

2. MOBILITY, MIGRATION AND TRADE: INTERACTIVE FLOWS BETWEEN DURBAN AND SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE

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*Introduction*¹¹

This chapter deals with one of the central historical themes of the social and economic development of southern Mozambique – that of cross-border migration, and movement to and from South Africa. The specific focus, however, is on the city of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal. The study aims to develop an understanding of how Mozambicans have gravitated towards economic and social opportunities there.

The research was motivated by a series of questions about how well the numerous, but uncounted, Mozambicans living and working in Durban manage to integrate themselves, economically and socially, into the life of that city, and how long distance traders travelling regularly to and from Mozambique use networks created by earlier migrants. Arising out of this, what is the nature of the flows of people, goods and resources, both cultural and economic, between the two areas? Who are these people, and how have the states on both sides of the border attempted to regulate and manage these flows, and to what effect? Are these Mozambicans prevented by their lack of formal education and foreign nationality from taking full advantage of the economic opportunities available in Durban, and the social services provided by the state? Do they, on the other hand, have some advantages over other foreign migrants from more distant parts of Africa, by virtue of cultural affinities and Mozambique's physical proximity, coupled with the long history of population movement between the two countries? What contribution do they make to the economy of Southern Mozam-

bique and how significant for their families in Mozambique is their economic activity in Durban? To what extent do the states on either side of the frontier effectively regulate, facilitate or control this movement, and how do migrants 'negotiate' the presence of these state institutions and their effects on daily living? Are the states a resource to be tapped into, or a barrier to be circumvented, as migrants go about securing their livelihoods by various means?

The chapter begins with an overview of migration to South Africa from southern Mozambique, and an investigation of the concept of 'integration' as a research problem. Integration is examined in its economic, social and political dimensions through a literature review which aims to throw light on the various forms of exclusion which have operated in the context of migration globally, and which might assist in the framing of a locally relevant research methodology. Some of the literature dealing with questions of the state and transnational migration, the informal economy and migration, and the role of economic and social networks, is reviewed for its relevance to the questions which this research seeks to address. The well-known history of Mozambican-South African migration is not covered in any great detail, but is referred to in order to provide relevant context for this study. The main body of the chapter presents the findings of the empirical study. The conclusion draws out the significance of the movement of Mozambicans to and from Durban, and raises some policy questions arising from the research.

Migration, integration and exclusion, and informality.

Migration

Migration between southern Mozambique and South Africa is a long-established tradition. This process has been the subject of a voluminous literature and is extremely well documented¹². The key role of Mozambican migrants in the foundation of the South African gold mining industry and in colonial capital accumulation is well understood.

The integration of the peasant economy of Southern Mozambique into the mining complex of the Witwatersrand and its dependence for its continued reproduction on this cycle of exploitation was of major concern to the new Frelimo administration when Mozambique gained independence in 1975. The first major research project undertaken by the Centro de Estudos Africanos (African Studies Centre) of

the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) was precisely to investigate both the institutionalized migrant system and its peasant base with a view to creating policy that would lessen dependence on South Africa and usefully employ skills gained on the mines in the development of the rural economy of Mozambique (First, 1983). Mozambican policy to lessen dependence on migrant labour to South Africa was rapidly overtaken by the Chamber of Mines' strategic decision to scale down rapidly recruitment from Southern Mozambique in the mid-1970s. In the 1980s the spread of the war to the south disrupted agricultural production and created enormous social dislocation in the countryside, effectively smashing the peasant economy over large areas and creating hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people, and refugees in neighbouring states.

An estimated 5.7 million people were forced to abandon their homes between 1979 and 1992. Of those who fled, about 4 million were internally displaced. The remaining 1.7 million crossed Mozambique's borders and became international refugees in Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi Zimbabwe, and South Africa. It is believed that up to 350,000 Mozambicans, predominantly from Gaza and Maputo provinces, sought refuge in South Africa, with about 250,000 settling in Gazankulu, and the remaining 100,000 going to Johannesburg and other South African cities. The historical links with Gazankulu go back to the flight of refugees from successive conflicts in what is today Mozambique in the 1830s, 1860s and 1890s. (Steinberg: 2005). His comments on their particular status – as being refugees in a complicated and qualified sense, who “never left the invisible but no less powerful boundaries of their Shangana-speaking ethnos” provide an interesting point of entry for looking at some of the integrative mechanisms at work in the context of later, post-conflict, migrations south to Durban.

With the ending of the war in Mozambique, and of apartheid in South Africa, and with greater freedom of movement, the number of Mozambican migrants to South Africa's major cities has grown exponentially. The more 'traditional' migrants from Southern Africa have been succeeded by waves of new migrants from West, Central and East Africa. The field of Migration Studies in South Africa has been developing rapidly, since the country has become a magnet for migrants from all over the continent, and new waves of mobility caused by wars and rural poverty led to Africans seeking security and a better life to join older-established regional patterns of movement¹³. There are a few specific studies dealing with Mozambican migrants, espe-

cially to Johannesburg, (Steinberg, 2005) and some current studies are underway¹⁴. As yet there is no study of the activities of Mozambicans in Durban, and it is this gap which this chapter seeks to fill, at least in a preliminary way.

Integration & exclusion

The research aimed to develop measures with which to evaluate the levels of integration of migrants, economically and socially, into the life of Durban. The word *'integration'* is defined as “the act of combining or adding different parts to make a unified whole” (Collins English Dictionary 1994). This definition seems to indicate that economic and social integration aims at eradicating divisive forms and creating mechanisms allowing individuals of different economies and social backgrounds to insert themselves into the larger mainstream of economic and social life. However, the ‘unified whole’ is hard to find when talking about any city as large and complex as Durban, with its historically segmented social, political and economic structures. A majority of Durban’s citizens live in conditions which marginalize them from the city’s mainstream ‘formal’ structures. In this context it is evident that the idea of integration has to be understood more as a process of insertion into certain niches which present themselves as potentially available, and of overcoming the various exclusionary forces which operate powerfully in the city to prevent a large proportion of its inhabitants from full and unfettered participation in the ‘mainstream’ of social and economic life.

