Outmigration from the Horn of Africa

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Abstract

The proliferation of sovereign states in the Horn of Africa has produced intra- and inter-state conflicts that have largely been induced by ethnic tensions. The conflicts resulted in the loss of millions of human lives, significant material damage, and forced people to leave their countries of origin to seek their fortune elsewhere, using a network of systems established between country of origin and destination. Some have been driven into desperation and they sought the services of human smugglers and traffickers. Geographical proximity to migration hotspots also encourages migration. This study explores immigration in the Horn of Africa countries from geographical, socio-political, and economic perspectives. The findings show mixed migration from the Horn of Africa of refugees, asylum seekers, smuggled, and trafficked persons. The last two categories are the largest number of undocumented migrants in the sub-region. They are relatively young, being primarily aged fourteen to forty. They are predominantly male, and have low educational attainment. One motivation for migration is to seek opportunities elsewhere that would facilitate ability to make remittances.

Keywords: Outmigration, migration, youth, trafficking, smuggling, asylum, Horn of Africa

Introduction

The movement of individuals or groups of people from their usual place of residence to another has been taking place since antiquity. Anthropologists and historians confirmed that one

of the distinguishing characteristics of Homo sapiens is the tendency to move from place to place, which eventually resulted in their living in scattered settlements (Du Toit and Safa 1985). Ravenstein (1885) and others claim that the phenomenon of human migration is a continuum where potential migrants mostly move, not randomly and spontaneously; instead, they follow some norms and patterns inherited from previous migration experiences.

Human migration has attracted scholarly attention of since the delineation of artificial boundaries produced sovereign states. Modern states exercise power over boundaries to monitor the flow of people and commodities. Consequently, any type of inter- or intra-border crossing conducted by individuals or groups of people without legal documentation authorizing or permitting such movement increasingly became classified as irregular migration (Icduygu and Toktas 2003). Immigration has no homogeneous definition. In the Horn of Africa, there is considerable irregular migration. This paper gives an overview of youth migration from the Horn to various parts of the world, specifically Europe, Gulf States, and South Africa. Refugees, displaced, smuggled, and trafficked people are considered as irregular migrants as long as they lack valid documents both at exit and entry points.

In the Horn of Africa, there is increased incidence of people crossing boundaries without valid and legal documentation. Their movement may be caused by push factors at home such as poverty, conflict, unemployment, political and ethno-national conflicts. On the other hand, the pull factors—enhanced living standards, better jobs, family reunification, political stability and access to better healthcare services—may be given equal consideration in determining what causes people to cross boundaries. Demographically, these immigrants are mostly the youth, defined by the African Youth Charter as young people who are between 15 and 35 years old (AU Commission, 2006). Border and ethnic conflicts, direct and indirect ethnic wars cause the youth

to leave their countries of origin. In countries like Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia, there are smugglers and traffickers—for whom the facilitation of migrants' movement is a profitable venture. Labor exploitation and sex trafficking are also part of the political economy of migration.

The desperation of securing successful migration opportunities causes migrants to engage in smuggling, human trafficking, and other clandestine activities. Increasingly, many host countries have enacted rigid migration laws and harsh migration regimes, including direct physical attacks, deportation, and imprisonment. The origin countries may develop resentment against the measures taken on their citizens by host countries. In response, they may reciprocate these measures against citizens of countries that have used draconian measures against their citizens. The measures taken by origin and host countries can trigger conflicts that later escalate into open wars. Thus, irregular migration can cause or intensify conflicts among the countries in the Horn of Africa.

This paper attempts to address the issues of outmigration in the Horn of Africa countries with a focus on youth participation in conflict resolution and regional integration. The paper has the following objectives: to provide an overview of youth migration; to analyze the nexus of migration and conflicts in the Horn of Africa; to highlight the geography of migration in the Horn of Africa; to assess the demographic and socioeconomic attributes of migrants; and to identify the causes of irregular migration.

Overview of Outmigration in the Horn of Africa

Outmigration has no homogeneous definition. As pointed out by Ferruccio (2006), the phrase encompasses all types of population movements across international boundaries, with or without valid and legal documents issued from the authorities of source and destination

countries. Most academics and experts refer to the definitions provided by the International Organization for Migration, which claims that the most common forms of outmigration are illegal entry, overstaying and unauthorized work permits (IMO 2006). Outmigration from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia includes irregular migrants like refugees, asylum seekers, displaced people, smuggled and trafficked persons. It also includes migrants who travel for business, pleasure, and family reunification. However, the paper focuses exclusively on irregular migration.

