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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF NEO-LIBERAL  
REFORMS ON IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN AFRICA

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## **Abstract**

Policies of free trade and the adoption of neoliberal economic models, which are important aspects of globalization, have caused major disruptions in labor markets around the world. In the less developed regions of the world, relatively unskilled agricultural hands have been rendered redundant in production processes while in the more technologically advanced countries, several long-stable industries closed down while some others were outsourced to less developed countries in a bid to maintain competitiveness. As the flow of material and cultural goods and services accelerated over time under the rubrics of globalization, human beings dislodged from their various productive bases became important components of the exchange. However, whereas the process of globalization appears to be bringing humanity closer together due to advances in transportation and communication technologies, this apparent physical closeness has created social distance between individuals and groups across territorial boundaries. Large numbers of mostly economic migrants from the less developed regions have ossified into an army of social outcasts, born throwaways, in various destination and transit countries. This paper explored the contradictions and tensions arising from globalization-induced migration within and out of Africa. It found that the massive outflow of irregular migrants from Africa has fed into the stream of modern day slavery in transit and destination countries that is unlikely to abate even in the face of apparent repudiation of globalization by its avid promoters, the United States and Great Britain.

**Key words :** Globalization ; neoliberal reforms ; migration in Africa 'Born Throwaways'.

## Introduction

Migration is an age long phenomenon but its tide has been given a boost by contemporary globalization (Nwanunobi & Ezeah, n.d.). This has resulted in unprecedented movement of people within and across national boundaries. For instance, it is estimated that about 258 million people reside in countries other than their country of birth (*International Migration Report, 2017*) compared to an estimated 120 million people in 1990 (The World Bank, 2012) ; and that about 3.4% of the world population is accounted for by international migrants.

The *International Migration Report (2017)* suggests that international migration makes an important contribution to population growth in many parts of the world, including the reversal of population decline in some countries or areas. Between 2000 and 2015, for instance, migration is said to have contributed 42% of the population growth in Northern America and 31% in Oceania. It has also been reported with respect to Europe that the size of the total population would have declined during the period 2000-2015 were it not for migration. Interestingly, as of 2017, around three quarters (74%) of all international migrants were of working age, or between 20 and 64 years of age, compared to 57% of the global population. Since international migrants comprise a larger proportion of working-age persons compared to the overall population, a net inflow of migrants lowers the dependency ratio, that is, the number of children and older persons compared to those of working age in the destination countries. With regard to the origin countries, however, it has been noted that in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, the net impact of migration on population growth is negative in most countries, particularly in some small developing countries where the negative impact of outmigration on the size of the population could be substantial, especially among adults of working age. It is for this that Africa has come to be rightly regarded as a continent of mass displacement and forced migration caused by poverty and violent conflict, with millions of Africans waiting to cross to Europe at the first opportunity (Black, Crush, & Peberdy, 2006) in what is generally referred to as irregular migration.

Irregular migration occurring from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb to Europe has increasingly been viewed as a security problem associated with international crime, trafficking, and terrorism (Castles, De Haas, & Miller, 2014; Cuttitta, 2007; Goldschmidt, 2006; Lutterbeck, 2006). One fallout of this is that African migrants have become the object of hostility and victims of obnoxious state policies in both destination and transit countries in the migration value chain.

Even though the depiction of African migration as being driven by despair has been challenged by a handful of modernization scholars on the ground that “such ideas are based on assumption, selective observation or journalistic impressions rather than on sound empirical evidence” (Flahaux & Haas 2016, p. 2), there is no doubting that heightened migration is an

inevitable outgrowth of unfulfilled liberal promises. Against the backdrop of this contestation, this paper brings into bold relief the nexus between the dislocation of African political economy arising from the implementation of globalization's handmaid, neoliberal reforms, and the swelling number of displaced Africans desperate to flee their countries, even at great risk to their persons. The paper also highlights how the implementation of neoliberal immigration policies in destination countries has created an army of irregular migrants in transit countries who become a mass of social outcasts, or 'born throwaways' in some parlance, and targets of local law enforcement agents, and victims of modern day slave merchants, including organ harvesters.

