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NOTE

THE CAUSES OF MIGRATION FROM ACP COUNTRIES

Abstract:

Migration poses a number of challenges to European societies and affects the bilateral and regional relations of the EU and its Member States with third countries. The external dimension of the migration policy has prevalently been built around the objective of better managing the migratory flows with a view to reducing the migratory pressure on the EU. Therefore, the causes of migration must be taken into account to shape a comprehensive policy and to deepen the link between migration and development. One of the additional challenges today also lies in the development of policies which maximise the benefits of migration for the migrants, the countries of origin as well as the host countries, and which recognise the positive contribution of migrants to European societies and economies.

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Migration is now at the heart of the political debate in Europe; it poses a number of challenges to European societies and affects the bilateral and regional relations of the EU and its Member States with third countries. This explains that it is now one of the strategic priorities for the Union's external relations. The external dimension of the migration policy has prevalently been built around the objective of better managing the migratory flows with a view to reducing the migratory pressure on the EU. This remains a valid goal. However, additional challenges today also lie in the development of policies which maximise the benefits of migration for the migrants, the countries of origin as well as the host countries, and which recognise the positive contribution of migrants to our societies and economies.

For some years now, the Commission has undertaken to systematically incorporate questions related to migration and asylum in its political dialogues with third countries, to propose comprehensive approaches on migration and to mainstream these questions in its development cooperation strategies.

The present international migration situation is characterised by the rise in the absolute number of migrants, the increasingly numerous different types of migration, the feminisation of migration, the widespread and diversifying trafficking in human beings, the growth of diasporas, the integration challenges for both migrants and the host countries, the strengthening of ties with people who have stayed in the country of origin, the diversification of destinations and origins, and the multiplication and rapid changes of migration routes¹.

In addition to the specific factors that push people to migrate, it is important to be aware of the existence of exogenous factors that also play a key role. As stated by the European Council meeting held in Dresden in January 2007, "increasing globalization has led to a growth in migration". Therefore, whereas the causes that push people to migrate have deep roots, the boom in migration is closely linked to the growing interactions stemming from the globalization process at the end of 20th century.

Conflicts and insecurity also generate forced migration and refugee flows.

Environmental change and natural disasters are increasingly key factors behind large-scale migration flows. 50 million people may be forced to migrate because of soil erosion, desertification, water shortages, sea level rise and extreme weather events.

However, migration is also part of the developing countries' modernisation process and an intense debate is currently ongoing on how migration can better contribute to development.

This debate addresses issues such as reducing brain drain and encouraging the migrants to contribute to the development of their country of origin (co-development), for example via the productive use of remittances and brain circulation.

¹ According to United Nations statistics, the population of migrants worldwide is estimated at 191 million, of which 115 million are living in developed countries and 75 million in developing countries. The migratory pressure is increasing and affects Europe and other industrialised regions in various ways, although south/south migration also constitutes an important phenomenon. From 1990 to 2005, the number of migrants increased by 33 million in developed countries and by 3 million in developing countries. During the same period, 75% of the growth in the number of migrants occurred in 17 countries; Germany and Spain gained 4 million each (while the United States gained 15 million). In 2005, 75% of all migrants lived in 28 countries; 21% in the European Union (20% in the United States). Global estimates by sex confirm that female migrants account for a little bit more than 50% of the migrants living outside their countries of birth. However, the proportions vary from country to country: the feminisation of labour migration seems least evident in Africa, although the proportion of female migrants is increasing.

To date, EU policies on migration have generally to fighting illegal immigration without seeking to develop a broader programme that would allow the Union to explore the benefits of immigration. In point of fact, as Kofi Annan underlined in his speech to the European Parliament on 24 January 2004, "*The immigrants need Europe and Europe needs the immigrants. A closed Europe would be a Europe that is harder, poorer, weaker, and older*".

