauritian governments. For most however, this has only made their housing relatively more secure. Rarely have Chagossians had the resources to acquire land that would

begin to replace their gardens, crop and livestock land, and the common property assets they were forced to leave in Chagos.

10.4. Environmental Damages to Land and Common Property Assets

Since Chagossians' expulsion, their land and common property assets in Diego Garcia and possibly in Peros Banhos and Salomon have experienced environmental damage as a result of the military base at Diego Garcia and other use of the islands. Environmental damage in Chagos is difficult to assess or document given the limited access to the islands afforded non-military personnel. We have not visited the islands and none of the authors has expertise in environmental science. The report therefore relies in this section on the very limited research available documenting environmental conditions in the archipelago and scattered journalistic and other reports about the environment and operation of the base. Unlike many other displaced peoples who will never be able to return to their lands, which are now flooded by rivers or dedicated entirely to other uses, environmental damage is particularly significant to Chagossians, who continue to advocate for their right to return to Diego Garcia and the rest of Chagos.

10.4.1. The Base at Diego Garcia

The U.S. military facility at Diego Garcia is a naval and air base that serves as a major "forward operating location" for U.S. forces operating from the Indian Ocean. The U.S. military has spent hundreds of millions of dollars and likely more than €1 billion in base construction on the island. The air facility features a runway, extending into Diego Garcia's lagoon, of around 3.7 kilometers with a parallel taxiway. The airfield hosts a range of aircraft including B-1, B-2, and B-52 bombers, other attack aircraft, and reconnaissance, cargo, and in-air refueling planes.

(Although the United States has never confirmed or denied the presence of nuclear weapons on the island, their presence has long been assumed given the hosting of nuclear-weapons-capable bombers.)

The lagoon at Diego Garcia provides a dredged anchorage for a 6-ship aircraft carrier taskforce and up to 30 total vessels including the largest navy surface ships and nuclear powered and other submarines. The lagoon also hosts as many as 17 skyscraper-sized cargo ships filled with tanks, weaponry, ammunition, fuel, water, and other equipment. The ships are anchored in the lagoon, “pre-positioned” in navy parlance, waiting for war-time deployment with enough supplies to equip tens of thousands of U.S. troops for 30 days.

The base has storage facilities for at least 650,000 barrels of petroleum, oil, and lubricants,³⁰⁵ munitions and weapons storage facilities, and hangars for the repair and servicing of aircraft. In addition, there are naval surveillance, cryptographic, and communications facilities, deep-space surveillance instruments, and other space program and intelligence gathering equipment.

The base is home to around 3,500 (and what has been as many as almost 6,000)³⁰⁶ military and civilian contractor personnel. Facilities constructed to house and support these personnel include bars and clubs, fast-food restaurants, sporting facilities, shops, banks, a library, a chapel, a golf course, a yacht club, and a movie theater, among others. At least eight diesel power plants provide electricity to the base.³⁰⁷

10.4.2. Damage from Base Construction

Construction of the base has transformed the northwest arm of the island. Prior to construction of the base, the area was home to two villages, Norwa and Pointe Marianne, surrounded by the

coconut plantation's groves. Since 1971, the military has built a gradually expanding airfield, which covers a large stretch of the northwestern arm of the island and extends into the lagoon (see Map 3 of Diego Garcia at front). The base is centered on an area nearby known as "Downtown." Here the military has built most of the facilities described above. This has meant the paving of roads, the construction of multi-story barracks for thousands of military and civilian personnel, and the installation of support facilities for the personnel. The construction of the airfield and other facilities resulted in the partial or complete destruction of both the Norwa and Pointe Marianne villages and the transformation of the surrounding environment.

The most obvious environmental damage that has affected Chagossians' common property assets has been the dredging of Diego Garcia's lagoon and ocean reef to create the base's deep-water anchorage and to provide coral for use in industrial construction on the base. There have been at least four separate dredging operations since construction began on the base in 1971. Dredging operations have included the use of explosives in the lagoon. (See Map 3 at front.)

More extensive dredging occurred soon thereafter to create a channel and turning basin capable of accommodating aircraft carriers and submarines. A private contractor completed the project by blasting coral heads and dredging in Diego Garcia's lagoon. According to Bandjunis, the contractor extracted 2.5 million cubic yards of coral material from the lagoon, creating a 3.5-mile-long, 750-foot-wide channel and a 2,750-foot-by-4,800-foot turning basin.

Additional dredging took place with construction funds appropriated between 1975 and 1978. Again the Navy dredged the lagoon to create an anchorage for a six-ship carrier task force and a separate "explosive anchorage" for the ship-to-ship transfer of munitions and weapons.³⁰⁸

Additional dredging, with at least one contract worth \$17.9 million, raised the elevation of the island during a large construction spurt in the early 1980s.³⁰⁹

The total impact of the explosions and the dredging on Diego Garcia's coral reefs, lagoon, fish and other marine life, and waters is unclear. The U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office claims that "Although dredging occurred within the lagoon of Diego Garcia, coral continues to thrive in this area."³¹⁰

10.4.3. Damage from Base Accidents

Little information is known about environmental damage caused by base operations. Several published reports by the U.S. Geological Survey however describe the impact of an underground jet fuel (JP-5) pipeline leak that was discovered near the base's airfield in 1991. The leak contaminated part of the drinking water aquifer and endangered nearby water production wells. Extensive surveying and chemical sampling in 1993 and 1994 showed that, "despite the recovery of more than 134,000 gallons" of jet fuel, "substantial fuel remained in the aquifer as a free-phase layer on the water table." Hydrocarbons were discovered dissolved in the ground water and as vapor in unsaturated ground, and benzene concentrations had increased in the ground water and soil vapor. Although surveying found that hydrocarbons were being degraded by naturally-occurring bacteria in the aquifer, "there was no evidence for the degradation of benzene." Other findings showed that, "Ground water samples were warm and had low concentrations of oxygen and high concentrations of hydrogen sulfide relative to atmospheric equilibrium." Naturally-occurring underground gas "had low concentrations of oxygen," while "samples near contaminated areas had high levels of methane."³¹¹

Accidents involving military hardware are a constant danger on bases, with potentially harmful impacts on the surrounding environment. One accident in 2001 was reported at Diego Garcia when, during warfare in Afghanistan and the bombing of the Tora Bora cave complex, a B-1 bomber loaded with bombs crashed after takeoff from Diego Garcia. The crew ejected about 100 kilometers north of Diego Garcia, still within the archipelago, in the Great Chagos Bank. The pilotless plane crashed into the ocean. According to a press report, “The B-1 lies at the bottom of the Indian Ocean, unlikely to be raised.” If so, the B-1 is likely in the waters of the archipelago along with its payload of bombs. B-1 bombers, about two-thirds the size of Boeing 747 jumbo jets, can carry more than 80 500-pound bombs. The precise environmental impact of the crash is unclear but could be significant in the area of the crash site.³¹²

10.4.4. Damage from Regular Base Operations

Environmental damage from regular base operations is difficult to measure in the absence of military reporting or independent analysis. Although the BIOT administration has instituted environmental protections in Chagos and the U.S. military has made efforts to lessen its environmental impact, there is evidence that many other U.S. military bases have caused widespread environmental damage. Base expert Catherine Lutz explains that bases are often, “solvent-soaked and ordinance-packed disaster sites that one administrator tried to cost-effectively rename ‘national sacrifice zones.’”³¹³ Lutz continues, “The Pentagon itself has counted hazardous waste problems, some of catastrophic proportions, at twenty thousand sites now or once owned by the Defense Department.”³¹³ Other than the incidents previously cited and in the absence of a comprehensive environmental assessment, there is no evidence to substantiate this kind of environmental damage. Environmental damage at other bases and the nature of military

activities and facilities suggest however that widespread environmental damage may have occurred with significant impact on Chagossians' land and common property assets.

The increase in the population size of Diego Garcia after construction of the base is one clear source of possible environmental strain to the island. Since the removals and the base's construction, Diego Garcia's population has grown to more than twice and, at times, five times the size of the maximum population to inhabit the entire atoll prior to construction of the base. In that time, the base population has been concentrated in one small part (the northwest) of the island. Use of the island has shifted from the harvesting of coconuts and other replenishable natural resources to the activities of a major U.S. air and naval base involving billions of dollars in military hardware and equipment. The increased population size, increased population density, and increased intensity of land use may have caused environmental strain or damage. Environmental damage may have been caused by the regular hazards of base operations, including base refuse and wastewater disposal, hazardous and medical waste disposal, industrial laundry impacts, power plant emissions, aircraft emissions, ground vehicle emissions, naval vessel emissions, and pesticide use. Environmental damage may also have been caused by the storage and use of hundreds of thousands of gallons of military petroleum products and the storage of munitions and other weaponry.

10.4.5. Nuclear Weapons

The U.S. Government has never confirmed or denied the presence of nuclear weapons at Diego Garcia. Given the military operations of the base and the extremely limited access granted non-military personnel, many have assumed or taken for granted their presence.³¹⁴ Since the 1980s, for example, the island has been a base for long-range B-52 bombers. During the Cold War, B-

52s had an important role in the U.S. nuclear attack arsenal, along with intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched missiles. There are two “nuclear-cleared berths” in the lagoon.³¹⁵ The presence of nuclear-powered and nuclear-missile-bearing submarines has been reported.³¹⁶

10.4.6. Fisheries and Other Impact on the Waters of Chagos

There are over 14,000-square kilometers of waters in Chagos. These include large fishing grounds that have been exploited by commercial fishing vessels under agreement with U.K. authorities. According to one source, the U.K. Government received £800,892 (€1,036,123.56 in 2004 euros) of revenue from fishing licenses in 2001/2002.³¹⁷ Again, given the lack of research available, it is unclear if commercial fishing has reduced the stock of marine life in the archipelago or caused other environmental damage.

Naval traffic in the lagoon of Diego Garcia has been substantial. The anchorage can host as many as 30 ships. There have been as many as 17 “pre-positioned” weapons-filled cargo ships anchored in the lagoon. Before the start of the 2003 war in Iraq, these cargo ships left Diego Garcia for the Persian Gulf. The environmental impact of these uses on the lagoon and its waters, in addition to that from dredging and the use of explosives, is unclear.

10.4.7. Environmental Impact in Peros Banhos and Salomon Islands

To date, other than aircraft overflights, there has been no reported military use of any islands in the archipelago other than Diego Garcia. Yachts sailing in the Indian Ocean frequently visit islands other than Diego Garcia including those in the Peros Banhos and Salomon groups. Tens of yachts may visit at any one time. British authorities have allowed people on the yachts to

explore the islands, including in former Chagossian villages. British authorities have instituted environmental regulations to protect the islands and have installed refuse bins and signs reminding visitors to protect the environment. Photographs taken on the islands since the removals show refuse, graffiti, and other damage left by visitors. Once again, in the absence of research or other information, it is impossible to assess any environmental damage to the other islands by these visiting yachts.

10.4.8. Conclusion

Detailing environmental damage in Chagos is not merely an academic exercise. Chagossians are demanding the right to return to Chagos to recreate their old societies. Any damage to the environment constitutes part of their impoverishment in the harm inflicted on Chagossians' land and common property assets, to which they might one day return. Even in exile, environmental damage to Diego Garcia also inflicts a subtle psychological injury on Chagossians in their knowledge that their homeland and many of their former villages have been paved over and transformed into an active military base.

11. FOOD INSECURITY AND MALNUTRITION

In Chagos, Chagossians enjoyed secure access to significant food resources. These resources included the food staples Chagossians received as part of their salaries, their own food production, and their access to the natural food resources of Chagos (detailed in Chapter 5, “Pre-Expulsion Life in Chagos” and also discussed in Chapter 7, “Joblessness,” and Chapter 10, “Landlessness and Lost Common Property”). As a result of the expulsion, Chagossians lost access to these food resources and have since experienced food insecurity and malnutrition.

The IRR model explains that “Forced uprooting increases the risk that people will fall into temporary or chronic undernourishment, defined as calorie-protein intake levels below the minimum necessary for normal growth and work.” Because expulsion often disrupts crop availability, food production, and income, hunger and undernourishment can become long-term effects of involuntary displacement.³¹⁸

Given the resources of the study, we have been unable to measure Chagossians’ levels of nourishment by caloric intake, either currently or retrospectively, as defined by the IRR model. Nonetheless, there is significant evidence that Chagossians have experienced food insecurity, including bouts of hunger and malnutrition, as a result of a decrease in their access to food resources and their low incomes. The impoverishment of food insecurity and malnutrition thus includes:

- Food shortages and malnutrition in Chagos during the expulsion process;
- Particularly acute food insecurity immediately after relocation;
- Lost access to freely available food resources constituting large parts of dietary intake in Chagos;
- Continuing bouts of hunger and undernourishment as a result of low incomes and limited access to food resources.

- Significantly altered dietary intake from one in Chagos based around locally-caught fish and other seafood, coconuts, other fresh fruit and vegetables, and rations of basic staples like rice, to one after the expulsion generally based around rice and bread products, with low amounts of fresh fish, seafood, fruit, and vegetables.

11.1. Dietary Intake and Food Access in Chagos

Chagossians' diet in Chagos was based around fresh, locally caught fish and other seafood, coconuts and other locally grown fruits and vegetables, meat from locally raised livestock animals, and salaried allotments of imported rice and other staple products. As explained previously, Chagossians had free, easy access to plentiful fishing and seafood harvesting waters. Fish and seafood formed the foundation of their diet as Chagossians harvested and consumed red snapper, tuna, and other fish, lobster, crab, crayfish, prawn, octopus, sea cucumber, and turtle.

The waters of Chagos provided what Chagossians say was an “abondans” [abundance] of seafood. Others verify these accounts; commercial fishing companies still fish the bountiful waters under agreement with the BIOT. An older woman Marie Ange Elysee, who lived most of her life on Diego Garcia before being deported to Peros Banhos and then Mauritius, explained that in Diego, fishing was so easy one could start boiling rice for dinner and in the time it took to cook the rice, one could catch, clean, and prepare a fish. Another former resident of Diego Garcia Joseph Andasamy described how simple it was to fish: all you had to do was put a short line with a hook in the water and in a matter of minutes you would catch a fish. ‘In Diego Garcia,’ he said, ‘you had fresh fish, fresh food, and it was all free. In Mauritius,’ Andasamy said, ‘Chagossians only get frozen fish,’ which they must buy.

While reports about the ease of fishing have likely been exaggerated somewhat with time, the underlying point is that fish and other seafood were an abundant and free food resource upon

which Chagossians could depend as a basic and healthy part of their diet. Chagossians could also sell fish to the plantation company or share their catch with neighbors.

Coconuts, which Chagossians were generally able to harvest as freely as they wished, played an equally significant role in Chagossians' diet. Along with seafood, the coconut formed the foundation of Chagossians' cuisine. Typical dishes include *seraz koko pwason* and *seraz koko pule*, coconut-based curries of fish and chicken respectively. Chagossians' own distinct grilled flatbread *roti* is distinguished by the substitution of coconut milk for water and oil in dough made in Mauritius and elsewhere of flour, water, oil, and salt (see photographs at Figures 16-17 at front).

Other trees provided freely available fruit like papaya, breadfruit, citrus, and mango. Chagossians supplemented these resources with vegetables and fruit grown in their gardens and with the meat and eggs from livestock raised on their lands. As explained previously, Chagossians received food rations as part of their salaries, which provided another dietary foundation. The types and quantities of rations varied over time but consisted primarily of a rice, maize (corn), or wheat flour staple, coconut oil, salt, lentils, and fish. In 1969, rations included 10 ½ lbs. of rice, 500 grams of coconut oil, 125 grams of salt, at least MRs2 of fish, and at times lentils, wine, vegetables, and pork.³¹⁹

With these available resources, Chagossians were never concerned about having enough to eat or the availability of food. Food in Chagos was, as Chagossians explain today, functionally "free" in the sense that it consisted of salaried rations and any vegetables, fruit, meat, eggs, and seafood that one chose to harvest, gather, raise, or catch. Some food products were available for purchase in the company stores, but one could maintain a varied diet never having to buy food.

11.2. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition during the Expulsion

Changes to many Chagossians' diets appear to have started prior to the expulsion. At several points during the expulsion process food supplies ran low. This led to diminished rations, a dietary overreliance on fish and coconut, difficulties in feeding infants, and signs of malnutrition.

As described in Chapter 6, "Traumatic Expulsion," conditions on the islands declined after the creation of the BIOT in 1965. Crucial to food availability, beginning in 1965, Moulinie & Co. began importing three-month stocks of food with each boat arriving in Chagos rather than the six-month stocks delivered previously.³²⁰ With boats only arriving, on average, once every three months, food supplies were left lower than normal. Shortages developed at least by 1968 and according to some Chagossians as early as 1965, with cuts in rations and other food availability.

In 1971, the *M.V. Nordvær* suffered engine troubles *en route* to Diego Garcia to remove some of the last inhabitants there and deliver a food shipment. Food stocks ran so low that BIOT officials began contemplating emergency assistance.³²¹ Eventually the U.S. Navy Seabee contingent provided some food and later medical supplies.³²²

Just as copra production declined after the creation of the BIOT, it is likely that local fruit and vegetable production declined significantly as a result of the removals, the general upheaval in society, and the uncertainty felt by all about future life in Chagos. Local food production was certainly interrupted for those removed from Diego Garcia to Peros Banhos and Salomon. A British Government document planning for the removals explains that "Vegetables growing in their garden plots which form a basic part of their diet will have to be left and it will be necessary for the workers to re-plant. They will also have to purchase more food from the Company stores during the interregnum before the new planting bears a crop."³²³ In addition to the loss of their

crops in Diego Garcia, Chagossians lost their chickens because of an outbreak of Newcastle's Disease. Some Chagossians moving from Diego Garcia to Peros Banhos and Salomon received MRs500 payments for food and other expenses they incurred during this removal.

The neglect of the islands by the BIOT and Moulinie & Co. continued and conditions worsened in 1972 and 1973. As explained in prior chapters, food supplies declined, Chagossians' diet became increasingly dependent on fish and coconuts, and women began feeding children a mixture of coconut milk and sugar. In April and May 1973, on Peros Banhos, food supplies were nearly exhausted before the last Chagossians were removed to Mauritius and Seychelles.³²⁴

One of the last to leave Salomon and then Peros Banhos, Marie Claudine Louis, recounted how Chagossians were eating too much fish in the last years. When she was living in Salomon, Mrs. Louis said, a man who said he was a doctor visited the island on his yacht. The man warned her and others that they were showing signs of eating too much fish. After being removed to Peros Banhos, she explained, they lacked milk, salt, and sugar, not to mention nurses and teachers. "*Tu fini,*" she said. Everything was finished.

It is impossible to gauge precisely the severity of these conditions in the final years before the last removals, but it is clear that food supplies ran low, that the variety of available food decreased, and that Chagossians experienced periods of malnutrition. The short and long-term health effects that might have resulted from this undernourishment and malnutrition are difficult to quantify, either for adults like Mrs. Louis or for children. We will explore the potential effects, including on mortality, in the following chapter, "Increased Morbidity and Mortality."

11.3. Food Insecurity and Malnutrition after the Expulsion

Food insecurity continued after Chagossians arrived in Mauritius and Seychelles. Food was no longer free for Chagossians and became a significant living expense. With the expulsion, Chagossians lost their easy access to fishing grounds and its seafood that formed an important part of their diet. They lost their free access to collect the coconuts that formed another important part of their diet. They lost their land on which many grew crops and raised livestock, providing fruits, vegetables, and meat for their meals. And because they lost their jobs, they lost the rations that formed an important part of their salaries and guaranteed them basic food staples.

In Mauritius and Seychelles, fishing was much more difficult, time consuming, and costly than in Chagos, generally requiring a small outboard motor boat and fishing supplies. The waters around the islands of Mauritius and Seychelles were neither as readily accessible as in Chagos nor are they (especially close to shore) as plentiful in seafood. To enjoy fresh seafood after the expulsion, Chagossians generally had to buy it. Buying fresh fish, especially in Mauritius, soon became a luxury beyond the means of most Chagossians. Most instead relied on small pieces of cheaper dried and salted or frozen fish as regular parts of their diet.

Likewise, where coconuts were a free food resource in Chagos, few had coconut palms on their property or free access to palms in Mauritius or Seychelles. Generally, coconuts had to be purchased from vendors, which accounts for its almost complete disappearance as an ingredient in Chagossians' food.³²⁵

In the slums of Mauritius, other fruit-bearing trees were rare, and, as in Seychelles, they were almost always on private property rather than a freely available community resource. Food in Mauritius and Seychelles thus became with rare exception a costly expense of daily life. For many, having enough to eat was often in doubt.

Food was transformed from a publicly available good into a costly commodity. In this way, Chagossians' difficulties in securing regular employment and incomes (detailed in Chapter 7, "Joblessness") contributed to their food insecurity and undernourishment. Madeley quotes a nun from the Sisters of Mother Theresa who tried to help the Chagossians after their arrival: "They are poorer than the poor of Mauritius. They don't have enough food and some of their children are undernourished."³²⁶

Marie Claudine Louis remembers the early days in Mauritius when she would have to send her children to school with no bread or other food to eat. "I had...many problems," she explained in Kreol. "In the mornings we woke up...and I would need to buy [something], but sometimes we would have nothing."³²⁷ At night, she would cook for her six children. Often, when she was done feeding them, nothing would be left for her to eat. Mrs. Louis would fall asleep hungry.

Lisette Volfrin recalled her early years in Seychelles when her father had trouble finding work and the family was often short on money and food. Most days, she and her siblings would awake with no food to eat. They would leave for school early in the morning to steal mangoes and other fruit that had dropped from their neighbors' trees before anyone was on the street to catch them. Sometimes her siblings were so desperate they ate rotten food. At one point a Seychellois man stole food for her family. She was not proud of having to eat stolen food, but she felt she had little choice. On other occasions, the man took her and her siblings to the forest to collect food together.

In Mauritius, where most of the island is planted with sugar cane and deforested, there were fewer opportunities to collect fruit (although some tell similar stories of collecting mangoes fallen from their neighbors' trees). Most Chagossians, however, still collect and eat one of the

only freely available food products in Mauritius (also consumed in Seychelles): *breds*, or the edible leaves of trees and plants. The leaves include *bred sovaz*, wild leaves, and *bred murum*, called the food of the poor. Most often the leaves are boiled to make a weak, lightly tinted broth.

11.4. Ongoing Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

Many Chagossians have continued to experience food insecurity, including periodic bouts of hunger and malnutrition. Food remains a significant daily expense. With limited incomes, many Chagossians have difficulty feeding their families. As Botte writes from 1980, “One can see that the Ilois Community in Mauritius cannot afford to buy fresh fish, sea tortoise and...coconuts.” On visits to Chagossian households between 2001 and 2004, the lead author often found refrigerators and pantries almost entirely empty. Dræbel’s WHO-funded study of Chagossian health found signs of malnutrition among younger children.³²⁸ Beyond the dietary and health effects of this change, Botte notes how as a result of their decreased access to the foods that formed the basis of their diets in Chagos, “Ilois culinary specialties are forced to disappear.”³²⁹

For many Chagossians, breakfast is usually a piece of bleached-flour French-style bread, perhaps with margarine and a cup of Mauritian-style tea (lightened with powdered milk and heavily sweetened with sugar). When food is left from the previous night’s dinner, Chagossians will sandwich a few tablespoons of curry, lentils, or another dish in bread for breakfast or lunch. In at least one household where the lead author lived, the family awoke on several mornings with no money to buy bread.³³⁰

Rice, bought in huge sacks and tediously sorted by (mostly) women’s hands to remove stones and other foreign objects, is the staple around which most other meals revolve. Mounds of rice are usually topped by a few small pieces of frozen, canned, or salted fish or meat,

prepared as a curry. Pressure-cooked lentils and a *bred* bouillon are often served as sides. On special occasions, families will deep-fry small, frozen pre-made snacks of fish, beef, or greens, known as *gajak*, and popular in Mauritius. Fresh fruit, especially in Mauritius, is generally expensive and a luxury item reserved for special meals and visitors. Ironically compared to their lives in Chagos, in most Chagossian homes in Mauritius and Seychelles, one usually finds posters depicting an array of gleaming fruit. Bowls of plastic fruit often serve as table centerpieces.

These posters and reproductions of fresh fruit are a sign of a significant aspect of Chagossians' food insecurity: Their significantly altered dietary intake from their lives in Chagos. Chagossians' diet in Chagos based around locally caught fish and seafood, fresh fruit and vegetables, and rice has been replaced by a diet revolving around rice and bread products and featuring small amounts of fresh fish, seafood, fruits, and vegetables. Fresh fish and meat in particular are, according to many Chagossians, simply too expensive for most to afford on a regular basis. Most still settle for small pieces of cheaper salted, frozen, or canned fish and frozen or canned meat.

11.5. Diet for Other U.K. Overseas Territories Citizens and Others in Mauritius and Seychelles

We have been unable to locate data on food access and diet for the Overseas Territories and Seychelles but assume their citizens generally enjoy better dietary standards than Chagossians given their significantly higher income levels. Per capita food consumption statistics for Mauritius show fresh vegetables as the largest single element in Mauritians' diets (73.8 kilograms per year), in contrast the paucity of vegetables generally found in Chagossians' diets.

Mauritians also consume an almost equivalent amount of meat, fish, and eggs (70.1 kilograms/year). Wheat flour (70.8 kilograms/year) and rice (51.6 kilograms/year) are also high but seemingly in better balance compared to Chagossians' overreliance on breads and rice.

11.6. Conclusion

Many Chagossians point to the lack of fresh fish as one of the main differences between life in Chagos and life in Mauritius and Seychelles. The widespread disappearance of fresh fish from Chagossians' diets symbolizes for many the dramatic change in food availability and diet experienced by Chagossians as a result of the expulsion. Food was transformed from a secure, almost entirely free part of life into a costly and insecure commodity. As a result of the expulsion and beginning during the expulsion process itself, Chagossians have experienced bouts of hunger and undernourishment. In the following chapter we will explore some of the possible health effects of this undernourishment.

Before doing so though we return to the symbolism of salt fish and frozen fish. Beyond representing the change in Chagossians' diets and access to food resources, salt fish and frozen fish carry with them symbolically a painful reminder of all that was lost in the expulsion. The abundance of fish and seafood in Chagos is so important in Chagossians' sociocultural landscape that salt fish and frozen fish have become metaphors, synecdoches for the expulsion itself.

12. INCREASED MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY

Prior to their expulsion, Chagossians enjoyed relatively good health. As a result of the expulsion, Chagossians' health has been damaged significantly, increasing their morbidity and, most likely, their mortality. Some of the damage to Chagossians' health occurred during the expulsion process. Other damage has been long-term harm experienced in exile. The IRR model predicts that "expulsion threatens to cause serious declines in health levels," with "empirical research show[ing] that displaced people experience higher levels of exposure and vulnerability to illness and severe disease than they did prior to expulsion." In addition to a general deterioration of health, displaced people are likely to suffer from "expulsion-induced social stress and psychological trauma." They are also, the model reports, vulnerable to water-born diseases, related to unsafe water supplies, and diseases of poor hygiene. The IRR model finds that water and hygiene-related diseases particularly impact infants, children, and the elderly, and that mental health effects vary considerably by age, gender, and marital and occupational status.³³¹

Chagossians' health experience after the expulsions corresponds closely with the IRR model's findings and predictions. Chagossians have suffered declining health, with elevated incidence of several illnesses and widespread evidence of increased social stress and trauma. Chagossians' health injuries are some of the hardest to document in the absence of a detailed survey of health and as prior research has focused little on health conditions. This report benefits from and draws on the findings of a recent WHO-funded report of Chagossian health.³³² In this chapter, we combine this data with the findings of our own ethnographic and interview-based research. The impoverishment of increased morbidity and mortality can be summarized as follows:

- Declining health in Chagos after creation of the BIOT in 1965, including the trauma and stress of the removals;
- Deaths by suicide, miscarriage, disease, and other causes during or shortly after the removals from Chagos;
- Conditions conducive to ill-health after the expulsion, including deterioration of diet, environmental and work conditions, economic conditions, social, cultural, and psychological well-being, and perceptions of receiving second-class health care;
- Elevated levels in exile of respiratory diseases, anemia, chronic colds, fevers, and some transmissible diseases like Tuberculosis, as well as problems with cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension, work accidents, and youth alcohol and tobacco abuse, as documented by a recent WHO-funded study;
- Around 85 percent of survey respondents 16 and older reporting the need for more health care, providing new evidence of their limited access to health care;
- 20 percent and likely even higher levels of substance abuse for those 16 and older;
- Vulnerability to and incidences of domestic violence and sexual assault against women;
- Limited access to health care;
- Feelings of profound loss and sadness from the exile suggesting complex connections between the expulsion and damaged health.