Migrants sometimes change their status along the course of their movement to accommodate to the realities in the alien environment. Hence, a person can leave home as a refugee, but if border crossing becomes difficult, he or she seeks the assistance of smugglers to cross the border safely and later seek asylum to guarantee living peacefully at destination. If unlucky, migrants in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia can end up as trafficked persons at the mercy of criminals who exploit and coerce them, and violate their human rights.

Irregular migration from the Horn of Africa presents complex challenges to regional governments, and to humanitarian and international agencies (Danish Refugee Council (DRC) 2011). Since 2004, tens of thousands of undocumented migrants from the Horn of Africa have landed in western and southern Europe and the Middle East by crossing the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (International Migration Office (IMO) 2010). In 2008, more than 50,000 irregular migrants, notably from Somaliland, Punt Land, Djibouti etc., arrived in Yemen by crossing either the Gulf of Aden or the Red Sea (DRC 2011). About 17,000 to 20,000 undocumented migrants flow to South Africa from the Eastern and Horn of African countries per year (Christopher 2009). One hundred thousand to 120,000 outmigrants cross the Mediterranean Sea each year, of whom 35,000 are from countries including Ethiopia, Sudan, Somaliland,

Eritrea, and Djibouti (Partial evaluation by International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) quoted in United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC 2010)). Between 65,000 and 120,000 people from the Horn of Africa enter the Maghreb countries overland every year; only between 20 and 38 per cent of them eventually proceed to Europe. De Haas (2007) further indicates that Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is probably the North African country with the largest number of sub-Saharan migrants, followed by Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

Outmigration by way of smuggling has become a critical issue in southern Europe since the early 1990s. The number of interceptions of unauthorized migrants sharply increased along the Italian, Spanish, and to a lesser extent, Maltese coasts. The UNODC (2009) indicates that about 65,000 undocumented migrants landed in Italy, Malta, and Spain and the migrants were mainly from western, eastern, and Horn of African countries. Living as migrants in these countries is very difficult as migrants are denied access to education, health, and other social services. The recipient countries stubbornly reject the demand of migrants and usually deport them to their countries of origin, otherwise they are put in detention, sometimes for years.

Undocumented migrants who escape from either deportation or imprisonment may have little chance to live in recipient countries. They are always on high alert about being discovered and apprehended by police in the recipient countries. Consequently, many live and hide in the outskirts of urban centers, and when indigent, in order to survive, sometimes move into nearby towns to seek food and other basic necessities from residents. Many of the migrants who experience this come to regret having migrated and even opt to go back to their countries of origin when they encounter unexpected harsh, grueling, and hostile situations. In addition, migrants arrive in these countries when they are totally exhausted and deprived of all their possessions during their journeys. They lose hope of successful migration and choose to stay

behind to accumulate resources and seek assistance from relatives and friends who could assist them for the next journey.

Migrants leave their countries of origin for many different reasons. However, there is significant information deficit and statistical inflation about the number of migrants crossing international boundaries. In addition, the journeys by the migrants to southern Europe, the Middle East, and to a lesser extent, South Africa are very dangerous and there are no guarantees of success (Hamood 2009). In addition, in the Horn of Africa countries, the outmigrants encounter a lot of hardships and life-threatening situations when dependent on smugglers and traffickers to get them to their destination. As Melanie (2005, pg. 19) pointed out, human trafficking and smuggling are some of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity in the Horn countries. While there are significant differences between human trafficking and smuggling, the underlying causal issues: extreme poverty, lack of economic opportunities, civil unrest, and political uncertainty all contribute to increased irregular migration. Criminal syndicates actively prospect for clientele among irregular migrants to encourage and facilitate illegal border-crossing s.

Human Smuggling and Trafficking

In some cases, it may be difficult to accurately ascertain whether a case is one of human smuggling or trafficking. The distinction between the two is very subtle, particularly when migrants strategically and rapidly change their statuses to benefit from conditions in migration fields. The key components that distinguish trafficking from smuggling include fraud, force, or coercion (Hughas and Denisova 2001). Smuggling is in most cases not coercive. Some outmigrants in the Horn of Africa facilitate outmigration by seeking a wide range of services ranging from physical transportation and illegal crossing of borders, to the procurement of false

documents (Friedrich 2007). Research suggests that it is not always clear whether a separated young person has been "trafficked" or "smuggled," or whether despite practitioners' distinction, the process of being trafficked might actually involve a conflation of the two. As outlined in Table 1, smuggling refers to moving a person across a border illegally, and is a violation of state sovereignty; trafficking on the other hand, involves the exploitation of a human being for financial gain or other benefits, and tends to involve a violation of that person's human rights. Force, coercion, deception, and being misled are key aspects of trafficking. While smuggling involves facilitating the transportation of an individual with their consent, trafficking involves a person being exploited by the trafficker as a commodity. However, these are not hard and fast distinctions. Any initial consent to being smuggled can be invalidated by coercive or deceptive means, transforming the situation into one of trafficking (Kleemam 2011).

