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

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Migration is the movement of people from their original habitat to a destination outside the borders of their origin, purposely to settle and can be voluntary or forced. The consequences of migration are usually not predetermined, due to various stages of uncertainty that may arise, to deter the motive of the migrant to relocate. The present state of migration debates is challenging the academic, humanitarian, development and government actors to look at migration differently given that the rhetoric of migration is changing. Migrants are being viewed through a negative lens instead of agents of development to their country of origin or their host country. The historical events since colonialism has challenged discussions related to nationalism, and shaped national and regional policies related to migration.

When a host community receives forced migrants (asylum seekers and refugees), they are unprepared to accommodate new entrants, due to the protection of limited shared resources within their territory, such as land, water, housing facilities, natural and mineral resources. Migrants are often faced with challenges of being accepted by host communities, hence the difficulties in communal integration, harmonious living, commerce, cultural practices, religious beliefs, language barriers, agricultural practices, economic activities, social integration, pastoralism and others. Invariably, conflict between host communities and migrants distorts social cohesion and other forms of societal decadence.

The border demarcation of Africa in 1885 by colonial powers, was a catalyst to establishing the sources of recent border conflicts that distort social cohesion, thereby resulting in xenophobia and intolerance between the host communities and the migrants. For instance, the conflict along the border of Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo began as an institutional obstruction of Belgian King Leopold who ruled Congo, during the colonial era, to strategically detach resource rich regions and lucrative landscapes (The Nile, Volcanoes and River Rusizi) from Rwanda and handed them over to the colonial administration of Democratic Republic of Congo. The handing over of the resource rich region to Congo ensured that while the Rwandese migrants are part of the Congo border community, their status will remain as migrants and not indigenes of Congo, hence as Rwandese migrants, who by the design of the colonial powers reside in a neighbouring country, cannot own land and have no claims to the natural or mineral resources within their former territory. The ethnic identity of the Rwandese migrants is questioned by the Congolese, whenever there is dispute over land utility and ownership, which led to several armed conflicts and inability to sustain social integration with the Congolese.

The province of Bufumbira was also cut out of Rwanda and handed over to Uganda, during the colonial era but the Ugandan communities have had successful relations with the Rwandese migrants and have been socially integrated into the Ugandan societies. Refugees from war torn nations in East and Central Africa, residing in Uganda have been warmly accepted by the host communities as well as the Uganda government, which established a sustainable integration program for the refugees by issuing land to refugee families for farming. This integration plans have resorted to peaceful integration between the migrants and the host communities, as well as generated economic opportunities for the migrants, whereby, they can produce crops and trade them within the local markets.

In other cases, migrants contribute significantly to Regional Economic Integration, whereby the migrants are the agents of economic diversity through cross-border trade activities.

There are also positive benefits of hosting migrants. Cross-border trade contributes to the Gross Domestic Product of the host state, as well as improve the social and cultural relations between the migrants and the hosts. Cross border trade is more pronounced in the West African region, especially between Nigeria, whose population is above one hundred and seventy million. The countries that border Nigeria rely heavily on cross border trade between their countries and Nigerian border communities. However, the social and economic benefits accrued are at par with emerging security threats along border communities, such as human trafficking, smuggling of contraband, proliferation of small arms and light weapons and narcotic trafficking. It is widely argued, criminal organizations operating in the region are mostly residing in border communities, where mobility is not a hindrance to their escape when they operate between two countries. Crime along border communities such as Badagry, which borders Republic of Benin and Nigeria has created resentment between members of the community and the migrants who are engaged in crime.

It is widely argued that when states cooperate economically, they are less likely to be conflict, suggesting that migrants are Ambassadors of peace, contributing to the good neighbourliness and strengthening regional integration. The trade integration objective of the East African Community (EAC) has spurred economic migrants within the region, which has given the leeway for the migrants to extend their businesses across borders, thereby creating new jobs for host communities as well as improved social cohesion between the migrants and their hosts. The underlining motive behind economic integration is to develop the atmosphere for countries to integrate markets as well as improve socio-cultural relationships. Both agendas are conducted by migrants. Nevertheless, forced migrants may be unable to contribute in equal measure as voluntary migrants within the host community, due to the psychological effect of war on their productive capacities but also their lack of access to resources within the host country.

