

Conference “Challenges of social and economic research in times of crisis”, organized by IESE”

Maputo, 19-21 of September, 2017

THE FUTURE OF THE ILLEGAL AFRICAN MIGRANT IN AFRICA

Open border trending and the question of social security

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ABSTRACT

Unlike some parts of the world, open border can be said to be trending in Africa. In July, 2016, the African Union launched the African Union passport, which is expected to grant visa free travel to Africans within the continent by 2020. Also, presently, 13 African countries operate visa free travel to all Africans. The vision of open borders in Africa is concretely cast in the pursuit of the political vision of pan-African unity, economic cooperation and Social cohesion within the continent. That vision of open border raises certain concerns, one of which is the socio-economic condition of the Africans that are expected to avail themselves of the opportunities of mobility within the region. That concern highlights three important variables. The first variable is the demographic boom of Africa, which is expected to double by 2050 from 1billion in 2010. On that note, a rapid growth of workforce by an estimated 970million people is expected within the period of 2010-2050. Ostensibly increasing the pressure on the labour markets and infrastructure, which could be expected to fuel migration of working age adults towards countries with infrastructures and more promising labour markets. Secondly, informal migration within Africa shows that the notion of 'open border' is not as novel in reality as it is politically. Africans have and continue to informally travel across borders within Africa for economic, social or political reasons. The literature on informal migration in Africa, has highlighted severe vulnerability and poverty amongst the informal migrants. While open borders may ease the effect of political criminalization of informal migration, it may not arbitrarily effect the socio-economic conditions that will ameliorate the vulnerability of the migrants. Thirdly, the unrelenting growth of the informal sector cannot be expected to reduce, rather in the face of increase in workforce via open migration, without commensurate growth in employment opportunities, it may increase. The poor work conditions and weak infrastructural and policy support to the sector, will mean that the sector will continue to be a poverty and vulnerability trap for its new and old actors. In the above vein, this paper examines the ongoing drive for visa free travel for Africans within the continent from the migration perspective that interlinks demography, social security and informal economy. The paper thus argues that while visa free travel is trending on the political notion of economic integration and profits, and pan-Africanism ideologies, there is need for more attention on the socio-economic challenges that will sprout from the pursuit. Also, there is increase need for the role of social research, and in particular comparative social research on migration experiences from a macro and micro perspective to feed to the noted drive for visa free travel for Africans within Africa.

Introduction

Unlike some parts of the world, open border can be said to be trending in Africa. In July 2016, the African Union (AU) launched the African Union passport, which is expected to grant visa free travel to Africans within the continent by 2020. Also, presently, 13 African countries operate visa free travel to all Africans. The vision of open borders in Africa is concretely cast in the pursuit of the political vision of pan-African unity, economic cooperation and Social cohesion within the continent. For instance, in 2008, the 1.2 trillion dollars Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (TFTA) was initiated, and signed in June 2015. The trade area and customs union stretch from South Africa to Egypt and from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Kenya, embracing a population of over 527million with combined GDP of about US\$624 billion. This TFTA is made up of 26 African nations: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, the Comoros, the DRC, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The ideology of 'one Africa' has stealthily crossed mere political visualization to institutionalization that will expectedly impact the lives of Africans. The important question of how will the lives of Africans be affected by the opening of borders cannot be left to the pan-Africanism imbued deliberations of over-positivity-inflated political pundits, politicians, technocrats or private entrepreneurs. The problem is that from the social, economic and political positions of the aforementioned, and similar agents, economic rewards are presented as the focal outcome of open borders in Africa. However, while there are ample grounds for expecting economic rewards (example, the sheer size of informal cross border trade in Africa, see Afrika and Jumbo, 2012) from open borders, its expected impact on migration of ordinary Africans (unskilled, low skilled, traders and potential micro entrepreneurs) should turn the focus to the socioeconomic and political conditions of African migrants welfare in host countries.

There are several reasons why the welfare of African migrants in host African countries should share the spotlight with economic or other gains expected from open borders in Africa. The first centers on demographic revelations of the people in Africa (AFDB, ECA and AUC, 2017) and subsequent explorations of mobility trend (Flahaux & de Haas, 2016; Gonzalez-Garcia, et al., 2016). That will refer to the skill, educational and financial level, age distribution, gender, and international migration destination of Africans within Africa. The second calls attention to informal migration within the continent. The literature on migration within the continent highlights that Africans continue to informally move within the continent either as refugees, economic migrants engage in trade or unskilled labour, or transit migration. In essence then, the novelty of 'open borders' within Africa is mainly political. However, a context of open border can be expected to increase migration within the continent, by ameliorating the effect of political criminalization of informal migration. But, due to dynamic

social, cultural and economic factors, it cannot be expected to arbitrarily eliminate the socio-economic conditions that promotes migrant's vulnerability, and xenophobic violence against migrants. Notably, documented antecedents of the lives of African migrants in popular host societies, such as South Africa and Libya, suggests intense and growing incidences of vulnerability and physical insecurity (Landau, 2011; United Nations Support Mission in Libya, 2016) from government agents but also disgruntled citizens. The third reason links the growing rate of African workforce (15-64years) by an estimated 970million people within the period of 2010-2050 (AFDB, OECD, UNDP, 2015) to rising unemployment, and booming informal sector in urban centers in Africa. That interlinkage suggests that the informal sector can be expected to expand in major cities as mobility is promoted by 'open borders'. As migrants move to popular urban centers in search of economic opportunities in the formal sector, rising unemployment and weak industrialization in urban centers will mean that migrants will take solace in the informal sector. Indeed, the attraction of urban centers in popular states will suggest skewed distribution of migrants. More so, the uneven field of state-centered social protection and infrastructural development across African countries hint at intensification of a lopsided distribution of African migrant within Africa in the open-border scenario. Such intensification will escalate already observed social conflicts, and distort political integration or cooperation efforts (Whitehouse, 2012; Crush, et al., 2015). For example, tensions and persecutions over the rights of the African migrant to engage in trade or service provision in the informal sector such as in South Africa (SAMP, 2014). In addition, the poor work conditions, and weak infrastructural and policy support to the sector, will mean that vulnerability and insecurity will remain or increase for the new and old actors. Furthermore, the infrastructural needs to support a growing migrant population in popular cities can be expected to increase, raising questions of responsibilities. In line with the goals of sustainability, taking a conceptual examination of a visa free Africa by 2020 from the now, gives some opportunities to develop empirical questions, but also institutional support for a better migration context in Africa. The arguments are presented in three sections: Unintended spinoff of open border scenario, present productivity and vulnerability of the African migrant, and the question of political responsibility of care.

Unintended spinoff of open border scenario.

The rate of African migration within the continent cannot be expected to reduce in the future. The African Development Bank 2015 Economic Outlook report suggests that 29% of people in sub-Saharan Africa desire to emigrate from their current place. The intra-Africa emigration rate is placed at about 50% of all emigration¹, but with significant difference between North and Sub-Saharan Africa. Statistics show that about 65% of total

¹Of those emigrating, more than 70% in West Africa, 65% in Southern Africa, 50% in Central Africa, and 47% in East Africa migrate within the sub-region.