As stated in a background paper released by the Commission on November 2006¹, "*a structural approach is needed in the long-term to address migration in a comprehensive manner in partnership with the countries of origin and of transit (...) Fortress Europe is not the answer.*" With this in mind, it is essential to understand the underlying reasons behind migration; "*Africa requires us to look at the root causes of migration and development issues in our policies*"².

This idea has been highlighted in many other EU documents; a Commission communication of July 2006³ also points to this necessity, promising that "*the EU will continue to address the push-factors for illegal immigration, such as poverty, unemployment, conflict, environmental degradation, bad governance, lack of access to education, health, etc.*"

This paper will consider the different **push factors** and **pull factors** (where some people tend to see the distinction between forced or voluntary migration) as both the nature of migration and the migrants' profile differ depending on which category they fall under.

I. ECONOMIC CAUSES/PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

Traditionally, one of the key factors in distinguishing political refugees from economic migrants has been the voluntary nature of the latter. Nevertheless, according to current data, the line is becoming increasingly blurry: do economic migrants really have control over their future and decisions? There are however no international arrangements at present that recognize economic migration as a form of forced migration.

The profile of an economic migrant can be summarised as follows⁴:

- Fairly educated, ranging from high school dropout to university graduate
- Urban to semi-urban dweller with frequent access to mainly international media. It should be noted that rural Africa has access mainly to government media and mostly to radio media.
- Has got access to 2000-3000 euros in cash, through relatives or in the form of propriety that can be sold to raise this amount.
- Has got relatives or friends in the EU (abroad).

Moreover as regards illegal migrants:

- The majority are men, single, and aged between 20 and 45.
- The number of families with young children is increasing compared to 5 years ago.
- 1/5 of illegal migrants are women and 1/12 are minors. These last categories are on the rise.

¹ Background briefing provided by EC, 10 November 2006, TLD 30 Nov- 5 Dec 2006

² *ibid. cit.*

³ "Communication of the Commission on Policy priorities in the fight against illegal immigration of third-country nationals". 19.7.2006. COM(2006) 402 final.

⁴ Contribution by Peter Kisitu, East-African Community Development Association, at the public hearing "The EU and the challenge of migration", European Parliament's committee on Civil Liberties, 30 January 2007.

A. POVERTY (PUSH)

The Millennium Development Goals will be difficult to attain in the current political climate. Many of the areas covered by this Agenda directly affect ACP countries; extreme poverty and hunger, access to primary education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health and fatal diseases.

- In 2005, Gross domestic product based on purchasing-power-parity (PPP) per capita GDP reached 28.900 US\$ in the Euro-zone, and attained only 2500 US\$ in Africa.
- 29 of the 30 countries characterised as least developed with regards to human resource indicators (according to the UN list and classification) are ACP members.
- With regards to hunger, most ACP countries present a worrying situation. To give but one example, 40% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa is undernourished.

Contrary to a fairly popular perception, the poorest countries are not those that generate those most important migrant flows. These mainly originate from countries at an intermediate development level. Similarly, it is not the poorest who immigrate but those who suffer from relative disadvantages while still possessing the necessary material and cultural resources to allow them to immigrate. These facts call into question the cliché of a Europe invaded by hordes of the Earth's damned. Some do indeed flee in order to survive but most attempt to enter the EU in order to attain a lifestyle that would be out of their reach in their home country.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Most migrants have to invest huge sums (2000-3000 €) in order to reach Europe. This amount could be used to start a small economic activity.▪ Developing micro-credit could be one element of the solution. |
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B. POOR DEVELOPMENT: CORRUPTION SLOWS DEVELOPMENT (PUSH)/ AND LACK OF INVESTMENTS

The lack or the misuse of resources hinders the undertaking of measures that could raise life standards. In 2005, Africa's external debt represented 35.9% of its GDP¹. The African Union considers that corruption costs represents up to 25% of the continent's GDP. The case of Nigeria is emblematic as 90% of oil revenue, which represents up to 400.000 million US\$, may have been wasted or have disappeared.