Both voluntary and forced migrants contribute to the cultural diversity of host communities through social interaction, which may be accepted or repelled. Hence, their relations could be a catalyst for development or conflict. Intra-cultural relations may result in racist or xenophobic attacks, especially when opposing ideologies are consistent in the lifestyle of the migrants who are of a different race, as witnessed between Somali migrants hosted in different countries across the globe. In the case where both migrant and hosts are of similar race, the resentments would qualify as xenophobic. South Africa is an example of a state that experiences xenophobia and racism concurrently. The white and black race in South Africa are constantly conflicting over economic resources, while the black race of South Africa is also in conflict with other African migrants, depicting xenophobia.

Kenya presents a clear example of racism, xenophobia, intolerance, social cohesion, integration and diversity. When Kenya began developing its railway, the Indians were contracted to build the network as well as maintain them, which meant their settlement

in the country. These rail workers became citizens of Kenya and has since become the largest non-African community. However, their settlement brought about racism, which is dominant in their relationship other race, till date. Kenyans have also been xenophobic with other Africans, especially the Somalis who dominate the North-Eastern part of the country. The diverse ethnic groups exhibit intolerance between them which has hindered the prospect of nationalism after its demise, after independence. Intolerance is widely displayed among in-migrants when they are either in transit or converge with other tribes in urban cities.

The Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps in Kenya demonstrates integration between host and refugee communities. However, the recent insecurity in the country has led to a growing negative perception concerning Somali refugees and migrants. Kenya has a Dadaab hosts majority Somalia refugees while Kakuma hosts South Sudanese, Congolese, Ethiopia, Eritrean and asylum seekers and refugees from other countries within the region. The refugees face challenges in the labour market as they are not allowed to work without permit, which is too expensive for refugees. This is particularly a challenge for heads of households, as they are not capable of providing for their families, which leaves them with little choice to make ends meet. Unemployment is a root cause of crime amongst refugee populations in Kenya, as the lack of work permits leads youth to engage in criminal activities, such as armed robbery, proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Insurgent recruitment and human trafficking. All these crimes disintegrate the social cohesion within the host communities, as well as creates intolerance, which leads to xenophobia.

Xenophobia is on the increase in Kenya, as a result of the stigmatization of the Somali population from North-Eastern Kenya and Somalia. These population of migrants are tagged with terror related offences and allegations, which taints the image of the entire Somali indigenes living in Kenya. In contrast to the xenophobic relations between the Somali and the Kenyans, trade integration is on the increase, however social integration is taunted by xenophobia. Many Kenyans would not let out their properties to the Somalis but the Somalis would let out their properties to Kenyans. The purpose of this paper is to assess the existing studies on the state of migrant integration, diversity and social cohesion in Africa, drawing examples from the current events under way in different parts of the continent in relation to migration. The paper will draw connection from, for example, countries that have a history of xenophobia and compare with countries that are showcasing evidence of xenophobic tendencies and provide solutions to curb this issue.

The decision to migrate is often accompanied by several preconceived expectations, especially that of acceptance by hosts, but with forced migration, the decision is often abrupt, to escape death, famine, and many other fatal conditions (Haug, 2008). The duration it takes a migrant to adapt to the new environment determines how soon to realise integration with the society. Some migrants tend to adjust sooner than others, through social interaction and engagement in economic activities (Botero, Weissing, Wright, & Rubenstein, 2015). However, not all migrants are warmly received by the host communities or are allowed to enjoy similar privileges with members of the host communities. In such instances, migrants become segregated amongst host population or marginalized from economic activities, especially if they are refugees.