## **Some Conceptual Issues**

### **Globalization**

Globalization has been the subject of intense debate among intellectuals regarding its meaning and consequences (Akopari, 2000). It is viewed by some as a purely economic phenomenon that involves the spatial reorganisation of production and the expansion of trans-border financial flows in ways that defy state borders. This view holds that the linkages between national economies have been profusely intricate, and that the world has become a 'global village' as a result. From a purely economic perspective, therefore, globalization refers to the international integration of economies with regard to markets for goods, factors of production, and technology (Bigsten & Durevall, n.d). Others perceive it as a socio-cultural process, involving not only a diffusion of cultural ideologies (McGrew, 1992) but also a diffusion of tastes, exemplified in the phenomenal spread of the fast-food industry (Shaw, 1999). Yet, globalization also has a political component involving an emphasis on the dismantling of authoritarian political structures, the building of western-styled democratic institutions and erosion of state power. With the abatement of the cold war, neo-liberalism, the dominant element of globalization, became a hegemonic international force, and globalization came to be rightly perceived as a western ideology reflecting a complete system of ideas, values, and orientations (Ahmed, 1999).

Regardless of the ideological posturing and the political pretensions associated with the term, globalization exhibits certain obtrusive and incontrovertible characteristics, namely:

- the integration of financial markets across the world;
- the increasing power and outreach of international corporations;
- increasing international communications through technological innovations such as the Internet;
- high mobility of capital unencumbered by state restrictions;

- a rise in the power of capital vis-à-vis social entities, including the state and labour; and
- the rise to hegemony of the neoliberal ideology which emphasizes economic and political liberalization and a curtailment of state power (Mengisteab, 1998, p. 2; Marshall, 1999, p. 259).

## **Globalization and Africa's Development**

Opinion is divided on the consequences of globalization. One perception led by the United States and its western allies, along with the dominant Bretton Woods institutions, argue that globalization with its intrinsic free market principles offers incredible opportunities for development. This perspective is consistent with the old modernization assumption that sanctifies international free trade as the engine for growth and development. This view implies that the liberalization of global trade ensures the free movement of labour, capital, and technology, which become available to countries that lack them. For Africa, it is argued that private investments would create jobs for the unemployed millions (The Economist, cited in the Sunday Times, 5 March 2000).

This view was sharply counteracted by critics who saw globalization as nothing more than 'myths' (Akilagpa, 1999). Drawing on the challenges which neo-liberal economic policies posed to Africa in the past, these critics opined that rather than ameliorating, globalization would compound Africa's developmental crisis by reversing the few gains it made during the cold war years, and exposing the continent 'to the profit maximizing greed of western corporations' (Tandon 1998, p. 3). In fact, some critical observers not only expressed caution in celebrating whatever opportunities globalization apologists claimed it offered, but were also critical of the very analogy of the 'village' used to describe globalization. According to such critics, the inequitable distribution of gains and pains among regions and countries stands in stark contrast with life in a village.

Hamelink (1994, p. 1), for instance, stated thus:

the authors of [the village imagery] know very little about village life. In the village, most people know what is going on and know each other. The opposite is true in the real world; there is more going on than ever before, yet most of us know very little about it and the majority of the world's citizens have little knowledge or understanding of each other. Even in relatively smaller regions such as Western Europe, there are myriad cultural differences that often obstruct meaningful communication.

It was further argued that even within industrialized countries such as the United States and United Kingdom there were marked differentiations, and that they were being further deepened in the face of globalization. This, according to Yearley (1996, p. 23), showed that even 'a global world is not a uniform world', and that rather than promoting a uniform world, globalization is exacerbating differences between regions and between countries.

In his famous Reith lecture on globalization, Giddens (1999) observed that the share of world's poorest fifth population in global income dropped from 2.3 percent to 1.4 percent over the past 10 years, coinciding with the thickening of globalization. While at the same time, the proportion taken by the world's fifth rich has risen from 70 percent to 85 percent. He noted further that 20 SSA countries now have lower incomes per head than they did two decades ago. Giddens further explained with respect to sub-Saharan Africa that the asymmetry in the distribution of benefits under the current orthodoxy, and in particular the tendency for multinational corporations to control its resources, depicted globalization more as promoting global 'pillage' than establishing a global 'village'. This pillaging, coupled with vast differences between the urban centers and the rural areas, accentuated by globalization, altered the dynamics of migration in Africa.