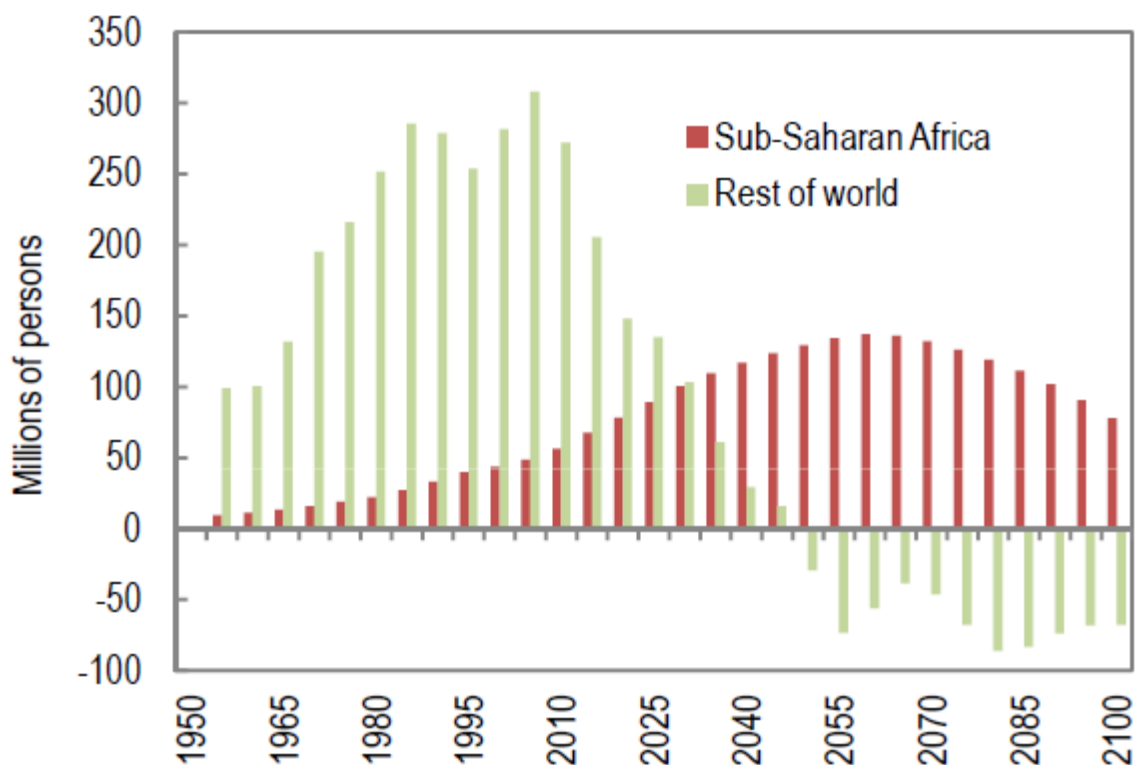
emigration from Sub-Saharan Africa is intra-regional, making it the largest intracontinental movement of people in the world (Ratha et al., 2011). However, 90% of emigration from North Africa is directed outside the continent. Although, income differences are shown to drive migration to more prosperous countries (example, South Africa), researchers have noted that Tanzania is an exception. For example, migration flows from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia are mainly to Tanzania, even though gross domestic product (GDP) is more favourable for the source country (Ratha, et al., 2011). That hints at the complexities and interaction of factors, obscured by unreliable and unavailable data that drive intra Africa migration.

Data for mobility within Africa are fragmented and scarce. For instance, 24 countries have data for the 1990s and only 15 countries have data for post 2000. Although the recent interest on data for the management and international support for refugees has facilitated growing mobility data management initiatives in Africa. The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) affiliated to the UNHCR and hosted by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is one example. Nevertheless, the scarcity of migration data to and from African countries is in sharp contrast with the increasing need for accurate and timely migration information for policy governance and support services for distressed migrants. As a result of the gap in statistical information on African migration, researchers continue to lament the challenges of studying trends and patterns of Africa migration, in a contemporary context of urgent need for information on migration flows. Efforts from international organizations and collaborations often suffer from programmatic approach – piecemeal (from different donors and agents), lifetime (data collected for the length of the program) political connotations (information collected is related to the political needs of specific donors). Consequently, available data (e.g. census data) only gives partial picture - data could be overblown or under reported, for example data on irregular migration, etc. (Parsons, et al., 2007; Jensen, 2013; Kasnauskiene & Igoseva, 2010; Lucas, 2006). However, combined data from large scale surveys from international organizations and multiplying small scale qualitative studies are producing important pictures of African migrations within Africa (Flahaux & de Haas, 2016).

Information from several studies have highlighted the high rate of migration within Africa as against the media and political focus on migration from the continent, especially to Europe (Ratha, et al., 2011; Schoumaker, et al., 2013). Such studies also indicate the diversity of international migration from Africa, both in terms of destination and reasons or purposes for migration (Schoumaker, et al., 2013; Flahaux & de Haas, 2016). Importantly, attention has also been turned to the role of aspiration and capabilities in influencing African migration (de Haas, 2011). That, acknowledges the role of individual agency alongside other factors that motivates migration, but it also hints at the average age of the African migrant and the gender, in a context of patrilineal societies. Ratha et al (2011) presented survey data from Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal, that shows migrants as young adults and male, with slightly above primary education. As such, intra-

Africa migration is understood as driven by search for economic opportunities, alongside historical factors. The profile of the migrants as young male adults with slightly above primary education and the motive of seeking economic opportunities suggests that majority of the migrants may not be engaged in formal and professional employment in the destination countries. As such it is logical to expect their participation in what constitutes the informal sector either as traders, service providers or employees. Although, several studies have highlighted changes in the demographic data of African migration. For instance, Adepouju (2005) called attention to increasing and independent female migration within Africa, and the strikingly young population of sub-Saharan Africa in a context of un/under employment (Adepouju 2008). It is thus important to query the institutional provision from the authorities that are pursuing open border processes in Africa for the informal sector or the African migrants that are active in the sector. As it is, the fate of the actors in the informal sector largely rests on national but also local policies, while the participation of large numbers of African migrants in the sector calls on targeted responsibility from the regional body.

Figure 1. Projected Changes in the Size of the Working-Age Population (ages 15-64). Culled from the IMF World Economic Survey report on sub-Saharan Africa (2015), pg. 25.



Sources: United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2012; and IMF staff calculations.

