

LEARNING ABOUT POVERTY AND MIGRATION IN AFRICA:
A NETWORKING INITIATIVE FOR AN AFRICAN MIGRATION ALLIANCE

Catherine Cross, Pieter Kok, Marie Wentzel, Johan van Zyl, Wesley Malebo, Olga Mabitsela, Niel Roux
Human Sciences Research Council and Department of Social Development
Pretoria

INTRODUCTION

Through the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Economic Development, Africa is committed to the UN's Millennium Development Goals, and through these to lifting the region's population to a high standard of prosperity and democratic development. In order to meet these goals, stability must be achieved, and a matching high standard of planning data needs to flow to the governments of the region. Accordingly, Poverty Monitoring Units are being established in Africa in compliance with the international thrust toward development of PRSPs, though this process is far from complete.

In this light, a critical area in data and policy which has not yet been fully addressed in dealing with poverty is that of population migration on the African continent. Probably no other social or demographic process has as much potential to disrupt and destabilize.

Migration is one of the most direct outcomes of poverty and social disturbance, and the continent of Africa is a major theater of migration activity. The Population Council's Policy Research Division notes that migration characteristically dilutes the achievements of economic development work, and that this happens on a massive scale:

Development is linked in various ways to population change. Population growth, unleashed by... migration, is a force of its own in the development process, sometimes seeming to promote development, at other times impeding it, and always diluting its achievements... And population change can also have implications for broader regional development and even for the global economy – directly through migration and disease transmission, or indirectly through effects on geopolitics and major environmental systems...

- G McNicoll, Population Council, 2003

However, little is known about residential African migration flows, in spite of the importance of population movement for development policy work and for the work of NEPAD. Food security, education and institutional development, along with public health and public order, are among the goals threatened by migration processes which

are currently largely beyond the scope of inter-governmental intervention because migration is so little understood.

Effective spending on human development and infrastructure in line with NEPAD goals requires taking account of migration flows. Avoiding waste of public funds, ensuring anticipated outcomes and promoting lasting effects on people's lives means bringing migration data into poverty and development policy. Collecting comprehensive data on population movement and mobilizing this data into policy-accessible formats will be key to Africa's future capacity to address migration processes and the threats and opportunities they carry.

At present, governmental programmes working to obtain official migration data in Africa's diverse and varied country contexts are limited, and sometimes isolated. Migration data collection is highly uneven. Limits on capacity, in relation to identifying indicators and also in data collection, capture and processing, are often a factor in the international lack of hard data on African migration.

This is not to say that Africa currently has little capacity to develop data on migration and development: this is not the case. Significant work on population migration is already being done by researchers and institutions in Africa, but not all areas are represented and available data does not always link up. Meanwhile, international attempts at collecting migration data for the African continent have not been conspicuously successful to date.

In order for African capabilities in the field of economic development and anti-poverty work to receive due recognition in international forums, there is a need to develop a migration research initiative which will bring in researchers from across the continent. Such an initiative will furnish governments and inter-government institutions with information on Africa's current migration situation as well as on emerging trends, opportunities and threats, and will be able to build toward a picture of migration trends for the entire continent.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT FOR MIGRATION

At the beginning of the 21st century, governments are beginning to take up migration as a priority, in Africa and worldwide. To a considerable extent, this new focus on population movement as a factor in world and regional affairs stems from fears of the destabilizing consequences of human flows at different scales. An uneasy recognition is emerging that the tide of human movement from the developing world to the developed world is on the rise everywhere.

At the moment, there are acute fears in the European Union of rapid migration from Eastern Europe, the Far East, North Africa and other poor regions overwhelming budgets and services in the destination countries and overbalancing job markets. In the United States, there is a continuing search for how to deal with in-migration from Latin America in ways that will be just, and will also sustain continuing economic expansion. As policy attention focusses, this rising anxiety is also serving to direct attention to the relation of migration to poverty, which is the underlying driving factor motivating people to leave their communities and go into the world trying to improve their lives.

In Southern Africa, the ministers of the SADC countries have been meeting on population issues generally, and have passed resolutions on their conference themes, looking to bring population issues into mainstream SADC deliberations. These gatherings have been institutionalized as the Southern African Ministers' Conference on Population and Development. One of the population issues the SAMCPD delegates are looking at is migration: this is mainly internal rural-to-urban migration, but also to some extent international migration, and women's right to mobility as a gender priority. All of these issues are set in the overall context of poverty and the Millennium Development Goals.

As a regional organization, a resolution has also been taken to integrate SAMCPD and its daughter organization the Southern African Forum for Population and Development into SADC structures and programmes. This move to integration will help to bring population issues, migration included, into the mainstream of regional policy formulation. A key goal will be promotion of a regional position on issues of population and development.

In Britain, the government has formed an International Development Committee to address the fear of waves of international migration arriving in Britain and wanting access to services, housing and other government benefits. This Parliamentary committee report is aimed at allaying anxieties in government and in the general population, and reassuring British and EU citizens that migration offers important benefits to the receiving countries. In this respect, the report also speaks to South Africa as a nervous destination country.