12.1. Health in Chagos

By most accounts, Chagossians enjoyed relatively good health prior to the expulsion, compared to people in Mauritius, Seychelles, and elsewhere in the western Indian Ocean. In 1954, for example, Governor of Mauritius Robert Scott found that “health conditions, relatively, are not unsatisfactory as compared with Mauritius.”³³³ A 2000 U.K. Foreign & Commonwealth Office study of health in Chagos reports that, “In general, visitors found that the health of labourers in Chagos was if anything somewhat better than in Mauritius.”³³⁴

One of the most extensive surveys of conditions in Chagos was conducted in 1953 by Mauritian Public Assistance Commissioner and Social Welfare Adviser Mary Darlow. In her 71-page report, Darlow generally found health and health care services to be more than adequate. Darlow found premature deaths to be, “by no means a serious problem.”³³⁵ Anemia was common, but she reports that it was being treated and did not believe it linked to dietary conditions.³³⁶ Childbirth was a risk and some children’s, particularly infant, health was a problem. As Darlow put it, “Many of the children are fine specimens, but some are not.”³³⁷ She continues, “From the medical point of view, all that can be done short of the provision of a doctor is done.” Darlow did not recommend installing a doctor in the islands, finding that inhabitants were receiving good care from the hospitals. Her only suggestion was to consider basing a seaplane in Chagos for emergency evacuations.³³⁸

In 1969, after the expulsion had begun, BIOT Administrator JOHN Todd found the “general health” of inhabitants in Chagos to be “good,” with some exceptions in Peros Banhos, which, he said, “seem[] to have improved.”³³⁹ A survey of the vital statistics for Chagos from the creation of the BIOT to the last removals agrees that, “the vital statistics were probably no worse than those of the other islands in the Indian Ocean.”³⁴⁰

12.2. Health Effects during the Expulsion

Negative health effects from the expulsion process likely began for many Chagossians long before the forced removals. As the previous chapter demonstrates, food insecurity increased after the creation of the BIOT, leading to food shortages and probable undernourishment, with unclear health impacts. Beginning around 1967, hospital staff began departing from the islands without replacement. Eventually all the hospitals in Chagos were closed. Again, it is difficult to

measure the effect of these decreased medical services on Chagossian health, but they likely contributed to worsening health conditions.

12.2.1. Some Findings of Increased Infant and Other Mortality

One study of health conditions in Chagos, from the creation of the BIOT through the final removals, by a former Medical Officer of Health for Seychelles suggests that “the combination of malnutrition and unhygienic conditions produced a situation where large numbers of people died from causes which were amenable to simple preventative measures.” According to the study, the main causes of death were enteritis, diarrhoea, and vomiting; anaemia; and debility and merasmus. At the same the study allows that “vital statistics were probably no worse than those of the other islands in the Indian Ocean.”³⁴¹

Our own analysis of trends in death rates during the expulsion process from vital statistics for Chagos is ambiguous in varying by island group (see Table 3 below). One should also keep in mind the limited availability and questionable reliability and accuracy of the statistics. Among the years for which reliable data is available, yearly infant mortality rates at Peros Banhos and Salomon during the BIOT years (1965-1973) prove to be several of the highest on record since World War II. Birth and death certificates show that in Peros Banhos, four of eight children born in 1970 died within a year of birth. For 1972, 5 of 17 infants died as infants. In Salomon in 1966, three of eight children died as infants.³⁴²

Examining the most reliable statistics available, one finds longer-term infant mortality rates in Peros Banhos and Salomon rising during the BIOT period from levels found in the 1940s (few statistics are available for the period between 1951 and 1965). In Peros Banhos, during the period 1943-1950, there were 70 infant deaths per thousand births. During a similar eight-year

period, 1966-1973, in Peros Banhos, there were 180 deaths per thousand births. In Salomon (where statistics are less widely available and reliable), the infant mortality rate for 1943-1945 was 80 deaths per thousand (and 134 per thousand for 1943-1950). The rate rose to 192 deaths per thousand during 1966-1968. In Diego Garcia, by contrast, in the years for which data is available and reliable, infant mortality appears to have declined from 111 infant deaths per thousand in 1944-1947, to 48 deaths per thousand in 1966-1969 (cf. also 107 per thousand in 1944-1950).

Table 3: Infant Mortality Rates**PEROS BANHOS**

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Births	15	14	17	16	16	10	13	14	18	11
Infant Deaths	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	3

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973**
Births	3?	11	13	9	15	8	13	17	3
Infant Deaths	?	1	3	2	0	4	0	4	2

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
IMR	200	0	0	125	0	0	0	142.857	55.556	272.727
Weighted IMR*	N/A	0	0	122.449	0	0	0	146.342	60	225

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973**
IMR	?	90.909	230.769	222.222	0	500	0	235.294	666.667
Weighted IMR*	N/A	120	243.243	193.548	0	387.097	0	255.319	260.870

SALOMON ISLANDS

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Births	12	11	13	10	15	12	9	13	12	13
Infant Deaths	1	1	1	2	0	0	3	3	2	2

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973**
Births	2?	8	10	8	3	11	7	6	N/A

Infant Deaths	0?	2	1	2	?	?	?	1?	N/A
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	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
IMR	83.333	90.909	76.923	200	0	0	333.333	230.769	166.667	153.846
Weighted -ed										
IMR*	N/A	88.235	81.081	181.818	0	0	300	257.1429	162.162	157.895

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973**
IMR	0?	250	100	250	?	?	?	166.667?	N/A
Weighted IMR*	N/A	333.333	107.143	230.769	?	?	?	157.895?	N/A

DIEGO GARCIA

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Births	26	25	27	20	17	22	22	17	27	24
Infant Deaths	4	10***	10***	3	1	2	3	2	3	2

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972**	1973**
Births	6?	18	13	15	16	12	6	N/A	N/A
Infant Deaths	0?	0	2	1	0	?	0	N/A	N/A

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
IMR	153.846	400	370.370	150	58.824	90.909	136.364	117.647	111.111	83.333
Weighted IMR*	N/A	394.737	379.747	134.328	55.556	98.361	136.364	107.143	126.761	80

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972**	1973**
IMR	0?	0	153.842	66.667	0	?	0	N/A	N/A
Weighted IMR*	N/A	0	136.364	69.767	0	?	0	N/A	N/A

? Data missing or likely incomplete.

* The “weighted mean” infant mortality rate (IMR) is a more accurate calculation than the “conventional” IMR. The conventional method (infant deaths in a given year divided by births in that same year multiplied by 1,000) often compares births and deaths from different years (e.g., an infant who dies in January at the age of 6 months was actually born in the previous year). The weighted method takes this fact—that a certain percentage of infant deaths in a given year will be from births during the previous year—into account with the equation: (infant deaths in year X) x 1,000 / (1/3 of the births in year X-1) + (2/3 of the births in year X). The most accurate “rigorous” IMR requires using a similar method for actual cohorts of children born in a given year. This data is not available for 1941-1950, and thus, I have not included this calculation. Often the difference between the three methods is insignificant and, generally, the conventional method is considered acceptable.³⁴³

** The population of Peros Banhos was involuntarily displaced and the islands closed to habitation by May 1973. The population of Salomon was involuntarily displaced and the islands closed to habitation in 1972. The population of Diego Garcia was involuntarily displaced and the island closed to habitation, other than for military use, in 1971.

*** The source for these years Dr. Lavoipierre notes, “It is difficult to account for these higher figures, but it is quite possible that during the temporary occupation of the island by the [British] Military in 1942 and 1943, the women paid a good deal of their attention to soldiers and neglected their infants.” This seems to be entirely speculative, and, to now, I have found no information to confirm this assertion.

Sources:

1941-1950: Dr. Lavoipierre, “Report on a Visit to the Chagos Archipelago,” Government of Mauritius, 17 October 1951, 2-4.

1965-1973: Birth and death certificates of the British Indian Ocean Territory, Seychelles National Archives, Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles.

12.2.2. Other Mortality around the Expulsion

Despite the lack of clarity from this mortality data, there is other evidence that the expulsion increased mortality among Chagossians in the form of miscarriages, suicides, and other deaths during and shortly after the removals. According to one report, “one Ilois woman, Marie Louina, died on Diego when she learned she would have to leave her homeland.” As the removals began, Madeley continues, “Most of the Ilois were deeply grieved over what was happening.” In an incident we have been unable to confirm, Madeley writes, “On one sailing, a 28 year old Ilois, Christian Simon committed suicide through despair.”³⁴⁴ Another Chagossian Marie Therese Mein testified in court that she miscarried one day after arriving in Seychelles in 1972.

Even more Chagossians seem to have died shortly after the last removals by suicide and other causes. A 1975 Chagossian petition protesting their treatment to the British Government lists 40 people who died since arriving in Mauritius.³⁴⁵ Madeley cites a survey by an Ilois support group documenting, by 1975, 9 cases of suicide and 26 families that “had died together

in poverty.” Among these deaths, Madeley offers the following examples of mortality taking place during the course of the expulsion:

Elaine and Michele Mouza: mother and child committed suicide.

Leone Rangasamy: born in Peros, drowned herself because she was prevented from going back.

Tarenne Chiatoux: committed suicide, no job, no roof.

Volfrin family: *Daisy Volfrin*: no food for three days, obtained [M]Rs3 (about 20p) and no more as Public Assistance. Died through poverty.

Josue and Maude Baptiste: poverty—no roof, no food, committed suicide.³⁴⁶

A paper by the Chagossian support group Comite Ilois Organisation Fraternelle reports 15 individuals who received psychiatric treatment, 11 suicides, and at least 44 other deaths “because of unhappiness, [] poverty and lack of medical care.”³⁴⁷ The paper explains,

We have come across an impressive number of cases where Ilois have found death after having landed in Mauritius, i.e. from one to 12 months’ stay in Mauritius. The causes mostly are: unhappiness, non-adaptation of Ilois within the social framework of Mauritius, extreme poverty particularly lack of food, house, job. Another cause of this mortality was family dispersion. The main cause of the sufferings of the Ilois was the lack of proper plan to welcome them in Mauritius. There was also no rehabilitation programme for them.³⁴⁸

By mid-1975, according to Madeley, “at least 1 in 40 had died of starvation and disease.”³⁴⁹

Some of the deaths after arriving in Mauritius seem to have been the result of Chagossian vulnerability to illnesses that were either rare or unknown in Chagos. An article in the *Manchester Guardian* cites 28 children as having died of influenza by 1975: “Diego Garcia was remote and disease free [sic], scoured of germs by wind and distance. Of a total of more than 900 who came to Mauritius, 28 of the children died from influenza. Adults and children died of the diphtheria against which Mauritians are automatically vaccinated. And the cultural shock of arriving in the teeming, humid, poorer quarters of Port Louis still takes its toll.”³⁵⁰ Walker

likewise writes, “A number of the deaths were attributable, no doubt, to the susceptibility of the Ilois to diseases common in Mauritius, but rare in the islands, which, in conjunction with conditions of extreme poverty, proved fatal.”³⁵¹

Although some of these reports are difficult to confirm, they seem to indicate increased mortality compared with life in Chagos. Yearly average death figures during the last years in Chagos for individuals born there are 0.75 per year in Diego Garcia, 4.75 per year in Peros Banhos, and 2.33 per year in Salomon.³⁵²

12.2.1. Trauma and Stress

While findings about increased mortality are at times difficult to confirm, there is widespread evidence of trauma and stress experienced during the expulsion. Dating to the earliest literature on involuntary displacement, researchers have shown how displacement causes stress for displaced.³⁵³ Scudder in particular emphasizes the traumatic aspects of displacement. He compares the trauma of expulsion to the death of a family member.³⁵⁴

Trauma for Chagossians began first among those who left Chagos around 1967 and were prevented from returning to their homes. In essence, these Chagossians became refugees in Mauritius instantaneously upon learning that the islands were “closed” and that they were being denied their customary return passage to Chagos. Being stranded this way separated many Chagossians from their natal lands, from family members and friends, and from their homes, property, and personal belongings. It is difficult to capture the psychological and emotional impact of being exiled in this manner; to describe it as a “trauma” is only to begin to describe its effect.

For those remaining in Chagos after 1967, their quality of life decreased progressively as the BIOT and the company managing the islands gradually reduced services to the islands. The quality of health care and dietary intake declined, the schools closed, capital infrastructural improvements were foregone, and morale among inhabitants declined. All of these developments created an increasingly stressful environment for the body and the mind.

This situation appears to have been made worse by the arrival of the U.S. military. As explained in Chapter 6, “Traumatic Expulsion,” the U.S. military presence spawned fears that Chagossians would be bombed or shot if they did not leave the islands. The source or factual basis of these rumors is relatively unimportant in a consideration of health effects. That people believed they might be bombed or shot points to an additional source of stress that Chagossians experienced, as well as the traumatic nature of the expulsion.

The most acute period of stress and trauma for many Chagossians was the process of physical removal from Chagos. This process began when the BIOT administration and its Moulinie & Co. agents informed Chagos’s inhabitants, first at Diego Garcia in January 1971, that they were closing the islands and that everyone would have to leave. Over the course of the next 29 months, Chagossians and other inhabitants were forced to board transport ships and were deposited in Mauritius and Seychelles. Some experienced two or three forced removals: first, with the closure of Diego Garcia in 1971, from Diego Garcia to Peros Banhos or Salomon; second, with the closure of Salomon in 1972, from Salomon to Mauritius, Seychelles, or Peros Banhos; and third, with the closure of Peros Banhos in 1973, from Peros Banhos to Mauritius or Seychelles.

Our history of the expulsion process in Chapter 6 documents further stress and trauma of the expulsion. We summarize the major traumas here:

1. The extermination of Chagossians' pet dogs by rifle fire, poison, and finally by gassing and burning;
2. Forced boarding of transport ships with as little as a sleeping mat and a small box of possessions;
3. Leaving behind in Chagos all other possessions, including homes, land, the graves of ancestors, and other pets and livestock;
4. Overcrowding, rough seas, illness, and unhygienic conditions on the transport ships; We repeat here the testimony of Diego Garcia's last manager about conditions on the last boat from the island:

The boat was very overcrowded. The boat deck was covered with stores, the belongings of the labourers and a lot of labourers were travelling on deck. [BIOT Commissioner] Greatbatch had insisted that the horses be carried back to Mahe and these were on deck with the labourers. The labourers also travelled in the holds. This was not unusual but there were more people than usual in them. The holds also held a lot of copra being taken out of Diego. When the boat finally arrived the conditions were filthy. They had taken four days to travel and many of the women and children were sick. The boat deck was covered in manure, urine and vomit and so was the hold.³⁵⁵

5. Arrival in foreign countries homeless, jobless, and with no resettlement assistance;
6. Initial temporary housing for some in Seychelles in a prison block;
7. Forced removal of some arrivees in Mauritius by Mauritian police when they protested their expulsion;
8. Arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles during times of considerable societal stress, conflict, structural unemployment, and (in Mauritius) ethnic violence.

The effects of the trauma and the stress involved in the expulsion are difficult to measure.

As findings from other displaced groups have shown, however, the trauma and stress of expulsion have lasting psychological and physical effects.³⁵⁶ Recent medical research on stress has likewise increasingly demonstrated the harmful physical health effects of stress.³⁵⁷

12.3. Continued Ill-Health

Chagossians have continued to experience ill health since the expulsion. Living in Mauritius and Seychelles has featured numerous conditions conducive to continued ill health. These conditions, which are the subjects of other chapters of this report, include Chagossians' food insecurity, malnutrition, and dietary deterioration, poor environmental and housing conditions, unemployment and underemployment, low incomes and poverty, social and cultural fragmentation, marginalization and declining psychological well-being.

12.3.1. A Recent Study of Chagossian Health

The best evaluation of Chagossians' health since the expulsion (although only examining Chagossians living in Mauritius) was produced in 1997 with the financial and technical assistance of the WHO. Dræbel's study finds that Chagossians suffer from elevated levels of chronic colds, fevers, respiratory diseases, anemia, and some transmissible diseases like Tuberculosis, as well as problems with cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension, work accidents, and youth alcohol and tobacco abuse.³⁵⁸ Children, the elderly, and women prove to be the most vulnerable segments of the population and the most likely to suffer health problems.³⁵⁹ The study points out that the incidence of chronic disease in Mauritius is one of the highest in the world and that Chagossians' health problems in this respect are similar to those found in the rest of Mauritius and in particular to those found among the poorest sectors of society.³⁶⁰

In addition to these chronic diseases, Dræbel reports that Chagossians suffer from transmissible diseases related to frequently unhealthy living conditions. As predicted by the IRR model, Dræbel finds children in particular suffering from water-borne diseases tied to poor hygiene and contaminated water supplies. These illnesses include infant diarrhea, Hepatitis A,

and intestinal parasites. The study was unsurprised by these findings as it also discovered many Chagossian households with little or no access to running or clean water supplies and toilet facilities.

Dræbel's study also details several other areas of Chagossian ill health: evidence of malnutrition and infected wounds among children and diabetes and cardio-vascular diseases particularly prevalent among the elderly.³⁶¹ Dræbel also describes what researchers found to be a surprisingly large number of Chagossians who had suffered work accidents. Dræbel attributes these accidents to the types of work in which most Chagossian men are engaged: dangerous physical labor with few work protections in the fishing and port industries, as well as daily work on trucks and as manual laborers.³⁶²

12.3.2. Limited Access to Health Care

Whereas Dræbel's WHO-funded study finds that most Chagossian health problems resemble those of Mauritius as a nation, the report concludes that Chagossians do not share the same access to health care services as others in Mauritius. Dræbel attributes this limited access to several factors, including Chagossians' limited knowledge of the health care system, limited confidence and trust in health care providers and the efficacy and quality of treatment, limited ability to pay for treatment, and the direct and indirect costs in money and time necessary to obtain treatment.³⁶³

Our survey tends to confirm Dræbel's findings that Chagossians have limited access to health care. In a series of questions asked about social services received and needed (education, job search, training, psychological, health care, and others), Chagossian respondents indicated that obtaining more health care was the social service most in need: Around 85 percent of

Chagossians (85.9 and 84.4 percent respectively for the first and second generations) reported needing more health care.

12.4. Corroboration of Findings

We base most of our conclusions about injuries to Chagossians' health on Dræbel's study, which we believe to be the most comprehensive examination of the subject. Rather than attempt to duplicate this recent work and carry out a comprehensive health survey of our own, we chose to rely on its authoritative conclusions while still making health one of several primary foci of ethnographic and interview research.

Based on our research, we support the findings of Dræbel's WHO-funded study. Throughout the lead author's periods of study in Mauritius and Seychelles, he found many Chagossians to be experiencing ill health. Chagossians frequently exhibited or reported health problems ranging from diabetes, hypertension, high blood pressure, nervous tension, heart and stroke related cardio-vascular problems, and paralysis, to physical disabilities, fractured and injured limbs, alcoholism, narcotics abuse, pneumonia, and chronic colds.

Chagossians frequently cite their ill health in Mauritius and Seychelles as a major difference between their current lives and their lives in Chagos. Like other displaced groups, many, to some extent, idealize the state of health in Chagos, saying that there was no illness there. Although such statements exaggerate the change, these comments are best and usefully understood as a way of drawing a contrast between the generally good health enjoyed in Chagos and Chagossians' health problems in Mauritius and Seychelles.

An elderly Chagossian woman Rita Edmond illustrates how Chagossians draw this contrast. Mrs. Edmond explained through translators that she has had many illnesses since

coming to Mauritius. In Chagos, she said, no one ever had these illnesses. In Chagos, there was a hospital, which was free, but people never got sick. In Mauritius, she continued, she soon developed problems with her stomach and with her knees (later, sitting on the ground outside her corrugated metal shack, she needed the help of two family members to stand).

When Mrs. Edmond arrived in Mauritius she had to find a job to survive. She found one, she said, but it was in a factory where she had to carry heavy loads on her head in hot conditions. She had to cover her mouth with a cloth to breath. Mrs. Edmond said that ever since working in the factory she has had respiratory problem. Carrying the heavy loads is also why she lost her hair, she explained, removing her headscarf to reveal a head of sparse, thin black and white hair.³⁶⁴

The illnesses that Chagossians describe illustrate how Chagossian health has deteriorated since the expulsion. When Chagossians contrast their new illnesses with descriptions of a nearly disease-free life in Chagos, the contrast also represents both a commentary on the expulsion and a sign of the emotional and psychological damage the expulsion has caused. For many Chagossians, the illnesses that they and their relatives and friends have experienced have come to represent all of the difficulties of life in exile and the pain of being separated from their homeland. Like salt fish and frozen fish (see Chapter 11, “Food Insecurity and Malnutrition”), illness and disease again become a synecdoche for all the injuries—material, psychological, and emotional—of the expulsion.

As part of our investigations into Chagossian health, the lead author interviewed Sandra Cheri, a Chagossian nurse and one of a few people qualified to comment professionally on Chagossian health. The lead author asked Mrs. Cheri about common health problems experienced by Chagossians. She listed diarrhea and vomiting, gastroenteritis, fevers, and

influenza—illnesses that, she said, Chagossians share with people throughout Mauritius. But Mrs. Cheri then pointed to the high incidence of diabetes and hypertension among Chagossians because of dietary changes Chagossians have experienced since arriving in Mauritius. In Chagos, she said, there was no stress and the food was different. (Fish even tasted better there, she explained.) There was no hard alcohol in Chagos, only wine and homemade brews like *calou* and *bacca*. In Mauritius there is rum and whiskey and, “many, many Chagossians are alcoholics,” she said. She described seeing Chagossian alcoholics at the hospital and in her neighborhood Cassis, where they are stumbling and drunk, shoeless and dirty along the road. Mauritians exploit many of these alcoholics, Mrs. Cheri added, knowing that the alcoholics will work for a few rupees just to buy a MRs60 (around €2) bottle of rum.³⁶⁵

12.4.1. Substance Abuse

Chagossians frequently mention alcohol and narcotic abuse as major problems among Chagossians and our research provides strong evidence to support these claims. Although Dræbel’s study does not confirm or refute such reports,³⁶⁶ earlier works, including Sylva and Botte, more assertively identify substance abuse as a serious problem among Chagossians.³⁶⁷

Observing visibly intoxicated men of the kind mentioned by Sandra Cheri was not difficult in Mauritius and Seychelles. Making similar observations about narcotics use among Chagossians was more difficult. A few Chagossians described having relatives who died of alcohol or narcotics-related causes. In an index of causes of death among deceased Chagossians, compiled by the Chagos Refugees Group, four individuals were listed with alcohol as a cause of death and one was listed with “drug addiction” as the cause.³⁶⁸ Other Chagossians described knowing Chagossians imprisoned for illegal drug use or trafficking.

The most striking indication that substance abuse is a serious problem among Chagossians are the results of our survey. Two questions asked Chagossians if they were receiving any treatment for an alcohol or drug problem and, whether or not they were receiving any, if they needed more treatment. Responses to survey questions asking about illegal substance use are renowned for underreporting actual use. Despite likely underreporting, 20 percent of second generation respondents and 18.8 percent from the first generation indicated that they needed more help or treatment for an alcohol or drug problem. (Only 1.1 of second and 2.1 percent of first generation respondents said they were receiving such treatment.) These findings along with the findings of earlier studies and the frequency with which Chagossians in both our research and Dræbel's study identified substance abuse as a problem strongly suggest that alcohol and narcotic use and abuse are serious health problems among Chagossians.

12.4.2. Assault, Sexual Assault, and Domestic Violence

Since the expulsion, Chagossians, and in particular Chagossian women, have been vulnerable to sexual and other assaults and domestic violence. Our survey indicates that (despite likely underreporting) 11.5 percent of first generation and 4.4 percent of second generation respondents identified themselves as being the victim of one or more attacks, rapes, beatings, or other physical or sexual assaults since arriving in Mauritius or Seychelles. There has been at least one alleged murder of a Chagossian man in a Mauritian prison. In many cases, Chagossians appear to be vulnerable to assaults because of their poverty, their need to find housing, and their position as outsiders in Mauritius and Seychelles.

In previous chapters (see Chapter 9, "Homelessness"), we have cited examples of domestic violence stemming from this vulnerability. In one case, a woman and her family

moved in with a Seychellois man in part to escape near homelessness. Soon the husband was beating the woman. As one of her sons, who later left the house to escape the abuse, explained, “You see, we cannot do nothing because we don’t have a place to stay. You see, you have to accept this. You know, [if not] we will be left on the street.”³⁶⁹

Another woman Josiane Selmour described how growing up poor she was pressured by her mother and stepfather to marry a Mauritian man with a good, well-paying, secure job. After their marriage, the man began beating her. Frequently she had to take her children to live with her mother. Finally in 1998 after a beating that left her with bruises on her face and body, Mrs. Selmour’s son confronted his father. Mrs. Selmour went to the police, who took her to the hospital for treatment. With the help of a recently passed law protecting the rights of women, Mrs. Selmour took her husband to court and won damages from him of several thousand rupees.³⁷⁰

Mrs. Selmour said that her husband has mostly behaved better since she took him to court. She added that he has been very different since the CRG began advocating for compensation for Chagossians. Other Mauritian men, she explained, have also started treating their Chagossian wives better because the men are hoping to get compensation. Mrs. Selmour said that in the past her husband had called her derogatory names as a Chagossian. ‘The Mauritians don’t like Chagossians,’ she explained. ‘Mauritians call Chagossians ‘sovaz’ [savages] and say, ‘Alle Zilwa!’ [Go away Ilois!]. Husbands too,’ she said, ‘they take advantage of Chagossian women. They abuse them, they call them names, because Chagossian women are powerless.’³⁷¹

Other Chagossian women in Mauritius and Seychelles echoed these feelings about Chagossian women suffering abuse, especially from non-Chagossian men. Many described

experiencing abuse from their husbands or domestic partners. Others experienced physical and sexual abuse at work. Some talked of verbally or physically abusive relationships between Chagossian spouses as a result of stress and pressures in the home.

Botte describes the vulnerability of Chagossian women and how Mauritian men have taken sexual advantage of this vulnerability. Botte asserts that some Mauritian public assistance officers took sexual advantage of Chagossian women after their arrival and even recommended to their friends to do the same. As Botte writes euphemistically, “Some Mauritian men who pretended to help were looking for other benefits.”³⁷²

Botte suggests that other Chagossian women had limited but relatively more sexual choice and control when, because of their economic vulnerability, they “accepted the Mauritian men as partners now and then only to feed their numerous children.” Others, as discussed previously (see Chapter 7, “Joblessness”), became prostitutes in their search for income. Of the many health risks involved in prostitution, Botte reports that “some are already seriously affected by venereal diseases.”³⁷³

12.4.3. Feelings of Grief, Sadness, and Sorrow in Exile

The Chagos Refugees Group has an “Index of Deceased Chagossians,” in which 396 cases list a cause of death. In 60 of these cases, the cause of death is listed as wholly or in part due to “sadness” or “homesickness.”³⁷⁴ Similarly, in everyday discussions, Chagossians often talk of Chagossians having died of sadness. As one Chagossian man explained in French, “Les Chagossiens meurent avec le chagrin, la tristesse, la misère” [Chagossians are dying from profound sorrow, sadness, and abject miserable poverty].³⁷⁵

Noelie Alexis quickly used the related Kreol word *sagren* [profound sorrow] to talk about her life in Mauritius. In her early 30s, Mrs. Alexis came to Mauritius as a young child with her parents and six siblings on one of the last voyages of the *M.V. Nordvær*. Mrs. Alexis explained that the family had to leave everything in Chagos. When they first arrived, the family had to live on the streets of Port Louis's largest slum, Roche Bois. Often they had no food or water. When they came to Mauritius, her parents were healthy, she said. But once in Mauritius, her parents fell ill—"tombe malad"—with "sagren ek latristes"—sorrow and sadness. They "tombe dan lamizer," she continued, saying they fell into abject miserable poverty. Over time, three of her siblings died in Mauritius.³⁷⁶

The use of this vocabulary of grief, sadness, and abject poverty demonstrates the feelings of profound loss and sadness that many Chagossians feel because of their expulsion and exile. That Chagossians often identify sadness as a cause of death also illustrates the impossibility of disconnecting Chagossians' mental health from their physical health. That Chagossians almost always discuss sadness and sorrow in combination with their poverty demonstrates the interconnection between Chagossians' mental and physical health and their economic and material well-being. When an older man told how his father died of sagren in 1970 after he was prevented from returning to Diego Garcia, the lead author asked him to define sagren. The man replied, sagren is "not having work...lacking" food, drink, education for yourself or your children, and not becoming "abitye," or accustomed to life in Mauritius.