Furthermore, the question of integration needs to take into account not only conditions in the ‘zone of reception’ – the city, but also the context which has created the patterns of migration under study. The process of ‘integration’ has – as its other, complementary, side – the processes of ‘extrusion’ operating in the ‘sending’ society. The social forces creating these currents in southern Mozambique are complex, but relatively well researched and understood. The research question was thus reformulated to ask ‘how well can people, who are in some quite profound ways already marginalized in their own society, hope to integrate themselves into another, which has its own powerful exclusionary mechanisms?’

It is difficult, in practice, to separate the two elements of economic and social integration from each other. For example, while a prime requirement for economic integration may be the insertion of the individual concerned into the host country’s labour market, social integration may require acceptance and assimilation into the

cultural milieu of the host country. Mozambicans in the study do not actively seek social integration – they are principally concerned with the economic side of earning a living in the city. However, they readily assimilate culturally and reduce their social visibility as ‘strangers’ by virtue of their cultural and linguistic affinities with the majority African ‘mainstream’ of urban life. The notion of ‘integration’ in Durban, for migrants, is clearly defined by strong ideas of ‘home’ and ‘belonging’ in southern Mozambique.

The concept of economic and social integration is normative and depends on “what people regard as the necessities of a good life” (Bohnke 2004, p.12). The needs of individuals – or, in our case, whole groups – clearly differ and serve to determine what is regarded as indispensable for well-being. There is also a hierarchy of needs, with Hamilton (2003, p.23) referring to a set of indispensable vital needs, (which would include shelter, food and employment).

Some of the key elements of social integration as set out by Bohnke, (2004, p.13) in the European context, are unattainable without the key economic elements such as a job, accommodation and good education. This constitutes a major challenge for the economic and social integration of Mozambicans in Durban, since generally those who have migrated to South Africa, historically, come from rural communities and lack relevant skills and education. As Martin (1999, p.8) has shown, when discussing economic integration of new immigrants entering the European labour market, one of the challenges they face is a lack of relevant skills as a result of low education. A further disadvantage is the inability to communicate in the host language which reduces their chances of being integrated into the labour market. The dynamics of economic and social integration are determined by a complex mix of forces at work. The exclusionary tendencies operating in the formal economy are powerful and have to do with the very limited spaces provided for individuals with the levels of formal education and skills possessed by the majority of the sample in the study. The state also operates to exclude undocumented migrants through its regulation of the labour market and its demand that employers, if they are to comply with the law, have to register employees – a process that requires formal documentation.

Even with the necessary documentation, the growing intolerance against foreign nationals, as an alleged cause of rising unemployment for South Africans and as perpetrators of ‘violent crime’, can be taken as an example of the factors hindering the process of both economic and social integration. Xenophobia has resulted in well-

documented violent attacks on foreigners and their property (Crush 2001, p.11), (Reitzes 2004, p.349). As already indicated above, 'integration' is a two-way process, and migrants search out very specific forms of integration within the city, based on the resources which they seek there. It should be noted, however, that, in the case of Mozambicans in Durban, these problems do not present themselves in an acute form. There are no local parallels, as yet, with the conflicts in Gauteng. This may well be due to the low visibility of Mozambicans in the city due to their cultural assimilability.

According to Reitzes (2004, p.345)

“Migration becomes a challenge of political management for the range of stakeholders, including migrants, their countries of origin and destination; citizens of the host countries; and other sectors such as business, organized labour and NGOs.”

The states on both sides of the border remain the primary role players in terms of policy formulation and regulation, but it is evident that they do not have the capacity to manage migration. Trans-frontier migration is not regulated, and neither state knows about most migrants because they are 'invisible' and undocumented.

Informality

How does 'integration' happen under these conditions? The answer is that it takes place largely in the realm of the 'informal' economy. The informal economy, globally, has provided economic solutions for people, particularly minority groups, excluded by circumstances from active participation in the formal labour market. De Soto (1989, p.11), looking at rural-urban migration in Peru, argued that state polices acted as the most powerful exclusionary force, and that the informal economy became an alternative means of resisting and fighting for survival in the city.

In the present study, nearly 60% of the total sample, who were self-employed, were in the informal sector. Various studies (e.g. MacGaffey et al, 2000; de Soto, 1989; Perlman, 1976) suggest that the informal sector operates on the margins of the law and involves people who embrace it as a survival strategy. There is a fine line separating 'informal' from 'illegal'. The role the state plays, and policy towards the informal economy, will define on which side of the line informal actors will fall. In reality, the boundaries between the informal and formal economies are not always

clear-cut. The one often emerges as an alternative, and in some cases is complementary, to the formal sector. Castells et al (1989) argue that the informal economy has become an alternative means of earning a living, not only for the unskilled and marginalized or migrants, but also for those individuals in the formal sector who see it as a means of maximizing their gains.

The informal economy globally has assisted migrants in the process of economic and social integration into foreign economies, particularly in the developing world. Duffield, (2002, p.1058), when discussing the effects of structural adjustment on developing economies, had the following pertinent comments to make on the relationship between cross-border movement, informality, and illegality:

The shadow economy that has developed in response to adjustment now constitutes the major part of the economy over much of the South. Extra-legal trans-border trade represents a lifeline and, as such, a normal way of life for many people. It draws upon and adapts resources and networks based on locality, kinship, ethnicity, religion or creed. In turn these networks inscribe their own forms of legitimacy and regulatory codes upon shadow economies.