Word is also out that migration will be a major World Bank priority in this upcoming year. It is anticipated that migration will be the topic of the Bank's second most important publication for the year upcoming, and the Bank is now quickly collecting information on migration flows. With international precedents set by the expansion of the EU to the east, the precarious economic situation in Russia and the heating up of the Chinese economy, together with the problematic relations of the developed Western countries with the Muslim world, migration is becoming a hot button topic. From a regional African viewpoint, what does all the uproar mean?

MIGRATION AND POVERTY IN AFRICA

Some recent observations from the international research community qualify the assumed simple and direct link between poverty and migration. In this light, poverty can be seen as both a cause and a result of migration, and there are a number of different ways in which migration can relate to poverty. In particular, the assumed relation on which a lot of international aid is based is often faulty.

Conceptualizing impacts

The World Bank (Working Paper 3179, Adams and Page 2003) has recently pointed out that migration over time is both poverty-driven and poverty-limited. That is, it starts to happen as incomes begin to rise and people in disadvantaged communities become aware of opportunities outside their own localities, and it tails off and stops when local incomes have risen past a point of relative adequacy: this point is reached

as the area becomes relatively developed and offers its own competing opportunities. The conceptual model is one of a fairly steep curve, that rises sharply and then falls. Outside the developed countries of the West and the Far East, most parts of the world are on the upcurve, but far from the threshold point at which migration will begin to fall. Anxious questions are boiling up in the rich destination countries about what they can do to hold back in-migration.

Quoting Hatton and Williamson 2003, the UK International Development Committee points out that from a policy standpoint, migration and poverty are not the same thing – policies that help migration don't necessarily help the poor, and policies that help the poor are likely to accelerate rather than reduce migration. It is well known that the very poor usually do not have the resources to migrate, and that international migrants in particular do not usually come from this grouping. People who migrate are most often those who have begun to raise their expectations, and have accumulated some resources and also some information, and also have access to trans-local networks. That is, they are the middle poor and upwards, not the destitute.

It follows that rich countries should not expect to reduce international migration into their borders by working to reduce poverty in poor countries, since an improvement in incomes away from real destitution brings migration more within the options of the middle poor at the source end, and may well result in higher migration rates. The UKIDC's argument concludes that aid programmes aimed at controlling rapid migration rates would be better targeted on measures that improve employment conditions, economic activity and economic opportunity at the source end, in the sending countries. This would imply concentrating on issues such as governance, rather than on the more usual kinds of poverty reduction measures (cf Hatton & Williamson, 2003).

Unfortunately, it can also probably be said that distinguishing between helping the poor and increasing economic opportunity for poor areas is likely to be difficult in practice. Likewise, it can be added that aid programmes of a kind that would be capable of making large changes in economic opportunity in rural and urban source areas have not yet reached Africa, if they have arrived anywhere.

The implication would appear to be that once it starts from any given source country, migration will continue to rise for the foreseeable future – unless international aid to poor countries improves its efficiency greatly in the short to medium term. Relative to the state of play in international aid programmes with an interest in curbing migration, Africa is likely to continue needing migration research aimed at an information base for poverty reduction policy, and will keep on needing it for a very long stretch into the future. This kind of information base will therefore be worth the investment it takes.

Against these concerns about limiting migration, any answers to the question of the impact of migration flows on receiving areas or host countries remain equivocal. For the World Bank, Hatton and Williamson also argue that increasing the share of migrants from a poor country will have some impact on poverty levels in the receiving population, and the recent DPRU/SAMP report (2004) on migration into Gauteng notes the same. However, Hatton and Williamson imply that the impact at

country level is relatively small even if the number of additional migrants is relatively significant.

On related lines, US research seems to indicate that the impact of migration as a whole on the host country is not very positive at least in the initial generation, though it isn't negative – most of the short-term benefit of migration on average goes to the migrant, and presumably to his network, his community, and his country. How far this limitation holds would depend on the education level and qualifications of the migrants. More immediate positive economic impact might be expected from the well-qualified and highly educated migrants that are sought by host countries, and less on average from unskilled workers – that is, benefits to the hosts come from the elite and not from the relatively poor. However, the relatively poor are the migrants who most often come from poor sending countries.

Therefore, it would appear that the impact of migration would depend significantly on the qualifications of the migrants involved, but that migration from poor countries could possibly have a negative effect if the blend of qualified and unqualified migrants tips far enough toward the unqualified. However, on the strength of the above, it looks as if the numbers of migrants involved would have to be extremely large in order to make a dent in the prevailing state of national well-being. This is sometimes the case with internal, rural-to-urban migration, but rarely so for international migration.

Impacts on the sending countries would probably be in the opposite direction. Results in terms of remittances would be generally positive and even vital, but outcomes of brain drain and loss of capacity can also follow. Poor countries can often spare large numbers of unqualified workers, but may suffer if educated people leave. The UK is now considering means of limiting the recruitment of qualified medical staff from developing countries, in response to protests from source countries about shortages of capacity and loss of expected returns on their scarce education funding.

