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Migration and Civil Society as Development Drivers - a Regional Perspective

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Content

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Preface

The 5th WAI-ZEI Conference entitled "Migration and Civil Society as development drivers within a regional context" sought to provide evidence-based results to support initiatives to mainstream Civil Society Organizations into national and regional migration policy-making processes in West Africa and Europe. The event was organized in the framework of the research and consulting project "Sustainable Regional Integration in West Africa and Europe," between the West Africa Institute (WAI) in Praia, Cabo Verde, and the Center for European Integration Studies (ZEI) based in Bonn, Germany. The conference provided a platform for academics and policymakers to peer-review research outcomes and also to brainstorm on topical regional issues.

Beginning in 2012, the scientific partnership between WAI and ZEI aims at bridging the gap between policy and practice in West Africa through bi-regional academic exchanges. The cooperation is also expected to underline the role of WAI as a West African regional think-tank that provides evidence-based recommendations to successfully accelerate the process of regional integration and social transformations in the ECOWAS Region. The partnership, sponsored by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) for the period 2012 – 2016, has been identified as a beacon project in the area of Humanities in the framework of the Ministry's Africa Strategy.

Organized in Praia at the Ministry of External Relations (MIREX) of Cabo Verde, the 5th Study Group Meeting of the WAI-ZEI project took place on 8th - 9th September, 2014. Considering the peculiar characteristics of Cabo Verde and recent global events, the selection of the place and the timing of the workshop could not have been more appropriate. Over the years, Cabo Verde has moved from a country of immigrants to a country of emigrants; its economy has depended heavily on remittances from emigrants; and the country's capital,

Praia, boasts of several international organizations and a substantial immigrant population. These factors place migration firmly at the core of the country's socio-economic policies.

As mentioned above, the workshop took place in the wake of several shocking global events that impact migration policies. The global financial crisis led to many European governments blaming their countries' economic woes on migrants within their territory. Coupled with the "Lampedusa tragedy," which led to the death of 359 illegal migrants from Africa, the call for more commitment to a more humane European approach to the management of immigration in Europe has received increasing support among academia, policy-makers, as well as ordinary Europeans, who bear the blunt of dwindling economic fortunes in Europe.

In West Africa, the Ebola menace has not only led to stigmatization and harassment of migrants from West Africa, but also freezing of flights to and from affected countries. This has brought about reduction in inter-regional migration, with grave consequences for regional trade relations. Considering the fact that these issues impact the life of ordinary people, and that the impact goes beyond national and even regional boarders, the importance of a discussion on Civil Society (represented by Non-Governmental Organizations – NGOs) engagement in migration issues, from a bi-regional perspective, both for academic research and policy-making, cannot be over-emphasized.

The forum hosted renowned experts from both academia and regional integration institutions, mostly from West Africa and Europe, but also from the SADC region. Presentations and subsequent discussions centered on the impact of intra-regional migration on the regional labor market in West Africa, issues relating to the wellbeing of migrants, data deficits, labor markets, regional integration and culture, history of migration and mainstreaming remittances in the development agenda of both sending and receiving countries. The publication is the compilation of research work peer reviewed at the conference.

WAI – ZEI collaboration will continue to provide the platform for fruitful academic exchanges that can lead to cross-fertilization of ideas for a sustained development of regional integration in both West African and Europe.

In the hope of an enduring collaboration with the participants, we express our profound appreciation to all who contributed in diverse ways to the realization of the publication. We are convinced that the document will provide useful insights on the state of affairs of migration within the broader context of European and West African regional integration, and show the way forward for a productive civil society engagement in migration issues in the two continents.

Prof. Dr. Ludger Kühnhardt   Prof. Dr. Djénéba Traoré
ZEI Director   WAI General Director

Bonn/Praia, June 2015

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Introduction

The tragedy of Lampedusa and the continuing influx of migrants fleeing the Arab Spring and civil war in Libya and Syria have brought the topic of migration back to the top of the European agenda. Still struggling with increased social inequality and high youth unemployment as a result of the economic and financial crises, European voters seem concerned about losing their job or straining national social systems, leading to waves of xenophobic resentment across the continent. However, these demands for increased border protection and stricter migration policies face a smart and ever-growing lobby of business people arguing in favor of well-managed migration to offset the decline in human resources within Europe's aging society. Whether the focus be on safeguarding Europe's economic future or on preventing further tragedies on Europe's shores, any European migration policy will need to be aligned to other policy areas in order to be effective and synergetic. Understanding migration as a cross-cutting issue, progressively evolving from inequalities between countries, the union will not only need to take a look at internal imbalances but also at inequalities in migrants' countries of origin, to find innovative strategies and cooperation partners.

Looking at the issue from the other side of the Mediterranean puts the media-framed "African exodus" back in perspective, as the influx of (legal and illegal) migrants to Europe is estimated to be only a minor portion of a young and growing African population. In fact, Africans primarily move regionally; West Africans for example, being six times more mobile within their region than Europeans are. As a matter of fact, living and working across the region has always been part of the region's history with workers from Sahel countries like Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger moving to the mineral and plantation-rich coastal areas in the South, notably Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia. Aiming to establish an "ECOWAS of the People" by the year 2020, the

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Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has further supported this intra-regional mobility with several efforts ranging from the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment in 1979, to the newly established ECOWAS Brown Card Insurance Scheme of January 2015. However, these efforts are confronted by a lack of enforcement on behalf of local and national governments, and - more recently - the Ebola outbreak which led to a significant disruption of regional trade and transport. Solving the region's difficulties of how to respond to the needs of a rapidly expanding and mobile population will, in turn, also need the cooperation and support of partners north of the "Waterless Sea" Sahara.

Taking into account that migration and mobility are core elements of any regional integration processes worldwide and that in a globalized world regions cannot tackle challenges associated therewith alone, the European Union and Africa have signed the EU-Africa Declaration of Migration and Mobility at the 4th EU-Africa summit in April 2014. In fact, both regional economies need migrant labor or, at least, the financial support they send back home. Nevertheless, critics argue that the declaration is merely a repetition of previous announcements to jointly fight irregular migration, human trafficking, and establishing more secure migration routes, while falling short on practical solutions and genuine commitment to its implementation.

In order to find alternative and innovative approaches towards the current questions of migration and civil society in West Africa and Europe, the 5th WAI-ZEI Conference on 8-9th September 2014 in Praia, Cape Verde, brought together researchers and practitioners to discuss the subject of "Migration and Civil Society as development drivers in a regional context". The conference was part of the joint cooperation project "Sustainable Regional Integration in West Africa" funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) from 2012 to 2016. Discussions during the conference focused upon the questions:

• What synergies can be found among civil society and external partners to effectively manage inter- and intra-regional migration?

• How can migrants' human and financial resources be used effectively to enhance trade and regional integration efforts?

• How can policy areas be aligned for a more harmonized approach to migration that takes global development aspects into account?

More specifically, the authors focus on the following themes:

Nana Afadzinu of the West African Civil Society Institute (WACSI) in Ghana critically assesses the contribution of civil society and cultural factors in West African Regional Integration, underlining their importance as an engine of this process, especially in the field of peace and security. She finds that transnational civil society actors still face many capacity-related obstacles and organizational shortcomings, so that much of their potential remains unused and their political influence rather low.

Consequently, the role of civil society in Europe is analyzed by Prof. Stefan Fröhlich from the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg. Recalling the refusal of the European Constitution in 2005 and recent regional elections, he highlights the widely perceived distance between EU institutions and the European people and the potential to learn from the bottom-up development of civil societal engagement in West Africa since the 90s.

Prof. Dr. Abderrahmane Ngaïdé from the Université Cheick Anta Diop in Dakar further explains the influence of culture and mentality on the regional integration process in West Africa and highlights the importance of cultural diversity. From his perspective, the historical experiences of the region with its historical kingdoms and diverse governance-styles existing in harmony or at least compatibly, are proof of the fact that the perceived ethnic fault lines of today do not represent an insurmountable hurdle for regional integration. He argues that, different to the region's past, cultural diversity ought to be used positively in order to achieve an "ECOWAS of the People."

The next chapter by Dr. Joseph Teye, Prof. Dr. Mariama Awumbila and Yaw Benneh examines the patterns and challenges of intraregional labor migration in West Africa: While in principle, ECOWAS member states have ratified the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Estab-lishment, its implementation has been challenged by local discrimination and border harassments. Furthermore, regional labor markets are constrained by their informality, the lack of formal employment and functional job market infor-mation systems, as well as low skill levels. They conclude that future labor mobility patterns will largely depend on the political will to cooperate and effec-tively implement regional labor migration policies, agreements and protocols.

Prof. Dr. Matthias Lücke from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW) assesses whether human capital follows financial capital, determining the impact and potential of international remittances from migrants and members of

the Diaspora for their countries of origins. He highlights the necessity to facilitate legal migration and the adjustment of international education, pension and health system standards in order to prevent "brain drain" and illegal migration. Furthermore, domestic conditions should be improved to assist the return of migrants to their home countries (circular migration).

The last chapter of Olawale Maiyegun (PhD) from the recently established African Institute for Remittances (AIR) of the African Union gives an overview of remittance flows to and within Africa. Examining the leverage and impact of these flows on social and economic development, he also provides practical recommendations on how to better use their economic potential as a source of poverty reduction and future investment stimulus.

The WAI-ZEI anthology at hand reveals the magnitude of existing obstacles and the number of questions which remain open, demonstrating that further academic analysis is needed for sound policy advice. This collection is intended to inspire further research and policy reflection, in order to enhance the knowledge-base of sustainable regional integration.

Nana Afadzinu

The Role of Civil Society in the Process of Regional Integration - the West African Experience

Introduction

One of the experiences that have left an indelible mark on my memory about our oneness as West Africans, as insignificant as it may seem, was my encounter with an Ivorian at the Abuja Airport. I was returning to Accra from a series of meetings in Abuja in February 2013. I met this gentleman who was also waiting in the lounge for the same flight. A conversation ensued. He started it, actually, by saying 'ete sen' which means 'how are you?' in Twi, a popular Ghanaian language. My exposed passport must have revealed my Ghanaianness. We went on to talk about the stay in Abuja, our missions, and matters of life generally, all in Twi. Getting to the last part of our conversation, we both narrowed down to the personal and begun to ask about names and where we came from. It was at that point, to my utmost surprise, that I found out that he was Ivorian. In fact, he spoke very little English, just as I also spoke very little French. And yet, we had had a whole conversation in Twi; in fact, he spoke better Twi than I did, as a Ghanaian half-Ashanti. I found out that he was an Akan from Cote d'Ivoire. Akan trace their roots back to the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. They spoke the language and performed the festivals and exhibited the culture of the peoples from that region. Every year, he said, they sent a delegation from Cote d'Ivoire to participate in the festival in Ghana and the Ghanaians did the same when they celebrated theirs in Cote d'Ivoire. The Anglophone/Francophone divide did not matter; we were one people.

My first thesis is that the peoples of West Africa have so much in common that policies, structures and institutions of regional integration can take advantage of these commonalities, which can be found by involving ordinary people. My

second thesis is that finding ways of getting ECOWAS closer to the ordinary West African, and strengthening the linkages between the regional and the national level, as well as the conduits such as civil society organizations through which many programs purport to involve the people, regional integration would work. In this paper I therefore discuss the manner in which the people have been made part of the regional integration process, and the challenges involved in bringing regional integration to the grassroots level in West Africa. The paper is divided into four parts. First of all, I will describe what I mean by the people (civil society) and how involved they have been in the development trajectory of West Africa. The second part will outline the central trajectory of regional integration in West Africa by focusing on the history of regional integration in the sub-region, and the setup of institutions such as ECOWAS. The third part will discuss civil society's role as indicated in the normative frameworks and its collaborations with ECOWAS as the vehicle for regional integration, with specific examples. Part four will focus on the challenges and make some recommendations on the way forward. A key feature of this paper is the use of case studies elaborated by other writers and by the author.

The People

'The people' is equal to 'civil society'. This does not mean only civil society organizations, so called 'organized civil society', but it also includes the ordinary West African; man, woman and child who may not be part of any organized group. Some definitions of civil society are essential to provide more clarity. Civil society has been defined, in the broad sense, as, "[...] 'the arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organizations and institutions to advance shared interests'" (CIVICUS, 2012, p.8). Therefore, civil society involves both the individual and the collective, and the main driver is the shared interest, in this case, that of sustainable development for West Africa: "Civil society (…) encompasses civil society organizations (CSOs) and the actions of less formalised groups and individuals. (…) 'organised civil society' (…) refers to independent, non-state and non-private sector associations and organizations that have some form of structure and formal rules of operating, together with the networks, infrastructure and resources they utilise." (CIVICUS, 2012, p.8) Kaplan has referred to Civil Society as, "[...] all those voluntarily constituted social relations, organizations and institutions that stand outside of state structures" (Kaplan,

1994, Section 2). Others define by excluding the market place or the private sector. It has been described as the, "[...] intermediate realm situated between state and household (excluding family, friends and business), populated by organized groups or associations which are separated from the state, enjoy some autonomy in relations with the state, and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their legitimate interests, values or identities"[1]. Giving a broader definition, Kaplan states that: "Civil society (…) seems to imply a society in which the interests, concerns, and dignity of the civilian, the citizen, the "ordinary person", are taken seriously. That is to say, a society which takes as its point of departure the rights (and responsibilities) of the individual "person in the street", rather than ideologies (of whatever kind) or the self-interest of particular groupings." (Kaplan, 1994, Section 2) Others define by including the market or the private sector.

In West Africa, the story of the evolution of democratic governance and its attendant requirements of good governance, transparency and accountability, widespread civic participation, respect for fundamental human rights, social equity and the empowerment of marginalized groups cannot be written without a mention of the significant role played by civil society. The evolution of civil society into the current state in which it finds itself can be traced from pre-colonial times to the colonial era when citizens fought for the independence of several West African states. As a significant case study, reference can be made to the tax riots in Nigeria when market women organized themselves: " Led by Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome- Kuti, the Abeokuta Women's Union protested against the taxation policy of the colonial authority and the withdrawal of the powers of women to control the markets. Although in contrast to most other places in Nigeria, market women in Lagos retained charge of the administration of their markets and were very well organized, their market associations took sides in politics and other related matters in the government. Between 1927 and 1941, the Lagos market women organized several protests to stop the colonial masters from taxing women" (Nwankwo, 2011, p.6). These were the voices of the masses making an input into their economic governance issues.

In the WACSI working paper series on civil society and development in West Africa, Obadare (2014) suggests that one can trace the beginning of civil

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1 This definition is culled from a concept paper titled "Civil Society and Governance" used by researchers of the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK in 1998. It borrows from the definitional discussions of civil society by British Scholar, Gordon White. Available at: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/civsoc/public.doc>. [Accessed on October 17, 2006]

society, as we now know it, to the pre-independence period when the political scene could be described as tumultuous. It was at this point that a number of groups, especially youth and student groups arose and the Pan-African nature of it could be seen from their names, i. e. West African Students' Union, West African Youth League. He even suggests that ECOWAS could probably have been inspired by the Pan-Africanism of those times.

In the late 1980s with the onset and frequency of coups d'etat and military regimes in West Africa, organized civil society was mainly led by student unions, academia, professional bodies such as Bar Associations, religious bodies, and trade unions. Several other phenomena in this era contributed to a particular trajectory of civil society in the West African sub-region. Given the dominance of authoritarianism in many West African countries, the end of Cold War, the onset of civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the introduction of Structural Adjustment Plans by the IMF, ordinary citizens of West Africa were facing a lot of harship in the 1980s, and beginning of 1990s. In the 1990s therefore, civil society evolved with the emergence of issue based associations and groups pushing forward the interests of the 'common man', and they contributed immensely to the wave of democratization that swept across the sub region in that era. (Afadzinu, 2014) Obadare explains that two events that took place between December 1989 and February 1990 dictated how political events would evolve in West Africa. These were mainly the civil war that broke out in Liberia after Charles Taylor led rebel forces known as the National Patriotic Forces of Liberia to attack and overthrow the late President Samuel Doe's regime, and the wave of democracy that swept through the region inspired by the victory in Benin over Mathieu Kerekou's dictatorship. Those events, Obadare opines showed that: "(1) the state is not invincible after all and will, if sufficiently pushed, make significant concessions and (2) society, despite acute material deprivation, remains capable of mounting a robust challenge" (Obadare, 2014, p.6, 7). The power of the people seemed to have been awakened.

Civil society has thence played an influential role in the promotion of democracy in West Africa. This includes complementing, informing, influencing and challenging government by advocating public services, strengthening state efficiency, lobbying for the rights of excluded groups, campaigning against corruption, engaging in public-private relationship; contributing to major advances in legislation and practices that promote fundamental human rights; engaging in budget analysis and tracking to ensure that budgetary allocations reflect critical needs and priorities of the larger society and [holding governments to account]

in issues of national and regional interest and relevance. (Vandyck) Obadare gives an example of the agency of civil society when he describes what he called the 'Miracle of Benin'. The 'Miracle of Benin', he says, was made possible by the synergistic collaboration of a network of civic associations from across the socio-political and cultural spectrum, including student bodies, community organizations, church and associated religious groups, trade unions, women's associations and sundry political groups [and] the events in Benin provided an impetus for other civil society groups across the region. (Obadare, 2014, p.3) It was therefore the amalgamation of the power of the ordinary citizen from all walks of life in Benin that finally gave them their 'democracy miracle' that subsequently affected other countries in a positive way (Ghana, Mali and others).

Therefore, civil society itself has many faces and sides and is as diverse in its constituency as it is in its functions in West Africa. It is made up of citizens, trade unions, voluntary associations, professional bodies, traditional leaders and groups, religious leaders and groups, non-governmental organizations, academia, student bodies and other civic bodies. It is important to understand that at many levels, these different groupings have represented and advocated the interests of the ordinary West African and sought to push forward a development agenda mainly at the national levels in West African countries, and also at the regional level. A lot more of what has been done at the regional level will be discussed in detail later in this paper.

Regional Integration in West Africa

What is Regional Integration? Tolentino describes it as including, "[...] two key ideas: a number of countries linked by geography and a degree of interdependence or a geographical area that is not a state but has some state-like characteristics such as economic policy, promoting the public good and sovereignty." (Tolentino, 2011, p.19) He goes on to describe the five levels of integration as follows: "i) the Free Trade Zone [that] seeks the progressive reduction and eventual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers between the signatory states (…) , (ii) Customs Union, [where] all member states apply a common external tariff (CET), (iii) the Common Market for the free movement of production factors (labor, capital and services) and macroeconomic coordination, (iv) an Economic Union is the next step [that] involves a common currency and political and social harmonization, [and] (v) the establishment of

a federal union." (Tolentino, 2011, p.19) Sesay additionally summarizes the key ingredients of successful regional integration as follows:

"(…) domestic peace and security in the integrating states (…); ii) enhancing political and civic commitment and mutual trust among the members, and iii) (…) a minimum threshold of macro-economic stability and good financial management in member countries."(Sesay and Omotosho, 2011, p.13, 14) The main aim of regional integration seems to be economic stability and prosperity for the countries involved and the basis of this has to be political stability, which will also ensure social stability and sustainable development.

The regional integration story of West Africa began in 1975. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was founded by 15 West African States in 1975 to pursue the key goal of economic integration. The main aims of the Treaty of Lagos, signed in May 1975 were to promote trade, cooperation, and self-reliance[2]. Sesay (2011, p.13) noted that the key driving forces for regional integration in West Africa were to enhance pre-colonial ties and strengthen solidarity amongst West African peoples that may have been destroyed by the fragmentation caused by colonialism, get an enlarged market to make the region more competitive in the global market space, increase their bargaining power with a combined population of over 300 million people, address the globalization threats which were more difficult to face as weak, fragmented states rather than a strong bloc and address some of the political challenges through regional consensus and agreement. ECOWAS, as Rene Roberts describes it, is fundamentally a strategy for socio-economic development in West Africa encompassing political coordination, market and regulatory harmonization. (Roberts, 2004, p. 5, 6)

The turbulent political years of the 1980s and 1990s, with the outbreak of civil wars in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, forced the rather dormant ECOWAS to regroup, assess and redirect its mandate. Whilst not shunning its original economic mandate, the organization in its revised treaty of 1993 now stated that the main principles underpinning the regional integration of West Africa through ECOWAS were political. They included:

a. "equality and inter-dependence of Member States;

b. solidarity and collective self-reliance;

2   Encyclopedia Britannica.

c. inter-State co-operation, harmonisation of policies and integration of programmes;

d. non-aggression between Member States;

e. maintenance of regional peace, stability and security through the promotion and strengthening of good neighbourliness;

f. peaceful settlement of disputes among Member States, active co-operation between neighbouring countries and promotion of a peaceful environment as a prerequisite for economic development,

g. recognition, promotion and protection of human-and peoples rights in accordance with the provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights; promotion and consolidation of a democratic system of governance in each Member State as envisaged by, the Declaration of Political Principles adopted in Abuja on 6 July, 1991; and

h. equitable and distribution of the costs and benefits of economic co-operation and integration."[3]

It was an acknowledgement that without peace, political and social stability there could be no economic development.

Mirroring the governance infrastructure at the national level, ECOWAS has three main arms of governance: the ECOWAS Commission, the ECOWAS Parliament and the ECOWACS Community Court of Justice. The ECOWAS Commission performs the executive role of formulating and implementing policies, the court plays the adjudicating role of interpreting the norms and legislation of ECOWAS and the Parliament is just an advisory body to the Commission. In the case of ECOWAS, the legislative role of the parliament, still lies in the bosom of the Commission. These three key organs, along with several agencies of ECOWAS ,endeavor to translate the regional policies and programs of ECOWAS to the national level in order to make regional integration real in the life of the ECOWAS citizens. The question to be asked is: Where are the people? As Sesay states: "(…) that ECOWAS has so far failed to effectively mobilise its nearly 300 million citizens solidly behind its regional integration agenda 36 years after its creation is no longer news."(Sesay and Omotosho, 2011, p.17) He elaborates

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3 Revised Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States, concluded in Cotonou, 24 July 1993, published by the Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS. Art. 4.

that unlike the EU, ECOWAS citizens have not been involved in the process of regional integration. A clear example of this, Sesay (2011, p.17) notes, was the response a man gave when he was asked what ECOWAS was; "a football team in England", was his confident reply. Much more needs to be done in involving ECOWAS citizens in the regional integration process.

In 2008, ECOWAS launched its 2020 vision statement heralding the movement of ECOWAS from and ECOWAS of States to one of Peoples. This was an admission that its people had so far been left behind in the integration process. Tolentino explains that, "the participation of internal and external, as well as state and non-state actors is crucial for the success or failure of integration. The internal actors can be governments, a group of states' leaders, civil society (…). Some act from top to bottom, others from the bottom to the top. In general, successful cases have resulted from the collective action of the actors which, functioning at the bottom and the top of society, have successfully joined forces in order to realize a common temporary or permanent vision." (Tolentino, 2011, p.21) In the case of ECOWAS, this participatory process had been non-existent for a long time, which had negatively affected regional integration.

I will elaborate on these factors by exploring some specific areas of focus for ECOWAS in the last twenty-plus years, and the contributions of civil society within this period in these areas. First of all, it will be helpful to state that in attempting to move from an 'ECOWAS of States' to an 'ECOWAS of peoples', organized civil society has been the main conduit and partner that ECOWAS has collaborated with, listened to and relied on as its main connection to the ordinary man and woman on the street. In order to understand this process, I wish to make a reference to the analysis of the concept of 'epistemic communities' made by Opoku (2007, p.8). He mentions that the relationship of ECOWAS with civil society can best be described within the context of it reaching out to, "a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and with an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge" and that for this epistemic community to be effective, there needs to be three conditions precedent: "First, there should be a high degree of uncertainty (preferably a shocking development that helps to overcome institutional inertia) among policy makers which would spur them on to seek help from an epistemic community." One could argue that the events of the 1980s and 1990s did indeed shock ECOWAS to take this step. As a result, "[...] there should be consensus among the experts on the issue in question for the emerging problem to be resolved on the basis of the technical merits of the

options provided by an epistemic community; [...]". This can be said to have been evident because civil society organisations had deepened their expertise, and also had first-hand experience of communities and community problems that ECOWAS bureaucrats and politicians may not have been privy to. Finally, "[...] the members of an epistemic community must 'become part of the bureaucratic apparatus'(i.e. gain access to the corridors of power) in order to influence regime formation and implementation" (Opoku, 2007, p.8). This final requirement can be said to have been established with the setup of the West Africa Civil Society Forum, a platform which was acknowledged and endorsed by the ECOWAS commission as the interface platform between the institution and the peoples of West Africa. The patterns and levels of collaboration have differed on various issues, which the following sections will examine giving specific examples.

The Avenues for Collaboration

As mentioned in previous sections, a number of developments in the late 1980s, 1990s and early 2000 led ECOWAS to sharpen its focus on peace and security. They included the internal conflicts in Liberia (1989) and Sierra Leone (1991), Guinea Bissau and Cote d'Ivoire (2002) and the effects of this civil strife on the sub region. ECOWAS intervened through ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone, ECOMIL in Liberia and ECOMICI in Cote d'Ivoire. These were, "[...] classic military operations designed to stop wars or monitor cease-fires, thus creating space for peace negotiations and humanitarian operations"[4]. In addressing this peace and security challenges, it was recognized that, "[...] ECOWAS Member States have a responsibility to ensure sustainable peace and security by implementing measures and initiatives that go beyond violence management. In other words, military intervention should constitute only a segment, and ideally a measure of last resort, within the broader peace and security architecture. Emphasis should now be placed on prevention and peace-building, including the strengthening of sustainable development, the promotion of region-wide humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness strategy and the culture of democracy. The ECPF constitutes a response to this challenge."[5] Peace and security were now encouraged to be more systemic, preventive and proactive rather than reactive.

4 *ECOWAS Regulation MSC/REG. 1/01/08, The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework.* [hereinafter referred to as ECPF]. Section V, No. 24.

5 ECPF. Section V, No. 26.

It is therefore not surprising that one key area in which civil society has played a huge role in the regional integration plan of ECOWAS has been the area of peace and security. Even though the economic integration of the 15 countries was the main goal for ECOWAS at its establishment in 1975, peace and security were recognized as important even though they were not given the level of recognition that they are enjoying now.

ECOWAS, in repositioning itself, drew its mandate to formulate policies in this area from the foundational and related legal documents of ECOWAS, the AU, NEPAD and the UN. It adopted the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression and the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defense. Other protocols that formed a solid foundation that the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) built upon were the 1979 Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment, the 1981 Declaration of Political Principles, the 1993 Revised Treaty of ECOWAS, which conferred supranationality on ECOWAS; and the 1998 Declaration of the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Lightweight weapons, which has, since June 2006, been converted into a binding instrument [known as] the Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials. All these treaties effectively informed the ECPF. However, the 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance and the 1999 Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security have been noted as providing, "[...] the principal basis and justification for the ECPF"[6].

The intention of the ECPF includes, "[...] a comprehensive operational conflict prevention and peace-building strategy that enables the ECOWAS system and member states to draw upon human and financial resources at the regional (including civil society and the private sector) and international levels in their efforts to creatively transform conflict"[7]. It is also envisioned to become a 'reference for developing process based cooperation with regional and international stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, Africa RECs, the AU and UN systems, as well as development partners on conflict prevention and peacebuilding around concrete interventions' Thus, the ECPF sets out to institutionalize that systemic conflict prevention framework and also involve key stakeholders including civil society, in its operationalization.

6   ECPF. Section VII, No. 30-37.
7   ECPF. Section II, No. 7a.

The recognition of civil society in a major developmental framework of ECOWAS as an equal partner in implementing the development project to ensure peace and security in the sub-region, is significant. This did not come by chance. By 2008, when the ECPF was adopted, civil society had been very active in engaging ECOWAS and West African leaders on peace and security matters, particularly on issues related to the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. An often-cited example is the Liberia mass action for peace, a group of Liberian women from all walks of lifeled by Leymah Gbowee[8] and others, who aggressively advocated peace in Liberia. Civil society actors and experts were very much involved in drafting the framework itself. Opoku explains that, "[...] with the loopholes in the then existing protocols in relation to the emerging conflicts, a group of experts from civil society with the support of the government of Nigeria began to examine existing ECOWAS protocols and explore how ECOWAS could fashion out a document appropriate for the emerging conflict trends. Again, the appointment of the late Cheikh Oumar Diarra as the ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary (at the time) responsible for overseeing the adoption and implementation of the Mechanism proved helpful. The ECOWAS – civil society partnership should therefore be seen in terms of the ability of civil society organizations to make informed input into ECOWAS peace-building initiatives." (Opoku, 2007, p.8, 9) This indicates that right from the drafting stages of the ECPF, ECOWAS encouraged civil society input.

The ECPF bolsters peoples' participation in the conflict prevention process and underscores civil society as a critical partner. It espouses that, "[...] as steps are taken under the new ECOWAS strategic vision to transform the region from an 'ECOWAS of States' into an 'ECOWAS of Peoples', (…), civil society shall play an increasingly critical role alongside Member States in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security"[9].

Being the area that ECOWAS has trumpeted through its normative framework and practice and has thereby endorsed its relationship with civil society, it is important at this stage to expatiate on what the ECPF sees as conflict prevention. Conflict prevention (as envisaged by the ECPF) is broad in its definition and comprises both *operational prevention*, which includes, " [...] early warning, mediation, conciliation, preventive disarmament and preventive deployment using interactive means, such as good offices and the ECOWAS standby force"; and *structural prevention* which comprises, "[...] political, institutional

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8   A Liberian women's rights activist and 2011 Nobel Peace Laureate.

9   ECPF. Section II, No. 4.

(governance) and developmental reforms, capacity enhancement and advocacy on the culture of peace"[10]. The subsequent paragraphs will discuss the different levels of engagement and roles played by civil society in the operational and structural prevention of conflict in the sub-region.

Early Warning

The Early Warning system of ECOWAS is set up, "[...] to facilitate the realization of Articles 3 (d), 19, 23 and 24 of the Mechanism[11], [...] [and] sets the objective to furnish incident and trend reports on peace and security as well as real time preventive response options, to ECOWAS policy makers to ensure predictability and facilitate interventions to avert, defuse or creatively transform acute situations of conflict, instability, disruptions and disasters"[12].

To achieve this, the activities that were to be undertaken included the responsibility of the ECOWAS Zonal Bureaux of Early Warning to, "[...] adopt a participatory regional approach in data gathering by building and strengthening cooperation with Member States and civil society, including but not limited to NGOs, traditional groups, diverse interest groups, women and youth organisations. (…) f. Member states and civil society are expected to actively cooperate with the Zonal Bureaux in the collection and processing of data, and actively engage in local conflict prevention, resolution and peace building initiatives"[13]. The role for civil society is thus spelt out.

The ECOWARN is a system that, "[...] makes use of qualitative, quantitative and network methodologies to operationalize the system. [It] is considered the first of its kind on the African continent in the sense that it is the first time that governments and CSOs collaborated to establish a sub-regional Early Warning System for the prevention of conflict. The system is set up in such a way that ever member country of ECOWAS has a civil society monitor and a government official monitor who collect information on a day to day basis that is fed into an online database." (WACSI, KAIPTC and GTZ, 2009, p.305).

10 ECPF. Section II, Section VIII, No. 19 (a).

11 ECOWAS, 1999. *ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.* [online] Available at: <http://www.comm.ecowas.int/sec/?id=ap101299&lang=en>.

12 ECPF, Section VIII, No. 44.

13 ECPF, Section VIII, No. 45 (d) and (f).

One civil society organization that has been very active in engaging ECOWAS on ECOWARN is the West Africa Network for Peace-building (WANEP). The box below captures Opoku's description of WANEP and its role in ECOWARN.

WANEP

WANEP was conceived in 1998 as a coordinating structure for collaborative peacebuilding in West Africa, with the ultimate aim of building sustainable peace as a foundation for development in the sub-region. Over the years, it has facilitated the creation of a coalition of peacebuilding civil society organizations, spearheading their synergistic relationship with ECOWAS in sub-regional peacebuilding. WANEP operates as a peacebuilding network organization, with a sub-regional headquarters in Accra, Ghana; and 12 national network secretariats in 12 ECOWAS countries. The countries are; Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. It continues to work to cover Mali, Cape Verde and Niger.

The WANEP secretariat based in Accra, provides guidance and support to national networks in strategic planning and process management, and promotes information sharing among its members and associated institutions. Its peace building activities are in the areas of conflict prevention/early warning and response initiatives, capacity building, network development, conflict intervention, and active non-violence education. The following programs constitute the vehicles through which WANEP undertakes the above-mentioned activities: West Africa Early Warning and Response Network (WARN); Capacity Building and the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI); WANEP National Networks; Women in Peacebuilding Network Program; Intervention and Special Initiatives Program (ISIP); Active Non-Violence Education; and Justice Building.

WANEP collaboration with ECOWAS dates back to 1999 on issues of conflict prevention. However, the adoption of the ECOWAS Mechanism in that same year led to its formal commissioning by ECOWAS to conduct an assessment of ECOWAS' "conflict prevention capacity including its training needs with a view to operationalizing the 1999 Mechanism."