When Chagossians talk about sagren then, sagren is not only psychological and emotional. For Chagossians, sagren is also a physical condition. It means the deep impoverishment most have suffered in Mauritius and Seychelles. When Chagossians talk of sagren, they are not just talking about their expulsion and their sorrow, they are also talking

about the material damage the expulsion has caused—physically, economically, socially, and culturally. For Chagossians, sagren is the inseparable combination of the profound sorrow of the expulsion and the profound material damage that the expulsion has done to their lives, their society, their income, their labor, their housing, and their health.

Dræbel documents the same phenomenon whereby profound sorrow or sadness “explains illness and even the deaths of members of the community.” Dræbel details the nature of this sorrow further:

The notion of *le chagrin* has an important place in the explanatory system for illness. *Le chagrin* is in fact nostalgia for the Chagos islands. It is the profound sadness of facing the impossibility of being able to return to one’s home in the archipelago. For many people we met, this *chagrin* explains illness and even the deaths of members of the community. During one of our first visits in the community, we met an old man suffering from diabetes and hypertension. Paralyzed for many years, this man only left his home every three months when an ambulance came to take him for treatment at the hospital.... Some weeks after having met him, we learned of his death. In the street with others who came to express their condolences to his widow, we tried to learn more about the deceased, including the precise cause of his death. It was then that one of his friends responded that he had died of *Chagrin des îles* [loosely: sorrow for the loss of the islands]. Knowing that he would never again return to the island of his birth, he had preferred to let himself die.³⁷⁷

Chagossians are not alone in the belief that grief and sadness can be a cause of death. “There is little doubt,” Scudder and Colson explain, “that relocatees often believe that the elderly in particular are apt to die ‘of a broken heart’ following removal.” Importantly this belief appears to have medical support: “The evidence is highly suggestive” that sadness can cause death “for Egyptian and Sudanese Nubians...and the Yavapai.... Elderly persons forced into nursing homes or forcibly removed from one nursing home to another are reported to have high mortality rates in the period immediately succeeding the move.”³⁷⁸ Other research has shown

that acute stress can bring on fatal heart spasms in people with otherwise healthy cardiac systems.³⁷⁹

Nayak provides more evidence of the connections between the grief of exile and health outcomes and between mental and physical health. From his work with the Kisan of eastern India, Nayak writes, “The severance of the Kisan bonds from their traditional lands and environment is a fundamental factor in their acute depression and possibly in increased mortality rates, including infant mortality.” Like Chagossians grieving for their lost origins in Chagos, “a continuous pining for lost land characterizes the elderly [Kisan]. Anxiety, grieving, various neuropsychiatric illness and post-traumatic stress disorders feature among the Kisan. In essence, they suffer from profound cultural and landscape bereavement for their lost origins.”³⁸⁰ This is what Scudder refers to as the “grieving for a lost home” syndrome experienced by those involuntarily displaced.³⁸¹ That grief and sadness could become causes of death is ultimately a reminder of the impossibility of disconnecting an understanding of Chagossians’ ill health (physical and mental) from Chagossians’ experience of expulsion and exile.

12.5. Health for Other U.K. Overseas Territories Citizens

Statistics for the Overseas Territories are not always directly comparable to those available for Chagossians but generally indicate health standards significantly above those enjoyed by Chagossians and closer to those enjoyed in Great Britain. In the Falkland Islands, government health expenditures total around £1,800 per capita per year. One hospital serves the territory with medical, dental, nursing, and other professional health staff and the services of visiting specialists from Britain. Patients can be flown to Britain for specialized services or to Chile and Uruguay for emergency treatment.³⁸²

Life expectancy is 76.9 years in Anguilla and 74.9 years in Saint Helena (it is 78.1 years for the United Kingdom). The infant mortality rate for Anguilla is 21.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, which is comparable to the rate for upper-middle-income nations (19 per 1,000), as defined by the World Bank. The child (under five) mortality rate for Saint Helena is 3.5 deaths per 1,000 children.³⁸³ Both Anguilla and Saint Helena receive development assistance funds for the provision of health services.

12.6. Health for Others in Mauritius and Seychelles

Health statistics for Mauritius and Seychelles also indicate a high level of health, generally consistent with other upper-middle-income nations. Although they are not always directly comparable to our report of Chagossian health, these statistics indicate a consistently higher level of health for Mauritians and Seychellois than for Chagossians. In Mauritius, life expectancy is around 73 years (the average for upper-middle-income nations is 73 years). Infant mortality is reported between 13.2 and 17 deaths per 1,000 live births (the rate is 19 per 1,000 for upper-middle-income nations); under five child mortality is 19 per 1,000.³⁸⁴

In Seychelles, life expectancy is reported between 71 and 73 years. Infant and child mortality rates are similar to those in Mauritius, between 12.0 and 17.6 per 1,000 for infants and 16.0 per 1,000 for child mortality.³⁸⁵

12.7. Conclusion

After enjoying relatively good health in Chagos, Chagossians' health has deteriorated in numerous ways as a result of the expulsion. This deterioration began during the traumatic expulsion process and may have included an increase in infant and general mortality during and

after the removals. The deterioration in Chagossians' health has continued in Mauritius and Seychelles: As this report and other studies have shown, Chagossians have experienced elevated levels of respiratory diseases, anemia, chronic colds, fevers, transmissible diseases like Tuberculosis, as well as problems with cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension, work accidents, alcohol and narcotics abuse, domestic violence, and mental health. Many of these health problems may result from conditions conducive to ill health brought on by the expulsion including the deterioration of diet, environmental and work conditions, and income. Chagossians' (and other displacees') frequent references to profound sorrow and sadness point to how the deterioration of psychological, social, and cultural health, in combination with the deterioration of material conditions, has likely also contributed to Chagossians' ill health in exile.

13. SOCIOCULTURAL FRAGMENTATION

Many of the injuries documented in previous chapters have been relatively easy to observe: land, property, and jobs lost, income diminished, and lost access to food and ill health. Less visible but no less harmful are injuries Chagossians have experienced to their social connections and culture. The expulsion destroyed Chagossian society, breaking apart Chagossian communities and scattering its people over almost 2,000 kilometers of Indian Ocean between Mauritius and Seychelles. This dispersal and the expulsion process itself broke or endangered many of the social and cultural ties that once bound Chagossians to one another. As the IRR model explains, “Forced expulsion tears apart the existing social fabric. It disperses and fragments communities, dismantles patterns of social organization and interpersonal ties; kinship groups become scattered. Life-sustaining informal networks of reciprocal help...are disrupted.”³⁸⁶ Simply put, “The people may physically persist, but the community that was—is no more.”³⁸⁷

The IRR model details the disruption of social ties in a process termed “social disarticulation.” In this and the model’s seven other subprocesses, the model largely overlooks cultural damage and disruption. (In earlier formulations of social disarticulation, Cernea placed more emphasis on the cultural effects of displacement referring to the “loss of a sense of cultural identity.”)³⁸⁸ We found damage to Chagossian culture to be a significant part of Chagossians’ overall impoverishment as a result the expulsion. For this reason, we document and analyze the impact of the expulsion on Chagossian culture in combination with the expulsion’s social impact. We refer to this injury then as *sociocultural fragmentation*.

Before documenting these injuries, we note that the expulsion has not only meant the destruction of Chagossians’ sociocultural life. As many scholars of involuntary displacement emphasize, expulsion also leads to creativity and the development of important new social ties

and cultural practices, which, in part, allow for survival under difficult conditions. Chagossians' social and cultural life has been damaged by the expulsion such that sociocultural fragmentation is a significant dimension of their impoverishment. But like all humans, and even under difficult circumstances, Chagossians' sociocultural life has continually evolved and changed. That is, to document Chagossians' sociocultural injuries as we do below is not to suggest that Chagossians are now entirely devoid of sociocultural life. It is only to show how detrimental the expulsion has been to their society and culture.

With this caveat, the impoverishment of sociocultural fragmentation can be summarized as:

- Community and family division when Chagossians visiting Mauritius were prevented from returning to Chagos after 1967;
- Community and family division between Mauritius and Seychelles after the removals;
- Community dispersal around Mauritius and Seychelles as Chagossians searched for living accommodations and (to a lesser extent) employment;
- Separation from ancestors' graves, preventing visits to and caring for grave sites, and thus damaging Chagossians' connections with their ancestors, which are an important element of their sociocultural life;
- Internal kin dissension and conflict in reaction to the stress of the expulsion and adaptation to life in Mauritius and Seychelles;
- Relative disappearance of some sociocultural phenomena, including an *esprit partazé* [spirit of sharing] and weekly community-wide *sega* dance gatherings that characterized life in Chagos;
- Diminished cultural identity related to discrimination, the denigration of Chagossian cultural practices, and feelings of shame and isolation as Chagossians, all of which led many to hide their identity as Chagossians.

13.1. Community and Family Dispersal and Division

The most visible element of Chagossians' sociocultural fragmentation is the physical and geographic dispersal of the group as a result of the expulsion. The damage and extent of this dispersal was heightened because the expulsion took place over more than six years. Prior to the expulsion, Chagossians for the most part lived in small villages in three of Chagos's atolls: Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos, and Salomon. As a result of the expulsion, Chagossians were dispersed around 2,000 kilometers from Chagos to Mauritius and Seychelles, themselves approximately 2,000 kilometers apart. Because almost no effort was made to resettle Chagossians, communities, kin groups, and households were further dispersed and separated within Mauritius and Seychelles.

13.1.1. Initial Dispersal and Division

After 1967, Chagossians stranded in Mauritius were separated from their family members and former communities in Chagos. Most Chagossians traveled to Mauritius as a partial family unit, leaving some parents, grandparents, siblings, or other relatives behind in Chagos. When Chagossians were stranded, they were cut off from these relatives, from their local village and neighborhood-level social networks, and from the rest of the Chagossian community. With mail service stopped, most lacked a way to inform those left behind of their fate.

This initial phase of the expulsion divided parents from their children, sisters from brothers, grandparents from grandchildren. It also severed countless social connections and networks between neighbors, fellow villagers, and extended kin members. The impact went beyond those stranded in Mauritius to the communities that remained in Chagos, where homes were left vacant, social roles unfilled, and important social actors suddenly missing.

13.1.2. Dispersal and Division between and within Mauritius and Seychelles

Between 1971 and 1973, the expulsion involved the forced removal of Chagossians from Diego Garcia and later Peros Banhos and Salomon islands. These chaotic removals had the same effect as the initial stranding of Chagossians in Mauritius: Individual households and families, social networks, villages, and entire local communities were dispersed and divided, initially between Chagos, Mauritius, and Seychelles, and later between Mauritius and Seychelles.

The majority of the population was eventually deported to Mauritius. Most Chagossians who went to Seychelles were Chagossian women and their children following Seychellois partners. In many cases though, parents and children were divided as fathers and mothers separated between Mauritius and Seychelles, and children went with one and not the other. Some Chagossians who left Chagos as infants thus grew up with no memory of one of their parents. A few children left Chagos with grandparents and were separated from both parents.

After arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians dispersed further. Initially homeless, and in contrast to their former neighborhood and village residential arrangements, Chagossians found housing haphazardly in Mauritius and Seychelles. As detailed in Chapter 9, “Homelessness,” most Chagossians found housing in a few scattered if concentrated places around the slums of Port Louis, in Mauritius, and around the main Seychelles island, Mahé. Although many in Mauritius settled around other Chagossians, most of the social networks and village ties that previously connected people were shattered by the expulsion.

Geographer Véronique Lassailly-Jacob emphasizes how forced expulsion can, in this way, be more disruptive to social cohesion among refugees like the Chagossians than among the

displacees of development projects. “In the case of development displacees, entire families [and, at times, neighborhoods] are moved to new sites” intact, she writes.

By comparison, refugee households have usually been disrupted or even destroyed before or during the move. Among the new arrivals are many fragmented nuclear families, individuals, and vulnerable people such as orphans and the disabled.... Split-up families, vulnerable individuals, and nonproductive members reduce the chances for viability and make it hard to reach self-sufficiency.³⁸⁹

Because the expulsion took place over more than six years, the fragmentation among Chagossians was especially severe. Over this time, the fragmentation extended beyond families and households separated between Mauritius and Seychelles to the dissolution of kinship relationships, social networks, and village ties that had been important parts of life in Chagos.

Over time, this dispersal only continued. Given the insecure nature of most Chagossians’ housing after the removals, most were forced to move repeatedly in the months and years after the expulsion before settling more permanently in one home. This both exacerbated the fragmentation of social ties from Chagos and made even more difficult the creation of new ties in Mauritius and Seychelles.

Chagossians’ job insecurity added to the fragmentation of families, households, and social ties. Arriving in Mauritius and Seychelles jobless, most Chagossians were forced to take whatever jobs they could find. For many this meant separation from their families. In Chagos, everyone worked together on the coconut plantations. Most worked within walking distance of their homes. Kin members and women could take their young children with them to work. In Mauritius and Seychelles, women and girls often had few employment opportunities other than jobs as domestic workers, often living in other people’s households. This left many young Chagossian women in particular separated from their families, friends, and communities for

weeks or months at a time. Likewise men often had few options other than to take jobs on fishing boats at sea for months before returning to port.

Arlette Lamb is one who had to leave her home to help support her family financially. When she was 14 years old, Mrs. Lamb went to work for a Mauritian family as their domestic servant and cook. For five years, Mrs. Lamb worked for the family, going stretches of three to four months without seeing her family members. It was very difficult to leave her family, she said, which was already confronting the death of one of her siblings and their exile. But she had no choice because the family was poor and needed her income. “Plore,” she said—I cried. “Plore, plore, plore....” I cried, I cried, I cried.

13.1.3. Separation from Ancestors’ Graves

The expulsion also divided Chagossians from their deceased kin buried in Chagos. For many Chagossians, maintaining a physical connection with ones ancestors and paying tribute to them by visiting, cleaning, and caring for their graves is an important part of life (as detailed in Chapter 9, “Homelessness”). To understand this aspect of Chagossians’ impoverishment, one must understand Chagossian society not just as a set of relationships among the living but also as a set of relationships between the living and the dead. Maintaining these relationships with the dead by visiting, tending to, and honoring ancestors’ graves is an important part of life for Chagossians. Marie Ange Pauline explained this connection in cultural terms, explaining that visiting the graves of one’s ancestors and bringing them flowers is an important part of Creole culture of which Chagossians are part. Forced to leave Diego Garcia for Seychelles as an adolescent, Mrs. Pauline said that especially among older Chagossians she sees the pain they feel from not being able to visit their ancestors’ graves.³⁹⁰

When many Chagossians were first informed that they had to leave the islands, losing connection with their ancestors was a primary concern. A sworn court statement from 1977 documents this fear. In the statement (quoted previously), Marcel Moulinie recalls the reaction of one of his most trusted overseers Marcel Ono to news of the “evacuation.” Moulinie says of Ono, “He was a bit shaken and talked about his forefathers having lived on the island and his having been born there. He accepted that if I told him he had to go he would have to go. All the same he was very upset.”³⁹¹ (See Chapter 9, “Homelessness,” for more on the importance of Chagossians’ physical connection with their ancestors.)

13.2. Kin Conflict and Dissension

The expulsion and its aftermath have had particularly powerful effects in disrupting kin relationships among Chagossians. Despite strong kin relationships, many Chagossians have experienced conflict and dissension among kin members since the expulsion. Nayak speaks to the powerful effects of involuntary displacement even relative to kinship ties. “Displacement is an extremely potent, divisive and alienating force that weakens human bonding and sometimes obliterates it,” he writes, “to the extent that carefully nurtured or ascriptive bonds disintegrate randomly.”³⁹²

Among Chagossians the disintegration of kinship (and other) bonds following the expulsion has rarely been random, however. Conflict among kin appears to have arisen in particular around housing arrangements. Faced with homelessness upon arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles, many Chagossians found housing by joining the households of kin members. This generally meant adding to already overcrowded housing conditions. In Seychelles, in several cases, families found or made crude housing for themselves on the property of kin members or

underneath a relative's elevated home. For many Chagossians, these overcrowded conditions eventually led to conflict among those sharing homes and the fraying of some kin relationships. In some cases, households hosting kin members eventually asked their guests to leave and find other housing.

For others, kin conflict occurred within the nuclear family. As scholars have found with other displaced peoples, involuntary displacement often complicates and strains family relationships, leading to familial divisions.³⁹³ For many Chagossians, there appears to have been an accumulation of stresses affecting kin relationships that developed as a result of the expulsion and its aftermath. Beyond the housing difficulties described above, the stresses on families included unemployment and employment difficulties, families' low incomes, experiences of discrimination, and adapting to an entirely different mode of life, among others.

Lisette Volfrin described watching and hearing her parents fight frequently in the first years after they arrived in Seychelles. 'They had a lot of responsibility and pressure on them in those days,' Mrs. Volfrin said, 'especially with so many children in the family. They would fight a lot, taking everything out on one another and on the kids, and the kids would fight back too.' There were times when she just wanted to die. Mrs. Volfrin said that in those days she would ask God whey this had happened to them, why they had to leave their island to come to this life in Seychelles.

13.3. The Disappearance of Sociocultural Phenomena

13.3.1. Espri Partazé

The sociocultural fragmentation following the expulsion extended beyond the fraying and destruction of relationships and social ties to the damage done to some sociocultural phenomena.

In discussing life in Chagos, many Chagossians describe an *espri partazé*, or spirit of sharing, that characterized life in the islands. This spirit was particularly evident in the sharing of food among Chagossians. When a Chagossian went fishing, for example, and caught more fish than her or his family could consume, Chagossians describe how the person would offer the extra fish to a neighbor. Chagossians explain that the community has lost this espri since the expulsion, in part because of the expense of food in Mauritius and Seychelles, where they cannot afford to be so generous.

To the lead author, an outsider from the United States, the degree of sharing and caring for others among Chagossians still appears impressive. However, that many perceive the *espri partazé* to have disappeared is an indication of the extent to which Chagossians feel less connected to other Chagossians. It indicates how Chagossians feel the disintegration of their social fabric and community ties. That some feel a loosening of ties, that some question the nature of their connections with other Chagossians, are in themselves signs that social ties have *de facto* weakened and frayed.

13.3.2. *The Sega*

Another important element of the social fabric, which connected people in Chagos was the *sega*. *Sega* is the name for a long-standing popular form of music of African derivation, as well as both the dance accompanying the music and the event of playing and dancing to the music. Although one finds *sega* on islands throughout the southwest Indian Ocean, most island groups developed unique *sega* traditions.

In Chagos, *segas* were generally held every Saturday night at the end of the workweek and were an occasion for entire island communities to gather. *Segas* usually continued late into

the night and into the next morning. Significantly, the structure of sega singing allows a soloist the opportunity to sing original song lyrics, which are often improvised. Most segas follow a call-and-response structure: Soloists sing verses supported by dancers, musicians, and onlookers who join in a chorus and provide frequent shouts, whistles, and other outbursts of vocal encouragement and accompaniment. In Chagos, soloists often used their lyrics to sing about problems and difficulties in their lives, gaining empathetic support from their listeners. Much as one finds in the blues and other musical traditions (as well as in professional therapeutic relationships), the sega became an important mode of expression and a way to share hardships and gain support from the surrounding community.

In Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians have been unable to continue their tradition of regular sega gatherings.³⁹⁴ In Seychelles, sega almost disappeared entirely as a distinct Chagossian tradition. Only recently did the Chagossian organization there attempt to resurrect some of the sega traditions by transcribing some of the songs from Chagos, practicing organized dance routines, and holding sega performances to raise money and awareness for Chagossians.

In Mauritius, Chagossians have been able to maintain some of the sega traditions with relatively more success since the expulsion. Segá remains a part of many Chagossian celebrations, including marriages, baptisms, first communions, and birthdays. Chagossian sega groups have given public performances and produced several recorded sega albums since the expulsion.

Chagossians still sing, play, and dance sega, but they do so now in smaller gatherings of family and friends. By contrast, in Chagos sega was *por tu dimun*—for everybody. The tradition of an entire island community gathering on a weekly basis for a sega has been lost. With that loss all that those gatherings entailed has also been lost: The opportunity to interact as a

community, to feel part of a larger collectivity, to share drinks and food, to meet friends, to meet potential romantic partners, to experience the joys of music and dance, to play together, to dance together, to sing together, and the opportunity to share one's feelings and emotions in a public setting and to get support from others in expressing those feelings.

Given the communal and expressive nature of the sega event, one can see how its disappearance has exacerbated the corrosion of the Chagossian social fabric. The effect and extent of injury resulting from this loss is impossible to quantify, both on an individual level and for the community as a whole. We conclude that the loss of this communal sega tradition is a significant dimension of impoverishment that is both the result of the destruction of Chagossian society and that has also been the cause of subsequent damage to Chagossian social and cultural life.

13.3.3. Other Sociocultural Phenomena

Walker's 1986 study documents the disappearance of some sociocultural phenomena and the maintenance of others. In particular, Walker points to the virtual disappearance of death and partnership practices. Dress and culinary practices from Chagos are, he says, continuing to some extent. "Distinct ethnic markers are being retained and developed, and a considerable degree of group cohesion is being maintained," Walker says. "At the same time, however, many unique aspects of Ilois society are disappearing as Mauritian values are adopted."³⁹⁵

In total the deterioration of Chagossians' sociocultural life has been a significant aspect of Chagossians' impoverishment. As the IRR model states, "This is a net loss of valuable 'social capital' that compounds the loss of natural, physical, and human capital." Social and cultural ties that once were important parts of Chagossians' everyday lives have been severed or severely

weakened. Like the loss of their land, jobs, and homes, described earlier, sociocultural fragmentation has been a significant part of Chagossians' overall impoverishment since the expulsion. Poverty is thus "not just an absence of income and assets," as the model explains, but includes all the aspects of sociocultural fragmentation that "directly worsen[] the corollaries of poverty—powerlessness, dependency, and vulnerability."³⁹⁶

13.4. The Loss of Cultural Identity and Feelings of Shame and Isolation

As Cernea emphasizes in several works, the deterioration of social and cultural ties at the group level extends into injuries in the lives of individuals: "The deterioration of community life is apt to generate a typical state of anomie, crisis-laden insecurity, and loss of sense of cultural identity."³⁹⁷ Since the expulsion, many (though not all) Chagossians have experienced a loss of cultural identity as Chagossians. Many faced discrimination and social stigma as Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles. Out of these experiences and feelings of defeat from being removed developed feelings of shame, isolation, and the anomie to which Cernea refers.

Walker describes contradictory processes at work among Chagossians in Mauritius. Amidst heightened Chagossian political organizing, Walker finds that Chagossians were both assimilating into Mauritian life as they lost unique aspects of Chagossian culture and becoming integrated into Mauritian society as a distinct community with a distinct culture in a nation of what are usually seen as distinct communities.³⁹⁸

Our research indicates a similar but slightly more complex situation. Some Chagossians have maintained a strong sense of Chagossian (or Ilois) identity since the expulsion. Most who have maintained this identity have been heavily involved in Chagossian political organizing. Many others have felt the need to conceal their Chagossian identity because of abuse,

discrimination, and negative stereotyping suffered by Chagossians. Still others describe losing much of their identity as Chagossians or as growing up in Mauritius or Seychelles with little sense of oneself as Chagossian.

Chagossians in Seychelles in particular appear often to have felt the need to hide their Chagossian identity. One Chagossian in Seychelles only told her husband that she was born in Diego Garcia after their marriage for fear of his reaction. Another Chagossian Marie Ange Pauline (detailed in Chapter 8, “Economic and Social-Psychological Marginalization”) described hiding her identity as a Chagossian until her “coming out” in the late 1990s. Although by using the phrase “coming out,” Mrs. Pauline did not intend to compare her experience to that of homosexuals in heterosexist societies, the parallels are strong. Like many homosexuals in heterosexist societies, Mrs. Pauline felt stigma, discrimination, and fear because of her identity as a Chagossian, motivating her to keep her identity secret.³⁹⁹

Many in Mauritius describe similar experiences of hiding their identity as Chagossians. Many in both nations explain that only since Chagossians won a court ruling against the U.K. Government in November 2000, and after they were given the right to have full British citizenship rights in May 2002, have they felt proud to be Chagossian and willing to identify themselves as such to others. At a research feedback meeting hosted by the lead author, one Chagossian said she is now proud to be Chagossian. Before however, she was not at all proud; “Ditu,” she said—not at all. Others still keep their identity secret or do not readily self-identify as Chagossian. One Chagossian in Seychelles explained she still does not reveal that she is Chagossian, as a co-worker recently told her angrily that Chagossians are taking jobs from Seychellois.

Similarly some Chagossians express feelings that they have been prevented from full cultural expression (and thus self-identification) as they have felt forced to adapt to the cultures of Mauritius or Seychelles. Instead of having the freedom to follow their own expressive cultural practices, some said, Chagossians have felt pressure to follow, for example, Mauritian and Seychellois styles of dance, music, and cuisine.

One of the most significant ways in which many Chagossians have hidden their identity as Chagossian has been to conceal their accents and change some of their linguistic practices. Chagossians born in Chagos spoke Chagos Kreol. While related to and mutually intelligible with Mauritian Kreol and Seselwa (Seychellois Kreol), Chagos Kreol is distinct from the others in some of its vocabulary, in its pronunciation of words, and in the accent of its speakers. Chagossians describe trying to change their accent soon after arriving in Mauritius or Seychelles to avoid being identified as Chagossian. One Chagossian man explained that Chagossians cannot express themselves as they would like. ‘Chagossians have to change their language and their accent,’ he said. ‘Chagossians have to think twice every time they start to speak.’⁴⁰⁰ Such comments indicate the extent to which not only Chagossians’ linguistic practices have been infringed upon by the expulsion but their cognitive patterns and consciousness as well.

13.5. Conclusion

Chapters throughout this report have pointed to various ways in which Chagossians’ social and cultural life has been harmed by the expulsion. In this chapter we have shown how what we term sociocultural fragmentation has been a major dimension of Chagossians’ impoverishment. The breaking apart of Chagossians’ social ties and culture has been physical in the destruction of Chagossian society in Chagos and the dispersal of its members and it has been sociocultural and

psychological in the development of kin and community conflict, in the disappearance of sociocultural phenomena, and in diminished feelings of cultural identity. Although these injuries may be harder to see than the loss of land, homes, and jobs, as Cernea says, “This is a net loss of valuable ‘social capital’ that compounds the loss of natural, physical, and human capital.”⁴⁰¹ Sociocultural fragmentation is as significant a dimension of impoverishment as the others.

