

# Editorial

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With immense pleasure we present the first 2024 issue of the African Human Mobility Review (AHMR). It provides up-to-date, high-quality, and original contributions – research papers, syntheses, and a book review – dealing with various aspects of human mobility in Africa. AHMR is served by a very competent Editorial Board along with a network of scholars from around the world with an interdisciplinary field of study helping to secure high-quality and original contributions toward evidence-based policymaking.

We would like to thank all contributors (authors, editorial board, publisher) to AHMR, including those who have served as anonymous referees for the submitted papers. It is our mission to continue improving the quality and standard of the journal and we seek to reach new milestones to position it more favorably in the scientific community from an international standpoint. This issue consists of five articles and a book review that promote the practice of original research and policy discussions and provide a comprehensive forum devoted exclusively to the analysis of contemporaneous trends, migration patterns, and some of the most important migration-related issues in Africa.

The first article by Sathiya Susuman and Knowledge Sithole is entitled “Influence of Socio-Economic Factors on Crime among International Migrants in South Africa.” The study used a quantitative research method that involved the analysis of data for migrants between the ages of 15 and 64. This study also obtained data from secondary sources, notably from the 2019 Statistics South Africa report on labour market outcomes of migrant populations in South Africa, as well as the 2017 South African Police Annual Crime Report. Through chi-square tests and multinomial regression, the study investigated whether these socio-economic factors drove criminal behavior among the international migrant population. The study's findings revealed that unemployment has an impact on migrants and crime rates in South Africa. Within the context of South Africa, immigrants' educational attainment did not significantly influence their criminal behavior. Other elements, like social networks, cultural assimilation, and personal traits, may have a greater impact on criminal activity among migrants. However, addressing unemployment issues among international migrants in South Africa to mitigate the risk of criminal involvement is crucial. The authors suggest that stakeholders and policymakers should concentrate

on creating practical plans that encourage migrant populations' social integration, skills development, and employment prospects. It might be possible to lower crime rates and build a more welcoming society in South Africa for both immigrants and locals by tackling these socio-economic issues.

The second article by Chipo Hungwe and Zvenyika Eckson Mugari is entitled “Let Them Stay There: COVID-19 and Zimbabwe’s Indignation against Return Migrants and Travelers.” The methodological approach employed in this research is a qualitative desk-based study of primary source data (gray literature) accessed online using search words. The findings of this research uncovered that in times of change and dealing with uncertainty, there is a tendency to redraw boundary lines between in-groups and out-groups with negative consequences for those labeled as the out-group. This study supports the theory that anxiety engendered by pandemics leads to the marginalization and rejection of regular in-group members. Perceived resource competition, resource scarcity, anxiety, and fear heightened the stigmatization of return migrants and travelers. The authors assert that to recover from the negative effects of the pandemic, it is necessary to review the preventive measures against COVID-19, avoid reckless public statements that stigmatize and incite hostility against returnees, and invest in the health system.

The third article by Kudakwashe Vanyoro, Nicholas Maple, and Jo Vearey is entitled “Compatible Compacts? The ‘Social Life’ of Vulnerability, Migration Governance, and Protection at the Zimbabwe–South Africa Border.” The research employed qualitative research design to gain insight into identifying and assisting non-nationals whom they considered to be vulnerable or to have special needs. The central argument of this paper is that interventions of humanitarian organizations at the Zimbabwe–South Africa border reveal the importance placed on making very clear distinctions between those needing protection and those who do not. These boundaries are retained in the stable definitions of migrant in/vulnerability that have been legitimized by the increased emphasis on two separate frameworks: one, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) for managing migration and the other, the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) that determines a set of stable norms for international refugee protection. Overall, this paper provides a novel concept to capture and reimagine the limits of and possibilities for protection.

The fourth article by Tackson Makandwa is entitled “Spaces, Places, and Migration: Understanding and Strengthening Public Health-Care Provision in South Africa.” This study argues that engaging with a place-based approach is required to understand the local context in which diverse groups are situated. There is, however, a lacuna in studies situating South(ern) African public health-care challenges within such a place-based approach. This paper presents findings from a mixed-methods study that was designed to fill this gap. The research team conducted fieldwork in six health-care facilities across two provinces in South Africa – four in Gauteng and two in the Vhembe district of Limpopo province – representing urban, peri-urban, and rural settings. The findings show how diverse spaces shape and are shaped by

different migrant profiles, producing diverse places, which in turn present particular demands to the public-health system. Accordingly, the study discovered that it is crucial to understand the pathways, behaviors, and meanings associated with such mobility if we are to strengthen the provision of health-care services in South Africa.

The fifth article by Leander Kandilige, Geraldine Asiwome Ampah, and Theophilus Kwabena Abutima is entitled “Migration and the Constant Search for Self-Improvement in Africa.” The researchers employed thematic and content analysis of relevant extant literature and examined the contextual factors that characterize the nexus between migration and self-improvement/development in Africa. The results of this study show that remittances have the potential to support development in Africa, but this depends on the environment in which migration takes place and where remittances are brought. Similarly, social remittances are credited with possible improvements in habits, attitudes, and social capital that could support development. The study also indicates that some empirical studies found that political remittances are positively related to the improvement of democracy in Africa. This research study further indicates that the development effects of migration vary in different regions and countries of Africa depending on the environments in which migration takes place and that migration promotes self-development, just as self-development promotes migration.

The last section of this issue is a critical and academic appraisal undertaken by Daniel Tevera of a book entitled “The Palgrave Handbook of South–South Migration and Inequality.” He points out that the book is divided into four parts that highlight often-overlooked mobility patterns within and between regions of the Global South and the intersectional inequalities that migrants face. According to the reviewer, the introduction by the editors highlights the critical issues discussed in well-structured chapters that provide fresh insights. The chapters grapple conceptually with the relationship between migration and inequality in diverse Global South locations. They also question the relevance of econometric migration theories that downplay context-specific economic and socio-political processes. The reviewer further indicates that the different book chapters focus on a critical and socially embedded understanding of South–South migration, including the climate change-mobility nexus.

Finally, I wish to see more researchers, academicians, and students engaging with us and continuing to explore new areas of meaningful research with increasing social and practical use in diverse disciplines. I also hope that they will contribute their original and weighty research ideas to this journal.

Thank you to our editing team and to all authors who submitted their work to the African Human Mobility Review.