Most host communities are not receptive towards refugees, for fear of losing scarce and valuable resources, such as land (Ediev, Coleman, & Scherbov, 2014). Although, Uganda[1] demonstrates a different scenario of hosting refugees and has been seen to have the most progressive refugee policy. According to UNHCR, Uganda registered more than 200,000 refugees with UNHCR in 2030. (Lyytinen, 2015) This figures otherwise strengthened the urban economy as opposed to refugee situations in Kenya, where refugees contribute to the insurgent activities at the North-East of Kenya, which borders Somalia. Insurgents from Somalia have camouflaged with residents of north eastern villages, who are also Somali, creating challenges for the state security agencies in identifying who was Somali resident in Kenya, and who was a new entrant, migrating from Somalia (Anderson & McKnight, 2014). The number of refugees hosted in Uganda has increased since the announcement by the Government of Kenya to close Dadaab Refugee Camp due to insecurity.

According to the Women's Refugees Commission (WRC), the urban refugee community of Kampala is divided into two wealth groups; "vulnerable households" and "struggling households". Uganda allocated plots of land in rural areas to refugees for Agriculture, in line with the Refugee Law Project (2005). Although, the authorities controlled the movements of refugees leaving the camps. Movement out of the camp was restricted to those seeking medical attention in Kampala, security concerns, pending resettlement or proven self-sufficiency. Since 2006, the government has allowed only few refugees leave the rural settlements (Urban Refugees Organization, 2017). This has created a favourable living condition for refugees, where they can earn an income as well as remit funds to the families left behind. Most of the refugees have made enough money to relocate to urban areas such as Kampala, whereas, some refugees migrate to Kampala to seek employment opportunities or engage in informal trade. Majority of these refugees reside in informal settlements in Kampala, where they contribute to the rise in urban poverty and the swelling of slum population. According to the UN data, 2010, children of poor refugees residing in Kampala, are not registered in schools, due to the high school fees (Dryden-Peterson, 2006).

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[1] Uganda has signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, 1967 Protocol, 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problem in Africa, 1960 Uganda control of alien refugees act, 2006 Ugandan refugee act, which allows refugees to choose to settle in Kampala, or elsewhere

Migrants tend to display diverse cultures within the host communities. Countries that attract migrants from several geographical regions, tend to enjoy a myriad of cultures that enriches the society, although not all cultures are accepted by the host communities. Some cultural practices are considered extreme and inhuman, as such the migrants are mistreated. Notwithstanding the negative impacts of migration on host populations, there are some instances where the host population benefit immensely from the migrants through cultural assimilation and induction of new economic practices (Skeldon, 2001).

Social cohesion[2] is induced by certain values such as trust, equity and respect. However, these elements are not always present in every situation. Some societies display cohesive tendencies for a limited period, while pursuing a common agenda and disperse as soon as they meet those objectives. This has been the nature of African societies, prior to independence. Most of the ethnic groups united to force the colonial administrators out of power, to gain independence. Following the independence, they retracted to their ethnic communities and begin to contend for the seat of power independently through party systems. This has also resulted in inter-ethnic disputes, nepotism and entrenched ethnic affiliations in election polls, as evident in Kenya elections, where the electorates vote for politicians from their enclaves (Hassan, 2017).

MIGRANT INTEGRATION WITHIN HOST COMMUNITY

Assimilation

The decision to cross an international boundary for the purpose of relocation, presents various opportunities as well as challenges. The foremost challenge a migrant encounter is culture shock, which is often caused by initial physical experience on arrival at destination. The culture of host communities often differs from that of the migrant, hence the difficulties in adapting to the language, religion, values and lifestyle choices of the host community. The challenges in assimilation are experienced by both host and migrants. The hosts may not easily comprehend the culture of the migrant, hence the resistance in accommodating migrants, especially refugees (Whitaker, 2015).