Which way the cost-benefit equation tips for the sending countries would therefore depend on the characteristics of the migration stream, but seems generally to be much more positive than negative. If this is so, Africa may wish to support policies that promote international labour migration and/or settlement; how far this will imply serious risks of losing educated human capital is not clear in advance of the data.

/Much more remains to be learned before generalizations about out-migration in Africa become sustainable. It will be difficult to conceptualize policy – other than reactive stopgap measures – in advance of pulling together the research that can underpin informed decisions in an Africa context.

Categorizing migration

To get a more complete model of migration and its poverty-related outcomes, it is possible to split migration up analytically in order to see determinants more clearly. A number of different kinds of migration are widely known: these include voluntary and forced migration – which are not always easy to separate even analytically – as well as migration following from economic determinants, conflict, trade factors, human trafficking, rural-to-urban interchange, and environmental factors. Different

kinds of migration flows are likely to be dominant in different parts of each country, and may require an approach to research that makes distinctions at sub-regional level as well as between countries and individual places. Once migration researchers over the entire continent can collectively perceive, grasp and identify what is there in terms of categorizing migration at different spatial levels, we can start to work with it in terms of policy alternatives.

Migration theory largely originates from early models of competing economic opportunities and constraints in the rural and urban sectors and in different localities. Against Todaro's (1976) early work stressing job access, Lipton (1995) emphasizes that migration is about competitive labour absorption between different areas, and not just about jobs at the urban end. Areas that cannot absorb their own labour – whether into paid work or into any other activity that yields household support – tend to become sending areas.

To this, Bryceson (1998, 2000) and the Leiden University group add that the rural economy in Africa is changing rapidly as land comes under pressure and the international terms of trade have moved against African small producers. Instead of African families relying on what is now often an inadequate income from the food crops produced by the family along with any migrant earnings from the male head, contemporary families in much of Africa are diversifying their support base – women and children are involved in cash earning, and non-farm activities are becoming increasingly central. Women's role in economic activity is tending to expand and become less circumscribed. In terms of migration, it is often reported that women are migrating more to increase the family's access to cash income in this more diversified family group. For South Africa, recent research by Posel (2004) highlights a trend for women migrants to succeed and to some extent replace male migrants at household level. This kind of family support structure, long familiar in South Africa, tends to go along with high levels of both labour migration and population movement.

What may be critical (Kok et al 2003) is how far people in different categories actually move, in relation to the resources they can mobilize to send and support one or more migrants. International migration often takes place over great distances and needs really substantial resources, while rural-to-urban and rural-to-rural migration within the country of origin are less demanding. A great deal also depends on information resources, which are mostly found by way of network connections. Once sending localities have established trans-local networks connecting them with the outside world, the way is open for both temporary and permanent migration to rise rapidly if local conditions promote this.

In the larger African context, migration work needs to take account not only of economic conditions on the ground, but also of social conditions that determine who can migrate and which families have access to the kind of resources and connections that facilitate migration. In looking at this kind of question at the continental level, the best approach may be at sub-regional level. That is, to conceptualize African migration adequately, migration within sub-regions against migration between sub-regions needs to be defined and compared; these processes then need to be located in relation to what can be said about shares of these populations that can mobilize the kinds of financial and social resources involved, and their relation with the different

destination sub-regions in other parts of the world that African migration is in touch with.

Policy responses

Governments are moving to meet the needs and shortfalls created by migration on a number of levels, but so far there have not been strong moves toward developing overarching policy for the whole of Africa. Holding aside the real and legitimate difficulties with funding, data availability and implementation, most of these initiatives from different governments are well-targeted, though there are some being advocated (see below) that may be alarming. In many cases, resources are not currently available to deal with migration other than reactively, in terms of providing relief or trying to block sudden human flows for which no relief resources are available.

In the Southern African region, arrangements have been long in existence for labour flows between neighbouring countries and South Africa's mining industry, facilitating cross-border temporary flows and allowing for remittances to be returned to home countries. However, other kinds of flows – including tension over individual cross-border traders and entrepreneurs – have produced more hostile responses, and the generally negative attitude of South Africa's Department of Home Affairs has not relieved tensions in the region. With large numbers of individual undocumented migrants also held in South African detention centres or deported to home countries, intra-regional negotiations over migration policy have become a matter being considered by SADC.

In South Africa, government is currently being advised by respectable commentators to deal with the on-the-ground impacts of international migration by expelling all illegal immigrants to preserve jobs for citizens, and with rural-to-urban migration by sending the inhabitants of the country's shack settlements back to the rural former homelands to live by farming. In a policy submission circulated by the respected Helen Suzman Foundation together with a submission from the Office of the President, and under a title offering novel solutions to the poverty problem, Joubert Botha (2004) suggests:

‘The real cancer to the body economic, however, is the unemployment rate... the government could start by clearing the country of illegal immigrants, unknown millions of whom have crossed our porous borders with impunity...

