



CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS TO MIGRANT INTEGRATION, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL COHESION IN AFRICA

DR. LINDA A. OUCHO

AFRICAN MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY CENTRE

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STATE OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA (1/3)

Pre-Colonial Era

- Migration decisions prior to the demarcation of borders in the late 19th century was influenced by the social, political and environmental conditions;

Colonial Era

- After the demarcation of borders during the 'scramble for Africa', movements were controlled by policies outlined by colonial governments;
- Internal migration was limited to male labour migrants only;
- Cultural imperialism and social changes within the local environment was influenced by the colonial governments, replacing traditional systems and culture with the culture of the colony
 - Migrant integration taking place, however, it is controlled and determined by the colonial government (e.g. education, religion)

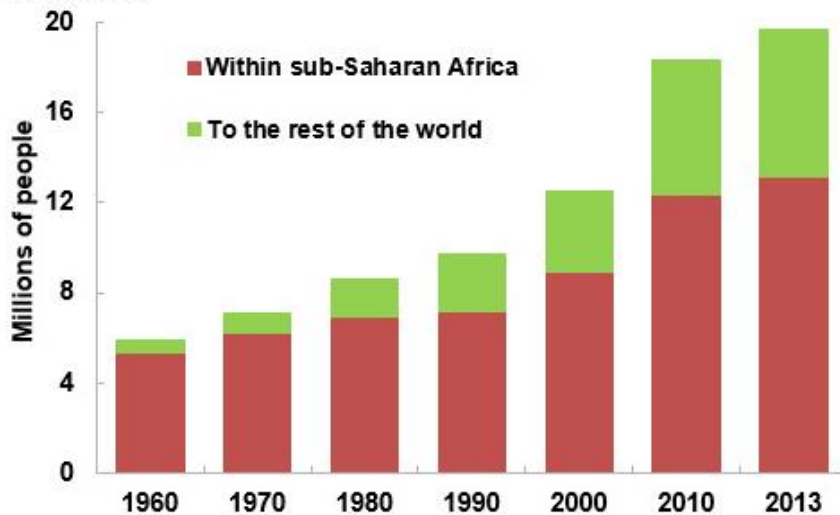
Post-Independence

- Internal movement in many African countries became fluid but the flows were larger;
- Ethnic communities from other regions of the country continue to interact with one another;
- International travel for education or employment purposes brings migrants in contact with other nationalities
- Globalisation has improved communication + transport links that people learn about different cultures and systems and determine the best way to integrate (fully or partially).

STATE OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA (2/3)

People on the go

Trends in migration within and to the rest of the world have changed over the decades.



Source: World Bank, Migration and Remittances Database.

Majority of the migrants are within the African continent;

Some are driven by violence (Somalia, South Sudan), others are driven by environmental shocks, while others economic opportunities, social situations (e.g. marriage)

Migrants contribute to the local economy;

Culture can be used to positively as a tool for integration (i.e. food, language, songs etc)

Migrant integration is essential to build relations between groups of people BUT it has to be well outlined and understood by the host government, migrants and community.

STATE OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA (3/3)

Migration lately is being viewed through a negative lens i.e. competition of resources, insecurity, crime. This influences relations between migrant and host.

This leads to migrants being faced with challenges of acceptance from host communities because of lack of understanding or effective strategies to curb indifference within communities;

- At present, most of the countries in Africa have hosted migrants from different countries and localities that indifference should not exist;
- Indifference emerges when there is lack of understanding of migrants presence, especially those forcibly displaced, but also when there is a lack of effective strategies employed by government to reduce negative impacts of migration
 - (e.g. xenophobia, racism, competition of resources etc) Hostility as the host communities perceive migrants to be a threat to employment

Perception of migrants differs in different regions and countries around the continent.

- Reports in Uganda indicate that refugees find it easier to assimilate within the host community whereas in Kenya, there has been evidence of xenophobia, intolerance, violence at a small scale, which questions whether durable solutions is possible in Kenya

MIGRANT INTEGRATION WITH HOST COMMUNITIES (1/3)



Social inclusion
(health, education);
economic inclusion
(labour sector); and
civic and political
participation



Anti-discriminations;
countering
xenophobia; and
promoting mutual
understanding

INTEGRATION

It's a two way process of mutual adaptation

Adaptation process for both host and migrants.

- Differences in cultures can make it difficult in adapting to the local community where esp. language, religion, values and lifestyle choices differ between host and migrant community.
- Migrants learn how to adapt to their local community by choosing to reject and/or accept new values, behaviours etc but it depends on willingness and openness for change
- Host communities must be open to accepting different cultures and the positive impact it can have in their community

MIGRANT INTEGRATION WITH HOST COMMUNITIES (2/3)

Host communities may not easily or be willing to accept new cultures of migrants, leading to resistance in accommodating migrants.