### **Migration : Nature and typologies**

Conventional definitions view migration as the movement of people from one country to another for settlement that is often permanent. A more working definition has however broadened the definition to encompass the movement of people from one location to another within and beyond their country of normal residence. This intra- or inter-state migration can either be permanent or temporary. The decision to migrate permanently may be spawned by unfavourable economic, political or environmental conditions prevailing in the home country. And, even though there is a strong attachment of the emigrant to the home country and to relatives, the net benefits of permanent migration are generally considered to outweigh the advantages of not migrating. Temporary emigrants on the other hand, are those who consider the attachment to their relatives strong enough to outweigh any potential advantages migration may offer and thus demonstrate desires to return home when conditions that precipitated their initial movement have stabilized (Akokpari, 2000).

A further dichotomy in the migration discourse is whether the movement is voluntary or forced. In general, voluntary migrants are those who relocate within or beyond their countries of origin at their own discretion rather than for uncontrollable factors. Voluntary migrants mostly, though not always, include people seeking better social and economic opportunities in other regions or countries. This category of emigrants is often referred to as economic refugees and includes professionals who see the salaries and working conditions in their home countries as incommensurate with their expertise. In recent years, growing economic adversities have also compelled unskilled individuals to take economic refuge in relatively affluent countries where they engage in unskilled jobs or more generally in informal market (Akokpari, 2000).

Involuntary or forced migrants on the other hand are those who relocate either proactively or reactively because of conditions beyond their control. This is the category of migrants conventionally referred to as refugees. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) :

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries (<https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>).

A key question facing host countries in recent years is whether to consider economic refugees as forced migrants. Two main contrasting views have been canvassed on this. The first view, consistent with prevailing international orthodoxy, posits that economic refugees are not covered by international protocols. According to this view, migration caused by declining opportunities is purely voluntary since existing international instruments do not classify economic crises among the phenomenon or events that may 'seriously disturb public order' and therefore warrant migration. In this wise, economic refugees who fail to procure the relevant migration documents are often referred to as 'illegal' emigrants by the host country precisely because in terms of the immigration laws, these are unauthorized entrants (Akokpori, 2000). This category of emigrants is often, sometimes wrongly, associated with criminal activities and become the objects of pursuit by the security establishment in the host country.

A second view, which is antithetical to the conventional position, depicts economic migrants as refugees. This perspective equates the unpropitious economic conditions in a country to a violation of the basic human rights of the citizens. Thus, like wars, which threaten the right to life and peace, economic hardships are seen as equally threatening the right to employment and decent living. For this view, then, deepening economic crisis dramatized in astronomical inflation, unemployment and declining standards of living, are sufficient causes for forced migration. However, as noted earlier, international conventions do not so far recognize migration based on economic adversities as forced; and people who migrate on this reason without formal documentation often risk harassment from immigration and law enforcement authorities in the host country. The contention, however, is that in whatever form or type migration takes, it is sparked or facilitated in recent years by the force of globalization. Given that majority of those displaced by war and conflict in Africa take refuge in neighbouring African countries, with neither the means nor the connections to make it to the industrialized countries, it follows that the bulk of outmigration from Africa is economically induced (Akokpori, 2000). And, since economic migrants are prime targets of state security apparatuses in industrialized countries, prospective economic migrants have since abandoned the formal migratory processes and have opted to travel via several irregular routes.



## Understanding Irregular Migration

The meaning of irregular migration has been a subject of some irregular interpretations with the effect that it has often been used interchangeably with 'illegal migration'. However, 'illegal migration' has increasingly been restricted to cases of smuggling and trafficking of persons (Lopez-Lucia, 2015). Jordan and Düvell (2002, p. 15) defined an irregular migrant as someone who crosses a border without proper authority or violating conditions for entering another country. International Organization for Migration (IOM), on its website, conceives of irregular migration as the movement of people that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries (<https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>, June 2018).

Kuschminder, de Bresser & Siegel (2015, p. 10) identified three principal ways migrants can enter irregularly:

- Entering a country without proper authority, either through clandestine entry or with fraudulent documents;
- Entering with authorization but overstaying that authorization; and
- Deliberately abusing the asylum system.

Morehouse and Blomfield (2011, p. 4) documented eight ways in which non-nationals become unauthorized migrants:

- Illegal entry (illegal border crossing)
- Entry using false documents
- Entry using legal documents, but providing false information in those documents
- Overstaying a visa-free travel period or temporary residence permit
- Loss of status because of nonrenewal of permit for failing to meet residence requirements or breaching conditions of residence
- Being born into irregularity
- Absconding during the asylum procedure or failing to leave a host state after a negative decision
- A state's failure to enforce a return decision for legal or practical reasons (toleration).

