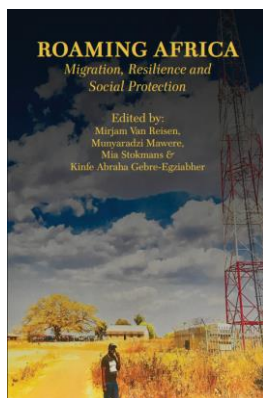


# Roaming Africa: A Social Analysis of Migration and Resilience

*Mirjam Van Reisen, Mia Stokmans, Munyaradzi Mawere &  
Kinfe Abraha Gebre-Egziabher*

## Chapter in: Roaming Africa: Migration, Resilience and Social Protection

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## Table of Contents

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Preface by Zaminah Malole .....	ii
Acknowledgement .....	vii
A Word on the Review Process .....	viii
Acronyms .....	ix
<b>Part I. Theoretical Perspectives .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Chapter 1: Roaming Africa: A Social Analysis of Migration and Resilience.....	3
<i>By Mirjam Van Reizen, Mia Stokmans, Munyaradzi Mawere &amp; Kinfe Abraha Gebre-Egziabber</i>	
Chapter 2: All or Nothing: The Costs of Migration from the Horn of Africa – Evidence from Ethiopia .....	37
<i>By Kinfe Abraha Gebre-Egziabber</i>	
Chapter 3: Why do Foreign Solutions not Work in Africa? Recognising Alternate Epistemologies.....	55
<i>By Gertjan Van Stam</i>	
<b>Part II. Living Borders .....</b>	<b>83</b>
Chapter 4: Continuation of Care across Borders: Providing Health Care for People on the Move in East Africa .....	85
<i>By Dorothy Muroki, Boniface Kitungulu &amp; Leanne Kamau</i>	
Chapter 5: Mobility as a Social Process: Conflict Management in the Border Areas of Afar Region .....	109
<i>By Abdelab Alifnur &amp; Mirjam Van Reizen</i>	
<b>Part III. New Perspectives in Migration .....</b>	<b>141</b>
Chapter 6: Out of the Frying Pan into the Fire: Are Climate Disasters Fuelling Human Trafficking in Kenya? .....	143
<i>By Radoslaw Malinowski &amp; Mario Schulze</i>	
Chapter 7: Standing in Two Worlds: Mobility and the Connectivity of Diaspora Communities .....	171
<i>By Antony Otieno Ong'ayo</i>	

Chapter 8: 'Europe is not Worth Dying For': The Dilemma facing Somalis in Europe.....	203
<i>By Melissa Phillips &amp; Mingo Heiduk</i>	
Chapter 9: Countering Radicalisation in Communities: The Case of Pumwani, Nairobi.....	225
<i>By Reginald Nalugala</i>	
<b>Part IV. Livelihoods .....</b>	<b>253</b>
Chapter 10: Moving on to Make a Living: The Secondary Migration of Eritrean Refugees in Tigray, Ethiopia.....	255
<i>By Bereket Godifay Kabsay</i>	
Chapter 11: Inhospitable Realities: Refugees' Livelihoods in Hitsats, Ethiopia.....	283
<i>By Kristina Melicherová</i>	
Chapter 12: Young and On their Own: The Protection of Eritrean Refugee Children in Tigray, Ethiopia .....	315
<i>By Tekie Gebreyesus &amp; Rick Schoenmaeckers</i>	
<b>Part V. The Challenges of Return Migration.....</b>	<b>345</b>
Chapter 13: Home, but not Home: Reintegration of Ethiopian Women Returning from the Arabian Gulf.....	347
<i>By Beza L. Nisrane</i>	
Chapter 14: Shattered Dreams: Life after Deportation for Ethiopian Returnees from Saudi Arabia .....	377
<i>By Shishay Tadesse Abay</i>	
Chapter 15: Life after the Lord's Resistance Army: Support for Formerly Abducted Girls in Northern Uganda .....	407
<i>By Primrose Nakazibwe &amp; Mirjam Van Reisen</i>	

<b>Part VI. Social Protection .....</b>	<b>433</b>
Chapter 16: Is Trauma Counselling the Missing Link? Enhancing Socio-Economic Resilience among Post-war IDPs in Northern Uganda .....	435
<i>By Mirjam Van Reisen, Mia Stokmans, Primrose Nakazibwe, Zaminah Malole &amp; Bertha Vallejo</i>	
Chapter 17: Roaming Lifestyles: Designing Social Protection for the Pastoralist Afar in Ethiopia.....	459
<i>By Zeremariam Fre &amp; Naomi Dixon</i>	
Chapter 18: Where is your Brother? Religious Leaders in Eritrea Offer a Counter Narrative to Totalitarianism.....	483
<i>By Makeda Saba</i>	
<b>Part VII. Defining Responsibilities at the National Level.....</b>	<b>519</b>
Chapter 19: Peace, but no Progress: Eritrea, an Unconstitutional State.....	521
<i>By Bereket Selassie &amp; Mirjam Van Reisen</i>	
Chapter 20: Moving Through the Policy Window: Women in Constitution Making in Kenya.....	557
<i>By Stella Maranga</i>	
Chapter 21: Where are the Youth? The Missing Agenda in Somalia's Constitution.....	577
<i>By Istar Ahmed</i>	
About the Authors .....	601

## Roaming Africa: A Social Analysis of Migration and Resilience

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### Introduction

‘Africa Roaming’ is an advertisement for a mobile phone provider; the picture shows an African herdsman in traditional clothing with a stick standing in front of his herd texting on a mobile phone. The advertisement implies that the mobile phone allows him to stay connected while he moves around. It is a pivotal image showing the meeting of modern technology with traditional ways of life. The image alludes to the pervasiveness of digital technology – which is embraced even by traditional pastoralists, who have often proudly rejected modernisation and technology to preserve their identity and way of life. And, pervasive it is: “Safaricom is

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*Current approaches to migration are mainly based on the ‘push-pull’ theory of migration, which fails to explain the complexity and multifaceted situations of people on the move. This theory is premised primarily on economic considerations and oversimplifies how decisions are made, leading to policies that are misguided at best and harmful at worst. Alternatives are needed to understand why and how people move, and whether this contributes to resilience or undermines it. Social theory provides a useful lens, acknowledging that within the specificity of each situation a better understanding of motivations, dynamics and drivers can be obtained. This book aims to bring African voices to the fore, working with researchers close to ground realities in Africa, to explain why people in Africa are on the move and provide alternative approaches to setting agendas on this issue.*

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like that loyal girlfriend or boyfriend who texts all the time” (Mwangi, 2017).

The most influential innovation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is arguably the global digital architecture. Much of this technology, most of it originating from Europe and the US, has been embraced in Africa, leapfrogging the continent into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and requiring it to adapt this architecture to its own structures, systems and contexts (Van Reisen & Mawere, 2017).