14. EDUCATIONAL DEPRIVATION

Chagossians have experienced educational deprivation since the beginning of the expulsion process and continuing into their lives in Mauritius and Seychelles. Although the IRR model does not identify educational damages as one of its eight major impoverishment subprocesses, the model says that other subprocesses of impoverishment often arise in specific cases, mentioning educational deprivation in particular.⁴⁰²

The deprivation of Chagossians' education began with the formation of the BIOT and the gradual deterioration of educational quality in Chagos. As the expulsion progressed, all of Chagos's schools closed, interrupting the schooling of children in Chagos. Regardless of the moment at which children were removed from Chagos, their schooling was interrupted by their removal and by the difficulties of resettling in Mauritius or Seychelles, where there was no assistance for Chagossians re-entering school. In some cases, Chagossians were barred access to schools or had significant difficulties in enrollment. Many older Chagossians who were still of school age often had to curtail schooling to find jobs to help their families financially.

After entering school, many Chagossians have experienced discrimination and verbal abuse from teachers and classmates. Chagossian students have also experienced significant educational difficulties because of systematic disadvantages facing them in an increasingly competitive educational system in Mauritius and Seychelles. These disadvantages have included their economic impoverishment, coming from families with mostly illiterate parents and grandparents little able to assist with schooling, their own relatively poor quality of schooling in Chagos, little early exposure to or instruction in French and English, and the interruption of schooling as a result of the expulsion.

Further, as Dræbel's WHO-funded study shows, Chagossians in Mauritius were plunged into an education system that systematically discriminates against poor students, which has meant that Chagossians have had limited access to education. Dræbel reports that Chagossians live in neighborhoods with the worst schools in Mauritius, featuring the worst and least motivated teachers. Although school is technically free in Mauritius, Chagossians have insufficient income for books, supplies, transportation, exam fees, and other significant costs of schooling, including the costly extracurricular tutoring important to scholastic success. We summarize Chagossians' impoverishment from educational deprivation as follows:

- Declining educational quality in Chagos after the creation of the BIOT in 1965 and continuing through the closing of schools and the final removals;
- Interruption of schooling by the expulsion; frequent barred access to schooling or enrollment difficulties once in Mauritius and Seychelles, including no universal free secondary school education in Mauritius until 1976 and 1981 in Seychelles;
- Discrimination and verbal abuse at school in exile;
- Systematic educational disadvantages (in competitive educational systems where economic success has been increasingly tied to educational achievement) leading to further employment and economic disadvantages. These educational disadvantages include Chagossians' economic impoverishment, coming from families with mostly illiterate parents and grandparents little able to assist with schooling, relatively poor quality schooling in Chagos, little early exposure to or instruction in French or English, and the interruption of schooling by the expulsion;
- Little *de facto* access to education, as found by a WHO-funded study, in a discriminatory educational system in Mauritius that leaves poor students with the worst schools, the worst and least motivated teachers, with insufficient income for books, supplies, and transportation, and without the extracurricular benefits of wealthier students important to scholastic success;
- 35.7 percent illiteracy for the generation born and raised in exile and 62.6 percent for the first generation;
- Almost half of the second generation not progressing beyond elementary school and an additional 35.1 percent dropping out of secondary school;

- The spread of educational injuries beyond school age Chagossians to entire households as students' educational difficulties have affected their employment success and thus household income.

14.1. Education in Chagos

Formal schooling began in Chagos with the establishment of a school in Diego Garcia on September 24, 1951. (Religious and informal education had longer histories in Chagos.) The school opened with 96 children attending class in the island's chapel before a three-room schoolhouse was opened in 1952. Schools were later opened in Peros Banhos and Salomon.

A single teacher generally worked in the schools. Initially the teachers were trained ones sent and paid by the British colonial government in Mauritius. Not surprisingly given the teacher-to-student ratio, the quality of education at the schools seems to have been low. The poor quality of the teachers seems to have contributed as well, according to government reports. Attendance was by most accounts irregular. The focus of most of the education was on group singing and recitation.⁴⁰³ Plantation managers also introduced sewing instruction over time. Teachers seem to have taught in a mix of Kreol, French, and English. As the Public Assistance Commissioner and Social Welfare Adviser reported in 1953, "A few [students] can spell and cipher, take dictation and write their names and the performance, as a group performance, is adequate."⁴⁰⁴ In the decades after World War II, the British colonial government in Mauritius was attempting to improve the quality of social and general welfare services in Chagos and it is likely that the quality of education improved somewhat over time.

14.2. The Creation of the BIOT and the Decline of Formal Education

After the creation of the BIOT in 1965, the quality of education appears to have declined. By 1967 (at the latest), the trained teachers in Chagos had been recalled to Mauritius. In their place, staff members of the company running the islands for the British and wives and daughters of the staff members served as teachers. According to the 1967 report of BIOT Administrator Todd, the daughters of the manager and the dresser staffed the school in Diego Garcia. In Salomon, the nurse/midwife assisted by the wife of a newly arriving assistant manager were to begin teaching after the school holiday. In Peros Banhos, Todd writes, “No school is run on the island, due to the lack of a suitable person to act as teacher.”⁴⁰⁵ (The school in Peros Banhos later reopened temporarily.)

The quality of education at the schools appears to have grown increasingly poor. In 1969 Todd reported of the school in Diego Garcia, “There is a good supply of text books but the general standard of the work is poor due to the lack of experience of the [unqualified] teacher. Attendance is voluntary and there are about 40 children regularly attending the school.” He found 20 pupils attending school regularly in Salomon where, “The teacher is untrained and the standard poor.” By contrast, Todd reported that the reopened school in Peros Banhos had a standard “higher than in the other island schools,” and was “quite well equipped and...well maintained by the unqualified teacher,” with 30 regularly-attending students.⁴⁰⁶

Between July 1969, and July 1970, the teacher in Salomon departed and the school there closed (permanently it seems). The school at Diego Garcia remained open until at least August 1970,⁴⁰⁷ and closed at some point during the removals there over the next 15 months. The school at Peros Banhos closed permanently around the time of the final removals of 1972 and 1973, if not earlier.⁴⁰⁸

14.3. The Effect of the Removal Process on Education

At a minimum, the expulsion temporarily interrupted the schooling of most Chagossian children. Under the best circumstances, children attended school up to their departure and then enrolled and began attending school immediately upon arrival in Mauritius or Seychelles, missing only a few days school in transit or perhaps none at all if their removal occurred during a school vacation.

Few however had such a minimal interruption. Many Chagossian children remained in Chagos when their schools began closing or operating with unqualified teachers, marking the beginning of their schooling interruption. The chaotic and unplanned nature of arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles made a seamless transition into new schools nearly impossible. The problems Chagossians faced in securing housing and the frequent moves that were part of these difficulties increased the challenge of enrolling in and attending school regularly. As Dræbel explains, in the first years of arrival in Mauritius, Chagossians were concerned “before anything else with struggling to find the means to house themselves, to feed themselves, and to find themselves jobs. It is not surprising then that children’s schooling was not prioritized.”⁴⁰⁹ By 1975, Siophe found that more than one-quarter (27 percent) of children 6 to 16 years old were not attending school.⁴¹⁰

When families tried to enroll their children in schools, many encountered enrollment difficulties. Some in Seychelles were prevented from enrolling because they were foreigners. As one explained, “nu pa ti Seselwa” [we weren’t Seychellois]. Others were barred enrolment because they lacked birth certificates, which some lost during the removals. Some were told they were too old and were denied enrollment. Children in Mauritius often had similar difficulties enrolling in new schools because of their outsider status (see below) and age.

Chagossians' poverty alone was a major barrier to continuing their education in exile. In Mauritius, secondary school was made free and universal in 1976. Chagossians arrived at the latest in 1973, meaning that any students attempting to continue at the secondary school level had to pay for their schooling. This meant that prior to 1976 very few Chagossian children received any secondary school education in Mauritius. Many received no education at all in Mauritius and Seychelles. According to our survey, of those who did not attend school in Mauritius or Seychelles, 37.1 percent of first generation respondents reported not attending because either: 1) they had to work, 2) they could not afford to attend school, 3) they were told they were not eligible, or 4) there was no school available where they lived. (The same percentage reported not attending school because they were too old for school upon arrival; 17.1 percent reported not attending for other reasons.)

Other young Chagossians left school quickly after arrival because they went to find work to support their families financially or to care for younger children so others in their family could work. Those who went to school generally had little money for transportation, books, supplies, or food. Some report dropping out of school because of the lack of funds for such school necessities.

Reflecting and reacting to these educational difficulties, the Church World Service and several Mauritians worked to open a special school for Chagossians in August 1975. Called the "Diego Special Class," the school registered 35 students, ages 7 to 17, from around Port Louis. The Church World Service paid transportation fees. Francoise Botte served as a teacher in this school. She writes of the difficulties and "destitute living conditions" facing the students in attendance: "There was no strong parental control over the children, the parents were working. Other children were always moving from the aunties' place to the grandmother's place. They

never had a fixed address. Those around the age of 16 or 17 years old were already in drug addiction. Among the girls two eloped with boys when they were around 15 years old.” Only two of five candidates eligible to take the Primary Leaving School Certificate examination passed to proceed to secondary school.⁴¹¹ The school soon closed and Chagossian children in Mauritius were left to the public education system.

14.4. Post-Expulsion Educational Experience

14.4.1. Discrimination and Verbal Abuse

Chagossian access to education was further limited in Mauritius and Seychelles by discrimination at school. Experiences of discrimination and verbal abuse by teachers, school officials, and students were particularly severe in the years after arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles. Walker says that upon entering school Chagossian children were quickly identified as “Ilois.” Those born in Chagos were identified upon presentation of a birth certificate (necessary for enrollment) indicating one’s place of birth. Walker describes the reaction Chagossians received to their birth certificates: “A Chagos birth certificate is likely to be commented upon by the teacher; one informant reported that a teacher had laughed on being shown her daughter’s birth certificate. Regardless of whether or not this is correct, the general attitude is that such a birth certificate is unusual, and...the child will be classified as Ilois and that classification will quickly become common knowledge.”⁴¹² In Seychelles, the lack of a birth certificate or a Seychellois passport prevented some from entering school and a few much later from attending university, which requires overseas travel.

Chagossian children born in Mauritius were often identified as “Ilois” because of classmates’ knowledge of a family’s background or based on behaviors stereotypically

associated with Chagossians. Walker describes how this identification as Ilois led to discrimination, noting that Chagossian children tended to group together “as a method of alleviating discrimination.” Walker writes, “Ilois children are seen [stereotypically] as being ‘wild’ and troublesome.... For example, when a fight occurs at school, an Ilois child, if involved, will, at least initially, receive the blame. Hence there is an amount of discrimination within the classroom: a child identified as an Ilois is accorded the characteristics of the group stereotype.”⁴¹³

Chagossians describe people calling them Zilois in its derogatory sense when they tried to register for school. Others describe children harassing them in classes. Some were insulted by classmates for coming to school barefoot, unable to afford shoes or sandals, or for the poor quality of their clothing.

One of the non-Chagossian Mauritian interviewers who conducted our surveys provided telling evidence of the stereotypes associated with Chagossians and the discrimination they faced as a result. The interviewer said that he first became aware of Chagossians in his childhood when Mauritian children used the word *Ilois* to insult a peer whom everyone knew not to be an Ilois, but who was seen as being poor, dirty, smelly, and poorly dressed. Several of our other interviewers reported similar use of Ilois as an insult among children.⁴¹⁴ Walker confirms the same among children and adults alike.⁴¹⁵

14.4.2. Structural Disadvantage

As Mauritius and Seychelles began periods of macroeconomic growth in the mid-to-late 1970s, educational qualifications became increasingly important to employment and economic success. As we described in Chapter 7, “Joblessness,” the economies of the two nations increasingly

revolved around skilled, semi-skilled, and service sector jobs in factories, the tourism industry, and in the offshore finance sector. In this environment of employment and macroeconomic growth, Chagossians found themselves with significant structural disadvantages that made them among those least able to take advantage of the economic success the nations enjoyed.

In Chagos, low levels of formal education and illiteracy were insignificant to performing the vast majority of jobs. In Mauritius and Seychelles, having little formal education and being illiterate or nearly so were significant impediments to securing an increasingly large number of jobs and to achieving any kind of upward job mobility. Even in jobs outside the Export Processing Zone and tourist sectors, Chagossians had to compete against Mauritians and Seychellois who in most cases would have received more formal education than what Chagossians received in Chagos. Thus they competed for employment as newly arrived outsiders with almost no literacy among them. (Almost all Chagossians who were adults at the time of the expulsion left Chagos illiterate: In 1975, Siophe found that only 2 percent of Chagossian adults surveyed could read a little.)

This illiteracy among the older generation of Chagossians had wider effects than on their employment prospects alone. Their illiteracy also created a systematic disadvantage for their children: Their children grew up in households without an atmosphere of literacy and with adults who for the most part had never attended school, leaving them little able to help with schoolwork.

Those younger Chagossians who attended school in Chagos and attempted to continue their education in Mauritius or Seychelles started school with several additional disadvantages: They arrived in school with a low-quality educational background from Chagos, having had their education interrupted by the expulsion, often having experienced difficulty entering school, and

facing discrimination and abuse at school. With this background, one can understand the comment of one Chagossian woman who said that Chagossians were easy to identify in school after the expulsion because they were almost always the oldest students in classes, having had to repeat years and being left behind their grade level.

As importantly, Chagossians' economic poverty was a major structural disadvantage to their educational success. As described above, Chagossians usually lacked money for books, supplies, transportation, uniforms, food, exam fees, and other educational expenses. Lacking these items or struggling to afford some of them disadvantaged Chagossians relative to their classmates.

Chagossians' poverty also meant that staying in school was a luxury unavailable to many. With adult members of their households struggling to find work and income, many Chagossians left school to find jobs to contribute income to their families or to care for younger children to allow others in the family to work. Those who left school and found employment generally worked in unskilled jobs, as domestic servants, dock loaders, construction workers, and the like. Importantly, these jobs had few opportunities for upward mobility. In this way, leaving school to counteract their economic poverty by finding immediate employment may have damaged long-term employment prospects and perversely helped to perpetuate their poverty.

14.4.3. Current Educational Deprivation

While educational qualifications were becoming increasingly important to economic success in Mauritius and Seychelles, economic means in (at least) Mauritius have been equally if not more important to educational success. That is, Chagossians in Mauritius have found themselves in a structurally unequal educational system favoring the wealthy. One of the leading scholars of

education in Mauritius Sheila Bunwaree says of the educational system, “There is in-built in the system a number of mechanisms which contribute to the marginalization of vast sections of Mauritian society.”⁴¹⁶ Beyond being merely an unequal system in practice, which she finds it is, the Mauritian educational system actually contributes to creating and perpetuating inequality and the marginalization of poor, mostly Creole, Mauritians.

Elsewhere Bunwaree explains that though Mauritius made a significant commitment to its educational system from the introduction of universal free secondary and tertiary education in 1976, the poorest children have benefited least. While secondary school accessibility expanded, those who have performed least well in primary school usually do not progress to secondary school at all. The “vast majority” of the lowest performers in primary school have been “those who are poorly housed, poorly fed, poorly clothed and whose parents are poorly educated.” The Mauritian system thus maintains a meritocratic ideology, Bunwaree finds, but “is organized in such a way that it will only continue to reproduce inequalities,” primarily disadvantaging the poor and the Creole.⁴¹⁷

It is in this group of the poor and the Creole and in this unequal education system that Chagossians have found themselves in Mauritius. We echo Dræbel’s findings that within this structurally unequal system, Chagossians lack *de facto* access to education. Dræbel’s study reports that Chagossians have faced persistent barriers in their access to a quality education. Chagossians attend some of the worst schools in Mauritius, featuring high rates of teacher absenteeism. Chagossians hear discriminatory comments from teachers based on their ethnic identity. Dræbel describes widespread illiteracy and semi-illiteracy among Chagossian parents and our survey shows an illiteracy rate of 62.6 percent among first generation Chagossians. Along with other difficulties, she says, this is a major factor inhibiting the educational success of

Chagossian children. As Dræbel writes, although the conventional wisdom is that Chagossians growing up since 1976 have benefited from Mauritian educational opportunities, the reality for Chagossians is more in line with UNICEF statistics showing that 6 percent of children across Mauritius are completely illiterate and 20 percent are partially illiterate when dropping out of school.⁴¹⁸

Our survey and ethnographic data support these findings and show that Chagossians' educational deprivation is worse than described by Dræbel. In examining this data, we again remind readers of the comparisons with the citizens of other U.K. Overseas Territories, where illiteracy is as low as 2 percent in one of the poorest territories Saint Helena, and with rates in Mauritius and Seychelles of 15.7 percent and 8.1 percent respectively. This makes the illiteracy rate among second generation Chagossians, who should have benefited from the educational systems in Mauritius and Seychelles, more than twice that of the highest comparison rate.

Among Chagossians we surveyed:

- 62.6 percent illiteracy rate for first generation Chagossians;
- 59.0 percent first generation Chagossians could not read;
- 62.6 percent first generation Chagossians could not write;⁴¹⁹
- 35.7 percent illiteracy rate for second generation Chagossians;
- 30.6 percent second generation Chagossians could not read;
- 35.7 percent second generation Chagossians could not write;
- 8 as the median number of years of school attended by second generation Chagossians;
- Highest level of schooling attained for second generation Chagossians:

Elementary:	47.0%	National Youth Service (Sey):	3.0
Some secondary:	35.1	Vocational:	3.6
“A” level:	3.6	Some college or above:	6.6 ⁴²⁰
“O” level:	1.2		

- 61.2 percent of first generation respondents and 78.1 percent of second generation respondents reported needing to continue their education.

14.4.3.1 Attending Low-quality Schools

Chagossians also generally attend some of the worst schools in Mauritius. The best schools are known as “star schools” (a name derived from tourist rankings) and are generally attended by the wealthiest in Mauritius. The worst schools, generally attended by the poor, have been put on a priority list for their low performance. Among 28 such schools, schools serving all of the neighborhoods where Chagossians are concentrated are on the list: Roche Bois, Baie du Tombeau, Cassis, Pointe aux Sables, Cité la Cure, Sainte Croix, Cité Vallijee, and others.⁴²¹

According to researchers, teachers generally consider postings in schools like those attended by most Chagossians as punishment, bad luck, or the result of discrimination; most hope to be transferred. In line with these attitudes, most teachers at these schools have low opinions of their students, considering them to be unmotivated, ill mannered, disobedient, and even stupid.⁴²²

A detailed picture of one school in Roche Bois attended by many Chagossians is illustrative. In 1997, the Emmanuel Anquetil Government School had 614 students and only 17 teachers (5 deputy teachers were also at the school and all taught regularly because of the other teachers’ high absentee rates), yielding a 36 to 1 student-teacher ratio.⁴²³ The school had a pass rate of less than 20 percent on the Certificate of Primary Education exam, meaning students had been unable to score 35 percent in examinations of English, French, mathematics, and environmental studies after 6 years of school.⁴²⁴ According to Bunwaree, “Most of the teachers resented the fact that they worked at this school.” Like their colleagues at similar schools, most see their mostly Creole (including Chagossian) students as deficient. Most assume they come

from deficient, impoverished homes and speak about their students in derogatory terms. The headmaster of Anquetil School told Bunwaree bluntly that an official at the education ministry considered the school a “dumping ground” for teachers who are unwilling to work. “It seems,” writes Bunwaree, “that the school is ‘l’école des exclus’ (school for the excluded).”⁴²⁵

14.4.3.2. The Systematic Discrimination of Private Tutorials

In addition to these low performing and poorly staffed schools, many Chagossians are unable to benefit from the private tutorials that researchers have found are strongly linked to educational success. In many cases, students take tutorials with the same public school teacher who instructs them during the school day. Teachers often teach material from the official school curriculum that they do not have time to teach during school hours. Those students unable to afford the tutorials then miss parts of the school curriculum, which they are still expected to know and on which they will be examined. Tutorials have become an informal but systematic continuation of the school day for those with the money to afford them.

As Bunwaree explains, and as Dræbel and a UNICEF study agree, “Private tuition has become entrenched in the system,” leaving students from wealthier families, who often already attend the star schools, with significantly more access to schooling and to overall educational success.⁴²⁶ Students from poorer families, like most Chagossians, can rarely afford to pay for the same number of tutorials as wealthy families, if they can afford tutorials at all. Dræbel reports that more than half of Chagossian children surveyed took some private lessons, with parents seeing these expenses as necessary for their children’s educational success. Parents saw the tutorials as the only way to help their children overcome the frequent absenteeism of their children’s teachers and the overall poor quality of their education.⁴²⁷

14.4.3.3. The Costs of “Free” Education

Like Dræbel, we found that for Chagossian households, the extra costs of the technically free education in Mauritius can be a significant burden. These costs include long lists of books to buy every semester,⁴²⁸ paper and other supplies, uniforms, transportation costs, exam fees, lunches, and other expenses. Among its other activities, the Chagos Refugees Group frequently receives requests for financial assistance in meeting the costs of books and examination fees in particular. The group has given significant charitable sums to meet these costs as well as directly distributing school supplies to students. (The Mauritian Government has recently begun providing some grants and loans for the exams of some low-income students.)

Facing these educational barriers, large numbers of Chagossian teenagers have dropped out of school. Most explain that they left school because their families could no longer afford the extra costs of school or additionally because they needed to find a job to contribute to the household. Others note having had difficulties in school, including failing a grade and needing to repeat that year. Whatever the reason for dropping out—be it financial, educational, or a combination of the two—it is clear that Chagossians face significant structural barriers to achieving educational success.

14.5. Education for Other U.K. Overseas Territories Citizens

The contrast between education for Chagossians and among other citizens of the Overseas Territories is particularly stark. Again, indicators of educational achievement in the Overseas Territories are not far from those found in Great Britain and other high human development, industrialized nations. In the Falklands, three-quarters of the entire population reports secondary school or vocational qualifications (note how this statistic includes the entire population and thus

children not old enough to have completed school, meaning the rate is actually higher). In Anguilla and Saint Helena, the illiteracy rate is 5 percent and 2 percent respectively. Primary and secondary school enrollment in Saint Helena, the poorest and least economically developed of the Overseas Territories, is 100 percent for the relevant age groups. Both Anguilla and Saint Helena receive development funds for the improvement of education.⁴²⁹

14.6. Education for Others in Mauritius and Seychelles

Education standards across Mauritius and Seychelles are also superior to those found among Chagossians, further establishing another way Chagossians have been impoverished. Adult illiteracy is 15.7 percent in Mauritius and 8.1 percent in Seychelles, compared with 35.7 percent for the second generation of Chagossians, which was born and raised entirely in these countries, and 62.6 percent for first generation, some of whom attended school in exile. In Mauritius, net primary school enrollment is 93.6 percent and net secondary school enrollment is 65.6 percent. In Seychelles the figures are even higher at 99.3 percent and 98.5 percent. Compare this with our findings for Chagossians that only 53 percent of the generation born and raised in Mauritius and Seychelles (among those 16 and older) has progressed to secondary school, with just 14.4 percent completing secondary school and an additional 3.6 percent attending or completing vocational school.⁴³⁰

14.7. Conclusion

In this chapter we have documented Chagossians' educational deprivation. This dimension of impoverishment began with the deterioration of schooling in Chagos and the interruption of schooling during the removals. The impoverishment continued in Mauritius and Seychelles

through barriers to enrollment, limited availability of universal public education until 1976 in Mauritius and 1981 in Seychelles, and discrimination and verbal abuse at school. Further, Chagossians students have faced systematic educational disadvantages common among poor students and specific to Chagossians, which have led to subsequent employment and economic disadvantages.

In conclusion, it is important to note that Chagossians' educational deprivation has not affected students alone. This dimension of impoverishment has spread beyond the students themselves to affect entire households. Not only do the costs and the frustrations of schooling impose financial and psychological burdens on households, but students' educational difficulties have also affected their employment success, which has in turn affected their income generating capabilities and thus overall household income. Even further, just as the educational weaknesses of older generations of Chagossians disadvantaged current Chagossian students, the difficulties of current students will likely influence the educational success and life outcomes of the next generation as well.

15. ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION

Ethnic discrimination is another dimension of impoverishment that is not part of the IRR model's eight original subprocesses of impoverishment but one which the model and other scholars acknowledge to be a common experience affecting involuntarily displaced populations. The IRR model stresses that involuntary displacement often leads to conflicts and social tensions between host communities and involuntary newcomers, including discrimination against the displacees. For most host communities, the movement of new groups into their communities is as involuntary as it is for displaced populations. When little planning or resettlement assistance goes into the displacement of populations, the introduction of a new group can lead to significant societal tensions. "The inflows of displacees increase pressure on resources and scarce social services, as well as competition for employment," Cernea explains. "Cultural clashes (in nonhomogenous areas) are quite likely, and social tensions tend to endure for a long time."⁴³¹

Like other displaced populations, Chagossians have experienced discrimination by host communities in Mauritius and Seychelles since their arrival from Chagos. Chagossians have been called derogatory names and have been the targets of curses. As we have discussed in previous chapters, Chagossians have faced discrimination and other forms of ill treatment, particularly in the realms of work, school, the marketplace, and other parts of daily life. Most notably perhaps, Chagossians have been excluded from employment on the military base at Diego Garcia, while others from Mauritius, the Philippines, India, and other nations have worked there in civilian contractor roles. In Mauritius and to a lesser extent in Seychelles, Chagossians have as people of mostly African descent found themselves in an environment of pervasive racism against Creoles, a group into which they are lumped. In this context, Chagossians have

generally been considered to occupy the lowest social strata in the Mauritian and Seychellois social hierarchies. We summarize the impoverishment of ethnic discrimination below:

- Discrimination and ill-treatment as Chagossians of a particularly intense nature after arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles, with particular impact on women;
- 66 percent of first generation survey respondents report verbal abuse from host populations, as part of widespread evidence of ongoing verbal abuse, derogatory stereotyping, and other bigotry suffered as Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles, where Chagossians have generally been considered the lowest segment of society;
- 50 percent of first generation survey respondents report suffering employment or other discrimination, as part of widespread evidence of ongoing discrimination and ill-treatment as Chagossians, especially in the areas of employment, education, the marketplace, and public life
- Compounding discrimination for most Chagossians who are categorized socially as darker-pigmented Creoles of African descent, especially in Mauritius in an environment of pervasive racism against people of African descent;
- Exclusion from employment on the military base at Diego Garcia, while Mauritians, Filipinos, and others work as civilian contractors.

15.1. A History of Discrimination and Ill Treatment

15.1.1. *Discrimination after Arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles*

The scholarly literature shows that involuntarily displacing populations into new communities increases competition for resources and social tensions generally. Chagossians arrived in Mauritius and Seychelles at times of already heightened social tensions as Mauritius and Seychelles transitioned from British colonies into independent nations. Chagossians arrived in host nations facing conflict and dissension about the future of each country and control over political and economic power. In Mauritius, a sizable group of Chagossians arrived just prior to and after independence, during a period that featured Creole-Muslim rioting in Port Louis and considerable instability. In both countries Chagossians arrived facing national unemployment

rates of 20 percent or higher. The arrival of new competition for jobs was noted with considerable anxiety by many of the Chagossians' hosts.

In this context Chagossians experienced significant discrimination and ill treatment as Chagossians. During these early years in Mauritius the word "Ilois" shifted from a term of identification to a term of insult, pronounced derisively *Zzeel-wah*. The literature on Chagossians documents this early discrimination. In 1975, Ottaway was among the first to mention discrimination by Mauritian "employers who favor local Mauritians."⁴³² In Seychelles, discriminatory treatment against Chagossians began when about 30 were housed in a local prison with the assistance of local authorities, while higher-level Moulinie & Co. staff lived in hotels.