By its very nature it is difficult to quantify the impact of cross-border trade between southern Mozambique and Durban, but what is clear is that it operates widely, sustains families on both sides of the border, and in many instances shades the boundaries of illegality and legality quite seamlessly. It may be over-dramatic to talk of a 'shadow economy' in the context of the study we have conducted, because of its limited and focused nature. But in the context of wider cross-border activities involving the smuggling of stolen vehicles, of drugs and weapons, it certainly exists in a thriving fashion. The extent of its co-existence and overlap with the focus of this study is surely limited, but the same routes and *modus operandi* seem to be used by quite different groups, with different aims and goals.

This section has asked questions about the nature of social and economic integration as a process which involves migrants, their choices, borders, states, markets and movements, and the lines between formality and informality, legality and illegality. We now turn to an examination of some of these questions in the context of the study of Mozambicans in Durban, which focuses on the largely informal world they inhabit.

Mozambicans in and around Durban

How many and where?

It is very difficult to say with any degree of certainty how many Mozambicans are living and working in Durban at any given time. Though Durban does not attract nearly as many migrants as Johannesburg and Gauteng, it hosts a significant number. Official archives at the Mozambican Consulate in Durban show that only 3,502 Mozambicans have obtained consular registration since 1999¹⁵. This number is insignificant given that many Mozambicans do not have any contact with the Consulate. Nearly 60% of Mozambicans surveyed did not know where the consulate was, nor were they interested in knowing. Some extrapolations of the numbers in the sample who are registered with the Consulate as a rough proportion of all Mozambicans in Durban actually registered allows us to arrive at a total figure of 8,759 as a nominal Mozambican population of Durban¹⁶. It is highly likely that official Mozambican information regarding the number of nationals in Durban represents a very substantial under-enumeration.

Information from the South African Department of Home Affairs in Durban was not easy to come by and even less conclusive. Local officials could not supply any significant data beyond a general aggregated SADC registration figure for the whole of South Africa of more than 100,000 where Mozambicans were the majority among all other nationalities who were granted the same exemption. It is safe to say that neither state has even a vague idea of how many Mozambicans are in and around the city.

This project found that Mozambicans live in more than 20 locations in and around the city and the metropolitan region. Given the limited sample no hard estimate of total numbers can be provided, but it is highly probable that the lowest figure is in the region of 10,000 – and it is not inconceivable that a higher estimate could easily double this figure. The majority of Mozambicans are not engaged in any meaningful sense with the official government institutions of either country, and thus remain hidden from their view.

Who are they?

Mozambicans living and working in Durban traditionally come predominantly from the rural areas of the three Southern provinces: Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo.

Only a small minority of Mozambicans surveyed in Durban came from other provinces, as illustrated in table 1 below.

TABLE NO. 1: Mozambicans in Durban – Place of origin

Number	Provinces	Frequency	Percentage
1	Maputo	32	64
2	Gaza	4	8
3	Inhambane	12	24
4	Other	2	4
5	Total	50	100

As expected, the majority sampled came from Maputo province, the closest to Durban. Of interest, however, are the greater numbers from Inhambane rather than Gaza, despite its greater distance from Durban. Factors other than physical proximity are at work in selection: only 14% of the sample gave closeness as a major factor influencing choice of Durban as a destination. It is clear that social networks, rather than territorial proximities, were at play in selecting Durban as a destination. Almost all informants, prior to their departure for Durban, knew someone who had already lived and worked in the city.

Unsurprisingly, males predominated in the sample, accounting for 78% of the total. These results can be considered as reflecting the old trend where, as pointed out by Crush, et al (2005, p.14), “the primary reasons for migration in the region have been for labour...” and males have dominated this process. Despite the fact that both internal and cross-border migration in Southern Africa has been dominated by males, there is a growing trend for women to migrate (Crush, et al 2005, p.14). In this study 22% of the sample (11 individuals) were women. Mozambican women mainly come to South Africa to join their husbands or relatives, but also become engaged in informal economic activities such as home beauty salons or selling Mozambican food products. Others manage to get jobs in Portuguese-owned restaurants, shops or butcheries.

TABLE NO. 2: Mozambican Women-Marital status

Number	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	6	54,5
2	Single	3	27,3
3	Widows	1	9,1
4	Live with a partner	1	9,1
5	Total	11	100

As reflected in the table above, just over half of the small sample is married. Single women also featured in the sample, as did a widow who gave the civil war as the main reason she came to Durban in 1985. Despite the increase in female migration and cross-border movement, various factors still impede free movement. In most cases when men migrate, the women are left behind to look after the household and to secure land tenure. Additionally, migration in rural Mozambique has traditionally been conceived as a male-only activity, and the migration of single women is perceived negatively. This is well reflected in the words of a rural woman from Ndote, in Maputo province:

“I don’t approve of women going to South Africa by themselves without their husbands. I cannot imagine any kind of work they do when they are there. We hear people saying that Mozambican single women are going to South Africa alone; they are there to practice prostitution. So I don’t approve.” (Interview, 26/03/07).

Similar sentiments were echoed by some of the males who were interviewed in Durban. When asked if they would marry a Mozambican woman who lived and worked in Durban, their initial response was that they would never do so because women should be in Mozambique and not in South Africa. The negative images linked to female migration, the traditional beliefs that legitimate males as potential migrants, and the fact that women are left behind to look after the households, powerfully combine to explain the minority status of women as migrants in the research sample.

The majority of Mozambicans sampled are young, as might be expected. As Table 3 below illustrates, 90% were 45 years old or younger, with just over half falling into the 25-45 age group. Given life expectancy rates in Mozambique, the sample results are not surprising. By Mozambican standards 45 years of age is ‘old’.

TABLE NO. 3: Sample Age Range.

Number	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	18-25	19	38
2	25-45	26	52
3	45-60	3	6
4	> 60	2	4
5	Total	50	100

Despite the fact that the majority of Mozambicans in Durban are relatively young, most have not completed primary and secondary education. According to Martin (1999, p. 8) education is crucial for economic and social integration in a foreign country. This study demonstrates that educated Mozambicans are economically better off than those without education. Those with primary education only (over half the sample) are less fortunate than the one third with secondary education, and the only person with a tertiary education was better positioned economically and socially than the rest of the group.