De Haas(2008) noted a critical difference between irregular *entry* and irregular *stay*. According to him, a migrant could enter a country without documentation and thus be considered irregular, but that individual could later acquire regularization, and his stay therefore ceases to be irregular. Conversely, a migrant could enter regularly, such as with a visa, but could become irregular by overstaying the visa. For instance, it has been reported that prior to 2014, the majority of irregular migrants residing in the EU entered regularly, either based on short-term visa-free regimes or with a visa, but they overstayed their visas or took up employment in violation of their visa restrictions, and

thus became irregular migrants (Kuschminder, et al. 2015). The World Bank (2011) reported that the main irregular migration flow within Africa is the trans-Saharan migration route, with 90% of the migrants planning to migrate to Europe.

### **Neoliberal Reforms and Irregular migration in Africa**

The 'thickening' of globalization from the 1990s involved the implementation of a set of neoliberal reforms prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. This entailed opening national markets to foreign competition, reducing the role of the state in providing services, and abolishing subsidies to the poor (Gumede, 2016). Africa's experience with neoliberal reforms has, however, been criticized on several grounds. First is that neoliberal economic reforms have largely failed to generate socio-economic recovery and a broader social well-being (Konings, 2012) but has instead resulted in stalled growths, low investment rates, increasing volatility in economic performances, growing aid dependency, and a worsening income distribution (Oya, 2007). It has also been argued that the social impacts of economic liberalization, such as reduction in state expenditure on health and education, and introduction of user-fees, have further exacerbated social hardship (Murphy, 2017), and proven to be disappointing (Abrahamsen, 2000 ; Ferguson, 2006; Harrison, 2010).

The political liberalization of many African states has, nonetheless, been credited with changing Africa's political landscape in certain respects. Between 1990 and 2004, for instance, multiparty elections were held in 42 African countries and a wave of constitutional revisions enshrined rights of expression and association (Rakner & Svasand, 2005, p. 85). This notwithstanding, multiparty elections have done little to alter the dynamics of authoritarian and neo-patrimonial regimes in Africa (Chabal & Daloz, 1999). For one thing, many African elections have been little more than elaborately staged ceremonies that authoritarian leaders used to ratify their rule (Murphy, 2017). Konings (2012, p. 4) surmised that neoliberal reforms in Africa within the formal structures of liberal democracy and a market economy, have failed as evidenced by "the ongoing power base of incumbent political leaders; the acquisitive nature of opposition parties and the lukewarm commitment to democratization by western states.

In the views of Ngwu (2016, p. 2):

the past few decades of democratization in Africa has remained utterly indistinguishable from what it was during the draconian military rules. The ophelimities of life have retained their illusory characteristics, the looting of the nation's treasury has continued unabated, and life has, more than ever before, become nasty, brutish, and indeed short in the mist of heightened insecurity across the length and breadth of the country and grinding poverty in the midst of plenty, both of which have made life for the man in the street largely meaningless.

Elsewhere, Egwu (2016, p. 1) noted that “despite the progress in electoral democracy and impressive growth rates, Nigeria continues to be buffeted by human security challenges”.

In spite of these stark realities and the protestations of African scholars on the undesirability of neoliberal prescriptions for Africa’s development, African political leaders and policy makers were hard put to implement these prescriptions in anticipation of the much craved and highly elusive foreign direct investment (FDI), and also for some other self-serving purposes.

However, an IMF internal paper published in June 2016 has, for the first time, conceded that the neoliberal package prescribed by the Bretton Woods institutions did not deliver on its promises. The report, titled “Neo-liberalism : Oversold”, and which was written by top IMF economists Jonathan Ostry, Prakash Loungani and Davide Furceri, looked at two aspects of the neoliberal strategy – the removal of barriers to capital flow, called ‘capital account liberalization’, and cutting public spending to reduce fiscal deficits and public debt, referred to as ‘fiscal consolidation’ or austerity and came to three disquieting conclusions (Gumede, 2016). First is that the IMF/World Bank neoliberal reform strategies have not boosted economic growth. Second is that they have increased inequality ; and third is that the increased inequality in turn hurts the level and sustainability of growth. The report acknowledged that the removal of barriers to capital flow, or financial openness, has often resulted in short-term speculative, so “hot”, inflows in developing countries (Ostry, Loungani & Furceri, 2016), which, unsurprisingly, did not boost growth or allow the developing country to share the costs of such destabilization with the industrial countries (Gumede, 2016).