Table 1. Differences between Human Smuggling and Trafficking

Trafficking	Smuggling
Must contain an element of force, fraud, coercion, or commercial sex act.	The person being smuggled is generally cooperating.
Forced labor and/or exploitation.	There is no actual or implied coercion.
Enslaved, subjected to limited movement or isolation, or documents confiscated.	Persons are free to leave, change jobs, etc.
Need not involve the actual movement of the victim.	Facilitates the illegal entry of persons from one country into another.
No requirement to cross an international border.	Smuggling always crosses an international border.

Person must be involved in labor/service or commercial sex acts (i.e., must be working).	Person must only be in country or attempting entry illegally.
Persons trafficked are victims.	Persons smuggled are violating the law. They are not victims.

Source: Global Migration Perspectives, 2007

The social cost is another dimension of the stressors of outmigration, since it might drain local resources, and leave the country of origin and the communities of co-nationals abroad even more impoverished than before. Most migrants depend on the savings of their family and loans from friends to fund their movement, making their migration a long-term collective investment (Liempt 2008). If migrants experience difficulties during the trip, they ask for more money from family and friends, which, when available, is transferred to pay for later stages of the journey. The financial outlay from the migrants' country of origin is often very high, and this sometimes has a negative impact on the economy of the migrant's family for years.

Spatial Perspectives of Outmigration

It is clear that some outmigrants in the Horn can use known spatial patterns of migrants movement in their region, as they usually use routine exit, transit, and entry points to reach their destinations. Outmigrants tend to use alternative routes interchangeably with the major routes to ensure success in evading border patrols. They use all modes of transportation. However, air transport is more difficult to penetrate for people who lack authentic documents. Lack of proper documentation makes migrants from the Horn of Africa more open to seeking the services of smugglers and traffickers who are readily available to facilitate movement, and even seem to dominate the terrain. In some instances, outmigrants move spontaneously without the assistance of smugglers and/or traffickers, when the causes of migration are sudden, and are linked with

natural hazards and wars. Such migrants tend to face weak to no resistance at checkpoints when they cross international borders. They comprise all demographic categories although most are women, the elderly, and children, who need immediate assistance. In the course of the movement, there are regional and sub-regional differences in international migration, as well the constraints that such differences place on the formulation of international migration policies in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia. In these countries, international migrants differ greatly from one another in terms of time and circumstances of migration, as well as place of origin (DRC 2011).