Furthermore, the negative impact of corruption is multiplied when dealing with post-war or politically instable contexts. Lowering corruption levels not only favours increased international assistance and national reconstruction on a physical level; but also helps to transform local economical policies and consolidate national institutions and political parties. Lowering corruption leads to more enduring peace and contributes to stability.

<p>In that sense, the JPA Bureau should applaud initiatives that aim at fighting this deep-rooted and widespread problem. The EU should be more attentive when inspecting the governance practices of ODA receptors, since most of the EU help may currently be lost due to corruption. It is the Commission's intention to reduce corruption at all levels in a coherent way within the EU institutions, in EU Member States and outside the EU.</p>

¹ World Economic and Financial Surveys. World Economic Outlook Database. September 2006 Edition. International Monetary Fund.

Corruption and bad governance are also one of the reasons, though not the only one, for low levels of investment. Lack of capacity in many developing country and the difficulties of setting up and running SMEs are important push factors.

C. UNEMPLOYMENT (PUSH AND PULL) IN THE SOUTH AND THE STATE OF THE LABOUR MARKET IN THE EU (PULL)

Unemployment is of course a push factor but poor employment is another one. Many migrants do not leave their country because they are unemployed but because their qualifications or their skills would allow to receive a better pay in a richer country.

The relationship between development and job creation is weak in developing countries (OCDE/World Bank/UNCTAD). The world's 50 poorest nations are becoming increasingly urbanized without creating productive non-farm jobs (Least Developed Countries Report, 2006; UNCTAD). In recent years, many Least Developed Countries (many of which are ACP members) have achieved higher rates of economic growth than in the past and even higher export growth. But there is a widespread sense — which is apparent in the concern to ensure “proper” growth — that this is not being effectively translated into poverty reduction and improved well-being. Economic growth does not seem to automatically raise living standards in ACP countries¹.

To these facts must be added the pull factors of the European labour market: (1) there is currently a shortage of labour (of the low-skilled variety) in several European economic sectors, such as construction or services; (2) declining unemployment rates make Europe increasingly attractive. The unemployment rate in the EU dropped to 7.9% in 2006, while the US labour market appears even more attractive given its 2006 unemployment rate of only 4.6%².

This phenomenon is partly linked to demographic differences between the North and the South: a Sub-Saharan woman has 5.4 children on average, women in Latin America and the Caribbean have 2.5 children and a European has 1.4 children. Without immigration Europe's population would have declined by 4.4 million between 1995 to 2000³.

If job creation is insufficient in developing countries - as it cannot help but being in view of population growth rates - and populations in the West are declining and ageing, the situation becomes that the jobs are in the North and the workers in the South. Some employers in developed countries are also looking for cheap a workforce, which migrants are.

In that sense, UNCTAD notes that *"There is a need for a shift which places the development of productive capacities at the heart of national and international policies to promote development and poverty reduction in the Least Developed Countries"*.

¹ Moreover, indicators and data are inflated for most of the countries, since there is a huge difference between the DGP growth and the GDP per capita growth. When looking to the GDP per capita growth in Ethiopia, that presents a GDP growth of up to 4.3% annually between 1990 and 2003, it is difficult to draw optimistic conclusions as said growth has led to a GDP growth per capita of only 1.4%. The GDP per capita growth in real terms only accounts for an annual growth of 0.1% between 1980 and 2003.

Real GDP per capita growth rates between 1980 and 2003 demonstrate that economies such as Angola, that presents an annual GDP growth of 3.2% (between 1990 and 2003) are in fact, classified as "regressing economies". In despite of this 3.2% of GDP growth, real GDP per capita growth rate in Angola is in fact of -0.1% (between 1980 and 2003).

² "Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee on a comprehensive EU policy against corruption". 28.5.2003 COM(2003) 317 final)

² Eurostat.

³ Report of the Global Commission on International Migration, October 2005.

D. BRAIN DRAIN (PULL)

As noted by IOM, where there is a shortage of skills or where skills are difficult to replace, the cost of skilled migration is high for the country of origin.