In sum, the impact of neoliberal structural adjustment programs has led to economic hardship, political instability and conflict in many developing countries. And even in cases where neoliberal reforms may have in some cases lifted economic growth, it brought in its wake little equity, jobs or social security. Consequently, neoliberal structural adjustments often enriched the already well-off political and economic elites, autocratic regimes and leaders, and impoverished ordinary citizens. World Bank and IMF-inspired economic reforms have also often led to political and social instability, as typified by the 2011 North African youth uprisings – the Arab Spring, and the numerous ethno-religious conflicts bedeviling much of the African continent as well as the pervasive insecurity experienced in the continent (Gumede, 2016).

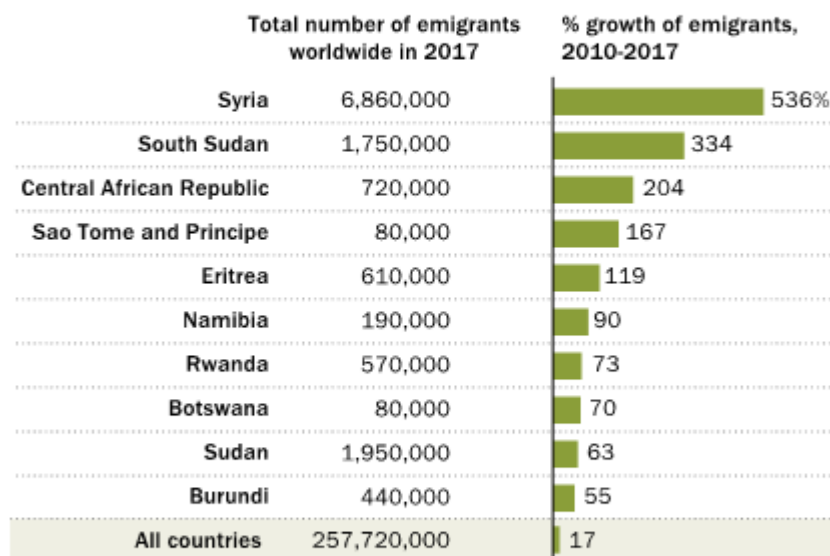
Tellingly, neoliberal reforms in Africa have also begotten an army of economically displaced citizens eager to flee their native countries by whatever means in desperate search for greener pastures that often turn grey, or even blue, as most are unable to reach their intended destinations. Often barred by highly restrictive neoliberal anti-immigration policies in the destination countries, these mostly irregular migrants end up in one or the other transit country. There, they become social

outcasts and targets of ferocious law enforcement agents. The unluckier ones among these desperate voyagers are known to have ended up in the belly of sharks while traveling ramshackle boats and canoes. Numerous others have also become victims of modern day slavery, brazenly traded in open slave markets that have sprouted in many of the transit countries as have been copiously reported in the international media in recent times. This is particularly the case in sub-Saharan Africa with its large population of emigrants, comparable only to Syria currently, undergoing harrowing experiences in transit countries, mostly in North Africa.

A Pew Research Center analysis of the latest United Nations data on the number of emigrants, or people living outside their country of birth, reports that sub-Saharan African nations account for eight of the 10 fastest growing international migrant populations since 2010. The number of emigrants from each of these sub-Saharan countries grew by 50% or more between 2010 and 2017, significantly more than the 17% worldwide average increase for the same period. At the country level, only Syria had a higher rate of growth in its number of people living in other countries (Connor 2018, para. 2). As shown in the figure below, the total number of emigrants worldwide from all sub-Saharan African countries combined, grew by 31% between 2010 and 2017, outpacing the rate of increase from both the Asia-Pacific (15%) and Latin America-Caribbean (9%) regions. Only the Middle East-North Africa region saw a larger increase (39%) of people living outside of their birth country during the same span, driven largely by people fleeing conflict in Syria. Overall, some 25 million sub-Saharan migrants lived outside their countries of birth in 2017. And as international migration increased, the breakdown of where sub-Saharan emigrants live also changed. In 1990, 75% of emigrants from the region lived in other sub-Saharan countries, a share that dropped to 68% by 2017 (Connor 2018, para. 3).

