



Migration, Mobility and the African City

Synthesis report on the African Perspectives on Human Mobility research programme

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report provides an analytical synthesis of the findings of the three-year collaborative programme, African Perspectives on Human Mobility (APHM), which was funded by the MacArthur Foundation and coordinated by the International Migration Institute (IMI) at the University of Oxford. As we will show, the research projects highlighted some of the current trends and the overlooked aspects of migration and mobility in the cities of Africa.

The programme included four research teams based at different African universities, including the University of Ghana, Legon, Accra (Ghana); the University of Ibadan (Nigeria); Université Mohamed V, Agdal, Rabat (Morocco); and Université de Lubumbashi (Democratic Republic of Congo). The programme was designed with a flexible structure to allow each of these teams to develop and conduct their own original research projects on international migration in Africa within the framework of the APHM programme. This provided an opportunity for the researchers to explore those issues which they saw as the most intellectually stimulating and important, rather than following a donor-led agenda. The partners seized this chance and looked at different aspects of migration in their respective countries, all focusing on urban areas. What emerged was a set of studies which contributed to many of the current debates on mobility and the city in Africa, by adding new voices with distinctive challenges to some of the existing knowledge. This report sets the APHM studies in the context of this wider literature showing how they both complement and challenge it.

This report presents some of the central findings by the four research teams in various African cities, namely in Lubumbashi (DRC), Fès (Morocco), Accra and Kumasi (Ghana), and Lagos (Nigeria), and reflects on the theoretical implications of these findings. In the next section, we provide some further background to the APHM programme and brief summaries of the four research projects undertaken within it. This lays the basis for the analysis in the subsequent section, which looks at the literature on different aspects of African cities and migration. We conclude with some reflections on new areas for research that are opened by the programme.

This report should not be taken as a comprehensive analysis or summary of the four APHM projects. Rather, we will pull out aspects that are comparable and which have more general implications for how we understand cities and migration, particularly in Africa, but also elsewhere. We therefore recommend the reader to study the four teams' individual reports separately, which each contain rich empirical material about migration in five African cities, and which raise exciting questions about their specific contexts and other avenues of research that are beyond the scope of this report.

2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The APHM programme was established with a view to help fill the yawning gap in research on the experiences of mobility and migration across Africa. There has been a growing volume of research on African migration, but our observation was that much of this was framed by a research agenda reflecting European preconceptions and concerns. The volume of research on migration from Africa to Europe far outstrips that on migration within the continent. Concerns about irregular migration, trafficking, insecurity and migration as a response to crises across Africa have attracted disproportionate attention, while the much more common experiences of mobility have tended to be neglected.

The APHM programme set out to explore some of what are perhaps the more ‘mundane’ or ‘normal’ aspects of African mobility and migration – the mobility that forms part of quotidian experiences of many people across the continent and helps to shape the societies in which they live and move. In order to allow new ideas to emerge, the programme’s starting point was a set of three broad themes within which it was envisaged that the research conducted in the programme would fit: i) reconceptualising mobility – challenging notions of destination, transit and arrival; ii) revisiting migration transitions and the ‘migration hump’; and, iii) the role of migration in African livelihoods.

In the first phase of the programme, each team prepared a country paper reviewing the existing research on migration to and from the country and identifying some of the critical research gaps (Berriane and Aderghal 2009; Ngoie and Vwakyankazi 2009; Awumbila et al. 2009; Afolayan, Ikwuyatum, and Abejide 2008).¹ There was a process of exchange between the partners but each partner identified their own research question, addressing particular gaps in research highlighted by these country papers. Overall they were all concerned with challenging conceptions of migration, and interactions between migration and livelihoods, the first and third themes elaborated in the original design of the programme. However, a more dominant theme explicitly taken up by all the projects was that of migration and the African city. It is therefore this theme which provides the analytical thread for this report.