Information communication technology (ICT) is facilitating mobile communication. It goes hand-in-hand with mobility – movement of all sorts. Mobility is the oldest of human ways of living. It is associated with the traditional livelihoods of pastoralist communities, such as the Afar. Mobility has offered the Afar their livelihood and resilience across three countries – Djibouti, Ethiopia and Eritrea – although their lifestyle is undermined by the current borders resulting from the French and Italian colonial presence in the Horn of Africa (Chapter 5, *Mobility as a Social Process: Conflict Management in the Border Areas of Afar Region*, by Abdelah Alifnur & Mirjam Van Reisen). The artificially introduced African borders, which cut through communities that belong together, pose specific challenges (Chapter 4, *Continuation of Care across Borders: Providing Health Care for People on the Move in East Africa*, by Dorothy Muroki, Boniface Kitungulu & Leanne Kamau), however, digital solutions have the potential to bring such split systems together.

Mobility, in the form of migrating communities, is also associated with the colonial policy of integrating Africans originating from one place as soldiers to fight in other places, or introducing them as migrant labourers or slave labourers in various colonial programmes. This is the origin of the Nairobi slum, Kibera, meaning ‘forest’, where Nubi people remained after having served the British colonial government (De Smedt, 2011). Another example is the Nairobi slum area of Eastleigh, which was founded as a township for Somalis who had moved to the Ngara plains; Eastleigh was established as a separate area in response to the segregation policy of the British colonial government and the inhabitants, till today suffer discrimination,

hardship and marginalisation (Chapter 9, *Countering Radicalisation in Communities: The Case of Pumwani, Nairobi*, by Reginald Nalugala). Mobility is often associated with conflict and returnees from conflict, such as the children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda, who returned as adults suffering from serious trauma (Chapter 15, *Life after the Lord's Resistance Army: Support for Formerly Abducted Girls in Northern Uganda*, by Primrose Nakazibwe & Mirjam Van Reisen). Mobility may include returning to the original home, but this is sometimes unrealistic and can be a source of new problems (Chapter 13, *Home, but not Home: Reintegration of Ethiopian Women Returning from the Arabian Gulf*, by Beza L. Nisrane). Due to the many different realities of people on the move, it follows that there is a need for diversified and localised approaches to researching mobility on the African continent.

Recent terminology, such as 'irregular migration' or 'mixed migration' have created container concepts for people on the move.<sup>1</sup> This creates a problem, as the specific circumstances of people with different experiences are not described by such container concepts. The danger is that the use of such concepts obscures the realities that inform or prompt people to move. This terminology also generalises the various and widely different realities and experiences of migration within overarching umbrella concepts that conceal specificity and uniqueness. The danger is that necessary distinctions can no longer be made, leading to overgeneralisations and a lack of understanding of mobility in specific situations. In this way, the cultural and contextual understanding of mobility on the continent is undermined (Mawere, Van Reisen & Van Stam, 2019). Rather than providing insight into the various modes of mobility across the continent, the use of container concepts frames migration as a negative 'problem', appearing as such on policy agendas (Smits & Karagianni, 2019). The framing of 'migration' as a problem impacts on people on the ground, creating new realities, which can undermine their resilience (Crowther

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of 'irregular migration' refers to migration that does not fall into regulated streams and 'mixed migration' refers to large flows of migration in which movements are made across similar routes for different purposes (e.g., to escape conflict or find work).

& Plaut, 2019). Increased mobility, often facilitated in one form or another by ICTs, coined as ‘migration’, is increasingly being seen as a potential security threat (Mawere, 2019).

In this book *Roaming Africa: Migration, Resilience and Social Protection*, which is the second in a four-part series called *Connected and Mobile: Migration and Human Trafficking in Africa*, the use of container terms is avoided for the reasons given above, and we have done our best to use clear and accessible language that allows precise descriptions and understanding. In order to promote a clear framework for discussing migration and human trafficking, in this book, we adhere to a strictly legal interpretation of the terms, as defined by international frameworks referring to migrants and refugees (United Nations General Assembly, 2016), or refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (African Union, 2019). Under international law, a refugee is defined as a person who:

*...owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.* (Article 1, 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto)

In addition, Article 1 of the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969) recognises this definition and expands it to include persons who flee their country “owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order” (Organization of African Unity, 1969) to cover the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa at the time of decolonisation. The United Nations provides a consensus on the definition of an international migrant as “someone who changes his or her country of residence, with a distinction made between short-term or temporary migration and permanent migration” (United Nations Secretary-General, 2016, p. 4).

This chapter aims to give an introduction to the book and an overview and justification of the theoretical lenses and



methodological approaches used in the research reported. In the next section, the purpose of the book is set out. In the subsequent section, the core approach used by the authors of the chapters in this series to study migration from a social science perspective is explained. The section that follows describes the different conceptual and theoretical frameworks used in the book – the theory of planned behaviour, cultural entropy, agenda-setting, resilience and social protection. A brief description of the mixed-method approach applied in the research for the chapters is then given. The last section contains an overview of the structure and chapters presented in this book.

### **The problem with migration studies**

So, why is this book – and this series – necessary? The field of migration studies enjoys considerable interest at present, but what contribution do the authors expect this book to make to the field? Firstly, the origin of this book is frustration with the (macro)economic approach to migration, such as the ‘push-pull’ theory of migration, which is used as the dominant frame through which to view any movement from Africa to other places. The (macro)economic approach is almost uncontested and assumed by many to perfectly represent reality. The use of this theory seems to be motivated by (unconscious) political paradigms, instead of solid scientific paradigms. This series intends to explore this theory and propose alternatives that are better suited to explain the movement of people from Africa to other places.

The experience of the authors who contributed to this book is that the situations of people on the move are complex and multifaceted. They have observed many policies on migration misfiring and seen valuable financial, political and executive resources being spent with little hope of resolving the issues at hand. The research on which these chapters is based emerges from close collaboration between the Great Zimbabwe University (Zimbabwe), Mbarara University (Uganda), Tangaza University (Kenya), and Mekelle University (Ethiopia). Research was also conducted in other countries, including Sudan and Niger. The expectation is that more in-depth

understanding will be derived if research problems are defined from a social science perspective (social psychology, sociology, and economics) and if research is conducted in greater proximity to the actual situations being studied and with the involvement of researchers who are close to the realities being investigated.