Africa's population growth becomes a relevant factor in shaping migration flow in Africa. Population reveals its relevance in the transformation of demographics and spatial dynamics within the continent (Adepoju, 2004). The World Economic and Financial Survey (2015, p. X) reported that by 2035 "the number of Africans joining the working age population (ages 15–64) will exceed that from the rest of the world combined". That suggests in less than 20 years from now, sub-Saharan African will be the major supplier of new members to the global workforce. Typically, increases in population are expected to drive rural-urban migration, as people move from traditional low-productivity area to cities or urban spaces seeking to be part of areas known for higher productivity. Two things become relevant to this discussion. Firstly, because urbanisation in most African countries is growing without commensurate industrialisation (Gollin, et al., 2016), people are severely hit with unemployment and inadequate service provisions in urban centers. The African Development Bank economic outlook report (AFDB, 2015) highlights dissatisfaction with local public services as one factor provoking the movement of people within the continent. Secondly, faced with unemployment in urban areas, the informal sector becomes the immediate viable alternative. Currently, this is estimated to be the highest employer of labour in Africa. For example, in East Africa, the informal sector is estimated at 28-36% compared to the 16% share of employment in the formal sector (Filmer & Fox, 2014; Jutting & de Laiglesia, 2009). The large size of the informal sector in Africa is shown as relevant to Africa's economic perseverance. But the sector has also been criticised as entrenching low incomes, under-employment, poverty and exclusion in Africa. Nevertheless, the informal sector is relevant to cross country migration in Africa for several reasons that includes: cross-border trades, ethnic entrepreneurship, the ease of entry for informal migrants, etc. (Simone, 2004).

Another important driver of migration processes is sub-regional cooperation. Ratha et al (2011), highlights that over 70 percent of Africa's migration from West Africa was within the sub-region. Indeed, several sub-regions have taken on initiatives to pursue state's integration through cooperation in economic activities and the movement of people. For example, sub-regions like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), through agreements on mobility of goods and persons, have tend to spur relatively smooth migration processes for citizens within the regions through visa free travel. So far, one can say that Africa does not lack policy initiatives for free movement of people, residency and labour for Africans. However, national immigration management concerns are known to act as impediments to the pursuit of such sub-regional cooperation ideals. SADC is a case in point, where South Africa's harsh stance against immigration is shown to frustrate the ideals of free movement of people within the region (Segatti & Landau, 2011). Furthermore, other pressing challenges concern the implementation, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of the policies (Adepoju, 2011; Akinboade, 2013; Awad, 2009; Betts, 2011). Nevertheless, such sub-regional cooperation tends to reinforce historical migration

patterns that reflects common linguistic, ethnic or trade roots. Although, more recent migration studies (Andersson, 2016) reveals increasing migration across sub-region, especially to several cities such as, Johannesburg, in South Africa, Sebha, in Libya, Agadez, in Niger, etc that have become established as migration hub in Africa. Furthermore, Bakewell & Bonfiglio (2013, p. 4) argues that attention should also be paid to the “mundane social processes that drive mobility, such as the search for an education, a spouse or a better life in the city”. In a context of open border, such ‘mundane social processes’ can be expected to attain higher significance that becomes relevant for goals of social cohesion if its benefits can be properly harnessed. Nevertheless, it also has the capacity to foment social conflict, discriminations and xenophobic tendencies.

The productivity and vulnerability of the African migrant

Migrants’ participation in micro-entrepreneurship

Under the nexus of migration and development, the discourse of remittances, diaspora investments and skill transfer from returned migrants have come to take center stage in political and academic forums that sought to stress the benefits of migration. Crucial to the livelihood of several migrants in Africa, is the foray into micro-entrepreneurship either as traders, service providers or manufacturers. Indeed, several studies have highlighted the economic and social relevance of entrepreneurial activities to migrants, especially ones that are socially and economically excluded in their host societies, (Rath, 2000; Hunter & Skinner, 2003; Maharaj & Moodley, 2000). African migrants’ participation in entrepreneurship can be seen from several perspectives, such as the return migrants’ participation in the private sector through entrepreneurship. This will refer to mostly returned international skilled migrants operating at the meso-level of society. Ammassari Savina (2004) in her study of return elite migrants in Ghana and Ivory Coast, argues that the return elite migrants are enterprising and contributing to private sector development in their home country. Furthermore, there are migrants that operate at a lower level of entrepreneurship, often referred to as survival businesses. Often less skilled (although, some studies have called attention to the high level of education of some of the migrant traders), these African migrants within Africa participate in micro-entrepreneurship through cross border trade and/or street trading², generally referred to as the informal sector.

One of the salient processes fueling the increasing participation of African migrants in the informal sector, is urbanization (Crush, et al., 2015). For example, 750million people, making half of the estimated population of

² I use the term street trader to refer to diverse micro-entrepreneurial activities that include trading and service provision (Lund, Nicholson & Skinner, 2000; Witt, 2000).

Africa, are projected to be living in urban areas in 2030. With weak prospect for sufficient growth in employment opportunities, majority of the urban dwellers can be expected to be participants in the more flexible informal sector (Southern African Migration Programme, 2014). Internal and International African migrants are known to find economic reprieve in the informal sector, for example, as in South Africa. In relation, Thomas and Inkpen (2013) study of migrants' participation in entrepreneurship in Malawi, calls attention to the weak participation of returning African migrants in agricultural entrepreneurship. They argue that as human capital increases, African migrants tend to focus their entrepreneurial activities in non-agricultural activities, with female migrants more likely to participate in the agricultural sector. Their study indirectly supports other studies that calls attention to the high participation of migrants in the informal sector in urban areas. As Crush, et al (2015, p. 1) notes in their study of South Africa's informal sector, "Migrants from other African countries play an increasingly important role in the sector and experience considerable success, something that eludes many local-owned start-ups."

In my doctoral study of how African migrants build their future in Johannesburg (Spel, 2017, Forthcoming), South Africa, participation in the informal sector was presented as central to their present survival, and the aspiration for future success. The study, in line with other studies of African migrants in South Africa, reveals the tenacity and resilience of the migrants in slowly growing their micro businesses in a context of huge constraints. For example, a migrant recounted how he started his roadside business:

I find (searched for) the job, but I didn't see the job, that is why I started to sell on the street until now. Am selling before, I start from there, I get small money, I buy banana from (open or retail market). I come market here, I buy one box (of banana), when I finish selling, I will go market again to buy one box again to go and sell it. I sell like that before I get (saved) small money, wey (which) I take go (took to) market (wholesale market) myself to go and buy it to sell (in retail quantity) after I leave (stop selling) cigarette. Only me (I) was selling the cigarette and later banana.

This migrant started participating in the informal sector by selling cigarette in retail quantity, after a futile search for formal employment in Johannesburg, South Africa. He saved enough money to move into selling bananas. He started his banana trade by buying from the retail market in small quantities and selling by the roadside with a margin for profit. After saving enough money, he could go to the wholesale market to buy in larger quantities at cheaper rate and resell at his roadside stall for higher profit.

Another migrant, Musa from Ethiopia resigned from his job in his home country and migrated to South Africa in 2005 to start street trading. He began his life in South Africa with 100 Rand (approximately 10 euro), with which he bought belts and socks and started selling at bus and taxi stations, slowly improving his economic wellbeing.