Botte best illustrates the early discrimination and ill treatment against Chagossians. Botte writes that Chagossians suffered discrimination from their Mauritian neighbors, particularly in their search for employment and in the low salaries they received.⁴³³ She explains, "The Ilois are an unskilled and illiterate community and as such they are vulnerable to exploitation in areas such as Port Louis."⁴³⁴

Desperate to find work and earn income after their arrival, many Chagossians used "intermediates" to connect them with employers and jobs. When Chagossians were to be paid however, the intermediates took most of their salaries. Many intermediates and employers appear to have exploited Chagossians' innumeracy and unfamiliarity with money. Botte explains how the exploitation worked, particularly against Chagossian women: "These 'intermediates' explained to the employers that these Ilois women are not used to money and [that] some money could be given to the intermediates from the salary of that poor maid-servant or washerwoman. These Mauritian employers preferred to engage the Ilois women because [the Ilois women] did not know about labour law and the employers had only to exchange a [M]Rs10

note into many coins to make the employees believe[] that it was much money.” Walker testifies to the same form of exploitation in his 1986 study.⁴³⁵ (Over time, Botte says, Chagossian women realized that they were being cheated and became more assertive with Mauritian employers.)⁴³⁶

Women were particularly vulnerable to and victimized by other ill treatment as well. As we detailed in Chapter 12, “Increased Morbidity and Mortality,” Mauritian public assistance officers pretended to offer assistance only to use their power to take sexual advantage of Chagossian women and to assist friends in doing the same. Given Chagossians’ inexperience buying everyday commodities in Mauritius, Botte says, “even the shopkeeper cheated them.”⁴³⁷ Again preyed upon for their innumeracy and unfamiliarity with the Mauritian economy, and as Chagossians widely attest, many Chagossians also became vulnerable to the exploitation of local money lenders and pawnsmen charging high rates of interest and keeping newcomers in debt.⁴³⁸

15.1.2. Discrimination against People of Primarily African Descent

Arriving in Mauritius, and to a lesser extent in Seychelles, Chagossians entered a new social environment of longstanding racism and discrimination against people of mostly or entirely African descent, known locally as Creoles. In Mauritius, bigotry and prejudice against Creoles dates from the introduction of enslaved African peoples as part of the first human settlements on the island. Bigotry against people of African ancestry increased with the introduction of indentured laborers from India, soon to make up the majority of Mauritius’s population and against whom they were pitted. Since this time, people of European descent have remained at the top of the social hierarchy; people of some European descent and people of Indian ancestry have occupied a middle strata; Creoles have remained primarily working class and at the bottom of the hierarchy.

In Seychelles, where the population is a significantly more homogeneous mixture of people mostly of African, European, and mixed descent, there is less discrimination against people of African descent (in part because few Seychellois do not have at least some (recent) African ancestry). Still, high social and economic status in Seychelles remains closely linked to lightly pigmented skin. Discrimination against darker-pigmented Seychellois remains.

In part because of their generally dark complexions (as we explained in Chapter 7, “Joblessness”), Chagossians in Mauritius are generally identified as belonging to a small subset of Creoles, known as *ti-kreol* [literally, little Creole], who occupy the most marginal and lowest-paying occupations.⁴³⁹ In Seychelles as well, Chagossians are mostly seen as part of a stigmatized darker-pigmented minority in a society dominated primarily by the wealthiest and lightest-pigmented people of some or all European descent.⁴⁴⁰

Removed to Mauritius and Seychelles, Chagossians were thus left in positions most vulnerable to ethnic and racial discrimination, both as dark-skinned Creoles and as Chagossians. Because they belong to two stigmatized groups, the discrimination Chagossians have faced often involves a complex array of overlapping prejudice and bigotry. Below we continue detailing the forms of discrimination they have experienced in this environment of racism and bigotry.

15.2. Derogatory Stereotyping, Verbal Abuse, and other Bigotry against Chagossians

One of the most obvious ways in which Chagossians have suffered bigotry and ill treatment has been when they have been the target of derogatory insults and other verbal abuse specific to their being Chagossian. In answer to a question in our survey, nearly two-thirds (65.5 percent) of first generation Chagossians and almost half of second generation respondents (44.7 percent) said that

they had been the victim of verbal abuse because they were Chagossian. Other research supports Chagossians' claims of discrimination.⁴⁴¹

Chagossians describe hearing people shout that they should, "Go back to the islands!" In Mauritius, Chagossians were called Zilois with such derision that the word transformed from a term of identification into a curse that helped inspire the creation of the term *Chagossian*. As Walker notes, the term *Ilois* is often used among Mauritians to describe any person "behaving in an antisocial or immoral fashion."⁴⁴² In Seychelles, many heard curses of "Anara!" suggesting that they had no identity, that they were uncivilized pagans and soulless, and that as a people, the Chagossians were the lowest of the low. Others in both nations were called *sovaz* [savage] and *bet* [stupid].

Lisette Volfrin explained that some of the worst days for her were the first years after her family's arrival in Seychelles. She remembers walking to school from their home, a converted animal stall on a relative's land, with neighbors throwing apricots, fallen from the trees, at her and her siblings. She remembers neighbors spitting on them. All the people living near their home were very mean and cruel, she said. People would say they had not been vaccinated and would make them sick. (This was another common insult aimed at Chagossians. If they had not been previously vaccinated, Chagossians in Seychelles were vaccinated upon arrival at customs. As described in Chapter 12, "Increased Morbidity and Mortality," evidence seems to point to the opposite of the insult's implication that Chagossians would make others sick: living in Mauritius and Seychelles has made many Chagossians sick.)

Josiane Selmour explained that because she is a Chagossian born in Mauritius, her language and accent are different than that of Chagossians born in Chagos. But when Mauritians hear the accent from Chagos, she said, 'They call Chagossians bad words, they call them names.

They say Zilois, sovaz, bet.' Mrs. Selmour said that Mauritians have been cruel to Chagossians, in the past and to this day. Even members of her church have made bigoted comments about Chagossians in her presence, not knowing that she is an *enfant Chagossien*.

Walker describes widespread negative stereotyping and prejudice against Chagossians. From an informal survey of shopkeepers' opinions of Chagossians, Walker reports "a wide range of responses varying from savage and uncivilized troublemakers to pleasant and honest victims of circumstance." But "the stereotypical Ilois is frequently assigned the attributes of laziness and drunkenness." Walker describes—ironically but not surprisingly—significant tension and animosity between Chagossians and Mauritian Creoles in particular. He writes of a Creole and wider Mauritian "perception of the Ilois as an inferior group, unwanted in Mauritius generally and in the local community in particular.... A dispute between a Creole and an Ilois may end in the Creole saying: 'Why don't you go back where you came from? We didn't ask you to come here.'"⁴⁴³

The lead author met several Mauritians who, knowing the subject of our research, offered opinions about Chagossians conforming to these common bigoted stereotypes. Some described Chagossians as "lazy" and unwilling to work. Others said that Chagossians only want to eat and drink and be given things rather than work for them (a reference to their struggle to gain compensation).

Even some who expressed considerable sympathy for Chagossians offered some of the most bigoted comments. One businessperson in Port Louis said he remembered the intense discrimination Chagossians faced after arriving in Mauritius. He blamed the United Kingdom for trying to wash its hands of the Chagossians and leaving them in Mauritius. He recalled the protests Chagossians held in the early 1980s and the land some Chagossians finally received as

part of the compensation they won in 1982. But Chagossians were cheated, he said. They sold their land to Mauritians and got cheated out of the land because Chagossians did not know about real estate and land sales. Giving them their own land, the man remarked, it was like giving “a razor to a monkey”: The monkey will cut himself.

15.3. Experiences of Discrimination

15.3.1. Diego Garcia Base Jobs

For Chagossians, one of the most painful forms of discrimination they have suffered has been their exclusion from jobs at the Diego Garcia military base. Since at least the 1980s, the base has employed non-military service workers who are neither U.S. nor U.K. citizens. Most of these workers have come from Mauritius and the Philippines. When Chagossians have attempted to apply for and obtain these jobs at recruitment offices in Mauritius they have been rejected repeatedly. It appears that no one who was born in Chagos or who is the child of parents born in Chagos has worked in Diego Garcia since the expulsion. Two Indian Ocean scholars confirm that, “One of the ironies of this construction upsurge [at the base in the 1980s] is that laborers are being recruited in Mauritius; however it has been stipulated that no Ilois...are to be allowed to go.”⁴⁴⁴ At least one grandchild of someone born in Chagos has worked on the base in the laundry and in other jobs. His obtaining a job seems to support the claim that Chagossians have been disqualified from employment on the basis of their place of birth or their parents’ place of birth.

Jacques Victor, a Chagossian born in Diego Garcia, said that he went three times to apply for jobs on Diego Garcia and was rejected each time. As soon as they saw that he was born in Diego, he said, they turned him away. Mr. Victor used these rejections as an opportunity to talk

about his entire experience in Mauritius. “They judge us,” before even knowing us, he said in broken English. ‘It’s as if life is a prison for us here in Mauritius—there is a lot of discrimination.’ “Beaucoup, beaucoup discrimination. Beaucoup,” he said, switching into French. Lots, lots of discrimination. Lots.

15.3.2. Other Employment Discrimination

As Ottaway first indicated in 1975, Chagossians have suffered other forms of employment discrimination since arriving in Mauritius and Seychelles. Our findings show that 49.6 percent of the first generation and 33.5 percent of the second said they have suffered job or other discrimination as a Chagossian. Chagossians in Mauritius describe being denied work when employers see their place of birth on a job application or on their national identity card. Chagossians in Seychelles describe how their national identity card is the source of job and other forms of discrimination when Seychellois realize they were not born in Seychelles: For those born outside Seychelles, the identification number on one’s national identity card includes the number “5” in the third set of digits indicating that its holder was born outside Seychelles.

Walker also reports Chagossians perceiving and experiencing discrimination in the labor market. Although discrimination is illegal in Mauritius, he says, “A policy of ‘last in, first out,’ for example, means that when redundancies are necessary Ilois workers are usually the first to go.”⁴⁴⁵

From Chapter 7, “Joblessness,” we repeat part of a conversation with Mr. Victor describing his experience with employment discrimination in Mauritius. The lead author asked Mr. Victor, who at the time was working weekends as an informal clothing vendor, if he thought it would be possible to find a better paying job. “In Mauritius, no. In Mauritius, no,” Mr. Victor

responded in English. “Ilois have the qualifications. But they [Mauritian employers] say, ‘How can they have this kind of qualification?’ They much prefer [to keep us] lower than low. It’s like that.”⁴⁴⁶

15.3.3. Other Experiences of Discrimination: Schooling and Health Care

Chagossians report other experiences of discrimination, particularly in the realms of education, health care, the marketplace, and public life. Like all discrimination, it is difficult to confirm all these reports. Given the pervasiveness of such reports by Chagossians and non-Chagossians alike, there is strong evidence of widespread discrimination. The widespread perception of discrimination is also notable, reflecting many Chagossians’ feelings of discomfort living in Mauritius and Seychelles. We have described many of these experiences of discrimination in previous chapters and briefly review some of them here.

Discrimination at school has limited Chagossian access to education. Experiences of discrimination and verbal abuse by teachers, school officials, and students were particularly severe in the years after arrival in Mauritius and Seychelles. Walker found that upon entering school, Chagossian children were quickly identified as “Ilois.” Many became the target of insults and jokes by teachers and students as a result.⁴⁴⁷

Sandra Cheri, a Chagossian hospital nurse, described how Chagossians are discriminated against in Mauritian hospitals. Mrs. Cheri said that Chagossians are the last served in the hospital, along with people from the Mauritian dependency Rodrigues. Chagossians are “désfavorisé”—disadvantaged—in the hospital, she added. While some of this is a matter of discrimination, she said, some is also a function of their language and communications troubles in explaining their problems to hospital staff.⁴⁴⁸

Some Chagossians in Seychelles experienced additional discrimination because of their lack of citizenship status following the expulsion. Unlike Chagossians in Mauritius who became Mauritian citizens under the first Mauritian constitution, Chagossians in Seychelles were not automatically granted Seychelles citizenship and had no citizenship for years. In Seychelles, Chagossians became a people without a country and without a nationality. And without Seychellois citizenship, many tell of being denied housing, jobs, education, and other services that they were told were reserved for Seychellois. Living in what was a one-party state from 1977 to 1992, many feared being deported as foreigners and were hesitant to object to such treatment or to claim rights for themselves.

15.4. Conclusion

The removal from Chagos placed Chagossians in positions in Mauritius and Seychelles of overlapping and pervasive discrimination, racism, and prejudice as Chagossians and (mostly) darker-pigmented people of African descent, called Creoles. There is evidence that Chagossians have faced discrimination in employment, education, the marketplace, and other parts of public life. Our survey found that 65.6 and 44.7 percent of first and second generation Chagossians respectively report having faced verbal abuse as Chagossians. To another question about discrimination, 49.6 percent and 33.5 percent of the first and second generations reported experiencing job or other discrimination. Clearly verbal abuse and discrimination are component parts of many of the other dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment (especially joblessness, marginalization, and sociocultural fragmentation). We isolated ethnic discrimination here to emphasize our finding that discrimination has been one of the major dimensions of Chagossians' impoverishment as a result of the expulsion.

16. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In this report we have documented how the expulsion of the Chagossian people by the U.S. and U.K. governments has resulted in Chagossians' severe, chronic impoverishment. Building on over three years of research and other scholarship on involuntarily displaced populations, we have shown how there are ten major dimensions to Chagossians' impoverishment—traumatic expulsion, joblessness, economic and social-psychological marginalization, homelessness, landlessness and lost common property, food insecurity and malnutrition, increased morbidity and mortality, sociocultural fragmentation, educational deprivation, and ethnic discrimination.

As we have demonstrated, each of these ten dimensions has damaged Chagossians in significant ways. Analytically we can separate each dimension of impoverishment and discuss them in turn, as we have done. In practice and in the experience of the Chagossians (and any impoverished group), the ten dimensions are intertwined and overlapping, having the cumulative effect of creating Chagossians' overall impoverishment. Indeed our terminological revision to Michael Cernea's "Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction" model, to identify "dimensions" of impoverishment (rather than "subprocesses") is in part an attempt to emphasize the interrelatedness of the ten and how each is a component part of the larger impoverishment experienced by Chagossians.

In this report we have also documented five distinct standards against which we can see the Chagossians' impoverishment: First, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to their former lives in Chagos. Second, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the standard of living enjoyed by citizens of other U.K. Overseas Territories. Third, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to the standard of living enjoyed by most citizens of Mauritius and Seychelles. Fourth, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to other populations living in

the vicinity of overseas U.S. military bases. And fifth, Chagossians have been impoverished relative to evolving human rights norms.

Finally, we have shown how the Chagossians' expulsion and their subsequent impoverishment appear to constitute multiple violations of fundamental human rights norms. These apparent violations are based on our analysis of widely accepted international agreements and declarations, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Given previous scholarly findings on involuntary displacement around the globe, it is not surprising that the Chagossians' expulsion—their having been dérasiné from their homelands—resulted in their chronic impoverishment. Other cases of involuntary displacement, including cases at other U.S. military bases, show that without proper preventative steps, involuntary displacement causes impoverishment. When the United States and the United Kingdom forcibly displaced the Chagossians, the governments implemented no preventative steps to prevent the Chagossians from being impoverished. More than three years of original research documented in this report confirms that the major consequence of the Chagossians' expulsion has been the severe, chronic impoverishment of Chagossians' economic, material, physical, psychological, social, and cultural lives in a manner and to a degree that appear to constitute multiple violations of their fundamental human rights.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH OUTREACH CARD

Side 1 Text:

RECHERCHES AVEK BANNE CHAGOSSIENS

My name is David Vine.

I am a student of the social and human sciences from the City University of New York, in the United States.

I am interested in learning more about the lives of Chagossians before and after le déracinement from Chagos.

No one knows more about this issue than Chagossians who are my teachers.

If you would like to learn more about my project or if you have ideas for me, you can contact me at 736 5712.

Side 2 Text:

You can also contact me by post after 26 August: 110 Lafayette Avenue, Apartment 3F, Brooklyn, NY 11217-4200, USA; or by email at davidsvine@hotmail.com.

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints, you can contact Dick Kwan Tat at: 212 6913

or

my professor: Shirley Lindenbaum, Department of Anthropology, Graduate Center, CUNY, 365 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016-4301, USA.; or at lindenbaum@mindspring.com.

Thank you for your interest and I look forward to getting to know you better in the days and weeks to come.

-David

APPENDIX B: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Note: The following is an English version of a survey delivered to Chagossians. For Chagossians born in Mauritius or Seychelles, Section C asking questions about life in Chagos was omitted. The questionnaire was developed by Dr. Phillip Harvey, Dr. Wojtek Sokolowski, David Vine, and the Camarades des Recherches. The questionnaire was translated into Mauritian Kreol by Komadhi Mardemootoo and Seychellois Kreol by Jean-Claude Mahoune and Julianne Barra.

Questionnaire with Chagossians

A. Identifying Information

A.1 Interview number _____

A.2 Respondent's name _____

A.3 Respondent's address _____

A.4 Date of interview ____ / ____ / ____ and time ____ : ____ - ____ : ____

A.5 Interviewer's initials _____

A.6 Place of Interview _____

Introduction

My name is _____. Thank you very much for agreeing to be part of this "Recherches avek banne Chagossiens" and answering this questionnaire. Your answers are very important to the research, which is trying to understand more about the lives of Chagossians here and in Chagos.

Before I begin to ask you questions, I need to explain a few more things about the questionnaire and make sure that you still want to answer the questionnaire.

The questionnaire is part of the research of David Vine, the American student working with the Chagossian community. The main purpose of the research is to help the lawsuits being brought by many Chagossians against the American and British governments to win the right to return to Chagos and to gain compensation.

I hope you will enjoy answering the questions about your life. Because there have been many painful experiences for the Chagossians, it is possible that some of the questions may be hard or upsetting to answer. If you ever have that problem, you can always choose to skip a question or take a break if you need one.

If you have any questions for me during the questionnaire, you can always ask me. If you have a question or comment after the end of the questionnaire you can always contact me or David Vine or other people involved in the research with the contact information on this flyer. [Give flyer now.]

If you ever want to stop the questionnaire at any point or if you do not want to talk to me about any specific issue, you can do that at any time—just tell me.

Eventually David Vine and another researcher will be writing about the Chagossians but they will never write anything that uses your name and I will never tell anyone else anything you say to me during our conversation. Everything you say to me will be kept strictly confidential and private. We are even applying for a Certificate of Confidentiality in the United States to make sure no one can ever see your answers.

I will ask you a series of questions that should last about 1 hour. Answer each question truthfully and as best you can. If you do not know an answer, that is not a problem and you can just say, “I do not know.” If you do not want to answer a question, just say “skip this question,” or “I do not want to answer this question.” And if you need to take a break, tell me and we can take a break.

Thank you for talking with me and don’t forget you can ask me any questions at any time. Do you have any questions? [Answer any questions now.]

[Consent] With this information, do you agree to take part in this questionnaire?

“Yes” [Interviewer initials] _____ “No” [Interviewer Initials and end] _____

Some questions may seem strange or even stupid or they may not apply to you, but for the research I must ask all the same questions to every person. Again, ask me if you have any questions.

Most importantly, you should know that your answers will not be shared with anyone except David Vine and the other researchers. No other Chagossians and no one else at all will see your answers. All the information about you will be kept strictly confidential and private.

Do you have any have questions before we begin? OK, let’s start.

B. Chagos Birth

First I have to ask you questions that you have probably answered before, but I have to ask them for the questionnaire:

Q1. Were you born in Chagos?
(1) Yes (2) No

Q2. Were your parents born in Chagos?
(1) Yes (2) No

C. Life in Chagos

Interviewer: Ask questions in this section only if the Respondent answered "Yes" to Q1. If the answer to Q1 was "No" and the answer to Q2 was "Yes" skip Section C and go directly to Section D.

Q3. How did you first come to be on Chagos?

- (1) I was born there (what is your DOB _____)
- (2) I came there to work (when did you arrive _____)
- (3) I came with a family member (when did you arrive _____)
- (4) Other (explain and provide date of your arrival _____)
- (7) DK¹
- (9) RF²

Q4. What island(s) did you live on?

- (1) Diego Garcia
- (2) Peros Banhos
- (3) Salomon
- (4) Egmont
- (5) Eagle
- (6) Trois Freres
- (7) Six Isles
- (8) Other(s) (_____)
- (9) DK
- (10) RF

Q5. How did you leave Chagos?

- (1) I left looking for work (date of your departure _____)
- (2) I left for holidays and I was not allowed to return (date of your departure _____)
- (3) I left to get medical care (date of your departure _____)
- (4) I left with a relative/family (date of your departure _____)
- (5) I was ordered or forced to leave (date of your departure _____)
- (6) Other (explain, and provide date of your departure _____)

- (7) DK
- (8) RF

Q6. Just before you left Chagos, how many people lived in the house where you slept on most nights (including yourself)? _____ (7777 if DK; 9999 if RF)

Q7. How many rooms did your house have, counting sallédebain, toilet, kitchen that you did not share with others? _____

Q8. Who owned the land on which that house was built?

- (1) I/my family owned it
- (2) Someone else owned it (who: _____)
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Q9. Who did you or your family get the land from?

- (1) Family member/in the family for generations
- (2) Employer/administrator
- (3) Other
- (4) DK
- (5) RF

¹ "DK" = Don't know

² "RF" = Refused

Q10. How big was the lot on which your house was built?

- (1) length _____ metres
- (2) width _____ metres
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Interviewer: Use the size of the property where the interview is conducted as a reference to benchmark or verify the Respondent's answers.

Q11. Did the land have a view of the ocean?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Q12. Could you or your family have given the land on which your house was built to someone else, (for example, your children)?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. DK
- 4. RF

Q13. Did you or your family have any land other than the plot on which your house was located (in Chagos)?

- (1) Yes [Go to next Q]
- (2) No [Go directly to Q16]
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Q 14. What was the size of that land?

- (1) length _____ metres
- (2) width _____ metres
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Interviewer: Use the size of the property where the interview is conducted as a reference to benchmark or verify the Respondent's answers.

Q15. How did you use that land (check all that apply):

- (1) Grow fruits, vegetables, or other plants
- (2) grass for animals
- (3) Make or store things (what _____)
- (4) Let others use it (what did you get in exchange? _____)
- (5) Other (what _____)
- (6) DK
- (7) RF

Q16. From the list that I will read, please let me know all the things that belonged to you or your family or household that you had to leave behind in Chagos [check all that apply]

- (1) clothing
- (2) furniture
- (3) work of art (musical instruments, crafts, other objects of sentimental value)
- (4) tools, other instruments
- (5) vehicles or boats [how many_____]
- (6) pets [how many_____]
- (7) farm animals [what kinds and how many_____]
- (8) Graves [how many_____]
- (9) Garden
- (10) other (what things_____)
- (11) DK
- (12) RF

Q17. Before you left Chagos, for whom did you work for pay of any kind (cash, credit, food, other goods or things)? (check all that apply)

- (1) I worked for someone else (including a family member)
- (2) I worked for myself or owned/operated a business
- (3) Didn't work [go to Q22]
- (4) Other (what _____)
- (5) DK
- (6) RF

Q18. What kind of work did you do?

(check all that apply)

- (1) Work in an office [like accounting, maintaining a register of employees; etc.]
- (2) Manual work [like any copra work, maid, cleaning, construction, carpentry, steel work, baker, farm, agriculture, or animal work, fishing, etc.;]
- (3) "Commandeur"/foreman/supervisor
- (4) Cook, baker, chef, pastry chef, etc.
- (5) Child care/babysitting
- (6) Supervise other workers
- (7) Operate a vehicle, transport people or goods
- (8) Sell things
- (9) Fix things
- (10) Other work (what _____)
- (11) DK
- (12) RF

Q19. What time did you start work and end work most days?

Time start working ____ : ____

Time end working ____ : ____

Any time off for breaks, meals, etc. during work? ____ : ____

Interviewer calculate hours worked minus breaks ____ : ____

(77:77 for DK; 99:99 for RF)

Q20. Which days did you primarily work most weeks?

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday
 Friday Saturday Sunday

Interviewer: Total number of days checked _____

Q21. What did you receive in exchange for your work each month?

(READ EACH RESPONSE and check all that apply)

- (1) Cash (Rs _____)
- (2) Credit/advance (Rs _____)
- (3) Food or drinks (_____)
- (4) Building/construction materials
- (5) Child care
- (6) Animals _____
- (7) Transportation
- (8) Land (_____)
- (9) Health care
- (10) education
- (11) Pension (Rs _____)

- (12) Paid holidays/vacations (how many days per year _____)
- (13) Clothing
- (14) Tools for work or in the house
- (15) Cooking supplies/equipment
- (16) Other (what _____)
- (17) DK
- (18) RF

Q22. Did you do any extra work for yourself or the administrator or others (overtime or extra work)? [For example: catching rats, beetles, etc.]

- (1) Yes
- (2) No [Go to Section D]
- (3) DK (4) RF

Q23. What did you receive for this work (overtime or extra work)?

- (1) Cash (Rs _____ per _____)
- (2) Credit
- (3) Food or drinks
- (4) Other things (_____)
- (5) DK
- (6) RF

D. Life in Mauritius/Seychelles

Now I am going to ask you some questions about your life here in Mauritius/Seychelles.

Q24. How did you and your family support itself when you first arrived in Mauritius/Seychelles?

(check all that apply)

- (1) Job
- (2) Money or other things from family
- (3) Money or other things from friends
- (4) Money or other things from government (social security)
- (5) Charity
- (6) Money lender
- (7) Other (_____)
- (8) DK
- (9) RF

Q25. In the place where you sleep now on most nights, how many people, including yourself, sleep together in that place? _____

Q26. Who owns the place where you sleep now on most nights?

- (1) I/my family owns it [Go to Q28]
- (2) Someone else (including government) owns it (who _____)
- (3) Other [including no home;] (explain _____)
- (4) DK
- (5) RF

Q27. What do you pay in exchange for living in this place?

- (1) I pay rent in cash (how much per month: Rs _____)
- (2) I pay rent with other goods or things (what kind and how much _____)

- (3) Housing is a benefit from my employer (how much _____)
- (4) Other (explain and how much _____)
- (5) DK
- (6) RF

28. How big is the place you/your family stays in, [*and ask if the family is the owner*] and how much is it worth?

- (1) length _____ meters
- (2) width _____ meters
- (3) value _____ Rs
- (4) DK
- (5) RF

Interviewer: Use the size of the facility in which the interview is conducted as a reference to benchmark or verify the Respondent's answers. If the interview is conducted in the Respondent's house, verify the answers by visual inspection.

Q29. Of what materials is the place where you sleep constructed?

- (1) Mostly concrete blocks/bricks
- (2) Mostly corrugated iron
- (3) Mostly wood
- (4) Mostly grass/branches
- (5) Other (what _____)
- (6) DK
- (7) RF

Q30. Does that place have any of the following (Read each response):

- (1) cement or wooden floor
- (2) walls inside the place (number of rooms, not including salledebain, toilet, kitchen:
_____ rooms)
- (3) running water
- (4) plumbing (sewer)
- (5) toilet in the house
- (6) showering room in the house
- (7) kitchen in the house
- (8) electricity
- (9) DK
- (10) RF

Q31. Who owns the land on which the place you sleep is built?

- (1) I/my family owns it [*Go to Q33 directly*]
- (2) Someone else owns it (who _____)
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Q32. How much have you or others paid in exchange for using the land on which this place was built?

- (1) I /my family pay(s) rent in cash (how much: Rs _____)
- (2) I/my family pay(s) rent with other goods or things (what kind and value _____)
- (3) The use of that land is a benefit from my employer (explain _____)
- (4) Nothing/free (Rs0.00)
- (5) Other (explain _____)

- (6) DK
- (7) RF

Q33. How big is the lot on which the house is built?

- (1) length _____ meters
- (2) width _____ meters
- (3) A flat
- (4) DK
- (5) RF

Interviewer: Use the size of the property where the interview is conducted as a reference to benchmark or verify the Respondent's answers. If the interview is conducted in the Respondent's house, verify the answers by visual inspection.

Q34. Does the house have a view of the ocean?

- (1) Yes (2) No (3) DK (4) RF

Interviewer: If the interview is conducted in the Respondent's house, verify the answer by visual inspection.

Q35. Do you or the people who sleep in the house have any land other than the plot on which the house is located?

- (1) Yes [Go to next Q] (2) No [Go to Q38] (3) DK (4) RF

Q36. What is the size of that land?

- (1) length _____ meters
- (2) width _____ meters
- (3) DK
- (4) RF

Interviewer: Use the size of the property where the interview is conducted as a reference to benchmark or verify the Respondent's answers.