Secondly, emanating particularly from Europe, the term ‘migration’ has been identified not just as a phenomenon, but as a (potential) societal danger that needs to be controlled. In the last decade, a range of new policy measures have been put in place, mostly by the European Union (EU), to mitigate this phenomenon (Smits & Karagianni, 2019; Crowther & Plaut, 2019). These measures are often the result of, what Munyaradzi Mawere calls, ‘copy-paste’ policies from Europe to Africa (Mawere, 2019). These measures respond to problems identified from a European perspective with measures that fit with European ideas of what the world looks like. In this world view, migration is defined as a security threat that should be curbed at all cost. Proposed solutions suffer from Eurocentricity by emphasizing the Westphalian model of the state as the main mechanism for addressing the problem. However, the African reality on African soil unfolds quite differently. In fact, in Africa, mobility is crucial for sustainable livelihoods. The ways of addressing mobility across the continent are more complex and multi-layered, involving a mix of regional, devolved, and traditional, as well as centrally-led leadership (Mawere, 2019). Hence, the interaction between European policy production and changing realities in Africa is a relevant topic of investigation.

Eurocentric policies introduced on the African continent are largely derived from the functionalist theories of ‘push and pull’, or variations of thereof. The push-pull theory sets the understanding of migration in a framework of push factors that encourage people to move away from one place and pull factors that attract them to another place (Castles, De Haas & Miller, 2011). These factors are derived from the functionality of certain benefits and the theory follows an economic model that assumes that people are attracted from a place with lesser benefits to a place with more benefits. In all

of the various ways in which people migrate, digital connectivity is a crucial enabler and ‘navigating’ tool. A naïve observer may expect that the combination of digital connectivity and physical mobility (from places of lesser benefits to places of larger benefits) will bring social and economic opportunities and that it is naturally beneficial to society. In this book, we show that this assumption needs critical scholarly consideration. Judgements about the benefits and returns of migration are contextual and subjective, and cannot be generalised across situations.

Thirdly, a critical review of the push-pull theory leads to its positivist roots, which explain that the theory relies heavily on the *outside* judgement of costs and benefits to clarify the rationales for people’s movements. This frame, constructed from an outsider’s perspective, needs to be confronted by analysis based on an insider’s perspective that sets out what motivations people have to explain their own mobility (Chapter 3, *Why do Foreign Solutions not Work in Africa? Recognising Alternate Epistemologies*, by Gertjan Van Stam). There is a sense that African issues are too often approached from an outsiders’ frame of reference, based on assumptions that may not apply in an African context, or are at least in need of questioning. In a message circulating on social media, an African middle-aged man with a long beard and piercing eyes expresses his frustration that everything that is consumed in Africa comes from a foreign place – including perspectives on what drives people and why. This, in his opinion, is also the case in relation to mobility. He expresses bitter frustration with the inequality and injustice experienced and how mobility favours the rich and punishes the poor: “We have passports that don’t give us access to other countries. They get access to our countries, but we don’t get access to their countries” (PN, personal communication to Mirjam Van Reisen, by video on social media, 10 July 2019). “Is this freedom?”, he asks. He points out that Africa works on the basis of *ubuntu*, “I am because you are” and that thinking on Africa needs to be grounded in African philosophy. Applying an ethnographic social science-based approach, Kidane & Stokmans (2019) question the suitability of the push-pull theory to adequately define mobility, and demonstrate that social theories provide a more

suitable, locally-relevant, explanatory framework that is deduced from the perceptions of the participants. Hence, they argue that there is a need for alternative theoretical approaches to explain migratory patterns in the digital world from the experience and interpretation of people on the move.

This book illustrates that mobility patterns are part of varied realities in a large continent leading to different outcomes in a specific context. In order to gain a thorough understanding of movements, it is important to explore different migratory groups (refugees, migrants, returnees and even tourists), as well as different situations on the ground. This allows investigators to compare and understand the situational factors that contribute to the movement of certain groups. The book, therefore, presents a wide spectrum of experiences with migration, including the human trafficking of migrants and refugees, investigated within their concrete situations. This inside approach focusing on the experiences and perceptions of the people involved is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of different contexts and to avoid overgeneralisation in this sensitive field.

The purpose of most research is to diligently and faithfully describe situations and establish reasoned explanations. It is important that research participants recognise themselves in the findings. This points to the need for ecological validity. Studies need to include theoretical frameworks tested within African reality, by African researchers, and with African explanatory frameworks, in order to obtain understanding derived from as close to the natural setting as possible. The approach of the research presented in this book and subsequent volumes is, therefore, purposefully empirical, set in a theoretical questioning of findings and using an explicit ethnographic mixed method approach. Many of the researchers involved come from Africa, work in African universities and were involved in collaborations with European researchers to maximise the relevance of the research approach to the setting at hand. We believe that such a collaborative methodology gives alternative and new insights into the experience of mobility on the African continent and that such an

understanding may provide alternative approaches to set agendas on this issue.

The book is part of a series called *Connected and Mobile: Migration and Human Trafficking in Africa*, which aims to make an ethnographic contribution to migration research. The first book, *Human Trafficking and Trauma in the Digital Era: The Ongoing Tragedy of the Trade in Refugees from Eritrea* (Van Reisen & Mawere, 2017), took an ethnographic approach following the trajectory of one highly mobile group across several countries. This book, *Roaming Africa: Migration, Resilience and Social Protection* locates mobility in various environments, in order to give a nuanced and detailed overview of the diversity of migration in Africa, emphasising the differences between particular places within countries, in border areas and across countries. This book presents a wide range of case studies, which provide a broad exploration of the different phenomena related to mobility and migration and their manifestations within the extended availability of digital technology. It looks at mobility as part of strategies for building resilience by strengthening livelihoods in a variety of African places.

The third book, *Mobile Africa: Human Trafficking and the Digital Divide*, looks at the ‘new’ phenomenon of mobility in trajectories across multiple countries, with a focus on the transaction process of migration, with mobility as a scarce resource that needs to be paid for through agents, facilitators and criminal organisations. This book places particular emphasis on the role of gatekeepers in online and offline information streams, who influence the mobility of people on these trajectories.

The fourth book, *Digital Human Trafficking in Africa*, zooms in on one region, North Africa, and investigates how the digital architecture produces places that can be referred to as ‘black holes’, which are unconnected and in which the ‘gated’ are entirely dependent on ‘gatekeepers’ for information. This book investigates how extremely unequal access to information in the digital environment produces extreme situations of displacement, dehumanisation and trafficking in persons.

## **A social analysis of migration**

This book studies mobility in Africa in the digital era as a social process that unfolds in specific situations from the interaction between different people. It firmly illustrates that a decision to migrate is not an idiosyncratic decision in which a person rationally evaluates the assumed push and pull factors. In the book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Kahneman (2012) points out that decision making is never a rational process. Moreover, decisions are taken in specific situations, in which people have a cultural and historical legacy, have specific experiences, and live in a specific community, all of which influence their emotions, their attitudes, the social norms they adhere to, and what they think they can or should do. Hence, the social context affects the decision to migrate.