Three migration routes that are frequently used by illegal migrants are identifiable in the Horn of Africa (DRC 2011). Although the major routes appear to be permanent, the smugglers and spontaneous migrants use various shortcuts to evade police patrolling borders in transit and destination areas (Fawcett, 1998). See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Main Migration Routes: From the East and Horn of Africa
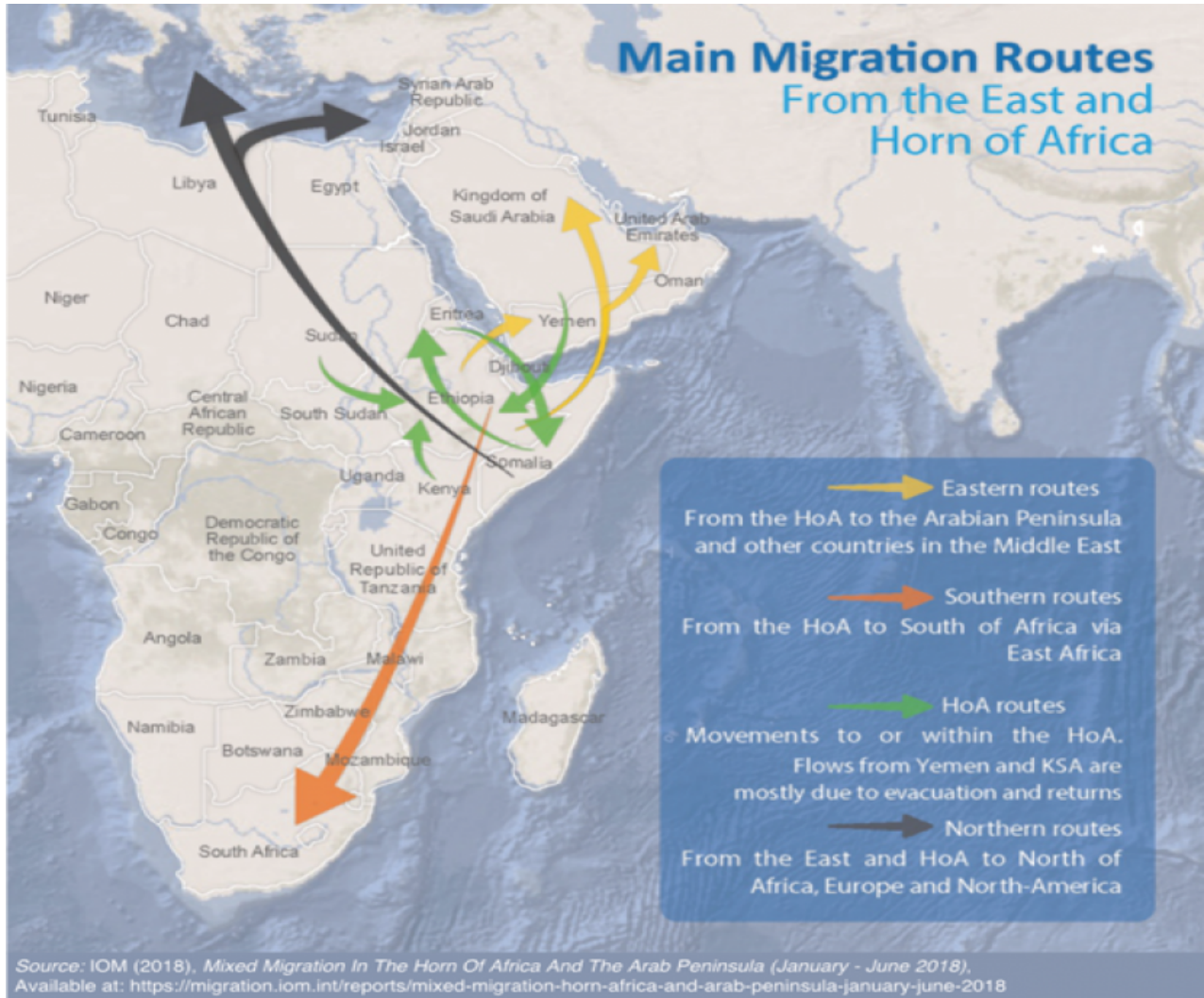
Source: Migration Data Portal

Route One: Horn of Africa to Europe via Sahara Desert and Mediterranean Sea

As Figure 2 indicates, this route begins from the Horn of Africa, including Eritrea, Sudan,

Ethiopia and Kenya and heads north to Italy and Malta via Sudan, Libya, and/or Egypt (De Haas

2007). It is the longest and also most difficult to cross because outmigrants from the Horn of

Africa, cross the Sahara Desert on foot before they proceed to southern and western Europe via

the Mediterranean Sea (Zhang 2007). Nonetheless, there are three basic reasons why outmigrants

choose this route despite the many challenges encountered while crossing it. Firstly, there is no other alternative route on land to Europe and via Europe to other countries. Secondly, the geographic proximity of this route to both Europe and the Horn of Africa may also induce migrants to use it frequently (Hein 2007). Thirdly, the migration hubs are mostly located in Europe and in some countries of the Middle East as well. In other words, border control might not be very tight at check points or officials at checkpoints may be corrupt. Thus, assisted by a network of smugglers, those irregular migrants who can afford to pay or those coerced by traffickers for free labor or commercial sex, start the long and difficult journey from their home country. Once they reach the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea or the Maghreb countries of North Africa, another group of smugglers take over the process until the migrants finally reach European countries as asylum seekers (Coollyer 2006). Recently another route branched off from this route via the Egyptian border to Israel and other Middle East countries (De Haas 2007).

Not all migrants cross harsh deserts, seas, or oceans and safely and successfully reach their destinations. Many die and others disappear without their whereabouts being known. Quite a substantial number abandon their original intentions and decide to permanently reside in transit areas. This scenario questions the validity of the transit migration theory, which says migrants avoid settling at transit points despite many opportunities available at these locations. Many villages in Sudan and the Maghreb countries of North Africa have experienced significant population growth due to migrants beginning new lives there after abandoning their previous intention to use them only as transit points (De Haas 2007).

Route Two: Horn of Africa to Gulf States via the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

The geography of this route as indicated in Figure 2 on page 20 embraces the Horn, including Eritrea and some East African countries, and acted both as origin and transit points.

The Gulf states are mostly considered migrants' final destinations. On this route, the centers of attraction to migrants are mostly Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Kuwait, and some of the Gulf States.