In specific reference to early warning, however, the involvement of WANEP in sub-regional early warning began in 2000 when it established the WARN to institutionalize a culture of prevention by building the capacities of communities and CSOs in the early detection of nascent violent conflicts that will bring about early warning as a basis for an informed early response. This initiative was strengthened by a five-year partnership it forged with the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in 2001, to promote preventive peacebuilding by developing local and regional capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. With substantial financial support from USAID, the WANEP – CRS partnership is … a two-phase implementation. Phase I, also known as the *Capacity Building for Conflict Prevention and Good Governance* – popularly referred to as Capacity Building Programme (CBP) - ended in 2004. Under that project, WANEP played the part of a sub-regional organization with technical expertise in conflict early warning and response as well as peacebuilding (CEWR/PB). Its expertise was sought to strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS and CSOs in West Africa to carry out work that reduces conflict and strengthens conflict mediation and peace at local and national levels. Under this project, WANEP was to develop the conflict prevention capacity of ECOWAS; identify and strengthen the capacity of peacebuilding civil society organizations in the sub-region; link the two; and foster a better management and prevention of on-going and emerging conflicts in the sub-region. Specifically, the operationalisation of the ECOWAS Observation and Monitoring System was the prime focus regarding the service that WANEP was to provide for ECOWAS. Part of the project challenge was the development of a joint early warning database with indicators to monitor security threats in the sub-region.

A memorandum of understanding signed in this context between ECOWAS and WANEP in February 2004 committed WANEP to "provide training, technical assistance and on-site technical support to ensure that appropriate structures are in place to establish and strengthen linkages between CSO networks and ECOWAS, to increase the conflict prevention capacity and effectiveness of ECOWAS; and increase the OMC's capacity to collect and analyze data on conflict issues.

The above-mentioned MoU enjoined the ECOWAS office of the Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs, Defence and Security (now Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security), in charge of the ECOWAS Mechanism to assist in getting access to relevant documents and key personnel; ensure ECOWAS' political support to the program; and facilitate civil society participation throughout the duration of the program.

Through this project, WANEP, among others, assessed the training needs of ECOWAS and peace-building CSOs in the sub-region; hired a Liaison Officer stationed at the ECOWAS secretariat to facilitate the WANEP – ECOWAS partnership; organized three consultative meetings between ECOWAS and CSO staff to develop action plans; trained some ECOWAS zonal bureau coordinators in the development of early warning reports; developed a list server of sub-regional CSOs; and organized a sub-regional civil society forum at which key conflict indicators were identified. So far, a coalition of more than 450 peace-building CSOs has been formed in the 12 national networks of WANEP. With these range of activities, sub- regional CSOs acting through the national network secretariats of WANEP, were to become the civil society organizations on the ground to support the work of the zonal bureau heads in early warning information gathering.

While ECOWAS displayed a hesitant involvement in the initial stages of CBP I, a process review of the project revealed two major weaknesses worth mentioning: First, there was no provision in the design of the project that linked the activities of the WANEP national network coordinators with the zonal bureau heads of ECOWAS; and there was no clarity regarding how ECOWAS would use the information gathered - something that the review report described as a "key weakness in the design" of the project.

Under phase II of the WANEP – CRS partnership (July 2005 – June 2007), a follow-up project known as the Enhanced Conflict Prevention Framework for ECOWAS and Civil Society Organizations", was implemented. This focused on the establishment of community level early warning system in seven countries. ECOWAS is working with WANEP in the development of the ECOWARN database – an online database reporting system designed to capture data collected from the field by both ECOWAS Member-States monitors and WANEP's network of monitors as a way of monitoring issues in the sub-region that impact on peace and security. Thus in each country, there is a pair of WANEP early warning monitor and ECOWAS Member-State Monitor all trained by WANEP. In essence, the information gathering reach of the ECOWAS early warning system has been widened.

This box was extracted from Opoku, J.M, 2007. West African Conflict Early Warning and Early Response System: The Role of Civil Society Organizations. *KAIPTC Paper* No. 19, p.12-14.

Preventive Diplomacy

ECOWAS is expected to, "[...] facilitate the enhancement of relevant institutions of the community to undertake mediation, conciliation and arbitration activities"[14]. Member States, on the other hand are expected to, "[...] work closely with the Zonal Bureaux, the Council of the Wise and the Offices of the Special representative through ECOWAS National Units to mobilise local resources, including eminent persons, traditional rulers, religious leaders, community groups, women's organisations, other civil society organisations, the private sector and any other such actors as may be necessary, or the purposes of mediation, conciliation and facilitation to resolve local disputes"[15]. Members of WACSOF and other civil society actors have played crucial mediation roles working closely with ECOWAS to address the crises that arose in Mali and Cote d'Ivoire in 2012 and 2013.

Training and capacity building in mediation and alternative dispute resolution and the provision of resources for this is undertaken by organisations such as WANEP , West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), and a number of others working in collaboration with the ECOWAS training Centres of Excellence, such as the Kofi Annan Peacekeeping and Training Centre (KAIPTC).

Democracy and Political Governance

Civil society's role in this is outlined in Section VIII, No. 53 (c, d, j, k, l, and o) among others, of the ECPF 2008. These sections require ECOWAS and its Member States to actively involve civil society in strengthening the internal democracy of political parties, electoral and governance processes, as well as in the popularization of ECOWAS protocols related to democracy and good governance. Member states are supposed to be assisted by civil society, "[...]to establish mechanisms to strengthen the capacity of the media, security services and the judiciary to deliver efficient electoral oversight, security and arbitration"[16]. Civil Society is expected to, "[...] carry out activities to promote credible and transparent electoral and governance processes, including awareness-raising, training workshops for political parties, electoral management bodies, the

14 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 49 (i).
15 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 49 (l).
16 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 53 (l).

media, security services, election monitors and observers"[17]. The ECPF in these sections is quite detailed in outlining specific activities that should be done in collaboration with civil society.

One noteworthy role of civil society has been its participation and monitoring to ensure good election governance, specifically through elections observations, voter education and sensitization, as well as through advocacy on specific areas affecting political governance such as enhancing women's political participation. The following case studies demonstrate how civil society has engaged with this opportunity to fully participate in strengthening democratic governance in West Africa.

Elections Observation

Two case studies will be used here to illustrate civil society's role in elections observation. These are: that of the West Africa Civil Society Forum, and the West Africa Women's Elections Observation team set up by the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) and Women in Peace and Security Network (WIPSEN).

CSO Election Observation in West Africa

The WACSOF experience

The involvement of CSOs in electoral processes is engendered by the need to promote citizen's participation in order to deepen democratic practice in West Africa. [...]

WACSOF's engagement in elections in the sub region was preceded by the dominance of the UN and other international and local non-governmental organisations. WACSOF has however institutionalized indigenous citizen-led election observation in the sub-region. WACSOF's engagement in electoral processes in the sub-region is predicated on the need to contribute to regional integration efforts through the promotion of democracy and good governance.

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17 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 53 (k).

Again WACSOF sees its role in electoral processes as a conflict prevention approach given that most conflicts in the sub region can be attributed to the poor management of electoral processes triggered in part by the tendency of some political stakeholders, especially ruling parties, to sabotage the holding of genuine, free and fair elections whose outcomes will reflect the will of the electorate.

As a result, the election observation missions of WACSOF are aimed at:

• determining the preparatory state of the elections in terms of elections materials among others;

• ascertaining the socio-political climate within which elections are being conducted;

• evaluating the degree of transparency an credibility of elections;

• sensitizing actors to entrench peace initiatives within the elections processes

The phases of a typical WACSOF intervention in electoral process involve:

• pre-assessment mission

• accreditation

• voter education

• elections observation training (mandatory) and conflict prevention training (optional)

• election day observation

• dissemination of election report

This box was extracted from WACSI, KAIPTC and GTZ, eds. 2009. *Conflict Prevention Resource Pack for Civilian Actors in West Africa*. Accra: West Africa Civil Society Institute, p. 88-90.

The West Africa Women's Elections Observation (WAWEO) Team

The notion of having an all-women's election observation team was borne out of the desire to see more women move beyond the periphery and margins of politics into mainstream decision-making positions at all levels of policy making. This is rooted in the firm belief that when women, who believe in promoting and protecting the rights and development of women have more decision making power, they will influence policy and change the life of women within their constituency for the better. This will not only benefit women but society as a whole.

The idea for the women's election observation team was first mooted at the second West Africa Women's Policy Forum in Cote d'Ivoire, in November 2009. This [Women's Policy Forum] is an annual forum coordinated by the West Africa Civil Society Institute and the Women in Peace and Security Network (WIPSEN). It convenes women from different West African countries and provides them the space for reflection, dialogue and strategic thinking on the key policy issues affecting women's development in West Africa. The Women's Policy Forum has identified the enhancement of women's political participation as one of the main catalysts for empowering the woman in West Africa, enabling her to reach her highest potential and to contribute her quota to the development of her country, region, continent and the world.

The Forum has acknowledged, that in addition to overcoming the numerous obstacles facing women in West Africa, women's participation in the electoral governance process itself needed to be enhanced for a number of reasons.

• For role modeling; that is, physically increasing the number of female observers;

• To gather credible data for advocacy for electoral governance reform that will ensure that the laws and administrative processes do not disadvantage women directly or indirectly; and

• To ensure that the electoral processes were themselves gender sensitive

The seed that was sown as an idea in 2009 of an all-women's elections observation team, bore fruit in 2011 with the inauguration of the West Africa Women's Election Observation (WAWEO) team.

WAWEO has an initial group of thirty (30) women from thirteen (13) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries. The only countries in the ECOWAS regions not included for now are the Lusophone countries (Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde). Efforts are being made to get women who are gender sensitive and interested in pushing forward the women's empowerment and rights agenda in these countries to join WAWEO. WAWEO's main strategy is to build a strong team of capable and well informed gender sensitive women from West Africa who would be present in every West African country that conducts elections in order to observe the elections through a gender lens, collate any pertinent information that needs to be addressed to enhance women's participation, note this in a report, forward it to the appropriate authorities for subsequent action, and implement the necessary follow up actions to get results. Since its inauguration in 2011, the WAWEO team has observed elections in Liberia, Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Ghana, and in the last four of these countries have not only observed as an independent WAWEO team, but also as part of the ECOWAS elections observation team.

WAWEO members do the general elections observation, and comply with the ECOWAS code of conduct for elections observation. However, they have an additional checklist to enable them glean and distill the aspects in the electoral process that affect women either positively or negatively.

Apart from the examples above, civil society involvement in elections is done by several groups at both national and regional level. Other groups that have been involved in elections observation are Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (RHADDO), Independent Observatory for Elections (GERDDES, Burkina Faso), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD, Nigeria), National Election Watch (NEW, Sierra Leone), (Mano River Womens' Peace Network (MAWORPNET), WANEP and several others. In recent times organized civil society groups have coalesced at national levels to form domestic observer groups while they also have a regional body of domestic election observer groups. These domestic elections observer groups comprise not only of NGOs but also of different civil society formations, including faith-based organizations, trade unions, voluntary associations and other groups.

A recent development in elections observation by civil society is what is known as the situation rooms. These are observatories set up by civil society coalitions at national level in West African countries to monitor elections. They have been set up in the last three years by CSOs in Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana

and Mali. The Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), a grant making and advocacy foundation in the region, has been a key partner in the set up and operation of these situation rooms.

WAWEO observed that women have also been very active in setting up and operating election situation rooms. The women of Sierra Leone, for example, established a women situation room, which created a platform for dialogue with key stakeholders supporting women's participation and representation in peaceful elections. It was a coordinating mechanism for women to significantly contribute to peaceful and credible elections in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. It comprised of women and youth groups involved in monitoring electoral processes across the country before, during and after elections. A monitoring room was used during the elections in order to capture any discrepancies arising and addressing them before they could cause tensions.

The coalition that set up the situation room also deployed 300 female observers. The domestic local observation team in Sierra Leone, National Elections Watch (NEW), deployed in total, nine thousand observers. A few of the female observers that were supported by IBIS in Sierra Leone benefited from training in gender-sensitive elections observation facilitated by WACSI.

In Senegal, a coalition of women's rights advocacy groups set up a women's situation room to monitor the elections. This was coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS). The observers also noted that 45% of the local election observers were female.(Afadzinu, 2013) Apart from this, due to the nature of elections in West Africa and its propensity to trigger violence, civil society also organizes peace campaigns during elections. As an example , in Liberia ordinary women and women in civic organizations held vigils and fasts, and prayed for peace during the election period. They also embarked on peace marches and undertook various activities to propagate the peace message.

Human Rights and the Rule of Law

As part of the regional integration agenda, the ECPF provides as a key objective, "[...] to ensure equal protection and access to justice and social services for all before the law, and to strengthen the institutions of human rights and justice in the region to this end". Civil society's role here is spelt out as follows: to ' actively participate in the adoption, reform, implementation and evaluation of

human rights policies and practices in Member States. [...] monitor Member States' compliance with human rights instruments, and [...] popularize and raise awareness about ECOWAS Protocols, regional and international instruments relating to human rights and the rule of law."[18]

The two case studies below are culled from Alter, Helfer and McAllister's submission on 'A New International Human Rights Court for West Africa: the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice', published in the 'American Journal of International Law'. They clearly depict how civil society has played some of these roles, and the obstacles that it has faced. At the same time, the case studies also bring to the fore the political will at the ECOWAS level to strengthen its institutions and work with civil society to achieve the overall objective of adhering to the policies and practices of ECOWAS, which will foster regional integration.

Case Study 1 – Ebrima Manneh

The case of Chief Ebrima Manneh involved a reporter for the *Daily Observer* who disclosed information that appeared in a news article critical of the government. Plainclothes intelligence agents arrested Manneh in July 2006. He disappeared until January 2007, when reports emerged that he was being detained at a local police station. Intelligence and police officials denied that he was in their custody. In May 2007, the NGO Media Foundation for West Africa filed a complaint with the ECOWAS Court charging the Gambia with numerous human rights abuses, demanding Manneh's release, and requesting compensation for his injuries. The Gambia refused to respond to the complaint and ignored multiple requests to appear or file documents, delaying the proceedings. In June 2008, the Court ruled for Manneh, ordering the Gambia to release him from 'unlawful detention without any further delay,' pay him U.S.$100,000 in damages, and bear the costs of the litigation.

The Gambia ignored the judgment—a decision that received a great deal of unfavorable publicity from governments, international organizations, and NGOs. For example, the International Press Institute publicly stated that the 'Gambian media environment has long been hostile and dangerous, but the government's flagrant disregard for the ECOWAS legal proceedings represents a low point.' Likewise, the African Commission on Human Rights called on the Gambia 'to immediately and fully comply' with the ECOWAS Court's judgment.

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18 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 58.

Case Study 2 – Musa Saidykhan

The second case, concerning the detention and torture of Musa Saidykhan, was harder for the government to ignore, because the plaintiff was alive, exhibited clear evidence of torture, and pursued the case from the safety of another country. After a coup attempt in 2006, the *Independent* newspaper published the names of individuals that the Gambian National Intelligence Agency had arrested. Shortly thereafter and without a warrant, soldiers and policemen arrested Saidykhan, the newspaper's editor. Security agents took Saidykhan to a detention center, where he was held for twenty-two days and repeatedly tortured. Intelligence officials eventually released Saidykhan, but they continued to monitor his movements and threatened his family, ultimately causing Saidykhan and his family to flee the country.

In 2007, Saidykhan, supported by the Media Foundation for West Africa, filed a complaint with the ECOWAS Court seeking a declaration that his arrest and detention were illegal and that he had been tortured and denied a fair hearing. This time, the Gambia participated in the proceedings. It asked the ECOWAS Court to dismiss the suit on the grounds that the Court lacked jurisdiction, that the Court's intervention was 'an affront to [its] sovereignty,' and that the suit should be heard by a national court. In 2009, the Court issued an interim ruling rejecting these arguments.

The Gambia's political attack on the ECOWAS Court occurred while the merits phase of *Saidykhan* was pending. Gambian officials noted that the government was 'aggrieved' by the judgment in the *Manneh* case and had 'set the political process in motion to take the matter to the next level and get the decision set aside.' In September 2009, the Gambia called for a Meeting of Government Experts to revise the 2005 Protocol and restrict the Court's authority. Most importantly, the Gambia sought to limit the ECOWAS Court's human rights jurisdiction to treaties ratified by the respondent state and to require exhaustion of domestic remedies. [...].

The ECOWAS Commission (which, under the 2006 reorganization mentioned above, replaced the Executive Secretariat) responded to the Gambian proposals by invoking the procedures for public participation in ECOWAS decision- making. The commission also invited West African lawyers to consider the proposed, multipart amendment. Based on their input, the ECOWAS Committee of Legal Experts recommended against narrowing the Court's human rights jurisdiction. In October

2009, the Council of Justice Ministers unanimously endorsed the committee's recommendation—with the consequence that the proposals were implicitly rejected at a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers the following month.

This box was extracted from Alter, K., Helfer, L. and McAllister, R., 2013. A New International Human Rights Court for West Africa: The ECOWAS Communitry Court of Justice. *American Journal of International Law* (107), pp.737-779, pp. 761-763.

The Community Court of Justice

One of the bench marks for assessing progress in the promotion of human rights and the rule of law is the active role of the Community Parliament and the Community Court of Justice in monitoring compliance of Member States; with human rights and rule of law instruments. Civil society was very active in ensuring that the mandate of the Community court of justice was expanded to include human rights protection.

The Community Court of Justice's Human Rights Mandate and Civil Society's Role

As part of the 1993 overhaul [of ECOWAS], member states agreed to broaden public participation in ECOWAS by expanding access for civil society groups. National NGOs were precluded from participating in Community policymaking, but regional civil society groups could be accredited to observe public meetings, make presentations, and circulate documents. These institutional reforms created an incentive for civil society groups to mobilize within ECOWAS and to create regional advocacy bodies. In 2001, NGOs formed the West African Human Rights Forum, an umbrella organization that gained accreditation from ECOWAS and attempted to influence Community policymaking. These opportunities for regional mobilization provided an avenue in 2004 for human rights groups to contribute to proposals to expand the Court's jurisdiction. NGO access was also important five years later when the Gambian government, unhappy with Court's rulings against it, proposed curbing its newly acquired authority to hear human rights cases.

Another expansion of ECOWAS competence was an important precursor for the ECOWAS Court's transformation. In 2001, the member states adopted a Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001 Good Governance Protocol) to deter military coups and unconstitutional changes of government. The Protocol wove multiple references to human rights into the fabric of an ambitious regional effort to promote democracy, accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. It also included a clause promising that the jurisdiction of the ECOWAS Court 'shall be reviewed so as to give the Court the power to hear, inter-alia, cases relating to violations of human rights, after all attempts to resolve the matter at the national level have failed.' These developments gave human rights advocates a legal foothold when they later lobbied to give the Court a human rights jurisdiction.

This box was extracted from Alter, K., Helfer, L. and McAllister, R., 2013. A New International Human Rights Court for West Africa: The ECOWAS Communitry Court of Justice. *American Journal of International Law* (107), pp.737-779.

Natural Resource Governance

The ECPF aims as one of its main objectives to promote regional integration and sustainable development in West Africa, "[...] to ensure that the management processes for natural resources, including the identification (exploration), contract award and exploitation, as well as the disbursement and use of benefits accruing from such resources, are transparent, equitable, environmental friendly and ensure balanced and sustainable development, social cohesion and stability. (…) natural resources refer to land, water, the environment and all objects, natural or synthetic, found on and below the land, in and beneath water masses and in the atmosphere, and which an be transformed to produce value"[19]. It states that, "[...] ECOWAS shall facilitate the establishment of a network of governmental institutions, the private sector, resource –monitoring NGOs and community structures to develop and apply regional norms and standards in natural resource governance, and which shall draw from existing national, regional and international regulatory mechanisms such as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) and other transparency and responsibility pacts"[20]. An example of how civil society has taken up this

19 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 64.
20 ECPF. Section VIII, No. 65 a.

role is the development, advocacy and successful adoption of the ECOWAS mining policy by Member States. In May 2009, the Council of ECOWAS Foreign Ministers concluded the adoption process of the ECOWAS Directive on the Harmonization of Guiding Principles and Policies in the Mining Sector, in Abuja. They were congratulated by civil society and commended for the collaborative spirit that characterized the development and subsequent adoption of the mining policy. At a press conference in Accra, civil society groups that had been a part of this noted in their release that, "[...] the ECOWAS Commission initiated a concerted strategy to develop a Sub-Regional policy on mining based on high standards of accountability for mining companies and governments. The initiative involved a wide participatory process, which brought together different stakeholders, government officials, International Financial Institutions, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and mining communities. Our organisations were involved in the consultation processes to ensure that the ECOWAS policy on mining is pro-poor; respectful of environmental and human rights and keeps government and mining companies accountable through good governance practices." (Ghanaweb, 2009)

It is clear from the above case studies that in the development and consolidation of political and economic governance in West Africa and the institutional and normative development of human rights protection particularly at the regional level, civil society has been very instrumental in pushing the needs of the ordinary West African. There are, however, challenges.

Challenges

Translating Regional to National to Personal

It may have been humorous that a citizen of ECOWAS, when asked what the institution was, thought it was a football club in England. This is indicative of how little the ordinary West African citizen knows and identifies with ECOWAS and the regional integration process. Even though civil society organizations have been fairly active at various levels working with ECOWAS, there remains a challenge on how much of that is truly owned by the ordinary West African man, woman and child. That is not to imply that they do not benefit from the active advocacy and work of civil society in collaboration with ECOWAS at the regional level, but in order to identify with the regional body, it must come closer

to them. The linkages between the development processes at the regional level that aim towards regional integration, and the local, national developments that affect the ordinary man and woman must be made. Those linkages are missing. The mechanisms that need to be set up at the national level to link regional ECOWAS policies to national level implementation are still lacking or even if present, very weak. Thus though there is very good work being done at the national level by civil society to consolidate democratic governance, for example, in West African counties, not much is done to show how that is linked to the supranational policies of ECOWAS that aim towards regional integration and bring sustainable development to all. An example is the enforceability of the judgments of the ECOWAS Court of Justice. A mechanism is expected to be set up at in all countries to ensure that the judgments of the ECOWAS Community court can be fully enforced at the national level. This is woefully lacking and hence poses a difficulty in enforcing ECOWAS judgments at the national level. A lot more also has to be done about raising the level of awareness of the existence of ECOWAS and the effects of its policies and practices in the ordinary lives of ECOWAS citizens. The mediums for reaching out to the ordinary people should be employed and more civil society groups encouraged and drawn to the regional integration campaign. These would include civil society organs that are closer to the people such as the religious institutions, the traditional institutions, the voluntary associations, the professional groups and the media.

The Community Parliament

The ECOWAS Community Parliament as it is currently composed is not truly representative of the peoples of ECOWAS. The representatives are not elected by the citizens to represent them at the regional level. They are selected by the Parliamentarians themselves to represent the people and that creates a challenge with lines of accountability. Additionally, even though the ECPF gives the Community Parliament a mandate of 'monitoring compliance of Member States; with human rights and rule of law instruments' the Community Parliament only has an advisory role in relation to the ECOWAS Commission that formulates and adopts policy. There is some effort underway, with both the Parliament itself and civil society to review the current documents establishing the Parliament to make it more representative of the people and give it more power to play an oversight role over the Commission. At the opening ceremony of the 2014 first ordinary session of the Parliament in Abuja, the current ECOWAS President,

John Mahama, called for the ECOWAS parliament's powers to be enhanced for the economic benefit of the West African region. If the parliament becomes more representative it could serve as one of the key links between the people and the ECOWAS regional integration process, between the local, national and the regional levels. Parliamentarians would take the needs of the ordinary West African to the regional level Parliament, promote their interests and bring the developments at the regional level back into the national level discourse, for domestication and implementation, to touch the lives of that ordinary West African that they represent.

Poor Involvement of Civil Society in Early Warning Response

Currently the ECOWARN has involved civil society, through collaboration with WANEP, in the collation and transmission of information on possible threats to peace in the region. This is well documented and has worked reasonably well so far. There remains a challenge, however, when it comes to responding to the early warning alerts. The involvement of civil society seems to cease at the point when information reaches ECOWAS. Yet, as Opoku indicates, "[...] the main weakness of ECOWARN has been its inability to generate early response. The concern that the early warning system is incapable of picking up conflict issues on its own needs to be addressed. CSOs should be well trained to intervene in intra-state conflicts." (Opoku, 2007, p.8, 9) Here an engaged civil society could make a difference with its broad spectrum of actors, including opinion leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders, women and youth associations.

Civil Society Capacity and Sustainability

From the numerous examples cited in this paper, one is left in no doubt as to how engaged civil society organizations have been in the regional integration process, and how their involvement has yielded positive dividends for the ECOWAS citizens. There are, however, many challenges to the civil society sector itself in West Africa, which need to be addressed to ensure that the sector is sustained and the gains made will not be eroded.

The West Africa Civil Society Forum (WACSOF), the recognized interface between ECOWAS and its peoples, needs to be strengthened to fully perform

its role. This strengthening is both operational and institutional and requires a fair amount of investment of material, human and financial resources.

The weaknesses suffered by WACSOF mirrors the state of civil society in the sub-region in a general manner. This includes weak institutional and operational capacity, poor capacity to analyze, plan and execute programs and projects due to the dearth of skilled manpower, inadequate human, financial and material resources, over dependence on donors for funding and in some countries such as the Gambia, a dis-enabling legal and regulatory environment.

However, the practice has been to invest more in programmes to the detriment of institution building, strengthening and expertise for efficiency and effectiveness. Thus, there is a real threat to civil society's ability to take up the roles so eloquently expressed in the ECPF to maintain the kind of political and economic stability, peace and security needed in the region to achieve regional integration. It is important to seriously consider new ways of mobilizing the needed resources to support the civil society sector. Member States of ECOWAS have to take a critical look at funding their own development from the government chest and supporting civil society in their countries to perform their roles. Philanthropists in West Africa should look more at investing their money in development work and supporting civil society rather than doing charity work. They should have an incentive for doing so and, therefore, the Member States of ECOWAS need to look at revising their tax regimes to encourage this kind of philanthropy. Civil Society organizations should themselves relook at their 'business model' as non-profits and think more innovatively about resource mobilization. Additionally, ECOWAS Member States need to create the kind of environment that enables civil society to be an effective development partner for the government and the private sector.

Conclusion

ECOWAS has made some strides in regional integration, particularly on matters of peace and security in West Africa. The organization remains the leading regional economic group particularly with regards to its progressive normative frameworks and to its relationship with civil society. However, much remains to be done to move it from an 'ECOWAS of States' to an 'ECOWAS of peoples'. There are only a few years left until 2020, the targeted year for the achievement of ECOWAS' vision. It is still possible to put in place the relevant mechanisms

and programs as well as to invest the needed resources. ECOWAS and regional integration must be made meaningful to the peoples of West Africa, and civil society still remains an essential factor to achieving this goal. Again, my mind is drawn back to my Twi-speaking brother from Cote d'Ivoire. The ties that bind us are more than that which divides us. The red-tapeism of regional integration needs to be used rather to create the thread that links the regional to the national, to the local and to the individual.

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The Role of Civil Society in the Process of Regional Integration - The European Experience

Introductory Remarks

Civil Society is a term and a key concept employed in numerous books and articles in different contexts and various ways. It is thus difficult to impose just one single definition of the term, since all of them refer to phenomena and are of considerable complexity. Some scholars claim that the concept was first employed by John Locke (1690), who referred to it as "an association based on the rule of law and formed by men in a state of nature to protect their property", consisting of life, liberty and estate (Armstrong, Gilson 2010, pp.4). For the British political philosopher, civil society (hereafter CS) was the force to oppose oppressive state power, a function that has continued to be central to the present day - notwithstanding Marx's equation of CS with "bourgeois society". Accordingly, the concept implies those areas of social life which are organized by private or voluntary arrangements between individuals and groups outside state control – that is, the domestic world, the economic sphere, cultural activities, and political interactions (Held, 1993, p.6).

Within the EU the term became popular with the revolutions of the 1980s against the repressive state systems. During this time people who went out onto the street developed a concept of CS in Eastern Europe that emerged as an antithesis to the totalitarian conception of the state as the single institution possessing all legitimate authority – not central, but dispersed, not vertically organized, but horizontally structured along private and voluntary lines. At the same time, the idea also came to be heralded as the antithesis of capitalism and globalization (WTO/IMF) by protest movements as well as by politicians

and representatives of the so-called third way, like Blair or Clinton, who, of course, embraced it for the purpose of social cohesion and domestic stability.

At this point, it is important to keep in mind that since then CS has played a crucial role in both the legitimacy and the effectiveness of global/regional governance – both being criteria by which governments are evaluated). CS or advocate groups by such an understanding, primarily publicly expose areas in which transparency is not forthcoming, directly address political leaders to explain their decisions, and disseminate information on those issues that had not been communicated to them and where compliance has not been achieved. The latter particularly refers to political issues that are transnational in character - such as environment, trade and finance. All of them give rise to specific transnational constituencies of affected groups and individuals who can no longer be defined in terms of traditional democratic notions of universal suffrage within a determined territory. In such a postmodern globalized world regionalism, and in its most developed form the EU, has been a significant response to the pressures of globalization.

Finally, it is important to note that CS in this context certainly implies more than just representation. Democratic legitimacy here means more than having directly elected representatives involved in each political issue – it implies active participation of the many NGOs, global networks and social movements that constitute CS, and at its very best, even expert input into governance (see for instance the call for the establishment of a Forum for CS by the Commission on Global Governance in 1995).

Some Theoretical Perspectives on the Interaction Between Various Kinds of Non-State Actors and International Governances

Despite all these progressive trends back in the 1980s and 1990s problems have surfaced within the EU in recent years relating to the failure of its citizens to see the Union as a key part of their collective identity. And of course, even in the most advanced regional organization globally in this sense, the question remains how such an identity formation is possible at the regional level at all when the existence of strong national identities may actually perceive it as a threat. Scholars who have been working on this issue in this context have

raised the question about the difference between a community and a society. According to most of them, the former involves a sense of belonging and a shared understanding of meaning and values while the latter involves a more rational perception of common interests (Kohler-Koch, 2010). And they have come to the conclusion that socialization processes – the learning of rules, meanings and values – are more crucial to any genuine formation of a community identity than any top-down initiatives like the EU's promotion of common symbols like a flag or the anthem during the negotiations for a European Constitution back at the beginning of the 21st century. In other words, various kinds of non-state actors can play a crucial role and are vital in developing horizontal rather than vertical dynamics of socialization.

Talking about CS in the EU, the issue of representation is particularly important and has important theoretical and practical implications. The traditional concept of representation employed by democracy theorists has been criticized particularly in relation to supranational institutions like the Commission. The alleged or factual remoteness of the EU's main institution from specific national constituencies makes the role of CS as provider of alternative channels of representation particularly "useful in terms of both top-down and bottom-up dynamics" (Armstrong, Gilson, p.8). CS in this case can play a linkage role between citizens and political structures. The question, however, remains whether organizations purporting to represent various strands within European CS are really able and willing to help bring citizens and the EU closer together. As a matter of fact, the European Commission developed a new "communication strategy" in 2005 - of which the key components are the 2006 White Paper on a European Communication Policy; the Commission's contribution to the period of reflection; the so-called Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate (2005); and "Communicating Europe in Partnership", a report presented to the European Parliament and Council by the Commission in 2007. However, looking at the empirical record of these initiatives to involve CS considerable skepticism remains as to what extent they have really achieved more than just simply invoking involvement in communicating Europe (Monaghan, 2008, p.18). After all, most organizations being addressed by the Commission's communication strategy during the debate on Europe's future in these days felt themselves being marginalized in the formal discussions of the Convention and restricted to the role of a passive document-provider on the EU's website. The reason for this was certainly also the Commission´s lack of a clear focus regarding their expectations and objectives; the result then was a lack of

consistency between the many actors involved, overlapping, and problems with implementation and evaluation. On the other hand, from the very beginning the Commission particularly involved those Brussels-based organizations which had been around and lobbying for their particular interests ever since professional lobbying in Brussels started in the 1980s.

In part, this expectation gap is the result of the still widespread perception that CS and representation are "conceptual rivals" (Kohler-Koch, 2010, p.100). CS is usually linked to the idea of participation, which is deemed to have higher democratic credentials than representation – which, in turn, does not necessarily imply involving citizens; it is, in other terms a "many-faceted and elusive concept" (Sartori,1968, p.465). Above that, the concept of representation is usually linked to the state – and since the French Revolution to the nation state. The EU, however, is not a state! That's why the EU/Commission started worrying about alternative ways to rethink the concept of representation in order to structure its interaction with intermediary organizations and to include as many as possible particularly on the issues of a strengthened European social policy and trade – a very ambitious goal taken the fact that those associations from countries with high social standards tend to protect their own standards instead of getting common but lower European standards (Smismans, 2002, p.23). Since 1998, the DG Trade in the Commission had been organizing meetings with NGOs and gradually institutionalized a structured dialogue on specific subjects. What started on the level of DG Trade soon became a partnership cross-cutting different DGs, with a particular impact on the drafting of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU by the Convention. And though CSOs had no formal role in the Convention, their informal impact through mail and direct contact with Convention members from national governments and parliaments, the EP and the Commission itself contributed to the Charter being seen as representative of common European values.