There are a lot of opinions about migration. This book chooses to investigate migration on a strictly empirical basis, allowing the data to speak for itself so that it can contribute to a fresh understanding of the mobility of people. In each of the situations researched and presented, the authors present empirical material that speaks to the particular situation. For the analysis of the data, the authors use conceptual frameworks of abstract social theories to provide a lens through which the information can be structured, analysed and interpreted. Nonetheless, we found the usefulness of theoretical concepts to differ significantly between contexts, due to people's cultural and historical legacy; their values, beliefs, and experiences; as well as their perceptions of opportunities and threats in the environment. Consequently, these theories only provide a starting point from which to approach the research problem, but are not regarded as a straitjacket into which the data collection or analyses are forced. This perspective can be implemented by using a convergent design of mixed method studies in which a qualitative emic (insider) perspective is combined with a quantitative epic (outsider) perspective (Creswell & Clark, 2018). In such a design, the data provided by the participants are as important as the theoretical concepts, and the role of the researcher is to let both the data and theory speak to come to a synthesis of both.

## **Conceptual frameworks**

In this book, different conceptual frameworks from the social sciences are used as a preliminary lens through which to approach the research problem(s) being investigated. Three major theoretical approaches are used. First of all, the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) is employed to try and understand what motivates individuals to migrate. The concept of cultural entropy (Stokmans, Van Reisen & Landa, 2018), which refers to the difference in the value system of an individual and his/her perception of the value system of the social network or community the individual is active in, is also used to explain how values and perceptions influence migration. This is a useful concept for examining the differences in the value systems used by the different stakeholders who are involved in the formulating and designing of migration policies at both national and international levels. The third framework is the multiple streams model of Kingdon (1984), which zooms in on the framing of problems in agenda setting and the role of different actors in that process. Finally, we consider the concept of resilience as a measure of the degree to which people perceive that they can participate in society and contribute to common goals. These theoretical frameworks are discussed in the ensuing section.

### ***Theory of planned behaviour***

Icek Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour is a widely-accepted and frequently-used socio-psychological model for studying the antecedents of behaviour (see Manstead & Parker, 1995; Armitage & Conner, 2001). The theory holds that the beliefs of people about their situation and in relation to other social groups are central to understanding the decisions they make in their life situations. These beliefs also shape the movement (or intended movement) of people or groups of people, such as refugees, migrants and returnees. The theory identifies three antecedents of behaviour: 1) the personal attitude of the migrating person, which entails his/her beliefs about the instrumental and hedonic benefits or discomforts of migration; 2) the social or subjective norms, which refers to the social pressure by relevant others in the social network of a migrant to migrate, in other

words, the social approval or disapproval of migration; and 3) the perceived behavioural control, which refers to the perceived capacity of someone to migrate and focuses on knowledge, resources, opportunities and threats of migration, as viewed by the migrant. The perceived behavioural control resembles the self-efficacy construct of Bandura (1977, 1982), which refers to the belief of an individual that he/she can implement the decision at hand successfully. The theory of planned behaviour, thus, assumes that background variables, such as socio-economic background and educational level, have an indirect effect on migration (intention) via attitude, social norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Unfortunately, the theory of planned behaviour has not been specifically used to study migration in the African context, although it could shed light on the decision of refugees, migrants, returnees and tourists to move from one place to another.

Within the context of migration in Africa, attitude (the beliefs of the individual) and social norms (social approval or disapproval of migration) are affected by historical and cultural beliefs relevant to those particular migration situations. People – either as individuals or a community – have a culturally-defined perception of what constitutes rights. The concept of a human rights culture (Rorty, 1993) implies that rights can only be demanded, advocated for, accessed or realised if the social situation recognises those rights as rights. Within a specific community, the beliefs about human rights may or may not be coherent. If they do coincide, the attitude and the social norms give the same impulse towards the decision to migrate. For instance, there is widespread consensus that victims of war should be able to seek protection as refugees. In instances where the perceptions of rights do not correspond, a person faces an internal struggle to decide what to do: follow what you regard as your right or comply with the opinion of the relevant others, who may have the power to enforce their perspective. For example, in the case of Eritrea, the authorities argue that the obligation of citizens is to serve the country, whereas a large number of citizens have decided to escape what they consider to be inhumane treatment and crimes against humanity (Chapter 18, *Where is your Brother? Religious Leaders in*



*Eritrea Offer a Counter Narrative to Totalitarianism*, by Makeda Saba). The concept of a human rights culture can help us to consider such situations. The concept is not only relevant to analyse situations within a community, but also to reflect on particular situations where a migrant or refugee is directly or indirectly confronted with a different human rights culture that involves them. Understood in this way, the concept is central in this book, as it helps us to investigate social norms as they manifest in the movement of people.

The third factor in Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour is the construct of perceived behavioural control. This concerns people's personal judgment, regardless of their objective competence, to accomplish the behaviour. It is not an objective characteristic. If people hear success stories about the migration of others, these stories can affect their attitude to migration, as they are informed about the benefits and losses of migration. But it also affects their perceived behavioural control; it evokes the idea that if other people can do it, I can also do it (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). The believed success of migration probably has a strong influence on perceived behavioural control or self-efficacy, as it is difficult for people to exactly imagine what resources and knowledge are needed in such a complex journey and what suffering may be part of it. In such instances, people often rely on stories about the success of others to get an idea of their chances of success (De Vries, 1992). In this way, an assessment of the attainability of migration can be made without consideration of the lack of own resources and knowledge to accomplish the journey.

Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour assumes that all three antecedents have a positive effect on the intention to migrate and, consequently, on the motivation to start and accomplish a migration trajectory. In most applications of the theory of planned behaviour, behavioural intention plays an important role as an intermediate construct (Armitage & Conner, 2001). In the case of migration, we expect this also to be the case, as refugees and migrants are often not aware of the barriers and dangers they may encounter to start and accomplish a migration trajectory. In other words, refugees and

migrants do not have a realistic perception of their behavioural control. People may move because they feel it is a good idea (based on their attitude and/or social norms) or to escape a miserable situation, without rationally considering the instrumental benefits of migration. It may be just a flight – a move forward to get out of a miserable situation – without consideration of what is next.