Outmigration in this route is comprised of refugees who move spontaneously in search of safe havens from natural and manmade hazards. The route includes trafficked people who are coercively trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation. War in Somalia and the involvement of neighboring countries has accelerated the flow of irregular migrants like refugees, smuggled and trafficked people from the region.

Route Three: Horn of Africa to South Africa via East African Countries

The third route to South Africa, as Figure 2 shows, starts from the Horn of Africa via East African countries. It involves various categories of irregular migrants, ranging from refugees to trafficked persons. The migrants follow a southbound route from the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region into East Africa, notably Kenya or Tanzania, and onward through Southern Africa, including Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, to South Africa (Christopher 2009). Except for Somali refugees who travel on foot over short distances, the majority of migrants from the Horn are always at risk. Many have neither accepted refugee statuses nor have easy access to travel destination areas via transit points. At times, they even choose to stay at transit countries to sustain their livelihoods and save adequate money in order to continue movement until they reach their final destinations. Geographically speaking, the topography of this route is difficult for migrants as it is comprised of tall mountains, extensive valleys and depressions. Besides, the route has swamps and a large number of lakes.

Profile of Outmigrants

One of the general assumptions in population movement is that migration is very selective. In other words, migrants who cross international boundaries without legal and valid documentation do not represent all population categories.

Demographic Attributes

In 2006, the vast majority of migrants around the world were young people, including many underage persons (under 14 years old). Many developing countries have very young populations. In most African countries and many in Asia, about half of the population is under age fourteen (IMO 2006). Severe economic crises cause unemployment and underemployment that is first felt by the young, who are motivated by the international market situation to leave their home countries. In other words, the youth is the group most susceptible to irregular migration (Doomernik and Kyle 2004). Although there is no conclusive data on the age categories of the smuggled migrants and trafficked persons in the Horn of Africa, they are mostly recruited from the youth (Aronowitze 2001). The majority of the migrants making the dangerous voyage are in their mid-twenties, but there are also relatively few older migrants and some young children.

Socioeconomic Characteristics

Most trafficked and smuggled people are usually the most disadvantageous, with poor job skills, with little chance of accessing decent jobs at home (Aronowitze, 2001). Further, these outmigrants are mostly women and children. The level of educational attainment of trafficked persons is low, with the majority not having completed high school education. Having low levels of education and also being vulnerable by age and gender, traffickers and criminal gangs easily trap them into forced labor and commercial sex. According to the IMO children and women are

especially vulnerable to danger and exploitation during the smuggling process and after arrival in southern Europe and the Gulf states. Trafficked persons from the Horn of Africa, usually are trafficked to Gulf States, southern Europe and northern Africa countries. In conformity with the IMO reports, Zang (2007) also claims that smugglers take advantage of the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of women and children to force them into the clandestine undocumented labor force and commercial sex.

Smuggled people tend to be better educated, skilled, and experienced than trafficked persons. The age range of smuggled people in the Horn countries is typically 18-40, and most are male (Boni 2008). The majority have completed high school education. Those unable to pay enough money to smugglers travel short distances and are usually abandoned in transit countries like Sudan, Yemen, and Uganda. They stay in these countries until adequate money is saved by working there or sent from relatives and friends living in other countries. Asylum seekers and refugees also seek the services of smugglers to reach their preferred destinations. Thus, rarely do irregular migrants reach destinations purely as smuggled, asylum seekers, and trafficked persons.

They frequently change their migration statuses from trafficked persons, smuggled, and asylum seekers. The frequency of status changes of outmigrants in the Horn depends on a number of factors, including: the socioeconomic situation at origin, transit, and destination areas; the strictness of border patrol security officials in enforcing restrictive immigration laws; the demographic and socioeconomic profile of migrants; and the degree to which the migrants are involved in decision-making processes. Trafficked persons usually prevail if recipient regions need child labor and/or the environment is suitable to practice commercial sex. Smuggled migrants on the other hand are attracted to regions where they can develop their professional skills and earn more money than what was possible at home. Recipient regions or transit areas

tend to be more developed than migrants' countries of origin. Loose border security sometimes encourages outmigrants to cross national or international boundaries without the assistance of traffickers and smugglers. Depending on the situation, migrants can claim refugee status to ensure their safety and/or access the protection of humanitarian agencies. To proceed further and access better jobs and educational opportunities, they may become smuggled migrants when they face situations that are tight and hard to negotiate.