In the case of refugees, they are escaping volatile conditions and do not choose where they relocate, as such, they have no predetermined expectations or preparedness while crossing international borders (Gibney, 2015). They suffer mentally stablility, therefore their assumptions, expectations as well as the outcomes of their residence within host communities are new experiences. Some refugees, however are inflicted with psychological trauma, due to conflicts in their home countries. Therefore, are withdrawn, hence, not sociable on arrival at the host community (Familiar, Hall, Bundervoet, Verwimp, & Bass, 2016). For example, former child militants, who have been forced to kill close relatives to qualify for recruitment in the militia as evident in Sierra Leone Civil

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[2] Social cohesion is described as 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)

War (1991-2002)[3]. After the war, these child militants crossed the border to join their relatives in neighbouring countries without going through any rehabilitation or demobilization and disarmament program (Derluyn, Vindevogel, & De Haene, 2013). They resumed civilian life with a distorted mindset, which reflects on their relative capacities with host communities. Some have been known to join or form rebel groups in the host communities, thereby, contributing their combat skills and expertise to escalating conflicts, as in the case with the Niger-Delta militants in Nigeria (Adeyemi-Suenu, 2014). The Niger Delta Liberation Front (NDLF) and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta are fighting side by side to overwhelm the Nigerian Army, in an ongoing battle to secede from Nigeria. It is widely known among the Niger Delta communities that the militants are from neighbouring countries, such as Liberia and Sierra Leone (Aghedo & Osumah, 2015).

Female refugees face more psychological challenges while settling down in host communities, due to mental and physical injuries sustained from rape during conflicts in their countries (Kohli, et al., 2014). For example, female refugees from South Sudan, are mostly victims of rape, due to the rampancy of the gory activity during the prolonged conflict. Majority of women from the Upper Nile State of South Sudan, living in Akoka, Bailet, Fashoda, Longochuk, Maban, Maiwut, Malakal, Manyo, Melut, Luakpiny / Nasser, Panyikang, Renk and Ulang have fallen victims of rape by militants (Tankink, 2013). These human right violations, destroy the productive capacity of refugee women in host communities, due to injuries sustained from rape, such as damaged uterus (Benshoof, 2014). In addition, men from those communities marry outside their community, and therefore not extending their lineage in the host communities (Clark, 2014). The perceived motive behind rape is to ensure the victims are not capable of reproduction, and never willing to return to their homeland, due to fear, trauma and stigma. This implies that the militants' objective of rape was to control population growth through rape. This in fact is an act of genocide and a gross human right violation (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013). Despite international conventions against rape, militia groups as well as the South Sudan military consistently violate the provisions of international law. Articles 3 and 4 of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008)[4].

Employment Opportunities

Migrants have very high expectations that may not be fulfilled at destination, hence, the disappointment and frustrations that ensue (Creighton, 2013). The first expectation of a migrant is to secure a meaningful job for immediate sustenance while they seek more sustainable opportunities. Migrants often to consider the probability of finding employment in the host country overlooking potential barriers that may prevent access to

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[3] Rebel groups fighting against the then President, Charles Taylor, (Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL) in partnership with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone joined forces to overthrow the government of Joseph Momoh (Borisova, Betancourt, & Willett, 2013).

[4] The UNSCR "demands that all parties to armed conflict immediately respond appropriately to protect civilians, including women and girls, from all forms of sexual violence; Article 4. notes that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide;" (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016)

the jobs they desire. They often ignore an assessment of the nature of the labour market before migrating. Some labour markets do not permit migrants, due to the limitations that exist, such as an overwhelming labour market, youth bulge, limited vacancies and government restrictions. Migrants are usually not permitted to work with their visitors' visa in many countries, which is a reason for migrant engagement in criminal activities, as a resolve to generating income for themselves and for the families left behind (Menjívar & Lakhani, 2016).

Existing immigration policies at country level would have to be reviewed and where necessary revised especially countries that attract labour migrants. This review will not only reduce the chances of migrants becoming undocumented and working with the risk of being deported, but will also endeavour to respect international obligations such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through its Members States. It aims to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, importantly identifies migrants as vulnerable people who must be empowered and whose needs are reflected in the Agenda to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, protect labour rights and promotions of safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment with special attention on forced and child labour.