I sold it there for 6 months, after six months I starting selling for street, for something clothes. Six months I was selling belt and socks for bus station, after six months I was thinking its better selling for street. I was selling the clothes for street almost a year. After that I buy one old car, I buy one old car, I buy stock from Johannesburg, I will go 500 kilometres to the border, Botswana border. I will sell the clothes that side, almost two years I was working just like that. This life is changing. Now I am working and own a restaurant, here in South Africa. (Male, 35 years)

Furthermore, several of the migrants moved into trade or micro entrepreneurship after unsuccessful experience with seeking formal employment. This reiterate the drive of African migration towards urban areas in the quest for formal employment, failure to get satisfactory employment in turn facilitates entrepreneurial activities. Nevertheless, some of the African migrants that are active in micro-entrepreneurship in South Africa are known to achieve relative good success as argued by Crush, Chikanda and Skinner, (2015). Although, businesses in the informal sector are shown by some researchers to be traps of vulnerability and poverty (Lyons & Snoxell, 2005). In my study, I observed that the migrants could perceive reprieve from the harsh socio-economic context not through satisfactory income from their businesses, but from the perception of possible success in improved income-earning activities. The businesses, although tiny in terms of quantity of commodities sold, or income generated, still embodied my interviewees' hope of achieving success in South Africa, indicating their resilience. They made their daily living expenses, paid their rent and other expenses and at times sent remittances to their home countries to support or sponsor family members. Therefore, while a third party may evaluate their businesses as not successful and a trap of vulnerability and poverty, the business still embodies their aspiration and indicates the gradual realization of the migrants perceived economic emancipation.

Irrespective of the grey areas in the perceived relevance of informal trade for the individual trader, studies have highlighted the relevance of the sector to the general economy of several countries in Africa (Bromley, 2000; Kamete, 2013; Potts, 2007). For instance, informal cross-border trade has been known to connect cities, towns and villages across Africa. Although often imbued with connotations of illegality, informal cross-border trade is a source of income to about 43% of Africa's population (Afrika & Ajumbo, 2012), most of whom are women. Traders could be either individuals or firms, operating entirely or partially outside the formal economy. The sheer size of the trade underscores its relevance to cross-country migration in Africa, and links informal migration in the continent to the social and economic fabric of a developing and cohesive Africa. For example, the value of informal cross border trade in SADC is estimated at \$17.6 billion dollars. In Eastern Africa,

Uganda's total informal exports to her neighbouring countries in 2009, were estimated at \$790.73 million and informal imports were estimated at \$66.49 million in 2010. Also, West Africa boasts of entrenched, extensive and complex informal cross-border trade, estimated to have a range of GDP contributions within the region. For example, 20%GDP contribution in Nigeria and 75% GDP contribution in Republic of Benin (UNECA/AFDB, 2012). Taking the note from Tannerfeldt and Ljung (2007, p. 130) declaration "The Informal is normal" and Kamete's (2013, p. 647) argument that "there is no salvation in technical solutions" in the misplaced efforts to 'normalised' the informal, the question of sustainability is moved to the experiences of African migrants operating in the informal sector. This paper calls attention to two pressing issues of vulnerabilities- Socio-political and Socio-economic respectively.

Socio-political issues

In the context of a future of open borders in Africa, the discussion of insecurity of the foreign African in Africa countries must start with a discussion of the socio-political issues experienced by African migrants. That is, situations where the vulnerability and strangerhood of the migrants are exacerbated by the actions or inactions of persons and agents with political and official power.

... anything one will be in this country is in the hand of God... people die like chicken everyday, everyday. Could you believe, last two weeks, opposite Okoro shop (the shop that I met him), ask anybody, in the evening like this, I don't know, they said they stab the guy all over, he was fighting somewhere in the club. So he was running (and bleeding), the blood has wasted. The guy just sat down there (pointing to a spot by the road), my anger was that we Nigerian, you know that it happens, you know that area (Hillbrow) they see it as where Nigerians are. So I saw this metro cops (South African police) they were passing (driving), we waved them 'please help this guy', they looked at us (and said in their language) ah ai ai he is a Nigerian and left. They thought the guy is a Nigerian, that guy died there. They let him die, at least that guy wouldn't have died.

Researcher: You mean the guy died there?

Migrant: he died there. The guy was sitting with head on his knees, you know he couldn't sit, and then he laid down. Before we know what is happening, you know everyone is crowded, so we were watching him... You don't even know this country, am telling you, I saw him he was alive, just bleeding, still breathing, that he is tired, still alive up to 45 mins, before he laid down, he could not (stand up), he has given up, he is gone. (Migrant in Johannesburg, from my interview data, 2013)

On a Sunday afternoon in mid-December 2005 Papa Doucouré was shot. He was driving a friend's car in a northern district of Brazzaville and allegedly failed to stop at an intersection when a policeman signaled him to do so. A pickup truck full of heavily armed paramilitary police sped after him and made him pull over a few hundred meters down the road. After he had stopped, sitting behind the wheel of the motionless car, he was hit by three bullets from a policeman's Kalashnikov rifle – once in the arm, once in the leg, and once in the stomach. The police put him into the bed of their truck and brought him to the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire, the city's largest public hospital. That is where Papa Doucouré, lying on a hospital gurney, was pronounced dead a short time later.

To members of the city's immigrant West African community, who called Doucouré one of their own, however, his killing was only the latest and most tangible sign of the hostility and discrimination they faced from Congolese people in general, and from agents of the Congolese state in particular. Many West Africans in Brazzaville were convinced that Doucouré had been targeted because he was a foreigner, the police, they believed, had identified him from his dress or facial features as a wara and made him pay the ultimate stranger penalty (A narration from the study of West Africans living in Brazzaville, Congo. Whitehouse, 2012, p. 180)

I presented the stories above here not for sensationalism as with the journalistic press, but to call attention to real and often fatal socio-political issues African migrants face in their host societies. The point is the complicity of the state and agents of the state, either by omission or commission, in perpetrating or provoking, what most times, turns out to be fatal experiences for the migrants. The offices of the state that are often presented and conceptualized in official agreements, policies or regulations as guarantors or guardians of the safety of the immigrant community, becomes complicit in their abuse, discrimination and lethal attack. Another instance, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) report on African migrants in Libya, warned that the situation is a human rights crisis. The report detailed the abuse and arbitrary detention of migrants under inhuman conditions, in centers managed by the Department for Combating Illegal Migration (DCIMI). There were also reports that during search and rescue operations for irregular migrants on the Mediterranean Sea, there were "life-threatening interceptions by armed men believed to be from the Libyan Coast Guard. After interception, migrants are often beaten, robbed and taken to detention centers or private houses and farms, where they are subjected to forced labour, rape, and other sexual violence". The threat to lives and properties reported by several researchers (Whitehouse, 2012; Landau, 2011; Worby, et al., 2008; United Nations Support Mission in Libya, 2016) are not only suffered by irregular African migrants, but often, by majority of individuals identified as foreign Africans by citizens and state officials.