Migrants characteristically have had low levels of formal education. According to one informant,

“Since the colonial period, education was not very important. The main thing black Mozambicans needed to know at school was how to write their names and to count. After that you could be able to go and work in the mines, like I did, without major problems. Nevertheless, most Mozambicans who came to South Africa did not even put a foot into school but they were able to work in the mines and other places because the job Mozambicans do does not require much education.” (Interview: 12/02/07).

Most rural areas of Mozambique, including those in the South, lack basic infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, water, and health facilities, despite efforts since independence by the government to effect improvements. For example, in Ndlotle, Manhiça district, people have to travel between 17 and 30 km to access better hospital facilities, and for pupils to attend secondary school. Many children from rural Mozambique do not proceed with their secondary education because the travelling and accommodation expenses are beyond the means of parents and guardians.

TABLE NO. 4: Educational levels of the sample

Number	Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Primary	28	56
2	Secondary	14	28
3	Tertiary	1	2
4	None	7	14
5	Total	50	100

Therefore it is not surprising that migration from Mozambique to South Africa is associated with low levels of education and is seen as an alternative means of economic survival for those who do not have professional skills and/or higher formal education. This was highlighted by various respondents in southern Mozambique.¹⁷ They all stated that they would prefer their husbands, children and relatives to work at home, but were forced to accept that their lack of education or professional skills forced them to migrate.

This reality is enforced by various factors. Some prefer relatives or spouses to work in South Africa where opportunities for unskilled work are greater. For others it is a 'cultural' practice. Almost every young man is expected to go and work in South Africa, like their fathers and grandfathers did. Given conditions in the rural areas of Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo, it is likely that the next generation will continue to migrate to South Africa continuing the legacy left by their older relatives. Households depend in some measure on migrant earnings for subsistence. According to one of the participants from Fondo (Inhambane Province) when the husband stopped working in South Africa, the household economic situation worsened and they decided to help one of their sons to go and work in South Africa.

How do they get there?

Mozambicans have lived and worked in Durban for many years, arriving via various official and unofficial entry points. Some have come to Durban through Komatipoort, or the Kruger National Park, with the prior aim of working in Johannesburg, and have ended up in Durban. More common entry points are through Catuana/Ndumo, Tembe, Ponta do Ouro and Lavumisa/Golela. Many make the border crossing illegally. Over 80% of our sample did so. Informants say lack of adequate policing on both sides makes this easy. When there are patrols these are easily circumvented, either with the connivance of the officers themselves, or with the help of civilians living along the borders.

Crossing the border illegally is less of an obstacle to reaching Durban than lack of finance to complete the trip in one journey. Many migrants make the journey in stages, finding work on the way. Shared languages and mutual intelligibility make this task easier, coupled with the fact that prospective employers favour illegal migrants

because of their vulnerability and exploitability. As much as six months may be spent working to earn the cash to make it to Durban. Some migrants remain on the farms where they find work and never reach Durban. Those remaining on the border zones become conduits in the pipeline down the coast, offering services such as food, accommodation and local intelligence to facilitate transit for other illegal migrants. Others gravitate to the smaller towns on the route and settle there.¹⁸ The networks of support from friends or relatives providing finances for taxis and bribes for border guards are critical in easing the journey.¹⁹

The waiving of visa requirements by both governments from April 2005 allows citizens to visit for 30 days. This has allowed many Mozambicans to enter the country legally and then remain illegally after the period of grace has expired. It was very striking that survey respondents gave *saltar o arame* or *kufohla*²⁰ as a first preference method of border crossing. They only seek to legalize their status after they have entered the country illegally, that is when they have become *mafohlane* or *manthlula guede*²¹.

On the other hand, the growing number of cross-border traders, in particular, stay 'legal' by returning regularly to Mozambique to take money or goods home and bring more merchandise back to Durban. But they then carry out their trade as street vendors without the necessary municipal permits. They are legally present in Durban, but what they do there is illegal in terms of the municipal by-laws.

Survival strategies in Durban: access and entry

Given that the majority of Mozambicans sampled for the study left southern Mozambique as a consequence of political instability and rural poverty, the act of migration in itself becomes a survival strategy. This section examines the ways in which migrants attempt to minimize the costs of entry into another milieu where they are excluded from participation in the 'formal' economy by virtue of lack of skills and/or official documentation. In this context, the creation of informal economic and social networks, based on common citizenship, language and ethnicity, become a primary vehicle of entry, integration and survival in a foreign environment.

Networks become important for migrants right from the outset, when information is needed about the intended destination, their reception there and potential economic opportunities available.²² Ethnic linkages play a particularly powerful networking role: Xitsopi speakers from Inhambane, for example, tend to stay in the

same area and share similar kinds of jobs in Durban.²³ The overwhelming majority of the sample, (80%), also share accommodation with one or more fellow countrymen. Shared rental costs and mutual aid in time of need provide a greater sense of security for migrants. A minority, (15%), stay with people of other nationalities, such as Zimbabweans, Congolese and Nigerians.

The networks are constructed in various ways, using the multiple identities that individuals carry with them. Mozambicans of mixed race – “*mulattos*” or “*mistos*” – have created their own set of linkages, living either in the city centre or in former apartheid “coloured” group areas alongside their compatriots. They look to fellow Mozambicans of mixed race for assistance in finding accommodation and work, and once established, provide assistance for newcomers. However, these networks are also widened to include other Mozambicans, on the basis of shared citizenship. Information about employment opportunities is shared, as are emotionally significant ‘community’ events such as the death or imprisonment of a fellow-national, regardless of race, ethnicity or language. More importantly, inter-marriage across the diverse Mozambican ‘communities’ does take place.