Decision of Outmigration

Those who can afford to pay usually seek the assistance of smugglers to reach their desired destinations or transit areas. When migrants have some decision-making power, they are very strategic, and they change their migration statuses frequently to benefit from existing conditions. They may not have much freedom of choice about destination areas and mode of transport. Most of the time migration decisions are made collectively by larger units of related people like families or households in order to maximize expected income and also minimize risks (Stark 1991). At times, some members of the migrants' family who have the upper hand become actively involved in influencing or determining migrants' migration choices. When migration is a measure to maximize family income as a human capital investment, the family of a migrant takes every opportunity to ensure that the entire process of migration is carefully plotted and executed. The problem arises if a potential migrant ignores family counsel. The expectation is that once such migrants settle abroad, they will make remittances that help their family recoup the investment made when they were assisted to facilitate migration. If a migrant does not meet such expectation, the family responds with harsh criticism.

Causes of Migration

Migration is associated human response of s to serious economic, social and political stimuli within their environment (Lewis 1982; Hein 2007). People opt to migrate due to a combination of push and pull forces in origin and destination areas. Intervening obstacles are equally important in stimulating a migrant to stay or leave his/her origin (Lee 1966). Migrants vary greatly by the legality of their movements (either regular or irregular), the nature of reaction to stimuli (either voluntarily or forced), and by spatial configuration (either internal or international migrants) (Skeldon 2000). Thus, it is essential to appraise outmigration as a separate event but within the broader context of the migration phenomenon.

Outmigration has increasingly become a major economic, social, political, and security concern for a number of countries in the Horn. It is one of the most complex, sensitive, and intractable issues affecting global and national governance of labor migration. The causes of irregular migration are varied and also very complex. It is almost impossible to distinguish the proximate from non-proximate causes that induce people to migrate illegally. Institutional theory provides a general outlook on the causes of outmigration. This theory puts more emphasis on the pull factors prevailing at destination areas than on the push factors at points of origin (Massey et al. 1993). The economic imbalance, particularly in labor supply and demand, between developed and developing regions of the world is assumed to be very influential in driving population movement. This disparity encourages those in urgent need of labor to recruit illegal laborers from labor excess regions through agencies working in clandestine markets. These situations create fertile ground to human traffickers and smugglers in the business of assisting or forcing migrants to cross international boundaries illegally. Albeit small in number, some asylum seekers and refugees also seek the services of the illegal syndicates.

The causes of irregular migration in the Horn reflect some of the situations enumerated above. The youth of the sub-region respond equally to the pull and push factors that persuade them to become irregular migrants. The assumption is that the outmigrants from the Horn would be primarily motivated by socioeconomic and political reasons. In reality, as clearly indicated in the reports of UNODC (2011) and other migration studies institutions, the people of the Horn also migrate because of non-economic and non-political reasons. A substantial number of migrants from the Horn are attracted by favorable environmental and living conditions like climate, housing, schools, and other community services available in host countries. At times, pull and intervening obstacles dominate economic and political factors as causes of migration. Quite a few migrants said that family reunification forced them to leave their countries of origin. Spouses and siblings of migrants are always ready to move despite less ideal situations at destination and transit areas. Moreover, pull and push factors may play no roles at all in determining outmigration (UNODC 2011). Some causal factors that cause irregular migration in the Horn include: remittances, networks, geographical proximity, and contiguity of outmigration fields.

Remittances Stimulate Migration

The sending of remittances by migrants is one of the strongest and most pervasive phenomena in the African migration system (Aderanti 1998). Remittance has been practiced in Africa by all forms of migration, perhaps with the exception of refugee movement. Specifically, in the Horn it is considered as one of the long-standing traditions established by migrants of such regions living in various parts of the world. In some countries of these regions, migrant remittances provide foreign exchange, ease balance of payments problems, encourage industrial

development by facilitating the import of capital goods and raw materials, and contribute to employment (Elizabeth 2004).

Remittances sent also directly assist individuals' families, relatives, and/or friends of migrants living at home. The assistance is mostly provided in cash, and rarely in-kind, which include foodstuff, vehicles, electronic products, appliances, etc. The remittance also enables the families to own houses and also to run individual and joint venture businesses. In some families of the Horn, remittances have negative impacts as recipients slowly withdrew from work and remain idle, looking only for assistance from relatives living outside the country.