Citing the Tomlinson and Holloway reports of the apartheid era, he continues,

‘A very large percentage of squatter-camp inhabitants moved in from the rural areas, where they had been subsistence farmers for generations. The only possible long-term solution is to create conditions that would entice them to return to the land to farm on a more economical basis. However, that will necessitate planning and organization on a scale never before attempted in this country... The world's large financial institutions may be persuaded to provide the necessary capital.’

This kind of well-meant recommendation is at once so unjust, impractical, fallaciously based and crippling expensive even in the minds of the advice-givers themselves that it calls into question any existence of a South African policy consensus on how to deal with issues of migration. More to the point, it draws attention to the scarcity of empirical data on migration available to support development of policy.

CURRENT PRIORITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The Southern African Ministers' Conference on Population and Development has reconfirmed its commitment to addressing the nexus of population and poverty, specifically referring to migration in this context, and noting it as an indicator in respect of poverty and inequality. SAMCPD began recognizing migration as a regional priority in 1999, when its population forum SAFPAD began promoting migration research to get at the causes of international migration within the SADC region. At this time, SAFPAD took a resolution that 'member states should attempt to establish the relationship between demographic parameters, poverty and migration' and drew attention particularly to 'the influence of push factors on rural-to-urban migration and its relation to gender and poverty'.

It has also adopted a number of commitments to inter-governmental cooperation that are relevant to the enterprise of developing migration data. These include:

- Promoting and disseminating population research
- Capacity building in the region
- Mobilizing resources for population studies
- Incorporating population issues in international development plans
- Sharing of expertise in the population field.

In a migration-related nutshell, these are some of the objectives of the African Migration Alliance. In particular, the Alliance would like to work toward providing a solid information base to assist in the development of common policy positions on migration-related issues, both at NEPAD level, and at sub-regional level. This will entail active research and mobilization of resources, capacity, a shared appreciation of the central importance of migration for the future development of the continent, and most of all the development and active sharing of expertise in population issues among the countries of Africa.

However, up to now the mainstreaming of migration issues into African policy-making has seemingly not proceeded far in the SADC region. Few of the most recent SAMCPD country reports (2004) mention migration as a policy priority under that label, though the region is an intensive sector of migration activity, and much of the economic performance and balance of trade depends on migration processes and the migrant earnings of SADC citizens. Inequality – and by implication poverty – is sometimes named as the major driver of regional instability, but it is less clearly recognized that migration is the legitimate child of inequality.

On the data side, the 2004 country reports refer repeatedly to problems with obtaining population data, and make regretful mention of how far '...even in this era of information technology, our countries' scientific communities still mostly work in

isolation from each other... We believe that we should get our population and development researchers to collaborate’.

But beyond the broad desire for collaboration, some of the different country reports published in the 2004 SAMCPD report also shed considerable light on the way Southern African countries are seeing national migration issues at the moment. In particular, these reports frame how the countries of the southern region are perceiving and prioritizing migration in relation to the more traditional population concerns of mortality/morbidity and fertility:

Namibia: The Namibia country report does not discuss migration under that label; however, it does so by implication when it reports an urban/ rural employment differential at about 25 percent overall, or about a third of those employed. The implications of a jobs differential on this scale for catalyzing rural-to-urban migration are easy to see and are likely to be very powerful, although the migration consequences are not specifically stated, and the report seems uncertain around how to frame and deal with the issue.

Mozambique: In contrast, the Mozambique country report is strongly preoccupied with migration: it discusses as a major concern the effects of sudden urbanization, war-related mobility and the resulting large shift in the spatial distribution of the country’s population. The report focusses on the demographic explosion in the cities, tracing it to increased internal population movement following the peace agreement of 1992, and it underlines the negative planning and delivery impact of this rapid urban growth. Destabilization and food shortages caused by the recent war are identified as the major cause of this large-scale movement out of rural areas, with desperate people coming to the cities looking for livelihoods. This process has led to congestion/ densification in the urban areas and an emptying/ hollowing out of the rural areas, which have seriously affected government activities. Government has had to respond with provision to build housing that is accessible, healthy and meets other conditions, with apparent implications for budget allocation.

The Mozambican report follows its discussion of migration by noting that this official effort to provide for rural-to-urban movement has increased government concern for collection of accurate population and migration data, in that the Mozambique government recognizes that provision of basic services – including education, health and clean water – rests directly on good data from national statistics.

Swaziland: The country report notes that the Swaziland government is working on an overall Action Plan for population issues, which will pull all existing programmes together and address the urgent population concerns. Again, the report doesn't directly mention migration: instead, it lists high rates for fertility and mortality/morbidity, high teenage pregnancy, low use of contraception, high dependency rates, environmental degradation, and increasing pressure on fertile land – all of which add up to a recipe for rural-to-urban push migration. On top of this, the Swaziland report mentions institutional capacity as a problem for implementation.