As might be expected, very few Mozambicans in Durban were hosted by non-Mozambicans. A small minority (10%) was hosted by South Africans, including naturalized Portuguese citizens, who generally have a prior relationship with the migrants based on contacts in Mozambique, and who offer employment in Durban.

It is evident that the success of these informal networks is based on the prior experience of well-established, “long stay” Mozambicans. They constitute a significant source of support in the initial stages of life in Durban for the newcomers. However, in order to succeed the newcomers have to build trust – “*construir confiança*” – with other Mozambicans. This means that the newcomers have to expand their social and economic networks so as to be able to benefit from the economic, social and emotional resources that exist within the confines of these networks.²⁴

The first six months are crucial for many first-time entrants, particularly those who enter illegally. In this period, they have the double task of learning the local languages – IsiZulu and English – and of “*construir confiança*” with other Mozambicans. Trust is earned by a display of a ‘good behaviour’ and willingness to help, without asking for payment, in any of the small private business owned by Mozambicans. In fact, Mozambicans believe that assisting in their compatriots’ business gives them a platform to learn about the local people and to assimilate the local languages.²⁵

Many of the networks in Durban reflect a continuity of prior contacts with southern Mozambique, so that friends and relatives on both sides of the frontier form an important conduit for new migrants, assisting with accommodation and the all-important search for economic opportunities.

Survival strategies: informality and work

Despite the importance of the mutual assistance networks described above, there remains the challenge for migrants of accessing the formal labour market in Durban.²⁶ The most crucial impediments they face are primarily their lack of formal skills or any professional training, and a lack of an officially-recognised presence in the city. The overwhelming majority of Mozambicans interviewed for this study were active in the informal economy in Durban. Thus only 4% of the sample – mainly women living with husbands – were not actually economically active. Of the rest, 58% indicated they were self-employed, and the remaining 38% were employed by someone else, who may have been a long-stay, self-employed, Mozambican. They usually only employ recently-arrived Mozambicans, their preference being based both on personal security considerations and the migrants' good work ethic.²⁷ It is safe to conclude, however, that very few Mozambicans living and working in Durban are involved in the formal economy. The majority sampled in this study were involved in a range of informal activities which, amongst others, included street trading, panel beating, motor mechanics, shop assistants, taxi owning, motor car drivers, restaurant assistants, domestic workers, men's barbers shops and women's beauty salons, and herbalists.

Mozambicans who employ others usually do so when they have more than one informal business, or where the nature of the business requires more than one person. The barber's shops and panel beater workshops on the peripheries of the city are a case in point. Recently-arrived male migrants tend to find their first employment in these small businesses run by long-stay Mozambicans who set them up in a patron/client relationship which provides both economic and emotional support for the newcomers. There is a broad consensus among Mozambicans on the need for mutual assistance. Being excluded makes the need for unity stronger.²⁸

Identity, the state and survival in Durban

For Mozambicans, access to a South African identity provides a means of integration into the host society, with its possibilities of formal employment and access

to social services provided by the state. To be an undocumented migrant means non-recognition by the state and a form of non-existence which brings with it not only formal social and economic exclusion but also the potential for victimization and abuse.²⁹ The overwhelming majority (82%) of the study sample entered South Africa illegally. Only 18% entered legally, and some of these later became illegal as they continued to live and work in South Africa even after their entry permits had expired.

What is of note, however, is that the number of documented migrants in the sample now amounts to 38%, which means that since entering the country a further 20% have acquired official status in one way or another. In 1996 the South African government offered former Mozambican refugees, along with other nationals who had lived in South Africa between 1980 and 1992, a 'SADC Exemption' aimed at assisting them to legalise their migration status and obtain permanent resident status. (Handmaker and Schneider 2002). Many took advantage of this concession.

On the other hand, the fraudulent acquisition of South African IDs is a time-honoured practice, involving the inducement of Department of Home Affairs officials to accept bribes, and, more often, the subsequent change of Mozambican names to commonly-used South African ones. This latter practice occurs because most Mozambicans in South Africa do not want to be identified as such for fear of exclusion by locals, or because they are carrying and using other people's ID books.³⁰ The long-stay Mozambicans play a significant role in the illegal acquisition of South African documents. They are able to help the newcomers obtain fraudulent IDs because over the years they have created the necessary networks. Some have become fully integrated by virtue of their level of political and economic involvement in Durban, and as such are 'invisible' as Mozambicans to most South Africans.³¹

Despite the increase in number of Mozambicans with identification documents, the majority (62%) of the respondents still live and work in Durban as undocumented and illegal migrants. Thus, the need for South African IDs among Mozambicans constitutes one of the vital elements for full economic and social integration. It was not surprising, then, that 86% of the total sample wanted to have South African IDs. But possession of a South African ID is prized principally for the purely instrumental reason that it maximizes economic opportunities. This expectation is justified by the fact that 40% of the total sample noted that they had been denied job opportunities because they did not have a South African Identity Document.

An overwhelming majority (96%) of the sample also indicated that they still regard Mozambique as their home country and have no intention of settling in Durban for the rest of their lives. This is further evidenced by the fact that almost every participant (92%) noted that their homes are located in Mozambique. As might be expected, there are very few (6%), who regard Durban as their home and are willing to stay there for the rest of their lives. What is interesting to note, however, is that just under a quarter of the sample maintain multiple households, in Mozambique and in Durban. They intend to retire in Mozambique but meanwhile are engaging in classic risk/opportunity spreading strategies. Perhaps the most interesting case of successful straddling of the borders is one of the 'long-stay' Mozambicans who now lives in both countries. After many years in South Africa he was able to legalise his status. Now that he has retired, he lives in both countries. When in Mozambique he uses his real name, and when in South Africa, he uses a localised version which makes him 'invisible'. He comes to South Africa at least once a month to receive his old age pension money and visit his South African wife and children. But he claims Mozambique as his real home, because there he has access to land.