Remittances, in either cash or in-kind, should be properly handled and utilized, otherwise, they negatively influence the national economy (UNODC 2009). The worst impact of remittances is that more people seek to migrate abroad at whatever cost in order to secure what they believe would be easily accessible resources that would be remitted home to their kinfolk. Families who have no relatives in foreign countries feel unhappy and may become jealous when they see their neighbors receive remittances, some of which is utilized to build houses and purchase highly valued commodities. Thus, non-migrant populations develop a sense of competitiveness and vengefulness toward those who make remittances to their kinfolk. Non-migrants sometimes believe it is possible to actualize their dream of easily accumulating wealth byby leaving their country illegally to seek their fortune elsewhere. Maltoni (2006)

The Horn countries formally or informally receive large sums of money from remittances, yet this promotes competitiveness among the non-migrant population and eventually stimulates more irregular cross-border movements from the regions (IMO 2010). At times, when outmigrants travel back home to visit their non-migrant families and friends, their perceived success prompt non-migrants to begin to search strategies to go abroad (e.g., via smuggling or

trafficking) and attain equal success as outmigrants. In many instances, the influence of remittances is the greatest factor in seducing the non-migrant population to leave their origins, more so than any other problems prevailing at home.

A substantial number of outmigrants in the Horn that left the sub-region confirmed that the major cause of their migration was the change they had observed in fellow migrants and their families as a result of remittances (Christopher, 2009). It is presently a common phenomenon to see people from affluent families, those who work in government institutions, or those with private businesses to migrate simply because they could not bear to witness the changes they saw in the lifestyle of their friends and families who benefitted from remittances. Thus, despite maximizing family incomes and improving the standard of living of members, remittances have some negative repercussions as they encourage more people to leave their home illegally.

Migration Networks

Migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect irregular migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination countries through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared national origins (Elizabeth 2004). In the Horn of African countries, migrants can easily share and exchange information and resources with the non-migrant population at home. through networks established between sending and receiving communities. Moreover, migrants' rate of adaptation and assimilation to the destination society is directly affected by the type of networks established (Massey et al. 1998). Massey et al. (1998) further added that established networks increase the likelihood of illegal international cross-border migration because they lower the cost and risks of movement and increase the expected net returns to migration. Slowly, the number of potential outmigrants increases as networks spread and encompass broader segments of the sending society. Potential migrants receive information about transit and

destination areas through such network systems established with migrants living in receiving communities. An expanding network further increases the likelihood of irregular migration, as the social capital reduces the costs and risks of migration. Hamood (2009) points out that family and friends play an active role not only in the migration decision—in particular through material assistance—but also in integrating the irregular migrant in the destination country.

Networks, Smugglers and Human Traffickers

The role played by the network system in outmigration from the Horn of Africa is indispensable, but in transit areas, smugglers and traffickers replace kinfolk and friends as major actors that link migrants and non-migrant populations between destination and origin areas. In transit areas, the smugglers and traffickers actively engage in assisting migrants to cross borders with demand from irregular migrants' relatives, friends, and acquaintances living in destination countries (UNODC 2010). Thus, at both ends of the irregular migration field (origin and destination), the major actors controlling the networks are potential migrants and their relatives. Between these two ends of the migration field, however, the networks are predominantly controlled by smugglers, traffickers, and their collaborators.

Previously, according to Hamood (2009), clandestine migrants from the Horn and East African countries took most of the risks in transit areas, hoping that their relatives in destination areas might directly assist to facilitate safe passage. Lately, however, the majority of irregular migration fields are dominated by illegal agencies of smugglers who facilitate the process of illegal border crossing. The four outmigration routes mentioned earlier all came into existence as results of extensive network systems established all the way between origin and destination areas of migrants and non-migrant populations. ICMPD (2008), for example, outlined the relevance of

various network hubs established along Route 1 (through the Mediterranean Sea) and Route 2 (through the Red Sea) of outmigration from the Horn of Africa.

The networks established along these routes provide irregular migrants with the necessary infrastructure and services to continue their migration journey. ICMPD (2008) further noted the presence of illegal agencies that professionally sell their services to smuggled people through stages along the East African routes. The outmigration flow should be seen in the context of a larger social framework, of which the smugglers or traffickers form only a part. Relatives, friends, and the Diaspora play an important role in supporting the migrants financially and in providing them with information for the irregular migration process.

Geographical Proximity and Contiguity of Outmigration Fields

The physical distance between sending and receiving countries of outmigrants and their contiguity to landmasses and water bodies greatly affects the flow of outmigrants (Shaw 1975). Migration between or among places diminishes as distance between them increase. Similarly, natural barriers like mountains, deep valleys, and swamps greatly diminish the size of migration. On the contrary, short distances and contiguous migration fields encourage more people to migrate. They sacrifice less human and capital costs to travel, and penetrate natural barriers between sending and receiving countries with greater ease. In addition, potential migrants can easily establish networks with fellow migrants living on the other end of the migration field.