Lack of awareness of the barriers and (possible) dangers that may be encountered indicates that people do not always base their decision to migrate on exact and conscious arguments or beliefs. The decision to migrate can also be triggered by negative feelings associated with the person's current situation. These feelings can be regarded as information (Schwarz, 2011) or cues that directly, as well as indirectly, affect the decision-making process (Fazio & Towles-Schwen, 1999; Fazio, 2007; Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006). These feelings can be so strong that they blind refugees and migrants from considering their options calmly and coming to a rational decision. Moreover, research (see for example, Kahneman, 2012; Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2011) indicates that feelings triggered by a situation, or as a part of the mood of a person (in the case of trauma), have a strong impact on their first immediate reaction, which can lead them to take a particular approach to a life situation. If positive feelings dominate, one is in a 'winning mood' and there can be avoidance of an ill-advised situation; if negative feelings dominate, the person may be focused on leaving this negative situation without fully considering the facts and possible consequences. The feelings may further impact on the person's beliefs, which may be triggered to back up or counteract this primary affective response. Kahneman (2012) illustrates that an affective reaction takes very little effort and that the affective response always has an impact on an immediate decision. Only if a person feels the necessity to calmly reflect on the decision, for instance, because the considered decision is not in line with social norms, or because one has to account for the decision, than the person activates opinions and beliefs (attitudes, social norms and control beliefs) to counteract or back up this first immediate affective response (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2011). This points to the need to add a fourth antecedent to the theory of planned behaviour,

namely, the affective feelings an individual has in the current decision situation. In the case of trauma, for example, strong negative feelings associated with trauma (affecting the mood of a person) are dominant and can trigger a flight, fight or freeze reaction. Furthermore, the trauma can impair a person's ability to deliberately consider attitudes, social norms and self-efficacy. In the studies presented in this book, the affective response is included in the theory of planned behaviour, referenced to Schwarz (2011) and Kahneman (2012).

### ***Cultural entropy***

In discussing attitudes and social norms as part of the theory of planned behaviour in the African context of migration, we have already mentioned that the human rights culture may differ between different stakeholders in a migration situation. Stokmans *et al.* (2018) also mention that if the beliefs of an individual about his/her human rights do not coincide with the perceived beliefs of other members of the community or stakeholders in the migration process, the person experiences stress due to the contradicting values. The clash of values in a system is what is called cultural entropy. This concept was first introduced by Barrett (2010; 2013) to monitor organisational change, which often goes along with a change in the values underlying the management of work processes. In this context, Barrett (2013) makes an explicit distinction between the values an individual sees as important for him/herself and the values that he/she regards as important (leading principle) by a social group (organisation, community or relevant others). The concept was validated by Stokmans *et al.* (2018) in the context of organisational change and by Mubaya (forthcoming, 2019) in the African policy context of heritage conservation.

Barrett (2013, p. 3) states that values are “a shorthand method of describing what is important to us individually or collectively at any given moment in time”. Values are, therefore, universal in that they transcend a specific context (and time) (Barrett, 2013, p. 3). However, Rorty (1993) claims that human rights values are always held in relation to a specific community and, therefore, not universal; the human rights values of a stakeholder can differ according to the group

of persons they pertain to, such as refugees or migrants from a specific region. This indicates that cultural entropy is situation specific. In consequence, not all values a person holds, are equally important in terms of prescribing social behaviour or decision making in a specific situation. Therefore, it is believed that values are ordered according to their priority with respect to other values in a tiered system. An individual may adhere to a value system in a certain context, which may not necessarily overlap with the value system the individual ascribes to as part of a social group, community, organisation or authority, which will then result in cultural entropy. This cultural entropy may also occur with regards to the human rights values that different stakeholders in the migration process hold in relation to the target group.

According to Barrett, misalignment of a personal value system and the value system attributed to others in the social situation of interest undermines effective behaviour. When this happens, the preferred mode of conduct of an individual triggered by their personal value system does not correspond to the mode of conduct signified by relevant others. In this case, a person can be obliged to do something that is not the best option or decision in the situation, as it is either in conflict with their personal value system or the stakeholders' value system. People experience this as frustrating. The result is that a person has to invest more energy to get the job done and that the job provides the person with less energy (less satisfaction, relevance or meaning). The findings of Stokmans *et al.* (2018) and Mubaya (forthcoming, 2019) confirm this. This difference in energy is called 'cultural entropy', as it is caused by factors (such as values) that are believed to be at the base of the culture of a community (Barrett, 2010; 2013).

In the area of migration, the differences in values can be situated between the different stakeholders involved. Cultural entropy can pertain to the difference in the values of an individual and those of the social network or community the individual is active in. But it can also be useful for studying the different perspectives on migration held by different stakeholders. Different stakeholders, such as

policy-makers who operate at different levels of government, have their own objectives and corresponding human rights values, based on which they formulate and design their migration policies. If different parts of administrations and organisations make use of different value systems in the formulation of their respective migration policies, migration policies may be contradictory. This results in migration policies that are less effective than when cultural entropy is low or zero. The consequence is that more energy and more forceful authority and control is required for the implementation of such policies. Policies in situations of high cultural entropy are, therefore, more costly in financial, political and executive terms.

### ***Multiple streams model***

Some of the research conducted for this book investigated how authorities play a role in situations where there is an intention to impact on the movement of people. Such intentions can be studied by analysing the process of agenda-setting in public policy. Kingdon (1984) explains agenda-setting as a social process in which he distinguishes three separate streams: 1) the problem stream is the stream of potential problems to be addressed in a public agenda, 2) the policy stream is the stream of possible ways to address these problems, and 3) the political stream is the stream of political priorities. Kingdon's main question is: "how will new ideas enter a public policy agenda?" He proposes the concept of a 'policy window', which is a moment in time when a window opens for new items to be moved on to the agenda. This happens when the three streams come together. The opening of a policy window can be triggered by regular moments, such as budget negotiations or elections, or unexpected ones, such as an impactful event that suddenly emerges. Situations that have the potential to open a policy window are also referred to as 'focusing events' (Birkland, 1998). Van Reizen (2009) explains that after a focusing event, the streams need to be redefined, as the perception of the situation prior to the focusing event is no longer the same as after the focusing event. The re-interpretation of the situation after a focusing event to make sense of the new situation is the moment of the opening of a policy window.

Vdovychenko (2019) identifies the Lampedusa disaster on 3 October 2015, when a boat full of refugees caught fire resulting in 366 deaths, as a focusing event. Analysing the documentary *It Will be Chaos* (Luciano & Piscopo, 2018), she narrates how heads of state, the President of the European Commission, Manuel Barroso and various directors of international organisations all came to Lampedusa to explain to the media how they saw the situation after the event and what they thought was the way forward. The role of the Mayor of Lampedusa is particularly interesting. The documentary shows that she was focused on what she saw as the correct framing of the situation. Emphasising the need to use correct terminology to address the victims of the tragedy as ‘refugees’ and not ‘illegal migrants’, she insists that this is critical for the correct framing of the problem. Klandermans & Oegema (1987) analyse the importance of the framing of a problem for social mobilisation. Contesting frames lead to cultural entropy and, as a consequence, the policy window may close, without a change to the policy agenda, because the three streams did not converge. The three streams model of Kingdon (1984) draws attention to the role of policy entrepreneurs – people with responsibilities within the policy process and outside in policy networks – in the definition of a problem and the formulation of political positions, policies and alternative policies.