In visualizing the future of Africa with open borders, the state and its many apparatus are being abstracted or politicized as custodians of the rights and welfare of the numerous Africans that are expected to take the economic opportunities offered by migration or mobility. Be that as it may, the reported experiences of African

migrants in African cities from decades ago until presently, calls attention to the grey areas of that abstraction. During the colonial period in Africa, immigration management was strongly defined by the expansion of production through the extractive industries, commercial farming and trading. There was increased need for labourers and immigration laws were designed in ways that allowed the movement of labourers between the newly defined borders. For example, in Southern Africa, unskilled labourers migrated to South Africa to work in the mines. In Western Africa, African migration was to Nigeria to participate in trade and services provision, and to Ghana to work on cocoa farms, railway lines and trade (Shimeless, 2010; Stahl, 1982; Peil, 1974; Beals & Menezes, 1970; Harvey & Brand, 1974) African migration was quite high as shown by Ghana's 1960 census (three years after independence from colonialism) that showed 98% of the 12% of foreign nationals in Ghana, were Africans (Anarfi, et al., 2003). In addition, there was increased internal migration within countries as people moved to take advantage of new economic opportunities. Hence, the African migrant experience in Africa was shaped by their participation in economic production and the notion or criminalisation of informality was aptly mitigated by the availability of opportunities for economic participation. Hence, economic participation was a form of socio-political inclusion for the informal migrant.

The mid-20th century ushered in the post-colonial period in Africa, as several states gained their independence from the colonial government. The first decade after colonial rule saw several of the African states enjoying a macroeconomic boom that translated to expansive governance for the citizens and booming economic activities that incorporated African migrants without discomfort. However, the macroeconomic boom was soon followed by severe macroeconomic downturn that changed the experience of the African migrants. With economic hardship, governments and citizens in several African countries turned against the African migrants in their societies and demanded they return to their home country. For example, in 1969, Ghana's promulgation of the Aliens' Compliance Order demanded the expulsion of all immigrants without relevant permits, most of whom were African immigrants. In addition, in 1983, Nigeria's president Alhaji Shehu Shagari ordered that all immigrants without the right papers must leave Nigeria within two weeks. His presidential order affected over two million African migrants, Ghanaians constituted over 50%, leading to the popular 'Ghana must go' phrase (Aremu, 2013). In 1985, still suffering under worsening economic conditions, the Nigerian government expelled another 300,000 migrants from the country (Otoghile & Obakhedo, 2011).

Furthermore, the newly found national identity also created grounds for expulsion. For instance, tensions arising from the institutionalisation of the Ivorian national identity giving access to political and economic opportunities led to the expulsion of over 1000 Burkinabes in the 1990's (Wiafe-Amoako, 2015). Evidently, worsening economic conditions singled out the African migrant as 'the other' that was in competition for scarce economic opportunities. In September 1977, the Congolese government initiated what came to be known as *Le Repatriement* - mass detainment and expulsion of foreign Africans mainly from West Africa from the

country. The arrest and detention of the targeted African migrants started without warning, detained Africans initially had no understanding of the reason for their arrest, for several weeks the government did not offer any public explanation for the actions. The result was that about sixty-four hundred targeted foreign African migrants were repatriated, majority left with only the clothes on their back, their properties were confiscated by the Congolese State (Whitehouse, 2012). The social, economic and political complexities that led to such mass expulsion of foreign Africans are historical signposts for caution and reflection in the contemporary vision of a border free Africa.

In present day Africa, the targeted violence, hostility and harm directed at the foreign Africa, comes less from open and direct political orders, coordination, and implementation. The social, in the form of despondent citizens (organized as groups or individuals) and individual agents of the state acting extra-legally, act as the harbinger and vehicle of violence and dehumanization targeting the foreign Africa. In my doctoral study of African migrants in Johannesburg, South Africa, the migrants reported stories of targeted violence and dehumanization were at the hands of ordinary citizens and 'rogue' state officials in the office of South African police. The state has been accused of instigating insecurity for the migrants through politics of nationalist-populism in line with the Cas Mudde's (2004) definition. Several authors have discussed the state's complicity in the insecurities experienced by African migrants, for example in South Africa (Neocosmos, 2006; Neocosmos, 2008; Vigneswaran, 2010). From the historical experience until present day, the role of the state in fashioning the insecurities of African migrants raises concerns that are threatening to the goals of sustainability within a context of open borders in Africa. For instance, if governments are unstable, the commitment to regional or international regulations and standards regarding the rights of migrants cannot be guaranteed. Ultimately, leaving the security of the migrants at the hands of political whims/ goodwill of government and officials. In addition, the availability or not of citizens' substantive access to social and economic resources for wellbeing, can act as a catalyst for nationalistic xenophobia targeting the migrants either as usurping (through successful business) or draining resources through vulnerability. The point being that whatever the economic status of the African migrants, and whatever the level of economic development in the host country, the migrant as a stranger can be a ready target for violent discriminations and abuse.

If we acknowledge that there is continuous high level of international migration within Africa, and as have been reported, we recognize the precarity, abuse, violence and dishumanization directed at African migrants in African countries, it becomes relevant to ponder at the relevance of 'open borders' to the ordinary African immigrants. Whitehouse (2012, p. 163) in his study of African migrants in Congo, calls these migrants "Aventuriers" and described them as "young, male, and often single...in their twenties, with little education". Abebe Shimless (2010) from the analysis of household survey data from Burkina Faso, Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana, also reported that African migrants tend to be young, predominantly male and generally have some

education above primary level. He noted that the sex, age and education level of the migrants varies depending on the destination country. For example, African migrants to the OECD are categorized as older, well-educated and predominantly (over 70%) men, in comparison to migrants that move to other African countries. However, the mobility of females and underage children across national boundaries should not be ignored. For instance, the IOM 2014 report on migration in Southern Africa, reveals that in 2013, 44% female and 20% underage (under 19years) children made up the 4million regular migrants recorded in the region.

For these 'aventuriers' migrants, through irregular means, the borders is in reality open, in as much as they can move across the borders, howbeit, under conditions of extortions, abuse and detentions. More so, the reported experiences of extortions, abuse and detentions, are not limited to international migrations that officially require applications for entry visa or permits. Hence, even in situation (for instance moving across borders within the ECOWAS region that has sub-regional agreements for freedom of movement) where the migrants are not in contravention of any migration regulations, they still reported cases of extortion and other abuse, for example, through profiling (Vigneswaran, 2010). The point, is that, the vulnerability of African migrants at the hands of the state and its agents, cannot be seen to be only related to the 'irregularity' of migratory choice.

Furthermore, there is the question of the use of national resources to care for large number of migrants that may be unable to afford the cost of accessing care from the private sector. Whitehouse (2012, p.181) narrated the story of Abodoulaye Barry, a Guinean migrant that died in Congo:

...two days earlier armed robbers had shot a trader from Guinea, Abdoulaye Barry, in the thigh after forcing their way into his Mounjali home. According to a friend who accompanied him to the hospital, medical staff watched Barry bleed to death while waiting for his West African companions to provide surgical gloves, gauze, bandages, and other items, which, they said, the hospital had run out of.

