



ILERA AFRICA

10TH REGIONAL CONGRESS

3 – 4 APRIL 2024



**REINFORCING THE NEXUS BETWEEN MIGRATION
REGULATION AND THE SOCIAL PROTECTION OF
WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY IN AFRICA**
RELOOKING MULTILATERALISM AND AFRICAN SOLIDARITY

DR SWIKANI NCUBE

OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION
2. THE GROWING TWIN CHALLENGES OF
IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND VULNERABILITY IN
THE INFORMAL ECONOMY
3. THE NEXUS BETWEEN IRREGULAR MIGRATION
AND THE INFORMAL ECONOMY
4. REVISITING PROTECTION: AN AFRICAN
PERSPECTIVE
 1. STRENGTHENING REGIONALISM TO
COUNTER THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL
MULTILATERALISM
 2. AFRICAN SHARED VALUES AS A
PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING FOR
PROTECTION
5. CONCLUSION



ILERA
AFRICA
10th Regional Congress



INTRODUCTION

- ❖ By 2050, up to 5 percent of Africa's population of some 2 billion people could be on the move.
- ❖ Limited economic opportunity, conflict, repressive governments, growing youth populations, and climate change are the primary drivers.
- ❖ A majority of these, mostly young and single migrants remain on the continent—seeking employment opportunities in urban hubs
- ❖ While fertility rates appear to be dropping faster than previously predicted, Africa is expected to have a high number of employable young people for the remainder of the century.
- ❖ Already, 10-12 million African youth join the workforce each year.
- ❖ In the absence of opportunities at home, movement is across international borders, with or without the requisite documentation.

INTRODUCTION cont..

- ❖ For the irregular migrant, the informal economy is the easiest space to plug into to earn a living.
- ❖ The irregular migrant, from his/her part, relatively easily finds work that suits his – at least initial – plans
- ❖ Consequently, irregular migrants – provide one of the main sources of labour in informal economic activity
- ❖ The growing challenge of human mobility: Western Africa hosts 7.64 million international migrants. Almost 34 per cent (2.6 million) live in Côte d'Ivoire and 17 per cent (1.3 million) in Nigeria.
- ❖ In Southern Africa, South Africa is estimated to host around 3 million migrants. (mostly economic migrants)
- ❖ East Africa accounts for 30% of the continent's total migrant population of 26.6 million, with economic migrants and refugees making up three-quarters of those on the move.



THE NEXUS BETWEEN IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

- Challenges with securing formal employment because of a lack of appropriate documentation pushes irregular migrants into the informal economy.
 - The fact that irregular immigrants have limited-to-no rights in the host country as non-citizens renders them a significant source of informal labour.
-

Revisiting protection: An African Perspective

TWO ARGUMENTS

- **STRENGTHENING REGIONALISM TO COUNTER THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL MULTILATERALISM**
- **AFRICAN SHARED VALUES AS A PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING FOR PROTECTION**



STRENGTHENING REGIONALISM TO COUNTER THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL MULTILATERALISM

- ❖ Multilateralism is in trouble, the UN is discredited: Russia-Ukraine war; Gaza war.
- ❖ The ILO retains some credibility, thanks to the tripartite set up within which it functions.
- ❖ UNGA: Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (2020) Multilateralism is not an option but a necessity as we build back better for a more equal, more resilient and more sustainable world. The United Nations must be at the centre of our efforts.
- ❖ In response to a request by the UNGA: The Secretary-General presented “Our Common Agenda” in which he called for solidarity between people, countries and generations, and a corresponding renewal of the multilateral system to accelerate the implementation of existing commitments and fill gaps in global governance that have emerged since 2015.
- ❖ He also proposed A Summit of the Future, building on the SDG Summit. UNGA subsequently agreed this will be held in September 2024.
- ❖ Africa has Agenda 2063, AU Social Development Policy as well as the African Union (AU) Livingstone Transformative Agenda (2006)
- ❖ ECOWAS, SADC and EAC all have 2050 visions where notions of development, integration and social justice stand out.
- ❖ ECOWAS Commissioner for Human Development and Social Affairs: Meeting of ECOWAS Experts on Social Protection Framework and Operational plan (2023)
- ❖ AU Good governance roadshow

AFRICAN SHARED VALUES AS A PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING FOR PROTECTION

- ❖ AU Assembly 2011 Declaration: “Towards greater unity and integration through shared values”
- ❖ We commit ourselves to enhancing efforts aimed at reinforcing a deeper understanding of Shared Values and their promotion and popularisation amongst the African peoples as a means of shaping Africa’s common future and mobilising the African peoples towards achieving the shared vision of continental integration and unity.
- ❖ We further call upon the RECs to work closely with the AUC and other AU organs and institutions in harmonising their instruments and further urge them to promote the Shared Values
- ❖ African shared values: “those norms, principles and practices that have been developed or acquired, which provide the basis for collective actions and solutions in addressing the political, economic and social challenges that impede Africa’s integration and development. These values are embedded at the individual, societal, regional, continental and global levels. They are not mutually exclusive and often complement and reinforce each other as individuals and communities interact.”
- ❖ What are African solutions to African problems in the context of irregular migrants in the informal economy?

AFRICAN SHARED VALUES AS A PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING FOR PROTECTION

- ❖ AU Constitutive Act, the Ouagadougou 2004 Plan of Action on Employment Promotion and Poverty Alleviation, as well as the Social Policy Framework both highlight empowerment and protection of the vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- ❖ Us v them approach in Europe - military deployment, fences, e.t.c
- ❖ SA white paper makes reference to Pan-Africanism as a basis for the 1969 OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa
- ❖ If you diminish dignity at entry/arrival, it is difficult to raise the standard at protection level.
- ❖ Conference of the future. Africa needs its own, and needs not model its responses on Europe or the US. Agenda 2063 already paints a picture of the future that needs to be worked towards. (Vision 2025 – ECOWAS, SADC and EAC).
- ❖ Special permits for Zimbabweans, Lesotho nationals as an example of an ubuntu approach, once regularised, such workers are able to insist on certain rights and also report abuse.

SHARED VALUES CONT..

- ❖ Botswana-Namibia Agreement on scraping passports – President Masisi said introducing the use of identity documents for travel is necessary to foster unity between the two neighbors and other southern African states. “it is a clear demonstration of our steadfast commitment to promote relations between our countries and foster social cohesion among our citizens, as well as enhance regional cooperation and integration,”
- ❖ Namibian president “We are taking the first steps towards realization of (the) SADC Protocol on the facilitation of movement of persons, not only goods but persons,”
- ❖ Ubuntu - Broadly defined as an ‘African worldview’ that places communal interests above those of the individual, and where human existence is dependent upon interaction with others, *ubuntu* has a long tradition on the continent.
- ❖ An ubuntu perspective also means adopting evidence-based policies and positions, refraining from populist narratives.

CONCLUSION

- Extending protection is a prerogative of government. Consequently, the focus should shift towards the political, cultural and social – not just the legal solutions
- Irregular migration will not be solved by focusing on the host state. For a holistic response, sustained immigrant flows should be made regional problems and dealt with through sub-regional organizations.
- Must acknowledge the shortcomings, lack of influence in member states by regional organizations.