The UN Member States also agreed to ensure that all migrants will be allowed to move safely and responsibly (Colglazier, 2015). Unsafe migration distorts social and economic development and often lead to the exploitation of migrants. Exploitation of migrants often begin at origin, where they are recruited for several informal labours in other countries. Their ignorance to international norms leave them vulnerable to the traffickers. Discussions at a global level has already began through the *Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* through regional consultations to outline some of the key issues to be considered An example is the trafficking of teenage girls from Benin Kingdom of Edo State Nigeria to Lomé, Togo. The traffickers take the young girls through the West African borders to Republic of Togo for orientation, which includes practising prostitution. They are held there for several months until a host in Italy or France is prepared to receive them (John & Faith, 2015).

Women and girls make up the majority of migrants globally, as a result of the discriminations they face in their country of origin (Gallagher, 2015). Discrimination is mostly found in sub-Saharan African countries and other developing countries across the world. Patriarchal perceptions borne to the societies where these women reside generate expected roles and responsibilities by gender with women playing a more private role and men a public role. These perceptions of African women playing traditional home maker roles have been challenged through feminist movements from the developed countries, which assume that this situation as enslavement and thus initiate programs to enlighten African women and their community to be self-sufficient and independent of men in the society (Allen, 2016). African women have been able to participate in employment and become self-sufficient as they contribute to the household economy while at the same time taking care of the home by recruitment house helps. This has often resulted in tensions between husband and wife as two divergent views on gender roles within the

household and in the public sphere would lead to broken households (Yoon, et al., 2015).

Those female migrants that play a more traditional role within the household would experience difficulties socializing with a host community where women contribute to the household economy and are self-sufficient. They are bound by culture to remain at home, therefore limiting their exposure to the host community which may lead to alienation due to cultural differences. Their contribution to development is often indirect, as they have transferred the culture of not working in public, hence, they neither generate revenue nor pay income taxes. However, many have argued that their contribution to the home can be quantified and assessed for productivity and societal development. The home is considered a fragment of the society, therefore if the home is not in order, the entire members would be considered to be living in chaos. The chaotic living conditions are not favourable to the mental health of those members of the family who contribute to public development. And as migrant families, they will be inconsistent at work, which may lead to losing their jobs (Abdi, 2014).

Housing

Housing is usually a major concern for migrants in terms of finding the right neighbourhood that is safe for their families, affordable with good transport links. Major cities which are primarily destinations for internal and international migrants offer different types of housing depending on affordability. Those migrants that are financially constrained, often seek informal accommodation in congested areas, such as slums, which are mostly affordable. The increased slum population impacts on available infrastructure, such as sewage, water supply, medical services and sanitation services. These services are in short supply to informal settlements, due to the unplanned and unstructured living situations within informal settlements that do not meet required standards of the city council (Mberu, Ezeh, Chepngeno-Langat, Kimani, & Oti, 2013).

Refugees are not privilege to enjoying similar benefits as other migrants, who have a choice to where they reside. Refugees are settled in host communities determined by the government where they have access to social services provided by a number of international agencies such as UNHCR, World Health Organisation and UNICEF. Their movement is managed by the government and UNHCR and in some countries, such as Uganda and to a certain extent Ethiopia, the refugees have the right to seek employment and opportunities in other locations within the country. Kenya hosts the largest refugee population in the world in two major camps, namely; Kakuma Refugee Camp[5] and Dadaab Refugee Camp[6]. Since the inception of the camps, the refugees have mixed with the host population and intermarried with them, to nationalize their immigration status (Oka, 2014). Refugees who integrate with their families who reside legally in Kenya, find

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[5] Kakuma Refugee Camp was established in 1992, located in Turkana County, the north-western region of Kenya, 95 kilometres from the Lokichoggio Kenya-Sudan border. It hosts about 60,000 refugees from Sudan, South Sudan, D.R. Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea and other nationalities

[6] Dadaab Refugee Camp was known to host one of the largest Somali refugee populations until the announcement to close the camp was made in May 2016. Dadaab hosts about 260,000 refugees from Somalia, located in a semi-arid town in Garissa County, Kenya. It hosts refugees in five camps (Dagahaley, Hagadera, Ifo, Ifo II and Kambioos). The camp is run by the UNHCR and funded by foreign donors.

it much easier to socialize with host communities and assimilate Kenya cultures faster than those who have no relative in the country. Those with families residing in Kenya, assist in domestic chores, and by so doing, contribute to refreshing their kin of their native cultures by cooking native foods and speaking native language around the house. Children in such situations, learn their cultures and adopt their traditional values in their lifestyle (Gilhooly & Lee, 2014).