## Sub-Saharan African countries trailed only Syria in growth of emigrant populations worldwide, 2010-2017

*People living outside their birth country (emigrants), by country of origin*



Note: Syria is the only non-African country of the 10 nations whose emigrant populations worldwide grew fastest in 2010-2017.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of United Nations data, accessed Dec. 23, 2017.

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**Source:** Connor, P. (2018). International migration from sub-Saharan Africa has grown dramatically since 2010, February. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/02/28/international-migration-from-sub-saharan-africa-has-grown-dramatically-since-2010/>

Over the same period, the share of sub-Saharan emigrants who live in the United States climbed from 2% to 6%. This has helped make African immigrants a small but fast-growing slice of the overall U.S. immigrant population. As of 2017, nearly 1.5 million sub-Saharan immigrants lived in the U.S., according to UN data. More substantially, the share of sub-Saharan migrants living in European Union countries, Norway and Switzerland rose from 11% in 1990 to 17% in 2017 (Connor, 2018). It has further been reported that whether their destination is a neighboring country, Europe or the U.S., many sub-Saharan emigrants face obstacles to relocating. For example, reports indicate that hundreds of thousands of emigrants from south of the Sahara Desert gather in Libya in hopes of crossing the Mediterranean into Europe. Many live in overcrowded, crime-ridden camps while they wait to make the journey, with some being sold in slave auctions.

Meanwhile, sub-Saharan emigrants are only part of Africa's international migration story. North African nations have also experienced decades of significant outmigration to Europe and other

parts of the world. In 2017, about 5.2 million North African immigrants lived in EU countries, Norway and Switzerland, compared with about 3 million in 1990.

### **Understanding Neoliberal Anti-Migration Policies**

In recent years, irregular migration has been the subject of increasing and ongoing public debate in both Europe and the United States. In Europe, this issue rose to greater public prominence during the summer of 2008, with daily reports of unauthorized migrants reaching Mediterranean shores and others tragically losing their lives in the process. Consequently, policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic came under political and public pressure to reduce irregular migration, with majorities across countries viewing it as a problem. The political pressure to reduce the number of new arrivals has tested mainstream political parties across Europe, which faced a rapidly growing challenge from populist groups advocating radical responses. Some EU member states responded to this pressure by taking unilateral measures, such as suspending *Schengen* and constructing fences. Migration control has thus become one of the Union's top priorities, and engagement with source and transit countries is rapidly becoming the instrument of choice to reduce flows.

In addition, development has come to be seen by policymakers as a means of tackling the root causes of irregular migration, such as poverty and conflict. Addressing these root causes through development was one of the elements of the European Commission's proposal of November 2016 for a new European Consensus on Development as well as one of the main objectives of the European External Investment Plan. Its principal strategy has been engagement with third or transit countries. It has however been observed that in the rush to pursue this strategy, many assumptions have been made without fundamentally questioning how and when migration and development should be linked or whether this linkage should be made at all. The net effect is that recent efforts to expand engagement with third countries have only served to further blur the distinction between migration management cooperation and development cooperation (Connor, 2018). In other words, the concept of the 'root causes' of irregular migration in EU policy has not been fully clarified. It could be said to encompass a wide range of causalities such as poverty, human rights violations, conflict, political instability, food insecurity, and a lack of access to natural resources.

While development cooperation policies have implicitly been addressing these root causes for decades, making the link between migration and development raises serious questions as to what constitutes a successful outcome. According to Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU), development cooperation policy's primary objective should be the reduction and eradication of poverty. However, current efforts to link migration and development appear to prioritise migration management over poverty reduction. There is, therefore, a clear danger that aid

is diverted to "promote EU migration and security interests in ways that stretch the definition of official development assistance" (Funk, Mc Namara, Pardo, & Rose 2017, p.2).