Q37. How do you or other people use that land (check all that apply):

- (1) Grow fruits, vegetables, or other plants
- (2) Keep/graze animals
- (3) Make or store things (what _____)
- (4) Let others use it (what did you get in exchange? _____)
- (5) Other (what _____)

Q38. Right now, are you working for pay or in exchange for other goods or things?

- (1) Yes [Go to next Q] (2) No [Go to Q43] (3) DK (4) RF

Q39. What kind of work are you doing now?

(check all that apply)

- (1) Work in an office (what _____)
- (2) Construction work [including construction, cleaning, laborer, maid, etc.;] (what _____)
- (3) Domestic/cleaning work
- (3) Child care/babysitting
- (4) Service work [including work in a store, restaurant, etc.;] (what _____)
- (5) Supervise other workers (what _____)
- (6) Operate a vehicle, transport people or things (what _____)
- (10) Other (what _____)

Q40. On most days, what time do you start work and end work?

Time start working _____

Time end working _____

Any time off for breaks, meals, etc. during work? _____

(Interviewer calculate hours worked minus breaks _____)

Q41. Which days of the week do you normally work right now?

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday

Friday Saturday Sunday

[Interviewer calculate total number of days checked].

Q42. Right now, what do you receive in exchange for your work each week?

(check all that apply)

(1) Cash (how much per week _____ Rs)

(2) Credit (how much per week _____ Rs)

(3) Food (how much per week _____)

(4) Housing or lodging

(5) Other goods or things (what kind and how much per week ____)

(6) Land or use of land (how much _____)

(7) Health care and/or medicines (what _____)

(8) Training/education (what and how much _____)

(9) Pension, old age benefits (how much _____)

(10) Paid holidays/vacations (how many days per year _____)

(11) Other (what and how much _____)

Q43. Now, thinking about the last 12 months, how much have you worked for pay or in exchange for other things? [read each answer]

(1) I never had work for pay or in exchange for other things during the past 12

(3) I worked for pay or in exchange for other things on only a few days
during the last 12 months

(4) I worked a few weeks during the last 12 months

(5) I worked for a few months during the last 12 months

(6) I worked most months during the last 12 months

(7) I had work for pay or in exchange for other things on almost every
day during the last 12 months

Q44. If you are not working right now, have you worked for pay or in exchange for other goods or things

in the last 12 months?

(1) Yes (2) No

Q45. During the past 12 months, what was the total amount you received in exchange for your work?

(check all that apply)

(1) Cash (how much _____ Rs)

(2) Credit (how much _____ Rs)

(3) Food (how much _____)

(4) Housing or lodging

(5) Other goods or things (what kind and how much ____)

(6) Land or use of land (how much _____)

- (7) Health care and/or medicines (how much _____)
- (8) Training/education (what and how much _____)
- (9) Pension, old age benefits (how much _____)
- (10) Paid holidays/vacations (how many days per year _____)
- (11) Other (what and how much _____)

For both those working now and not working now:

Q46. *What are all the kinds of work have you done in the past 12 months?*

- (check all that apply)
- (1) Work in an office (what _____)
 - (2) Construction work [including construction, cleaning, laborer, maid, etc.;] (what _____)
 - (3) Domestic/cleaning work
 - (3) Child care/babysitting
 - (4) Service work [including work in a store, restaurant, etc.;] (what _____)
 - (5) Supervise other workers (what _____)
 - (6) Driver, operate a vehicle, transport people or things (what _____)
 - (11) Other (what _____)

Q47. During the last year, have you had your own business or ti commerce or any other way to make money **that you have not already mentioned** [e.g. *making brooms, construction, babysitting, etc.*]?

- (1) Yes [Go to next Q]
- (2) No [Go to Q51]
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q48. What is the main product of your business or ti commerce?

- (1) goods/things (what _____)
- (2) construction work
- (3) transportation
- (4) trade (what _____)
- (5) services [*like babysitting*] (what _____)
- (6) other (what _____)

Q49. How many other people, **not including yourself**, work in the business or ti commerce most of the time?

Q50. During the last 12 months, what is your total profit or total money you have made from the business?

_____ Rs

Q51. During the past month, what money have you received from all sources other than work? (check all that apply) [Read all answers and ask, "Have you received any money from... ?"]

- (1) Help from your family, friend, neighbors, or others (amount _____ Rs)
- (2) Pension (amount _____ Rs)
- (3) Social Security (amount _____ Rs)
- (4) Fisherman's Welfare Fund (amount _____ Rs)
- (6) Other (what source _____ amount _____ Rs)

Q52. How much, if anything, do you or the people you live with pay for the following things each month?

- (1) water _____ Rs

- (2) electricity ____ Rs
- (3) telephone ____ Rs
- (4) television ____ Rs
- (5) furniture ____ Rs
- (6) education ____ Rs
- (7) gas for cooking or other things ____ Rs
- (8) debt ____ Rs
- (9) building/construction costs for the place you are living ____ Rs
- (10) Other major monthly payments (source _____ amount ____ Rs)

Q53. In the last year, how much money did you pay for taxes?

_____ Rs

Q54. What is the total amount of money you have personally ever received as official government compensation for leaving Chagos (amount ____ Rs)

Q55. Did you receive any other things as official government compensation for leaving Chagos?

- (1) Land (how much _____)
- (2) House
- (3) Other (what and how much _____)

Q56. Since you have lived in Mauritius/Seychelles, have you been attacked, raped, beaten, or been the victim of some other kind of physical assault on your body?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes, once or twice
- (3) Yes, several times (3-5 times)
- (4) Yes, many times (6 times or more)

Q57. Have you ever been the victim of verbal abuse because you are a Chagossian/Ilois?

- (1) Yes (2) No

Q58. Have you ever suffered job discrimination or other types of discrimination because you are a Chagossian/Ilois?

- (1) Yes (2) No

Q59. Since you have lived in Mauritius/Seychelles, how many people who have been living with you have died between the ages of

- (1) birth and 12 months (number: ____)
- (2) 1 - 5 years (number: ____)
- (3) 6 -15 years (number: ____)
- (4) 16 - 65 years (number: ____)
- (5) 66 years or older (number: ____)

Q60. Can you or could you ever read in any language?

- (1) Yes (2) A little bit (3) No

Q61. Can you or could you ever write in any language?

- (1) Yes (2) A little bit (3) No

Q62. Do you or did you attend school in Mauritius/Seychelles?

- (1) Yes [Go to next Q] (2) No [Go to Q65]

Q63. How many years of schooling have you completed in Mauritius/Seychelles?
_____ years

Q64. Highest level of schooling attained _____ (grade, title, or degree)
[Go to Q66]

Q65. What was the main reason why you never attended school?

- (1) I went to school somewhere else (where _____)
- (2) I was too old
- (3) No time, I had to work
- (4) I could not afford it
- (5) My parents/family did not let me
- (6) I did not see any need
- (7) I did not know how to enroll
- (8) I was told I was not eligible
- (9) There was no school where I live
- (10) other (_____)

Q66. How important is it for you to have more schooling or educational opportunities?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Now I am going to ask a few questions about services you may have received in the last month and how you feel about those services.

Q67. In the last month, have you received any: Job or vocational training?

- (1) Yes (Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (12) RF

Q68. How important is it for you to have more job training?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q69. In the last month, have you received any: health care?

- (1) Yes (Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (13) RF

Q70. How important is it for you to have more health care?

- (4) Not important at all

- (5) A little important
- (6) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q71. In the last month, have you received any: emotional help, counseling, or psychiatric services?

- (1) Yes (*Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough*)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q72. How important is it for you to have more emotional help, counseling, or psychiatric services?

- (7) Not important at all
- (8) A little important
- (9) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q73. In the last month, have you received any: legal help?

- (1) Yes (*Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough*)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q74. How important is it for you to have more legal help?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q75. In the last month, have you received any: help in looking for a job?

- (1) Yes (*Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough*)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q76. How important is it for you to have more help in looking for a job?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q77. In the last month, have you received any: help or treatment for an alcohol or drug problem?

- (1) Yes (*Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough*)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q78. How important is it for you to have more help or treatment for an alcohol or drug problem?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q79. In the last month, have you received any: other services from a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) or other assistance office?

- (1) Yes (*Ask, Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough*)
- (2) No
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q80. How important is it for you to have more of these services from a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) or other assistance office?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q81. In the last month, have you received any other services I have not mentioned?

- (1) Yes (*Ask, What _____ Has this been (a) enough; or (b) not enough [Go to next Q]*)
- (2) No [*Go to Q83*]
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q82. How important is it for you to have more of these services?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q83. Are there other services that I have not mentioned that you would like to have more of?

- (1) Yes (*what _____ [Go to next Q]*)
- (2) No [*Go to Q85*]
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q84. How important is it for you to have more of these services?

- (1) Not important at all
- (2) A little important
- (3) Very important
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q85. If you were allowed to return to Chagos and if most of the needs of life (like work, food, water supply, health care, and education) were rebuilt, would you wish to return to any of the Chagos islands?

- (1) Yes ____ (*Ask: to live permanently____ or. to live or visit for a shorter time____*)
- (2) No ____

Q86. If Diego Garcia would not be available for Chagossians/Ilois to live, would you wish to return to any of the other Chagos islands?

- (1) Yes _____ (to live permanently _____ or. to live or visit for a shorter time _____)
- (2) No _____

Q87. If you were to return to Chagos to live, what work could you do?

- (1) Coconut production
- (2) Other agricultural production, vegetable and fruit growing
- (3) Animal or livestock work
- (4) Child care
- (5) Fishing
- (6) Cleaning inside or outside buildings and homes
- (7) Construction, carpentry, or other manual labor
- (8) Office jobs
- (9) Operating boats or other transport
- (10) Tourist industry jobs (restaurants, shops, etc.)
- (11) Other (what _____)

E. Socio-demographic data

Q88. Interviewer: Record the Respondent's gender. Say you must ask, if not sure.

- (1) Male
- (2) Female
- (7) DK
- (9) RF

Q89. What is your age or date of birth?

age _____ DOB _____

Q90. What is your marital status?

- (1) Never married
- (2) Married
- (3) Divorced/separated
- (4) En menage
- (5) Widowed

Q91. What is the number of children under 18 regularly sleeping in the place where you sleep?

Q92. Is there anything else that you would want to say to make other people better understand your life in Chagos and Mauritius/Seychelles?

That is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for answering all the questions. The questionnaire is very important to the research and to the lawyers working on the lawsuits in America and Great Britain and you have provided them with a great service. Your answers will hopefully help the lawyers to win the right to return to Chagos and compensation for the Chagossians.

If you have any questions at any time, you can always contact David Vine or anyone else involved in the research with the contact information on the flyer I gave.

Thank you again for taking for your help and for answering the questionnaire.

END OF INTERVIEW

QUESTIONNAIRE AVEK BANNE CHAGOSSIENS

- WHO?** **David Vine, an American student working with Chagossians, with the assistance of a Chagossian research advisory group.**
- WHY?** **To help lawyers for the Chagossians in their lawsuits and to learn more about the life of Chagossians.**
- WHAT?** **Asking questions about work, family, health, and other issues.**

INFORMATION?

For more information or if you have questions or comments, contact:

David Vine: 110 Lafayette Avenue, # 3F
Brooklyn, NY 11217
USA

Or by e-mail: davidsvine@hotmail.com.

You can also contact David Vine's professor:
Shirley Lindenbaum, Department of Anthropology, Graduate Center, CUNY, 365 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016, USA; or e-mail lindenbaum@mindspring.com.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you can contact:
Hilary Fisher, Sponsored Research, Graduate Center/CUNY, 365 Fifth Avenue, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10016, USA; or e-mail hfisher@gc.cuny.edu.

APPENDIX C: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**Research with Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles
Qualitative Interview Protocol****Background Basics**

P.O.B. Which islands? Parents' p.o.b. and grandparents? Vacations? How and when left?

Family, Kin, and Social Ties in Chagos

Who did you live with in Chagos? Did that change over time? Who did you live with right before you left (list if possible)?

Where did you eat your meals in Chagos? With whom? Who cooked? Where did the food come from?

Changes in unions, ménage, marriages? What age people get married in Chagos? Similar here? Coq marron? Coq sappon? Segas?

What things did people do in groups? Were there any clubs or organized groups of any kind?

Daily Life, Work, and School in Chagos

Take me through an ordinary weekday in Chagos from the time you woke up to the time you went to sleep. Where did you wake up? Who else was there? Eat? Work? What happened there? School? What happened there? Who else was there? What hours? What else did you do?

Take me through an ordinary Saturday or Sunday.

Were there other kinds of work that you did to make extra money or overtime or get food (rats, beetles, fishing, etc.)?

What did you do in your "free time"?

What relationships did you have with church people? With administrators, storekeepers, teachers, accountant, commandeurs?

Other than school, were there other places where people learned things?

Did you have books in Chagos? What books? Did you read there?

Land and Property in Chagos

What things did you leave behind in Chagos? What was the hardest thing to leave behind?
Why?

What kinds of things did you or your family own in Chagos? Where did you get those things?

What did your house look like in Chagos? What changes did you or your family make over time to the house or areas around it?

Were there any buildings or places that a lot of people used or owned or went to?

Where were meetings held? Parties?

Inter-Island Connections

Was it common for people to leave the islands before the removals? Why did they leave (vacations, school, connections in Mauritius or Seychelles)?

Vacations: how long? Where? Where stay? Who owned the place? What happened with your house while you were gone? Why did you go? Why did you go there in particular?

Did you ever visit any of the other Chagos islands? Which ones and why? How often?

Did you know anyone who lived in Mauritius or Seychelles?

Who is a “Chagossian” or “Ilois”?

Do you prefer the term Chagossian or Ilois? Why?

Who was considered to be a Chagossian or Ilois in Chagos?

What did it mean to be a Chagossian or Ilois? Natif vs. worker distinction? When did you first use the term to describe yourself?

Was there anyone living in Chagos who was not thought of as a Chagossian?

When did you first hear the words Chagossian and Ilois?

Was anyone else called “Ilois” when you lived in Chagos? Who?

What does it mean to be a Chagossian/Ilois now? How are Chagossian/Ilois different from other people? Who is a Chagossian or Ilois now?

Are the children of Chagossians born in Mauritius/Seychelles considered Chagossian/Ilois?

Oral Histories of Removal/Departure

How did you leave Chagos for the last time? What happened? Do you remember what you were thinking/felt then? Do you remember what you felt when you heard the news? Who told you? How long did you have to prepare?

How did life change after you heard you would have to leave? How did everyday life change: work, pay, food, school, health and health care, scail life, parties, family life, daily needs, supplies?

Who was with you when you left? How was the departure arranged? Did anyone tell you what to do? Who? What did they tell you? What could you bring with you? What did you have to leave behind?

What happened during the trip? Name of the boat? Where did you stay and sleep? How did the crew treat you? Did anyone get sick? Where did the boat go? What else happened in transit?

What happened when you first arrived in Mauritius/Seychelles? What happened the first day? Week?

How did you and your family survive? Where did you stay? Did you have any savings or pay in the bank?

What did you lose when you left and could not return?

What has been the same about life in Mauritius/Seychelles? What has been different?

Daily Life, Family, Kinship, Social Support in Mauritius/Seychelles

Residential history (major stays) since arrival [use calendar].

Who do you live with now most nights (list relationships)?

Who contributes money, food, or other things to your household?

If you needed a place to sleep, where would you go? Where else?

If you needed a meal, where would you go? Where else?

If you needed to borrow Rs50, who would you go to? Who else? Rs500?

Are marriages and unions different now in Mauritius/Seychelles? How?

Is it regular for Chagossians to marry or live together as a couple? More common to have Chagossians marry or live in union with Mauritians/Seychellois?

Discrimination

Have you had experiences where people treated you badly since your arrival? What did they do to you? (Call names, mistreated you, insults, job discrimination, intimidation, physical force?) What happened? Why do you think it happened? Do you know anyone else who was treated this way? (How do you know?) How often?

What names called?

Have there been times since arriving that discrimination has been particularly bad?

Before leaving Chagos for the last time?

Work in Mauritius/Seychelles

Was yesterday a regular day more or less? Take me through the day from the time you woke up to when you went to sleep. Where did you wake up? Who else was there? Eat? Work? What happened there? At home? What happened there? School? What happened there? Who else was there? What hours? What else did you do? Shopping? Etc.?

What did you do last Sunday? Take me though the day.

Are you working now for pay or not, or making money in any way? What do you do? What hours and days do you work regularly? How did you start doing this?

Do you do any work around the home or in someone else's home?

Are there other things you are doing to make extra money, like a little business or selling things, or to get food or other things?

What jobs have you had here?

What other ways of making money are there in the family?

The last time you looked for a job (current job or last time looked), what did you do? Where do you go? What happened? Who did you talk to? What sort of job did you want to get? If you wanted to find a job now, where would you go and what would you do? [Specifics of job search experience.]

Do you have hopes or dreams for a job in the future? Did you in the past? Do you have any goals for the future in terms of work? What will you need to do to reach those goals? [Aspirations.]

Do you have other sources of income/money? What ones? (Social security, pension, other benefits, family, etc.)

If you didn't have any money and you needed money, what would you do? Where would you go?

Education

What experiences have you had with school or training in Mauritius/Seychelles? What was the highest level? Why did you stop?

Have you had any difficulties with school for you or your children or other young people you care for? What happened?

What has been your experience with the certificate exams?

[Language and accent questions: which ones, where, when, learning, difficulties with, differences between Chagos and here, etc.]

Health and Health Care

If you are sick, where would you go? Really sick? What happened the last time you were sick?

Have you ever been really sick or broken a bone since you have been here? What happened?

What illnesses have you had since you arrived? What happened? Members of your family?

Do you ever care for people who are sick? Who? Why? What do you do for them? Do you get paid or receive anything in exchange?

Do you ever feel upset, sad, depressed, angry, etc. What happened?

What do you eat in the morning usually? During the day? At night? Who makes the food? How? [Malnutrition, hunger, etc.]

Do you use alcohol or drugs? How much? How often? What kinds? Do you think of this or have you ever thought of this as a problem? How? For others you know?

Other Questions

What differences are there between the experience of Chagossians in Mauritius and Seychelles?

Have you visited the other? Why? Do you know people there? What did you think of life there generally and for Chagossians?

Do you ever work with your neighbors or your community? What do you do? (Political activism? Involvement in? Why?)

Songs and artistic production [get at creative parts of life].

[Sexuality]

Have you been the victim of a violent crime...? How many times? What happened?

What do you want now? What hopes do you have for the future for you or others? What needs to be done to give you your old life back? What must be recreated, rebuilt? Do you want to go back to Chagos? To live? To work? To visit?

What was lost with the deracinement? What has been hardest to be without?

Did you ever receive any compensation? How much? What happened? When? Who gave it to you? What happened then?

ENDNOTES

LBJ Library = Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas, USA

MA = Mauritius Archives, Coromandel, Mauritius

PRO = British Public Records Office, Kew Gardens, England, UK

UKTB = U.K. Trial Bundles, *Chagos Islanders v. Attorney General and Her Majesty's British Indian Ocean Territory Commissioner* [volume-page number(s)]

¹ Prem Saddul, ed., Philip's Atlas of Mauritius (for Primary and Lower Secondary Schools) (Mauritius: Editions de l'Océan Indien, 2002), 5.

² Military Survey, map, Ministry of Defense, United Kingdom, 1997.

³ "Diego Garcia," map, Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, n.d.

⁴ Saddul, 17.

⁵ Ibid., 18.

⁶ All photographs by David Vine.

⁷ As the term *Chagossian* is in wider usage and as some members of the people consider the older term *Ilois* (*Ilwa*) derogatory, we use Chagossian throughout.

⁸ David Ottaway, "Islanders Were Evicted for U.S. Base," *Washington Post*, 9 September 1975, A1.; Hélène Siophe, "Summary of Survey of the Persons Displaced from the Chagos Islands," in House, Special Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on International Relations, "Diego Garcia, 1975: The Debate over the Base and the Island's Former Inhabitants," 5 June and 4 November 1975, 94th Cong, 1st sess., Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office; A. R. G. Prosser, "Visit to Mauritius, From 24 January to 2 February: Mauritius-Resettlement of Persons Transferred from Chagos Archipelago," report, Port Louis, Mauritius, September 1976; Herve Sylva, "Report on the Survey on the Conditions of Living of the Ilois Community Displaced from the Chagos Archipelago," report, Mauritius, 22 April 1981; John Madeley, "Diego Garcia: A Contrast to the Falklands," rev. ed., The Minority Rights Group Report 54, London, Minority Rights Group Ltd., February 1985; Tania Dræbel, "Evaluation des besoins sociaux de la communauté déplacée de l'Archipel de Chagos, volet un: santé et éducation," report, Mauritius, Le Ministère de la Sécurité Sociale et de la Solidarité Nationale, December 1997; C. Anyangwe, "Question of the Chagos Archipelago: Report on the Fact-Finding Mission to Mauritius," report, Lusaka, Zambia, Inter-African Network for Human Rights and Development, 2001; Simon Winchester, "Diego Garcia," *Granta* 73 (2001): 207-226.

⁹ For a more detailed history of the Chagossians and Chagos, see David Vine, "Report on the People of the Chagos Archipelago as an Indigenous People: Analyzing the Evidence," report, forthcoming. A draft is available for distribution from the author.

¹⁰ For the sake of clarity, we refer to various creole languages of the Indian Ocean with the common local spelling "Kreol," while referring to the ethnic group of the same name with the spelling, "Creole." One exception to this rule involves a subcategory of the ethnic group in Mauritius known by the local name and spelling, "ti-kreol." In this case we refer to the people not the language.

¹¹ See the secret attached notes to the 1966 "British Indian Ocean Territory Agreement," at American Embassy, London, airgram to Department of State, Washington, 2 July 1966, Enclosure A, 7. LBJ Library: "UK, Cables, Vol. VIII, 1/66-7/66," Country Files, NSF, Box 209.

¹² Between 2000 and 2004, the U.K. Government changed the laws of the BIOT to allow Chagossians to return to all of the islands except Diego Garcia. In June 2004, the laws were amended by two Orders in Council to prevent habitation in Chagos by anyone except military personnel.

¹³ See Chapter 15, "Impoverishment from Discrimination," below.

¹⁴ Ottaway.

¹⁵ Prosser, 6.

¹⁶ Mauritius Legislative Assembly, Public Accounts Committee, "Financial and other aspects of the 'Sale' of Chagos Islands and the Re-settlement of the Displaced Ilois," special report, Port Louis, Mauritius, L. Carl Achille, Government Printer, June 1981, 3-5. Only where noted are monetary figures converted into 2004 euros.

¹⁷ Dræbel, 4.

¹⁸ Anyangwe.

¹⁹ Michael M. Cernea, "The Risks and Reconstruction Model for Resettling Displaced Populations," *World Development* 25 (1997):1569

²⁰ See e.g., Robert C. Kiste, *The Bikinians: A Study in Forced Migration* (Menlo Park, CA: Cummings Publishing, 1974); Catherine Lutz, ed., "Micronesia as Strategic Colony: The Impact of U.S. Policy on Micronesian Health and Culture," Occasional Papers 12, Cambridge, MA, Cultural Survival, 1984; Katherine McCaffrey, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The U.S. Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Kensei Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa Under U.S. Occupation* (Bellingham, WA: Western Washington University, n.d.[2001]); Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York, Metropolitan/Owl: 2004[2000]); D. L. Brown, "Trail of Frozen Tears," *Washington Post*, 22 October 2002, C1; J. M. Olsen, "US Agrees to Return to Denmark Unused Area Near Greenland Military Base," *Associated Press Worldstream*, 24 September 2002.

²¹ The group was formerly known as the Chagos Social Committee (Seychelles).

²² Like other Overseas Territory citizens, many Chagossians now have the right to a full British passport and citizenship, including the residential rights in Great Britain.

²³ Department for International Development, "Development Assistance: Overseas Territories," July 2002, 1; available at www.dfid.gov.uk.

²⁴ Falkland Islands Government, "Falkland Islands...Sustaining a Secure Future," 2002; available from www.falklandislands.com; Internet. See also, Infoplease, "Falkland Islands"; available at <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108112.html>; Internet. Figures are from 2001-2002.

²⁵ Infoplease, "Anguilla"; available at <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0198164.html>; Internet. Figures are from 2001.

²⁶ Saint Helena: The Official Government Website, "Investment"; available at <http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/investment/Summary%20Data.html>; Internet. Infoplease, "St. Helena"; available at <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108119.html>; Internet. Figures are from 1998-2004.

²⁷ Department of Statistics, "Facts & Figures 2004," Cabinet Office, Bermuda Government, n.d.[2004?]. Infoplease, "Bermuda"; available at <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108106.html>; Internet. All figures are for 2002.

²⁸ Department for International Development, "St Helena"; available at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/caribbean/sthelena.asp>; Internet. Department for International Development, "Montserrat"; available at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/caribbean/montserrat.asp>; Internet.

²⁹ U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories," white paper, 1999?

³⁰ Vine.

³¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 9, 12, 13, 15, 17; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 9, 12, 17; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 25, 27; ILO Convention 169, art. 3, 7, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18.

³² United Nations Charter, art. 1, 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 21; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights art. 1 ; International Covenant on Civil and Policitcal Rights art. 1; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 31, 32; ILO Convention 169, art. 6, 7.

³³ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 27; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 15 ; International Covenant on Civil and Policitcal Rights, art. 27; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 29; ILO Convention 169, art. 7.

³⁴ International Covenant on Civil and Policitcal Rights, art. 27; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 4, 6, 7, 8, 12.

³⁵ United Nations Charter, art. 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 21 ; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 1; International Covenant on Civil and Policitcal Rights, art. 1; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31; ILO Convention 169, art. 7, 13, 14, 15.

³⁶ United Nations Charter, art. 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 21; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 1; International Covenant on Civil and Policitcal Rights, art. 1; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32; ILO Convention 169, art. 6, 7.

³⁷ United Nations Charter, art. 1, 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 15; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 1; International Covenant on Civil and Policitcal Rights, art. 1, 24; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 5, 6, 7, 12, 22, 32; ILO Convention 169, art. .

³⁸ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 26; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 13, 14; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 15, 22; ILO Convention 169, art. 7, 21, 22, 23, 26-31.

³⁹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 25; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 12; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 22; ILO Convention 169, art. 7, 20, 25.

⁴⁰ United Nations Charter, art. 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 23; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 6, 7; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 18, 22, 24; ILO Convention 169, art. 20.

⁴¹ United Nations Charter, art. 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 22, 23, 25; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 7, 9, 11; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 22; ILO Convention 169, art. 2, 20, 24.

⁴² United Nations Charter, art. 55, 56; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 2, 7; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 2, 7; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 2, 26; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 1, 2, 16, 18; ILO Convention 169, art. 2, 3, 20.

⁴³ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 8, 28; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 2; Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 27, 29; ILO Convention 169, art. 12, 16.

⁴⁴ Robert Scott, *Limuria: The Lesser Dependencies of Mauritius* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976[1961]).

⁴⁵ E.g., Roger Dussercle, *Archipel de Chagos: En Mission, 10 Novembre 1933-11 Janvier 1934* (Port Louis, Mauritius: General Printing & Stationery, 1934).

⁴⁶ Ottaway.

⁴⁷ Anyangwe.

⁴⁸ Peter Benson, *A Lesser Dependency* (London: Penguin Books, 1989).

⁴⁹ Ottaway.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Sunday Times* (London), “The Islanders that Britain Sold,” 21 September 1975, 10.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Madeley, 3.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁵⁵ Siophe, 112-113.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 121.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 115-116, 118-119.

⁵⁸ Prosser, 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁰ Sylva, 3.

⁶¹ Ibid., 11-13.

⁶² Ibid., 2-3.

⁶³ Francoise Botte, “The ‘Ilois’ Community and the ‘Ilois’ Women,” unpublished manuscript, 1980, 29-30.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 27.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 28-29, 31-32. Botte does not indicate if all the women she describes as “unemployed” are in search of employment. She also distinguishes between “employed” and “unemployed” females, whereas her distinction with males is between those “employed” and “underemployed.”