DIVERSITY OF MIGRANTS AND HOST COMMUNITY (POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE)

Migration ensures the transfer of different cultural norms and values to the host communities, which is sometimes rejected, especially if the cultures seem to be extreme to the belief system of the host community. An example is the circumcision of the girl child, which is a norm in many African societies, but is currently been challenged at a national level as it is viewed as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) which is perceived as barbaric and considered as a violation of fundamental human rights.

Therefore, migrants with similar cultural practices are often segregated from social and economic activities in host communities. For instance, within the Somali culture, which insists on the circumcision of the girl-child. When migrant Somalis are in countries where this practice is considered a crime, they send their girl-child back to Africa to carry out the circumcision and remain there till marriage. There have been instances, where the migrant families returned to Africa from North America, to ensure their daughters are not isolated from cultural norms. Most of the European countries, United States and Canada abolished FGM and considered the act as an offence to the state if committed. However, some African countries that still practice it, do not interfere with traditional values, which is the basis for the traditional institutions that remain the custodian of the African society (Bongard & Nakajima, 2015).

Migrants who are easily assimilated into host communities, are those, whose cultures are already being adopted by members of the host communities or those that have historical relations with the host country through colonial or other ties. As such their contribution to the development of the social and economic milieu in mostly accepted, with the hope that they may sustain those contributions. This is the usual practice, when the migrants are from a more developed nation, such as countries in Europe or United States of America. These migrants enjoy rare and esteemed privileges amongst host communities, and usually settle for longer periods until they become citizens. Examples are the European communities in Kenya, where some families have been in the country for more than a century, reaching their fourth generation residing in Kenya (Carboni & Soi, 2016).

SOCIAL COHESION BETWEEN MIGRANTS AND HOST COMMUNITY

Social cohesion between migrants and host communities occur when they are in agreement over shared resources, such as land, infrastructure and economic activities (Spoonley, Peace,, Butcher, & O'Neill, 2005). The growth of migrant population is also dependent on the sustained friendliness and compromises between migrants and host communities (Kawachi & Berkman, 2000). Social cohesion may occur from social and economic relations. For example, when migrants provide services that are in high demand or of significant importance to the host community, whereby the host community

lacks the capacity to provide similar services (Friedberg & Hunt, 1995). These services may range from household requirements to public utilities. The host communities may also be in admiration of the migrants' culture, which would enable ease of integration and assimilation between the migrants and the hosts. The European community in Kenya, for instance, is admired by the host community in Kenya. The host community emulate their attires, which has contributed to the creation of a huge market for European goods in Kenya markets. It is also responsible for the creation of several trade pacts between Kenya and European countries. Some of these trade pacts ensure the expansion of Kenya markets, as well as create jobs for small and medium sized distributor and retailers alike. Examples of these trade pacts are; Economic Partnership Agreements that allow more products from Europe to enter the local markets on equal terms (Hinkle & Schiff, 2004). And with the existing regional trade integration protocols amongst East African countries, consisting of Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya (Chakraborty & Sahu, 2017).

The trade pact with European countries would also expand regional markets as a result of the East African Community Customs Union, which was established in 2005, to fast track economic integration process, which would also lead to a monetary union and an eventual East African federation. The concept of an East African federation is however dependent on the strength of assimilation between the member countries as well as the ability to accept diverse cultures as well as compromise on traditional institutions. Therefore, the East African Community agenda for political federation is heavily reliant on the integration of its markets, communities as well as its institutions. In addition, it would rely on the compromises of the people with regard to their diversity, intra and inter communities. Both integration and diversity are however dependent on the movement of people across international borders and their ability to attain social cohesion within host communities. Social cohesion between migrants and host communities occurs when the migrants are at peace with the host communities, whereby, assimilation is dependent on the ability of the migrant to adopt or accept host cultures. Host communities often appreciate when migrants learn their cultures and are tolerant of their religions and traditional values.

STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS TO SOCIAL COHESION AND MIGRANT INTEGRATION

While the process of integrating can be a shock to migrants and establishing a fair balance of social cohesion between the migrant and host community may appear daunting, there are a few strategic approaches that can be adopted to improve relations between migrant and host communities.

First, *sensitization of host communities and migrants* in necessary to reduce any negative perceptions and challenges that may emerge between the two communities. The peaceful coexistence of migrants and host communities have been of concern to the international community, especially if the migrants are refugees from a neighbouring country. Refugees from war torn nations sometimes resume conflict at host nations, when they migrate with their enemies. When the conflict resumes, it affects the host communities more than the opposing ethnic groups they are in primary conflict with. The resolve to maintaining peace in the host community is an intervention to redress the differences through various means of communication, both in domestic and public

domain. Such as through the radios, posters, television and other means that are often used to communicate to the members of the society.

Second, adopting a *sustainable relationship between migrant and host community* is also needed especially on the long run to ensure peaceful co-existence. Both communities will have to learn to understand cultural norms and values bearing in mind the differences in the event conflict arises due to these differences. For those communities hosting refugees, they would have to sensitive to the needs of the refugee population bearing in mind that they have undergone a traumatic experience. This will help the host community better understand and accept migrant populations knowing that they have different value systems.

Most economic migrants chose to reside in locations where they can improve their domestic income and sustain their household, inclusive of the families left behind. Refugees, however, do not have such privileges of choice in residing in another country. They are forced to reside there without any consideration to their welfare or coping strategies to endemic issues in host communities. Some migrants do not consider the cultures of the host communities before making a choice to where they shall reside, hence the conflict that arises from rejection, disrespect to cultural values and disobedience to traditional laws. An example is the Ramadan period in Abu Dhabi, where migrants are not allowed to drink liquids in public domain due to the fasting of Muslims. Most migrants may not feel comfortable with such rules, especially in a highly humid city, where migrants who are not accustomed to the weather are mostly dehydrated.

Third, there is a need to develop a *safer migration practices* at a national, regional and global level. Through the UN Global Compact on Migration, steps are being taken to assess safer ways of migrating and to ensure regular migration takes place. The international frameworks and guiding principles exists as useful tools for governments and regional economic communities to use to mainstream migration into their laws and policies but also outline practices that can be used to effectively manage migration. Without laws governing migration, border conflicts alone will account for majority of global conflicts.

According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2015, 244 million people resided outside their countries of origin in 2015. The huge numbers of migrants and refugees was a focus of attention at the UN Summit for Refugees in 2016, as the delegates stressed on the fundamental human rights and fundamental freedom of migrants. Although, states possess the sovereign right to determine admission and residence of non-nationals on their territory, but also have the responsibility under international law to protect persons who have entered their territory or come under their jurisdiction.

Key international fraemworks and conventions that should be considered when shaping the policy or approach to safe and regular migration include the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR). Article 2 states that "Everyone is entitle to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a

person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty." other Treaties protecting the rights of migrants include; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Other conventions that could give shape to safer migration include but not limited to:

- The International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD),
- The International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers (ICRMW), and
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
- The International Labour Organization Convention Concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers (No 143, 1975);
- 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees;
- UNGA resolutions on Protection of migrants and Violence against women migrant workers;
- HRC resolutions on Human rights of migrants;
- 2000 Protocols against Trafficking and Smuggling;
- 2011 ILO Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers (No. 189);
- ILO Forced Labour Protocol and Recommendation (2014); and
- 1997 Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and its Recommendation.