Before developing this analysis, we provide a synopsis of the four country projects undertaken within the programme. A set of fuller summaries can be found in the appendix, and the full reports prepared by the project partners are available online. Given the different designs of the projects, their results are not directly comparable but they provide intriguing and useful areas of overlap, which suggest that their findings are compatible. These comparisons can be most clearly seen if we consider the projects as complementary pairs.

The focus for research in both Ghana and Nigeria was on the mobility of market traders rather than longer-term migrants. Both countries have seen a huge boom in the levels of trade with the Middle East and Asia, especially China. The local markets in many African cities and towns are now dominated by Chinese manufactured goods, often of poor quality but always at low prices compared to other imports. The studies undertaken by the University of Ghana and the University of Ibadan set out to examine the movement of people that accompanied the movement of goods to the markets of Accra and Kumasi in

¹ These papers are available on the IMI website:
www.imi.ox.ac.uk/research-projects/african-perspectives-on-human-mobility

Ghana and Lagos in Nigeria. What are the characteristics of market traders undertaking international journeys for their businesses? What routes do they use and how do they organise their journeys? How do they negotiate the various obstacles to their mobility, including logistical and bureaucratic hurdles? What is the impact of their international mobility on their livelihoods? To what extent can these short-term movements be associated with longer-term migration?

In Ghana, the research was conducted in the two largest markets in the country: the Kumasi Central Market in the central belt of Ghana and the Makola Market in the capital city Accra in southern Ghana. A survey was conducted with 154 traders (104 in Makola, 50 in Kumasi) who travelled internationally for their business, and this was supplemented by in-depth qualitative interviews and case studies. The majority of traders in these markets are women, but there is a relatively high proportion of men among those involved in transnational trade. Most of the respondents had moved into long-distance travel stepwise, starting with their first journeys to other cities and towns in Ghana, before moving into the ECOWAS sub-region and eventually to trading destinations outside Africa. One of the most striking findings was that China was by far the most popular destination for these transnational traders, followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with the UK, often seen as the more traditional destination, lagging some way behind. Perhaps not surprisingly, women in the sample were more likely to travel within West Africa, and there were proportionately more men travelling to China and UAE. Most reported travelling two to four times a year, in visits lasting on average about two weeks, with very few staying beyond one month.

The transnational traders emphasised the importance of networks in facilitating both their mobility and their trade, including visa acquisition, ticketing, and shipping of goods. They employ middlemen – mainly Ghanaians who have settled in the trade destination countries for some length of time – to guide them around as well as to assist them in purchasing their goods. These middlemen also offer information on informal banking services including currency exchanges, and some facilitate the transport of the goods to Ghana, as shipping agents. Over two-thirds of the respondents reported travelling with cash, introducing security risks and meaning they have to smuggle money through the airport to avoid the currency restrictions. However, they claimed that they avoid the formal banking system as it places a limit of \$10,000 on their transfers, which they say is too low. This illustrates the scale of the trade.

The development of these rapidly expanding trading networks to Asia and the Middle East is clearly enabled by the growing presence of more permanent Ghanaian migrants in the destination countries. While it might be assumed that these longer-term migrations evolve from the short-term journeys of the traders – where a trader eventually decides to set up business in the destination country and stay longer term – the research provides little evidence for this. The vast majority of those interviewed (95 per cent) had never considered staying more permanently in their trading destinations, despite the exposure that transnational trade has given them. Only 13 per cent even knew friends who had gone to stay permanently abroad in trading destinations, following new business interests, taking up job opportunities, or for education or marriage. While it is possible that a small but growing Ghanaian population in China has mostly been drawn from traders, it is clear that

the short-term mobility of trade is not generally transforming people into long-term migrants.