The process of problem definition is analysed by Melicherová (Chapter 11, *Inhospitable Realities: Refugees’ Livelihoods in Hitsats, Ethiopia*, by Kristína Melicherová) as a social process, in which social groups and individuals are mobilised to engage with a policy agenda; she particularly looks at the process of bringing new ideas to the agenda. This process, which is called ‘framing’, is helpful in explaining the relationship between changing social norms and the creation of environments that enable or disable certain possible behaviours through policies. The situational aspect of problem definition is taken as an important precondition for understanding the relationship between policies, agendas and their implementation at different levels of authority.

## ***Resilience***

The concept of resilience is derived from the Latin word *resilire*, which means to leap back, to recover from a disturbance of some kind. It construes resilience as the bouncing back of a system following a shock to its pre-existing state or path (Martin & Sunley, 2014). The term resilience has been used by sociologists to explain the human ability to return to its normal state after absorbing some stress or after surviving some negative change (Surjan, Sharma & Shaw, 2011, pp. 17–18). A new strategy to achieve resilience for people is social protection, which “is now being recognized as instrumental in both poverty eradication and rural transformation, as well as an integral component of effective humanitarian response and resilience building efforts” (FAO, 2017 p. 2). Conway, De Haan, & Norton (2000, p. 2) define social protection as “public actions taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risk and deprivation which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society”.

Van Reisen, Nakazibwe, Stokmans, Vallejo and Kidane (2018) operationalised socio-economic resilience on the basis of six scales that can be categorised into three different aspects: 1) individual abilities (capabilities and human capital, empowerment, and worry), 2) the perceived social support (embeddedness in the community and trust in government), and 3) perceived income security (Chapter 16, *Is Trauma Counselling the Missing Link? Enhancing Socio-Economic Resilience among Post-war IDPs in Northern Uganda*, by Mirjam Van Reisen, Mia Stokmans, Primrose Nakazibwe, Zaminah Malole & Bertha Vallejo). Van Reisen *et al.* (2018) found that the three scales measuring: 1) capabilities and human capital, 2) empowerment, and 3) perceived income security had high correlations, both within and between, and changed due to social protection programmes (cash transfers and trauma counselling). This illustrates that resilience is closely associated with perceived and real sustainable access to livelihoods and the perception of ability to access these. The first definition of livelihood is broadly accredited to Chambers and Conway’s working definition (1992). Their definition was accepted and adapted by the Department for International Development (DFID), among others. In a set of Guidance Sheets (DFID, 1999), DFID recognise that a

livelihood is comprised of the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (Chambers & Conway, 1992, p. 6). This definition acknowledges the complexity of the livelihood concept and implies that securing livelihoods may entail, for example, access to water, land, health care, education, or even services protecting legal rights (De Silva, 2013, p. 5) and depends on socio-economic resilience to make use of the resources available.

In emergencies that lead people to become destitute, it is often the case that the large-scale loss of livelihood assets could be saved by providing timely assistance. Social protection or livelihood support in emergencies, therefore, consists of actions to protect the assets that are essential for people's livelihoods and to support people's own priorities and strategies. It includes any activity that aims to restore people's dignity and ensure adequate living conditions (Caverzasio, 2001).

### **Mixed methods**

In the foregoing, several conceptual frameworks were discussed as abstract theories that can provide a lens through which to look at migration in Africa. We also indicated that these frameworks have some flaws, due to the social and contextual dynamics of migration processes. In this book, we regard these frameworks as global ideas that should be fine-tuned to the specific dynamics of the African migration context. We believe that theoretical concepts provide an abstract model that can help to understand and explain phenomenon on the ground. But, we are studying social processes, which are affected by the cultural and historical legacy of the people involved, as well as their past experiences and perceptions of what is going on.

Theories provide a starting point from which to approach the research problem, but do not provide standardised guidelines for studying problems, as problems are context-specific and the



uniqueness of the people and the situation involved need to be recognised. This means that the perceptions and experiences of people in the different situations are as important as theoretical concepts when trying to understand the dynamics of African migration. The role of the researcher is to give a voice to the persons involved in the social process of migration, to integrate their views into theories at an abstract level, and to adjust the theories accordingly so that the views of the participants are accounted for. This perspective can be summarised as ‘living with theory’ (Burawoy, 2013), which involves diminishing the separation between participant and researcher, inspiring critical assessment of existing theories and allowing for the participant’s alternative understanding of reality.

The separation between participant and researcher is reduced as the researcher takes into account the perspective of the participant and is responsive to the research situation at hand. In the migration discourse, such an approach is not implementable if the researcher uses the push-pull theory of migration, as this theoretical model takes an etic (or outsider) perspective of the migration situation. Moreover, it assumes that objective push and pull factors motivate a person to migrate, or not, factors that are not known to the researcher as an outsider to the situation. From the perspective of living with theory, the push-pull theory does not take into account a (potential) migrant’s perceptions of the push and pull factors involved, nor their experiences and feelings. Accordingly, we believe that an insider perspective can give valuable information about migration processes as they unfold in real-life situations. The point is that the researcher gathers specific insider information, which necessarily and inevitably makes him or her part of the social reality in which the research takes place (Burawoy, 1998).

Such a research perspective can be implemented as a convergent design, which is one of the three core designs of mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2018). In a convergent design, “the researcher intends to bring together the results of the qualitative and the quantitative data analyses so they can be compared and combined” (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p. 65) in a complementary effort.

The objective is to “obtain different but complementary data on the same topic” (Morse, 1991, p. 122) in order to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem at hand.

### ***Qualitative studies to explore the situation at hand***

In the convergent design used in this book, qualitative studies serve two important objectives. First of all, they give vivid information about the situation studied, as perceived by the people who live in that situation and who give meaning to the social processes unfolding in it. Secondly, qualitative studies enable a researcher to build a rapport with all people involved. Consequently, participants trust the researcher and give inside information about the social processes investigated, and the researcher is empathic and able to take the perspective of the participant. The building of rapport is necessary in a ‘living with theory’ approach.