In this context scholars tend to overestimate the contribution of CS to the democratic legitimacy of the EU, which in political reality is often not linked to the concept of representation. The Commission in its White Paper on European Governance indeed emphasized the huge "legitimacy capital" of an encompassing dialogue with CSOs by "reaching out to citizens through regional and local democracy" (COM (2001) 428 final, July 25 2001). In political practice, however, representation in the sense of "accountability representation" does not easily work and the complicated multi-level EU system makes direct relations between the represented and the representatives difficult. The rhetoric of CSOs

and the explicit requests of EU institutions convey an image of representation that is in contrast with political practice. Though the Commission's dialogue with CS was intended to provide bottom-up inclusion of those excluded, CSOs remained distant from stakeholders, in the case of NGOs even more so than in the case of trade associations and direct communication to the grassroots level. Finally, there is a tension between, on the one hand, the broad definition of CS by the Commission, including all sorts of participatory and consultative fora lending legitimacy, and, on the other hand, its proposals to institutionalize contacts with CS, which are predominantly focused on the NGO sector.

Another conflict arises from the dichotomy of legitimacy and legitimation: The former involves the "capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society" (Lipset, 1984, p.84) – or, as Schmitter describes it, the "shared expectation among actors in an arrangement of asymmetric power" (Schmitter, 2001, p.2). It implies that the actions of those who rule are accepted voluntarily and out of conviction by those who are governed, meaning that legitimacy converts power into authority to rule. Legitimation, on the other hand, is seeking for possible ways of assuring legitimacy for a governing authority. According to the German sociologist Max Weber in his classical work "The Theory of Social and Economic Organization", there is a threefold approach to this concept: the rational, the traditional and the charismatic type of legitimate authority (Weber, 1946, p.328). In more recent times, scholars working on the issue have identified different types of legitimization, among them as the most prominent examples of the input and output mechanisms for CS to accept political leadership. Fritz Scharpf has suggested that input legitimacy implies democratic selection of office holders, electoral approval and public consultation, whereas output legitimacy refers to the direct attendance to the public needs and preferences by the ruling authority (Scharpf, 1997).

At the supranational level of the EU, things are particularly difficult in the context of decision-making. Political identity, loyalty and affiliation here do not operate in the same way at the various levels of governance (Wallace, 1993, p.100). While input legitimacy is granted through the directly elected EP, citizen participation and consultation, and more transparency in taking decisions (government by the people), output legitimacy implies more efficiency in provisions of goods and services and increased European problem-solving capacity. The problem, however, is that legitimacy is rather granted through the member states and their democratic representatives, operating at different levels, indirectly which

means that supranational authorities have traditionally relied on what has been called "borrowed legitimacy" (Höreth,1998). To complete the field of research on democratic legitimacy, others have added the concept of "constitutional legitimacy" as the one that provides formal legitimation through European and international law (government by the rule of law).

Most scholars hold that, looking at the practice of EU decision-making, using output and "borrowed" legitimacy, at best explains an assuring support for EU institutions and policies (Fröhlich, 2004). They argue that the EU is sufficiently legitimated by referring to the member states as a source of popular support and that there is only limited capacity of EU institutions to effectively influence member states representatives during decision-making and to control national administrations during implementation, which since the Lisbon Treaty, have been granted additional power within the EU system of governance (Moravcsik, 2002). There is, however, also a different group of scholars who suggest that, vice versa, there is only a limited role for the EP and national parliaments within the system, and that, above all, elections for the EP have not been very popular among national politicians and member state populations (Hix, 2008).

These developments and, parallel to this, the increasing Europeanization of different policies since Maastricht and the separation of national and supranational spheres of activity have left both domestic leaders and CSOs demanding more transparency and accountability from European elites. In the end, it triggered momentum for CSOs in today's Europe to become encompassing organizations, which do not only aggregate interests, but also settle social conflicts. Citizens in the EU have grown accustomed to the system and the respective stakeholder audience have accepted the outcomes of conflict settlement as being legitimate – even if it's true that associations and policy makers face much more public scrutiny at the national than at the European level.

Civil Society in the European Institutional Discourses

It has been only recently – since the mid-1990s – that a normative link between the role of intermediary organizations and legitimate European governance has been made. The first steps in this direction were the adoption of the TEU and the instauration of formal European citizenship (Pinheiro, 1993). The idea was to include representatives of CS in EU decision-making, thus attempting to close the confidence gap between European elites and citizens (European

Parliament 1996; Commission 2001a und b). Nevertheless, the successive rejections of the Draft Constitution in 2005 and the Lisbon Treaty in 2008 turned the relatively positive expectations of the early 2000s (with regard to more involvement of CS and for more Europe and better functioning institutions) into a feeling of paralysis.

There were several reasons why this started at that time and why it happened at all.

1. The permissive consensus about supranational decision-making and institutional reforms had been waning since the mid-1980s already – and particularly since the mid-1990s. Until then member states' societies mainly supported integration and further transfer to the EU level for basically utilitarian reasons (economic benefits).

2. The increasing EU intervention in and Europeanization of various policy areas (particularly migration policy, education and culture, social protection and foreign policy) has created a widespread feeling among domestic leaders and member state citizens that the process of integration might completely redefine the political boundaries in Europe and overhaul the balance of power between the national and the EU level in favor of the latter (Bulmer, 2007).

3. Despite all the positive aspects of deepening, CS's perception was basically one of an EU that was unable to protect its citizens from the negative impacts of globalization (labor migration, outsourcing etc.), thus leading to a profound transformation of the domestic socioeconomic and political systems; this feeling has been nurtured by the perception of economic stagnation and what has been labelled "Eurosclerosis" (Scharpf, 1997).

4. The ever-increasing legal activism of EU institutions, the establishment of new cross-national standards, and the introduction of concepts such as subsidiarity, proportionality, equal treatment, benchmarking etc. have spurred resistance among societies to maintain domestic interests and defend their national constitutions.

5. Finally, the alleged inefficiency and lack of accountability of certain European officials (resulting in allegations of corruption, filthy bureaucracies etc.) led to widespread resistance and more inwardness by members states and their constituencies.

All these developments have spread to all levels of EU governance and they have left both domestic leaders and CS groups demanding more transparency and accountability from EU elites. In the end, two institutions above all, have made reference to this idea/concept and initiated a discourse – namely the Commission (with its Discussion Paper "The Commission and NGOs" of 2000 and the White Paper "on EU governance" of 2001 – Höreth, 2001; Ericson, 2001) and the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC) with its "Citizen's Europe Initiative" and its "Own Initiative Opinion" on the role and contribution of CSOs in the building of Europe in 1999 – linking for the first time CS to the legitimacy problem in the EU. In this period CSOs developed an important role activity in the drafting of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU.

In terms of the ease with which both institutions have expanded the concept of CS inclusion the idea as such has certainly been a success. CS has become a popular tune at the EU level. The ESC, in particular, seems to have been able to sell its discourse in the sense of a promising relation of the institution with many CSOs. And the ESC discourse has clearly influenced the debate on the White Paper. Both the Paper itself and the working group on "consultation and participation of CS", set up by the Commission explicitly use the definition of CS provided by the ESC, and acknowledge the particular role of the Commission.

With regard to the Commission the success of the discourse in terms of expansion may paradoxically go against its potential to change reality. The problem is with the Commission's use of an ever-broader definition of CS. The discourse on the issue can be used by more and more policy actors while at the same time Brussels is moving away from a precise definition of the concept. As long as the dialogue was used to integrate NGOs in the social sector, the objectives were clear. As soon as the Commission, however, adopted the ESC's definition of CSOs, which included the social partners, the strategy became more confusing. It is more confusing when social partners, NGOs and epistemic communities are placed together in the melting pot of CS through all sorts of different advisory committees. Above that, the Commission does not provide any criteria on how the state should structure its interaction with them; rather it stresses the independence of CSOs vis-à-vis the state. Increasing involvement of intermediary organizations can certainly strengthen the legitimacy of the EU, but can – as in the case of getting common European standards – also have a counter-productive impact if associations organized at the EU level are pursuing national rather than European interests.

In sum, though the Commission tried hard to strengthen representation in terms of "accountability", it is obvious that this is hard to achieve in practice given the complicated multi-level-governance system of the EU. The explicit request of a broad involvement of CSOs rather conveys an "image of representation that is in contrast with reality. European CSOs are distant from stakeholders, in the case of NGOs even more so than in the case of trade associations, and direct communication down to grassroots level is…marginal" (Kohler-Koch: 112). In the end, representation is valid not because of formal authorization but because citizens have adapted to the system and so far have accepted the output of EU decision-making as being legitimate.

Active Civic Participation – Expectations and Problems

Despite increased activism by EU representatives, four problems, remain in terms of active participation: Firstly, there is a lack of resources and opportunity structures for participation of various societal organizations at the supranational level (Andreev, 2008, p.215). Particularly smaller civic groups and individuals have difficulties in getting access to supranational deliberations because they are either not registered with the respective EU institutions or discriminated compared to larger trade unions or employers confederations.

Secondly, the customary definition of European CS was misleadingly used to denote large transnational businesses and lobbyists, while a relatively small number of truly European civic organizations, groups or individuals were admitted as stakeholders in EU decision-making (Andersen and Eliassen,1998). These smaller groups have not benefited from the same amount of financial and conceptual resources as their larger counterparts. The Commission lacks a clear understanding of the different types of organizations and their financial situation which is needed to develop a more realistic approach to funding. Vice versa, it is highly problematic if those lobbying groups based in Brussels which are supposed to act independently from EU institutions receive funds from them to engage in projects aimed at increasing awareness of the added value of the EU.

Thirdly, the thinness of the concept of supranational citizenship and lack of European identity has led to a clear deficit in the political participation of both

individuals and parties at the supranational level (Magnette, 2003) – a problem of both rights and resources.

Fourthly, the crucial problem is that CS participation is predominantly coordinated and sponsored from above (Commission)! The primary concern with this has not so much been the privileged access granted to big international organizations, but the unaccountable way the representatives of these organizations have been reporting to their members and the general European public before, during and after participation at the supranational level.

Conclusions

Despite the successful completion of the common market, the adoption of the Euro and enlargement, the more the EU has changed, the more opposition it has provoked both at the national and supranational level. The added value of the EU has become less obvious and more difficult to sell to the public; that's why people have started worrying about a so far top-down elitist project.

Discussions until recently have not always paid proper attention to citizens and national elites. Hence, there has been an acute need to address the bottom-up dimension of legitimization in much greater detail. Traditional output and borrowed legitimacy types could not be applied single-handedly but need to be supplemented with input and constitutional ways of legitimation.

In spite of the major advances made by institutions to include CS in supranational decision-making, there have been persistent problems that have prevented European elites from closing the legitimacy gap. The limited participatory opportunities, lack of resources, biased selection of CS and interest group partners, and a poorly developed concept of European citizenship have been some of the problems singled out in this paper.

Above all, in this process the Commission underestimated that associations from countries with different standards may well prefer to protect their own standards instead of negotiating common, but potentially lower, European standards. It also thought that strengthened dialogues with associations would make the European integration process more inclusive. However, while the excluded or weakest groups have great difficulty organizing themselves at the national level, their organization at the supranational level appears even more

problematic. One should add at this point, however, that an increasing role of CS in decision-making is only acceptable to the extent that they can show democratic credentials in terms of accountability, internal democracy, broad pan-European base and good mechanisms of internal consultation.

For this reason, more support for capacity building in terms of allocating resources, building a cadre of staff and recruiting strategies is an important step to filling the gap between the great expectations launched by the EU initiatives to increase CSOs involvement in the integration process on the one hand, and the political outcome in practice. Another step would certainly be to develop and strengthen multiple linkages between national organizations in different countries, between national and EU level organizations, and also between national organizations and EU institutions.

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Abadarahmane Ngaïdé

The Influence of Mentalities and Culture in the Formulation of Regional Integration Policies - History and Points for Discussion

"The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The "past-present" becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living". [Homi K. Bhabha, 2007 Les lieux de la culture. Une théorie postcoloniale, Paris, Payot, p. 38].[1]

"Customs are more certain than laws." [Euripides].

Introduction: Co-creating Society

The problem we are being asked to address is very complex. In fact, it brings together three paradigms based on which humans establish and interpret their *actual experience*, govern their social commerce and structure their imaginations.

Until now, no people in the world has developed beyond the prevailing attitude in which it has lived since the establishment of the mechanisms of its internal governance and exploitation of its immediate environment. These three paradigms (*mentalities* - in the plural - *culture* and *policy formulation*) seem to

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1   This translation is taken from Homi K. Bhabha, 1994, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, p. 7.

reproduce a concern that has been expressed for a long time and conceptualized by various specialists in questions of contemporary history in light of the recent past[2]. The necessity, indeed the obligation of requestioning, throughout the world, the teaching of the history of the mentalities and representations of the past - not too distant - from the second half of the 20th century to the present is established in order to better understand the issues surrounding the revitalization of ethnic or so-called "national" cultures and the battles that it generates around the world. An in-depth analysis, of the *representation* of the *border* between the *actual experience* and the *imaginary* as they are linked together to *co-create* the many practices that we observe in the administration of African governments, in the behavior of elites, and even citizens, has not yet truly concerned the social sciences and humanities in Africa.

The history of precolonial and neocolonial nationalism, and the agendas of the universities and research institutes affiliated with those of the western world have always tended to reproduce all the stereotypes with which the endogenous regulation systems are described, categorized, indeed downgraded. They are rarely analyzed and questioned to serve as the baseline in order to better comprehend the daily behavior of all of the players involved in the functioning of society. The history of the mentalities as they are reconstructed has never concerned the social sciences or humanities in Africa. Even if works exist here and there, they remain in the small circle of "initiates", and are used less to think about the politician based on the figures that he presents in the public arena, the sphere of which never ceases to expand, covering or opening to other emerging modes of solidarity.

African nations first increased their meetings among themselves before being able to then open up to other civilizations with their own norms. They adopted most of these imported modes of functioning, decreasing or limiting their spheres of influence, indeed by *integrating* them, thereby producing hybrid norms. These disparate elements therefore came to be superposed on other *pre-existing and still living* realities because they were applied daily in all sectors of the life of the nation. Since they gained their independence, the countries, governments,

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2 For more on this subject, read the text of François Bédarida: „La contribution du savoir historique et la responsabilité des historiens face au monde present" [„En guise de préeface"] to the work edited by UNESCO and CISH in 2005 entitled *Des frontières en Afrique du XIIe au XXe siècle*, Paris: UNESCO/ICSH, pp.9-12 (UNESCO/ICSH, 2005. Des frontières en Afrique du XIIe au XXe siècle. Paris: UNESCO). It should be noted that this work followed a symposium held in Bamako in 1999 on the same topic.

political and intellectual elites, and African militaries have occupied themselves with programs other than those promoting endogenous culture and its centrality in any development undertaking. All of these players have been trapped by the norms inherited from the centralizing colonial state and imposed as the only possible outcome. Rare are the African states that have not known the single-party system and the successive regimes of colonels to captains with no worries of an actual decentralization[3].

All these upheavals seem to determine that the nation-state, as it always functioned, did not deliver the anticipated results. Because everywhere on the continent, we experienced and are still experiencing wars and other conflicts that draw one of their resources from the progressive marginalization of constituency groups, the survival of which poses a real problem within the dominant groups. The national integration model experiment, for more than fifty years, has long proven its limits. It requires a thorough review according to current local, regional and global challenges. It is therefore in the name of the principles of the colonial legacy that the African States are going to establish and organize themselves within said national borders while this desire hardly reflects the realities at the peripheries of the States. The cross-border cultures, for example, always borrow from the experiences of a previous organization that has "survived" up to modern times with a standardizing tendency.

The purpose of this text is to return partially, and in great detail, to aspects long discussed and for which no formal and institutional solution had been initiated intelligently up to that point; in order to translate into daily acts a group of mechanisms of social regulation and management of the differences produced by the African memories and cultures in general and West African, in particular. It will return to the establishment of empires and the internal social activity which kept them alive and in step with their own "modernity". Despite the profound

3 The decentralization policy initiated several years ago in many African countries has uneven results, indeed arouses issues and challenges not yet well informed scientifically to predict trends to better understand the political and social activity at the periphery of the States and their possible influences on the common policies of cross-border infrastructure construction. In addition, decentralization poses the important question of *autochtony versus citizenship*. Mali is an interesting example on the subject. Today there is evidence the decentralization as it had been initiated in Mali has a stake in what is happening to the north of this vast space which, a few centuries ago, was the same place that saw the foundation and development of flourishing and rich empires and kingdoms by the diversity of their inhabitants.

political and social changes in progress in West Africa, it is impossible to sidestep the political, social, urban and cultural history of this region which has long been home to empires whose mission in the integration of the peoples has never failed.

Precolonial Empires, Kingdoms and Territorial Dynamics[4]

To better comprehend the historicity of this duration of the integration dynamics in West Africa, we are going to revisit the history of some empires and kingdoms that succeeded in this vast part of the current West African region.

One of the first empires that was established is Ghana[5], which is called Wagadou by its inhabitants. It was founded in the 3rd century B.C. It extended from the middle of Senegal to the current city of Timbuktu and was at the heart of a flourishing gold and salt trade, two essential products which dominated commerce during this period. They were known in Europe and in Arabia. The economic wealth of the kingdom and its cultural influence still provide common stories interspersed with *establishing historical elements.*

Beginning in the 9th century, the empire extended toward the west and includes within it Galam (a gold-bearing country) and Tekrour, a kingdom born at the same time as the empire of Ghana. It was located in the valley of the Senegal River[6]. The empire includes some Berber tribes in the north who live as nomads in the Sahara. We can argue that it was from the 11th century that the country became an actual confederation of kingdoms whose power is going to be gradually centralized around the city of Koumbi Saleh which at that time had less than 20,000 inhabitants. It was home to a diverse population and various religions were practiced there.

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4   If this history is well known today by important scholarly publications, it remains under-publicized and not very well disseminated (in its transmission and its consolidation in individual as well as collective memories) by joint curricula capable of *generating a common historical awareness*; its task would be to strengthen or, even better, to create new relationships of solidarity which straddle the borders between nations and the supposed intangibility, which seems to guarantee their sovereignty. Any common elaborated or desired history is constructed, very often, on the basis of subjectivities that the players assume in order to *positivize* them so that those for whom they are instituted claim ownership of them and transform them into indispensable touchstones to build a united and shared future.

5   It is part of the three great empires that marked the West Africa's "imperial" period.

6   Like other politico-social entities of its time, Tekrour dedicated itself to the commerce of salt, gold (mined in Bambouk), grains and slaves.

Between the 12th and 13th centuries, it loses its independence and is thus integrated with that of Mali which ruled Soundiata Keïta[7]. This empire extended between the Sahara, the equatorial forest, the Atlantic Ocean and the area south of the Niger River; thus encompassing part of Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. Therefore, a large part of West Africa was integrated in this vast politico-administrative entity, the history of which was passed on to us by the Arab chroniclers and their contemporaries[8]. It was one of the largest crossroads bringing together the nomadic populations of the Sahara and the sub-Saharan populations.

Soundiata Keïta is considered a unifying king after having defeated all the other kings and taking the title of Mansa (king of kings). The famous battle of Kirina (around 1235) is the conclusion of the "pacification" of this region and the integration of the populations, followed by a cultural harmonization which is still based on the Malinké (Mandinka) culture. His reign is marked by the alignment of a varied group of West African ethnic groups, like the Bambara, Malinké, Toucouleur (Peul) and Wolof people.

Soundiata Keïta would be at the root of this tradition which is still alive and primordial in the inter-ethnic relationships in this part of the continent: Sanankuya[9]. This tradition aimed to bring together all of the competing tribes in the kingdom. It made it possible to preserve the peace andstrengthen the solidarity beyond any ethnic characterization. He was also at the root of the

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7   Djibril Tamsir Niane gives to the griot Djéliba (one of his characters) the following words: "*Before achieving the sharing of the world, the organization that gave each person a role to play in the city, having spoken of the Assembly that declared the laws that govern us before that, the story of what proceeded to this sharing must be told, which was the worry of giving a share to each, I want to tell of Sundiata. He is called Mari Djata, Sogolon Diata, Maghan Sundiata. He is also called Nakamma, the predestined. It is he who is at the root of the fundamental law, our Charter, drawn up in Kurukan Fuga*" (p. 8).

8   The development of the archaeology and new discoveries that it "updated", make it possible to connect the different historical "series" by corroborating them with the stories passed from generation to generation. For more on this subject, read among others: Cornevin, M., 2000. *Secrets du continent noir révélés par l'archéologie*. Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose.

9   This tradition is still functional today and is always used to establish of spaces for dialogues and culture of peace. Even if its scope is exaggerated, it remains symbolic and establishes "mockery" and joking as norms and especially virtues in order to calm any atmosphere which appears contentious. In any case, it participates in strengthening relationships between individuals, indeed between ethnic groups.

Manden Charter[10], which is considered by many African researchers to be a revolutionary constitution with a universal calling, because at its heart are respect for human rights and freedom of speech[11] in all of the conquered territories. Other fundamental elements of this constitution must be pointed out here: the condemnation of slavery in all its forms and the institution of relationships between the different social categories that make up the ethnic groups. It is well known that this period, with its wars, was a period of "production" and selling of slaves. Even if controversies fuel debates around the Manden Charter, it must be noted that it is considered the reason for the culture of peace that reigned in West Africa in the 13th and 14th centuries.

After the disappearance of the founder, his successors continued his plan to unify the different peoples by expanding its limits further and by multiplying the regions that they controlled. Incidentally, one of them had a more incisive vision of what the empire needed to be, its limits and its international ambitions. Indeed, Bakari II (1310-1312), it seems, had attempted to organize two large expeditions, the objectives of which were to explore the other side of the Atlantic Ocean[12]. Although that can be disputed today, it is essential to emphasize an

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10 It is composed of "seven sayings" which were the basis for the solidarity between the different populations integrated within the empire: "Every life is a life"; "Injustice requires reparations"; "Help one another"; "Protect the homeland"; "Eliminate servitude and hunger"; "End the torment of war"; "Each person is free to speak, to act and to see". A more thorough analysis of these different notions is necessary to better understand the spirit and the letter contained in the rules of this historic charter instituted by a man whose story is still told today.

11 Speech was sacred in the societies that had not yet adopted a writing system which condensed all the norms that governed them. Societies with an oral tradition base their "social contract" on the word of honor that establishes an inviolable pact between two or more partners. Amadou Hampaté Bâ wrote: "In places where writing does not exist, a man is bound to his word. He is committed by it. He is his word and his word is a testament of what he is. The very cohesion of the society rests on the value of and respect of the word." (Bâ, A. H. and Badaire, J-G., 2008. *La parole, mémoire vivante de l'Afrique*. Paris: Éditions Fata Morgana, p.8). The spoken word is therefore a real institution, but since the appearance of Arabic and western "writing", the written word has become an element integrated in the African consciousness to the point that the spoken word as an institution is tending to lose its value as an moderator of behavior. The word of honor is disappearing. To understand this question of language as an institutional resource, read: Legendre, P., 2001. *De la société comme Texte. Linéaments d'une anthropologie dogmatique*. Paris: Fayard.

12 Read the work by Pathé Diagne: Diagne, P., 1992. *Bakari II, 1312, Christophe Colomb, 1492, à la rencontre de l'Amérique*. Dakar: Éd. Sankore. To measure the passion that this hard-to-very historic fact still arouses today, read the comments to the following links: http://livracine.overblog.com/bakary-ii-de-pathe-diagne-a-sylvie-kande and http:// www.afrocentricite.com/2010/07/ta-ra-na-lamerique-antique-est-une-ethiopie/. (Consulted October 4, 2014).

interesting historical fact. It must be admitted here that, under the rule of Bakari II, who was considered a great "visionary", the empire first acquired great West African "notoriety" and then "international" "notoriety". The latter must be symbolized by the conquest of oceans and other territories located beyond its seas. Having acquired the unity of the territories and peoples, he had the liberty to think of extending the kingdom's culture beyond the limited horizon of West Africa in order to not only spread it, but also to profit from the trade that he would not fail to engage in with new populations. But one of the most famous kings of Mali is still Mansa, or Kanka Moussa. His reign coincided with the height of the kingdom (1312), the extension of which goes from the Adrar of the Ifoghas to the estuary of the Gambia. This extension shows the desire of this empire to remain attached to the idea of integrating all of the spaces that were going to allow its economy to continue to flourish with the development of trans-Saharan trade; and the competition practiced by the kingdoms of the Maghreb region which began to be interested in the interior of the African continent. Its "opulence" is still talked about today. It is symbolized by the pilgrimage of Mansa Moussa. He took so much gold with him (10 tons!) that he triggered a fall in the price that lasted several years in the Mediterranean. It must also be noted --even if the facts are the subject of great controversy-- that he "escorted" more than 10,000 slaves with him, who he sold or offered as gifts in the countries he visited.

Upon his return he established an "education policy" worthy of this name, bringing back with him scholars in Islamic sciences and architects, one of which would design the Timbuktu mosque built in 1328. It is during the period of Mali's expansion and development that a dependent entity of the empire of Sundiata (Gabou) exercised its power over all of northern and southern Senegambia[13].

In fact, the famous kingdom of Gabou extended to the territories of the current states of Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. It was a vassal of Mali before the decline of the latter. The indigenous Mandinka populations found others there such as the Baïnounk, the Balante, the Diola, the Manjacque (south of modern-day Senegal), the Serer, the Wolof, and the Peul peoples but also the Soninke people and other more well-known Mandinka groups under the name of Sossé. Gabou, in turn and in the image of other political entities, was not

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13 Read on this subject: Ngaïdé, A., 2009. Identités ethniques et territorialisation en Casamance. In: M.B. Arrous and L. Ki-Zerbo (under the guidance). *Études africaines de géographie par le bas.* Dakar: CODESRIA, pp. 39-77.

mono-ethnic but the Mandinka culture would quickly become the bedrock of a shared civilization before its separation into "independent" kingdoms beginning in 1867[14].

At the same time as the empires of Ghana and Mali, we have the birth and development of the Songhai empire, which seems to have played a leading role in this part of West Africa. It was founded around the 7th century. It was ruled by the Dia dynasty, whose mixed-race origin is known. The culture that emerged resulted in interbreeding for centuries between the Sonrhaïs and the Berber clans of the Sahara or the Peul people with which they shared the same space. If at first it was limited to a section of the Niger River, vassal of the empires of Ghana and Mali, it would progressively gain its independence and become a great empire from the 15th century on. Its borders extended from the border of the Sahara and Sahel to cover a wide space from Mali to the north of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Thus it had supremacy over this entire largely integrated Saharo-Sahelian belt where the economic and social dynamisms of the populations allowed an actual interpenetration of cultural entities.

The economic development of the empire was related to trans-Saharan trade which brought together the kingdoms of the Maghreb and those located in sub-Saharan Africa[15]. One of its great cities is the mythical city of Timbuktu[16][16]. It would become not only a true economic center, but also a religious and intellectual city, whose architecture[17] (adobe monuments still stand as evidence of a very advanced civilization) left true imprints of the genius of its artisans, who came from everywhere[18]. The prosperity of this empire would quickly attract the

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14 On this subject, read our thesis: Ngaïdé, A., 2012. *L'esclave, le colon et le marabout. Le royaume peul du Fuladu de 1867 à 1936.* Paris: L'Harmattan.

15 In an article published in its Arabic version in August 2014, we come back to the relationships between the "two banks" of the Sahara [Ngaïdé, A., 2011. A historical memory shared but misinformed. Morocco and sub-Saharan Africa (11th-20th centuries). In: Proceedings of the Dakhla Symposium. *Histoire, mémoire et patrimoine sahariens. Recherche, préservation et muséalisation*, to be published in French].

16 Read: Corlan-Ioan, S., 2014. *Invention de Timbuktu. Histoire des récits occidentaux sur la ville pendant les XIXe-XXe siècles.* Paris: L'Harmattan.

17 Incidentally, it is not rare to encounter buildings dating back to the colonization which reflect the Sudanese style of architecture symbolized by the Djenné mosque in Mali.

18 To grasp the central role played by this city in the salt trade and intellectual influence, read the work by John O. Igué: Igué, J. O., 2008. *Les villes précoloniales d'Afrique noire*, Paris: Karthala, pp. 41-44.

greed of the North African countries and in particular the Moroccan kingdom ruled by the Saadiens[19]. In fact, a battle for the control of the salt mines, led Al-Mansour to send his army abroad to wage war again the Songhai people, not only for control of the Teghazza salt mines, but also and especially for the gold mines that were supposed to be there. The empire did not fall until 1591 after the attack of the Moroccan army led by Pacha Djouder, a Spanish mercenary[20]. The famous battle of Tondibi signaled the end of this West African kingdom which was involved throughout its entire existence connecting territories and strengthening social ties which finally ended in a solid common culture shared by all of the ethnic groups in the region, even if each also remained sovereign in its own internal organization.

To better understand the evolution and foundations on which the cultural and historical heritage of integration in West Africa are erected, you must consider the exceptionality of the Manden expansion. In fact, it is on the basis of this history that all or almost all of West Africa found itself integrated into a single and vast territory. This expansion is part of an "original" center which many authors place between Upper Senegal and Upper Niger. The Soninké, Malinké and Bambara populations have spread and exercise their domination over a group of territories that they govern all while unifying them; despite the existence of a multitude of ethnic groups, languages and religions. Finally, we can say that they constitute the factors that determine this expansion, and that ensure the intermixing of the populations.

19 See the work by Michel Abitbol. Abitbol, M., 2009. *Histoire du Maroc.* Paris: Perrin, pp. 201-229.

20 A Spaniard who has converted to Islam.

Precolonial Customs, Social Solidarities and Emergence of "Urban[21]" Structures

It would be wise to remember here that empires and kingdoms would not have been able to prosper in this area if they had not developed a mechanism of settlement and establishment of urban areas which allow peoples thus united to develop close relationships strengthened complex matrimonial exchanges. Urban structures in the image of Koumbi-Saleh, Awdaghost, Azougui, Ouadane, Silla, Teghazza were real cities whose prosperity was based on the salt, also called "white gold", trade, the importance of which during this period aroused desire for control of its extraction and sale beyond the simple area that covers present-day Mauritania, Mali and the Senegal River valley. These cities had a large population for the time (20,000 souls for the capital of Ghana, Koumbi-Saleh). They therefore served as actual crossroads not only for trade, but also for the men who came from all directions who develop an intellectual and cultural life there which is still alive in the memories of the people. This urban reality is unchanged from the time of the empire of Mali with the cities of Niani where "natural conditions" offer possibilities of agricultural development all along the Sankarani River" (Igué 2008 : 35) and Walata (in the present day territory of Mauritania) which would benefit the fall of the empire of Ghana and experience great economic prosperity. In fact, Walata diverted the trade routes toward the East making the "boucle" of Niger, the regions sound of the Niger River, a trade axis that the city served (Igué 2008: 37).

The cities of the Songhai empire were not to be outdone. Despite its short life, compared to the empires of Ghana and Mali, Songhai developed a large network of cities with much larger populations and substantial intellectual influence. While saving the old cities, the emperors founded others which experienced rapid development. From a simple encampment, Timbuktu would become an intellectual center which was in no way inferior to the North African cities of the period. These few examples allow one to see the emergence of poles of settlement which would not cease to develop between the Sahara and Sahel to the point of becoming the nerve center of a territorial network that

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21 Nearly all of the developments in this section are taken from the work of Joseph Ki-Zerbo cited in the bibliography.

would contribute to the reputation of these empires and the kings who founded and administered them.

In fact, it is this technique of occupation and making the territory, commercial and intellectual activities profitable, which the empire allowed, which would be at the basis of the interconnections which would be established between the peoples of this part of the world.

The decline of the first empires would lead progressively to the splitting up of the territories and the birth of new kingdoms. They inherit the genius of the empires to develop new structures around large royal families and merchants who would find in other products, such as gold and kola[22], the means of "production" of political and social power. However, the Arab pressure, particularly that from Morocco, the fall of the Songhai empire, followed by the reduction in the numbers of black people in slavery would lead to vast migrations which would contribute to the dispersion of the populations and production of "new" mixed cultures[23]. This dispersion opens new lands to settlement and allows the establishment of a new fabric of dense and prosperous social, political and economic relationships. It is therefore in the wake of successive falls of empires, changes in trade routes and the products exchanged which other kingdoms would appear south of this vast area.

We can note that the kingdom of Benin among others which is considered one of the kingdoms of the West African coast to have experienced an actual expansion outside of the influence of Islam. It corresponds with the present-day southwest of Nigeria and included Benin and part of Togo.