Tanzania: Tanzania’s country report in discussing its population situation makes no mention at all of migration, instead stating its population problems in terms of birth and death rates and reproductive health. But then it notes another key problem:

‘Tanzania has continued to receive large numbers of refugees from the neighbouring Great Lakes states. The impact of these refugees is devastating in terms of environmental degradation, disruption of peace in the area, spread of communicable diseases, and the burden on scarce resources’.

Tanzania’s report seems to indicate cross-border migration taking place on a considerable scale.

On the other hand, the Zambian and Malawian country reports have nothing on migration at all. Zambia only refers to fertility and disease, especially AIDS. The Malawian country report has nothing on migration either. However, it gives considerable attention to the data side of population, emphasizing inadequate capacity to coordinate collection of relevant population data, and notes the need to strengthen the institutions that collect this population data. The Namibian report concurs, and goes on to list the constraints the country faces in getting to grips with population and development issues:

- Inadequate number of staff in institutions dealing with population matters
- Insufficient number of qualified personnel and expertise
- Lack of proper institutional framework for the implementation of population-related programmes and projects
- Poor transfer of skills of international experts to national professions.

Putting these reports together, it can be seen that concern for migration flows surfaces repeatedly, though this concern is not always separately labelled and categorized. Namibia, Mozambique and Swaziland either refer directly to rural-to-urban migration, or to the root conditions that cause it, including rural/urban employment differentials, the disruption of the rural production economy, land degradation, high rural fertility rates and pressure on remaining arable land. Tanzania speaks in emphatic terms about international conflict migration as a major national problem, and the Tanzania and Mozambique reports refer very specifically to war-related conflict migration as provoking a population-related resources crisis in both rural and urban areas.

The kinds of migration most often recognized at policy level appear to be (1) international migration; and (2) rural-to-urban migration. Not much has been said until very recently about the new international issues of trafficking, people smuggling, and related concerns of the rich countries. Some countries continue to prioritize mortality and fertility concerns, partly because of high rates of population increase, partly because of the devastating impact of AIDS, but partly because migration is perhaps not yet seen as being as central to population issues as are issues around overall population growth and population stats in themselves.

It seems as if in the current state of the data it may be difficult for overburdened government population agencies to clearly lay out the implications of migration unless (1) the numbers are available, and comparable, and (2) they are available and comparable in a graphic, convincing form accessible to policy makers. This is what we want to promote through the nascent African Migration Alliance.

PROBLEMATIZING MIGRATION DATA AND POLICY

Migration is how people who face difficulties or hold rising aspirations change their constraints completely. At the same time, migration is also how individuals and families lose all their previous resources, and have to find and survive on new resources. In this light, migration tends to be a high-risk, all-or-nothing kind of strategy, one that carries risks for regions and countries as well as for migrants themselves.

Governments need to meet these risks, and hard data is needed. Early information indicates that some African migration data is being developed now in relation to policy for poverty and economic development, but this development is patchy, and does not appear to be moving forward effectively in most parts of the continent south of the Sahara. A full review of the state of migration data will be obtained from the initial set-up workshop of the proposed project, aimed at an inventory of the existing migration data and data-collecting structures.

This workshop will be held in March of 2005, with support from South Africa's Department of Social Development, and invitations for papers have already been issued. Topics for the workshop papers include both *emerging trends in African migration*, and also work based on *new sets of data*. The workshop will also present the results of the literature review – which will include the research output of Francophone areas – for general critique and comment, kickstarting the work of the project.

The state of the data: From what is known at present, little is written in English on migration trends outside of the Southern Africa sub-region, where various research projects have been collecting useful data of good quality. The lead for quality of data collection in the Southern African region appears to be held by countries such as Lesotho, where government has worked extensively with international donors: South Africa itself appears to be behind these leaders, and needs to work to catch up.

At the same time, a number of institutions in East and West Africa, many of them Francophone, also report that they are conducting research on migration. This work may be staying at the level of individual research papers, and does not appear to be making an impact at policy level. This seems to be particularly true in relation to poverty policies at the regional level.

That is, the poverty monitoring process is gradually being established in African countries outside the Southern Cone. However, it appears that these new Poverty Monitoring Units (PMUs) are not yet collecting and using migration data, in spite of the danger which human migration represents for effective anti-poverty spending.

PMUs are being established mainly where PRSPs – the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers sponsored and funded by the World Bank – have already been adopted. These countries are mostly in East and West Africa. In line with the apparent position reflected in the SAMCPD country reports, the countries in these sub-regions also appear to have relatively limited data yet available on migration trends, and the new PMU process as yet has given little impetus to measuring migration effects. National

statistics seem to give little if any information so far on the impact of population migration on governmental anti-poverty work in eastern and western Africa, or on the general question of migration and stability in Africa as a whole.

South Africa itself also lags behind on PRSP development. This is partly because South Africa is excluded from the World Bank PRSP initiative because it is seen as a middle income country, in spite of extreme Gini coefficients which testify to very severe poverty persisting alongside plenty. Individual South African provinces are generating their own self-funded PRSP-type projects: however, lacking structures like the national PMUs as focus points, the South African migration data which is being produced is still not often feeding effectively into policy. There is a clear need to bring South African migration data into perspective with data from Africa as a whole so as to promote a unified approach.

