

Editorial

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We are delighted to announce the release of the second issue of 2024 of the African Human Mobility Review (AHMR). This issue features current, high-quality, and original research, including a book review and articles focusing on various aspects of human mobility in Africa. AHMR benefits from the expertise of a skilled editorial board, a global network of scholars, and an interdisciplinary approach, ensuring contributions that support evidence-based policymaking.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all contributors, authors, the editorial board, the publisher, and anonymous reviewers, who have supported the journal. Our goal is to continually enhance the journal's quality and achieve new milestones, positioning it more prominently within the international scientific community. This issue includes a book review and four articles, all promoting original research and policy discussions, while providing a comprehensive forum for examining contemporary trends, migration patterns, and key migration-related issues in Africa.

The first section of this issue is a critical and academic appraisal by Daniel Tevera of a book entitled “Lifeworlds in Crisis: Making Refugees in the Chad–Sudan Borderlands,” authored by Andrea Behrends. The reviewer indicates that the book is divided into three parts. Part I, organized around the themes of displacement and emplacement, provides an exposition of how the war had shaken many lives, with some families losing almost everything and recovering very little. Part II focuses on the refugee camps and the everyday realities of people living in and around the camps in the borderlands. Part III provides a close analysis of the Chadian government’s intricate categorizations of the borderlands, such as delineating security zones and allocating resources. Tevera comments on the author’s discussion of the nuanced strategies that households and communities in the borderlands employ to navigate everyday situations of severe crisis and uncertainty. Furthermore, the reviewer notes the author’s detailed examination of the interventions of international, military, and non-governmental organizations that have reshaped the social landscapes of the borderlands. Tevera further indicates that the book is a richly textured discussion of refugee precarity and the permeability of borders in the Chad–Sudan borderlands.

The first article by Franzisca Zanker is entitled “‘When There Is No Migration, the Whole Region Has a Problem’: The Political Priorities of Migration Policies in West Africa.” The paper is based on over 130 interviews with policymakers,

politicians, civil society activists, and academic experts in Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and the Gambia in 2019. It adds to the literature on the agency of migration states in the Global South. The study's findings revealed that the lack of prior political attention to migration governance becomes most evident when we consider that in Nigeria, Niger, the Gambia, and Senegal a National Migration Policy (NMP) was only developed and introduced following external funding for these schemes from the European Union (EU) and their member states. The juxtaposition of the lack of policy implementation and an everyday lived reality of mobility comes across clearly, considering the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) framework. Addressing the political priorities of migration policies in West Africa is crucial.

The second article by Gracious Maviza and Divane Nzima is entitled "Dynamics of Protection in a Shrinking Economy: A Peak into Zimbabwe's Refugee Regime." The methodological approach employed in this research is qualitative research based on 12 in-depth interviews with key informants to explore how the prolonged socio-economic crisis has impacted the state's ability to provide social protection to refugees in Zimbabwe. The author argues that although the refugee regime in Zimbabwe mandates the state to provide protection services to refugees, the macroeconomic reality is the major constraining factor. The author further indicates that even though the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its partners strive to offer protection, they often become overwhelmed by the extensive demands involved in providing housing, improving livelihoods, ensuring food security, and delivering water, sanitation services, and public health systems. The findings of this research uncover that socio-economic challenges in a shrinking economy affect the protection outcomes of refugees, regardless of the presence of a robust refugee regime in the country.

The third article by Aklilu Asha and Thanyani Madzivhandila is entitled "Does Climate Change Transfer Poverty from Rural to Urban Areas? Implications for a Regional Sub-Saharan Research Agenda." The research is based on an extensive review of existing literature using qualitative document analysis. The purpose of this article is to examine the role of climate change on rural-urban migration, which ultimately contributes toward the increase in urban poverty. Using a thorough literature review, the authors contend that the impacts of climate change are widespread, affecting agriculture, water resources, and biodiversity, and disproportionately burden vulnerable communities. Addressing climate change requires urgent action, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, transitioning to renewable energy, and implementing sustainable practices. Overall, this paper provides a novel concept on the implications for a research agenda in the context of sub-Saharan Africa towards sustainable ways to respond to the challenges of climate-induced migration, urbanization, and poverty.

The fourth article by Learnmore Mvundura is entitled "Institutionalizing Anti-Migrant Discourse in Public Healthcare: An analysis of Medical Xenophobia against

Zimbabwean Migrant Women in Johannesburg.” The research broadly focuses on how Zimbabwean migrant women navigate maternal health inequities in South Africa. The narratives are from 13 Zimbabwean migrant women who have been in the country from as early as 2008. The paper focuses on the utterances and practices that the participants attribute to nurses and frontline staff in their interactions in healthcare facilities, drawing parallels with the anti-migrant discourse that populates certain platforms outside the healthcare facilities, especially in the conventional media, political discourse, and narratives from other anti-migrant platforms in the community and on social media platforms. The result of this study concludes that the practices that constitute medical xenophobia in the public healthcare system are rearticulations and restaging of the anti-migrant discourse that has been popularized by the media, politicians, and certain anti-migrant groupings in the community.

Finally, I encourage more researchers, academics, and students to join us in exploring new and impactful research areas with significant social and practical applications across various disciplines. I also hope they will bring original and substantial research ideas to this journal.