From the mid-15th century, the kingdom of Benin, which had become rich from its gold mining continued its expansion, embracing the different populations of the region. From the 16th century, it reached its peak and developed then a culture which contributed not only to the economic flourishing, but also to the

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22 To understand the role played by kola in the relationships between the terroirs and the West African ethnic groups, read the thesis of Brahima Ouattara: Ouattara, B., 2012. *Le commerce de la kola dans les territoires de l'AOF: 1881-1960*, Individual thesis. Dakar: FLSH/Department of History, UCAD.

23 The Moroccan populations known as Gnaouas still claim today the cultures of the Haoussa and Bambara populations who supplied the armies of the different royal dynasties in Morocco and elsewhere in the Arab world. This black diaspora is less known by Africans in general.

cultural, allowing the different ethnic groups that were present to integrate with each other. The descendants of these populations still live there, in part, in countries like Benin (formerly Dahomey), Nigeria and Togo.

In the same area, beginning in the 13th century, a federation known as the "Ashanti Federation[24]" developed, the capital of which was present-day city of Kumasi in Ghana. The federation had succeeded in covering almost all of the current territory of Ghana. It was part of the group of Akan states which extended over part of the Côte d'Ivoire. Furthermore, it is difficult to talk about ethnic groups, because they were different peoples who were united to found their kingdom and manage their territory.

Other states were established in what some call Central Sudan. "Haoussa city-states" extending from Niger to Chad were large crossroads at the intersection of trade routes and gave birth to brilliant civilizations. Founded in the 12th century, seven city-states would spread in this vast region: Kano, Daoura, Gobir, Katsina, Zaria, Biram and Rano. The city of Daoura seems to have played a central role in the spread of Haoussa culture whose ruling class in all likelihood occupied Aïr, Kawar and Tibesti. The worsening of the climate and the progressive arrival of the Touaregs would result in a continuous migration of the populations toward the southwest. On this subject, Joseph Ki-Zerbo wrote that "it is the arrival of these various groups and their mixing with the indigenous Sao and others who developed from communities with remarkable originality, resulting from the fortunate fusion of several ethnic and cultural currents" (1978: 151). It is interesting to point out here that these peoples were subjected very early on to the influences of "Eastern culture", the traces of which still remain in many aspects of their life[25].

Beyond successive invasions, these city-states turned out to be real markets for the exchange of goods, not only material, but also immaterial, the marks of which remained in the daily activities of the populations. In the 14th century, the Muslim religion arrived from Mali and the princes of Kano continued their

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24 On this subject, read the book by Gérard Pescheux: Pescheux, G., 2003. *Le royaume asante (Ghana). Parenté, pouvoir, histoire: XVIIe-XXe siècles*. Paris: Karthala.

25 It is interesting to recall here that many West African ethnic groups, having been converted to Islam, adopted the Arabs' notion of time (because of the five daily prayers, among other things), indeed changed their mode of orientation (because the direction of the Kaaba became the point of reference of all points of reference: the *qibla*) and ultimately their minds!

conquests in the direction of the valley of the Bénoué and occupied the city of Zaria toward the start of the century. It is during this period that a queen named Amina crossed the entire Haoussa culture. It was under her rule that Zaria grew more consistently toward Niger, Bénoué and Katsina. There is evidence that Korofora and Noupé[26] paid tribute to her. The kola trade made the entire region prosper. The development of these different cities and the influence of their civilization attracted Toucouleur, Mandé and Arabic "explorers" such as Al-Maghili[27].

A little later, all of these cities (Katsina, Zaria and Kano) become the satellites of the great Songhai kingdom. The "banks" south of the desert would also see the appearance of the Kanem-Bornou kingdom, the result of an association between Saharan and settled nomads of this part which spread to present-day Chad. The incessant wars between the different kingdoms allowed the ebbs and flows of the territorial limits and an intense intermingling of the ethnic entities through matrimonial relationships not only between the princes, but also between the populations[28]. Thus, at a time in the tumultuous history of the region, this entire strip which covers the valley from the Senegal River to Lake Chad formed a vast space in constant movement; and from this movement would result the civilizations that Islam would come to shape according to its organizational principles. There is evidence that Kanem-Bornou, together with Mali and Songhai, were the greatest empires born in the Middle Ages. It borrowed the political and social organization from Mali and especially from Songhai.

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26 Noupé was known for its flourishing arts and crafts.

27 For more details read: Ki-Zerbo, J., 1978. *Histoire de l'Afrique Noire. D'hier à aujourd'hui.* Paris: Hâtier.

28 Today, the conflict in CAR has evolved into a "religious and ethnic conflict", though for centuries and since its independence these two elements have never come up with reasons to demand the division of the country. Unfortunately, the international institutions, the Africans also validated this "religious and ethical conflict" option and the current government has named a Muslim prime minister as if citizens of Muslim faith demanded second status in the governmental order. This persistence in the ethnic or religious reading of the conflicts in Africa make any peace negotiation difficult, because the promotion of individuality can accentuate the competitions and the divisions between factions or political leanings/orientations. It is true that the nomination of a Muslim prime minister can have a beneficial symbolic effect but it does not guarantee peace. The diversity of the families, the result of a long history prohibited any conflict, but the political hand, the hegemonic wills some powers, the oil, water and forest resources, all of them together make the conflict more complex by increasing the number of players.

Toward southeastern Nigeria, we saw the birth of new kingdoms as dynamic as those of the valleys of the Senegal and Gambia Rivers. In this area, the "ethnic" Yoruba had established an "ultra-democratic" structure. In fact, beyond the possibility given to the individual to be realized, the group had developed an integrated policy based on exogamy. This matrimonial policy would be at the origin of the establishment of a powerful network of relationships which would allow the Yorubas to reign over many entities such as the Owou, Sabé, Popo, Bénin, Ila, Kétou and Oyo. Ilé and Ifé would make up the central network of the dispersion across this space, but also principal sources and principal resources of the mystical power and its legitimacy. The Yoruba kingdom consists of a federation of cities, and each of them had an autonomous "aristocratico-democratic" organization. This high decentralization of power does not at all conceal the fundamental role of the king (*Alafin*). But it was the object of strict surveillance. Its fate depended on its doings regarding the accepted customs and norms of the country.

The kingdom of Oyo has shown throughout its history a real ability to conquer. Other kingdoms next to Oyo developed, such as Ifé and Benin on the coast. These kingdoms are connected and have a shared "legendary" origin. The founder of Benin was Oranyan, son of Odoudouwa, the first king of Oyo. It must be noted that this shared origin represents a fundamental element of the history of these three entities that controlled the mouth of the Niger River. The kingdom of Benin would reach its peak in the 15th century with the rise in power of Ewuare the Great. It was under his reign that great sculptors came to the country. He conquered thousands of cities and villages, creating an actual "urbanization" which made the city of Benin famous. It was surrounded by a high earthen wall and four wide avenues were bordered by trees and houses had an original style.

All of these kingdoms thus completed the architecture of the trans-Saharan trade which opened the precolonial West African area to the outside world and connected it with the cities of the Nile Valley, Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean[29].

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29 For more on this subject, read Saupin, G. (Under the direction), 2014. Africains et Européens dans le monde atlantique. XVe-XIXe siècle. Rennes: PUR.

Matrimonial Alliances and Cathartic Relationships: for a Social and Solidarity Economy

As we have highlighted above, two cultures succeeded in establishing themselves, spreading across a large multi-ethnic territory which covers a large part of West Africa. They are distinguished from others by their internal dynamism, but also by their political and economic ingenuity. All the different types of conquests cannot be reduced to simple "ethnic wars" opposing groups with unsolvable conflictual relationships. It seems important for us to try to detect a crucial moment of multiple exchanges and fusions there, because they allow the rebuilding of broken relationships and presaged the emergence of new shared social and historical trajectories. They necessarily end with the establishment of new, more dynamic entities whose primary concern is the stability needed to secure peace and social tranquility.

This long history[30], which saw several empires and kingdoms succeed one another at the edge of the Sahara, Sahel and forest countries, gave birth to a common civilization which developed around cultural elements indeed cultural structures. This civilization overcame the imagined borders of the ethnic communities to spread and finally established themselves beyond any possibility of assigning it to a territory or a single ethnic group. Because the area never limited the migratory movements nor even prevented the mixing that resulted in harmonious groups and whose complementarities are still alive today. The territorial continuities fit together with the cultural continuities, invalidating any "natural" boundary. The social cohesion that existed within the empires, then kingdoms and finally in the city-states, draws its substance from this stated wish to unite the differences in this vast area.

30 Which was forged during "the Middle Ages" is rich.

The Influence of Mentalities and Culture on Regional Integration Policies

The *Manden Charter*[31] was a framework for formalizing this social and cultural integration policy. In fact, it united 12 kingdoms that understood that their future could not be realized individually. Only their unity could ensure them consistent and harmonious economic and political development. There is evidence that since the empire of Ghana, the kings took their spouses from conquered provinces. The blood lines that resulted from these alliances played the role of cement between the "imperial" families and the local rulers. And suddenly they were involved in building familial solidarities, prolonging the influence, and especially the cohesion of the empire. This matrimonial policy continued under the empires of Mali and Songhai and the children produced by these different marriages played the role of mediators in conflicts that were able to arise between "clans" or provinces. These veritable "social ambassadors" made it possible, by their multiple affiliations, to mitigate enmities and as a result secure peace. That is, the matrimonial alliances made it possible to weave a dense network of relationships that cover the territories and cross all of the ethnic communities vertically and horizontally.

The *Mandé* and *Haoussa* benefited from the influence of the empires that led them to establish themselves in an intelligent manner until a number of diverse groups became affiliated by reorganizing them based on their cultural principles and their own mentalities. This process resulted in a form of homogenization which would be the cause for some social rules, including the "joking relationship", which we mentioned above.

The joking relationship, or "cathartic relationship", was initiated by Soundiata Keïta, Emperor of Mali, to allow true interpenetration of the ethnic groups. In fact, the greatly expanded use of patronyms cannot be interpreted as the basis of a weak ethnic division. This institution came to seal multiform relationships through joking which exceed the purely playful aspect of the relationship between

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31 For more on this subject, read the book by the elder Djibril Tamsir Niane: Niane, D. T., 2010. *Kouroukan Fouga. Soundiata et l'Assemblée des peuples.* Abidjan: CEDA/NEI/SAEC [Théâtre africain]. This text is an excellent condensed version of the Manden Charter presented in a "theatricalized" form, but it has a certain pedagogical significance, includes important philosophical lessons and thus should be used in a judicious manner because they give an account of the depth of this historic act, written out by Soundiata Keïta, even if its legendary aspect can captivate to the point that it takes away from the teachings that it contains. All human societies are constructed on the myths and legends that have some significance for them in a well-defined context. But these different myths and legends are re-fabricated over the course of time and are enriched with new contributions through mutual borrowing.

"cousins" who heckle one another! Almost everywhere in West Africa from Mali (*Sanankouya*) to Côte d'Ivoire (*tukp*), including Senegal and Mauritania (*dendiraagu* in Fulfulde and *kal* in Wolof), this age-old fact is still true today. It commits the different individuals and their descendants from the same ethnic group or a different ethnic group to develop between themselves relationships of mutual aid and multiform assistance based on the virtues of the derision[32]. It is evident that these relationships have been, still are and will always be factor of social and cultural integration.

The migration of patronyms and their interchangeability are factors that reinforce the ideas that the joking relationship cannot be considered merely a marginal fact because it involves a variety of ethnic groups and "totemic" families: Peuls/ Senoufou; Peuls/Serer, Abron/Agni, Dida/ Attié, etc. These are examples that allow better visibility of the interculturality of the different West African ethnic groups. This mental and cultural fact covers a large part of the present-day area of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and consequently represents an element to which particular attention must be given so that it acts in a more consistent manner in the process of seeking peace and stability in the sub-region. Beyond this shared cultural aspect, the West African peoples also share a recognized linguistic kinship even if around 2000 languages have been counted on the whole African continent. The fact remains that, considering the historic, demographic and territorial realities, the West African languages seem to have the same basis which results, not only, from the progressive expansion of the linguistic areas, but also from their high degree of interpenetration.

The reciprocal borrowings make it so most African speakers can switch from one language to another with ease. The original unity of the spaces left to posterity a genetic kinship between the languages spoken by the peoples of West Africa. They are all descended from the Niger-Congo family.

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32 This is a form of theatricalization, in the positive sense of the term, of the social relationships inside families, and beyond that, this tradition makes it possible, in many cases, to redevelop, on this "interstitial space" what the joking relationship is, the disrupted interethnic relationships. Because it also institutes a form of patronymic mutation which represents a process of ethnic dilution which guarantees the integration of the individual which at the same time strengthens the group. In fact, it is often said that a Traoré from Mali becomes a Diop (the most common patronymic name among the Wolofs) by crossing the border and that a Diarra becomes an Ndiaye (a patronymic name as common as that of Diop among the Wolofs. Incidentally, it is tempting to argue that Ndiaye means *the being in his/her essence* as the Wolofs express in the saying *"niit ndiaye"*, literally and freely translated as: *the person, he/she is Ndiaye*).

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The diversity and the variants that can be spoken from one area to another are the result of a continuous process of splitting up which however has no effect on their belonging to this family which counts "400 million speakers". It is evident that there are vehicular languages that spill over their original area to extend to other larger and more ethnically complex areas: Manding (Bambara in Mali, Dioula in Burkina, in Côte d'Ivoire, Maninka in Gambia; in Guinea; in Sierra Leone and in Senegal), Peul in most of the West African countries and beyond, Yoruba in Benin and in Nigeria, Haoussa in Niger and Nigeria.

In conclusion, we can say that the linguistic areas overlap and interpenetrate each other, and this evidence proves that the Mandinka foundation of the different cultures is proof of a long negotiation of the identities[33]. These developments make it possible to argue that by drawing on this common cultural foundation, policies can accelerate the arrival of the "ECOWAS of the people".

Other structuring elements – less explored – such as the sharing of a similar folklore with all points of view, of an identical musical foundation, indeed of a common cosmogony argue in favor of the relativization of the differences and incompatibilities brandished as arguments to invalidate any possibility of unity or integration of the people considering their diversity. This rich history can only be understood by pointing out the unifying character of these different empires which were in the infinite process of reorganizing their internal structures, of reconfiguring their power and revitalizing the role of the territory facing a double pressure; that coming from the north of the continent and that coming from the Atlantic. These empires, kingdoms and the people who make them up, thus found themselves caught in a vice that would change the entire historic trajectory of the states and affect the mentality of the societies.

The Arab wave arrived around the 10th century and the European invasion from the 15th and 16th centuries would come to derail this long process of unification establishing conflictuality – associated with the black slave trade and then colonialization – at the heart of intercommunity relations. It seems to us that it was at that time in the sub-region's history that ethnic groups began to turn inward in order to preserve their existence as cultural being in societies

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33 The diversity of the languages, cultures and customs in Europe has not prevented the countries of that continent from uniting around fundamental principles which guarantee their respective populations to benefit from their differences while remaining motivated by in a common future, and that despite the rise of the extreme right in all the countries.

which broke up and dispersed under the constraint of new religions and new types of relations with the Atlantic. They connected to the world and the wars for the capture of slaves accentuate the ethnic isolation and reciprocal distrust. It is on all of that that the foundations of the colonial state -- of which the Africans would be the direct heirs -- would come to rest. Since then, the question of how to "emerge from the dark night" has been asked.

"Why Does Culture Matter?[34]"

In a recent work, the Indian anthropologist Arjun Appadurai has attracted the attention of specialists in the social sciences and humanities. He asks a fundamental question on the role of culture in development based on a practical case, Mumbai in India, which he analyzes and he has especially experimented. He does not beat around the bush to respond that *"it is in culture that ideas on the future and ideas concerning the past are merged"* (Appadurai, 2013: 225).

Let us suppose that culture signifies the place from which any society deploys what the anthropologist refers to under the concept of *"capacity to dream[35]"* based on the possible and not the probable. Because local cultures have always been opposed to development based on the western model, but also on the different concepts that organize its discourse. We forget all the imagination that activates not only the relationships within societies, but also the history on which they lean to justify their legitimacy.

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34 Read: Appadurai, A., 2013. *La condition de l'homme global.* Paris: Payot, pp.225-246. Read: Keita, L., ed. 2011. *Philosophy and African Development. Theory and Practice.* Dakar: Codesria. This book is a collection of fundamental texts that analyze the place of indigenous culture in the development of the African continent. Refer to the texts of Kwesi Kwaa Prah "Culture: The Missing Link in Development Planning in Africa" (pp. 155-168), that of Souleymane Bachir Diagne "On Prospective: Development and a Political Culture of Time" (pp. 57-67) and Messay Kebede "African Development and the Primacy of Mental Dimensions" (pp. 97-114).

35 The Indian anthropologist defines this concept as follows: "… aspirations are elements of more general ethical and metaphysical ideas derived from broader cultural norms. Aspirations are never purely individual (like the language of desires and choices inclines us to believe). They are always formed in interaction and in the fullness of social life. Since Emile Durkheim and George Herbert Mead, we have learned that there is no self outside of the social frame and mirror. Could it be otherwise for aspirations? And aspirations for the good life, health and happiness exist in all societies" (p. 235)

If we follow the developments of the Indian anthropologist, we can maintain with him that each social entity works for its "recognition" through its philosophy of life, its ways of thinking and the norms that organize its policy on a daily basis. It is this situation by "virtue of which there is an ethical obligation to extend a sort of *moral recognition to people who have visions of the world profoundly different from our own*"[36] (Appadurai 2013: 229) which must lead to better understanding that the world works on the basis of all of these differences that justify its own existence as a world. This sentence poses a real problem that has been traveling the world since western democracy and its "derivatives" were established as universal norms applicable in any period, in any circumstance and in any human structure. This philosophical error is at the root of several misguided ways which can, in our opinion, only be resolved by reconsidering the relationships that the Africans have with their different heritages as they have been handed down to them.

Each social structure develops its own internal dynamic, that is, the same one that allows it to better manage its environment, according to its most structuring activities and the ethnic groups with which it shares a common historical background but which have internal trajectories that are their own, indeed which are specific to them. The language which expresses all of these mechanisms becomes, so to speak, the place from which we evaluate the *political intelligence* achieved by a given society. Because no political intelligence can be achieved outside of the environment into which it is born. It borrows from the latter a large part of its drive and all of its possibility to become, to finally connect with other philosophical realities and truths of the world in competition.

The cultural elements that create this social dynamic are worth being examined in order to better understand how the societies continued throughout history to govern themselves and to govern their daily activities by themselves. It is thus that any attempt at union requires the establishment of compromises capable of allowing one to grasp the significance of these mentalities in the development of sociabilities until they are shared with a multitude of other entities having finally understood that not only their destiny is shared but that their history also teaches it, indeed demands it.

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36 Emphasis added by us.

To paraphrase Homi K. Bhabha, we say that "we are in this *moment of transit* where *space and time intersect* to produce complex figures… " (Bhabha 2007: 29) which must be acknowledged and rendered according to the contexts in which the people created them by innovating them. This reality dates from a long time ago because this cultural mixing has always given rhythm to the history of the peoples in this part of the world. It is even tempting to argue that all of their different policy norms borrow from each other the same mechanisms or, end with the same sought after result, that is to say to make society more governable by the establishment of rules accepted by the majority and by whatever means.

Together the culture and mentalities (values, ideas, etc.) that create it develop an energy that expresses not only their vitality but also, and especially, their abilities to negotiate their common future by re-examining the modern mechanisms for managing individuals: their *creativity*. Because if traditions come back everywhere, and at any time, that has no effect on the irreversible process of the emergence of a disembodied individual and of what Giorgio Agamben calls "the ordinary being[37]." But the latter will always lean on the foundations of the culture that carries him, and which is offered in all of his daily activities in the city. The culture or rather the West African cultures continue to generate behaviors and attitudes, especially to negotiate their permanent integration in the realities of the world. It is unthinkable today (as always) to remain apart from the realities of the world. And Africa generally was never disconnected from the world and has always participated in its reconfiguration.

The dynamism of the West African cultures can only be beneficial when it makes the national differences converge or rids them of a significant part of this mentality inherited from colonization in order to make them elements of integration, and not structures called to confront each other continually on the basis of individualized projects. These projects exacerbated the conflicts within the ethnic groups and spread their manipulated effects through its different "fragmentations". Resulting from all of that would be a certain mentality or mentalities that would shape not only society as a whole, but also the individuals that it shapes; and which are responsible for perpetuating a spirit of living together.

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37 Read: Agamben, G, 1990. *La communauté qui vient. Théorie de la singularité quelconque.* Paris: Seuil.

For a Positive[38] and Dynamic Ethnicity: Admitting Evidence

Many writings have already reported on the realities of West African ethnic groups and it would be useless to restate what has already been written and discussed, but to ask the question of how to benefit most consistently from the positive elements that the ethnic group has as an eminently political social entity, thus *producer of policy*?

Ethnicity is a concept that is discussed so much nowadays that talking about it has become increasingly suspect. And yet its reality is more than significant in all of the African societies, particularly in West Africa, an area that is of interest to us. Incidentally, without the ethnic referents, many things would not be able to function at all because the nation-state, as an anonymous structure and which should take responsibility for all of the demands and aspirations of the people, does not respond and never seems to respond to internal social demands. The "traditional" social entities function in parallel and in complex relationships with the State as a structure managed by men from these same social entities. It is as if the individuals are, in these precise cases, obliged to fall back on their brothers and sisters to satisfy their needs and respond to the traditional solidarity which has long created inter-individual relationships. It is not the ethnic organizations as structures that pose a problem, but clearly the abuse, distortion and "demonization" of their mechanisms which dismantle our entire way of thinking of it.

Thus our understanding of their actual role in the social equilibrium and their political effectiveness was flawed because the ethnic group is almost rejected with "disdain" while it manages and irrigates the veins of the West African societies from yesterday, until today. And the decentralization policies, initiated everywhere in West Africa, revived several mechanisms of power that were inspired by ancestral traditions. These old "legitimacies" call for their visibility through all the instances of the Republic[39]. They use, indeed abuse, so-called

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38 Read: Ngaïdé, A., 2004b. De l'ethnicité comme réalité mais pas comme fatalité. La défaite de l'individu. *L'Ouest saharien* N° 4. Paris: L'Harmattan, pp.81-89.

39 It is not rare in the ministerial nominations for ethnic, tribal, confessional and local considerations to use their influence to justify the political and social ascension of this or that other individual.

democratic methods to perpetuate their legibility on the political, social and economic chessboard.

The ethnic groups have never functioned as "fixed and monolithic categories" indeed as closed categories; much more than that they have always espoused the shape of *waves* which interfere with each other and exchange their energy depending on challenges of any nature; sustained by projects in ongoing discussion.

Ethnicity is an important reality, and as a structure organized in a "community of individuals", who are united around origin myths and the sharing of a language of life, it functions like any organization. That is to say that it enacts rules and establishes standards for behavior and relationships with others. It produces governance in the original sense of the term, that is, the ability of men to be in control of their feelings, indeed in control of their sexuality[40]. These are individuals from groups that, according to their own will, their own *political ambition (desire for visibility)*, social or economic, activate the resources most destructive to ethnicity to the point that it is always incriminated when a conflict erupts in some corner of the African continent. When taken in its essence, it holds enormous potential which can create what Homi K. Bhabha is referring to with the term "interstitial spaces". That is to say, those spaces of exchanges that are established between the ethnic groups and that are transformed instead of possibly converging. They become "innovative sites of collaboration and disagreement in *the act itself of defining the idea of society*[41]" (Bhabha 2007: 30). This "disagreement" or rather emulation poses the question of the value of all of these cultures which have always flourished in perfect harmony with others. It is not a desire for revitalization that gives the paths any nostalgia or feeling, but deep reflection faced with the evidence: the forced homogenization of cultures has no chance of succeeding.

The ethnic groups of West Africa functioned (still function!) like "political" entities and not just like simple, uninteresting biological groups whose final

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40 The matrimonial policies meet these *biologization* criteria for social relationship, but with an eminently political impact. Tout revolves around the control of men and their activities, indeed of their emotions and the most subtle of them (To better understand the possible role of emotions on thoughts and their influences on the internal organizations of human societies, read: Lordon, F., 2013. *La société des affects. Pour un structuralisme des passions.* Paris: Seuil.

41 Emphasis added by us.

objective is the natural and "instinctive" reproduction of a blood community. This unique objective cannot be at the basis of their constitution as a recognized entity with rules, customs, methods of governance, a complex group of which interpenetrate and overlap with one another and an entire philosophy of life shared and accepted as the distillation of a moral and social ethic to be handed down from one generation to the next. It is this ability to transmit ways of relating that are the basis of their historicity. It seems to us that the too mechanistic and utilitarian vision takes away the ethnic group's true political content. While the philosophical and ethnic foundations report of an intense internal political activity, and always the bearer of solidarity. It paves the way for the emergence and consolidation of the "gaps" on which "the intersubjective and collective experiences of belonging to the nation, common interests or cultural value" are negotiated (Bhabha 2007: 30).

Since then, we can ask ourselves the questions "How are the subjects formed in the "gap" or in the access of all of the different "parties" (in general conceived as race/class/gender, etc.)?" and "How do the strategies of representation or of taking power come to be formulated in the competing demands of communities in which, in spite of shared histories of deprivation and discrimination, the exchanges of values, of meanings and priorities do not always operate in a spirit of collaboration and dialogue, but can be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even incommensurable?" (Bhabha 2007: 30).

Applied to our case, these two questions by Homi K. Bhabha pose a crucial problem that of the training of individuals within established groups and the relationships that can develop these different groups so that their relationships are not forged in the only secrets of "incommensurable" conflicts by integrating all of the existing cultural resources to give them back their capacity for invention imagination of the political fact. This is what we will call *positive ethnicity*. It existed for a long time before the "modern" functions of ethnic groups existing today, to their method of governance, to the ambitions of their new entrepreneurs and their reconfigurations.

Approached from this point of view, ethnicity cannot be considered a hindering factor for an alignment of all the political wills that have a calling to achieve the equalization of the differing points of view which can characterize the day-to-day relations between individuals, or between the groups that they form. On the contrary, it makes it possible to better understand this idea of *waves t*hat

interfere with each other. The peripheries of the modern states, for example, represent places where this *wave* is fully realized[42].

Although ethnicity has always been marginalized, it has resisted all forms of governance by imposing its way of functioning on the so-called modern one or by "accompanying" it in all of its expansions. It penetrates everywhere and resolves problems considered insurmountable or unsolvable. It would not be an exaggeration today to say that we are in a process of recomposition on other bases and other criteria imposed by the current context of the continent and of the world.

In globalizing, the world is still crossed by increasingly particularistic desires which are manifested in all populations[43] and that figure, somewhere, the necessity and the requirement to consider this natural aspiration to return to this *something* that seems to have disappeared while it does not cease to change itself and adapt to the constraints and realities that largely succeed its internal way of functioning. All the contours of West African social life are crossed by multiple forces that are tug at the different spheres of power. And that of religion does not escape the *intrusion* not only of ancestral practices, but also of demands to return to a Muslim religious orthodoxy with a "radical[44]" tendency influenced by movements with "thinkers" who are outside of national territories and whose battles and final objectives are not at all in keeping with the concern of the majority of the people in this region.

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42 For more on this subject, read: Ngaïdé, A. 2008. « Continuités culturelles » et tentatives d'homogénéisation! Les périphéries étatiques à l'épreuve du 21ième siècle. *Annales de la Facultés des Lettres et Sciences Humaines* N° 38 B, pp.221-232.

43 The concept of *Ivoirité* and the resulting long war that followed illustrates the error in any idea of cultural identity and "nationalistic" feelings. Read: Kipré, P., 2010. *Migrations en Afrique noire. La construction des identités nationales et la question des étrangers.* Abidjan: Les Éditions du CERAP.

44 The recent events in Mali prove it.

Religion and Regional Integration: Between Syncretism, Multiplication of "Prayer Rooms[45]" and Radicalization

Since the birth of monotheistic religions, people have reorganized their ways of life, indeed profoundly modified their multiple relationships with their most immediate environment and therefore the relationships with their neighbors of different religious faiths. The notions of *respect* and *tolerance* are certainly born at the same time that the religious wars were considered a way of imposing one's faith, the rules that accompany it, and which detail its different offshoots.

Africa is one of the rare continents where all of the so-called revealed religions or religions of the Book stand alongside all the other mystical and spiritual practices which preceded them. The presence of the Muslim religion go back more than 10 centuries, but the fact remains that the Arab culture in its current form remains less significant. Christianity arrived at the same time as the first explorers. The priests accompanied the slave traders and collaborated with the colonial administrations by spreading their religion through the Church. The Western languages invaded mental spaces and many adhered to the "new" religion. If the Christian religion was able to succeed, it is because there was a receptive audience that certainly understood the opportunity offered to live in the universe of a new cultural experience dominated by a heavy hybridization of practices[46]. It is not rare in West Africa to find in one family all the religions and all

45 This multiplication of places (new churches, revitalization of the ancient) of prayer is happening not only Central Africa (the two Congos), but also the whole continent. It is not rare in African airports to encounter religious "entrepreneurs" on an evangelization "mission". This spiritual fervor that the different crises have made contemporary has not been studied enough to inform us of its "integrative" (dissident?) potential and of its different consequences on the shaping of minds and the emergence of new transnational solidarities.

46 Read: Ela, J.-M., 2003. *Repenser la théologie africaine. Le Dieu qui libère.* Paris: Karthala, to understand part of the tactics deployed by the African "Christians" to believe their "new" religion and especially the "deviated" uses that they make of its ways of working according to their own criteria. Read Chapter 1 («Dire Dieu dans un continent meurtri») in the first part « Évangile et libération », pp. 21-51).

the languages and the idioms that drive them.[47] It seems obvious to us that even at the time of the West African empires, attempts to unify the religious practices were underway. They permitted an interpenetration of the ethnic groups and the consolidation of their different assets, which became shared.

Take Islam as an example to illustrate this important reality of religion in social regulations, indeed the internal reorganization of the West African societies. Part of West Africa has been Muslim since the 10th century at least. Large parties and movements[48], the actions of which are inscribed in the Islamic foundations and teachings have remained famous in the minds of the populations of a large part of the Senegambian territories. At a given moment, they shaped the dominant philosophical spirit. The movement of the Almoravides (*pluri-ethnic*) originated in the current territory of Mauritania. It brought together a multitude of ethnic groups and Saharan tribes won over by the principles of Islam. This movement would restructure the way of thinking, change the territorial configurations of the state-owned areas by connecting them and tracing the milestones of new social and political trajectories in a vast area stretching from Spain to the Senegal River valley.

Later, with the heavy Islamization of the populations, we see the emergence of theocratic kingdoms. It seems at first that their birth was followed by a desire to fight against the ravages of consecutives wars resulting from the slave trade. These included the kingdom of Boundou in western Senegal, which would play a very important role in the attempts to limit the negative effects of the trade by controlling the land routes for conveying the "human cattle". Its establishment goes back to the 17th century. Its founder, Boubacar Sada Sy, was a native of Fuuta Tooro. This

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47 Today, Senegal is given as an example and initiatives have been adopted to send a delegation of imams and Senegalese priests to the Central African Republic where the rebellion took on an ethic and religious connotation while the real problems that undermine this country puisent their multiple and complex drives in other realities which go outside of the „modest" frameworks of ethnicity and religion. The two principal religions practice in Senegal without any constraints or restrictions. Mixed marriages and the inextricable bundle of genealogies makes things more complex by making visible the relationships of *co-fraternity* that link the families and maintain a social equilibrium that participates in the consolidation of nation. All of the festivals of the two religions are celebrated indifferently by both to the point that the Islamo-Christian dialogue of which one speaks in that country, has no logical foundation. The social tranquility is ensured not only by the teachings of the two religions and the laws of the Republic, but they also use traditional methods of solidarity to perpetuate an asset.

48 Read: Robinson, D. and Triaud, J.-L., eds. 1997. *Le temps des marabouts. Itinéraires et stratégies islamiques en Afrique occidentale française v. 1880-1960.* Paris: Karthala.

kingdom was as influential as those that succeeded it in the West African region because it would extend to the Soninké states of Galam, southern Mauritania (Guidimakha) and eastern part of the Soninké state of Diara. It should be noted that the clandestine caravans of slaves from Côte d'Ivoire and the Gulf of Guinea borrowed the kingdom's land. The kingdom had put at the heart of its undertaking the fight against Atlantic trade and the slave trafficking that would relocate the resources of the different kingdoms and ruin the peace in their provinces and their farthest regions. Its population, as in the other kingdoms, was mixed: Diakhanké, Malinké, Tenda, Toucouleurs (Peuls). It was situated on a vital trade axis, the one that led to the gold mines of Falemé and Bouré. The kingdom would only be conquered with much difficulty by the French at the end of the 19th century.

Then, we have the Fouta Djallon which initially depended on the empire of Soundiata Keïta. Its birth goes back to 1725. In fact, Karamoko Alpha Diallo founded the state by consolidating the union around the Peuls. The economic prosperity and massive adherence to Islam allowed the Peul culture to be a bearer of a new historical narrative based on the principles decreed by Islam. This situation would favor the integration of peoples, opposed until then, and would result in a strong ethnic and cultural homogenization which would be to strengthen the kingdom's influence[49].