Consequences for policy: As a result, both the Southern Cone and the expanse of Central, East and West Africa each tend to lack solid migration data as an input into government anti-poverty spending decisions, though Southern Africa has some migration data and Africa to the north is moving ahead with national PMUs as the best instrument for standardizing and focussing anti-poverty work. The gap which can be identified therefore takes different shapes in different parts of Africa, but an integrated effort is needed to relate Africa's powerful migration flows to their little-recognized effects in undermining governmental poverty initiatives.

At the moment, a significant amount of research information on migration in Africa is being produced by African researchers, as well as by non-governmental aid organizations, journalists and others. However, this information is not yet coming together effectively to support African governments in their efforts to bring greater stability to our turbulent continent, and to lift Africa toward prosperity and a position of international respect. At the same time, efforts by overseas researchers to collect African demographic data so as to promote anti-poverty policies have had relatively poor success over the last ten years. There is thus a need for African researchers and research institutes in all the main regions to collectively take the initiative in producing high-quality African statistics that will be able to command respect in international circles.

Mobilizing responses: It is proposed to integrate the work being done in Southern Africa on migration with the strong but scattered work taking place in East and West Africa, and to try to raise the profile of migration as an ongoing serious risk to poverty reduction programmes throughout the NEPAD region. The SAMP project is currently doing research focussing on cross-border migration flows in Southern Africa, and HSRC has done significant research on migration within South Africa in the regional context, and has constructed a predictive model of migration flows for planning use, which could be adapted to include other parts of the continent, and which HSRC can offer toward the proposed network-based research initiative. A number of other important initiatives in migration studies are already at work in Africa and internationally, including MIDSA, ACAP, Codesria, and the IOM itself. These research bodies have a great deal to contribute both to the proposed work and to the general study of African migration in a world context.

The proposed collective research process is seen in a long-term context, though it would begin soon with modest objectives in view. The networking process would work to span African research institutions to create a new research network and a capacity-building process of investigation. This institutional network and capacity process would be focussed to assist in promoting higher-quality migration data collection by governments and PMUs throughout Africa. This capacity boost will contribute to raising the overall quality of poverty data, and securing international recognition for Africa's inherent capabilities in conceptualizing and addressing the continent's crisis of acute poverty. Management of this research networking initiative will expand soon to take in managing partners from Africa to the north.

At the same time, the proposed project would conduct a pilot study in Africa's sub-regions which would cover both internal and cross-border flows and would link up with the SAMP data as well as with studies from other research bodies. Part of the output of this process would be in adapting the HSRC migration model to take in quantities of new data. The end results of this pilot study would go toward assembling the capacity to eventually be able to quantify major flows, assess their origins and consequences, and even to predict migration – in a policy context and relative to poverty – across the whole continent.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This proposed work would help start to integrate what is being done in Southern Africa into comparable, standard datasets, and would extend into Central, East and West Africa, linking up both ends of a continental effort to bring the entire Sub-Saharan migration region into focus. Work going on outside the Southern Cone would focus initially on countries with high cross-border outflows and turbulent internal flows, including Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, and perhaps Gambia, Gabon and other West African countries of high migration activity. This work would also take in conflict migration in the Great Lakes, and the population movement taking place in response to long-time turbulence in the West African coastal countries including Ivory Coast.

The key questions here would be both policy-related and practical:

- (1) how to best attack the current incomplete state of African migration data
- (2) how best to build migration research in Africa
- (3) making high-quality migration data quickly available to the policy process in individual African countries, to sub-regional groupings, and to NEPAD.

On advice from UNFPA, it is anticipated that taking a sub-regional focus in order to be able to compare and contrast the migration situation in different areas would be the most appropriate approach.

APPROACH AND METHODS

A simultaneous Africa-wide existing-data initiative and a regional African pilot in combination with capacity building are proposed as pathways to the goal of improved migration data for policy in the NEPAD region. The project will work with existing qualitative and quantitative data, while also taking a supportive role in promoting

capacity for sound data collection in Africa through census surveys especially. The work will proceed from broad to detailed mapping and modelling of African migration. Poverty, unemployment, gender, and AIDS will all figure as migration drivers, and a main focus will be on monitoring and evaluation.

This research will have two phases. The main idea is:

First, to compile an *inventory of the existing data*, documentation and reports and to produce qualitative (impressionistic) maps of migration flows on, to and from the continent. At this stage it is not anticipated that there will always be precise data on the size of population flows, but where such data is not yet available such flows could, at a minimum, be categorized for scale and volume so as to get a general picture before attempting precise quantification. The population movements to be addressed would include first economic migration, and then migration sparked by conflicts, and after that the other types of voluntary and involuntary migration.

Second, the *development of more comprehensive, in-depth migration data* for Africa, through institutional collaboration and mutual migration capacity building. As data builds up, the African Migration Alliance network will attempt to produce quantitative databases and maps of migration flows. These policy maps will relate to the continent in general, as well as to the overseas membership of the African diaspora of migrants in other countries, and to population movements within the individual countries.