The qualitative component of this book is based on observations communicated by refugees in different locations on the routes in the network of Africa Monitors and other organisations working with refugees. The data provided through this network was corroborated through interviews and observations by the researchers. Information was communicated through the research monitors from Kampala, Khartoum, Kassala, Addis Ababa and the Shire region. Observations were further investigated in field visits to Addis Ababa and Khartoum. The collaboration of Tilburg University with Africa Monitors and the technique of working with monitors within the trafficking routes, as a way of exploring the modus operandi of traffickers on the routes, resulted in the publication of a high impact volume: *Human Trafficking and Trauma in the Digital Era* (Van Reizen & Mawere, 2017). The observations made about the human trafficking routes were compared with study findings in the host communities. This work concentrated on Ethiopia. Mekelle University conducted several studies as part of the study into host communities, their relationships with refugees and migrants, and the dynamics of human trafficking. Ethiopian researcher, Beza Nisrane (PhD candidate at Tilburg University) conducted additional research into the specific experiences of Ethiopian women who had returned from the Arabian

Gulf and Middle East with human trafficking, migration and reintegration. The findings of the research were presented and compared during a workshop held in Mekelle in January 2018 and a writing week held in February 2018 in Tilburg University. The qualitative research on the use of social media was conducted by Rick Schoenmaeckers through (participatory) observation and interviews carried out during a three-month stay in Hitsats refugee camp (June to August 2017), during which the researcher participated in the daily routines in the refugee camp. The researcher was introduced through Zuid Oost Azië's (ZOA), a humanitarian organisation working in the camp that had established working relationships with organisations and refugees in relation to unaccompanied minors in the camp. A survey conducted by Kristína Melicherová served as explorative research to describe the population of Hitsats camp and explore their perceptions about the livelihood opportunities available in the camp. This research served as a background against which other research activities took place. The data were collected through a survey and descriptively analysed using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS).

### ***Quantitative studies to test hypotheses***

In the convergent design applied in this book, quantitative studies are important to test causal relationships between concepts, as hypothesised by theory or as derived from the qualitative data provided by the participants. The most rigorous method to test cause and effect hypotheses is a true experimental design (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2001). However, using such experiments in examining social processes as they unfold in real-life situation assumes that the researcher has full control over the research situation, including designing the study so that (Van Reisen *et al.*, 2018): 1) respondents are randomly assigned to intervention and control groups, 2) the intervention is based on theory, so hypotheses can be formulated to explain why, and to what extent, the intervention works and in what settings, and 3) the implementation of the intervention is under the control of the researcher and the treatment of each individual assigned to a specific group is equal and the (social and

environmental) context of the treatment is equal or known to the researcher.

These guidelines usually result in an experiment that is carried out in a controlled setting, such as a room at a university or a laboratory, creating an artificial situation that is not representative of the real-life situation in which the cause and effect relationship unfolds naturally (Van Reisen *et al.*, forthcoming, 2019). When research is conducted outside the natural environment, it results in lower ecological validity. The problem identified by many policymakers, who are interested in evidence-based decision making, is that research tends to be carried out in a sterile experimental environment, which undermines our understanding of what may be expected of an intervention in the real-life situation that policymakers are concerned with. Studying social processes demands that an experiment be carried out in a real-life situation. The findings established in such a situation can inform researchers about the way in which the intervention resonates in a natural setting. Araújo, Davids and Passos (2007) call this a representative design. A representative design requires awareness of the specifics in a particular place: “proper sampling of situations and problems may in the end be more important than proper sampling of subjects, considering the fact that individuals are probably on the whole much more alike than are situations among one another” (Brunswik, 1956, p. 39, cited in Araújo *et al.*, 2007).

The study by Kidane and Stokmans (2019) is an example of a true experiment conducted in a real-life situation. This study was conducted in a refugee camp, allowing the implementation of the intervention to be controlled to a great extent. The researcher made use of a mobile app for trauma counselling that was designed for the purpose of the study. This gave the researchers the opportunity to control the assignment as well as the implementation of the trauma counselling in great detail, as the digital app needed a code to be activated. Moreover, due to the camp-setting, participants had no opportunity to go elsewhere and they all showed up for the post-test.

However, in most situations, it is not possible to conduct a true experiment, as a researcher is seldom able to design an intervention and/or control the implementation of the intervention, due to the fact that other stakeholders are important agents in such implementation. Even if the researcher is able to design an intervention that is effective according to his/her ideas, they often depend on others to implement the intervention in a real-life setting. Consequently, the researcher does not have full control over the intervention, nor the assignment of participants across groups. In such a case, researchers can make use of a quasi-experimental design, in which the researcher can compare the effectiveness of the own intervention with that of existing interventions.

However, such a procedure calls for a pre-test (the measurement of the effect variable before the intervention starts), which can be problematic in real-life situations, as implementation agencies often start the implementation of their interventions without the consent of a researcher. In such a case, the effectiveness of the intervention can still be studied, as illustrated in the study by Van Reisen *et al.* (Chapter 16, *Is Trauma Counselling the Missing Link?*), who reported on the effectiveness of social protection programmes. In this study, the researchers were not able to assign people to specific social protection programmes, nor did they have any control over the design of these programmes, as in this real-life setting these were existing programmes being implemented by agencies that had their own objectives. However, in this design, the researchers ‘assigned’ participants to specific groups on the basis of the social protection intervention they were receiving. The researchers had little control over the implementation of the intervention and, therefore, little control over alternative causal explanations.

Irrespective of the kind of experimental design that is used in studying the effects of an intervention in a real-life situation, one should realise that by researching the effect of an intervention for a defined group, one helps this particular group (and, therefore, not another group). This choice can trigger envy and affect the ecological validity of the study. For example, the research by Van Reisen *et al.* (Chapter 16, *Is*

*Trauma Counselling the Missing Link?*), which focused on women, the men in the community (spouses, fathers, and sons) asked to be included in the intervention. Such a reaction by a community indicates that doing research is not an objective act that does not interfere with the social situation at hand. Research is an integral part of the social reality in which the intervention takes place. The effect of the research itself can be estimated through a Solomon's 4 group design, but a pre-test is then required for some groups.

When a researcher realises that the results of an intervention always emanate from social processes in specific social situations that the researcher is participating in, certain standard rules for experimental design can be modified. The rule that representative cases should be chosen is no longer relevant, as representative cases as such do not exist in real-life situations, given that each context is different and specific and, therefore, not representative. The inclination to generalise the results to a wider context (other populations, other social circumstances) needs to be modified based on the understanding of the social reality of the research (representativeness of the experiment and ecological validity of the results). This does not mean that it is not possible to identify results at a more aggregate level. The researcher is prompted to look for general tendencies across different implementation contexts and can, thereby, develop an abstract theory of the working elements of the intervention. This theory can then be used as a guideline to develop (and study) similar interventions in other situations and to validate or adjust the theory.