In the meantime the large majority of respondents (85%) find that Durban meets their expectations, mainly because they are able to work and financially assist their families in Mozambique. There is a perception that Durban depots fewer illegal migrants when compared to other major South African cities such as Johannesburg and Tshwane. This 'security' allows Mozambicans to get on with the business of daily life and survival without too many worries of unwelcome official attention. Even so nearly a quarter of the sample have been arrested and deported at some time, losing their belongings in the process. A relatively small number (16%) of respondents were not happy in Durban. They cited police hostility (xenophobia), lack of job opportunities and low wages as the main causes.

Living conditions for the vast majority of migrants sampled are not easy.³² They live in the informal settlements on the periphery of the city, where rentals might be lower, but where running water and electricity supplies are less certain. The migrants accept the difficult living conditions because they see the present situation as temporary, and are willing to sacrifice today in order to live a better future in their home country.

Mobility as a survival strategy

Mozambicans in Durban exploit mobility as a survival strategy in order to trade, and to send money and goods between the two countries. The ease of cross-border movement allows access to goods, services and economic benefits on either side of the frontier.

The vast majority of respondents keep in touch with families and friends in Mozambique by phone, but the most important form of interaction lies in the dispatch of money and goods from Durban to assist their families at home. Friends are commonly used (22%) to send money, goods or information. Minibus taxis, known as “*chapas*” by Mozambicans, are used more frequently (by 60%) because of the greater regularity of their movement. Both sets of transactions are informal, are used by most people, and are based purely on trust.³³ Money and goods also travel to Mozambique in a more formal and structured way via the *Pantera Azul* Bus and the *Kawena* company.³⁴ This last method is not so widely used, however, because most of the intended recipients in Mozambique do not have documentation such as the *Bilhete de Identidade (BI)* to identify them as the rightful recipients.³⁵ The *Pantera Azul* bus is mainly limited to Maputo while *Kawena* services cover the rural areas of Southern Mozambique. *Kawena*’s ability to deliver bulk goods such as furniture and agricultural tools over a wider area makes it a reliable service provider.³⁶

Many send money and goods from Durban to Mozambique: nearly three quarters of the sample send home an average of between R200.00 and R400.00 per month.³⁷ Many go home at Christmas with a wide range of goods, both food and consumer durables. The receiving households in Southern Mozambique rely on the economic assistance of their members working in Durban.³⁸ All the above points to a well-developed and sophisticated cross-border movement of goods and people from Durban to Mozambique and vice versa, much of it undocumented and informal.

Trans-frontier traders have a specific location within this general pattern of flows of people, goods and resources. They are quite widely dispersed in Durban, with some notable concentrations in specific locations.³⁹ Their stock comes either from local, or Mozambican sources. Generally, those who source their stock locally are street vendors – *vendedores ambulantes*. Vendors surveyed mainly sell sunglasses, belts, wallets, ladies bags, and toys. They buy all their stock from local Chinese shops at discount prices and resell it in Durban. They prefer to sell in Durban to take advan-

tage of the stronger Rand, but they are nevertheless forced to go home at least once a month to comply with visa conditions.

Traders who get their stock in Mozambique, on the other hand, cross the border constantly. Three groups have been identified: two sets of women traders who sell three-legged pots and traditional Mozambican foodstuffs respectively, and a group of male traditional healers – *médicos tradicionais*. These groups operate in different places in Durban, each with their own niche market of customers.⁴⁰ Respondents maintain that virtually all their goods crossing the border for sale in Durban do so illegally because they do not have permits that would allow them to import and export from either country. As a result, they often enter into conflict with customs officials demanding payment of import duties. According to the respondents, the additional costs of customs duties are prohibitive and render their business unprofitable, so they resort to smuggling – *mukhero*. This is often done through bribing officials. As one of the *mukeristas* pointed out:

“Every time, when we come from Mozambique to Durban with our products to sell here, we use the Manguzi border, particularly when we have a lot of stock. There we have policemen who assist us in getting in our products. We know that like us, they are there to help their families, so after telling them what we have, we give them something like R50.00 and they let us cross the border. If you are lucky the policemen just say to you ‘when you come back bring me some fish’, and they let us cross the border with our products. If our business was a legal one we would not survive because that it would mean that we pay all kind of fees from Maputo to Durban.”⁴¹

Mutual assistance between cross-border traders is an essential part of their activities and a powerful tool for social and economic integration. When traders return to Mozambique to replenish their stock, they also buy for the others left behind in Durban. Those remaining behind in Durban will in turn mind the businesses and belongings of the absentees until their return.

Cross-border traders, in common with the majority of Mozambican migrants in Durban, have no access to a formal banking system. Money accumulated through the sale of products in Durban is advanced in S.A Rands to other traders returning to

Mozambique to buy stock. The travellers in turn pay a nominated recipient in Mozambique the equivalent in *Meticaís* and this sum is eventually collected by the original owner on his or her return home. Having no access to banks, the majority of migrants keep their money concealed in their rooms in a '*banco de casa*', and nearly half (46%) of them are members of a *xitique* or *stockvel*. None of these informal transactions would be possible without the social capital of '*confiança*'. Earnings from trade are variable; the nature of the products, the weather, the time of the month, and the fiscal activities of the Municipal Police in confiscating goods from illegal traders all affect daily takings. Informants reported putting aside money every day for the *xitique* with an additional weekly amount, grossing R700.00 in savings, to be used as remittances, with the balance of takings going into stock replenishment.⁴²

Standing outside of the formal institutional structures of urban life, migrants make provision for health care, housing, savings and employment – all the essential activities for life in the host city – through a tightly woven and complex survival network of informal institutions. These have their own structure, logic and rules no less solid than those of the world from which they are excluded.