In order to collect currently available African migration information and also expand the utility of the computerized migration model across Africa so that it can be used to track and predict migration, the proposed project would stand on four research blocks:

- (1) an existing-data exercise broadly blocking in flows for the whole of Africa, based on qualitative and quantitative information from government, NGOs and other sources, to develop preliminary Level One migration maps;
- (2) a pilot study in more than one sub-region of Africa, which will explore some of the root causes of population flow, will move toward more detailed Level Two maps, and will start applying the HSRC migration prediction model in the sub-regions;
- (3) direct involvement of the Alliance partners and collaborators in developing comprehensive migration data throughout the NEPAD area, through promoting interaction with poverty monitoring and census units, and including identifying indicators; and
- (4) capacity building work in partnership with African migration data researchers and policy workers in various continental centres, in research institutions and in governments, to promote full African capacity to collect, monitor, analyze and use migration data.

Greater clarity around these four components is expected to emerge from the upcoming workshop. While carrying out these projects, the Migration Alliance will

also work to leverage additional funding for collaborative migration research in parts of Africa that are key to understanding migration flows.

The approach through GIS mapping: The mapping exercise for developing initial Level One maps for the African continent will be based on existing documentary sources, currently available official data, and direct interview material to be obtained from government officials and formal institutions, university researchers, NGOs, journalists and others who have information concerning the causes and outcomes of migration in Africa. That is, this exercise will proceed on the principle that considerable amounts of information dealing with migration in Africa are already available and can be fruitfully compiled, but that these data are not always in an objectively comparable or scientifically valid format. African migration flows at this initial stage would be categorized into *high, medium* and *low*, with quantification to be filled in gradually as the data become available.

Compiling this kind of qualitative information in a context where official statistics are still incomplete will allow a broad-brush preliminary mapping exercise to be carried out, showing the location, general scale and direction of known migration flows in different parts of Africa. Although not fully quantified, this Level One mapping exercise will compile existing data in a format much easier to access than what exists now. It will have significant immediate value and can serve to assist policy formulation while official statistics are under development.

Approaches through research connections: Research linkages are being established with institutions and individuals in different parts of the continent in order to access capacity and information in the different sub-regions. Working through network members, it is anticipated that links will be developed with the country and regional bodies working with demographic and migration statistics as well as with those working with poverty monitoring, so that the migration aspects of poverty can gradually be effectively integrated, beginning at a modest scale. Links of this kind, as well as the employment of African interns in the project work of the Alliance, will provide a vehicle on which capacity building with young African researchers can move forward.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: WHERE ARE WE TRYING TO GO IN AFRICA?

To locate this initiative in its larger setting, we can try some futurism to consider where Africa is going to be compared to the rest of the world over the next 30-50 years of migration trends and developments.

In locating Africa's migration future, people on this continent will need to turn their thinking toward the world demographic cataclysm that is now thought to be on the way. Recent studies from the United Nations refer to coming overcrowding in the poorest nations, and to very severe overcrowding in the cities of the developing world. At the same time, European and American studies as well as the UN Population Report are forecasting shrinking populations in most of the developed world.

What is critical here is that this trend to aging and shrinking populations is likely to be echoed in the developing world itself – further, this change will be migration-driven. As rural-to-urban migration in poor countries is generally expected to accelerate, it

will also bring very large numbers of people in the developing world into urban situations where large families are no longer economic.

In this sense, migration effects are likely to have a dominating effect on the demography of the developing countries of the South, and are expected to put a brake on population increase. A migration-determined population curve is anticipated that will drive population rapidly upward in many or most urbanizing countries, followed by sharp falls as the urban economics of the family takes hold. If the countryside loses population to the exploding cities and urban incomes rise, national populations are not likely to continue to increase in these countries. Cities may expand sharply as demographic nova stars, and then collapse inward again soon after.

As the examples of China and Japan suggest, rapid aging of the urban sector is the probable outcome of migration and rising urban incomes, with sub-replacement fertility rates a very strong possibility. New projections from the UN and from developing-country demographers are showing rapid falls in birthrates expected in large parts of the East and South, in what is now the newly developed world. On this continent, South Africa's own fall in birthrates has likewise been very rapid and is still continuing. Shortfalls in the workforce and difficulties in social provision are likely to become an obstacle to successful social and economic planning in large parts of the world within the first quarter of this century.

Africa appears to be different. Population is still rising in Africa, at the same time that the established developed countries and the newly developed countries will be experiencing population shortfalls with potentially very serious consequences for growth rates and for economic stability in general. It is thought that Africa's cities will continue to grow, as will those of the Middle East, while those in much of the rest of the world start to shrink due to falling birthrates. Urbanization flows will continue to be massive all over the continent, but other kinds of flows may also increase.

Europe and many other major regions will be accepting large flows of replacement population from the regions of the world that are still growing demographically and can still spare some of their people – it looks as if there will not be many of these sustainable source regions, and it looks like Africa and the Middle East will be important among these few.