Beyond this part of Senegambia, we have seen appear in the Senegal River valley, Fuuta Tooro (Peul kingdom with Soninke and Wolof enclaves still alive) of the Almamis. It emerged toward the first half of the 18th century, Waalo and Djolof (Wolof kingdoms). All of these kingdoms are characterized by their multiethnicity and their integrative calling. Several of them extended beyond the two banks of the Senegal River and embraced different populations. This historic and sociological reality breaks down the ethnic borders and invalidates the differences long thought unsolvable[50].

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49 Even today in Guinea, democracy and the fight for economic and political power have led the political players to draw from the social residue some elements of their speeches on mobilization, the orientations of which further threaten the historical relationships between ethnic groups, social classes and statutory groups.

50 Read: Ngaïdé, A., 2007. Peuplades anarchiques contre Nations à construire. Intégration invisible dans le bassin sénégalo-mauritanien. Épreuve du peuple et/ou équation de l'État-nation ? (XIXe-XXe siècles). In: Diop, A. and Niang Diene, A. *Les États-nations face à l'intégration régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest. Le cas du Sénégal.* Paris: Karthala, pp.153-183.

In this part of West Africa, the rivers there have always enabled civilizations around them to flourish and have consequently led to better integration with joint management of resources such as water, land and pastures notably; on the bases of which a local economy is developed. Even if the control of these resources aroused greed, there is evidence that the vast empire of Mali, as we have pointed out above, knew to establish a sub-regional dynamic in which each ethnic community could blossom, while still recognizing the central authority. The "decentralization policy" initiated during this period offers the possibility of regrouping around what is essential: the joint management of the natural resources available. The Senegal River and the Niger River were important axes of settlement, and played the role of actual lines of communications from one end to the other of this vast and rich area inhabited by countless ethnic groups, which Islam united. They connected all the different peoples with each other, facilitating exchanges.

This unification would give birth to state structures and allow the spread of this new religion which was Islam. The Dioula merchants were vehicles for the spread of the rudiments of the Arab Muslim culture. These tireless merchants would, through their dynamism, unify the people and open business perspectives in the regions that they crossed. Indeed, as Emmanuel Terray points out, "the Dyula Muslims […] shaped the intellectual and ideological horizon from which the new states are formed[51]" (Terray 1995: 84) which would emerge around these large valleys that run through Senegal and Niger. The Fulani-Haussa kingdoms would extend from the current Republic of Niger to the current Federal Republic of Nigeria[52]. The mixing of the populations would be in the wake of all these movements which shift not only a world but also civilizations that resolutely entered into a process of intermixing throughout history.

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51 The Gabou extended to the current region of Ziguinchor. The different populations lived in harmony and practiced flourishing agriculture benefiting from rich soils and forests for the pastureland of their numerous herds. It would extend beyond that area to include the Serer kingdoms of Sine-Saloum. There is evidence that the Mansa were at the origin of the Guélewar aristocracy (union between the Serer and Mandinka people) of Sine and Saloum. The historians note that during this period large migratory waves crossed the entire West African sub-region.

52 Which is confronted with several rebellions, one of the most violent of which in recent decades hides behind the Muslim religion to perpetrate abominable and reprehensible acts, such as to organize the abduction of young girls intended for sexual slavery. The sub-regional, indeed continental, dimension of the action of Boko Haram calls for the harmonizing of security operations.

Islam has never been, in the distant past, at the root of destructive acts like those of which we are currently familiar. The example of Mali tells us of this aberration which consists of manipulating the resources of Islam in order to satisfy a deliberately dissident aspiration. Beyond the religious aspect which is raised, "race" is often cited, ruining any possibility of an appropriate reading of the demands. The players involved and the sub-regional and geostrategic challenges interfere with our visions even more and make it so that no common solution is possible. Western semantics and concepts are established as the only horizon, while the societies that "confront each other" are heirs of civilizations, whose depth of historical relationships make a case in favor of the relativization of the impermeability of ethnic and religious borders.

Africans live in a profound, multi-secular religious syncretism which accounts for the vitality of some of the most subtle demonstrations of the so-called traditional, ancestral or primitive religions. All of the African "mystical" practices, categorized in the area of "sorcery", still resist the so-called revealed religions. A deeper analysis of the resources of inventiveness that these *old religious practices* offer would allow us to understand what Achille Mbembe refers to as "cultural indiscipline[53]" (Mbembe 1990: 84) indeed religious, not only in Christian societies but also Islam societies.

As for Christianity, it arrived later but it would gain in prominence especially among the forest-dwelling populations. Today, and everywhere in Africa, churches are multiplying, accompanied by charitable, or "unselfish", actions, which benefit all populations without distinction of ethnic group or religious affiliation. Furthermore, even if we see disputes among followers, religion as an institution is not the cause because all pagan and revealed religions are suited to solidarity and interdependence, worship the same God, and dream of the same paradise.

In recent years, we have witnessed the flourishing of "houses" of God[54] (due to the recession) with their ramifications and their implications in the resurgence of

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53 Read Mbembé, A., 1990. *Afriques indociles. Christianisme, pouvoir et État en société postcoloniale*, Paris: Karthala.

54 Already Georges Balandier analyzed kibangisme, the "Missions des Noirs" and the new "Congolese churches" at the beginning of the 1960s in Congo (Gabon, Cameroon); for more on this subject, read his work: Balandier, G., 1963. *Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique noire.* Paris: PUF. (Chap. 3, pp. 417-487).

internal conflicts that pit the State against "ethnic" and "tribal" groups. The latter contest not only the State's territorial "sovereignty", but also its "legitimacy". Those who make these demands, often justified, use and abuse their rights to attack that which is the basis for harmony in a country. In the name of a manipulated religion, these players, supported by a criminal transborder economy and mastering not only the handling of the most sophisticated weapons, but also the formidable propaganda tool of modern times, the Internet; they attempt to bring back old practices on the basis of an erroneous interpretation of the precepts of Islam. Their reading is done out of *context* of the profound changes that the religious practices experienced from the inside, and especially in ignorance of those that affect the attitudes of the believers in this part of the world. Here we are in the presence of a troubling heritage and which deserves particular attention because its negative actions pose a constant threat to this part of the continent. Because they disrupt the pre-existing cultural order to its very foundation.

Political societies have been established throughout history, whether at the time of the empires of Ghana, Mali, Songhai, the kingdom of Gabu, the Wolof states (Djolof and Waalo), the theocratic kingdoms (Boundou, Fuuta Djalon, Fuuta Tooro), the kingdoms of Benin, the "Ashanti Federation" and the Muslim states of Nigeria until the so-called modern states, the area has always served as a means of integration and stimulation for the building of strong and balanced relationships between the different peoples. The colonial empires that arrived at the start of the 15th century found civilizations already well established. Later, after the abolition of the slave trade and especially after the famous Congress of Berlin, the colonial enterprise took the form of a *true colonization* which would result in territorial, ethnic and political reconfigurations according to the competitions between power and the treaties signed with their different local allies. The notion of "delimitation" of possessions does not espouse only the contours of the mental character of the forces present, but also depends on the political, military and cultural dynamism of the European nations in competition.

The borders, even if they existed, were not weak, did not demarcate and therefore could not establish well sealed areas between the different ethnic communities. Because a border could not be interpreted as a simple place for demonstrating difference. It is, par excellence, the place from which any form of communication originates. The role of borders and supposed ethnic differences would go beyond the stereotypical images conveyed by the English, French

and Portuguese colonial literatures and, before them, the Arab chronicles[55]. The heavy colonial heritage[56], its administrative machine, its vocabulary and grammar are still present in the African mentality in a general sense[57], but very deeply. It would therefore involve continuing the decolonization of the mental of the African being so that he can find the semblance of balance that again he is lacking because he has been involved in an incessant process of hybridization of his practices since his opening to the world.

Heritages and consequences of colonization: between mimicry[58] and problematic hybridization[59]

The colonization that occurred later established a method of command that the Berlin conference of 1885 had already approved. This rush toward the African continent would be at the foundation of the "subdivision" of all the territories of the whole continent in "portions" controlled by the colonial powers.

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55 We very often neglect to analyze the image that the Arabs have of the sub-Saharan Africans (and vice versa) though the analysis of these views can tell us much about the different intra-state conflicts that pit the "white" populations against the "black" populations of an African country which brings together these two entities. But also understand what makes the North Africans look toward the Mediterranean and Arab Peninsula. It is true that strong trends show that the option has decreased a little in recent years, once Africa was generally presented as the future of the world in the "projections" in progress.

56 Without being able to enumerate all of them, everything in this arsenal that shapes its thought and its social, economic and political architecture.

57 It is not about accusing in a cold and authoritative manner colonization as a place where stereotypes are created but it is involved in the freezing of the entities that it wanted to lead to its own civilization.

58 It is necessary „to invent the total man", and to do that Frantz Fano requested, in the conclusion of his book *Les damnés de la terres*, in which the colonized peoples and Africans specifically „do not dare lose ‚time in sterile litanies or queasy *mimicries*' (p. 673). And that „it is important not to speak of *yield, intensification, rhythms.* No, it is *not about a return to Nature.* It is very concretely about *not pulling people in directions that mutilate them, do not impose on the brain rhythms that rapidly obliterate them and upset them.* It is not necessary to, under the pretext of *catching and knocking the person down, to pull him from himself, from his privacy, to break him, to kill him. »* (p. 675).

59 This section summarizes some elements developed in our article ''Continuités culturelles' et tentatives d'homogénéisation! Les périphéries étatiques à l'épreuve du 21ième siècle", Dakar, *Annales de la Facultés des Lettres et Sciences Humaines*, N° 38 B., 2008, pp. 221-232.

West Africa would not be the same after this policy of occupation of "vacant lands with no masters", according to the terminology established by the European vision.

Three "powers" shared the territory, and in this sharing, England and France "awarded themselves" the largest part after multiple resistances[60] on the part of literate African Muslims whose regional objectives would never be denied. Even if the African countries have achieved independence separately, the fact remains that the debates about the unity of the territories was at the center of discussions of the emerging elite since the start of the 1950s[61]. As proof of the pan-African ideology, the pooling of the battles in the trade union, political and student structures dominated the political scene before and after independence. This situation could only generate seeds of belonging to a common region where the diversity, instead of being a source of conflict, guarantees the future and an "*in-common*" culture.

The African states have been created in the image of centralized models, the matrix of which is the city based on which the administration and the emerging elite have founded not only the method of managing individuals but also all the mechanisms of transmission of a new culture which the modern school leads and attempts to spread.

The observation has long been made that the territories interpenetrate each other and that the cultural continuities are evident and the peoples tend toward a more united dynamic ["from the bottom up"] than one would think. But we must always reflect constantly on how this truth, waved as such, does not tend to become a rule so that together the West African states can reconsider their multiple trajectories to build a world where difference would not be a brake but rather an opportunity to build a common future. Reconstruction of the ruptures that were created over a long period of time may only succeed by thoughtfully considering new forms of relationships to the creative intelligence of Africans and to these diversities that form the basis of the multiple relationships that the players have with their global and shared heritage.

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60 We can limit ourselves to the actions taken by El Hadj Oumar Tall and Samory Touré to illustrate our remarks.

61 We must remember that many West African countries were part of French West Africa, which functioned as a large confederation with its own administration but dependent on a Governor General. It was based in Dakar.

Since then, a true reflection on the culture should not show outrage faced with what can appear to be a "deterioration" in tradition before a world that is globalizing and which attempts to destroy, over time, the deepest cultural and memorial certainties. On the contrary, the current globalization must validate the deep desire to change the trajectory of the world based on the multiple philosophies that characterize it. Tradition only seems interesting and more valuable to us when it is supposedly lost. In place of a loss, we see there an important moment to put it to the test, one which determines, in part, its intrinsic creativity. The time of the tradition is combined in the various borrowings that shape it. They consolidate its multiple contributions from the most explicit to the most implicit among them, and as a result allows "primitive mentalities" to negotiate their future by loaning to the modern some important aspects in its new configuration.

Independence has created another precedent: the break-up of territories into micro-states with their national sovereignty according to the criteria calculated on the west. How then should we think about the future of ruptured and drawn societies between the territories on which sovereignties that want to be exclusive are exercised? Can the states build on, in a purposeful and irrevocable manner, the imaginations and spatial, political and social practices to state policy and apply it according to the criteria of the populations that the laws seek to organize around a project that goes beyond the only national sovereignty? What are the political decisionmakers, from all spheres of decisionmaking, lacking in order to take charge of these mental "truths" which are still significant? One of the most visible heritages and one which deserves attention is the epistemological and paradigmatic. How are all of these paradigms to be reoriented with those that characterized Africa and West Africa? How to escape the trap of these different and multiple notions "forged based on historical experience and the cultural life of the West" (Kipré 2010: 15)?

All of that must flow from a way of thinking, the purpose of which is to *reshape* not only the society as a whole but also the individuals who make it up; in order for each of them to be able to take responsibility for the building of the common objective: to perpetuate a philosophy of living together based on concrete realities.

"Primitive Mentalities": Proof against Divergent Modernities?

The notion of way of thinking[62], like many other concepts, has been forged and reforged to express finally different things according to the civilizations to which it is applied. The dominant doxa[63] disregards the players and especially the philosophies on which they base the structures of the society and construct their "own" history. It is clear that each part of our world and each society has experienced its own trajectories, its own norms and institutions according to a grammar that translates a complex set of mechanisms, the purpose of which is to make it more driving.

World tour of concepts[64], work directed by Pierre Legendre, focuses on several concepts forged in the West and which are disseminated, indeed imposed throughout the world with their philosophical responsibilities, their subjectivities and the fantasies that do not fail to feed them.

In his "marginal note", Pierre Legendre wrote, from the third line of his text, "… we live in a so-called globalized world where the harshness in terms of thought does not try to become universal science, announcing the new global certainties, or rather western as appropriate65" (Legendre 2014: 11). This truth has been established for a very long time even if its relevance is still tried and tested by what many consider legacies of retrograde ways of thinking. It is essential not to lose sight of the fact that the stereotypes developed from the first contacts between the West and the rest of the world have been shaped in the mould

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62 Because whoever says "African way of thinking" is generally referring to something negative although it is the evocation of multiples references which have long shaped the social intelligence and which are handed down from generation to generation according to the criteria of pre-established transmissions. To have a general understanding of this idea of *"primitive way of thinking"*, read: Lévy- Bruhl, L., 1960. *La mentalité primitive.* Paris: PUF.

63 It is useful to remember that in the "colonial situation" work consists "of abolishing all separation between the interior self and the exterior view. It involves anesthetizing the senses and transform the body of the colonized into something that has the stiffness of a cadaver» (Read the preface of Achille Mbembe « L'universalité de Frantz Fanon ». In: Fanon, F., 2011. *Œuvres.* Paris: La Découverte, pp.9-21). Since then, it is comprehensible that corps cannot produce intelligence!

64 Legendre, P. (Under the direction), 2014. *Tour du monde des concepts.* Paris: Fayard [Poids et mesures du monde]. It addresses the following nine concepts: *Contract, Body, Dance, Government, Law, Nature, Religion, Society and Truth.*

of views based on a "comparison" of ways of life and ways of thinking which diminish all the cultures born outside of the Age of "Enlightenment". Western thought has always dominated the world order without actually taking away the philosophical essence of cultures thus devalued, especially the internal energy that drives their dynamism. Moreover, no culture in a contact situation can pretend to escape the influences, indeed to make profound readjustments would only be for convenience. It borrows, distorts and redirects the borrowings according to its own ways of operating and the philosophic content that it puts in the concepts that it adopts.

The book therefore revisits the key ideas throughout a world of diverse cultures. Two articles[65] expose and analyze the meanings that some African ethnic groups have of these concepts which play a part in the governance of the world. They demonstrate the crucial necessity of considering African mentalities to better understand the realities of this problematic encounter of the philosophies.

Generally, Africa inherits three methods of colonization which have left almost indelible imprints on the memories of the people. These imprints play a part in the blurring of meanings and which lead the states to negotiate their own modernity according to the criteria of this heavy heritage, without actually taking serious the actual weights of the mentalities, considered primitive, in the current social trajectories.

Today: Decontextualization and Putting the Cultures in Perspective

Various conventions and negotiations make it possible to reconcile opposite views if the players agree to "elucidate [together] the structure of the strange facts which only exist by virtue of [their] *belief* in their existence" (De Munk 1998: 173). That is, their ways of *co-producing* modes and rules of their internal organization with everything that that entails as subjectivities. As soon as this

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65 Read: Libiersky-Bagnoud, D., 2014. Langues africaines (Burkina Faso): kasim, moore et gulmancema. In: Legendre, P. (Under the direction). *Tour du monde des concepts.* Paris: Fayard [Poids et mesures du monde], pp.74-133, and the article by Augustin Emane: Emane, A., 2014. Langues africaines (Gabon): fang, lingala, nzébi. In: Legendre, P. (Under the direction). *Tour du monde des concepts.* Paris: Fayard [Poids et mesures du monde], pp.188-228.

part of the subjective is understood in every organization, we then perceived the importance that this work assumes within the societies to bring out a "transitional time" during which *pre-figurative processes* of a new society in gestation will begin to work. This political and social technology in motion necessarily involves all sorts of risks and they are consubstantial to processes with a depth that exceeds the limits of simple observation. They lead to forms of reconfigurations indeed of metamorphoses of all of the mechanisms in competition. What was considered until now a singular asset, free of any external contribution, reveals this incessant process of hybridization of practices. If the policy formulations have to take into account the culture and memories of the ethnic communities present, we are called to analyze and understand the ways of thinking that organize them and give them their *practical sense*; in order to better discern the mutual influences on decision-making in a multiethnic region. This *practical sense* allows these ways of thinking to be established as a possible horizon that submerges its foundations and pulls all of its validity into a confirmed *"collective intention"*, and to common historical roots.

A society that wants to apply the laws for living together must be able, in its own internal dynamic, to produce the resources for an intelligent reconciliation tactic. It can only occur by mastering all of these imaginations that cross all the ethnic communities that make up a given space. This mastery only occurs through a suitable conceptual and philosophical language. All cultures attempt to institutionalize their "traditions" to make them the foundations of these mechanisms which structure their relationships and govern their social, political and economic everyday life. They thus proceed to the establishment of norms capable of allowing them to make their actions last for life; by having on hand all the resources that guarantee the success of the *historic initiative*: to perpetuate a method of governance capable of absorbing the differences without setting them against each other.

The culture and the ways of thinking that nourish it go together, and together make it possible, if they are well thought out, to produce a social technology capable of adapting to the realities of every era. Since then, the focus would be to *decontextualize* them to benefit from their various teachings.

To prolong the discussion and better reflect on the social projects in progress, let us agree with the Indian anthropologist to say that we must review all or a significant part of the "practice and procedure 'rituals'" which have governed the ways of *acting, doing* and *making do* in Africa. They are in a process of

inventiveness, made of simulations (dissimulations) of uninterrupted dodgings and creativities.

Let us suppose that this is what the Indian anthropologist meant by the terms "practice and performance 'rituals'". That is to say that we must bring about "This creative, productive, ritual-generating formula" because it "is crucial for building consensus [*in societies*], and it explains in part why culture matters for development" (Appadurai 2013: 242). Because the principle, essence and purpose of all mimicry is to prolong learning.

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Intraregional Migration in the ECOWAS Region: Trends and Emerging Challenges

Introduction

There is no doubt that the movement of human beings from one geographical area to another is an important aspect of life (Castles and Miller, 2009). While ethnic and political conflicts have led to the displacement of a significant proportion of the world's population (Ogata, 2005; Boateng 2012; Teye and Yebleh, 2014), most people move for social and economic reasons, such as work, marriage, and education. There is enough evidence to suggest that human migration can have significant impacts on both sending and receiving areas (Yaro, 2008; Ravallion et al., 2007). Migration can have a decisive impact on the direction and speed of development in both areas of origin and destination. Despite its significance, the relationship between migration and economic development has, historically, received little attention in both academic and policy circles (Srivastava, 2005). In policy circles, the discussion has often focused on how migration from poorer/rural areas into more urban and more developed regions of the world results in problems, such as unemployment, poverty, and the emergence of slums (Owusu, 2008). As a result, policy prescription in many countries, has largely occupied itself with attempts to curb the flow of migrants from rural to urban areas (Awumbila et al, 2014a).

In recent years, however, it has been recognized that, if effectively managed, human migration could contribute to the socioeconomic transformation of the economies of both developed and developing countries. Consequently, a number of governments are making efforts to effectively integrate migration into their development plans (Awumbila et al, 2014b). However, while international migration and its related remittance flows have attracted considerable attention

in recent years (Mazzucato et al., 2005; Ratha et al., 2011), there has been little focus on internal and intraregional migration. In the West African subregion, the focus is often placed on migration to Europe and North America, even though only a small proportion of West African migrants actually travel to the global North. Intraregional migration is the major trend in West Africa, offering development opportunities and challenges for the countries and peoples concerned (Awumbila et al, 2014b). It is estimated that 84 percent of emigrants from West African countries travel to destinations within the subregion (SWAC and OECD 2006). According to Olsen (2011), with more than 7.5 million people (which constitutes 3 percent of the subregional population) circulating within West Africa , migration within West Africa is about six times more prolific than intra-European mobility (with a mere 0.5 percent of the European population living as expatriates within the EU).

Based on an understanding that regional cooperation in the field of labor migration could promote the transfer of skills, knowledge and assets, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, in 1979. This represents a crucial step towards the creation of a borderless subregion. As West African governments seek to harness the benefits of migration while minimizing the associated risks, there is a need for evidence-based policy formulation on labor migration patterns within the subregion. Yet, little or no reliable data is available on the major migration patterns and their linkages with development priorities (Adepoju, 2006). As part of efforts to improve the policy framework on intraregional migration and development in the ECOWAS region, this paper examines the patterns of migration and the challenges of regional migration in ECOWAS.

The paper is based on data gathered during previous studies; including recent research in all ECOWAS countries (see Awumbila, 2014b). The paper is structured into four sections. The next section presents some theoretical perspectives on drivers of migration. This is followed by a presentation on the patterns and challenges of intraregional migration in West Africa. The last section presents conclusions elicited from the main findings.

Theoretical Perspectives on Drivers of Human Migration

A review of the literature shows that there are a number of theories that can be relied upon to explain migration trends in West Africa. These theories include the Neo-Classical Economic Theory, Push-Pull Theory, Migration Hump Theory, and Migration Network Theory. The Neo-Classical Economic Theory explains human migration in terms of geographical differences in the supply and demand for labor. It posits that geographical differentials in wages cause people to migrate from labor-surplus, low wage areas to labor scarce, high wage areas. Migration will eventually cause labor to become less scarce at the destination and scarcer at the sending area. This will eventually bring about growing convergence between wages at the sending and receiving areas (Todaro & Maruszko, 1987). In the long run, this pure economic process would eliminate the incentives for migration from poorer to developed regions. While the theory is credited for identifying the role of wage differentials in migration trends, it can be criticized for failing to emphasize the role of social factors in shaping migration decisions.

The Push-Pull Theory of migration, which was first propounded by Lee (1966), posits that migration between two areas is dependent on factors existing in the area of origin and destination (Lee, 1966). The pull factors are the favorable conditions which attract the migrant to the destination, while the push factors are the unfavorable conditions that drive people away from the origin. The theory assumes that apart from the push and pull factors, the decision to migrate may be influenced by intervening obstacles which include long distances, legal constraints (e.g. immigration laws), cost of migration and psychological stress of leaving relatives behind. The theory is criticized for assuming that the population at the origin is homogenous. In recent years, it has been argued that general contextual factors habitually defined as either push or pull factors are likely to work in a differentiated way on the individual level, and might subsequently encourage some people to leave and others to stay (De Haas, 2008).

The Migration Hump Theory assumes that there is a relationship between migration trends and socioeconomic development. In the early stages of development, an increase in wealth tends to lead to a rise in migration, since a certain threshold of wealth is necessary to enable people to assume the costs and risks of migrating. Only at later stages of development, does emigration tend to decrease and do regions and countries tend to transform from net

labor exporters to net labor importers (Rotte et al. 1997). This theory does not examine the direction of migration flows.

The Migration Network Theory explains migration in terms of social networks between earlier migrants at the destination and potential migrants at the destination (Teye and Yebleh, 2014). Networks are defined as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin (Massey et al 1993:448). The facilitating role of such "family and friends networks" makes migration very difficult for governments to control. Networks lead to migrants clustering at certain places (Awumbila et al. 2014a). Although it is criticized for ignoring economic drivers of migration, this theory can be credited for emphasizing the role of social networks in intraregional mobility within West Africa.

Historical Patterns of Intraregional Labor Migration in West Africa

Population mobility in West Africa is not a recent phenomenon (Yaro, 2008), and there is enough evidence to suggest that current migration trends in West Africa are deeply rooted in historical antecedents (Adepoju 2006). In the pre-colonial era, movements were mainly motivated by the search of security and fertile land for settlement and farming (Adepoju, 2003). Indeed, most of the tribes of the region are thought to have moved to the present locations in search of better ecological conditions and safe havens (Yaro, 2008). Some population movements were also caused by spatial differences in ecological conditions which necessitated exchange of goods, such as salt, livestock, and food, among the population (Zachariah et al., 1980). These exchanges of products among people from different parts of West Africa crystallized into the famous trans-Saharan trade routes. Integration between the peoples of West Africa transcended beyond trade in commodities to include intermarriages, exchange of slaves and military alliances (Yaro, 2008). Most of the movements in the pre-colonial era were not seen as cross border migration per se, as those involved regarded the West African subregion as a borderless area within which goods and people moved freely (Adepoju, 2005).

The colonial regime significantly altered the motivation, direction, and composition of migration by introducing and enforcing various blends of political and economic structures, and establishing national boundaries (Adepoju, 2005). Between the mid-sixteenth and early 19th century, the slave trade led to the forced migration of several million people from West Africa to Europe, North America, and the Caribbean. Within West Africa, colonial policies prompted movement of labor migrants from Northern or Sahel West African countries to the mining and plantation areas in Southern West African countries (Bump, 2006). The export-oriented colonial economic policies provoked large-scale labor requirements for plantations and mines in coastal areas that exceeded local supply (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003). The colonial administration adopted different economic and recruitment measures, such as contract and forced labor legislation and agreements, to stimulate labor migration from Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Togo and Mali to the plantations and mines in Gold Coast (Ghana) and Côte d'Ivoire. The construction of rail and road networks also stimulated large-scale, male-dominated, seasonal and cross-border labor migration within the subregion by reducing the distance and hazards of journeys that previously discouraged long-distance migrations (Adepoju, 2005). Seasonal migration from Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Mali to the groundnut areas of Senegambia, for instance, began by the early 1920s.

Intraregional mobility in the early post-colonial era (in 1960s) was still dominated by North-South movements from landlocked countries of Sahel West Africa (Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) to the plantation-rich and mineral-rich coastal countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and The Gambia). Of these countries, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana were the two most important migrant destinations in the 1960s. In Côte d'Ivoire, cocoa and coffee production necessitated the recruitment of large numbers of farm laborers from neighboring regions, especially Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali. After independence, bilateral agreements on the conditions for employing workers from Burkina Faso were signed between the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso on 20th of March 1960. Côte d'Ivoire had similar bilateral agreements with Mali, Benin, and Guinea. These agreements facilitated migration of labor from these Sahel countries to the plantation zones of Côte d'Ivoire. The migrants generally worked as farm laborers, artisans, administrative workers, and hawkers (Haeringer, 1973). On the other hand, Ghana attracted many migrants from Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Niger, Mali and Nigeria because of the massive extraction of minerals and the cultivation of cocoa taking place in the country

(Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2011a). Meanwhile the seasonal migration of farmers from Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Mali to the groundnut fields in Senegal and The Gambia also intensified during this period (Swindell, 1977; Zachariah et al., 1980).

In the 1970s, Nigeria also became a major migrant destination in West Africa, as a result of dramatic increase in oil prices. It received immigrants from Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Cabo Verde and Ghana. It is estimated that one million Ghanaians migrated to Nigeria by the late 1970s (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003). Since the 1980s, migration flows from several ECOWAS countries have increased, in line with global migration trends (IOM, 2005; Papastergiadis, 2000). The major labor-exporting countries in the region have continued to be Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. However, Liberia and Sierra Leone joined these traditional labor-exporting countries with high levels of emigration in the 1990s, mainly as a result of political crises. Senegal has been both a labor-exporting and labor-receiving country. It also now serves as a transit country for migrants seeking to enter Europe clandestinely via Las Palmas (Canary Islands) to Spain. Again, since the late 1980s, traditional labor-receiving countries, such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Ghana, have experienced political and economic problems, spurring emigration of their nationals to Europe, North America and other African countries (Adepoju, 2005). Most of the migrants who have been moving to Europe and North America are highly skilled professionals, including doctors, nurses, lecturers, and engineers (Afolayan et al., 2009; Quartey, 2009).

Contemporary Migration Patterns in the ECOWAS Region

The dominant typologies of migration in contemporary West Africa include permanent migration, seasonal migration, cross-border movements, return migration and transit migration (Adepoju 2006). Seasonal labor migration is commonly associated with those living in the Sahel Agro-Ecological Zone due to the relatively short rainy season which alternates with that of the Forest and Transitional Agro-Ecological Zones (Adepoju, 2003). Migrants in the ECOWAS subregion also include temporary cross-border workers, female traders, farm laborers, professionals and clandestine workers. An important feature of contemporary migration patterns in West Africa is the fact that female migrants are increasingly drawn to the wage labor market (both formal and informal) as

a survival strategy to augment meager family incomes. Commercial migration is female-dominated, helping to promote intraregional trade. Trafficking of children from Mali, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria to Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa and coffee plantation areas is also pervasive (Adepoju, 2005). Large-scale refugee movements are also widespread in contemporary West Africa (Ogata 2005; Boateng, 2012). The major causes of these movements include: the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s; political tensions in Togo and Côte d'Ivoire; and ethnic conflicts in Northern parts of Nigeria and Ghana. Data on actual flows of migrants in the subregion is, however, difficult to obtain. As part of research funded by the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) Observatory on Migration, we relied on data from national population census reports and/or other sources from the various ECOWAS countries to analyze the stock of ECOWAS emigrants and immigrants in each country. Despite the inherent challenges associated with the use of data from different sources (Bryman, 2001) for such an analysis, our assessment revealed that today, almost all West African countries are both migrant-sending areas and immigration destinations (see Awumbila et al, 2014b).

Table 1 shows that in absolute terms, Côte d'Ivoire had the highest number of ECOWAS immigrants (2,350,024), followed by Nigeria (823,743), Ghana (409,910), Guinea (381,315) and The Gambia (278,793). Thus, recent political tensions may have displaced a number of the people from Côte d'Ivoire, but it is still the most popular destination for ECOWAS migrants. This may be attributed to the fact that the country's economy has historically been strong as a result of cocoa production. It contributes about 40 percent of GDP of the West African Economic Monetary Union (Direction des Services Socioculturels et de la Promotion Humaine de la Mairie du Plateau, 2009).

Given that the different countries have different sized populations, we also examined the number of immigrants as a percentage of each country's population. The 2010 population of individual countries as provided by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Population Division was used in computing the share of the population that were migrants. Table 1 clearly indicates that The Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire have the largest percentages of their populations made up of immigrants from other ECOWAS countries. About 16.1 percent of the population of The Gambia and 11.9 percent of the population of Côte d'Ivoire are immigrants from other ECOWAS countries. Therefore, although a country like The Gambia does not rank very high in terms of migrant destinations in ECOWAS, when considering

immigrants from ECOWAS countries as a percentage of the total population, The Gambia ranks the highest in ECOWAS. On the other hand, only 0.3 percent of the population of Burkina Faso and 0.4 percent of Mali's population are immigrants from other ECOWAS countries. In terms of sending countries, Table 1 shows that countries with the highest number of emigrants in other West African countries are Burkina Faso (1,414,685), Mali (708,687), Guinea (438,481) and Benin (404,464). In percentage terms, 8.6 percent of nationals of Burkina Faso and 8 percent of Liberians were living in other ECOWAS countries. Other countries with a relatively high proportion of their citizens living in other ECOWAS countries are Mali (4.6%), Benin (4.6%), Guinea (4.4%), and Togo (4.3%). It is also clear from Table 1 that although all of the ECOWAS countries from which migrants leave also receive migrants from other countries, Burkina Faso is a predominantly migrant-sending country. The country had 1,361,599 more emigrants in ECOWAS countries than the number of ECOWAS immigrants it was hosting. Other predominantly migrant-sending countries are Mali, Benin, and Liberia. The situation of Burkina Faso and Mali shows that landlocked countries in the Sahel region are still predominantly migrant sending areas. Table 1 also indicates that some countries are both immigration as well as emigration countries. In fact, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and to some extent Guinea, which are key destination countries in the subregion, are also important migrant sending countries.

In order to show the flow of migrants between and among countries, Table 2 presents the stock of ECOWAS migrants in each country according to the top four origins, while Figure 1 presents the direction flow of migrants within West Africa.

