



International Advocacy

HYBRID 10 WORKSHOP

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Lectures 1



AFRICA

Confronting the challenges of migration

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Confronting the Challenges of Migration in Africa

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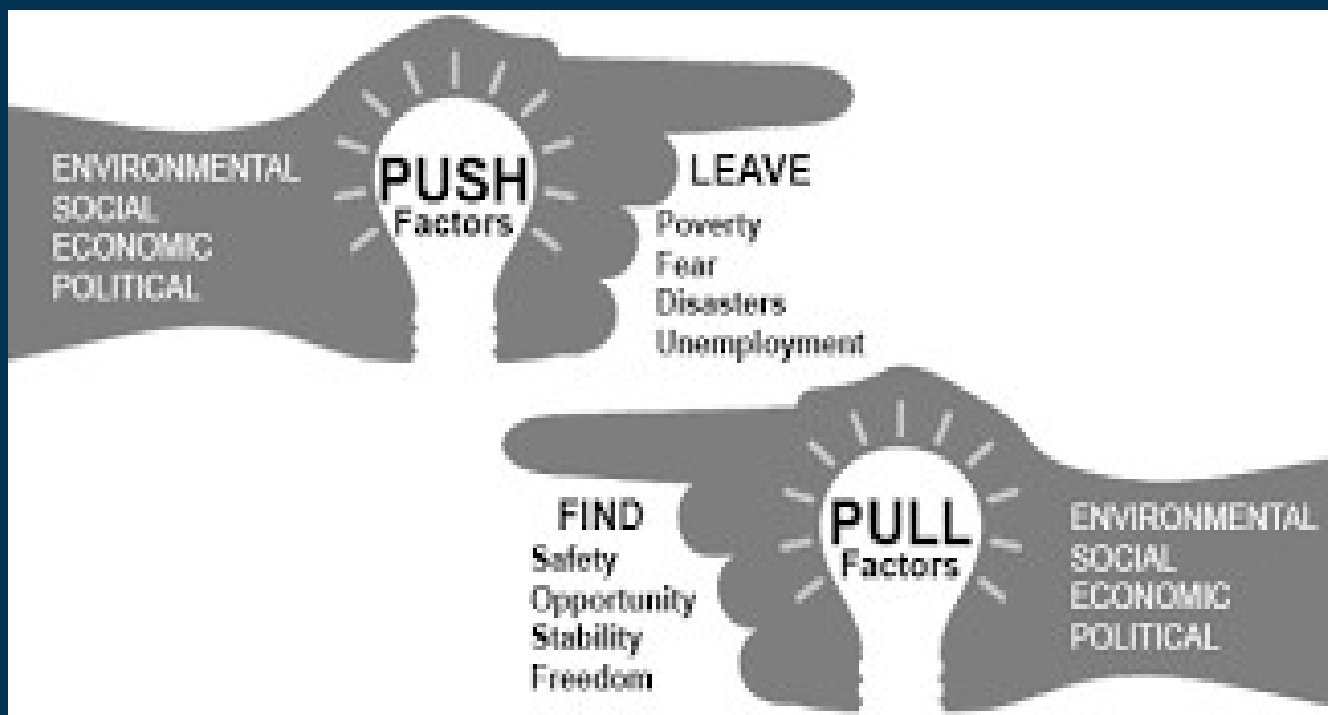
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First things first- The concepts

- Migration
 - A demographic process: adds or subtracts from the members of a population or society.
- Definition
 - A change in residence across some geopolitical boundary in a given period of time.
- To qualify as a migration, a move must satisfy three conditions (Pressat, 1985):
 - i. Must involve a permanent or semi-permanent change in one's residence;
 - ii. Must cross some administrative boundary;
 - iii. Must occur during a given time or period

First things first- the concepts



Migration in Africa



Africa is often seen as a continent of mass displacement and migration caused by poverty and violent conflict. Influenced by media images of massive refugee flows and 'boat migration', and alarmist rhetoric of politicians suggesting an impending immigrant invasion, the portrayal of Africa as a 'continent on the move' is linked to stereotypical ideas of Africa as a continent of poverty and conflict (*Flahaux & De Haas, 2016:1*)

For millions of African migrants and their families – like others worldwide – moving to another country offers a chance for a better life with benefits extending to future generations. Yet beliefs about international African migration are rife with misconceptions that have become part of a divisive, misleading and harmful narrative (*Paul Akiwumi, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, UNCTAD, 2018*)



As a result of the faulty thinking and often inaccurate information about African migration, many migrants in destination countries have become victims of violence, xenophobia and other forms of abuse.