⁶⁶ I. B. Walker, Zaffer Pe Sanze: *Ethnic Identity and Social Change among the Ilois in Mauritius* (Vacoas, Mauritius: KMLI, 1986) 14.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 21-22.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 23-24.

⁷⁰ Dræbel, 4. Translated from the French by the lead author. This and all other translations are by the lead author.

⁷¹ Dræbel, 13-14, 16.

⁷² Ibid., 19-21, 25.

⁷³ Ibid., 13, 59.

⁷⁴ See e.g., Sheila Bunwaree, “Education in Mauritius since Independence: More Accessible But Still Inequitable,” in *Consolidating the Rainbow: Independent Mauritius, 1968-1998*, ed. Marina Carter (Port Louis, Mauritius: Centre for Research on Indian Ocean Societies, 1998).

⁷⁵ Dræbel, 36.

⁷⁶ Anyangwe, 43.

⁷⁷ The lead author will capture other aspects of Chagossian life in a forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation based on continuing research with the Chagossians.

⁷⁸ See e.g., Michael M. Cernea, "Disaster-related Refugee Flows and Development-caused Population Displacement," in *Anthropological Approaches to Resettlement: Policy, Practice, and Theory*, eds. Michael M. Cernea and S. E. Guggenheim (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 375-402; "Risks, Safeguards, and Reconstruction: A Model for Population Displacement and Resettlement," in *Risks and Reconstruction: Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees*, eds. Michael M. Cernea and Christopher McDowell (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2000), 11-55.

⁷⁹ Seminal works by Anthony Oliver-Smith and Art Hansen, Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, and others focused largely on the stresses of displacement and the subsequent coping responses of affected peoples. While stress remains a topic of investigation for some like Chris de Wet, the earlier works are, in retrospect, overly mechanistic and generalized. Each theorizes an automatic stressor-coping mechanism relationship that predicts little about what kind of coping responses displaces are likely to develop and says even less about which types of stresses are likely to be generated by involuntary displacement.

⁸⁰ Cernea, "Disaster-related."

⁸¹ Cernea, "The Risks," 1569.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Cernea, "Disaster-related"; "The Risks and Reconstruction."

⁸⁵ We acknowledge that these terms are useful for the reconstruction aspect of the model to send the message that subprocesses and processes can be reversed with reconstruction efforts.

⁸⁶ Cernea, "Risks," 19.

⁸⁷ Theodore E. Downing, "Mitigating Social Impoverishment When People Are Involuntarily Displaced," in *Understanding Impoverishment: The Consequences of Development-induced Displacement*, ed. Christopher McDowell (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1996), 33-48.

⁸⁸ Walter Fernandes, "From Marginalization to Sharing the Project Benefits," in Cernea and McDowell, 205-225.

⁸⁹ Ranjit Nayak, "Risks Associated with Landlessness: An Exploration toward Socially Friendly Displacement and Resettlement," in Cernea and McDowell, 79-107.

⁹⁰ Alistair Ager, "Perspectives on the Refugee Experience," in *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration*, ed. Alistair Ager (London: Pinter, 1999), 1-23.

⁹¹ Cernea, "Disaster-related"; "The Risks and Reconstruction."

⁹² Nayak, 106-107.

⁹³ The lawyers represent the Chagos Refugees Group and its individual members and the Chagos Committee (Seychelles) and its individual members. The lead lawyer in the United States is Michael E. Tigar, Professor of Law, Washington College of Law, American University. The lead lawyer in the United Kingdom is Richard Gifford, Sheridans Solicitors, London, England. The lead lawyer in Mauritius is Sivakumaren Mardemootoo, Mardemootoo Solicitors, Port Louis.

⁹⁴ The lead author invited leaders of the Diego Garcia Islanders Council, which represents a small minority of the Chagossian community in Mauritius, to participate in the survey. The leaders declined but, along with members of another minority group the Chagos Social Committee, participated in the research through qualitative interviews and numerous informal conversations. Some of the members of these two groups are also members of the Chagos Refugees Group and thus would have been part of the population sampled. The number of Chagossians excluded from the total survey population from which a sample was drawn is thus estimated to be small, likely less than 50, or 0.962 percent of the total group population.

⁹⁵ Also known as "fieldnotes."

⁹⁶ A. Walter, *The Mauritius Almanac for 1915* (Mauritius: R. de Spêville, 1914), A52.

⁹⁷ Scott, *Limuria*, 242.

⁹⁸ Walter, A52.

⁹⁹ Scott, *Limuria*, 282. Maurice Rousset, "Report of Mr. Magistrate M. Rousset on the Chagos Group," report, Port Louis, Mauritius, 19 June 1939, 13-14. PRO: CO 167/912/10.

¹⁰⁰ Scott, *Limuria*, 283.

¹⁰¹ Scott, *Limuria*, 271. Iain B. Walker, "British Indian Ocean Territory," in *The Complete Guide to the Southwest Indian Ocean* (Argelès sur Mer, France: Cornelius Books, 1993), 572.

¹⁰² Rousset, 13-14. Scott, *Limuria*, 275.

¹⁰³ Scott, *Limuria*, 265.

¹⁰⁴ Iain B. Walker, "British Indian Ocean Territory," 572.

¹⁰⁵ Scott, *Limuria*, 266-67.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 264.

¹⁰⁷ See Scott, *Limuria*, 260-68; Iain B. Walker, "British Indian Ocean Territory," 572; Henri P. Dalais, "Report of Mr. Henri P. Dalais on the General Conditions and Administration of the Lesser Dependencies of the Chagos Archipelago, Inspection of October-November 1935," report, Port Louis, Mauritius, 8 November 1935. PRO: CO 167/893/41-2.

¹⁰⁸ Robert A. Papen, *The French-based Creoles of the Indian Ocean: An Analysis and Comparison*, Ph.D. dissertation (Department of Linguistics, University of California, San Diego, 1978); John Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles, Volume 2: Reference Survey* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1989), 403-404.

¹⁰⁹ Holm, 403.

¹¹⁰ Dussercle, 9.

¹¹¹ Madeley, n. 5.

¹¹² R. Lavoipierre, "Report on a Visit to the Mauritius Dependencies: 16th October-10th November, 1953," Port Louis, Mauritius, 7 December 1953, 5. PRO: CO 1023/132; Mary Darlow, "Report by Public Assistance Commissioner and Social Welfare Advisor," report, Port Louis, Mauritius, December 1953. PRO: CO 1023/1321953; Robert Scott, "Despatch Report No. 3," 16 January 1956, 7. PRO: CO 1036/138.

¹¹³ Edward P. Ashe, letter to Sir A. W. Moore, 26 November 1903. PRO: ADM 123/34.

¹¹⁴ J. R. Todd, "Notes on the Islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory, report, Victoria, Seychelles, 10 January 1969, 22, 30, 35. Dalais, 18.

¹¹⁵ The following description of working and living conditions comes from many sources including interviews and conversations with Chagossians and other plantation employees. See also, Scott, *Limuria*; I. B. Walker, Zaffer and "British Indian Ocean Territory," the reports of J. R. Todd, and a series of magistrates reports on Chagos dating to the 19th century.

¹¹⁶ Auguste Toussaint, *Histoire des îles Mascareignes* (Paris: Éditions Berger-Levrault, 1972), 18.

¹¹⁷ H. Ly-Tio-Fane and S. Rajabalee, "An Account of Diego Garcia and its People," *Journal of Mauritian Studies* 1, no. 2 (1986): 90-107, 105.

¹¹⁸ Scott, *Limuria*, 182.

¹¹⁹ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 10.

¹²⁰ Iain B. Walker, "British Indian Ocean Territory," 566.

¹²¹ Todd, "Notes on the Islands," 19; Ottaway, *Sunday Times*; House, 79-80; Scott, *Limuria*, 23; I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 9; Edward L. Powe, *The Lore and Lure of the British Indian Ocean Territory* (N.p.: Dan Aiki Publishers, 1996), 640; Simon Winchester, *Outposts* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1985), 39.

¹²² J. B. Kirk, letter to Colonial Secretary, 18 August 1939. PRO: CO 167/905/11 1939; Lavoipierre, 5; F.D. Ommaney, *The Shoals of Capricorn* (London: Longmans, Green, 1952), 233; H. Blood, "The Peaks of Lemuria," *Geographical Magazine* 29 (1957): 516; *The Peaks of Limuria*, The Film Section of the Visual Aids Branch, Education Department, Colonial Film Unit Production, Mauritius, n.d.; Scott, *Limuria*, 2; I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 2, 9-10; Iain B. Walker "British Indian Ocean Territory," 562-566; Faryahd Dedaar, "Esquisses d'Une Insularité: Archipel Des Chagos," B.A. thesis (Department of French, University of Mauritius, 1999), 27, 29; Anyangwe, 17.

¹²³ Scott, "Despatch," 3.

¹²⁴ Scott, *Limuria*, 23.

¹²⁵ See Ottaway; Winchester, *Outposts*; "Diego Garcia," documents collection dated 1825-1829. MA: TB 3/2; Madeley.

¹²⁶ See UKTB: 4-132.

¹²⁷ American Embassy, London.

¹²⁸ This purchase and the British Government's 1967 purchase of the archipelago excluded sale of the small and uninhabited Nelson Island.

¹²⁹ J. B. Margoschis, "Report on Visit of J. B. Margoschis, Defense Lands Staff, to the Seychelles and the British Indian Ocean Territories," 1 September 1966, 21.

¹³⁰ J. R. Todd, "Tour Report—Chagos May 1967," British Indian Ocean Territory, May 1967. UKTB: 4-284-292.

¹³¹ United Kingdom, "Draft Contract between the Crown and Moulinie and Company (Seychelles) Limited," 1968, PRO: WO 32/21295.

¹³² "Lanstates," telegram to Finance, Port Louis, 29 February 1968. UKTB: 5-372.

¹³³ Mauritius Ministry of Social Security, letter, 19 July 1968. PRO: FCO 31/134.

¹³⁴ Madeley, 4.

¹³⁵ E. H. M. Counsell, "Defense Facilities in the Indian Ocean, Diego Garcia," report, 19 February 1969. PRO: FCO 31/401 DG 1969.

¹³⁶ Mr. Woller, Telno 36, telegram to Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 25 February 1969. PRO: FCO 32/483 81210.

¹³⁷ See J. H. Lambert, letter to Mr. Jerrom, 21 October 1968. UKTB: 5-551-552.

¹³⁸ See UKTB: 5-578.

¹³⁹ Woller.

¹⁴⁰ United Kingdom.

¹⁴¹ Todd, "Tour Report," 5.

¹⁴² J. R. Todd, "Chagos," report, British Indian Ocean Territory, 28 September 1968, 4.

¹⁴³ Todd, "Chagos," 2.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Todd, "Tour Report," 3; J. R. Todd, "Chagos," Appendix I.

¹⁴⁵ Todd, "Tour Report," 3.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Todd, "Notes on the Islands," 33; J. R. Todd, "Notes on a Visit, 16th-30th July, 1969," 3. UKTB: 4-312-322.

¹⁴⁷ J. R. Todd, "Notes on a Visit, 17th July-2nd August 1970," 2.

¹⁴⁸ J. R. Todd, letter to F.A. Knight, 17 February, 1971.

¹⁴⁹ Madeley, 5.

¹⁵⁰ Conversations with Chagossians. See also, *Sunday Times*.

¹⁵¹ Marcel Moulinie, statement, "[1977] Statement of Mr. Marcel Moulinie," *Queen v. Secretary of State for the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, ex parte Bancoult*, para. 13.

¹⁵² Interviews with Chagossians. See also, Bruce Greatbatch, Telno BIOT 4, telegram to Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 12 January 1971.

¹⁵³ Vytautas Bandjunis, *Diego Garcia: Creation of the Indian Ocean Base* (San Jose, CA: Writer's Showcase, 2001), 47.

¹⁵⁴ Bandjunis, 47-49.

¹⁵⁵ Interviews with Chagossians. See also, Madeley, 5; Henri Marimootoo, "Diego Files," *Week End* (Mauritius), series published May-September 1997, 46, 48; Jeanette Therese Alexis, statement, *Queen v. Secretary of State for the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, ex parte Bancoult*, 2; Marie Therese Mein, statement, *Queen v. Secretary of State for the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, ex parte Bancoult*, 5. These accounts have been hard to verify. What seems clear is the danger Chagossians felt with the arrival of the U.S. military force and the disruption it immediately brought to their lives.

¹⁵⁶ Ottaway.

¹⁵⁷ See e.g., Mein, statement, paras. 11-12.

¹⁵⁸ Bruce Greatbatch, telegram to Foreign & Commonwealth Office, FCO Telno BIOT 52, 26 August 1971.

¹⁵⁹ House, 61; interviews with Chagossians.

¹⁶⁰ See Moulinie, para. 14.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., para. 15; see also Madeley, 4-5.

¹⁶² Moulinie, para. 14.

¹⁶³ *The People*, "B.I.O.T. Throws out Islands' Natives," 3 November 1971.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., para. 16.

¹⁶⁵ Dale, telegram to Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Telno personal 176, 23 September ?; See also, *Sunday Times*.

¹⁶⁶ Bruce Greatbatch, telegram to Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Telno BIOT 57, 21 October 1971. UKTB: 7-1181-1182.

¹⁶⁷ Interviews with Chagossians.

¹⁶⁸ J. R. Todd, letter to Allan F. Knight, 17 June 1972.

¹⁶⁹ Mein, para. 14.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ C.A. Seller, letter to Morris, 20 June 1967. PRO: T317/1347.

¹⁷² "Nordvaer of 3/5/73 Voy 66," passenger list, n.d. UKTB: 7-1178.

¹⁷³ R. G. Giddens, letter to J. R. Todd, 11 May 1973. UKTB: 8-1358.

¹⁷⁴ "List of Ilois Passengers Sailing from Peros Banhos to Mauritius via Seychelles per M.V. Nordvaer on or about 26th May 1973," passenger list, n.d. UKTB: 8-1360.

¹⁷⁵ Cernea, "Risks," 24.

¹⁷⁶ Cernea, "The Risks," 1573.

¹⁷⁷ Two late-19th century coaling stations are the only exceptions and they closed within 10 years.

¹⁷⁸ The following description of working and living conditions comes from many sources including interviews and conversations with Chagossians and other plantation employees. See also, Scott, *Limuria*; I. B. Walker, *Zaffer* and "British Indian Ocean Territory," the reports of J. R. Todd, and a series of magistrates reports on Chagos dating to the 19th century.

¹⁷⁹ Scott, *Limuria*, 293.

¹⁸⁰ Todd, "Notes," 20-21.

¹⁸¹ David Greenaway and Nishal Gooroochurn, "Structural Adjustment and Economic Growth in Mauritius," in *The Mauritian Economy: A Reader*, eds. Rajen Dabee and David Greenaway (Houndsmill, UK: Palgrave, 2001), 67. See also Ramesh Durbarry, "The Export Processing Zone," in Dabee and Greenaway, 109.

¹⁸² Wooler.

¹⁸³ Pacific & Indian Ocean Department, "BIOT Working Papers: Paper No. 5—Evacuation and Resettlement of Inhabitants of Chagos Archipelago," paras. 6, 8.

¹⁸⁴ I. Watt, "British Indian Ocean Territory; Resettlement of the Inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago," letter to D. A. Scott, L. Monson, and Mr. Kerby, 26 January 1971, 3. PRO: T 317/1625.

¹⁸⁵ A. Wooler, letter to Eric G. Norris, 22 August 1968, 1. Attachment to Eric G. Norris, note to Mr. Counsell, 9 September 1968. PRO: FCO 31/134.

¹⁸⁶ E. H. M. Counsell, "Defence Facilities in the Indian Ocean; Diego Garcia," letter to Mr. Le Tocq, 2. PRO: FCO 31/401.

¹⁸⁷ Mauritius Ministry of Social Security.

¹⁸⁸ Ottawa.

¹⁸⁹ Siophe, 112-114, 117-118, 121.

¹⁹⁰ Botte, 27.

¹⁹¹ Sylva, 2-3, 11-13.

¹⁹² Dræbel, 15-16.

¹⁹³ Commission Justice et Paix study cited in Sheila Bunwaree-Ramharai, Jean-Claude Lau Thi Keng, and Nathalie André, "Introduction," in Asgarally, 3.

¹⁹⁴ There is little literature on Seychelles generally and almost none comparing Seychelles and Mauritius. But see e.g., Marcus Franda, *The Seychelles: Unquiet Islands* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), 94-98, on the educational system, including extensive training opportunities, and full-employment program.

¹⁹⁵ Titmuss and Abel-Smith.

¹⁹⁶ See e.g., Durbarry; Larry Bowman, *Mauritius: Democracy and Development in the Indian Ocean* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991); Kevin Ramkalaon, "Post-Independence Mauritius: An Economic Vision," in Carter, 27-32; Berhanu Woldekidan, "Export-led Growth in Mauritius," Indian Ocean Policy Papers 3, Australia, National Center for Development Studies, 1994.

¹⁹⁷ See e.g., Marion Benedict and Burton Benedict, *Men, Women and Money in Seychelles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982); Raphael Kaplinsky, "Prospering at the Periphery: A Special Case—The Seychelles," in *African Islands and Enclaves*, ed. Robin Cohen (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983), 195-215; Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report: Mauritius, Madagascar, Seychelles," report, London, Economist Intelligence Unit, September 2001; Rony Gabbay and Robin Ghosh, "Tourism in Seychelles," in *Tourism and Economic Development: Case Studies from the Indian Ocean Region*, eds. R. N. Ghosh, M. A. B. Siddique, and R. Gabbay (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), 104-127.

¹⁹⁸ Benedict and Benedict, 161.

¹⁹⁹ Franda, 16, 81, 84-85.

²⁰⁰ Martin Walker, "Price on Islanders' Birthright," *Manchester Guardian*, 4 November 1975, in House, 122.

²⁰¹ Research notes, 23 June 2002.

²⁰² Nayak, 103.

²⁰³ Research notes, 14 August 2002.

²⁰⁴ Jean-Claude Lau Thi Keng, "Intégration/Exclusion," in Asgarally, 17-48.

²⁰⁵ Roland Lamusse, "Macroeconomic Policy and Performance," in Dabee and Greenaway, 30.

²⁰⁶ Rosabelle Boswell, "Views on Creole Culture, Economy and Survival," *Revi Kiltir Kreol* 1 (2002): 15-26.

²⁰⁷ Bowman, *Mauritius*, 46.

²⁰⁸ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, "Creole Culture and Social Change," *Journal of Mauritian Studies* 1, no. 2 (1986): 59.

²⁰⁹ See Asgarally.

²¹⁰ Franda, 36-37.

²¹¹ See e.g., Botte, 38-39; I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 21-22; Dræbel, 36.

²¹² Durbarry, 112.

²¹³ Siophe, 115-116, 118-119.

²¹⁴ Interviews with Chagossians. See also, Botte, 30-31.

²¹⁵ See Boswell, 19-21.

²¹⁶ Research notes, 1 January 2002.

²¹⁷ Botte, 41-42.

²¹⁸ Madeley, 6.

²¹⁹ Research notes, 2-3 July 2002.

²²⁰ Interview with "Marie Mireille Louis," 8 November 2002.

²²¹ Falkland Islands Government, 7, 13; Infoplease, "Falkland Islands"; U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Partnership for Progress," 57.

²²² U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Partnership for Progress," 45; Infoplease, "Anguilla"; available at <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0198164.html>; Internet. Figures are from 2001.

²²³ Saint Helena: The Official Government Website; Infoplease, "St. Helena." Figures are from 1998-2004.

²²⁴ Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, "Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World," New York, United Nations Development Program, 2004, 140; Central Statistical Office, "Mauritius in Figures 2003," Port Louis, Mauritius, 2004?, table 9, introduction; available at <http://ncb.intenet.mu/cso.htm>. Internet.

²²⁵ Fukuda-Parr, 139; Statistics and Database Administration Section, "Seychelles in Figures 2003 Edition Online," Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles, 2003, "Labour" table; available at <http://www.seychelles.net/misdstat/Labour.htm>. Internet; Management and Information Systems Division, "National Population and Housing Census 1997," October 1999 (Seychelles: Printec Press Holdings), 28.

²²⁶ Cernea, "Risks," 26.

²²⁷ Ibid., 26-27. See also, Cernea, "The Risks," 1574.

²²⁸ M. Loustau-Lalanne, letter to J. R. Todd, 20 August 1973, copy in J. R. Todd, letter to A. C. Stuart, 16 March 1974.

²²⁹ Ottaway.

²³⁰ See e.g., Botte, 47; see also Boswell, for more on this phenomenon among the poor of Mauritius generally, and Elizabeth Colson, *The Social Consequences of Resettlement: The Impact of the Kariba Resettlement upon the Gwembe Tonga* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), on the phenomenon among involuntary displacees as a group.

²³¹ Botte, 25, 27; Sylva, 3.

²³² Botte, 26, 32.

²³³ Interview with "Jacques Victor," 25 August 2002.

²³⁴ Interview with "Louis Silvio Latouche," 24 August 2002.

²³⁵ Botte, 32.

²³⁶ Sylva, 3.

²³⁷ Among scholars, see Botte, 34; Dræbel, 19.

²³⁸ Cernea, "Risks," 26.

²³⁹ Scott, *Limuria*, 181.

²⁴⁰ Cernea, "Risks," 26.

²⁴¹ Scudder, "The Human Ecology," 51.

²⁴² Colson, *The Social Consequences*, "Overview."

²⁴³ Research notes, 24 March 2002.

²⁴⁴ Cernea, "Risks," 25.

²⁴⁵ Scott, *Limuria*, 162-165, 23.

²⁴⁶ Richard M. Titmuss and Brian Abel-Smith, *Social Policies and Population Growth in Mauritius* (London: Frank Cass, 1968), 6. They report the cost of straw and timber-framed "huts" in Mauritius at MRs250.

²⁴⁷ Madeley, 5.

²⁴⁸ Titmuss and Abel-Smith.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 7.

²⁵⁰ See e.g., Sydney Selvon, *A Comprehensive History of Mauritius: From Beginning to 2001* (Mauritius: Mauritius Printing Specialists, 2001), 394.

²⁵¹ Interview with “Arlette Lamb,” 16 August 2002. In keeping with most anthropological practice, the names of all Chagossians interviewed for this report are pseudonyms. In a few cases, some identifying details have been changed to protect the anonymity of the interviewee.

²⁵² Interview with “Juliette Bernard” and “Claude Bernard,” 29 July 2002.

²⁵³ *Sunday Times*; “Diego Garcia,” 97.

²⁵⁴ Interview with “Marie Claudine Louis,” 17 August 2002.

²⁵⁵ *Sunday Times*; “Diego Garcia.”

²⁵⁶ Siophe, 114-121.

²⁵⁷ Prosser, 2.

²⁵⁸ Siophe, 116.

²⁵⁹ Prosser, 5.

²⁶⁰ Jan S.F. van Hoogstraten, letter to Chairman Lee H. Hamilton, 16 January 1976, in House, 111.

²⁶¹ Botte, 29, 30.

²⁶² Sylva, 3

²⁶³ Mauritius Legislative Assembly, 3-5.

²⁶⁴ See Madeley, 10-11; Dræbel.

²⁶⁵ Dræbel, 13.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 13-14.

²⁶⁷ Central Statistical Office, “2000 Housing and Population Census,” 134; Management and Information Systems Division, 44.

²⁶⁸ See e.g., *Sunday Times*.

²⁶⁹ Nathalie André, “Exclusion et Gestion de la Quotidienneté,” in *Etude pluridisciplinaire sur l’exclusion à Maurice*, ed. Issa Asgarally (Réduit, Mauritius: Présidence de la République, 1997), 80, 76-80.

²⁷⁰ Thierry Chateau, “Pollution bactérienne d’origine fécale dans les zones de baignades,” *Le Mauricien*, 31 July 2002, 5.

²⁷¹ Housing survey, ethnographic research, Pointe aux Sables.

²⁷² Research notes, 20 December 2001.

²⁷³ Ibid., 5 January 2002; 6 January 2002.

²⁷⁴ Central Statistical Office, “2000 Housing and Population Census,” 134; Management and Information Systems Division, 44.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 10 July 2002.

²⁷⁶ See Madeley, 5; Prosser, 2; Siophe, 116.

²⁷⁷ Research notes, 3 July 2002.

²⁷⁸ Interview with “Juliette Bernard” and “Claude Bernard.”

²⁷⁹ Elizabeth Colson, “Overview,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989): 1-16.

²⁸⁰ Another anthropologist Liisa Malkki provides an important critique of early scholarship on refugees, like Colson’s, that tended to assume a single “refugee experience” and a common reaction to the experience of being uprooted from one’s home. As Malkki explains, one cannot assume that expulsion will necessarily lead to psychological disorder or the loss of identity and culture. See Liisa Malkki, “Refugees and Exile: From ‘Refugee Studies’ to the National Order of Things,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1995): 495-523.

²⁸¹ See David Vine, “The Former Inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago as an Indigenous People: Analyzing the Evidence,” draft report, 3 July 2003, 44-49.

²⁸² Todd, letter to F.A. Knight.

²⁸³ Rosemond Saminaden, Fleury Vencatassen, and Christian Ramdass, “Petition to British Government,” English translation, Port Louis, Mauritius, 197[5?].

²⁸⁴ Moulinie, para. 12.

²⁸⁵ Saminaden.

²⁸⁶ Research notes, 18 July 2002.

²⁸⁷ Any utterances bounded in the text by double quotation marks are direct quotations recorded by the lead author during research. Utterances bounded by single quotation marks are approximate quotations where the lead author was not entirely certain to have recorded every word spoken. These approximate quotations are not reconstructions and instead indicate instances where the lead author could not ensure that he had recorded a direct quotation.

²⁸⁸ Research notes, 20 July 2002.

²⁸⁹ Thayer Scudder, “The Human Ecology of Big Projects: River Basin Development and Resettlement,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 12 (1973): 51.

²⁹⁰ Nayak, 96.

²⁹¹ Interview with "Maxwell Albert," 18 August 2002.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Central Statistical Office, "Mauritius in Figures 2003," table 8; Statistics and Database Administration Section, "Seychelles in Figures 2003," "Housing and Households" table.

²⁹⁴ Central Statistical Office, "2000 Housing and Population Census," 78; Management and Information Systems Division, 44.

²⁹⁵ Central Statistical Office, "Mauritius in Figures 2003," table 8; Statistics and Database Administration Section, "Seychelles in Figures 2003," "Housing and Households" table.

²⁹⁶ Central Statistical Office, "2000 Housing and Population Census," 134; Management and Information Systems Division, 44.

²⁹⁷ Central Statistical Office, "Mauritius in Figures 2003," table 8.

²⁹⁸ Cernea, "Risks," 23.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 29.

³⁰⁰ The median land area reported among respondents in our survey of Chagossians was 720 square meters. Other research confirmed this figure as a reasonable estimate of Chagossians' average land holdings; we rounded down slightly to 700 square meters to err on the side of a conservative estimate.

³⁰¹ Scott, *Limuria*, 285.

³⁰² Ibid., 276.

³⁰³ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 11.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 11. Powe, 650. Centre Culturel Africain, *Table et Traditions Créoles: Ile Maurice, Ile Rodrigues, Agaléga, Chagos* (Mauritius: Les Editions de l'Océan Indien, 1997), 97.

³⁰⁵ Bandjunis, 163.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 256.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 165.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 144, 163.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 179-80, 216.

³¹⁰ British Indian Ocean Territory Administration, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, report [on the environment in the Chagos Archipelago], 1 December 1994, 4.

³¹¹ Gordon W. Tribble, "Ground-Water Geochemistry at the South Ramp Jet Fuel Leak, Diego Garcia Atoll, 1993-94," report, U.S. Geological Survey, Honolulu, HA, 2001, 1, 33.

³¹² Steve Goldstein, "They 'Punched Out' and Lived to Tell," *Edmonton Journal*, 26 May 2002, Sunday Reader, D6.

³¹³ Catherine Lutz, *Homefront: A Military City and the American 20th Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), 177, 197, 107.

³¹⁴ See e.g., one well-informed British source, Labour Party International Department, "Diego Garcia," Information Paper No. 62, London, February 1984.