If these trends continue, and if Africa can mobilize education resources, we can expect to see huge flows abroad of African people moving abroad into the job openings left unfilled in Europe and the East. If so, this trend will have powerful effects on the base conditions needed for African economies to grow internally.

It is too soon to see poverty in Africa being overcome in the medium term, but the conditions for this to happen may be coming into place. At the same time, the impact of migration on population and on economic development also depends directly on how successfully rural-to-urban migrants and also international migrants are able to reduce poverty and change the economic expectations of their families and children. In the light of coming trends, poverty and migration remain locked inextricably together as cause and effect – if migration to cities does not reduce poverty, birth rates will probably remain high and population decompression will be curtailed.

If poverty reduction is a part of the process, implications for Africa will flow from these interactions with developed countries with falling populations. Migrant labour pioneers pathways for permanent migration, and it can be expected that there will be very large African populations overseas in most strong economies by mid-century. Education-related flows overseas are also likely – the United States is currently taking in fewer overseas students due to restructuring of visa restrictions, and if this trend continues it is likely that qualified African youth will be getting their higher education in Europe and probably in Asia. Coming the other way, Africa may have to engage with very large economic population flows entering this continent from an expanding Middle East, with educated Middle Easterners finding jobs in Africa and moving here in numbers. Both economic and cultural impacts here may be considerable.

New expectations for population movements will flow from this kind of accelerated economic migration, but much will also depend on the chances for good governance and for stability in Africa itself. Civil peace depends on institutional coherence and delivery. There is no certainty at present of how far the continent as a whole and its component nations will have the resources needed to achieve solid policing by mid-century. Differentials in economic success power migration from the attraction side, while differentials in respect of peace and conflict drive refugee flows. The future for African non-economic forms of migration is unknown at present.

Faced with population-driven changes that may be immense in scale, for future planning within Africa there is a real need for baseline data now and in the near future, to allow for soundly based assessments of change by governments. There is clearly a real need to move African population studies forward in the field of migration – if population growth rates in Africa remain high and do not fall as they have done in much of the rest of the developing world, migration may well be Africa's most significant demographic process over the formative years of this century. The work of the Southern African Ministers Conference for Population and Development shows some shift toward recognizing that fertility and mortality/morbidity are not alone in representing important aspects of population dynamics that need to be taken up at government and regional level. Resolutions and reports from SAMCPD reflect African governments acknowledging migration as a major aspect of population process that needs to be tracked in order to enable planning to reach maximum effectiveness against poverty.

To track migration in Africa, we need effective data collection, and we need to move on by using GIS approaches. It will be important that data we collect becomes accessible to the policy world and to the public in general – everyone needs to know what is happening in order to bend the efforts of society and the nations toward engaging the problems and needs that generate migration.

In this light, we can probably identify some of the challenges in the road ahead. Among many, these will include:

- To understand the relation between urbanization and population changes
- To understand the role of migration in the urban population curve

- To locate the thresholds in terms of economics and information flow that triggers the rising curve of migration, both for the rural populations of Africa and for national and regional populations
- To understand the relation of education, income, migration and birth rates on this continent, and how these interactions vary with local and regional conditions
- To understand the conditions under which migration is and is not destabilizing to both sending and receiving areas or regions
- To understand existing international migration flows coming from and to Africa, and to identify the conditions around which these may change
- To understand the basic relation between rural-to-urban migration and international migration.

Underlying all these issues are the fundamental splits between rural-to-urban migration and international migration, and between sending and receiving areas: receiving areas may be the large African cities in the first instance, but later on in the migration sequence the receiving areas will include the major cities of the developed world. Receiving areas and sending areas to a considerable extent have opposed interests in the scramble for scarce resources – receiving areas often want to restrict their resources to their established residents, but the resource-poor sending areas continue to fight for access, and to demand their human rights. Europe is currently struggling to come to terms with the human rights demands put forward by in-migrants from the Muslim world and specifically North Africa, but within the continent South Africa continues to take a hostile attitude toward in-migration from Africa to the north, and relations here are a major concern of SADC.

When we attend to these issues, we can perhaps locate rising trends in rural-to-urban migration by the poor in the countryside more clearly in their role as a precursor to later rises in international migration, which requires a more resourced and educated population which comes into being mainly though not entirely in the urban context. How far will Africa's cities decompress into Europe and Asia in the course of this century? What will be the results for poverty in Africa itself? And, how is Africa as a continent, through the AU and Nepad and also in national and cultural terms, going to face this conflict of interests for senders and receivers?

The African Migration Alliance is perhaps one of the instruments which Africa and its governmental and administrative entities can make use of in finding ways to plan for migration and its consequences. Seen against the large-scale and continent-wide outcomes of migration over the next thirty years, there is a clear need for population researchers to take up the issues of migration, and to work for better understanding across the whole continent. If we are not able to do this, and to collaborate effectively around the heavyweight questions of population movement, policy-making will be partly blind in critical areas, and it will not be easy for Africa to move into its best-practice future.

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