Major misconceptions



1. Migration is something new
2. Most Africans are leaving the continent for Europe.
3. Most migrants are poor and fleeing from poverty and/or conflict
4. Migrants take jobs and opportunities away from the citizens of receiving countries and in the process drive down wages
5. Once migrants arrive their destination they will never leave

Misconception 1: Migration is something new

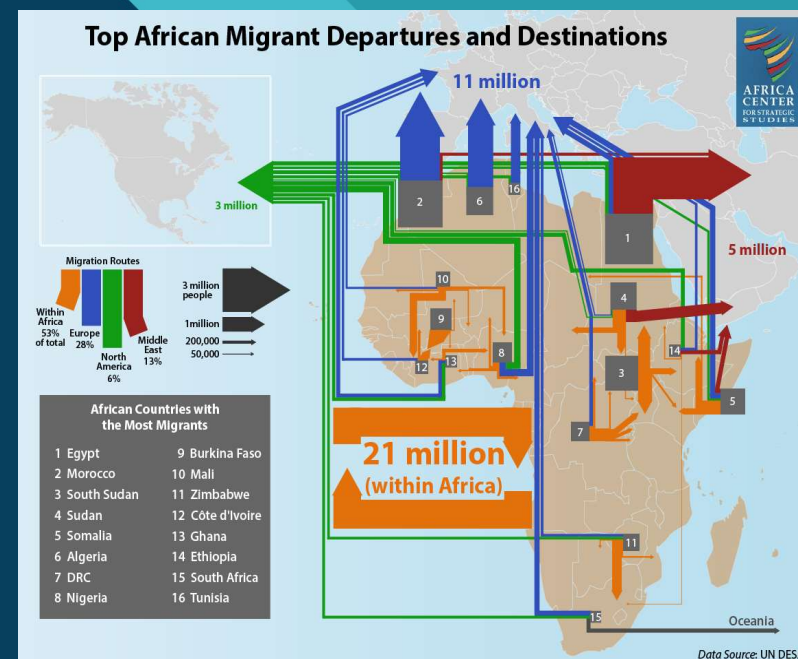
- Africans have a long established and rich history of population mobility E.g.:
 - ❑ migrant workers from Burkina Faso and some parts of Northern Ghana to cocoa and mining centres of Southern Ghana and the Ivory Coast
 - ❑ Labour migration from Southern African Countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique to gold mines and farms in South Africa

Estimated total stocks of migration from, to, and within Africa

	From Africa to the rest of the world	From the rest of the world to Africa	Within Africa
1960	1 830 776	2 811 930	6 176 385
1980	5 418 096	1 872 502	7 966 359
2000	8 734 478	1 532 746	10 500 000

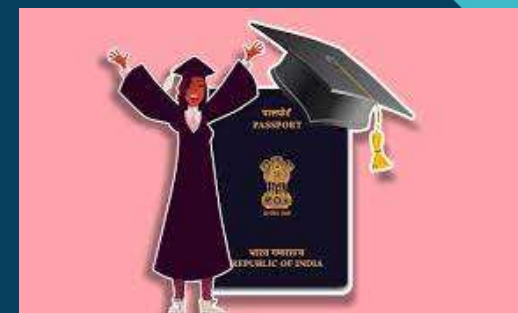
Misconception 2: Most Africans are leaving the continent for Europe.

- Most African migration remains intraregional; a long established pattern
- Around 21 million documented Africans live in another African country
- Those moving out of Africa do not only move to Europe but also to the Gulf countries and the Americas
- African migration not always “irregular movement”; most Africans migrate out of the continent in possession of valid passports, visas and other travel documentation



Misconception 3: Most migrants are poor and fleeing from poverty and/or conflict

- Migration is a costly process that requires financial and social capital.
- Although it would be impossible to deny the importance of conflict as a cause of (forced) migration in the region, [it will also be] 'equally wrong to neglect ... social processes that drive mobility, such as the search for an education, a spouse or a better life in the city' (Bakewell & Bonfiglio, 2013, p. 4)
- Refugees and 'people in refugee-like situations' represented 2.4 million or 14 per cent of international migrants in Africa (UNHCR, 2011). That is, about 86 per cent of international migration within Africa is not primarily related to conflict.