³¹⁵ Winchester, "Diego Garcia," 210.

³¹⁶ Winchester, *Outposts*, 56; Bandjunis citing Winchester, 257.

³¹⁷ Date(line, "Winning Back Paradise," SBS, 14 August 2002, television broadcast.

³¹⁸ Cernea, "Risks," 27.

³¹⁹ Todd, "Notes," 20-21.

³²⁰ J. R. Todd, "Chagos," report, British Indian Ocean Territory, September 1968, 4.

³²¹ Bruce Greatbatch, FCO Telno BIOT 52, telegram to Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 26 August 1971.

³²² House, "Diego Garcia, 1975," 61; interviews with Chagossians report the provision of food and medical assistance.

³²³ A. F. Knight, letter to C. J. Eason, 30 April 1971, PRO: T 317/1626.

³²⁴ "List of Ilois Passengers Sailing from Peros Banhos to Mauritius via Seychelles per M.V. Nordvaer on or about 26th May 1973," passenger list, n.d. UKTB: 8-1360.

³²⁵ Based on research in the 1980s, Iain Walker saw some continued culinary use of coconuts. See I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 27.

³²⁶ Madeley, 6.

³²⁷ Interview with "Marie Claudine Louis."

³²⁸ Dræbel, 34.

³²⁹ Botte, 14-15.

³³⁰ The researcher bought the bread.

³³¹ Cernea, "Risks," 27-29.

³³² Dræbel.

³³³ Robert Scott, letter to Alan Tindal Lennox-Boyd, Despatch No. 971, 10 December 1954, PRO: CO 1036/138.

³³⁴ African Research Group, "BIOT: Health & Mortality in the Chagos Islands," report, London, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, October 2000, 3, 5.

³³⁵ Ibid., 4.

³³⁶ Ibid., 58.

³³⁷ Ibid., 55, 58.

³³⁸ Darlow, 57, 4.

³³⁹ Todd, "Notes," 23, 30, 35.

³⁴⁰ C. R. Grainger, "A Retrospective Estimate of Some Vital Statistics for British Indian Ocean Territory 1965-1973," *Journal of the Royal Society of Health* 105, no. 5 (1985):180.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² British Indian Ocean Territory birth and death certificates, Seychelles National Archives, Mahé, Seychelles. The "rigorous" infant mortality rate tracks deaths among cohorts of children born rather than the conventional method that compares births and deaths within a single year, when infant deaths are often for children born in the prior year.

³⁴³ See Roland Pressat, *Demographic Analysis: Methods, Results, Applications*, trans. Judah Matras (Chicago: Aldine Atherton, 1972), 55-60; and David P. Smith, *Formal Demography* (New York: Plenum Press, 1992), 10-11, 18-19.

³⁴⁴ Madeley, 5.

³⁴⁵ Saminaden.

³⁴⁶ Madeley, 6.

³⁴⁷ Comite Ilois Organisation Fraternelle, "Paper Prepared by the Comite Ilois Organisation Fraternelle," n.d., 2-5, appendix in Government of Mauritius, "Ilois Community in Mauritius," memorandum, 24 June, 1981, Port Louis, Mauritius. UKTB: 9-1698-1710. Also cited in I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 14.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 3.

³⁴⁹ Madeley, 5.

³⁵⁰ Martin Walker.

³⁵¹ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 14.

³⁵² B.I.O.T. Death Peros-Banhos, Solomon Island, Diego-Garcia 1965-1971, Seychelles National Archives, Mahé, Seychelles.

³⁵³ See e.g., Anthony Oliver-Smith and Art Hansen, "Introduction: Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: Causes and Contexts," in *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Dislocated Peoples*, eds. Art Hansen and Anthony Oliver-Smith (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), 1-9; Colson, *The Social Consequences*; Scudder, "The Human Ecology"; Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, "From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of Dislocated People," in Hansen and Oliver-Smith.

³⁵⁴ Thayer Scudder, *No Place to Go* (Philadelphia, PA: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1982).

³⁵⁵ Moulinie, para. 16.

³⁵⁶ See e.g., Scudder, "The Human Ecology"; Colson, *The Social Consequences*.

³⁵⁷ See e.g., Erica Goode, "The Heavy Cost of Chronic Stress," *New York Times*, 17 December 2002, Science Times 1,4; Leith Mullings and Alaka Wali, *Stress and Resilience: The Social Context of Reproduction in Central Harlem* (New York: Kluwer Academic, 2001), 17-18. Rob Stein, "Study Says You Can Die of a Broken Heart," *Washington Post*, 10 February 2005, A3.

³⁵⁸ Dræbel, 18-25.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 19.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 20, 18, 34.

³⁶¹ Ibid., 34, 21.

³⁶² Ibid., 21.

³⁶³ Ibid., 26-35.

³⁶⁴ Research notes, 20 December 2001.

³⁶⁵ Research notes, 13 July 2002.

³⁶⁶ Dræbel, 34.

³⁶⁷ Botte 32, 34; Sylva 3.

³⁶⁸ Chagos Refugees Group, "Index of Deceased Chagossians," list, n.d.

³⁶⁹ Interview with "Juliette Bernard" and "Claude Bernard."

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- ³⁷⁰ Research notes, 2 July 2002; 3 July 2002.
- ³⁷¹ Research notes, 3 July 2002.
- ³⁷² Botte, 38.
- ³⁷³ Ibid., 41-42.
- ³⁷⁴ Chagos Refugees Group.
- ³⁷⁵ Research notes, 19 December 2001.
- ³⁷⁶ Ibid., 20 December 2001.
- ³⁷⁷ Dræbel, 25.
- ³⁷⁸ Scudder and Colson, 269.
- ³⁷⁹ Stein.
- ³⁸⁰ Nayak, 95-96.
- ³⁸¹ Scudder, "The Human Ecology."
- ³⁸² Falkland Islands Government, 16.
- ³⁸³ U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Britain and the Overseas Territories," 31; Saint Helena: The Official Government Website; Fukuda-Parr, 139; Infoplease, "Anguilla"; World Bank Group, "Seychelles at a Glance," 29 September 2004.
- ³⁸⁴ Central Statistical Office, "Mauritius in Figures 2003," table 3; World Bank Group, "Mauritius at a Glance," 16 September 2004; World Bank Group, "Mauritius Data Profile," August 2004; available at <http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?CCODE=MUS&PTYPE=CP>. Internet; Fukuda-Parr, 140;
- ³⁸⁵ Statistics and Database Administration Division, "Health" table; World Bank Group, "Seychelles at a Glance"; World Bank Group, "Seychelles Data Profile," August 2004; available at <http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?CCODE=SYC&PTYPE=CP>. Internet; Fukuda-Parr, 139.
- ³⁸⁶ Cernea, "Risks," 30.
- ³⁸⁷ Quoting Theodore Downing, Cernea, "Risks," 30.
- ³⁸⁸ Cernea, "The Risks," 1575.
- ³⁸⁹ Véronique Lassailly-Jacob, "Reconstructing Livelihoods through Land Resettlement Schemes: Comparative Reflections on Refugees and Oustees in Africa," in Cernea and McDowell, 120.
- ³⁹⁰ Research notes, 18 July 2002.
- ³⁹¹ Moulinie, para. 12.
- ³⁹² Nayak, 92.
- ³⁹³ Colson, *The Social Consequences*; Scudder, *No Place*.
- ³⁹⁴ See also, I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 28.
- ³⁹⁵ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 27-28, 31.
- ³⁹⁶ Cernea, "Risks," 30.
- ³⁹⁷ Cernea, "The Risks," 1575.
- ³⁹⁸ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 25-31.
- ³⁹⁹ Research notes, 24 March 2002.
- ⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 23 March 2002.
- ⁴⁰¹ Cernea, "Risks," 30.
- ⁴⁰² Ibid., 31.
- ⁴⁰³ Darlow, 33-37.
- ⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 33.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Todd, "Tour Report," 2, 3, 5.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Todd, "Notes," 23, 35, 30.
- ⁴⁰⁷ Todd, "Notes on a Visit, 17th July-2nd August 1970," 2.
- ⁴⁰⁸ Interviews with Chagossians.
- ⁴⁰⁹ Dræbel, 44.
- ⁴¹⁰ Siophe, 115-116, 118-119.
- ⁴¹¹ Botte, 33-34.
- ⁴¹² I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 21.
- ⁴¹³ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 21.
- ⁴¹⁴ Research notes, 15 July 2002.
- ⁴¹⁵ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 24.
- ⁴¹⁶ Sheila Bunwaree, "Education and Exclusion," in Asgarally, 145.
- ⁴¹⁷ Bunwaree, "Education in Mauritius," 74, 79.

⁴¹⁸ Dræbel, 56, 59, 36, 44.

⁴¹⁹ We define “illiteracy” like the United Nations, as the inability to read and write a few sentences about one’s life.

⁴²⁰ Figures may not add to 100 percent because of “Don’t know” and other responses.

⁴²¹ *Week End* (Mauritius), “Ultime stratégie pour combattre l’échec scolaire,” 23 June 2002, 9.

⁴²² Ramesh P. Pudaruth, “Exclusion: Children at Risk and Schooling,” in Asgarally, 135.

⁴²³ Bunwaree, “Education and Exclusion,” 152-153.

⁴²⁴ Pudaruth, 134.

⁴²⁵ Bunwaree, “Education and Exclusion,” 155-156, 152-153

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 146. See also Dræbel, 37, for a summary of the UNICEF findings.

⁴²⁷ Dræbel, 46.

⁴²⁸ Dræbel points to the costs of books as the most expensive of many costly school expenses. See Dræbel, 45.

⁴²⁹ Falkland Islands Government, 15; U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, “Britain and the Overseas Territories,” 31; Saint Helena: The Official Government Website.

⁴³⁰ Fukuda-Parr, 139-140. (Illiteracy figures for Mauritius and Seychelles are for individuals 15 and above in 2002. Chagossian figures are for individuals 16 and above.) World Bank Group, “Mauritius Data Profile”; World Bank Group, “Seychelles Data Profile.”

⁴³¹ Cernea, “Risks,” 32. See also, Colson, “Introduction”; Scudder, *No Place*, 11.

⁴³² Ottaway.

⁴³³ Botte, 27, 31.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 43.

⁴³⁵ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 16.

⁴³⁶ Botte, 39, 25.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 38.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 30-31. See also, I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 17

⁴³⁹ See Eriksen, “Creole Culture,” 59.

⁴⁴⁰ See Franda, 36-37.

⁴⁴¹ See e.g., Botte, 38-39; I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 21-22; Dræbel, 36.

⁴⁴² I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 24.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 22-24.

⁴⁴⁴ Larry W. Bowman and Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, “The Indian Ocean: U.S. Military and Strategic Perspectives,” in *The Indian Ocean: Perspectives on a Strategic Arena*, eds. William L. Dowdy and Russell B. Trood (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), n. 28. See also Pranay B. Gupte, “Dispossessed in Mauritius Are Inflamed,” *New York Times*, 14 December 1982, A5.

⁴⁴⁵ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 22.

⁴⁴⁶ Interview with “Jacques Victor.”

⁴⁴⁷ I. B. Walker, Zaffer, 21.

⁴⁴⁸ Research notes, 13 July 2002.

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RÉSUMÉ EN FRANÇAIS

Pour plus de 30 ans, le peuple chagossien vivait en exil dans la misère. La misère des Chagossiens n'était pas un accident. C'est à cause de l'expulsion des Chagossiens de leur pays d'origine par les gouvernements des États-Unis et du Royaume-Uni. C'est parce que les Chagossiens étaient, comme ils disent en kreol, <<dérasiné>> de leur terre natale.

Entre 1967 et 1973, les gouvernements des E.U. et du R.U. ont déplacé par force le peuple de l'archipel Chagos de l'océan Indien. Les gouvernements ont déplacé ce peuple (<<les Chagossiens>>) 2.000 Km de leur terre natale pendant le développement de la base militaire des E.U. sur l'île Diego Garcia. Depuis août 2001, par la demande des avocats des Chagossiens, les auteurs ont fait plus que trois ans de recherches quantitatives et ethnographiques pour faire la documentation systématique pour montrer comment le déracinement a nuit le groupe.

Nous concluons que à cause de déracinement, les Chagossiens, comme un groupe, connaissent la misère considérable et chronique. Leur misère est plus de la pauvreté économique, c'est une misère avec dix dimensions identifiée (déracinement traumatisé, le chômage, l'exclusion, la maison perdu, la terre et la propriété communale perdue, la faim, les problèmes avec la santé, la fracture de la société et la culture, l'éducation diminuée, et discrimination ethnique). Il semble que le déracinement et la misère des Chagossiens aussi constituent des violations continuant des droits humains.

Cinq manières dans laquelle les Chagossiens connaissent la misère

1. Comparé au niveau de vie ils ont connu en Chagos. Même s'ils n'ont pas connu le luxe, les Chagossiens ont connu une vie de richesse des ressources et sécurité, avec tous les besoins du logement, la nourriture, l'emploi, la santé, et les autres complet sur les îles idylliques.
2. Comparé au niveau de vie connu par les autres citoyens des territoires outre-mer du Royaume-uni. En Chagos, les Chagossiens ont été résidents du <<British Indian Ocean Territory>> (BIOT) et ils restent citoyens d'une territoire outre-mer du Royaume-uni, comme les Bermudes et les îles Falkland. Comme les citoyens d'une territoire outre-mer et sans déracinement, les Chagossiens ont pu s'attendu à un niveau de vie montant progressivement à un niveau comme dans les autres territoires outre-mer du Royaume-uni.
3. Comparé au niveau de vie connu par la plupart des citoyens à Maurice et aux Seychelles, où les Chagossiens vivaient comme une sous-classe exclue depuis le déracinement.
4. Comparé à des autres peuples vivant à coté des bases militaires des E.U. Chagossiens ont pu joui du travail et des revenus de vivant à coté de la base à Diego Garcia. Nous estimons ce niveau de vie comparé aux peuples à coté des bases à Guam et Kwajalein, Îles Marshall.

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5. Comparé à des peuples vivant sans violations des droits humains. Les peuples à Guam et Kwajalein ont subi des violations et nous modifions leurs niveaux de vie en accord avec un peuple vivant avec tous les droits humains.

Violations apparentes des droits humains

1. Droit contre l'exil
2. Droit à l'autodétermination et l'autonomie (gouvernementale)
3. Droit à maintenir, protéger, et développer sa culture
4. Droit contre le génocide et l'ethnocide
5. Droit à contrôler, développer, et diriger sa terre natale et ses ressources naturelles
6. Droit à diriger son développement politique, économique, et culturel
7. Droit à une nationalité
8. Droit à l'éducation
9. Droit aux soins médicaux
10. Droit au travail
11. Droit à la sécurité sociale et à un niveau de vie suffisant
12. Droit être libre de toute discrimination, compris sur la base de son identité indigène
13. Droit à un recours effectif contre les actes violant les droits fondamentaux, compris la restauration de terre.

Dix dimensions majeures de la misère

1. Déracinement traumatisé

- Pression verbale et avec des actions pour quitter Chagos;
- L'extermination des chiens des Chagossiens sur Diego Garcia;
- Déracinement de Chagos par force sur des cargos bondés.

2. Le chômage

- 100% perte d'emploi de Chagos;
- 45% et 40% chômage actuellement pour les 1^{ere} et 2^{ieme} générations, en accord avec le chômage élevé et le sous-emploi élevé après le déracinement;
- €60 et €81 revenue moyenne par mois actuellement pour les 1^{ere} et 2^{ieme} générations, en accord avec le revenu bas en exil;

3. L'exclusion économique et sociale-psychologique

- Perte d'une vie de la sécurité structurale en Chagos pour une vie de la précarité structurale comme une sous-classe exclu à Maurice et aux Seychelles;
- Les sentiments de l'impuissance, l'injustice, et la vulnérabilité à cause du déracinement;

4. La maison perdu (sans chez toi)

- Perte de toutes les maisons en Chagos et sans abri initial à Maurice et aux Seychelles;
- Le logement continu dans les quartiers le plus pauvre, avec les conditions souvent surpeuplées, sans les facilités sanitaires et avec les problèmes structuraux;
- 40% des foyers manquant une toilette et la plomberie, 26% manquant l'eau dans la maison, 8% manquant l'électricité;
- Les sentiments d'une maison perdue en exil.

5. La terre et la propriété communale perdue

- La terre perdue, estimé à 700 mètres² pour chaque foyer en Chagos;
- Les ressources communales perdues, comme les fruits de mer, les noix de coco, les espaces libres, et les cimetières;

6. La faim

- Manque de nourriture et la nutrition en Chagos pendant le déracinement;
- L'accès perdu en exil à la nourriture libre en Chagos;
- La faim et les problèmes de l'alimentation en exil.

7. Les problèmes avec la santé

- Le déclin de la santé en Chagos sous BIOT et les morts pendant et après le déracinement;
- Les problèmes avec les maladies respiratoires et cardio-vasculaires, le diabète, hypertension, Tuberculoses, la violence domestique et sexuelle contre les femmes;
- 85% signalant le besoin pour plus des soins médicaux;
- 20% et probablement un niveau plus haut d'abus de l'alcool et la drogue;

-
- Le chagrin et la tristesse en exil, endommageant la santé physique et mentale.

8. La fracture de la société et la culture

- La division de la communauté par le déracinement;
- La séparation des ancêtres en Chagos, nuisant les liens importants avec les ancêtres;
- L'identité culturelle diminuée et la disparition des phénomènes socioculturels.

9. L'éducation diminuée

- Le déclin de la qualité des études en Chagos
- Désavantage systématiquement en exil, compris la pauvreté et un système d'éducation à Maurice qui fait les étudiants pauvres défavorisés;
- 36% analphabétization pour la génération née en exil;
- 47% de cette génération pas commençant l'école secondaire, et un autre 35% pas finissant l'école secondaire.

10. Discrimination ethnique

- 50% de la 1^{ère} génération signalant qu'ils ont souffert de la discrimination;
- 66% signalant qu'ils ont souffert de l'abus verbal en exil parce qu'ils sont Chagossien(ne);
- L'exclusion d'emploi sur la base militaire à Diego Garcia, pendant que des Mauriciens et des autres nationalités y travaillent.

REZIME KREOL

Por plis ki 30 bann lane lepep-la chagossien ti pe viv dan mizer dan lekzil. Mizer-la de bann Chagossien pa ti enn aksidan. Sa akoz de derasinman de bann Chagossien de zot pei natal par bann guvernman meriken ek angle. Sa akoz bann Chagossien finn derasine de zot later natal.

Ent 1967 ek 1973 bann guvernman meriken ek angle finn derasinn par fors lepep-la de larsipel Chagos. Bann guvernman finn derasine bann Chagossien 2.000 km de zot later natal pendan developman-la de labaz-la militer meriken lor Diego Garcia. Depi Ut 2001, par deman-la de bann lavokat de bann Chagossien, bann ter ti fer plis ki twa bann lane de resers por fer dokumentasyon sistimatik lor koman derasinman-la ti fer mal lor bann Chagossien.

Baze lor sa resers nu konklu ki akoz zot derasinman, bann Chagossien, kom enn grup, finn konn enn mizer gran ek kronik. Zot mizer plis ki povrete ekonomik—sa enn mizer avek dis bann dimansyon (ekpropriyasyon de Chagos, somaz, eksklisyon ekonomik ek social-sikolozik, later ek propriete komin perdi, lafin, bann problem avek lasante, sisyete ek kiltir kase, ledikasyon diminye, deskrimnasyon etnik). Dan manyer ek degre, derasinman-la ek mizer-la de bann Chagossien paret kom bann vyolasyon de bann dwa fondamantal.

Bann manyer bann Chagossien konn mizer

1. Par konparizon nivo-la de lavi zot ti konn dan Chagos. Mem si zot pa ti ena enn lavi ris dan kas, bann Chagossien ti konn enn lavi de rises de bann resurs naturel ek sekirite, avek tu bann bezwen de lakaz, manzer, travay, lasante, ek zot bann soz dan enn lenvironman zoli.
2. Par konparizon nivo-la de lavi ki zot bann sitwayen de <<teritwar utremer>> britanik. Dan Chagos, bann Chagossien ti bann residan de <<British Indian Ocean Territory>> (BIOT) ek boku rest bann sitwayen de enn teritwar utremer britanik kom bann Bermuds ek bann ziles Falkland. Kom bann sitwayen de enn teritwar utremer ek san derasinman, bann Chagossien ti kapav ena enn nivo de lavi monte ziska enn nivo kom zot bann teritwar britanik.
3. Par konparizon nivo-la de lavi konn par laplipar dimunn dan Moris ek Sesel, u bann Chagossien ti abite kom enn klas ba ek eksklir depi derasinman-la.
4. Par konparizon bann zot lepep ki viv kot bann zot labaz militer meriken. Bann Chagossien ti kapav ena travay ek kas de pe viv kot Diego Garcia. Nu kalkil sa nivo de lavi par konparizon bann lepep ki viv kot bann labaz militer lor Guam ek Kwajalein, bann ziles Marshall.
5. Par konparizon bann lepep ki viv san bann vyolatsyon de bann dwa imen. Bann lepep de Guam ek Kwajalein ti ganye bann vyolasyon ek nu sanz zot bann nivo de vie avek enn lepep pe viv avek tu bann dwa imen.

Bann vyolasyon aparaman de bann dwa fondamantal

1. Dwa kont lekzil
2. Dwa oto-determinasyon ek otonomi (de guvernman)
3. Dwa gard, protez, ek develop so kiltir
4. Dwa kant genosid ek etnovid
5. Dwa gard ek develop so later natal ek so bann resurs naturel
6. Dwa diriz so developman politik, ekonomik, ek kiltirel
7. Dwa ena enn nasyonalite
8. Dwa ena lediksayon
9. Dwa ena swin medical
10. Dwa ena travay
11. Dwa ena sekirite social ek enn nivo de lavi baz
12. Dwa rest lib de tu deskrimnasyon, komplet lor baz-la de so identite endizenn
13. Dwa retabli so-mem kont bann vyolasyon de bann dwa fondamantal, komplet rann later.

Bann dimensyon enportan de mizer

1. Ekpropriyasyon de Chagos

- Presyon verbal ek avek bann aksyon pu kit Chagos;
- Eksterminasyon de bann lisyen de bann Chagossien lor Diego Garcia;
- Derasinman par fors lor bann bato avek tro boku dimunn.

2. Somaz

- 100% finn perdi travay de Chagos,
- 45% ek 40% somaz pu premyer ek dezyem generasyon asterla, kom parti de somaz ek su-lemplwa ot depi derasinman-la;
- €60 ek €81 kas moyen par mwa pu premyer ek dezyem generasyon, kom parti de ena ti kas depi derasinman-la.

3. Eksklisyon ekonomik ek social-sikolozik

- Perdi lavi-la de sikirite striktirel dan Chagos pu enn lavi preker striktirel kom enn klas ba ek ensklir dan Moris ek Sesel;
- Bann sentiman kontinye de rest san puvwar, enzis, ek vilnerab akoz derasinman-la;

4. San domisil fixé

- Tu bann lakaz dan Chagos perdi ek san domisil fixé premyerman dan lekzil;
- Lozman dan lekzil dan bann kartye plis pov ek malsante, avek bann kondisyon suvan avek tro boku dimunn, san bann facilite sanitasyon, ek avek bann problem striktirel;
- 40% de bann fwaye mank enn twalet ek plomri, 26% lo dan lakaz, 8% elektrisite;
- Bann sentimen dan lekzil de enn domisil perdi.

5. Later ek propriete komin perdi

- Later perdi, estime kom 700 m^2 pu sak fwaye dan Chagos;
- Bann resurs komin perdi, kom bann fridemer, bann kokotye, lespas lib, ek bann simitye.

6. Lafin

- Mank manze ek nuritir pendan derasinman-la;
- Lakses perdi ar manze lib dan Chagos, ek lafin ek bann problem de dyet dan lekzil.

7. Bann problem avek lasante

- Lasante pe ale enba dan Chagos su BIOT ek bann mor pendan ek apre derasinman-la;
- Bann problem avek bann maladi respiratwar ek kardyo-vaskular, dyabet, hypertensyon, Tiberkulosis, lalkol ek ladrog, vyolans domistik ek seksuel kont bann fem;
- Sagren ek latristes dan lekzil, avek domaz lor lasante fisik ek mental.

8. Sosyete ek kiltir kase

- Divisyon de bann Chagossien akoz derasinman-la;
- Divisyon de bann anset dan Chagos, pe fer domaz lor bann koneksyon ansetral enportan;
- Identite kiltirel diminye ek disparisyon-la de kelke bann fenomen kiltirel.

9. Ledikasyon diminye

- Deklen de kalite-la de ledikasyon dan Chagos su BIOT

- Bann problem sistimatik avek ledikasyon dan lekzil, kom povrete ek enn sistem de ledikasyon dan Moris ki defavorize bann etidyan pov;
- 36% analfabet pu generasyon-la finn ne dan lekzil,
- 47% de sa generasyon pas komonse lekol sekonder, ek enn zot 35% pas fini sekonder.

10. Deskriminasyon etnik

- 50% de premye generasyon pe koz ki zot ti ganye deskriminasyon dan lekzil;
- 66% pe koz ki zot ti ganye abiz verbal dan lekzil akoz zot Chagossien;
- Eksklisyon de travay dan labaz-la militer meriken lor Diego Garcia, kan bann Morisyen ek zot bann nasyonalite travay laba.

NOTES ON THE AUTHORS

Philip Harvey is Associate Professor of Law and Economics at Rutgers University School of Law—Camden (USA). He received a Ph.D. in economics from the New School for Social Research (USA), a J.D. from Yale Law School (USA), and a B.A. from Yale College. Prior to joining the faculty at Rutgers, he was a Visiting Scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation and, before that, practiced law in New York City. Professor Harvey's research focuses on public policy responses to joblessness. Some of his recent works are *Securing the Right to Employment* (Princeton: NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); *America's Misunderstood Welfare State* (New York: Basic Books, 1990), with Theodore Marmor and Jerry Mashaw; "Aspirational Law," 52 *Buffalo Law Review* (2004): 701-726; and "The Right to Work and Basic Income Guarantees: Competing or Complementary Goals?" 2 *Rutgers Journal of Law and Urban Policy* 1/4/1-1/4/48 (2004). He is working on a book about the trajectory of U.S. social welfare policy in the 21st century.

S. Wojciech Sokolowski is a Sociologist and Senior Research Associate for the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project and the Nonprofit Employment Data Project, both at Johns Hopkins University (USA). He received a Ph.D. in sociology from Rutgers University (USA), an M.A. in philosophy from the Lublin Catholic University (Poland), and an M.A. in sociology from San Jose State University (USA). He has taught at Hartnell College (USA), Rutgers University, and Morgan State University (USA). Dr. Sokolowski's research has focused on the interaction between individuals and social institutions and includes writing on social movements, organizations, work, and professions. His publications include *Civil Society and the Professions of Eastern Europe: Social Change and Organization in Poland* (Plenum/Kluwer, 2001); *Global Civil Society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, 1999), with Lester M. Salamon and others; *Measuring Volunteering: A Practical Toolkit* (Independent Sector/United Nations Volunteers, 2001), with Alan Dingle and others; and articles in *The International Journal of Sociology*, *The International Journal of Cultural Policy*, *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, and *Voluntas*.

David Vine is an independent researcher and a Ph.D. Candidate in the Ph.D. Program in Anthropology, Graduate Center, City University of New York (USA). He received an M.A. in anthropology from the City University of New York in 2003, and a B.A. from Wesleyan University (USA) in 1997. He expects to receive his Ph.D. in December 2005, completing a dissertation on the Chagossians and the military base at Diego Garcia. David's other research has focused on gentrification, displacement, and development issues in Brooklyn, New York. He will have a chapter about Chagossians in Seychelles in the forthcoming book *Seychelles and the Indian Ocean: A Small Island Developing State in a Globalising World* (New Delhi: Star Publications). Other publications have appeared in *International Migration*, *Critical Planning*, *The New York Times*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, and *Week End*.

(Note: Institutional names are for identification purposes only.)