Conclusions

This project was motivated by very concrete concerns about the fortunes of Mozambican migrants living in Durban. Preliminary iterations of the research problem – that of Mozambicans' 'integration' into the city – revealed assumptions about the nature of the 'community', its rootedness in place, and its relationship to the official and formal side of Durban, which could not be sustained as the research progressed. 'Integration' was initially conceived of as a desirable end-state which would enable migrants to access formal employment, and public social services such as education and health care. Ideas about integration as a desirable state of being, involving successful economic and social insertion into the host society, and a lack of discrimination, led to attempts to devise measures which could be deployed in an attempt to provide some quantitative information about the phenomenon. Questions designed to provide some indices of 'integration' covered biographical information on age, education etc. and moved on to employment, housing conditions, access to financial institutions and possession or use of a range of domestic consumer items. Inevitably, attempts to measure 'integration' turned towards discussion of the broader literature on mecha-

nisms of marginalization and exclusion at work in cities at a global level and its usefulness for the present research. The initial focus on the state as gate-keeper to integration was modified to take into account powerful market mechanisms which also function to exclude, independently of any state regulation. It became clearer in the course of the research that it is not possible to talk about integration without a more nuanced understanding of what the target of integrative attempts should be. Discussions about integration presuppose a problem of exclusion, and a clearer understanding of its specific mechanisms in the context of the study was developed.

The research and questions about 'integration' inevitably led to a deeper consideration of the other side of the 'problem' as originally formulated. Migrants cross boundaries for a range of reasons which have to do with the forces which act to extrude them from their homes. It became evident during the course of the study that many migrants were already marginalized in their home country through lack of education and rural poverty. Their marginality in their own society does not equip them for 'integration' in the receiving country, if we only understand the concept of 'integration' in formal terms. It is in this context that it became necessary to reformulate ideas about integration in order to take account of the very real forms of insertion that have taken place, between and within the margins of the formal and legal order which the states on both sides of the frontier seek to manage, with the variable results reported.

It was evident from the study that the states on both sides of the border have no real idea of the extent of the phenomenon of migration, and their capacity to regulate it is very limited. Many migrants in Durban lack official Mozambican identity documents; the South African version is prized for the access it can provide to employment and social services. The authorities in Durban have no real idea how many migrants the city hosts, and the branch of the state concerned with migration is notorious for its inefficiency and corruption. The borders between the two states are extremely porous: people and goods seem to be able to transit without undue regard to the formalities of frontier controls.

The research shows that the migrants surveyed are mainly 'undocumented', but that they are also mainly productively employed in a range of economic activities in the informal economy which are designed to earn money which can be sent back to Mozambique in order to sustain their families and households, principally in the rural areas. The research was not able to quantify accurately the flows of transfers from

Durban, but the information obtained on both sides of the border makes it clear that the sums involved form a significant portion of individual earnings, are quite substantial when aggregated, and are an important component of the household income necessary for the maintenance of families in southern Mozambique.

A general picture emerged of a group of hard working, innovative, flexible and quite well networked Mozambicans doing their best to survive in an environment that is not at all conducive to 'integration' as originally conceived. The Mozambicans in this study live and work on the margins of the city. These margins are multifaceted, they are physical and geographical, economic and social, and in many cases involve the margins of legality as well.

The issue of legality raises a range of policy-related issues concerning the regulatory practices of the state. Most of the migrants in the study were aiming to earn an honest living through trade or other activities in and around the city. But many were already outside the law by virtue of being undocumented. Their very presence in the city constitutes a transgression of state boundaries. This is at one level a function of the incapacity of the Mozambican state to document adequately its own citizens, and the incapacity of the South African one to police its frontiers. At another level it is a matter of choice, based on calculations of the risk of detection, stemming from what is perhaps an ingrained preference for 'invisibility', given historical experiences of former attempts at population control by states in the region. Possibly the more serious issue of legality, for this study, arises out of the finding that cross-border traders almost routinely smuggle goods in order to avoid paying dues which would render their activities unprofitable (or less profitable)⁴³. This activity could be legalized by policy decisions about the duty-free nature of goods in transit, which would then enable the states on both sides of the border to focus on the more serious criminal activities involving guns, drugs and stolen vehicles, which seem to use the same routes, and perhaps even the same methods of suborning the border authorities. States on both sides should be working towards facilitating the legitimate and honest activities of migrants whose efforts form part of networks of survival which span the sub-continent. There should be a clear differentiation between these activities, some of which are currently illegal, and those of the criminal networks which threaten the state itself.

Notes

- ¹¹ This research was done for Simão Nhambi's MA dissertation. It was based on a literature survey, plus in-depth interviews with 10 key informants, a sample survey of 50 migrants living and working in Durban, 25 Mozambican cross-border traders in Durban markets, and 25 households in Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane provinces.
- ¹² Through the work of Harries, Newitt, Rita Ferreira, Duffy, Webster, Covane, First et al and Wilson, amongst others- see the bibliography.
- ¹³ The work of the Southern African Migration Project is a case in point.
- ¹⁴ Dom Vidal, University of Lille, France, has an ongoing project.
- ¹⁵ Consular registration is given to Mozambicans who live temporarily or permanently outside the country. The document is used simply to enable the government to know the approximate number of Mozambicans who live in that particular country and does not replace the passport.
- ¹⁶ If we are to estimate the approximate number of Mozambicans in Durban based on the available data the following could be said: Let 3,505 correspond to 40% of the total sample registered with the Mozambican Consulate and 60% correspond those who are not registered. This would mean that 60% is equivalent to 5,257 and the total number of Mozambicans in Durban would be estimated at 8,759.
- ¹⁷ From Inhambane (Quissico, Nyamajacala, Ramiro, Fondo and Chibembe), Gaza (Fidel Castro, Inhamissa, Maria Muguambi and Koka Mussava), and Maputo Provinces (Ndlote, Manhiça and Ilha Josina Machel)
- ¹⁸ Thus Mozambicans live in Manguzi, Ingwavuma, Jozini, Mbazwana, Ntselene, Mkuzi, Hluhluwe, Mtubatuba, Empangeni, Richards Bay, Esikhawini and Stanger/KwaDukuza en route to Durban.
- ¹⁹ In the sample, 32% were assisted by friends, 40% by relatives (this includes women who came to join their husbands), and the remaining 28% claim to have come alone.
- ²⁰ Portuguese and Ronga terms for 'jumping the border'.
- ²¹ Ronga terms for people who work and live in South Africa as illegal migrants
- ²² Nearly 90% of the sample were hosted on arrival by fellow Mozambicans. Nearly 2/3rds (64%) were from the same ethnic group, and over half (56%) were relatives.
- ²³ Various ethnic groupings of Mozambicans in Durban can be found in Lindelane, predominantly from Catembe, and Folweni, dominated by people from Manica. It is important to note that these groups have not been directly surveyed in this study.
- ²⁴ More than half (56%) of the total sample speaks or understands English and, as could be expected, IsiZulu is spoken by 98% of participants.
- ²⁵ More than 90% of the total sample was able to find jobs through the assistance of their compatriots, relatives and friends.
- ²⁶ This project did not survey the formal sector: no attempt was made to establish how many Mozambican-based businesses have formal links with Durban.