Table 1: Stock of ECOWAS Immigrants and Emigrants, 2012

| Country	Population in 2010 (000)	Total number of immigrants from ECOWAS countries	Immigrants from ECOWAS countries as a percentage of total population	Total number of emigrants in ECOWAS countries	Emigrants in ECOWAS countries as a percentage of total population	Net migration within ECOWAS (absolute)
Benin	8,850	132,567	1.50	404,464	4.57	-271,897
Burkina Faso	16,469	53,086	0.32	1,414,685	8.59	-1,361,599
Cabo Verde	496	8,782	1.77	15,302	3.09	-6,520
Côte d'Ivoire	19,738	2,350,024	11.91	47,164	0.24	2,302,860
Gambia	1,728	278,793	16.13	21,059	1.22	257,734
Ghana	24,392	409,910	1.68	347,487	1.42	62,423
Guinea	9,982	381,315	3.82	438,481	4.39	-57,166
Guinea Bissau	1,515	15,985	1.06	44,544	2.94	-28,559
Liberia	3,994	69,321	1.74	318,459	7.97	-249,138
Mali	15,370	65,949	0.43	708,687	4.61	-642,738
Niger	15,512	176,877	1.14	293,261	1.89	-116,384
Nigeria	158,423	823,743	0.52	267,948	0.17	555,795
Senegal	12,434	137,626	1.11	227,033	1.83	-89,407
Sierra Leone	5,868	87,199	1.49	178,758	3.05	- 91,559
Togo	6,028	215,409	3.57	261,166	4.33	-45,757

Source: Awumbila et al (2014b).

Table 2: Stock of ECOWAS Immigrants by Top Four Countries of Origin

Receiving Country	Number of Immigrants from ECOWAS	Percentage Contributions by Country of Origins (Top Four Countries)			
Benin	132,567	Niger (37.2)	Togo (23.6)	Nigeria (21.9)	Ghana (4.9)
Burkina Faso	53,086	Togo (16.4)	Benin (11)	Niger (10.7)	Nigeria (9.9)
Cabo Verde	8,782	G. Bissau (63.2)	Senegal (18.6)	Nigeria (8.4)	Guinea (5.2)
Côte d'Ivoire	2,350,024	Burkina Faso (55.8)	Mali (18.8)	Guinea (5.7)	Ghana (4.7)
Gambia	278,793	Senegal (58.3)	Guinea (35.6)	G. Bissau (2.3)	Mali (1.3)
Ghana	409,910	Nigeria (30.4)	Togo (7.8)	B. Faso (7.5)	Liberia (3.3)
Guinea	381,315	Liberia (49.7)	S. Leone (41.2)	Mali (4)	Senegal (1.7)
Guinea Bissau	15,985	Senegal (61.4)	Guinea (30.2)	Gambia (5.7)	C. Verde (2.7)
Liberia	69,321	Guinea (48.7)	S. Leone (17.1)	Côte d'Ivoire (13.2)	Ghana (9.7)
Mali	65,949	Burkina Faso (33.6)	Côte d'Ivoire (28.3)	Guinea (24.9)	Senegal (7.7)
Niger	176,877	Mali (39.5)	Nigeria (17.0)	B. Faso (16.9)	Benin (15.7)
Nigeria	823,743	Benin (29.0)	Ghana (22.6)	Mali (16.2)	Togo (14.1)
Senegal	137,626	Guinea (58.7)	G. Bissau (17.6)	Mali (12.7)	C. Verde (6.8)
Sierra Leone	87,199	Guinea (67.3)	Liberia (24.2)	Gambia (2.7)	Nigeria (2.3)
Togo	215,409	Benin (31.4)	Niger (28.4)	Ghana (13.7)	Nigeria (13.6)

Source: Based on Awumbila et al (2014)

Figure 1: Map Showing Major Migration Flows of ECOWAS Immigrants and Emigrants
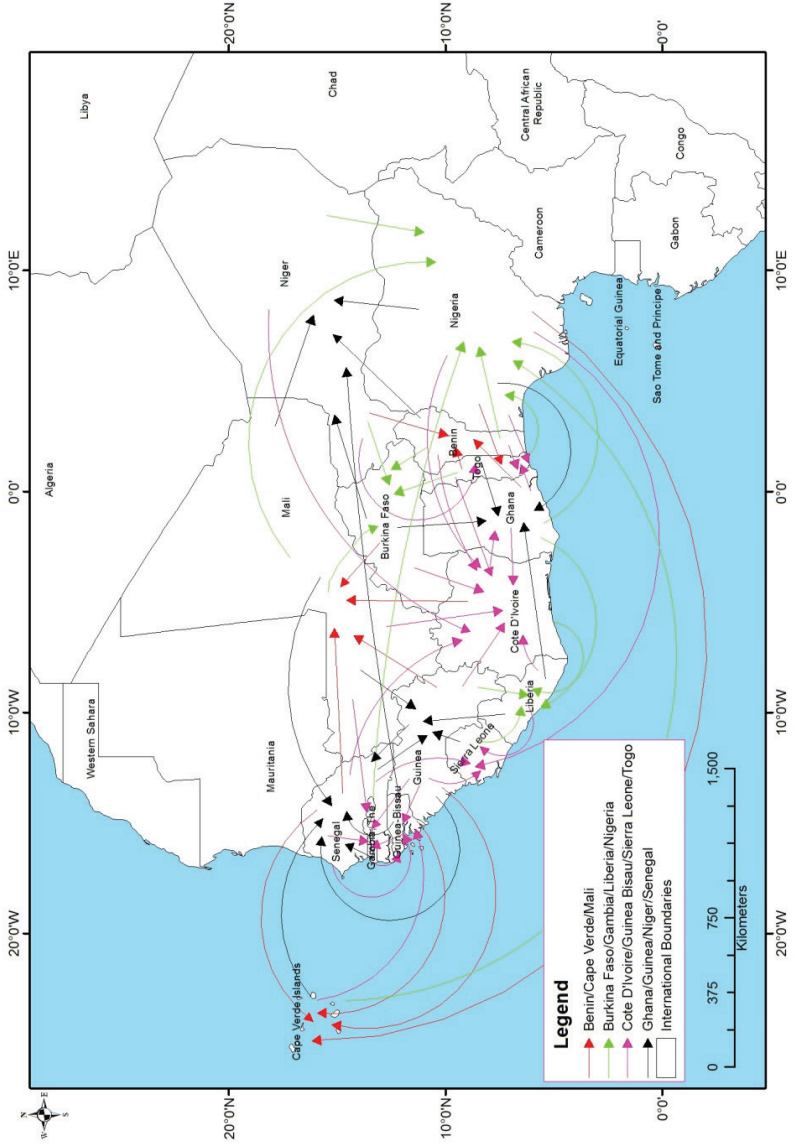
Source: Awumbila et al, 2014.

It is clear from Table 2 that each of the ECOWAS countries has a dominant migrant-source country. For instance, about 55.8 percent of ECOWAS immigrants in Côte d'Ivoire are from Burkina Faso. Similarly, about 63.2 percent of ECOWAS immigrants in Cabo Verde are from Guinea Bissau, while 67.3 percent of ECOWAS immigrants in Sierra Leone are from Guinea. Migrants from each country tend to have a popular destination, which is not necessarily the most economically prosperous country in the region. For instance, 92.7 percent of migrants from Burkina Faso were in Côte d'Ivoire as of 2010 (not shown in table). Similarly, 87.9 percent of migrants from Sierra Leone were in Guinea (not shown in table). In some cases, the popular destination for a country's emigrants is also the most popular source region for its immigrants. For instance, a higher proportion of ECOWAS immigrants in Benin were Nigerians. At the same time, a significant proportion of ECOWAS immigrants in Nigeria were from Benin and Ghana.

Proximity seems to influence the choice of destination for many migrants, as in the case of Benin and Nigeria. Colonial legacy and common official language may also explain why migrants from Ghana are more likely to move to Nigeria and vice versa. Ethnic ties also tend to influence the choice of destination among ECOWAS migrants. Most of the Ewes in Togo, for instance, move yearly to stay and work with their relatives in the Volta Region of Ghana. Before the advent of colonialism, these movements were not seen as constituting migration. Today, most ECOWAS migrants still perceive their mobility from one country to another as being within one sociocultural space rather than between two nations (Afolayan et al., 2009). As the Ewes of Togo move to and from Ghana because of their ethnic linkages with the Ewes in Ghana, the Kpelle, which is the largest ethnic group in Liberia, are also found in southern Guinea. Hence, members of this group tend to move across the boundaries of Liberia and Guinea. Additionally, the Kissi are found in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, while the Malinke are found in several countries including The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Liberia. These ethnic ties and the use of the same language make it easy for migrants to stay and work in different countries. Thus, the destinations of migrants have mainly been countries that share some political, historical and cultural ties, consistent with the network theory of migration which is widely used to explain destination choice, the migration process and livelihoods of migrants in a new environment (Cassarino, 2004; Boateng, 2012; Teye and Yebleh, 2014).

The above migration patterns show that migration trends in West Africa are very complex and cannot be explained by a single theory. While the Push-Pull Theory may explain why people continue to move from relatively poorer Sahel countries (especially Mali and Burkina Faso) to resource rich coastal regions (notably Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal), Migration Network Theory seems to explain the ethnic-based migration flows between Ghana and Togo; Nigeria and Ghana; Liberia and Sierra Leone; Guinea and Sierra Leone, among others. The fluid nature of migration in the subregion is also explained by the fact that migrants are not a homogenous group. Within the same country, different types of migrants may move to different regions based on their qualifications, skills and opportunities available in other countries. For instance, while highly educated Ghanaian professionals may find it more useful to move to Nigeria for professional practice, Ghanaian fishermen are more likely to move to the coast of countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Gambia.

Sociodemographic Characteristics and Economic Activities of ECOWAS Migrants

Understanding the characteristics of migrants is key for designing policy to promote their integration and contribution to development (Teye and Yebleh, 2014). Yet, data on sociodemographic characteristics of migrants is generally difficult to find as many countries do not disaggregate their migration data into various sociodemographic groups. An analysis of the data from a few countries, however, suggests that most migrants are in the active labor age group. For instance, 63 percent of ECOWAS immigrants in Ghana, 64 percent in Liberia and 50 percent in Togo were in the economically active population (15–64 years of age). The situation in the Gambia, Senegal and Nigeria were the same, with more than 50 percent of ECOWAS immigrants in the economically active age group. This indicates that the major cause of mobility in the region is the pursuit of livelihood activities.

In terms of sex composition, West African immigrants in many ECOWAS countries are slightly more likely to be male. Table 3 shows the sex distribution of immigrants in selected ECOWAS countries where recent age-specific data exists. Apart from Burkina Faso, male ECOWAS migrants outnumber female migrants in all the countries presented in Table 3. Cabo Verde and Liberia have the highest percentage of male ECOWAS immigrants, with 87.2 percent and

60.5 percent, respectively. Burkina Faso has slightly less males, at 49.5 percent. This trend is not surprising as labor migration in Africa has been traditionally regarded as a male-dominated phenomenon (Adepoju, 2003; Awumbila et al., 2009). The aggregated figures presented in Table 3 may, however, conceal patterns of distribution of migrants from some specific ECOWAS countries. For instance, Togo generally has more male ECOWAS immigrants than female immigrants. Yet, 59.5 percent of the 29,416 Ghanaian immigrants in Togo during the 2010 census were women. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most of the Ghanaian women in Togo are traders. Similarly, 51.6 percent of the 67,665 immigrants from Benin in Togo were women.

Table 3: Stock of West African Immigrants in Selected ECOWAS Countries by Sex, 2012

Countries	Male		Female		Total number
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Burkina Faso	26, 293	49.5	26793	50.5	53,086
Cabo Verde	7,658	87.2	1124	12.8	8,782
Ghana	224,414	54.7	185,496	45.3	409,910
Liberia	41,906	60.5	27,415	39.5	69,321
Sierra Leone	47,276	54.2	39,923	45.8	87,199
Togo	109,693	50.9	105,716	49.1	215,409

Note: This table contains data on immigrants for only a few countries because there is no available data on sex distribution of immigrants of the other countries.
Source: Awumbila et al, 2014.

In relation to economic activities engaged in by migrants, an analysis of available data reveals that migrants in most ECOWAS countries tend to work in the informal sector as traders, artisans, and farmers. For instance, according to the 2010 Gambia Household Integrated Survey (IHS), non-Gambians are more frequently engaged in retail trade (Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Surveys of the fishery sector in The Gambia suggest that up to 60 percent of fishermen in the area are foreign-born, mainly from Senegal but also from Ghana (IMF, 2007; Mendy, 2009). In Cabo Verde, out of about 5,619 work permits issued

between 1976 and 2008, 2,617 (46.6%) were issued to people working in the commerce and service sectors, with only nine (0.2%) working in the banking and insurance sector (Cabo Verde National Institute of Statistics, 2012). In Ghana, managers constitute only 2.8 percent of ECOWAS immigrants, while skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers constitute about 34.6 percent of the ECOWAS immigrants (GSS, 2012). The situation is similar in Côte d'Ivoire (AGEPE, 2006). Low educational level of many ECOWAS migrants may explain why many of them do not work in the formal sector. Research has shown that highly educated professionals, such as medical doctors and engineers, are more likely to migrate to Europe or North America than to other ECOWAS countries (Awumbila, et al. 2014b). Lack of industry and insufficient proficiency in the destination country's language(s) may also affect the ability of ECOWAS migrants in other countries to get jobs in the formal sector. For instance, most Togolese graduates in Ghana and Nigeria cannot speak English, which is the official language in these two countries. Clark and Drinkwater (2007) have documented similar problems faced by migrants in Europe. Despite these challenges, the study shows that ECOWAS labor migrants are contributing positively to socioeconomic development in their destination countries. Indeed, many immigrants have brought capital for trading and businesses into their destination countries. In Ghana, for example, the banking sector has been revitalized by the establishment of several Nigerian-owned banks.

Challenges of Managing Intraregional Migration in ECOWAS

There is no doubt that making migration work as an agent of development is a major challenge manifested in several spheres (Yaro, 2008). This is because the effects of migration on both sending and receiving areas can be either negative or positive. Migrants sending areas can benefit through several mechanisms, including remittances sent home by emigrants; development projects undertaken back home by diaspora associations; reduction in unemployment rates; reduction in population pressure on agricultural land; and brain gain. However, if poorly managed, migration can negatively affect sending areas resulting in a shortage of labor, reduction in size of market, food shortage, and brain drain. On the other hand, migrant receiving areas can reap several benefits from migration, and these include cheap labor, larger market size, and

increased revenue. If poorly managed, migrant receiving areas can record the following negative effects: pressure on housing and health services; congestion and development of slums; increased unemployment and declining standards of living; and increase in the number of crimes and social vices (Owusu et al, 2008). Given the complexity of the relationship between migration and development, efficient policies are required to minimize the negative effects and maximize the positive effects of migration on both the origin and receiving areas. However, there are several challenges to ensuring that intraregional migration in West Africa produces positive outcomes for the migrants, their host communities, and their areas of origin. In the discussions that follow, we discuss these challenges in relation to the labor markets and also implementation of the free movement protocols in West Africa.

Labor Market Challenges

While a well-developed and regulated labor market is required to ensure that migrants find jobs in various sectors of the economies of their destination countries (Quartey, 2009), the labor market in the West African subregion is characterized by several challenges which affect the development outcomes of migration. To begin with, a lack of job opportunities in the formal sector is a major challenge to intraregional mobility in West Africa. Although West African countries have been historically poor, formal sector employment has declined in many countries since the 1980s due to the withdrawal of governments from direct involvement in productive economic activities, as a result of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). A major feature of the SAPs was a substantial reduction in public sector employment in the late 1980s and early 1990s through public sector retrenchment and privatization of state-owned enterprises. In the case of Niger, for instance, about 2,500 workers were laid off in the public sector between 1983 and 1987 (Hugon et al., 1995), while in Côte d'Ivoire, formal sector employment fell from a growth rate of 7 percent per annum to 3 percent per annum between 1980 and 1983. The agricultural sector remains the major employer in West Africa's labor market. Consequently, there is a general lack of job opportunities in the urban areas in many ECOWAS countries. As a result, migrants may find it difficult to find jobs in their host countries which are already struggling with high unemployment rates. Unavailability of jobs also explains why some governments do not allow migrants to work in their public sectors.

The informality of labor markets in West Africa also affects how labor mobility takes place and the working conditions of migrants. As a result of the lack of jobs in the formal sector, many citizens and migrants end up working in the informal sector. The formal sectors in Benin, Liberia, Mali, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria (1999) account for between 3.9 percent and 25 percent of employment in these countries respectively, with an increasing shift into the informal sector. It is estimated that about 70-80% of workers in the subregion work in the informal sector (Awumbila et al, 2014b). There is enough evidence to suggest that many of the workers (both citizens and migrants) in the informal sector lack an assured salary, pensions, sickness benefits or job security.

Another major problem is the inability of governments in West Africa to develop comprehensive data sets on labor markets to provide information on employment opportunities to youth entering the labor market. Few countries have carried out labor force surveys, the most recent country being Liberia in 2010. The majority of countries lack comprehensive labor force data and possess limited statistics on labor migration. A recent assessment shows that only three countries – namely Senegal, Ghana and Gambia – had made some efforts towards the establishment of such a Labor Market Information System (LMIS). In the absence of LMIS, labor market information is collected independently and not shared amongst relevant stakeholders. There is no coordinated strategy for data collection and dissemination, or for engaging different institutions that are key to the success, or otherwise, of LMIS. Consequently, most potential migrants have no idea of areas with job opportunities (Awumbila et al, 2014).

Low skill levels in the subregion constitute another major challenge. Labor supply is not only dependent on the total population, but also on the quality of labor available. Available data suggests that literacy levels among the population in West Africa aged 15 years and older varies geographically. While the proportion of the population who is literate has increased in some countries, such as Ghana (71.5%), populations in others, like Benin, Guinea, and Liberia, exhibit lower educational levels. Only 39.5 percent of the population aged 15 years and above is literate in Guinea, a figure lower than the general literacy rate for Sub-Saharan Africa, estimated at 61.6 percent (UNDP, 2011). In Benin, the adult (15 years and older) literacy rate was estimated at 40 percent in 2009. The Liberian Labour Force Survey (LFS) of 2010 also shows that the country's labor force is predominantly illiterate and unskilled, with the literacy rate estimated at 59 percent. Thus, many young people are entering the labor force with very low educational levels (African Progress Panel, 2012). Additionally,

there is a limited emphasis on vocational education. A study on private sector demand for youth labor in Ghana and Senegal in 2009 indicated that, in the case of Ghana, the sectors with the highest employment potential include the service sector, and particularly those linked to telecommunication and ICT (Aubyn, 2011). In Benin, a recent study by the Observatory for Employment and Training indicated that there are nine growth sectors in which youth and the unemployed could find formal employment opportunities. These sectors range from the garment industry, tourism, transport services and the chemical industry, to telecommunications, food processing, commerce and handicrafts (EDC, 2011). Yet, most of the youth who migrate within the region do not have vocational skills.

Challenges with the Implementation of ECOWAS Protocol on Free Entry, Residence and Settlement

One of the goals of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol is to promote the relaxation of immigration control measures in order to facilitate intraregional population movements among countries of the subregion. As a result, the ECOWAS Treaty, which was adopted in Lagos on 29th of May 1975, enjoined member states to exempt Community citizens from visitor visas and residence permits, and allow them to work and undertake commercial and industrial activities within their territories. The Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 1993 provides in Article 3(1) for "the removal, between Member States, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and to the right of residence and establishment". Essentially, ECOWAS citizens have the right to reside and work, without discrimination, in ECOWAS countries, but are required to apply for the necessary work permits from the relevant state agencies (Benneh, 2005; Agyei and Clottey, 2007). In practice, however, a number of factors have made the implementation of the free movement protocols difficult. First, in some member states migrants are harassed and asked to make unofficial payments before being allowed to enter the country. Some ECOWAS citizens also do not have passports or identity cards and as such it is difficult to establish their nationalities. Such travellers may also be forced to make unofficial payments at points of entry or exit. There are also concerns that the privileges enshrined in the protocol have been abused by some citizens of the subregion, including smuggling of goods and illicit trade in narcotics. These crimes and acts of

economic sabotage have led to expressions of resentment among officials and the general public in destination countries.

The extensive borders of large countries, such as Nigeria, Mali and Niger, also makes policing borders a major challenge for immigration enforcement agencies the subregion. This has led to several hundreds of illegal border crossing points which have security implications. Another challenge is that the Protocol reserves member states the right to refuse admission into their territory, to community citizens deemed inadmissible, under their domestic laws (Article 4). This provision undermines the purpose of the Protocol through the use of restrictive domestic inadmissibility laws (Adepoju, 2006). Another challenge is presented by the fact that migrants intending to settle in member states do not always apply for work or residence permits and often work without the necessary documents.

Restrictions and discrimination against migrants is another major problem in the West African subregion. Despite the existence of bilateral, regional and universal agreements as well as national legal frameworks prohibiting discrimination, nationals of ECOWAS member states continue to be exposed to discrimination. Within the various national legal frameworks, some privileges and rights are reserved for nationals and are not extended to foreigners. In terms of employment, for example, foreigners in Ghana and Togo, including those from ECOWAS member states, cannot work in sensitive security services. In Mali, foreigners cannot hold any employment in the public service. Again in Ghana, by law (Section 18 of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, Act 478 of 1994) certain enterprises are wholly reserved for Ghanaian nationals. This provision appears to discriminate against nationals from other member states and as such it violates the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol, which stipulates that ECOWAS nationals who intend to pursue livelihood activities should be subjected to the same laws as nationals of the destination member state. In all member countries, public service jobs are only available to nationals, except under special arrangements, while foreigners are free to work in the private sector. Those foreign nationals employed by governments in the civil service often provide either technical assistance or have been long-term residents of destination countries, or are granted permission under special executive arrangements (for example, bilateral agreements) as is the case in Sierra Leone.

In the case of Gambia, the National Assembly passed an amendment to the payroll tax act in 2010 requiring that employers do not hire non-citizens in excess of 20 percent of their workforce except in a specialized professional category, a move that is regarded as an effort designed to encourage employers to train and employ more local citizens (Awumbila et al, 2014b). The passing of indigenization policies by countries to protect the few available jobs, in addition to expulsion and stricter border controls, has impeded free movement of people within the subregion. Many of these policies were implemented when economic conditions began to deteriorate and the governments faced civil and political upheavals. In theory, migrant workers and their families are entitled to all of the social benefits available to national workers, but this is often not the case in reality. In addition to discrimination in the legal codes, migrants may suffer discrimination in the informal sector where they work, as the local population feel threatened by the prosperity of the newly arrived, who usually are determined to succeed in whatever endeavor they engage in.

Economic Challenges and Instability

The worsening economic situation in most West African countries and pressure from the local population in destination countries also frustrates the migration process by making the benefits for most low-skilled jobs not worth the effort for migrants. Economic challenges and high levels of poverty among citizens create anti-migrant sentiments that render states reluctant to implement the ECOWAS free movement protocols (Konan and Kouakou, 2012). Indeed, periods of economic crisis tend to translate into periods of dislike for non-nationals. The blame for economic and social ills is usually put on foreigners rather than the root causes of corruption, mismanagement and international forces (Yaro, 2008). In the past, this has contributed to mass expulsion of ECOWAS citizens from some countries. For instance, Senegal expelled Guineans in 1967, while Côte d'Ivoire expelled about 16,000 Beninoise in 1964. In early 1979, Togolese farmers were expelled from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The largest case of mass expulsion of undocumented aliens took place in Nigeria in 1983 and 1985 (Adepoju 2005). These mass expulsions of ECOWAS migrant workers undermine the broader regional aims and principles set out in the ECOWAS Treaty on Free Movement (Adepoju et al., 2007).

The economic environment in the ECOWAS subregion is also not favorable for intraregional migration and regional integration. Transportation and communication between countries in the subregion has improved recently but it is still quite expensive compared with movement to the developed North. There is also a language problem as most people from English speaking countries cannot speak French, in particular, affecting intraregional migration and integration.

Political instability also poses a serious challenge to using intraregional mobility to promote development. Since the early 1990s, the subregion has experienced a number of high-profile intra-state conflicts, the most notable of which being those of Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Senegal and recently Mali. These conflicts generate many refugees and internally displaced persons. For instance, about 70 percent of Liberia's population was displaced, and the thousands who fled the war to seek refuge in Sierra Leone, were soon dislodged as conflict broke out there in March 1991. As a result, both the individual countries and ECOWAS have to devote much attention and commit their scarce human, material and financial resources to the resolution of these conflicts, thereby constraining ECOWAS from achieving its objectives. For migration to be successful, it must be a planned activity based on real opportunities. A major challenge to ECOWAS is establishing an emergency response system capable of handling emergency migrants in an integrative manner rather than the current refugee camp system which tends to breed all sorts of social vices rather than promoting development (Yaro, 2008).

Conclusions

The discussion in this paper has shown that intraregional migration has been integral to labor markets and livelihoods in the ECOWAS subregion. Contemporary intraregional migration in West Africa includes temporary cross-border workers, male farm laborers, female traders, professionals, clandestine workers, tertiary-educated students and refugees. Although the direction of flows has changed over time in response to a variety of factors, intraregional migration has been generally dominated by a North–South movement from countries of Sahel West Africa (i.e. Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger) to the mineral-rich and plantation-rich coastal countries, notably Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and The Gambia. More recently, conflict situations have made Liberia and Sierra

Leone also migrant source countries. In most cases, the popular destination for a country's emigrants is also the most popular source region of its immigrants. The destinations of ECOWAS migrants have mainly been countries that share some political, historical and cultural ties. We conclude that no single theory is adequate for explaining the complex migration trends in West Africa. The Push-Pull Theory and the Migration Network Theory can be relied upon to explain various aspects of intraregional migration in ECOWAS. Labor migrants in most ECOWAS countries tend to work in the informal sector as traders, artisans, and farmers, possibly as a result of the generally low educational level of many ECOWAS migrants and a lack of employment opportunities in the formal sector.

The findings show that West African countries are not reaping the full benefits of intraregional migration because of challenges associated with the labor markets. These include a lack of jobs in the formal sectors of receiving countries, the informality of labor markets, and low skill levels in the subregion. ECOWAS member countries therefore need to increase the overall capacity of the labor force and achieve a better match between workers' skills and private-sector demand. Additionally, although many ECOWAS countries recognize the need for labor market information systems (LMIS), most of the countries in the subregion do not have functional labor market information in place. In this regard, we suggest that the governments must conduct periodic labor market and migration surveys to ascertain labor needs and supply, ensuring regular updates of migration and labor market information at the national level. Stakeholders must invest in helping to determine labor demand and supply within the subregion to contribute to greater employment.

Although, in principle, many member states of ECOWAS have ratified the Free Movement of Persons Protocol, in practice, there are still restrictive policies/ initiatives by member states to protect certain sectors of their economies for their own nationals. While the Common Approach with its strategic priorities and action plans can be said to represent a comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing the interdependence of migration issues, more needs to be done to ensure their effective implementation. Member states must adopt a series of legislative, regulatory and practical measures at the national level in order to implement these action plans. As noted elsewhere, the provisions in the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons guaranteeing community migrant workers are treated the same as citizens of the member state, were overambitious. In reality, governments are concerned that if nationals are pushed out of the labor market by foreigners, citizens would vote them out of power. This

explains why some member states enact laws to reserve some sectors of the economy for their citizens. Given this situation, bilateral agreements between countries in the West African subregion can better promote labor migration. For instance, Ghana currently has such an arrangement with the Government of Liberia where Ghanaian electrical engineers and technicians are working in the energy sector of that country (Awumbila et al, 2014).

It is also recommended that since there are hardly any jobs for migrants in urban areas and cities, there should be a policy encouraging rural-rural migration. If rural livelihood is given all the support it needs less people will prefer to move and the increase in productivity will enhance the economy of the subregion. There is a need to ensure people move to rural areas with new technologies (Yaro, 2008). We also recommend that governments must develop national migration policies and ensure the integration of labor migration and migration issues in general, into National Development Planning agendas and regional frameworks. We finally conclude that future labor mobility patterns will largely depend on the political will of the member states of ECOWAS to cooperate, share labor migration data, and effectively implement labor migration policies, agreements and protocols.

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Matthias Lücke

Remittances: Does Human Capital Follow Financial Capital? – The Development Potential of the West African Diaspora

Introduction

Academic and policy-oriented debates about the impact of migration on economic development in migrants' countries of origin have now gone on for several decades (de Haas, 2007). One recurring theme is that migrant remittances do not contribute to development at home if they are used for consumption. "If only" the recipients of remittances used their additional disposable income for investment (rather than consumption), economic growth would be accelerated. Even better, if migrants were to return to their countries of origin, their presence would increase the stock of human capital and promote economic growth and development even more.

In this paper, I present a more nuanced view. I argue that the key to understanding the contribution of the migrant Diaspora to home-country development is to adopt a migrant-centered approach. The decisions to migrate, to remit, to consume, to invest, and to return to the home country are all taken by migrants and their household members in line with their preferences and in response to prevailing conditions. To understand how migrants and their household members make these decisions is the first step to designing policy interventions that enhance Diaspora contributions to development at home, including in West Africa.

The experiences of many countries of origin, with large Diasporas as well as the existing development-related activities of West African migrants, suggest that migration and remittances contribute to economic growth and development at home through several distinct channels. Here, I draw on a broad notion of "human

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development" in line with UNDP's Human Development Reports, especially UNDP (2009) on human mobility and development. At its core, development means an increase in people's capacity to lead fulfilled lives. In operational terms, poverty reduction, higher education attainment, and better access to health care are all important elements of human development, beyond traditional indicators such as the growth of total output (GDP) and disposable income.

Furthermore, human development through migration and remittances occurs not only among individuals who remain in the country of origin. The migrants themselves experience human development as they move abroad, gain access to better-paid jobs, better education for their children, better healthcare for themselves and their families, etc.

In their countries of origin, migrants contribute to human development, first, through their remittances (financial or in-kind) to relatives and friends. Such remittances increase the recipients' disposable income and are frequently spent on essential consumption such as food, school fees, and medical costs.

However, the human development benefits of financial remittances do not stop with the immediate recipients. Through at least three channels, financial remittances will lead to higher real wages for all workers: first, through higher demand for locally produced goods and services; second, by reducing competition for jobs as the migrants themselves and some remittance recipients drop out of the labor force; and third, by increasing government tax revenue through higher imports (which are subject not only to customs duties but also to excises and value-added tax). These indirect effects are larger, the higher the financial remittances economy-wide.

Second, migrants contribute to human development at home through their "social" remittances. Abroad, migrants are confronted with different social, political, and cultural habits and values, including fertility patterns, educational aspirations for children, gender roles, opportunities for political participation, and the transparency of public institutions. Experiences in many migration corridors show that migrants may "remit" new values to their relatives at home. For example, after learning about opportunities for political participation, high quality standards for public services and transparent bureaucracies from their migrant relatives abroad, individuals in some countries have begun to expect more from their own governments, politicians, and public service providers (Omar Mahmoud et al., 2013).

Third, many migrants support not only their own relatives, but also wider communities at home ("collective" remittances; Goldring, 2004). For example, because of the role of migrant networks, migrants from a particular location in the country of origin often congregate in the same city abroad. It is natural for them to connect and join forces to pay for community projects (schools, etc.) at home. Many medical professionals provide material support and expertise for hospitals. Recent debates in the development policy community about Diaspora policies have focused on collective remittances.

Fourth, if migrants return home for good and remain economically active there, they may bring with them the skills and education that they may have acquired abroad. The resulting "brain gain" may compensate for the brain drain that may arise when migrants are higher-skilled on average than the resident population.

In this paper, I assess how migrants from West Africa contribute to human development at home through these channels. I identify obstacles to an even larger contribution and possible policy interventions, particularly in the EU, to address these obstacles and to enhance the development impact of the West African Diaspora.

In the second section below, I set the scene by reviewing the extent of migration and remittances received in each ECOWAS member state. In the third section, I discuss the available evidence for West Africa on the development effects of financial, social, and collective remittances, brain drain due to the emigration of professionals, and return migration. In the fourth section, I discuss the implications of this analysis for policy interventions by the EU, its member states, other countries of destination, home-country governments, and the donor community.

One important caveat applies to this analysis. While migration, remittances, and return migration may contribute to human development, sustainable output and income growth (and hence, progress in human development in the long run) depend crucially on a favorable investment climate. Unless the private returns to investment in physical and human capital reflect the corresponding social returns, potential investors (domestic, migrant, or other international) will not want to invest. The rule of law and the cost-effective provision of high-quality public services, including physical and social infrastructure, are key ingredients of a favorable investment climate. The development effects of migration and remittances may complement, but can never replace growth-promoting institutions at home.

Migration and Remittances in West Africa

Migrant Stocks

Unfortunately, all the available data on migration and remittances is subject to much uncertainty. The best possible source for international migrant stock data disaggregated by countries of origin and destination is the World Bank's bilateral migration matrix for 2010. In this database, an individual is defined as a migrant if they have been born outside their country of residence. This information is compiled from various national censuses and household surveys. Migrant status does not depend on current citizenship – which is useful when many immigrants become naturalized citizens of their host country but still interact with their country of origin through remittances, visits, etc.