This mainly concerns two important issues: that of living standards in countries where there is an exodus of health and sanitation staff; and that of the poorer countries losing their already meagre chances of development.

Innovative fields and technologies thus seem to be the preserve of developed countries, confining developing countries to labour-intensive economic fields. The Caribbean countries have lost 10–40 percent of their labour force due to emigration to OECD member countries. The percentage of Granada's labour force that has migrated from the Caribbean Countries to OECD Member Countries (1965–2000) accounted stood at more than 50%.

Migration rates are particularly striking when looking at the highly skilled. Many countries have lost more than 70% of that portion of their labour force with more than 12 years of completed schooling—this is among the highest emigration rates in the world. When considering the level of schooling, the situation is even worse: for instance, In Antigua and Barbuda, between 1965 and 200, the percentage of the labour force that had migrated to OECD Member Countries stood at 9% among people with only primary-level education, but rose to 67% among people who had received tertiary education¹.

Other than leaving the country bereft of skilled workers, this phenomenon represents a loss of investment, since the State has invested capital in the formation of these people which will not be returned to the country in the form of expertise or skills. As emigrants do not remain within the economy, the entire subsidising of their education could be treated as a social cost. The public expenditure on education of migrants represents a loss to the country. This cost is particularly high for the tertiary-educated migrants in developing countries such as Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago (UNESCO, 2004).

- Develop cooperation as a source of employment opportunities for skilled professionals in developing countries. The Commission has suggested that donors, in the context of OECD/DAC, could usefully review the operational mechanism of their technical assistance programmes with the specific objective of assessing whether stronger incentives for the employment of skilled professionals from developing countries by implementing bodies could be introduced. The JPA Bureau could support this idea and assess the first experiences in that field.
- Circular migration: Commissioner Frattini announced, on November 2006, plans to create European Job Mobility Portals in African countries which would provide information for local people about job opportunities in Europe, encouraging “brain circulation” rather than “brain drain”. Mali and Senegal could be used as test cases. The JPA Bureau could require to be informed of further development on this experience and charge the Members of the relevant countries to report on their own perception of the experience.
- More specifically, in the case of Brain Drain in the Health Sector, the EU should ensure that migration policies do not work to the detriment of developing countries by actively seeking key health workers from the poorest nations. The task of reporting on this aspect could be given to the JPA Economic Committee.

¹ "Emigration and Brain Drain: the Evidence of the Caribbean". Pratchi Mishra. IMF Working Paper. WP 06/25.

E. THE ROLE OF REMITTANCES

Remittances are playing an increasingly important role in the subsistence of diverse local communities. The World Bank officially estimates that in 2005, migrants from developed countries in developed countries sent home more than \$223 billion to their families in 2005 – a figure which stood at more than twice the level of international aid. The Caribbean is the world's largest recipient of remittances as a percent of GDP: remittances constituted about 13% of the region's GDP in 2002.

Therefore, young people are encouraged to leave their countries of origin in order to accomplish what their neighbours are achieving.

However, there is ongoing debate about the use of these remittances. Most of the time, these flows are used for survival purposes, and they are not exploited to launch productive initiatives that could raise host country' population living standards in a more sustainable manner. They also foster dependence in the people left in the country of origin.

- The EU and countries of origin should seek to develop a cheaper and more transparent system for the transfer of remittances. The current systems are prohibitively expensive and, as a result, most of the remittances are transferred by "unofficial" channels.
- For a development-oriented use of remittances, some systems of co-development or preferential investments should be encouraged.

F. CULTURAL PERCEPTION INFLUENCE

The image of the western paradise is promoted by i) local media, ii) global media and, iii) returning migrants. Lack of information through official channels strengthens this perception.

▪ LOCAL MEDIA

As noted by the East-Africa Community Development Association, local media have focussed on foreign news, reinforcing the myth that the European way of life is superior to the African one. There is a sort of self-disdain for local culture that encourages people to build their lives abroad.