Even though the dual objectives of reducing irregular migration and poverty may not necessarily be mutually exclusive, it has been argued that making a direct link between the two threatens to undermine development principles. This is particularly well-evidenced by the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) and the Partnership Framework with third countries set up in November 2015 and June 2016 respectively. Both aim to manage migration and address the root causes of forced displacement, and use money allocated from the European Development Fund for these purposes. A breakdown of approved EUTF projects however reveals that a large amount of funds has been allocated to fighting irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking, and little to enhancing legal migration and mobility. Many of those directly involved with the EUTF admit that it cannot address "root causes", as is its stated objective. It is, therefore seen as a political gesture to leverage African cooperation on migration or, in a word, for buying African cooperation. This is evidenced by the launch of 'migration compacts', which channels aid through the EUTF conditioned on cooperation on migration management. And even this more limited and transactional ambition for the EUTF has been questioned on the basis of the relatively small amounts of money on offer (the EUTF has 1,982 billion Euros to which 500 million has been added to implement the migration compacts) and the complex political, economic and security factors that shape African migration policies (Castillejo, 2016).

The European Parliament and human rights organizations have similarly criticized the EUTF's use of development aid to stem migration flows. They argue that even if the instruments of EU development policy are used at the same time to tackle the root causes of forced migration, the eradication of poverty should remain the main objective. Instead, the 'migration compacts' negotiated under the Partnership Framework with third countries appear to be diverting funds away from traditional development concerns. The mobilization of €8 billion in support of the partnerships by 2020, for instance, was not a result of additional commitments, but of redirecting existing development funds away from development assistance to tackling migration into the EU.

Recent efforts to link migration and development have also led to the emergence of the concept of 'conditionality' as a means to ensure implementation. With this concept, the amount of aid received by a partner country would depend on its willingness to increase its cooperation with the EU on migration matters. Development cooperation would then be used as leverage to secure third-country commitments related to readmissions and border control. In other words, development aid becomes a bargaining chip in negotiations that follow the objective of improving migration management. Such conditionality runs counter to traditional development principles enshrined in

Article 208 of the TFEU, which are based on the needs of the populations in third countries. As has been explained, the danger in making development conditional upon the tightening of borders is that it places the rights of migrants at risk and often results in migrants taking alternative, more dangerous, routes. Other types of conditionality, such as the signing of readmission agreements, may be less controversial in terms of representing an immediate threat to migrants' rights but still compromise the principles upon which development is undertaken.

Meanwhile, even if the premise of allocating development aid money to counter-smuggling and migration management activities were accepted, many practical obstacles render this kind of assistance problematic. For instance, it is on record that a segment of African migrants, in conjunction with the locals, have set up migration economies along major migratory routes from where they extract rents. Such that all along the migratory routes, from countries of origin in West Africa and the Horn of Africa, to transit states like Niger and Libya, a plethora of local actors with vested interests that run counter to the EU's own objectives and values hamper efforts to create meaningful partnerships for migration management. The activities of these migrant merchants, coupled with the frightening economic reality in most SSA countries, ensure that the out-migrant population from the zone is not about thinning. Instead, it has continued to rise in spite of the fences that have gone up in most of the destination countries. This has given rise to the current migrant glut and the sprouting of modern day slave markets in many of the transit countries in North Africa. Whether those countries will have the capacity to continue to rein these immigrants in and keep them in subjugation under whatever guise, or whether there will be an immigrants' backlash as never before witnessed, remains to be seen.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

This paper highlighted how the adoption of policies of free trade, economic liberalization, and neoliberal economic models under the aegis of globalization, by uncompetitive sub-Saharan African countries, has worsened poverty, widened inequality, and resulted in conflicts, social dislocations, and forced migration from the region towards the industrialized nations, particularly in EU. The paper further highlighted how the increasing flow of economic migrants, who travel mostly via 'irregular' routes, has met with rising fences, aid-for-migration-control, and other ingenious neoliberal anti-migration policies in destination countries, resulting in large pool of migrants stranded in the transit countries, especially in North Africa. The paper also highlighted how these economic migrants, often associated with crimes and other illegal activities in both the destination and transit countries have become outcasts and therefore the targets of law enforcement agents in their countries of temporary residence. Worse still, the massive irregular flow of economically and socially



displaced persons has fed into modern day slavery and organ harvesting trade that is difficult to quantify. The paper concludes that these obnoxious outgrowths of globalization are bound to worsen regardless of the apparent repudiation of globalization by its avid promoters, the United States and Great Britain, under the current spate of ultra-nationalism evidenced in Trumpian doctrine and Brexit respectively.

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