- AMADPOC (2016) study showed little understanding at governmental level on relations and integration of migrants within the Kenyan community.
- No clear systematic process to handle tensions between migrant and host community

Process of adaptation

- **Culture shock** i.e. adapting to language, religion, values and lifestyle choices
- **Resistance** of hosts and/or migrant populations in accommodating migrants and in extreme situations can spark xenophobic tendencies
- **Adjustment** migrants accept certain cultural and economic aspects of the host community while compromising of others (temporarily or permanently), e.g. learning the language of the community, but retaining one's language through migrant community groups or events
 - challenges faced by forcibly displaced migrants seeking a source of livelihood and home

PLATFORMS FOR MIGRANT INTEGRATION

Employment

- Migrants sometimes identify job opportunities without considering potential integration challenges
 - High expectations concerning job opportunities at the destination country (e.g. salary range, position)
 - Overlooking of potential barriers to employment access
 - Lack of understanding/assessment of the labour market from the perspective of the migrants
- Host community may see migrants are competitors in the labour market (e.g. South Africa); migrant population maybe filling a labour gap (e.g. Botswana health sector late 1990s)

Housing

- Neighbourhoods are platforms for migrant integration;
- Search and selection of housing in safer and affordable neighborhoods;
- Ending up in congested areas with informal settlements (slums)
- Displaced persons resettlement is provided by the host government that allocates land to IDPs, and in collaboration with UNHCR and resettlement countries in the case of refugees.
 - Kenyan IDPs displaced by the 2007/08 PEV, requested to continue to reside in the areas they resettled in temporarily

CASE STUDY: REFUGEE INTEGRATION IN UGANDA

Uganda is currently hosting the largest refugee population within Eastern Africa.

- Refugees from war torn nations with majority from South Sudan and more recently Somalia since the announcement for the closure of the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya

Targeted initiative led by government of in partnership with international stakeholders, ensure that the integration process not only supports the needs of the refugee population but benefits and gives access to the host population

- E.g. Refugee Law Project (2005): Allocation of agricultural land to refugees; ReHOPE Initiative

Majority of the refugees are based in rural settlements closer to the border, however, refugees move to urban areas in search of employment opportunities or engage in informal trade

Approach to 'local integration' when contextualised in refugee hosting countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia, it could be beneficial for the country

- Discussions in Kenya have taken place on the positive contributions of refugees to national development BUT challenge continues to exist as the political stance continues to focus on securitization versus protection especially of Somali refugee populations

SOCIAL COHESION

‘The outcome of a combination of harmonious interactive activities amongst a group of people living in close proximity, purposely advancing the interest of all those involved; (Bourne & Solomos, 2007)

- Ensuring that there is an agreement between migrant and host community

Social and economic relations aid social cohesion, e.g. migrants addressing labour gaps within host communities contributing to national development and the economy

Migrants choosing to adapt to the host community are taking effective steps ensure that they assimilate and integrate into society.

- Difficult balance as it means rejecting and/or rejecting certain cultural behaviours

Use of existing platforms to ensure social cohesion e.g. church, market places, community centres, community events, schools etc

Assessing relations between migrant and host communities to identify any changes in behaviours and triggers that disrupt the process of social cohesion

CASE STUDY: PERCEPTIONS OF MIGRANTS IN KENYA

AMADPOC (2016), challenges and benefits of migrant presence

“It is difficult to find anything good that these outsiders have brought us in this area. Instead, we have lost our land to them while labour is nowadays cheaper. So, you cannot work for somebody at a higher price because he can just go and hire a cheaper person.” - **44-year old female respondent (Ongata Rongai)**

“The migrants now control the economy of Narok and that has increased economic competition because we also need to gain those business opportunities. We are very uncomfortable when it is only these people that get all the good things while we only get the leftovers.” - **34-year old male respondent (Narok)**

“As you know, Maasais didn’t know or value education before but in-migration has taught them the benefit of education. There has been development in terms of business and infrastructure as a result. The Maasai were traditionally pastoralists but in-migration has familiarized them with the trade business. In-migration have also brought about job opportunities for the local.” - **57-year old male respondent.**

CHALLENGES

1

Limited understanding on migrant integration. Few studies touch on this except when highlighting xenophobia

Disconnection between research and policy

2

Lack of effective comprehensive policies that include migrant integration which creates barriers between migrant and host community (e.g. requirements to speak the national language)

3

Lack of a platform for migrants and host communities to address their primary concerns stemming from difficulties integrating

4

Lack of understanding of migrant integration at policy level

STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS

Comprehensive and coherent policies responding to the diverse community (e.g. bilateral agreements between countries).

- Developing safer migration practices at national, regional and global levels (e.g. UN Global Compact on Migration)

Sensitization of host communities and migrants on bilateral and multilateral between countries so as to enable the citizens to enjoy the benefits

Policies countering xenophobia and all forms of discrimination as outlined in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016). Awareness campaigns for the local population and training of law enforcement and local authorities

Pre-Departure training and migrant orientation programmes e.g. IOM Pre-departure training for resettled refugees – address some of the concerns of migrants and prepares them for what to expect

Private Sector engagement as integration partners with the government. Promote diversity, provide training and enforce legal obligations concerning labour and migrant rights

Technology as a tool for promoting migrant diversity through integration strategies to ensure social cohesion