### **Structure of this book**

This book opens by introducing the topic and outlining the key theoretical considerations for the study of migration in Africa (Chapter 1). In Chapter 2, Kinfu Abroha Gebre-Egziabher gives an overview of the new manifestations of migration-related phenomena in the Horn of Africa, with a specific focus on Ethiopia. As Gebre-Egziabher explains, being one of the countries with a large population of refugees, internally displaced people and migrants, new migration routes have recently developed from Ethiopia to Europe, as well as

other countries in Africa. He outlines the new aspects of this phenomena for consideration, such as the impact of refugees on local communities and the extension of human trafficking to people within host communities. In Chapter 3, Gertjan Van Stam critically reflects on the different realities in Europe and Africa and the use of foreign epistemologies, coming from a dominant position. He argues that as a result of epistemological imperialism, the understanding of social migration dynamics in Africa are obfuscated. Van Stam concludes that in order to create a basis for intimate knowledge of migration in African places, epistemological awareness is necessary and needs to make space for African creations of meaning that relate better to social relations in an African place.

One example of Eurocentric epistemology is 'borders'. In Africa, (national) borders are artificial boundaries, created for political purposes that often have little historical or cultural meaning to the communities split by these borders. The borders, agreed in Berlin in 1884–1885, were established by the colonial powers to divide their rule in Africa, but had little to do with realities on the ground. In East Africa, as elsewhere on the continent, these borders separate communities that belong together. In light of this realisation, in Chapter 4, Dorothy Muroki, Boniface Kitungulu and Leanne Kamau present a study of cross-border communities in East Africa and the challenges involved in serving such mobile communities. The study specifically presents the result of inventorising the problems that arise with the provision of health care to mobile populations in the region. In Chapter 5, Abdelah Alifnur and Mirjam Van Reisen introduce the way of living of a pastoralist community in the Horn of Africa, the Afar people. Their culture and way of living includes many approaches to minimise conflict and maximise resilience in rapidly changing, vulnerable environmental contexts. But their way of living is under pressure due to population growth, increasing pressure on land, and conflict, which has resulted in increased tensions between sedentary and pastoralist communities. The authors argue that their traditional values, norms and customs are important and cost-effective in order to mitigate such rising conflicts.

New perspectives on migration are presented in Chapter 6 by Radoslaw Malinowski and Mario Schulze, who critically examine the relationship between human trafficking and climate change in Kenya. Their conclusion is that there is a complex correlation between climate change and increased vulnerability to human trafficking. In Chapter 7, Antony Otieno Ong'ayo discusses the online and offline dimensions of migration in Africa focusing on the role of diasporas. He argues that the interaction of diasporas through mobile phones by transferring information, payments, and knowledge creates changes in the home communities, as well as expectations about other places. In Chapter 8, Melissa Phillips and Mingo Heiduk look at the role of diasporas in a European context (Denmark) and how the communities try to dissuade relatives in the country of origin (Somalia) from taking insecure and dangerous irregular migration routes to Europe. In Chapter 9, Reginald Nalugala examines how community programmes have led to the social transformation of Somali youth in Nairobi and countered radicalisation.

If making the dangerous journey to Europe is ill advised, what are the options open to refugees and migrants closer to home, in neighbouring countries? To answer this question, in Chapter 10, Bereket Godifay Kahsay, discusses limitations on the access of refugees to economic activities in refugee camps in northern Ethiopia, due to fragmented support systems. In Chapter 11, Kristína Melicherová presents the findings of a survey carried out among Eritrean refugees in Hitsats camp to explore their access to economic activities. She concludes that the situation in the camps is not adequate, including the provision of basic necessities, and that it is very difficult for most refugees to earn a living. These conditions encourage refugees to move on to other places, where they hope that there are better opportunities. In Chapter 12, Tekie Gebreyesus and Rick Schoenmaeckers describe the extremely poor and substandard conditions that unaccompanied and separated minors find themselves in Hitsats refugee camp in Ethiopia – conditions that violate international norms to protect the best interest of the child. These conditions explain why minors often continue their perilous journeys, despite the well-known dangers.



Refugees and migrants often dream of the day that they can return home. Yet, the challenges involved in return migration are large. In Chapter 13, Beza L. Nisrane describes the lack of welcome that Ethiopian women receive when returning home from the Arabian Gulf and show that this can be partly explained by the clash in expectations between the returnees and their relatives at home. She concludes that many women re-migrate as they feel unwelcome and unhappy after their return. In Chapter 14, Shishay Tadesse Abay looks at the lives of return migrants deported from Saudi Arabia to Ethiopia and finds that reintegration is extremely difficult. In Chapter 15, Primrose Nakazibwe and Mirjam Van Reisen investigate the trauma of women returnees who were abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda as children and who face hostile and challenging situations on their return, including the difficulty of home communities accepting children born in captivity.

In Chapter 16, the success of efforts for rehabilitation in Northern Uganda, where refugees and rebels returned after the war, is investigated by Mirjam Van Reisen, Mia Stokmans, Primrose Nakazibwe, Zaminah Malole and Bertha Vallejo. In this study, the researchers found that social protection schemes for vulnerable women led to significant positive changes in their socio-economic resilience. The authors conclude that psycho-social support significantly increased the positive effects on resilience of social protection. A literature review by Zeremariam Fre and Naomi Dixon in Chapter 17 on social protection programmes by the Government of Ethiopia for vulnerable pastoralist communities in the Afar region, shows that these programmes have had positive results. The authors conclude that the government policies on social protection, targeting vulnerable populations, make a good contribution to strengthening resilience and independence.

The role of government is critical to the conditions in which people can build their lives and livelihoods. But what if a government fails to protect its own people? In Chapter 18, Makeda Saba describes the desperate and deteriorating situation in Eritrea, a country where the majority are required to serve under indefinite National Service,

which is tantamount to slave labour. The inhumane conditions and ongoing human rights violations have led to large numbers of refugees fleeing the country, a number that has not decreased since the peace agreement was signed between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 2018, despite expectations to the contrary. In Chapter 19, Bereket Selassie and Mirjam Van Reisen describe the importance of the rule of law and lament the lack of implementation of a constitution in Eritrea. A constitution provides for protection of citizens, predictability, accountability and justice. It is an essential element of good governance and the foundation of any rights-based society.

In Chapter 20, Stella Maranga analyses how the constitutional reform process in Kenya, which provides a framework for devolution, has also opened up the possibility of protecting women's rights, despite push-backs in its implementation. In Chapter 21, the final chapter, Istar Ahmed describes how the constitution-making process can be regarded as an opportunity for the interests of youth to be better represented, thereby contributing to a more stable situation in Somalia, and possibly diminishing sentiments that migration from home is always the better option.

Together, these chapters attempt to describe mobility in Africa that is grounded in reality, giving an alternative to the dominant narrative coming out of Europe. By describing mobility more accurately, it is hoped that our understanding will deepen and our solutions become more nuanced and targeted, and, therefore, effective. In this way, we hope to be better equipped to deal with the challenges facing the world today driven by a population on the move.

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