This definition is broadly appropriate for the purpose of this paper because we focus on interactions between migrants and home country residents. However, this definition excludes (critically) second-generation migrants who are born in the country of destination. These individuals may maintain contact with and support their parents' countries of birth and therefore constitute an important target group for Diaspora policies. Nevertheless, they do not show up in our migrant stock data.

Overall the prevalence of migration (migrants abroad relative to resident population) in West Africa is similar to the world as a whole, at about 3 percent of the resident population (Table 1). However, this average figure conceals important differences across West Africa. In Nigeria (by far the largest West African country), the number of migrants abroad is only 0.6 percent of the resident population. By contrast, prevalence of migration in Liberia, Mali, and Senegal is around one tenth of the resident population. Not surprisingly for a small island nation, prevalence of migration in Cabo Verde is nearly 40 percent.

Around two thirds of international migrants from West Africa reportedly live elsewhere in West Africa (5.8 out of 9.1 million). Nearly 1.4 million West Africans live in the EU, with large communities especially in France and in the UK as a result of former colonial relationships. Nevertheless, migrants in the EU correspond to less than one percent of the population in all West African countries except Cabo Verde (23 percent), Senegal (4 percent), Guinea-Bissau (3 percent), and Gambia (2 percent).

Table 1: Migrant stocks, 2010 (1000 individuals)

Across: Destination Down: Origin	France	UK	Oth-er EU	US	Other high in-come	Nige-ria	Other West Afri-ca	"Other South"	Rest of the World	Total	in % of total pop-ulation EU / All	
Benin	17	0	6	1	1	239	174	55	39	532	0,2	5,6
Burkina Faso	5	0	17	1	1	8	1.374	168	4	1.578	0,1	10,2
Cabo Verde	23	0	90	21	2	4	10	6	35	193	23,3	39,5
Côte d'Ivoire	71	4	33	9	5	4	928	113	4	1.172	0,6	6,2
Gambia, The	1	5	28	7	2	7	12	2	0	65	2,1	3,9
Ghana	5	97	120	111	29	186	224	50	4	825	0,9	3,4
Guinea	22	0	23	6	3	6	414	52	6	533	0,4	4,9
Guinea-Bissau	9	1	39	1	0	5	49	7	2	111	3,0	7,0
Liberia	1	2	12	67	4	19	290	37	0	432	0,4	10,9
Mali	69	0	25	3	1	133	630	99	53	1.014	0,7	7,2
Niger	4	0	3	1	0	88	210	41	40	387	0,0	2,4
Nigeria	3	151	157	211	23	0	143	47	266	1.001	0,2	0,6
Senegal	91	1	142	17	4	5	241	41	95	637	4,1	11,1
Sierra Leone	1	23	19	18	7	4	175	22	0	267	0,3	2,1
Togo	22	1	26	4	2	116	150	34	15	369	0,8	5,9
TOTAL	344	285	739	478	85	824	5.023	773	564	9.117	0,5	3,0

Note: «Other South» may include Ghana.

Source: World Bank bilateral migration matrix - http://go.worldbank.org/JITC7NYTT0; WDI.

Remittances

The size of remittances relative to domestic output (GDP) varies widely across West Africa (Table 2) but only exceeds 10 percent of GDP in Mali (25.6 percent) and Cabo Verde (10.1 percent). These magnitudes place West Africa among the least remittance-dependent countries at a global scale (World Bank, 2014). The average ratio for West Africa (4.1 percent) is surpassed in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria (in spite of relatively few migrants at 0.6 percent of the population), Senegal, and Togo. Remittances from the EU – which may be viewed as an indicator of transnational linkages between the EU and West Africa - exceed 3 percent of GDP only in Cabo Verde, Mali, and Senegal. Modest transnational linkages go together with a modest-sized Diaspora (cf. previous section).

Irregular Migration from West Africa to the EU

West African migrants face different immigration regimes in their various countries of destination. Within ECOWAS, free labor mobility has apparently been broadly established, even though some bureaucratic obstacles persist (Adepoju, Boulton, Levin, 2008). High-income countries including the EU offer few opportunities for West Africans to legally enter in search of employment. Therefore, apart from studying in the EU and family unification, irregular migration is one of the few routes open to West African labor migrants.

There is extensive qualitative information (Yeboah, 2014) that West Africa has been the starting point for several irregular migration routes to the EU. While the Canary Islands were an important point of entry into the EU several years ago, nowadays the route through the Sahara desert and the Spanish exclaves in Northern Africa or by boat to Italy or Malta seems to be the most important. While some migrants probably manage to enter EU member states undetected, others apply for political asylum when they are picked up by member state authorities. Therefore the number of new asylum applications in the EU from West African citizens provides an indication of the extent of irregular migration (Table 3).

Table 2: Remittances received, 2012 (million US dollars)

Across: Sender Down: Recipient	France	UK	Other EU	US	Other high income	Nigeria	Other West Africa	Rest of the World	TO-TAL	Remittances in percent of GDP EU / All	
Benin	12	0	4	1	21	73	49	18	179	0,2	2,4
Burkina Faso	1	0	4	0	18	1	106	1	130	0,0	1,2
Cabo Verde	24	0	88	24	7	3	7	24	177	6,4	10,1
Côte d'Ivoire	41	2	19	6	38	1	216	2	325	0,3	1,3
Gambia, The	2	9	46	14	6	5	8	0	89	0,1	0,2
Ghana	1	25	31	33	15	21	24	1	152	1,0	2,7
Guinea	8	0	8	3	10	1	45	1	75	1,9	9,1
Guinea-Bissau	5	0	21	0	2	1	11	1	42	2,9	4,6
Liberia	2	4	24	166	39	10	126	0	372	0,3	3,6
Mali	73	0	25	4	50	49	213	29	444	5,7	25,6
Niger	4	0	4	2	18	27	58	11	122	0,1	1,8
Nigeria	74	3.842	3.906	6.126	1.335	0	1.744	3.540	20.568	1,7	4,5
Senegal	290	3	429	61	88	7	333	156	1.367	5,1	9,7
Sierra Leone	0	14	12	13	10	1	28	0	79	0,7	2,1
Togo	41	1	51	8	35	76	90	17	321	2,4	8,2
TOTAL	580	3.902	4.672	6.463	1.693	275	3.060	3.799	24.443	1,5	4,1

Source: World Bank bilateral remittances matrix - http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Bilateral_Remittance_Matrix_2012.xlsx; WDI

Table 3: EU28: New asylum applications by citizenship, 2008-2013

Citizenship	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Benin	195	185	195	245	285	285
Burkina Faso	750	415	260	1.030	445	555
Cabo Verde	5	5	5	15	15	10
Côte d'Ivoire	2.305	1.470	1.345	5.165	2.420	2.330
Gambia, The	890	1.005	940	1.235	1.395	3.345
Ghana	2.515	1.500	1.015	4.710	1.995	2.150
Guinea	1.650	3.730	4.440	5.560	4.480	5.590
Guinea-Bissau	60	245	265	385	340	565
Liberia	290	280	240	280	155	180
Mali	660	1.045	885	3.980	2.325	6.440
Niger	340	190	170	930	300	295
Nigeria	8.980	7.735	5.435	12.225	6.725	10.155
Senegal	260	545	720	1.945	2.265	2.785
Sierra Leone	490	560	525	750	660	740
Togo	940	510	610	745	575	670
Total ECOWAS	20.330	19.420	17.050	39.200	24.380	36.095
Total: all source countries	153.980	196.765	207.440	263.640	278.815	377.440

Source: Eurostat database - migr_asyappctza.

Since 2008, West African citizens have accounted for approximately one in ten new asylum applications in the EU, with substantial year-to-year fluctuations. While Nigerians constituted the largest group, citizens from Côte

d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, and Guinea were also prominent. Over six years from 2008 to 2013, the EU received approximately 160,000 new asylum applications from West Africans. When compared to 1.4 million West African immigrants in the EU in 2010, this relatively large number suggests that many more West Africans would migrate to the EU if they could do so safely.

Irregular migration through the Sahara and across the Mediterranean Sea raises humanitarian concerns related to the risk of death as a result of human trafficking. At the same time, in the spirit of a migrant-centered approach to analyzing irregular migration, we need to ask whether migrants are aware of these risks. If they are not, one useful policy intervention would be to spread truthful information about irregular migration so that individuals can make more informed decisions. On the other hand, if people opt for irregular migration even though they are aware of the risks, possible responses to humanitarian concerns may involve creating safer routes for refugees or more opportunities for regular labor migration.

While there is little empirical evidence on the motivation and risk attitudes of would-be migrants from West Africa, one study suggests that many migrants are aware of serious risks to their lives and willingly accept them. In a survey conducted in an urban environment in Senegal (Mbaye, 2013, Figure 1), out of a large number of individuals who desire to migrate, approximately one in four say that they would do so illegally if necessary. When asked what risk of death they would accept and still emigrate, the median response among this group was 25%.

While more evidence would be helpful, this study suggests that most irregular migrants broadly "know what they are doing". This proposition is also plausible because information on the plight of many irregular migrants is widely available on the internet and international media. If EU member states are concerned about the humanitarian downside of irregular migration across the Mediterranean, they need to address the large differences in economic opportunities between West Africa (and other developing countries) and the EU. By and large, irregular migrants do not rely on the services of intransparent intermediaries and unsafe means of transport because they are tricked into doing so. Rather, this is their only (or preferred) route to Europe in order to benefit from greater economic opportunities there.

Development Effects

Migration and remittances may affect human development in West Africa through a variety of channels. In this chapter, I discuss the role of family, social, and collective remittances, along with return migration, drawing on the limited empirical evidence available for West Africa as well as on pertinent experiences of other emigration countries. UNDP (2009) summarizes concisely the extensive related literature.

Family Remittances: Direct (Household-Level) Effects

Many popular debates on the development effects of remittances focus on the question of "how remittances are spent". This seemingly innocuous question raises several theoretical and methodological issues that affect the interpretation of empirical findings as well as the debate on policy interventions.

First, at the most basic level, money is fungible. Therefore, a more meaningful question to ask is how the expenditures of households that receive remittances differ from those without remittances. In a survey, one might ask: "Given that you receive remittances, what expenditures do you now make that you would not otherwise make?"

Second, even this modified approach does not account for the fact that remittances are not exogenous to the circumstances of the recipient household. For example, a household member may fall ill and potential remitters may be asked for (additional) support specifically to deal with this emergency. In this example, the need for additional spending on health care leads to higher remittances. This is the reverse of the more common argument that access to remittances (or other additional income) permits higher expenditure on health care.

Third, access to remittances (even if limited to emergencies such as health crises) may change the incentives for work or other income-generating activities. Members of households with remittances may work less, especially when the potential wage is low relative to the remittances. They may also spend less time in education, possibly because they have access to a migrant network and expect to migrate so that returns from education for them are lower than for other individuals. On the other hand, remittances may relieve credit constraints.

Greater financial security may allow households to take on more investment risk, leading to higher investment in education, household agriculture, and other businesses. These effects may not be straight-forward. For example, Luecke and Stoehr (2013) find for households in Moldova that young men with a migrant parent in Russia are less likely to be in post-secondary education - presumably because the returns from further education in Moldova are small when you are headed for manual work in Russia in any case. By contrast, young women with a migrant parent in Western Europe are more likely to be in education – maybe because they are more likely to perceive additional education as opening doors to employment in Western Europe or with international employers in Moldova.

Fourth, remittances are usually received from a migrant member of the extended family. The migration decision depends on a large number of observable and unobservable characteristics. Therefore, even if we compare income and spending patterns of recipient and other households comprehensively, we must be aware that recipient households (with migrants in their extended families) may be different in terms of unobserved characteristics (for example, their willingness to take risks or their preference for material well-being over other elements of quality of life) and that these unobserved differences (rather than migration and remittances) may be responsible for some of the differences in outcomes.

Given these caveats, what do we know about the impact of family remittances on human development at the household level? First, there is ample evidence from many high-emigration countries, including in West Africa, that households with remittances are less likely to be in absolute poverty. This point is less obvious than it may seem. Migration is often costly. Therefore, very poor households may not be able to send a migrant abroad and may therefore not receive remittances that would lift them out of absolute poverty. In some regions of the world, this constraint is lessened because migrants may opt for different destination countries depending on their financial means. For example, in West Africa, migrants may be able to move to another ECOWAS country cheaply and still benefit from income diversification and maybe higher wages than at home (Ratha, Shaw, 2007). By contrast, irregular migration to Europe may cost several thousand euros and may be beyond the financial reach of many poor West African households.

Second, households with remittances tend to spend more on the education of young family members. This may involve higher expenditures on school uniforms, books, and other educational materials and (hopefully) more

productive learning. It may also involve higher school enrolment, particularly in secondary and tertiary education (although the opposite effect has also been observed when receiving remittances implies access to migration opportunities and the returns from education in foreign labor markets is considered low). There is also evidence that households with remittances use more health care services than other households. Taken together, it is clear that remittances promote human development among recipient households through poverty reduction and human capital formation.

By contrast, evidence is very mixed on whether remittances lead to additional business investment by recipient households or whether migrants themselves invest in businesses at home. The underlying notion is (implicitly at least) that (i) investment is low mainly because potential investors are credit-constrained, while (ii) remittances help overcome these constraints. In some Central American countries, investment in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is indeed found to be linked to migrant remittances (Bobeva, 2005). However, in many high-emigration countries investment in SMEs is low mainly because the business environment is unfavorable (at least) for formal enterprises. Access to finance through remittances typically cannot compensate for a poor business environment.

Family Remittances: Indirect (Economy-Wide) Effects

In many West African countries, remittances are large enough in relation to GDP (say, above 4 percent of GDP) to have noticeable "general equilibrium" effects (Table 2 above). Economy-wide, remittances increase household disposable income. Consumers will want to spend their additional income on tradable goods (which may be imported) as well as non-tradable goods and services (which, by definition, have to be produced at home). Higher demand for non-tradables must be met by expanding the sectors which produce non-tradable goods and services, creating additional employment when there is unemployment initially or raising wages if workers need to be attracted from other sectors.

This process has been described as the "Dutch disease", based on the Netherlands' experience with natural gas exports in the 1950s. Some observers consider it toxic because higher wages (in the absence of unemployment) reduce the competitiveness of manufactured (as well as agricultural) exports and therefore hold back the development of industry and the associated formation of human capital. However, it seems implausible to argue that wages

are "too high" in West Africa. Poverty reduction requires higher wages and more jobs. Higher demand for non-tradable goods and services will produce exactly that. In this way, not only the immediate recipients benefit from remittances, but all workers throughout the economy.

Social Remittances

Social remittances have been defined as the norms, practices, identities, and social capital (Levitt, Lamba-Nieves, 2011, 3) that migrants may transfer to their families, friends and other individuals in the country of origin. If migrants live in societies with high levels of human development, it is conceivable that they will transfer norms and practices such as an aversion to corruption and interest in political participation that will support political and economic reform in West Africa. Along these lines, the North-South Center (2006) argues that social remittances to the African continent hold great potential but this has been insufficiently recognized so far. Furthermore, implementation suffers from shortcomings on the part of host and origin country governments as well as the Diaspora organizations themselves.

Unfortunately, there is little empirical evidence regarding the extent and effects of social remittances to West Africa. More broadly, de Haas (2007, 23) points out that there is no guarantee that the new norms and practices acquired by migrants abroad will always contribute to human development. For example, the Diaspora may support peace-building in post-conflict countries, but they may also finance a violent conflict at home. Levitt and Lamba-Nieves (2011) similarly emphasize that if migrants adopt values such as consumerism and put less emphasis on family ties, many observers would view this as problematic.

Experiences from other countries demonstrate that social remittances may be measurably important while their development effects depend on the migrants' destination country. Fargues (2006) finds that across countries and regions in North Africa and Turkey, fertility declined most where migration prevalence to Western Europe was highest and least where there was extensive emigration to Gulf countries. In the area of political reform, Omar Mahmoud et al. (2013) find that voting districts in Moldova with high migration prevalence to the West tended to support non-Communist parties that favored integration with the EU, whereas districts with little migration or migration to Russia were more pro-Communist.

Collective Remittances

Collective remittances may be defined broadly as any transfers – financial or social – that are meant to benefit not an individual household, but a larger community (neighborhood, municipality, nation). The senders may be individuals or groups like hometown association. The recipients may be community organizations, local governments, or national NGOs.

There is anecdotal evidence that many Diaspora members support community projects in West Africa – for example, by organizing and funding the construction of a kindergarten or school building in their home town. When Diaspora organizations are involved, these are often run by members in their free time. Formal cooperation with official donors is rare, as this would require specialized administrative skills and a professional organization (IRIN, 2014). While many countries of origin maintain social investment funds that match migrant donations with government or donor contributions (Bobeva, 2005), such funds are apparently rare in West Africa.

Regarding non-financial collective remittances, again there is anecdotal evidence but no coherent statistical picture or policy strategy. Some academics have engaged with universities at home in the areas of research and teaching. Physicians have provided health care services (IRIN, 2014). Some reform-minded politicians in West Africa have called upon and received support from the Diaspora, including by prominent Diaspora members taking up positions in home country governments (on Liberia: Antwi-Boateng, 2011).

Facilitating Trade and Investment Between Countries of Origin and Destination

Migrant Diasporas may help to reduce the cost of international economic transactions such as trade, direct investment, and possibly other capital flows. For example, "ethnic stores" that offer familiar and traditional products to emigrants in the host country may serve as an export channel for home country producers. Conversely, the marketing of exports from the destination to the home country may benefit from the expertise of emigrants. Migrants returning home for temporary visits purchase tourism services.

The Diaspora may play a similar role in direct investment in their home countries. Setting up operations in a foreign country is thought to involve costs linked to the degree of legal, language, cultural etc. differences. Migrants who are familiar with both countries may help to contain such costs (for a comprehensive review of the Cabo Verde experience see Carling, 2008).

Ultimately, however, the amount of direct investment will depend not only on whether there are migrants to bridge cultural divides, but more importantly on whether the business environment is fundamentally sound. Resource extraction may be profitable under almost any circumstances as long as resource rents are large enough – although the benefits to the local population will depend on the political and business environment. However, there is intense competition among countries for inward direct investment in manufacturing, especially for "vertical" FDI that generates new manufactured exports (unlike "horizontal" FDI that mainly serves the local market). Having a Diaspora in the right countries may be an advantage in attracting FDI, but local conditions will be paramount.

Brain Drain

Concern has been voiced for several decades that highly skilled workers from developing countries are attracted to higher-paid work abroad – sometimes actively, through selective immigration policies of high-income countries. At home, their absence may set back economic and social development if emigration leads to a shortage of critical skills. Some popular examples concern West Africa, such as the emigration of medical personnel from Ghana to the UK.

While the brain drain may be conceptualized in different ways, it is remarkable that throughout West Africa the share of university-educated individuals among migrants is vastly higher than among the general population (Figure 1). As a result, a large proportion of the highly educated individuals born in each country live abroad (for example, Cote d'Ivoire and Niger: 6 percent; Ghana: 47 percent; Sierra Leone: 53 percent). It is not clear whether these numbers are representative of all emigrants or biased towards the Diaspora in high-income countries. In any case, the formal education level of the West African Diaspora in Europe will be at least as high as suggested by Figure 1.

It is difficult to pin down the negative effects of the brain drain analytically. For the sake of illustration, let us consider the medical brain drain. Several strong

conditions must hold for curbs on the emigration of physicians (presumably, a scenario that some observers have in mind) to lead to better health outcomes on the ground. First, those physicians who can no longer emigrate must still have trained as physicians initially, even without the prospect of higher earnings through emigration. Second, there must be employment opportunities for them locally – preferably in the countryside where they are most needed. Third, the additional physicians must have access to complementary resources such as physical infrastructure, support staff, etc.

Figure 1: Brain drain - university-educated individuals in resident population vs. migrants, 2000
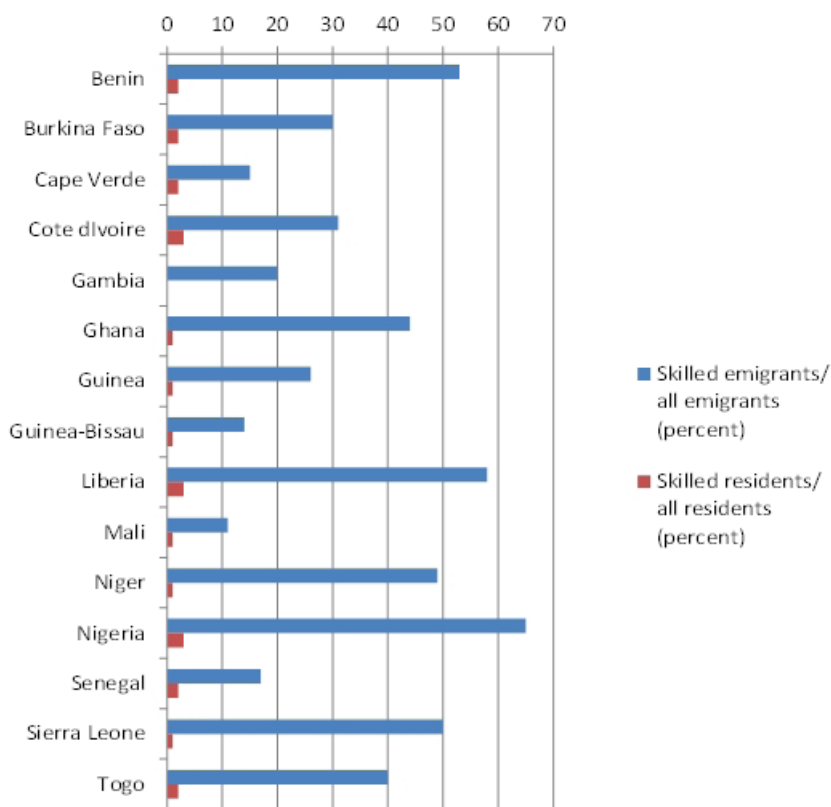
Source: African Development Bank (2011, Annex 2).

Regarding the first condition, the "new new" economics of labor migration (Stark, Helmenstein, Prskawetz, 1998) emphasizes that individuals tend to acquire their education based on their expected earnings. Furthermore, it is likely that better-educated individuals have a better chance of migrating to a high-income country and earning a higher income. Therefore, if migration opportunities improve over time, more people will acquire a higher education and more will emigrate. At the same time, more highly educated individuals than before may also end up staying in the country of origin. Whether this happens depends on the precise parameter constellation: chance of successful migration if highly educated; international wage difference; education level of the population; country size, etc. Beine, Docquier, and Rapoport (2003) calibrate a similar model to data for a large number of developing countries. They conclude that countries with low levels of human capital and low migration rates of skilled workers tend to benefit from a modest brain drain (including Ghana, the only West African country in the sample).

Regarding the second and third conditions (jobs and complementary resources for physicians in the country of origin), Docquier and Rapoport (2011) review quantitative studies of the determinants of migration by physicians across developing countries. Low wages (as well as high rates of HIV prevalence, which may be a proxy for risky and unsatisfactory working conditions) drive emigration. A lower number of physicians on the ground does not lead to worse health outcomes, but higher emigration prevalence among physicians does – maybe due to the poor working conditions that tend to be associated with high emigration. In sum, these studies imply that underfunded and badly run health care systems are mainly to blame for bad health outcomes. The emigration of physicians is a symptom of these underlying problems, rather than an independent cause of bad outcomes (OECD, 2007 arrive at a similar conclusion based on a wide-ranging assessment of the empirical evidence).

So far, we have not addressed the fiscal cost of training medical personnel. If taxpayers in countries of origin bear most training costs while migrant physicians and taxpayers in host countries benefit the most from the training, this would be lop-sided. Countries of origin may wish to limit free medical training to those students who commit themselves to working in the country for several years. Host countries may wish to use development assistance to help develop and pay for medical training in developing countries for the benefit of patients in both countries.

In any case, it is neither politically feasible nor technically possible to curb high-skilled migration through administrative measures. A more constructive approach is to encourage and support existing efforts by individual Diaspora members and organizations to use their skills to contribute to human development in the country of origin (section "collective remittances" above; for policy interventions see section "Strengthen incentives for collective remittances and Diaspora engagement" below).

Return Migration

Some observers point to return migration as one way in which the education and skills of Diaspora members may be utilized for human development at home. In order to assess the prospects for fostering return migration realistically, it is useful to think about the conditions under which migrants who have freely decided to leave their home country many years ago might now decide to return.

One important consideration is the pattern of migration that was originally intended and how it has evolved over the years. In most countries, some migrants (at least) work abroad only temporarily while their nuclear family stays behind in the home country. In this case, return migration is not only part of the original plan; it also provides a natural conclusion to the migration episode because there is no permanent household setting in the host country and the migrant is separated from loved ones while abroad. In West Africa, a large proportion of mobility within ECOWAS is probably temporary in this particular sense.

Another group of migrants that is prominent in many countries leave home with a clearly defined savings objective in mind, in addition to supporting family members and relatives on an ongoing basis (De Zwager, Gressmann, Gedeshi, 2010). Even if they plan initially to return home at some point in the future, they establish a more permanent presence abroad, including a nuclear family. While some migrants do return once their savings objective is met (e.g. money for a house, business investment, car, university fees), migrants' preferences may change through the experience of living abroad. Members of the nuclear family (spouse, children) may also have to be convinced to return. Clearly, living

conditions and economic prospects in the country of origin must be broadly favorable for migrants to return as originally planned.

Finally, many migrants leave their home country because they consider their prospects unsatisfactory. Unless conditions change radically, either for them individually or for the country as a whole, they are unlikely to return before retiring from the labor force, if at all. In the West African context, many irregular migrants to Europe who incur high monetary costs and risk their lives to get to Europe are likely to fall into this category.

Empirical evidence on the extent of return migration to West Africa, returnees' motivation, and their subsequent economic activity is sparse. Black and Castaldo (2009, Table 2) analyze a sample of 300 returnees in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire around the year 2000 and find that work experience abroad is the most significant predictor of whether returnees are self-employed. Higher savings while abroad and more frequent home visits also play a role. Based on the same non-representative survey, Black, King, and Tiemoko (2003) conclude that while the phenomenon is impossible to quantify, there is a discernable number of returnees who register and operate a business using the skills gained through employment abroad as well as their savings.

For a small group of highly educated individuals, the return decision may not be permanent but temporary and part of their transnational way of life. Some prominent Diaspora academics have taken high-level government positions at home when invited to do so (Antwi-Boateng, 2011).

Policy Implications

In this section, I discuss how the contribution of the Diaspora to human development in West Africa can be enhanced. This task falls upon a wide variety of stakeholders: individual migrants and Diaspora organizations; European and West African governments; regional organizations; development donors; and civil society. I focus on the Diaspora in Europe.

Create More Opportunities for Legal Migration to EU member Countries

In Chapter 3 we reviewed several channels through which migration, remittances, and other interactions with the Diaspora may contribute to human development in migrants' home countries. Some of these possible positive effects, such as higher business investment financed from remittances, depend on conditions in the country of origin, especially a favorable business climate. At the same time, migrants invariably send financial remittances to family members that raise disposable income, reduce poverty, and often pay for higher expenditures on education and health care. Even households that do not receive remittances themselves tend to enjoy better employment prospects and higher wages as a result of higher demand for locally produced goods and services.

In this sense, "more" remittances would be "better" for human development in West Africa. Furthermore, many West Africans are now risking their lives while attempting to migrate to Europe irregularly, as there are very few legal migration opportunities. This raises the question of whether EU member states can provide for additional legal immigration opportunities that (i) would promote human development in West Africa; (ii) would constitute a feasible alternative to irregular immigration from the migrants' point of view; and (ii) would be politically feasible and (at least) not economically disruptive in the country of destination.

In many EU member states, the labor market integration of many immigrant groups remains a challenge. Immigrants (just as natives) without a complete secondary education, good knowledge of the local language, and adequate professional training are finding it difficult to obtain and hold on to regular jobs and may become a burden to the welfare state. Therefore, EU member states would probably want to target any additional migration opportunities at those potential immigrants who are demonstrably qualified to take on jobs for which there is a perceived labor shortage in the country of destination.

This approach, if implemented, would call for the creation of education and training opportunities in West Africa that prepare students for work abroad as well as at home. It would have to be based on bilateral cooperation between individual EU member states and West African countries. Donor assistance could be used to pay for some of the training costs. While the individuals selected for such training would need to be equipped to face the many challenges of an international migration experience, admission to such programs should not be

more selective than necessary. Otherwise, the benefits of additional migration opportunities would be limited to those already relatively well-off.

Policymakers may be tempted to restrict new migration opportunities to temporary or circular migrants, for example, by limiting participants to a maximum period of stay in the destination country. Circular migration is often thought to limit the risk of immigrants becoming a fiscal burden to the country of destination. It may also facilitate the flow of human capital back to the country of origin (Abella, 2006).

However, many countries' experiences with supposedly temporary migration programs suggest that such restrictions may be difficult to enforce. Immigrants will normally need some time to familiarize themselves with living conditions in the destination country and to master the requirements of their workplaces. If they are obliged to return home shortly afterwards, the program may become unattractive for employers as well as workers. Immigrants may also overstay their visa and remain in the country of destination illegally, with tacit support from their employers.

Conceivably, circular migration schemes could function well when professional requirements and working conditions are standardized (such as in long-term care provided in private homes or in many agricultural activities). It would also help if workers had an incentive to abide by the terms of their visa, for example, because that is a precondition for them to return to the destination country in the future - in the true spirit of circular migration (Gibson, McKenzie, 2010). While any additional migration opportunities from West Africa to the EU would be welcome (if they are unattractive, people will simply not use them), the notion of temporary and circular migration should be approached carefully.

Strengthen Incentives for Collective Remittances and Diaspora Engagement

Additional opportunities for legal migration (Section 4.1 above) would increase the size of the West African Diasporas in Europe. In this section, I shift the focus to the intensity of interactions between the Diasporas and their countries of origin. I discuss measures to strengthen the emotional bond between migrants abroad and their home countries as well as policy interventions to support

collective remittances in the form of financial support for community projects as well as transfers of critical skills through personal interaction.

One obvious precondition for successful interactions between home countries and their Diasporas is that migrants continue to identify emotionally with their home country – even after they have lived in the host country for a prolonged period; possibly even after they have taken host country citizenship. A particular challenge is to foster allegiance to the home country among second-generation migrants. Diaspora members frequently create their own organizations and may need no government support for this particular task. At the same time, it would make sense for country-of-origin embassies in the destination countries to view themselves as ambassadors not only to the governments and citizens of their host countries, but also to their own local Diasporas. In addition to providing efficient consular services, embassies may facilitate cultural exchanges, act as catalysts for the teaching of home country languages, formally interact with Diaspora representatives, etc. Migrants may need to be reminded that home country governments care about being connected with them. Some high-emigration countries are now also setting up web portals in conjunction with Diaspora organizations (and donor support) where migrants can register their interest in particular activities.

Diaspora involvement in development and collective remittances could be strengthened through several measures. First, in many countries of origin, national governments and donors have set up "social investment funds" that top up migrant donations ("collective remittances") for community projects. Donors and home country governments may advocate for favorable tax treatment of migrant donations in the host countries; at present, donations are often tax-deductible only when they are channeled through national (host country) charities.

Second, some Diaspora organizations have become involved in development cooperation supported by host country donors. By scaling up their activities, Diaspora organizations not only leverage their donations revenue, they may also tap into the professional skills and local knowledge of Diaspora members more systematically and thus make development projects more successful. For similar reasons, when donors hire experts for technical assistance projects, they should consider recruiting Diaspora members.

Third, Diaspora members already transfer knowledge and skills in a variety of formats. In academia in particular, many researchers based in high-income host countries now contribute to training and joint research with colleagues in their countries of origin. Additional funding opportunities for experienced academics to conduct joint research in the context of temporary return by would be useful.

Fourth, Diasporas also affect home country politics and policies. In some instances, reformist politicians have actively sought out support from the Diaspora and widened the talent pool for filling government positions by hiring Diaspora members. One difficult issue in many countries is the political representation of the Diaspora in the national parliament. While formal representation will convey the message that the Diaspora is taken seriously as part of the home country political process, Diaspora representatives would be voting on issues (of war and peace, for example) that affect them far less than the resident population. A reasonable compromise may involve symbolic representation while recognizing that the tax burden as well as the consequences of most political decisions fall upon the resident population, rather than the Diaspora.

Create Favorable Conditions for Return Migrants

Anyone who moves across national borders is confronted by two sets of regulations regarding taxes, health insurance, old-age pensions, other social transfers, right of residence, citizenship, etc. While such regulations may (or may not) be mutually consistent within each country, they are unlikely to be fully mutually consistent across countries. Identifying and harmonizing the most glaring inconsistencies will facilitate return migration, especially when individuals lead "transnational" lives and continue to be affected by both sets of regulations.