The Nigerian study adopted a different approach by focusing on just one city, Lagos, but looking at four large markets dealing in different goods across the city: Auto Spare Parts and Machinery Dealers Association Market (ASPAMDA); Alaba International Market dealing mainly in electronics; Ikeja Computer Village Market; and Balogun-Idumota Market, which has a very wide range of goods, but the research was confined to traders in footwear and textiles. Using the different trading associations as the basis for sampling, the research team conducted a survey interviewing a total of 728 traders across these four markets, of which 448 travelled internationally for trade and 280 worked only in Nigeria (internal traders). In contrast to the Ghanaian study, the vast majority of the respondents (85 per cent) were male.

Once again, China emerged as the most popular destination, followed by the United Arab Emirates (in particular Dubai) and then Japan. However, there was little evidence of the step by step graduation to transnational trade seen in Ghana; over three-quarters of transnational traders went to Asia or the Middle East on their first trip outside Nigeria. There were far fewer traders moving within West Africa or to Europe. Those engaged in transnational trade seemed to be more established than internal traders: they were older, better educated and more likely to be married.

Most international traders were travelling by air, using business visas and staying for short periods, usually up to two weeks but rarely as long as a month. Like the Ghanaian transnational traders, the Nigerians also relied on networks of co-nationals who had settled in the destination countries and could help orientate new traders and assist with language (although they emphasised how much could be achieved in business in China with just a pocket calculator to communicate prices). While the respondents anticipated continuing and even expanding their transnational trading – with those engaged in internal trade aspiring to move into the international markets – there was no indication of any desire to join the growing Nigerian (mainly Igbo) population in Guangzhou, one of the major trading towns in China. The Nigerian research team argues that the mobility of the transnational traders can be distinguished from that of longer-term migration by the way that it is shaped by the individual interests of the trader and directed towards a single strategic aim. Ironically, given their strategic cost benefit analysis and individual decision-making, the transnational traders, who are generally not counted as migrants, may conform more closely to the assumptions of neo-classical migration models than longer-term migrants with their much more complex mix of rationales and decision-making frameworks.

The research in Morocco and DRC shifted the focus from the capital cities to secondary cities, Fès and Lubumbashi respectively, and from movement out of the country to inward migration, whether the return migration of nationals, or immigration from within the continent or beyond. Like the Ghana and Nigeria studies, they also called into question the common categorisations of migration that differentiate between permanent movement, transit migration, return migration and so forth. Both uncovered much more complex pictures of settlement that confound such simplistic categories.

Like the Ghanaian and Nigerian teams, the team from the University of Lubumbashi were intrigued by the growing links with China, but their focus was on the settlement of Chinese immigrants in the city. In addition, their qualitative research in the city looked at the settlement of other Asians, immigrants from other parts of Africa as well as Congolese returnees. Lubumbashi is a relatively new city created around the mining industry, which evolved because of immigration, particularly during the colonial era. Today, it is the mobility of its residents that gives Lubumbashi a claim to connection with the wider world: 'Mobility brings life to the city of Lubumbashi: it enables it to be "globalised"' (p. 55 in the DRC report).

There appear to be two prominent 'ideal types' of return migrants living in Lubumbashi: the successful retirees who returned voluntarily and who had invested in property, which they settled into; and younger people who had been forcefully expelled or repatriated due to lack/expiry of their residence permit. The latter group desperately wanted to leave the DRC. The returnees had been to various places, some both within and outside the continent. South Africa was often perceived as a transit place before entering Europe; but due to Europe's restrictive immigration regime, South Africa had rather turned into a substitute destination. Upon return, the less successful former migrants in Lubumbashi tend to work on the street, while the more successful ones use their knowledge of migration to travel and engage in transnational businesses, purchasing goods from abroad that they would sell in Lubumbashi. Hence, they turned from migration to commercial mobility.