Misconception 4: Migrants take jobs and opportunities away from the citizens of receiving countries and in the process drive down wages

- Migrants
 - Generally take jobs that citizens either: (i) do not have the skills to do or (ii) do not want to take*
 - Participate in the destination countries' economies by creating additional demands for goods and services
 - Pay taxes to national accounts



Misconception 5: Once migrants arrive at their destinations, they will never leave

- Rules, regulations and costs of crossing borders make it difficult for migrants to return home
 - *“The same rules that restrict access often force migrants to settle”.*
- Covid-19 illuminated vulnerabilities including to trafficking; human rights
 - Tens of thousands of migrants detained in crowded and unsanitary conditions, and then deported.
 - Many reported instances of wage theft and being coerced into more exploitative contracts with fewer protections due to their inability to leave.
- Violent extremist groups and criminal networks also continue to benefit financially by controlling migrant smuggling and trafficking routes.



Migration and family challenges in contemporary Africa

- Wide evidence of union and familial instability and/or dissolution due to labour migration
- Weak ended intergenerational and reciprocal caregiving relations
- Extraction of care resources by removing carers from the family.
- Increased burden on women as they take on production functions in addition to family care and other domestic responsibilities
- Higher social costs such as the emotional strain resulting from the separation of family members
- Unregulated migration processes make migrants vulnerable to exploitation through poor working conditions, violation of labour laws, limited or no access to social security etc.

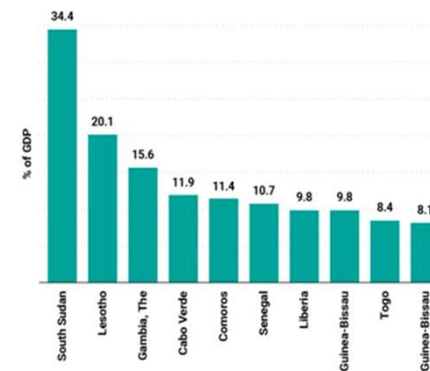
At the same time...

- Remittances provide a financial lifeline to millions of households.
- Used for an array of things
 - Food security
 - School fees
 - Health care access
 - Clothing
 - Investments e.g. property, livestock acquisitions

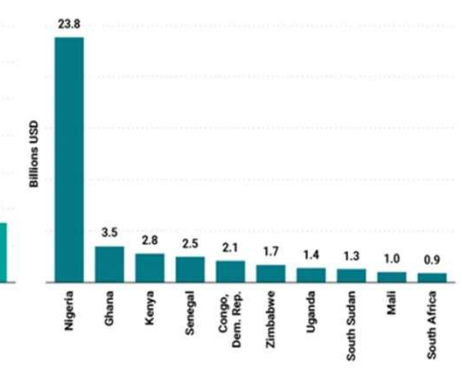
TOP RECIPIENTS OF REMITTANCES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, 2019

Remittances play an important role in many sub-Saharan African economies. For example, at \$1.3 billion, this source of financing accounted for over 34 percent of South Sudan's GDP in 2019.

Top-10 remittance destinations (by % of GDP), 2019



Top-10 remittance destinations (by absolute amounts), 2019



Source

Dilip Ratha et al. 2020. Phase II: COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens. World Bank Group. Migration and Development Brief 33.

B Africa Growth Initiative
at BROOKINGS

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2021/03/15/keep-remittances-flowing-to-africa/#:~:text=Remittance%20flows%20to%20sub%2D-Saharan,likely%20to%20be%20significantly%20larger.>

Confronting the challenges: Safe, regular and orderly intra-African migration must be a priority

- Improved labour policies that allow migrants to:
 - move to and take advantage of economic opportunities in other African countries.
 - enjoy same labour rights as citizen workers.
- All-African passport for free movement??



Last but not least ...



- Improve the current status of extremely limited and patchy data availability on migration.
- Facilitate the availability of macro-data that allows:
 - The mapping of migration patterns from, to and within Africa over time
 - more fundamental insights into the factual evolution of African migration
 - Verification of the validity of common misconceptions about African migration,
 - The provision of the required evidence base to inform policy making and scholarly debates migration dimensions.

Selected key sources

- Common misconceptions about African migration? <https://unctad.org/fr/node/1845>
- Marie-Laurence Flahaux, M. & De Haas, H. (2016). African. migration: trends, patterns, drivers. *Comparative Migration Studies*. 4:1 DOI 10.1186/s40878-015-0015-6
- Cohen, J.H. & Sirkeci, I. (2011). *Cultures of migration: The global nature of contemporary mobility*. [**Chapter 4: Contemporary Movers: International Migration, pp. 68-80**)]