Such stories of the avoidable deaths of African migrants in hospitals also abound in South Africa. While such stories have been used to call attention to the attitude (xenophobic) of citizens towards African migrants, they also raise the question of the cost of caring for the ordinary African migrant. A question of accessing national resources as a migrant resident in an African country, is as much a political question, with economic consequences, as a social question with legal (rights) connotations. That is, in the case mentioned above, it is logical to ponder if Barry would have received the necessary treatment as a Congolese? Or was it a case of a poorly resourced national hospital, with inadequate stock of medical materials needed for emergencies such as his? While arguments from a human rights perspective may consider Barry's citizenship as irrelevant to giving him access to life saving resources, a more pragmatic examination (taking into consideration the general socio-economic conditions of life and the macro-economic climate) will want to go further to enquire

who pays for or shoulder the financial responsibility of care for the ordinary African migrant. The pursuit of open borders on the track of pan-Africanism and capitalistic economic theorization, cannot, alone, fully examine or cater for the actual presence of ordinary African migrants in the host society. The visualization and hence politicization of the future of an Africa with open borders, must incorporate a social policy perspective as a foremost and integral part of that vision as a matter of urgent necessity. It becomes important to point out that attention to issues of social policy or care will need to transcend the framework of nation-state, that is if it is to deliver substantive care to the migrants wherever and whenever care is needed (Spel, 2017). That only reiterates the relevance of the question of 'cost of care' for African migrants at the host society in the visualization of open borders in Africa.

Nevertheless, beyond the politicization and econometrics of migrants' vulnerabilities, there is the social aspect that calls attention to the actions of ordinary citizens and their interactions with the migrants. The conditions of insecurity to life and properties for the African migrant within Africa cannot be left only at the policy level, but attention to micro level aggressions and abuse, can be brought to the top. The failure or weakness of implementation or enforcement of available policies and regulations that protect migrants' rights in countries with aggravated cases of reported migrant's abuse, logically cannot be improved by even more policies and regulations. At the micro level, the power of appropriate policies and regulations to make a difference, quickly becomes hollow within a hegemonic social context of stranger-hood, or 'stranger's code' (Whitehouse, 2012, p. 137). That highlights the available or not, of structures of social integration and rights education within host societies, but also quite importantly, the many anxieties of citizens.

Socio-economic issues

The vulnerability of informal migrants although connected to their relationship with the host government, also connotes a social or cultural aspect. This fact is self-evident, as migrants cannot avoid daily contact with members of society, even if authorities can be skillfully avoided. In that vein, the cultural aspect of vulnerability becomes relevant in understanding the context where informal migrants attempt to build their future in South Africa. Jorge Bustamante (2002, p. 339) identified the cultural aspect of vulnerability as 'the set of cultural elements (stereotypes, prejudices, racism, xenophobia, ignorance and institutional discrimination) with derogatory meanings which tend to justify the power differentials between nationals and non-nationals'. For instance, in South Africa, the derogatory term "*amakerre-kwerre*" (often shortened to *Kwerekwere*), is a popular label for unwanted African migrants (Gordon, 2010, p. 4), and in Congo the term *Wara* is used to refer to African migrants (Whitehouse, 2012). Qualitative data from my doctoral study shows that although the African migrants tactically endeavor to manage their economic vulnerability, the everyday activities related to

livelihood and socio-economic welfare were often associated with victimization, humiliation and oppression from their host. For instance, a migrant woman informed me during my fieldwork in Johannesburg, that she did not immunize both her children because of the verbal humiliation from the nurses at the hospital:

Even my children this thing – immunisation - I don't even go, since I came to this Hillbrow, because of the harshness. They will be hitting you, put your child in order. They will be so harsh, especially when you are a foreigner. (African migrant in Johannesburg, Female, 30 years)

Migration researchers emphasise that victimisation, humiliation and abuse of informal migrants are socially justified with the logic that the victim is a foreigner (Whitehouse, 2012). That reasoning is shown to be fueled and supported by prevailing national political and media discourses and propaganda, highlighting the complicity of the state in criminalizing informal migration, such as in South Africa (Vigneswaran, 2010; Landau, 2012) and globally (Aas & Bosworth, 2013; Khosravi, 2010; Macklin, 2007; de Genova, 2002; Torpey, 2002). Yet, vulnerability experienced by participants in my study and in other research works, highlights the limits of political actions or policies in creating a better experience for informal migrants. For example, even when there are policies that make provision for informal migrants' healthcare, such as access to healthcare services, the hospital staff acts as obstruction to access. Attention is then drawn to the individual members of society, to the breakdown of morality and ethics and to the juncture where social security meets with personal desires and fear of the future as impliedly exemplified by citizens.

The 'production of criminality' by the nation-state or political figures, which is often reported as the opium for citizens, that is, reproducing the dehumanisation of informal migrants as 'the norm' in society, does not satisfy the question of choice and why or how some people resist it and others fall for it. Without undermining the relevance of policies or institutional structures in creating and sustaining migrants' vulnerability, the cultural elements casts doubts on the sufficiency of policies in adequately responding to migrant vulnerability in Africa. That understanding is relevant in the context of a contemporary society that is interested in the search for economic and political integration through open borders for profit maximization and development. As Neocosmos (2008) notes about the discussion of xenophobia in South Africa, although the government is widely identified as actively (and less often passively) complicit in fomenting xenophobia, the analysis often laid the solution on the government. That is, to a large extent, understanding the socio-economic experiences of the informal migrants as a failure of governmental immigration policies. Failure is then explained as either having the wrong policies or inability to implement the right policies. By laying the source and solution of the problem on the same agent, there is the possibility to become blindsided to other rigorous query of the problems or challenges of informal African migrants in South Africa.

For instance, Bustamante's (ibid) report from a United Nations commissioned study of International Migrants and Human Rights violations called attention to the structural and cultural nature of vulnerability. His discussion highlights the power differentials between foreign immigrants and citizens, with immigrants at the lower level. Attention is thus called to the social relations between citizens and foreign immigrants and the role of power in fashioning the relations. One can then understand the notion of citizens as having a higher level of power over the foreign migrant, creating various degrees of impunity in the treatment of foreign migrants by citizens. Such effect of power in social relations have interested sociologists for decades. For example, Howard S. Becker (1968) included it in his theorization of deviant behaviour and the philosopher Bertrand Russell (1938) emphasized the central role that the conception of power play in everyday social interactions. More recently, Reis et al. (2000), expatiated the significance of power as an organizing force that assist individuals to achieve their desire in relationship dynamics and outcomes.