- ²⁷ Mr. S who runs a carpentry workshop: Interview, 03/03/07 Red Hill, Durban.
 “We cannot employ South Africans in our workshops because when they see that you are now developing they will report us to the police for being illegal migrants so that after our deportation they will be left with the business. Another reason we cannot employ South Africans is that, unlike Mozambican boys, the local people are not reliable and are not hard working.”
- ²⁸ Mr. JC: interview, 25/05/07, CBD Durban.
 “Anyone from Mozambique in Durban is here because they are looking for a better life. Though none of us belongs to this country we need to assist each other by sharing important information regarding economic opportunities here and at home. I personally share information with people who share it with me when they have some. If we fail to assist each other we will never get assistance from anyone.”
- ²⁹ Ms DM: Clermont, Durban 10/02/07
 “If you are illegal it means that even when you know who killed your husband, or steals cars, and does all sorts of unacceptable things, you have no right to say a word and the authority cannot protect you. That is why most of us know criminals - but how do you tell the police if you are illegal, because instead of listening to you they will question your migration status and deport you? That is why we do not report crime.”
- ³⁰ Ms. LSF CBD Durban, 25/05/07.
 “I stayed in Stanger almost a year, and in that year I was learning IsiZulu so as to be able to embark on a new mission which was to look for a job. I then got a job as shop assistant in Mandeni. I got a job there because I had a friend who was working there, so she spoke to the shop owner and I was employed. However, the shop owner wanted my ID, and at that time I did not have an ID. Since I did not want to lose the job, I contacted another Mozambican lady who had a South African ID and I asked her to lend me her ID. She did not hesitate because that was a habit, that an ID could be used by more than one person [...]. All this marathon, resulted in me having to change my names and I became known by my friend’s name which was **Thandeka Bongiwwe Gumede** (*Fictitious name)
- ³¹ “As a Ward Committee member, I have the necessary political connections and for that reason I can help my fellow Mozambicans obtain IDs. However, Mozambicans, in order to be able to be helped, should not show that they are not South Africans. They need to pretend to be South Africans, by adopting South African names and speaking one or more local languages. In relation to names, Portuguese names like Fernando, Simão etc. are not appropriate for someone who needs an ID. Then I get them a mother or father who are local to testify that the person is their son and they need him registered. The people with whom I work do not know about this, because I know it is illegal”. Mr. FDT: Inanda, Durban, 16/11/06
- ³² More than 70% still rely on public transport, 40% of the total sample do not have fridges, 94% do not have TVs, close to 90% do not have radios or any kind of sound system in their rooms. Nearly 80% of the total sample lives in a house where they rent only a single room which is usually shared with other Mozambicans.
- ³³ Ms J.K., “when I send anything to Maputo I give the cell number of the driver to the person who is going to receive. They keep in contact with the taxi driver until they meet and collect the parcels” (Interview, 07/07/07)

- ³⁴ *Kawena* is a South African company which sells and delivers various consumer and non-consumer goods, such as building materials, to the nearest home place of the buyers. Most illegal migrants in Durban use it because of ease of border transit. They do not have to pay import duties, and avoid the uncertainty of travelling in person without proper documentation.
- ³⁵ *Bilhete de Identidade*: Mozambican identity document issued to citizens.
- ³⁶ Kawena Durban archives indicate that Mozambicans bought and sent home products to the value of R359,428.50 between January and February 2007.
- ³⁷ Many migrants wait several months to amass a substantial amount to send home.
- ³⁸ The general point about dependence is well illustrated by Ms T.C. (Inhambane): “every man at home works in South Africa. My four brothers are all in South Africa. So our lives depend mostly on our bothers because our mealie-meal, *mandioca* and sweet potatoes are not enough to keep us alive. It is for this reason that we find it difficult to survive if they fail to send us food or money from South Africa.”
- ³⁹ E.g the Beach Front ‘Flea Market’, Workshop ‘Flea Market’, West Street, Smith Street, Mansel Road “Night Market’ where the long-distance buses arrive, and Warwick Junction.
- ⁴⁰ Pots are sold at Mansel Rd, food at the Sunday Workshop ‘Flea Market’ and in the peripheral areas housing migrants, and medicines at Warwick Junction ‘Umuthi market’.
- ⁴¹ The experience of the *Mukheristas* serves to underline the permeability of the borders, and their openness for a range of other illegal activities of a more seriously criminal nature such as the transit of stolen vehicles, drugs, guns and human trafficking. Young girls are smuggled to Durban to act as baby-sitters for women who are trading on the streets. Many of these activities cannot take place without the connivance of border officials (Durban, 08/07/07).
- ⁴² Street vendors: West Street, 4/07/2007
- ⁴³ This information is based only on interviews with traders and has not been comprehensively cross-checked and verified.

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