One widely recognized concern is the portability of old-age pensions and other social benefits. If return migration means losing access to benefits, migrants are far less likely to return. Similarly, some host country programs that sought to encourage return migration prohibited returnees from ever moving back to the host country (clearly, this works only for migrants without host country citizenship). Such a rule is counter-productive: migrants may want to return to their countries of origin even when there is some uncertainty about the political future or security situation - as long as they have the fallback option of moving back to the host country, should the situation at home deteriorate seriously.

Conclusions

In this paper, I argue the following main points:

• Migration and remittances are mostly good for human development in West Africa.

• EU countries should permit more legal immigration from West Africa to enhance those benefits.

• Various policy interventions in EU member states and in West Africa may enhance the contributions of the West African Diaspora in Europe to human development in their countries of origin.

At the same time, substantial progress in human development in West Africa does not depend primarily on interactions with the relatively small West African Diaspora in Europe. Rather, human development requires sustainable economic growth, which in turn requires a favorable business environment at home.

One final caveat: In this paper, I address 15 West African countries and their Diasporas in several EU member countries. Generalizing about such diverse groups of individuals and countries is risky. In order to better understand how the broad conclusions and policy recommendations of this paper apply "on the ground", more detailed, country-specific analysis is required.

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Olawale Maiyegun

Remittances: How to Activate the Potential of the Diaspora

Introduction

In a number of African countries, efforts are underway to mobilize Diaspora and migrants' resources for development purposes through remittances, various Diaspora bonds and related financial products. Migrants hold savings in billions of US dollars, estimated as equal to the annual remittances amount (Migration and Development Brief #22, April 2014) and several countries in the continent are organizing Diaspora bonds and related financial products to tap into this large pool of funds.

Migrant remittances are an important and growing source of finance for Africa. Remittances sent by over 30 million African migrants reached an officially reported more than $62 billion in 2013[1], supporting at least 120 million[2] family members living at home. For many African households, remittances constitute a significant share of their income. These remittances represent a source of opportunity and, for many, a financial lifeline during periods of hardship. Yet, Africa is failing to realize the full potential of remittances.

On the other hand, African migrants face the highest transaction charges on remittances, at an average of more than 12%. The Send Money Africa remittances database shows that intra-African transfers can be over twice the

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1 The World Bank 2014. M*igration and Development Brief #22*, April 2014.
2 See: <http://sendmoneyafrica.worldbank.org/feature-story>.

price of transactions from Europe to Africa[3]. If remittance charges were reduced to the 5% level - target set by the G8 countries[4] and endorsed by the G20 Summit Seoul 2010[5] and their commitment is renewed[6] - there would be a significant additional amount going to the migrants and their family's pockets: the overall flow of transfers would increase and a greater share of the transfer would be available for productive activities which would also benefit the community at large.

This paper makes the case for putting remittances at the center of Diaspora contributions to social and economic development in Africa. It is divided into four parts. The first looks at the African Diaspora and migrants: Global distribution and patterns; Part 2 provides a summary overview of remittances flow to and within Africa; Part 3 examines the impact and leveraging of remittances for social and economic development in Africa; and Part 4 looks at the objectives, roles, and functions of the African Institute for Remittances (AIR) and its strategic benefits. Finally the paper tries to provide recommendations on how to put remittances at the center of Diaspora contributions to social and economic development in Africa.

An Overview of African Diaspora and Migrants: Global Distribution and Patterns

Diaspora and Migrants

The terms "Diaspora" and "Migrant" are related and often used inter-changeably, yet they are quite different. Diaspora means the dispersion or spread of any people from their original homeland; while the migrant is a person who moves from one place to another in order to find work and or better living condition (Oxford Dictionaries)[7].

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3   See:<https://sendmoneyafrica.worldbank.org>. The Send Money Africa database is part of the preparatory project for the establishment of the African Institute for Remittances (AIR).

4   G8 2009. *Summit Declaration*, paragraph 134.

5   G20 Seoul 2010. *Consensus*, ACTION 2.

6   G20 St. Petersburg. *Accountability Report on G20 Development Commitments* (St. Petersburg G20 Leaders' Declaration).

7   See: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>.

For millions of Africans who left the continent more than two hundred years ago and are mostly spread over North and South America, they hardly have any family attachment in any particular country in Africa to whom they send remittances. However, they do engage the continent and their potentials are in other financial products apart from remittances that benefit African countries. In the last four decades, there has been a new wave of migrants who are increasing joining the ranks of those who left the continent more than 200 years earlier. Some of them have become citizens or residents of the destination countries; others are non-resident migrants, seasonal workers and cross border workers. These migrants have strong family ties and attachment to particular countries. They send remittances home and they also have huge savings for investment. Notwithstanding the distinction made above, some countries use the term "Diaspora" for all their nationals living abroad. For the purpose of this study which focuses on remittances, the two terms are used interchangeably.

Overview of African Diaspora and Migrants

Globally, migration today has risen to an unprecedented level. The United Nations, IOM and ILO estimate that the number of persons living outside their country of origin has reached 175 million, more than twice the number a generation ago[8].

The African Union (AU) places critical emphasis on the participation of African citizens and people of African descent in Africa's development. As clearly outlined in the Constitutive Act of the Union, the AU has always identified itself as a 'people-oriented and driven community' based on partnership and collaboration between governments and civil society. A key aspect of this relationship is the inclusion of the African Diaspora, defined as "consisting of peoples of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union." (AU Executive Council Decision: EX.CL/Dec. 221(VII)). Additionally, the AU divides the continent into five geographic regions – Central, East, North, South and West and considers the African Diaspora

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8   African Union, 2006. Th*e Migration Policy Framework for Africa, The Ninth Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council*, The Gambia, Banjul, 25-29 June 2006.

as the sixth region of Africa due to the fact that it constitutes large number of people of African descent currently residing outside the continent.

"Africa is known for its long history of migration within and beyond the continent. It is estimated today that the number of people with African origin that live outside of the continent is close to 140 million, most in the Western Hemisphere" (Shimeles Abebe, AfDB, 2010). The bulk of these Diasporas lost their ties altogether with the country of origin. Migrants that left their country in recent decades are able to keep in close contact with their relatives and maintain economic, social and political relationships with their countries of origin.

A marked feature of movement of people across the world is that more than half of migration takes place within the same continent, while the other half is trans-continental. The African migration pattern shows that the intra-Africa migration rate is more than 50%[9] (Graph 1). According to the Bilateral Migration Matrix data of the World Bank (2010), out of the 30.6 million stocks of African migrants, about 29% are from North Africa and the rest originate from Sub Saharan Africa. More than 90% of migrants from North Africa generally migrate to countries outside of Africa. However, migration within Sub Saharan Africa is close to 64%, which represents the largest intra-continental or south-south movement of people in the world (compared with Europe 59% and Asia close to 55%). Countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria are some of the top 10 recipients of migrants from other African countries (Graph 2). Generally, the intra-African migration is driven by the complexities of the history of state formation where colonial borders overlooked often linguistic and ethnic commonalities, as well as waves of internal and cross-border conflicts. It also reflects migration in search of job opportunities across neighboring countries.
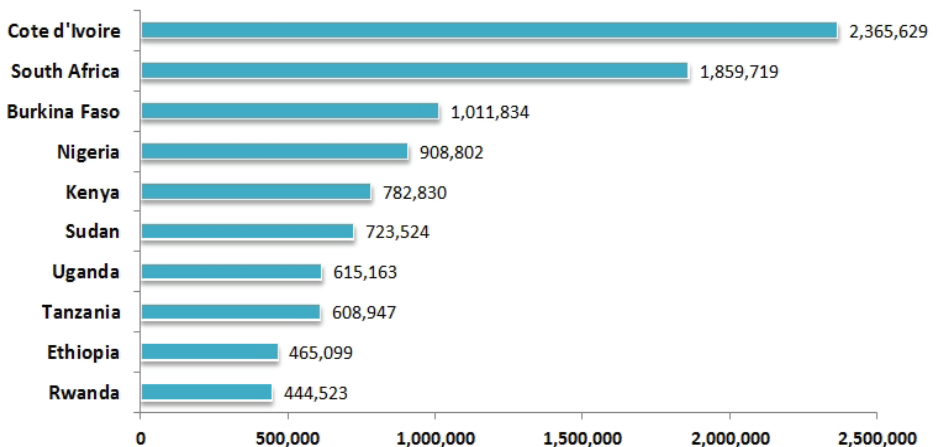
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9   World Bank, 2010. *Bilateral Migration Matrix* 2010.

Graph 1: Distribution of African Migrants
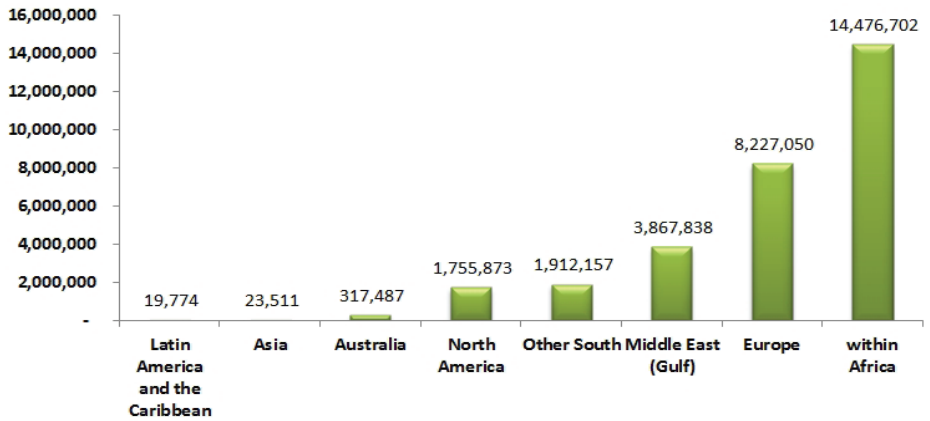
Source: author's computations based on the data from Bilateral Migration Matrix 2010 Caribbean

Graph 2: Top 10 Sub-Saharan Migrant Recipient countries

Source: author's computations based on the data from Bilateral Migration Matrix 2010

An Overview of Remittances Flows to and within Africa: Components and Patterns of Remittances

"Remittances are defined as cross-border person-to-person payments of relatively low-value, generally associated with migrant workers" (CPSS and the World Bank group, 2007). Remittances transfer have existed for centuries, but have only garnered international attention for the last two decades because of the relatively small amount of money sent with each transfer, and the often-marginal social status of both the sender and the receiver. Migrants make important developmental, economic and social contributions to countries of residence and origin.

Remittances include cash and noncash items that flow through formal channels, such as via electronic wire, or through informal channels, such as money or goods carried across borders. They largely consist of funds and noncash items sent or given by individuals who have migrated to a new economy and become residents there, and the net compensation of border, seasonal, or other short-term workers who are employed in an economy in which they are not resident (IMF, 2009, Balance of Payment Manual (BPM6)). Compensation of Employees and Personal Transfers are the two components of remittances (IMF, 2009, International Transactions in Remittances: Guide for Compilers and Users).

Compensation of employees refers to the income of border, seasonal, and other short-term workers who work in an economy where they are not resident, and to the income of resident workers who are employed by nonresident entities.[10] Compensation of employees represents "remuneration in return for the labor input to the production process contributed by an individual in an employer-employee relationship with the enterprise." Personal transfers consist of all transfers in cash or in kind made or received by resident households to or from non-resident households. Personal transfers thus include all transfers between resident and non-resident individuals.

A Migrant worker may travel for either short-term or long-term employment, partly depending on the socio-economic and political conditions in the host and

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10 Nonresident employers include embassies and international institutions as well as nonresident companies. In some economies, income obtained from nonresident employers is significant.

the source countries. In most instances, short-term migrant workers consume less of their income than do long-term migrants, and therefore more of their income or compensation is available to support family members in their home countries. Short-term migrant workers relatively maintain strong ties with their countries of origin because of their permanent interest in their home countries. Among migrants, remittances senders tend to be more concentrated among more recently arrived immigrants, and at least half the migrants who have stayed for up to 10 years may be regular remitters. The motivation of migrants to send remittances usually declines with the duration of their stay, however, their capacity to send remittances often increase because their income tends to rise over time. For instance, in a survey of a Nigerian Migrants in South Africa and Ghana, an annual estimate of more than USD 3,300 remittance is recorded in South Africa compared with an annual estimate of USD 2,470 from Ghana (Akinjide Olatuyi, Yisa Awoyinka and Abiodun Adeniyi, 2013). Informal channels were used mainly by respondents. Higher salaries earned by professionals based in South Africa may account for the high remittance levels (Akinjide Olatuyi, Yisa Awoyinka and Abiodun Adeniyi, 2013).

Remittance flows are becoming an increasingly crucial issue in the regional debate on migration and development. Remittances are perceived as one of the main benefits that migration brings to Africa. Africa is benefiting from remittances sent by over 30 million African migrants[11]. Remittances reached an officially reported more than $62 billion in 2013, supporting at least 120 million family members living back home (Feature story, Send Money Africa)[12]. For many African households, remittances constitute a significant share of their income. These remittances represent a source of opportunity and, for many, a financial lifeline during periods of hardship. Yet, Africa is failing to realize the full potential of remittances. The quality of data on migration and remittances in Africa, especially in Africa south of the Sahara, remains weak.

Remittances are private funds mostly intended for direct consumption and household support. However, there is solid evidence that remittances can and have assisted many African countries in ensuring the availability of hard

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11 IFAD, 2009. Sending Money Home to Africa: Remittance markets, enabling environment and prospects, International Fund for Agricultural Development. [pdf] Available at: <http://www.ifad.org/remittances/pub/money_africa.pdf>.

12 See: <http://sendmoneyafrica.worldbank.org/feature-story>.

currency, improving countries' credit worthiness for external borrowings and increasing internal aggregated demands. "Remittances are a large source of funding in many African countries: in Lesotho, they are close to 30 percent of GDP; in Cape Verde, Senegal, and Togo, more than 10 percent of GDP. In Egypt, remittances are larger than the revenue from the Suez Canal, and in Morocco they exceed tourism revenue" (Dilip Ratha and Sonia Plaza, 2011).

Remittance flows to Africa increased by 3.5% in 2013 and reached more than $62 billion. Nigeria is the largest recipient ($21 billion). As a share of GDP, the largest recipients are Lesotho, Liberia, The Gambia, Senegal, Togo, and Cape Verde. In 2013, remittances sent to East African countries continued to grow, for example, by 10 percent in Kenya and 15 percent in Uganda. In contrast, West African countries saw their remittances increase only moderately after a slow down in 2012 in Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Nigeria. The decline in flows to South Africa appears to be bottoming out[13].

Graph 3: Trend of Remittances Flows to and within Africa (billions of US Dollars)
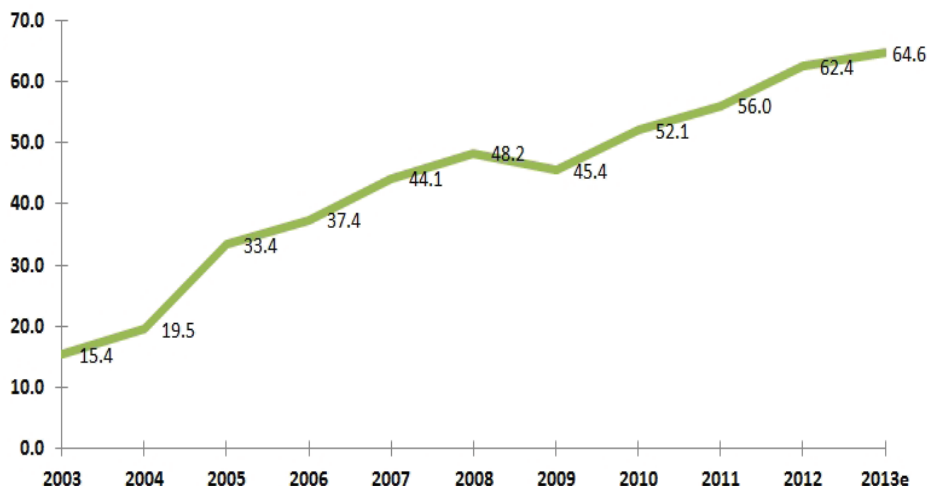
Source: Migration and Remittances Fact Book 2013 and author calculations

13 Worldbank, 2014. *Migration and Development Brief #22*, April 2014.

Despite the growing emphasis, however, relatively little progress has been achieved in terms of better understanding the magnitudes involved, lowering transaction costs and leveraging the beneficial impact of remittances for African families, compared to most other developing regions of the world. Remittances to, and within Africa are still significantly uncounted and remain the most expensive in the world by a substantial margin. This is clearly the case in a high number of post-conflict countries where inevitably many families have been uprooted and must rely on informal delivery channels and weak institutional infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

Leveraging Remittances for Social and Economic Development

As indicated earlier, African migrants contributed an estimated more than US$62 billion in remittances to their families and communities back home in 2013, affecting as many as 125 million recipient family members and significantly contributing to reducing poverty and stimulating inclusive growth. Anyanwu and Erhijakpor, (2010) in their study show that a 10% increase in official international remittances as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) leads to a 2.9 % decline in the poverty headcount[14]. Studies show that the growth of remittances was generally robust in Africa during 2013; remittances flows to the region are expected to increase in 2014-2017 at 9% annual average rate[15].

Remittances play a fundamental role as a portfolio diversification strategy of families and communities and as a means of improving their livelihood, thereby representing a social safety net at the occurrence of poverty, economic crisis and natural calamities. Remittances can help leverage expenditures on food, health and education, and are assets in post-conflict reconstruction, thus strengthening human capital, reducing poverty and extreme hunger. It is not surprising therefore, that recipients of remittances in Africa were found to have higher levels of education, were more likely to have some form of savings account and a higher level of savings than those who were not receiving money

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14 Anyanwu, J.C. and Erhijakpor, A.E.O., 2010. Do International Remittances Affect Poverty in Africa? *African Development Review*, 22 (1), p.51-91.

15 The World Bank, 2014. *Migration and Development Brief #22*, April 2014.

from abroad and an estimated 10-20% of remittance flow to the continent is saved or invested[16].

Remittances are seen currently as a strategic tool, if well harnessed, for social and economic development in Africa. They can become a solid resource base for leveraging human development, financial inclusion, and investment in a productive capacity. Realizing the potential of remittances for development is not an easy task. Senders and recipients, as owners of these resources, have their own priorities and usually dispose of only a small share of these resources once basic needs have been addressed.

Evidence shows that a significant amount of remittance transfers to African countries are spent on household consumption (UNCTAD, 2012). A share of these expenditures is directed towards the construction of homes, healthcare and education, thereby generating local employment in these critical service sectors. Much of the remaining remittance flows to developing countries are household savings, which can be invested in local infrastructure and productive activities, often through the direct involvement of home country governments, local communities and diaspora associations. These funds can be significantly leveraged for co-financing development.

Remittance recipients in Africa are for the most part unbanked, despite the fact that many regularly come into contact with the banking system to receive their disbursements. A coordinated effort to build upon their disbursement history as a tool for evaluating creditworthiness could strengthen the financial sector by incorporating millions of new account holders and providing them with basic financial services. The opportunities created by access to secure savings and payment methods; insurance products and microcredit could enable beneficiary households to attain greater financial security and a more active role in production, thus benefiting the entire economy.

According to the remittances price database, Send Money Africa[17], sending money to and within Africa is very costly: Remittance corridors to Africa and within Africa are the most expensive, with average remittance cost hovering

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16 IFAD, 2009. Sending Money Home to Africa: Remittance markets, enabling environment and prospects, International Fund for Agricultural Development. [pdf] Available at: <http://www.ifad.org/remittances/pub/money_africa.pdf>.

17 See: <https://sendmoneyafrica.worldbank.org>.

around 12 percent. The 10 most expensive corridors are all intra-African, originating in South Africa, Tanzania, and Ghana[18].

In addition, Exclusivity Agreements between banks and international money transfer operators serving African corridors seem to be a factor contributing to lack of competition in the remittances market resulting in high remittance transfer costs.

The use of mobile technology, particularly M-PESA, plays greater role in making bill payments and local remittances cheaper, faster and easier in Kenya and other East African countries. Similarly, other mobile telecommunication operators like MTN have joined in mobile money transfer in different countries and sub-regions. Notwithstanding the efforts being made at involving other operators apart from traditional financial institutions in remittance payments, challenges remained, particularly the legal framework regulating transfers and payment systems that dates back to the 1960s in many countries. If well backed by remittances friendly regulatory frameworks, one can imagine its impact for cross boarder remittances and in reduction of transfer costs.

Furthermore, little progress has been achieved in terms of better understanding the magnitudes involved, lowering transaction costs and leveraging the beneficial impact of remittances for African families, compared to most developing regions of the world. Remittances to and within the continent are mostly through informal channels, significantly uncounted and remain the most expensive in the world by a substantial margin.

Remittances are correlated with increased household investments in education, entrepreneurship, and health, all of which have a high social return in most circumstances. It can also contribute significantly to poverty reduction and to other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As mentioned above, the reality is that there is an overall lack of reliable data about remittances (the amounts, the routes, the people, the locations, etc.). Also, "remittance families" need to be empowered in terms of what they do with the money. Therefore, Governments in destination and origin countries can facilitate remittance flows and enhance their development impacts through the application of appropriate policies. If

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18 See: <https://sendmoneyafrica.worldbank.org>.

these mentioned goals are achieved, remittances may become a very powerful tool for development in Africa.

Strategies and Policies that Support the Productive Use of Remittances and Related Financial Products

Migrant transfers have increasingly become a sizable and stable source of external funding of development and should be fostered by well-informed policy interventions. Higher inflows of migrant workers' remittances are likely to sustain growth in African countries if supported by adequate domestic pro-growth policies. What then are the strategies and policies that can support the productive use of remittances?

First, the flow of remittances can be leveraged to improve access to financial services for the poor – particularly in rural areas through the extension of financial services to these areas. Such services might include bank accounts, provision of credit facilities for small business investments, rural farmers and workers in the informal sector. This will supports economic growth and reduce poverty in these rural areas. Thus, the availability of remitted funds indirectly helps entire communities within developing nations where the money is spent. With appropriate strategy and policy therefore, remittances will help to foster a sense of financial democracy, as it represents a financial flow to those in the rural areas who might not otherwise receive assistance, due to location or social status.

Secondly, the development potential of remittances could be exploited by expanding the financial markets through the facilitation of the transfer of funds and the improvement of access to banking services for migrants in destination countries. Apart from making changes to Exclusivity Agreements with international Money Transfer Operators, domestic banks need to enhance the opening of more international representative offices to channel more migrant workers' remittances through official channels. Countries with better-developed financial markets and better access to finance are likely to attract more remittance flows through the formal channels. Furthermore, conscious effort and strategy need to be in place to facilitate the use of the formal channels by undocumented migrants. In this context, the use of third-party transactions could be useful, where undocumented migrants remit money home through

colleagues with approved resident permits. Thus, better access to financial services by both senders and recipients of remittances will likely reduce transfer costs, enhances domestic investment and social development. Policies and strategies should be developed at the national level to harness the potential of remittances for development by improving access to financial services to make it easier and more cost efficient for people to use the banking system and other formal channels to send and receive remittances from abroad.

Thirdly, since a significant percentage of remittance is spent by the recipients on health and education, it provides an opportunity to develop a contributory social protection scheme that includes health insurance. This will extend social protection to mostly rural and informal workers, thereby complimenting government's effort where it exists or to start the social insurance scheme from scratch. This will be a good example of where with appropriate policy and strategy, private cash transfer (remittance) can be leveraged for public social protection.

Fourth is the regional dimension. The promotion of regional solutions to harness the positive impacts of remittances on development must be enhanced. For instance, the development and harmonization of regional remittances payment systems with international standards would reduce fragmentation, increase competition for attracting more transfers and help reduce costs of cross-border payments for transfers. Hence there is a need for more collaboration and networking by African countries in this regard.

Similarly, the establishment of the African Institute for Remittances (AIR) by the AU in Nairobi, Kenya can be a timely solution in addressing the concerns associated with the barriers to higher migrant remittances transfers. The new institute should hopefully facilitate the framing of the legal and regulatory frameworks needed to foster the social development impacts of remittances, as well as the capacity building initiatives of the national and regional entities involved in the management of migrant remittances.

Proactive and targeted policies and measures could enhance the development impact of remittances. These may include financial education and financial inclusion, both for migrants and recipients of remittances; and the design and

marketing of financial products (e.g. savings, small and micro enterprise loans and insurance products), as well as regional measures.

Diaspora Return: Bringing Capital and Know-how

"Whether skilled or unskilled, migration contributes to the development of State economies. Migrants often maintain a web of connections with their home States creating beneficial feedback effects such as the transfer of remittances, knowledge, skills and technology, as well as short and long-term return migration. Strengthening these feedback effects by enhancing collaboration with the African Diasporas is a key aspect in fostering the migration-development nexus" (AU, 2006, Migration Policy Framework of Africa).

Members of the Diaspora population send remittances in billions annually to residents of their home or ancestral lands. But their skills, knowledge, and entrepreneurial capabilities are lost to their home countries - not to mention the tens of billions of dollars they do not send home but save outside Africa each year. Persuading these emigrants and their descendants to return is generally a vain hope. Although many, perhaps even most, view their homeland warmly, they left for a reason. But perceptions are changing. The diaspora has a number of good aspects beyond remittances and experts are beginning to believe that even the loss of skilled workers has an upside. Most important, perhaps, members of the African diaspora are playing a role in helping their homelands develop, and African countries have begun efforts to tap the skills and resources of emigrants and their offspring.

Some African countries have established government agencies to encourage Diasporas to invest, assist local communities, and provide policy advice. Such agencies are also involved in the collection of data on Diasporas, provision of information and counseling, consular services, and, at times, facilitation of the migrants' participation in social security, housing, and insurance programs at home. Government initiatives have taken various forms - from the creation of dedicated ministries to the addition of specific functions to existing ministries such as foreign affairs, interior, finance, trade, social affairs and youth. In addition, some governments have set up councils or decentralized institutions that deal with migrant issues, with varying degrees of success. Government

institutions abroad, especially embassies and consulates, can play a key role in reaching out to the Diaspora.

Allowing dual citizenship can also encourage greater diaspora participation in their origin countries by facilitating travel, avoiding the constraints foreigners face on some transactions (for example, temporary work or land ownership), and providing access to public services and social benefits. More broadly, dual citizenship can help maintain emotional ties with the origin country, thus encouraging continued contact and investment.

Recognizing the huge potential of the Diaspora and to explore concrete ways and means of harnessing the abundant human and material resources in Africa and beyond and to advance - in close and sustainable partnership with the African Diaspora – the socio-economic development of the continent, the African Union organized the Global African Diaspora Summit under the theme: "Towards the Realization of a United and Integrated Africa and its Diaspora" in May 2012 in Johannesburg, South Africa. At the Diaspora Summit, the AU Heads of State and Government adopted five legacy projects as a way of giving practical meaning to the Diaspora program. The legacy projects are: i) the Production of a Skills Database of African professional in the Diaspora; ii) the African Diaspora Volunteer Corps; iii) the African Diaspora Investment Fund; iv) a program on the Development Marketplace for the Diaspora, as a framework for facilitating innovation and entrepreneurship among African and Diaspora; and v) the African Institute for Remittances (AIR). The Preparatory project for the establishment of the AIR is fully implemented and will be discussed in the next section.

African Institute for Remittances (AIR): Objectives, Goals, and Functions

"The total global volume of remittance transfers to developing countries far exceeds official development assistance (ODA) and has important macro-economic effects by increasing the total purchasing power of receiving economies" (AU Executive Council, 2006)[19]. African countries receive significant amounts of

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19 Decision of the AU Executive Council, EX.CL/276 (IX), The Gambia, Banjul, June 2006.

remittances relative to size of GDP. Remittances are used by migrants' families to meet daily subsistence needs, health and education, but are also invested in improvements to land, homes, entrepreneurial activities, etc. Identifying ways to maximize the developmental effects of remittances, and improving remittance transfer mechanisms are therefore topics of growing importance to Africa. In line with this, the AU – within its Migration Policy Framework - sets the following recommended strategies in harnessing remittances for development.

- Encourage the transfer of remittances by adopting sound macro-economic policies conducive to investment and growth and appropriate financial sector policy that encourage financial institutions and their outreach: post office networks, supporting credit unions, and rural financial service providers.

- Strengthen collaboration with relevant stakeholders in civil society, donor community and financial sector to create incentive strategies and investment opportunities for remitters in commercial, entrepreneurial, savings and other productive activities.

- Improve the quality of data on remittance and migration statistics to create a solid basis for future policy action on remittances.

- Promote the effective mobilization and utilization of the Diaspora funds for investments and development in the public and private sector which in the long term will improve the macro-economic environment and reduce outflows or immigration of African professionals.

The Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development Tripoli in 2006 (Tripoli Declaration) recognized the benefit of migration to both AU-EU and emphasized the need to initiate programs to facilitate the transfer of remittances and to reduce the costs of these transfers in order to leverage remittances for development. The establishment of an AIR was conceived within the framework of Africa-EU Migration, Mobility and Employment Partnership and was included in the Second Action Plan 2011-13 of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. The Action Plan was endorsed by the AU Assembly by its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.354 (XVI).

The preparatory phase project towards the establishment of an AIR was launched on 8 June 2010 with a grant from the European Commission (EC) through a Bank Executed Trust Fund (BETF) Grant Agreement signed in December 2009. The preparatory phase project was implemented by the AUC

and World Bank in collaboration with the EC, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

AIR is designed to help African countries develop proactive policies aimed at leveraging remittances for social and economic development. Through capacity-building, technical assistance and dissemination of best practices it shall help them improve the measurement and recording of remittance flows, reduce their transfer cost and enable the financial inclusion of beneficiaries, as well as contribution to social protection systems.

The AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 19th Ordinary Session in July 2012, through its Decision: (Assembly/AU/Dec.440 (XIX)) endorsed the establishment of the AIR with the objective of harnessing migrant remittances for social and economic development in the continent. The AU Executive Council in its Decision, EX.CL/Dec. 808(XXIV) in January 2014, accepted the offer of the Republic of Kenya to host the AIR. Following the conclusion of Host Agreement with Kenya, preparations are underway to make the AIR functional by 2015 and to exclusively work to:

• Improve the statistical measurement of remittance flows in Africa;

• Lower the transaction costs of remittances to and within Africa; and

• Leverage the potential impact of remittances on economic and social development.

AIR Mission

The AIR will exclusively work in the areas of remittances to make remittance transfers to and within Africa cheaper, safer, faster and easier and to maximize their impact on the economic and social development of African Countries.

Roles

AIR shall adopt a two-stage operational approach in order to fulfill its mission: the first five-year stage (Phase I) shall prioritize the first two strategic objectives, centered on improving the measurement of remittances and lowering their transfer costs. With the progress achieved in Phase I, AIR shall then have a

firmer platform from which to subsequently shift the agenda emphasis towards leveraging the development impact of remittances during operational Phase II. The role of AIR would be categorized into four main activities:

• Applied Research;

• Technical Assistance and Capacity Development;

• Addressing market inefficiencies by catalyzing private sector involvement; and

• Advocacy towards AU Member States' authorities.

Functions

The proposed functions of AIR would include:

• Building the capacity of Central Banks to improve collection and measurement of data on remittance flows;

• Promoting an appropriate legal and regulatory framework for remittances and the use of technology;

• Building the capacity of Non-bank Financial Institutions: Microfinance Institutions, Cooperatives and Post Offices to offer remittance services;

• Organizing Private Sector Challenges on several topics (cost of remittances, remittances and financial inclusion, remittances in rural areas);

• Fostering technology partnerships to lower costs and improve access to remittance and financial services;

• Ensuring that the General Principles for International Remittance Services (GPs) are implemented in Africa (AU Member States); and

• Promoting the use of cashless payment instruments across the region.

Conclusions

Practical evidence indicates a positive correlation between migration, remittances, development, and poverty reduction. Remittances have, if properly harnessed, multiplier effects on economic and social development. Proactive policy measures could encourage the productive use of remittances and take advantage of the diaspora networks for development purposes. There is a need for a comprehensive and coherent policy – a regulatory and institutional framework with the involvement of all stakeholders.

Expanding networks to transfer and distribute remittances, strengthening the capacity of the non-bank financial services sector to channel remittances into productive activities, using new technology, and improving information flows can facilitate the efficient transfer and use of remittances.

Therefore, the following considerations will be important actions to use Migration and Remittances as a strategic tool for poverty eradication in Africa:

• Migration and Remittances have made positive contributions to poverty reduction, economic growth and social development in recipient countries by answering basic needs, health and education, enabling investment in housing, and enabling transfers of knowledge and skills from returned migrants and Diasporas. It should be mainstreamed and integrated into the overall migration management policy national development strategies.

• Proactive and targeted policies and measures could enhance the development impact of remittances. These may include financial education and financial inclusion, both for migrants and for recipients of remittances; and the design and marketing of financial products (e.g. savings, small and micro enterprise loans and insurance products).

• African Institute for Remittances (AIR) should be supported as a major player on African remittances and a continental focal.

• Right policy mix need to be designed to tap Diaspora resources, professional and technical skills, to attract them to return on a temporary basis and to fully activate their potentials for development.

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