Whitehouse (ibid, p. 147) also draws attention to the social and economic dynamics that shapes migrant-citizens' relationship, with outcomes that negatively and at times lethally affects the migrants. Whitehouse notes that "the types of discrimination these migrants face are seldom embodied in official government policies and legal texts". Whitehouse study throws a relevant perspective to the discussion of African migrants' experience of hostility and vulnerability in the host society through what he calls 'the strangers code' (p.138) of conduct. The code warns the migrants not to get involved in host-country politics, not to flaunt their wealth and not to protest the violations of their rights. From his field observations in Congo, those are the unwritten rules that West African migrants have developed as crucial to their safe and continued presence in the host society.

If we take Whitehouse's (ibid) 'strangers code' and juxtapose it with the many allegations against migrants that is reportedly instigating the xenophobic violence against African migrants in South Africa, we come to see the highly precarious and uncertainty laden position of being an African migrant in Africa. If you do not show your wealth as an African migrant, you are considered poor and destitute, living off the generosity of the host government. If you flaunt your wealth, you are stealing the wealth of the country. Whitehouse (ibid, p.143) notes "under the stranger's code immigrants and their descendants give up their rights, believing they can never expect the same rights that they would enjoy back home". Understanding that the opportunity for redress is unattainable, the migrants come to accept that they should pay the 'strangers penalty'. One of my migrant interviewees explained his perception of the injustice and discriminations African migrants experience as informal migrants in South Africa:

Yes, because you are in a different country you must face the challenges because you leave your country to come here. But if you can't bear it, anymore then the best solution is to go back home. That is how most of us do it. Even me, I am just watching the metro (police). (For instance) you cannot pay your rent; it is a big problem here. You can't pay your rent in my country, if you can't pay your rent, the owner will come take the

key from you. If you don't want to leave, they will go to police station, after police station they will take court, then after that, they will take your key. But here, you never pay once, they close the door (lock it up). I don't believe this country. I don't believe this country. (Male, 28 years)

Another migrant recounted a story to emphasize his perception of the injustice that migrants suffer at the hands of citizens in South Africa:

I had this job from universal church; you know what we used to do? We use to carry a bucket here (indicating shoulders); they were cleaning rubbles. That is when they broke the walls they wanted to renovate. We were cleaning those rubbles; we were taking it down. They didn't want us to use lifts. They employed 50 South Africans; they couldn't do it in four months.

So they came and met us and say, because they believe we Nigerians are stronger. In that group we were seven – one Nigerian, two Cameroonians and then the rest were Congolese. We did it for 2 weeks, what 50 South Africans could not do. That is we used to carry those rubbles from 8th floor and rush down and go up again. Cleaned the whole place, the place was clean, the problem is that they promised us that after that they will give us a job, permanent or at least temporary permanent, till the work is complete. We finished, the last day we were finishing, that was the hardest work, we cleaned everything, everywhere is clean. When we finished, that same day we were replaced by South Africans. My brother, he looked at it and started crying there, they sent us away. We waited and waited and waited. (Male, 45 years).

The socio-economic aspect of African migrants' vulnerability in the host society centers on individuals as citizens and their interaction with African migrants as the foreign others. Quite importantly, it calls attention to prevailing perception of the migrants by citizens, but also, the perceptions of 'strangerhood' by the migrants. There are two sides to the coin. On the one side, there is the hegemonic power position favouring citizens. In that position, citizens understands their political rights as privileging their needs and the access to means of alleviating those needs as above that of the foreign other. The citizens' responsibility to observe state regulations that protects and provide for the migrant is disregarded as inconsequential in the jostle to 'keep national resources for nationals'. On the other side, the migrant stands with the self-awareness of an unwelcomed stranger, and the self-imposed restrictions based on experience but also fear, to accommodate the confident impunity of the citizens. In that understanding, emphasis is turned on the available structures or institutions for social cohesion and redress at the micro level. Effort at social cohesion can be expected to promote cooperation and respect for the rights of the migrants. Also, timely and appropriate redress when migrants are abused can be expected to discourage such abuse and encourage the confidence to raise objections and seek redress.

The responsibility of care

The relevance of discussing the responsibility of care for the African migrants is related to the goals of sustainability, the core of which calls for calculated considerations for future needs while tackling the needs of the present. In the context of this paper, the responsibility of care draws attention to the political will and institutional set up that can secure the lives, livelihood and properties of African migrants in their host countries. The political will of African head of states to promote a just and positive experience for the African migrant in Africa can be seen as strong through the collaborative efforts to strengthen coherence and cooperation under the AU migration and regional integration framework. The African head of states, under the overarching auspices of the AU, have adopted several legal and policy instruments that aim not only to regulate, but also to positively impact the experiences of the migrants. In 1991, the establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC) by the AU member states, heralded the joint articulation of policies and regulations to promote free movement of persons and rights of residence. The objectives and goals of the AEC was grounded on the establishment of the Regional Economic Communities, such as ECOWAS. In recognition of the increasing relevance of cooperation on a global field, and the important link of migration to development and integration, the African Union Commission took the needed steps to develop an overarching strategic framework for a more effective policy on migration. The approach to achieve that, is articulated in the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA), adopted in 2006, by the Executive council of the AU. Although, the African Union Commission also works with other migration documents such as the African Common Position on Migration and Development, Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development, and The Joint Africa-EU Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.

The MPFA covers a broad array of thematic policy issues pertinent to migration. Some of which are, Human resources and Brain drain, Labour migration, Migration and Development, Remittances, African Diaspora, Migration and Peace, Security and Stability, human rights of migrants, etc. (African Union Executive Council, 2006). The documents sought to promote and encourage an approach to migration management that is aligned with international standard amongst its members. For instance, although the document did not signal special attention to social cohesion, it nevertheless encourages its members to uphold the humanitarian principles of migration by harmonizing national legislation with international convention that protects the rights of migrants (Achieme & Landau, 2015). Policy instruments as the MPFA are promoted as exemplary of the political will and institutional commitment to facilitate mutually (migrants-host society) beneficial and satisfying migration experience.

Nevertheless, there are several points that highlights the face value of available policies to the real experience of the migrants. The dehumanizing daily experience of the African migrant in the host society - South Africa as an example - are constant reminder that the African migrant live in conditions of heightened insecurity and

violence irrespective of available policy guidelines (Nyamnjoh, 2006; Whitehouse, 2012; Spel, 2017, Forthcoming). In addition, increasing nationality consciousness amongst politicians and citizens raises conflicting interests and contradictory regulations in popular immigration destinations. Furthermore, the on-going efforts to fortify Europe and other developed zones of the world against irregular immigration from specific global regions has seen the externalization of immigration control. In that vein, and in the case of Africa specifically, foreign governments are making migration deals with selected countries to stem the flow of African migrants. The effects of those deals can be seen as working against the goals of free movement stipulated in sub-regional agreements on mobility and against the welfare of the African migrant through deportations and violence to discourage irregular migration (United Nations Support Mission in Libya, 2016; Achiume & Landau, 2015). The African migrant can thus be seen as existing in a vulnerable and volatile context, encompassed by three predatory agents – Citizens, States and Foreign governments. Thus, while the responsibility of care emphasizes the need for concrete steps to address the vulnerability and lethal hostility consistently experienced by African migrants, it also locates such responsibilities on an agent outside the 'predatory three'. The African migrant needs substantive experience of care that translates to security, and access to quality basic services such as health care. That conception of care also implies financial cost that arches over state provisions. The thoughts of the future of open borders in Africa, readily brings those points to mind.