▪ GLOBAL MEDIA

Global media are an important source of information for potential migrants, as most of the people who decide to resettle come from urban areas with access to Western channels and programmes. However, the Western image reflected in these media frequently inaccurate and encourages a false idea of Europe.

▪ RETURNING MIGRANTS

A sense of honour here comes into play: when returning to their home countries, migrants rarely acknowledge the difficulties and challenges they have had to face in the receiving country. As recently reported by Mr. Kisitu in the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs: *“an African who lives on 10 pounds a day in London, when he goes to Africa he will spend 300 pounds per day, this big spend will mislead the locals into thinking there is so much money out there not knowing this man has been saving for twelve months just to come and impress”*.

Talks have been launched about the possibility to open EU desks in African countries to disseminate information about the legal ways of entering the EU, about the difficulties and challenges that migrants may face, and about the dangers of illegal migration. This proposal should be encouraged.

G. THE ROLE OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The trafficking of Human Beings is enhanced by the lack of registration at birth and of government data. UNICEF estimates that 55% of children in Sub-Saharan Africa (around 15 million children) are not registered. For instance, countries such as Eritrea, Ethiopia or Somalia have a very limited registration system that only covers a fraction of the countries' births¹. This situation leads to a lack of protection against child trafficking, but also against child labour, early marriage, and protection during armed conflict, and to the negation of the right to education and healthcare services.

The JPA Bureau should ask the Commission to produce an evaluation of the policies led in the field of birth registration which was one of the request of JPA's report on children rights adopted in Rome in 2003 (Kamuntu - Gemelli report).

II. POLITICAL CAUSES: POLITICAL INSECURITY (WARS, NON-DEMOCRATIC ENVIRONMENT...)

As reported in the previous report², the UN counted 8.4 million refugees worldwide at the beginning of 2006, the lowest number since 1981. Out of the 5 countries from which the majority of refugees and asylum seekers originate, 4 are ACP countries: Sudan, Burundi, DR Congo and Somalia.

The impact of refugees in no way affects developed countries as severely as it does developing ones, as these movements lead to supplementary problems within host countries that lack the necessary resources to relocate these people. Refugees are generally shunted into camps where they will receive emergency food and medical aid until such a time as it is safe for them to return home. However, in some cases, as the years pass, third party countries decide that it will never be safe for them to go back. By the end of 2004, the number of refugees had nonetheless dropped to 2,748,400, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Many African refugees cross into neighbouring countries in order to find a safe haven, and African countries are frequently simultaneously countries of origin and of asylum for refugees. Thus, the Democratic Republic of Congo was the country of origin for 462,203 refugees at the end of 2004, but also the country of asylum for 199,323 further refugees.

¹ Figures from United Nations Children's Fund, *The 'Rights' Start to Life: A statistical analysis of birth registration*, UNICEF, New York, 2005, p. 3. To view an example of a UN resolution on birth registration: A/61/439 (nov. 2006) : "(...)Once again urges all States to intensify their efforts to comply with their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child to preserve the child's identity, including nationality, name and family relations, as recognized by law, to allow for the registration of the child immediately after birth, to ensure that registration procedures are simple, expeditious and effective and provided at minimal or no cost and to raise awareness of the importance of birth registration at the national, regional and local levels".

² Submitted in the Bureau in September 2006.

According to Marc Lavergne, who coordinated the panel of experts sent by the UN Security Council to Darfur from May to September 2006, "wars for land" have emerged in Africa, from Darfur to the Ivory Coast.

With the exception of South Africa, the African continent has never been industrialised; as a result of which, land pressure has reached boiling point. Land is the only resource, but it can neither feed the entire population nor ensure the future of the younger generations, who are therefore forced to find alternative methods of survival, be it immigration or war. War brings money and prestige. In Darfur, the average salary for a Janjawid militant goes from US\$70 to US\$200, which corresponds to the average annual income within that province.

III. CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES/POTENTIAL PUSH FACTORS

Greater resource scarcity, desertification, risks of drought and floods, and rising sea levels could drive many millions of people to migrate, as developing economies are very sensitive to the direct impacts of climate change given their heavy dependence on agriculture and ecosystems, their rapid population growth and the grouping of millions of people in slums and squatter settlements, and their low health levels.¹ Moreover, the host countries often lack of the necessary resources to tackle these challenges.

Vulnerability to the effects of climate change is measured through 3 elements of criteria: Exposure, Sensivity and Adaptative capacity. ACP countries score poorly on all three standards².

- Extreme weather events. While the number of natural disasters has recently been on the increase, it is noteworthy that extreme weather events particularly affect developing countries; over 96% of all disaster related deaths worldwide in recent years have occurred in developing countries. Natural disasters also have a massive effect on movements of population. The floods that struck Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia in December 2006 affected 1.5 million people (among them 100.000 refugees living in Kenya). The extreme drought that preceded this depleted land and livestock reserves, worsening malnutrition and hunger.
- Arable land per capita has generally decreased since 1990, while the proportion of rural population remains high in most of these countries. The example of Mauritania is emblematic: although the rural population has decreased from 56% in 1990 to 37% in 2004, the arable land per capita has also decreased from 0.20 Ha arable per capita in 1990 to 0.17 in 2002. Most ACP countries face the same situation³. Declining crop yields are likely to leave hundreds of millions without the ability to produce or purchase sufficient food, particularly in the poorest parts of the world. Developing countries are highly dependent on water- the most climate-sensitive economic resource- for their growth and development. However, most ACP countries also lack the necessary resources to tackle a potential water scarcity. For example, Ethiopia has less than 1% of the artificial water storage capacity per capita of North America. In North-Eastern Ethiopia, drought induced losses in crop and livestock between 1998 and 2000 are estimated at \$266 per household – more than the average annual cash income for more than 75% of households in the study region.

¹ Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change. 30 Oct. 2006.
http://www.hm.treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/stern_review_report.cfm

² Idem.

³ World Development Indicators 2006. The World Bank Group.

- Climate change also has a potential impact on the hunger situation: lack of water and shortage of arable land are often compounded by the rising cost of food - following the drought in Zimbabwe in 1991-92, for example, food prices increased by 72%. The drought in Zimbabwe in 2000 is estimated to have contributed to a loss of 7-12% of lifetime earnings for the children who suffered from malnutrition.
- Climate change can also have effects on the propagation of diseases: *Vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever may become more widespread if effective control measures are not in place.* WHO estimates that in 2000, 2% of deaths from Diarrhoeal diseases, malaria or malnutrition were due to the effects of climate change. An additional 40 to 60 million people in Africa could be exposed to malaria should there be a 2°C rise in temperature, increasing to 70 to 80 million at a rise of 3 - 4°C. Malnutrition is a health outcome in itself, but it also lowers natural resistance to infectious diseases by weakening the immune system. Hence, this is likely to generate higher morbidity and mortality rates among people suffering from malnutrition than among food-secure people. Climate change will potentially exacerbate this vulnerability as a greater number of malaria carrying mosquitoes move into previously uninfected areas.
- Macro-economic effects on growth: Climatic change can affect and slow the development and growth process of ACP countries. The financial costs of extreme weather events represent an important loss in terms of percentage of GDP in developing countries, even though absolute costs are higher in developed countries given the higher monetary value of the infrastructure. Climatic shocks can - and do - cause setbacks to economic and social development in developing countries. The IMF, for example, estimates that between 1997 and 2000, the costs of large-scale disasters stood at an average of over 5% of GDP in low-income countries.

- The German Presidency has announced the adoption of an EU-Africa energy partnership. This should take into account Africa's vulnerability to climate change.
- Islands in the Caribbean and in the Pacific are particularly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. Measures should be taken to reinforce their disaster preparedness means.
- Diminishing stocks of fish, notably due to extensive European fisheries in Western Africa, is a motive for fishermen to try to leave for Europe.