Africa geographically holds a central position in the spatial distribution of the world's continents. The continent has almost contiguous land masses, as it is separated by very narrow water canals from the Middle East and European countries. Thus, reaching the other continents of the world via Middle Eastern and European countries is not as challenging to potential irregular African migrants. Specifically, the flow of outmigrants from the Horn and Eastern

African countries is highly encouraged due to geographical proximity and contiguity of the sub-region to Middle East and European countries. Outmigration routes from the Horn and East African countries are good examples of the relevance of distance and natural barriers in determining the density and direction of flows. Two major hubs that attract the majority of irregular migrants from the Horn of Africa countries are the southern Europe and Gulf states, and to a lesser extent, South Africa. These three hubs are relatively close in spatial proximity with access via the North Africa and Red Sea, and are often utilized by outmigrants originating from the Horn. The density of migration flows, together with the illegal agencies and individuals facilitating the irregular flows, is particularly high between migration fields that link Europe and Gulf States with the Horn (UNODC 2011; Christopher, 2009). Research conducted by the DRC (2011) on the spatial configuration of outmigrants from the Horn disclosed that outmigrant flow is susceptible to the geographical proximity and landmass contiguity of the Horn, to southern Europe and Gulf States.

Outmigration versus Regional Cooperation and Integration

Outmigration has increasingly become a major economic, social, political, and security concern for a number of countries in the Horn. Businesses facilitating human smuggling and human trafficking in the Horn are liable to develop into well-organized internal gangster syndicates (Salt and Stein 1998). Such gangster cells will ultimately increase their size and influence by merging with similar groups of criminals, or they share information and resources, without merging. Eventually, they become major threats to the national sovereignty of many countries in the Horn of Africa. Porous borders not only allow clandestine migrants to sneak through, they also let bandits, criminals, and pirates smuggle arms, drugs, and armed bandits. Inter-border conflicts in the Horn are aggravated by the illegal border movement of migrants.

22

The problem mostly occurs at borders, transit lines, and destination areas. The problems of repatriation, return, and deportation of irregular migrants, if it is sudden, can also trigger conflicts among countries of the Horn since they aggressively drain the resources of migrants' countries of origin.

Sometimes transit and destination countries hold migrants as hostages illegally, in order to exercise political and economic pressures over the migrants' countries of origin. Similar measures may also be taken by other countries as a revenge, causing conflicts and open wars. Thus, outmigration is one of the triggers of inter- and intra-state conflicts in the Horn of Africa. It could also be the source of criminality if left unchecked by either the governments of the region.

Policy of the Horn of Africa

What can the region contribute, to tranquilize the conflicts and promote regional integration? Common strategies and policies that bind expectation in the region should be ratified. Some of the common migration strategies and policies which have commendable influences in the Horn, are:

- Launch awareness and consciousness building campaigns targeting vulnerable groups (especially the youth) of the sub-region, to sensitize them to the problematic and inaccurate aspects of the propaganda of the foreign media, agencies, and internet services, which attempt to seduce them to leave their country.

- Develop a common migration policy among Horn countries through the harmonization of laws, standards, procedures, and information regarding irregular migration scenarios.

- Strengthen and encourage information sharing on border management activities, including sealing porous borders and conducting joint cross-border patrol inspections.

- Ratify and implement strategies aimed at reducing poverty, improving living and working conditions, creating employment opportunities, and developing skills that can contribute to addressing the root causes of migration.

- Develop a common strategic framework for migration policy in the Horn in order to encourage legal migration and also combat the challenges posed by irregular migration to ensure security, stability, development and cooperation.

Conclusion

Outmigration is the most complex type of population movement to handle. It is also difficult to take corrective measures. People in the Horn practicing such movement not only change their statuses frequently, but they also conduct many of their activities in a clandestine manner. Outmigration is a burden to both sending and receiving countries. Outmigrants, particularly smuggled and trafficked persons drain the resources of their families and countries to enable them to cross international boundaries. Upon arrival at their destinations they are mostly not welcomed by the people and government of the alien environment, as they are considered the source of social and political conflicts and economic crises. A complex of causes stimulates the youth of the sub-region to abandon their countries. The majority of the causes are linked with the economic and social factors, including the myth of greener pastures believed to be available to the migrants living abroad. In addition, the geography of the sub-region, in terms of its spatial proximity and ease of travel to migration hubs, contributes to encouraging people to leave their countries of origin.

The youth of the sub-region is the most predisposed to outmigration, being spurred by high levels of precarity and frustration. Public education and awareness campaigns about the problems and dangers of the situation should be directed at the youth. It is also possible to

encourage and support the youth to play a key role in minimizing conflicts. Finally, more efforts should be made by all states in the region to integrate their policies and foster sub-regional cooperation to combat outmigration.

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