CONCLUSION

The state of migration at present has been as a result of lack of sustainable development or lack of access to much needed resources for development. In Africa, common drivers of migration have been associated with conflict and the state of the economy. Many people are displaced due to conflict, as such are forced to migrate to neighbouring countries, hence, there movement are not usually a voluntary decision. Others migrate due to lack of opportunities or for economic reasons, where they assume that the more developed economy will provide the opportunities they desire. Migrants select a destination based on access to opportunities, providing a more favourable environment, which provides better security and economic advantage over the country of origin.

The cultural orientation of migrants is different from the cultural orientation of host communities by virtue of the differences in their countries. Therefore, when contact is established, they initially generate perceptions of each other, as well as confirm previous knowledge of each other. The similarities and differences confirmed will form the basis of future communication and relationship. This will also determine their peaceful coexistence or conflict between them. Both economic migrants and refugees face similar challenges of integration, due to the acceptance or rejection of their cultural orientation by the host communities. When they are warmly welcomed, the migrant will be at ease to contribute significantly to social and economic development, but if they are rejected, the migrants will coexist under very tensed conditions that may lead to conflict between them and the host communities. The ability to accept migrants is accompanied by

compromises between them, as such they must agree on certain issues and come to terms with each other's lifestyle choices.

Diversity is the established differences between the migrants and the host communities. The establishment of these differences are revealed through mutual communication carried out on friendly terms and courtesies, which also begins through exchange of compliments. The diversity of both migrants and host communities are assessed for the purpose of adopting favourable aspects that may not alter or violate traditions. The adoption of foreign cultures enriches and expand knowledge of the wider environment at large. Migrants contributes to social development as well as economic development through meaningful interaction and participation in economic activities. They introduce agricultural practices that may have been a challenge to the host communities. They also introduce new products and services to enrich the markets. They are more resilient to harsh conditions, where the host communities find it difficult to cope. Their coping strategies are often strengthening the resilience of the host communities to harsh environmental and economic situations. Diversity creates the condition for accruing additional benefits to a community.

Social cohesion is achieved when there is mutual agreement between migrant and host communities. The strength of understanding between them determines the cohesiveness and the sustainability of their mutual agreement. The duration of the mutual understanding is also determined by the compromises and sacrifices they both contribute to the relationship. When these factors cease, tensions may arise and escalate to conflicts and eventual expulsion of the migrants from the host country. The situation is exemplified at the north-eastern region of Kenya, where the Somali indigenes are in constant battle with the Somali migrants for land, which is used for grazing their cattle along the corridors of Kenya / Somalia border.

The solutions to migrant integration, diversity and social cohesion in Africa relies on the will power of the governments to strengthen bilateral ties between the countries. To increase mutual benefits within the provisions of those bilateral agreements, to avoid tribalism in leadership, nepotism in labour market and openness in state services. The public has a right to understand the provisions of every trade benefits that accrue to them, to enable them to expand their businesses across international borders as well as ease the barriers to trade. This will encourage meaningful investments and expansion of indigenous industrial growth, which translates to the creation of jobs and poverty alleviation. When people have access to means of production, they will coexist with foreigners without conflicts. But when the means are scarce, they will compete unfavourably with migrants, who may have financial resources to acquire property and other resources.

Most of the trade pacts in Africa are not being revealed to the citizens who are meant to enjoy the benefits. This is due to ignorance of the significance of those agreements, leading to the dormant nature trade between African states. Rhetoric and practice has not been differentiated in most public services. For example, the Fourth Estate is the medium between the state and the citizens, covering all state functions and revealing them to the citizens, however, most of the media institutions are owned by people in power or opposition to the government, which itself creates the bias for information.

Therefore, the revelation of the news that is intended to benefit the entire public is censored for the public and revealed to interest parties. This is the situation in most tribal oriented states in Africa, where tribe plays a significant role in public service and determines accessibility to public goods. Most Africans do not have knowledge of the bilateral or multilateral agreements signed by their states, therefore are ignorant of the opportunities they have access and privileges to, which could provide the much needed jobs, reduce unemployment, increase domestic income, reduce unnecessary migration, reduce conflicts due to scarce resources in host communities and lastly reduce the corruption in public services which has contributed to weak borders, weak law enforcement agencies and weak financial institutions.

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