In the above vein, there is the suggestion that the African Union as a political agent stands in the position to assume responsibilities that provide care beyond rhetoric for the migrants. That understanding is based on certain fundamental advantages that the AU possess as a regional body and a political association. One of that fundamental advantage draws from the regional wide common identification of individuals (citizens of different states) as Africans. Drawing from the benefits of belongingness to goals of cooperation and cohesion, the AU retains a strong position to 'draw Africans together' through dedicated and targeted innovative grassroots programs, events and projects. In principle, distinct sense of belonging as Africans can be built upon with political will and dedicated resources to foster a more positive and constructive interaction across borders. Although, the identification of 'I am an African' can be understood as banal, yet, researchers (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Sicakkan & Lithman, 2005; Fenster & Vizek, 2006) have highlighted important analytical dimensions of sense of belonging. For instance, belongingness has been analysed as feelings of 'being at home', construction of claims', 'private sentiment of place attachment', and as 'official public oriented structure of membership' (Antonsich, 2010, p. 645).

In addition, the AU as an overarching political association, sits in the position to call for a 'council of states' to discuss, negotiate, and concretize the practicalities of extending care across border to all Africans. While the AU is not a political organization and hence could fall flat in the face of implementation and enforcement of

agreement, yet, it is an important platform for the negotiation of common set of principles of cooperation or interaction in the efforts to achieve protection for African migrants. In the same thread, as an association of states, the AU has a stronger position to engage foreign governments and their varied forms of interventions in the mobility of Africans within Africa. It is not farfetched to expect that the regional goals of protection of African migrants and free mobility within regions will be better advocated through a unified platform when challenged by foreign interest. Especially, when international migration control interests is couched on huge financial incentives and support for partnering governments (Andersson, 2016) that fragmented a regional-owned approach to mobility within Africa. For instance, the 2008 five billion 'friendship pact' between Italy and Libya, the 40million euro Khartoum Process involving eleven African countries (Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Tunisia, Uganda and Libya).

At this point, the important question then is how much should the regional authority be expected to influence the mundane experience of the African migrant in the host country? The answer will be as much as keeps the African migrant socially and economically safe and secured in a mutually profiting relationship with host governments. If the regional authority cannot make provisions beyond verbal or 'paperwork' for the protection and care of the African migrant at host country, then it is illogical and unfruitful to promote free mobility as in open border within the region. The commitment to achieve open borders in Africa as revealed in ongoing political processes, without a practical and concrete intervention in ameliorating and eradicating the experiences of vulnerability and violence against the African migrant in popular destination countries is similar to putting the cart before the horse. A situation that can only spell success on paper, but in reality, will create new challenges and escalate old problems for the migrants and the host societies.

However, there are challenges to the conception of the AU reaching down to local level to concretely influence the life of the individual African migrant. As a political association, the AU is weak on the substantive power to enforce legislations or regulations reached at the regional level. That reiterates the case of many 'good' policies but weak or non-existent implementation. Nevertheless, that is not a reason to downplay the inherent opportunities for the AU to achieve stronger impact on the real experience of the African migrant. Developing the political backbone, backed by concrete willingness to accept or share the political burden of care, can overarch the limitations of its political construction. There is something to be learned in the recent role of ECOWAS, a sub-regional economic union, in aiding the transfer of political power to the elected president of Gambia. Furthermore, the increasing linkage of Africa migration to the discourse of 'illegal' migration to for example, Europe, and the many deaths of Africans within same discourse, has heightened the need for a stronger presence of the union. That need can be conceptualized as a strong motivation for coordinated and unified political action from the region (represented in the AU) to promote and guarantee socio-economic and physical security in Africa for the African migrant.

One political instrument for providing socioeconomic security, is Social Policy. From its foundational inception, human wellbeing has been the central concern of Social Policy both from the socio-cultural perspective of interdependency and the Public Policy perspective of political systems and institutions (Esping-Andersen, 1996; Titmus, 1970, 1958). Over the years, Hartley Dean (2012) noted that Social Policy still “remains a highly rigorous subject because it retains a highly specific commitment to the cause of human wellbeing”. Its commitment to human wellbeing has seen the extension of the provision of care through Public Policy to women, children and foreigners and minorities over the years (Sevenhuijssen, 2000; George & Page, 1995; Jencks, 1992; Williams, 1989). Yet emerging forms of inequality and the scarcity of economic resources continue to raise new terrains to engage the relationship between Social Policy and human wellbeing. Contemporary Informal migration is one such terrain. In it, the conception of informality as illegality severs the responsibility of care from the nation-state, which is the traditional foundation of Social Policy. The modern response to that gap of care can be seen in the international protection for refugees. Social Policy as institutional commitment to human wellbeing becomes relevant to imagining care for African migrants if it is innovatively developed on a platform that arches over the nation-state. This may be theoretically and politically challenging as the nation-state is the birth place of Social Policy. However, large scale immigration of the socioeconomically vulnerable and the uneven development of countries in Africa, suggests that is an innovative option for theoretical and political exploration. In that vein, Social Policy as a political instrument of care originating from the AU and targeting African migrants can be hypothesized. That hypothesis is necessary to meet the context specific needs of a future of open borders in Africa. Although visa free travel is desirable based on the benefits of economic integration, and pan-Africanist ideologies, the associated socio-economic challenges for the individual migrants and the host countries cannot be ignored. Thus, the future of open borders in Africa provides a dynamic context for stronger academic research on migration and Social Policy in Africa.

Conclusion

Within the confine of this paper, the responsibility of care for the African migrant is suggested to take the form of a social security framework from the regional authority targeting African migrants at host countries. Conceptualizing substantive social security for vulnerable African migrants does demand an institutional framework that overarch the nation-state divide of qualified citizens and others. On this basis, the African Union as a supranational association is seen as the ideal political site for an innovative social policy that can target the poor informal African migrants in Africa. The AU is suggested as the political site for the development of targeted care for African migrants based on its structural advantages over the nation-state in the context of the needs of the migrants. The paper presented that argument based on the increasing

vulnerabilities and physical danger experienced by African migrants in Africa. In addition, the paper cited the growth of Africa's population to highlight a future of increased mobility of working age adults within Africa. Furthermore, the paper noted the political complicity of the nation-state in fashioning the vulnerabilities of African migrants, and also called attention to the social context that ferment vulnerability and violence against the migrants. Attention was also called to the productivity of the migrants, through their resilience in microenterprise, but also showed that the care for migrants carry responsibilities that demands the utilization of finance and other economic resources. Finally, the arguments in the paper is concretized as a hypothesis that can be developed for theoretical modelling or qualitative research.

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