Due to the precariousness of living conditions, Congolese people are constantly moving, both within the nation and externally, looking for opportunities to get by – a kind of 'strategic nomadism' (p. 6). Like the *Lushois* (the residents of Lubumbashi), the African migrants in Lubumbashi are generally characterised by a culture of mobility – they constantly move back and forth between the city and other locations within and outside the country, conducting business. Moreover, migrants in Lubumbashi are often involved in a multiplicity of overlapping formal and informal activities. Flexibility seems to be the key to getting by (in French, *se débrouiller*) in this setting. The city facilitates and provides strategies for getting by and for managing on one's own, with migration being one of such strategies.

Several African immigrants have settled in Lubumbashi. Malians and Senegalese migrants, known locally as *Ouestaf* (West Africans), mainly started arriving in Lubumbashi in the 1960s in the wake of the DRC's independence. Other African migrants to Lubumbashi come mostly from neighbouring countries, such as Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, Cameroon and Zambia. The general attitude of the native population towards African immigrants is: 'if you act like us, you are no stranger'. The sense of community between African immigrants and the Congolese population is reinforced when immigrants marry native Congolese, share their living space, or participate in events such as sports or funerals.

The study from Lubumbashi contains some interesting findings on the inclusion of immigrants in this African city. Unlike Western societies where integration is largely conceived as something implemented 'from above' by the state, migrants in Lubumbashi are taking their own initiatives to navigate in and adjust to their new society. The absence of a functional state apparatus in the DRC means that the society that migrants join is not a coherent one; this raises questions about how new arrivals can be integrated into a society

which itself is characterised by tendencies toward disintegration (p. 5). The absence of hard and fast norms and regulations allows migrants to go about their informal activities, and the flexibility of the DRC administration in terms of migrants holding the formally required papers makes it feasible for people to stay – in fact, the DRC itself has been described as a state without papers (Obotela 2002). The ‘everything can be sorted out’ culture contributes to the attractiveness of Lubumbashi for African and Asian migrants (p. 47). Thus, as the research team argues, ‘the city becomes a laboratory where makeshift economic activities and survival strategies can be worked out’ (p. 51).

Asian migrants mainly started arriving in Lubumbashi around the year 2000, except for the Lebanese who have been present in the city since the 1970s. Some Chinese and Indian migrant workers in Lubumbashi have been recruited, sometimes forcefully, through patrimonial networks, and they often work on miserable contracts, where they are badly paid, exploited, and entirely dependent on the patron who recruited them in their home country. Other Asian immigrants in Lubumbashi work in the commercial sector. They run construction companies, hotels, restaurants, bakeries, and garages. Asians are also found in the health sector, running pharmacies, clinics and hospitals. The Asian immigrants only really make contact with the local population in professional contexts. This distance is partly due to the way their migration to Lubumbashi is organised. Whereas many African immigrants consider themselves ‘adventurers’ who have migrated on their own initiative and who are able to get by on their own, many Chinese and Indian migrants have been recruited through clientelist and, at times, neo-feudal types of arrangements. At the level of the individual, those best placed to take advantage of the opportunities of the city seem to be the African migrants rather than the Chinese in Lubumbashi. The latter are caught in webs of constraining connections that keep them fixed in particular businesses, staying in residential ghettos, or otherwise fixed. Those who are most directly exploited by these incursions of global capitalism may be the Chinese rather than their African hosts.

The Moroccan research project in the city of Fès also focused on the settlement of three groups of migrants in the city: the families of international migrants, originating from outside the city but which had relocated to Fès; sub-Saharan migrants seemingly on their way to Europe; and Westerners (Europeans and Americans).

In contrast to Lubumbashi, Fès has the features of a ‘world city’, being an historical centre of trans-Saharan commerce, pilgrimage, and scholarship. Fès therefore has a particular mythical image which exerts a level of attraction on various immigrants groups, including Westerners who describe the city as ‘mystical’ and ‘authentic’. The sub-Saharan presence in Fès dates from pre-colonial times when Fès played a major economic, cultural and religious role in the region. The Sahara used to be a space of circulation and commercial exchange as well as a route for the penetration of Islam from the north.

Since the 1980s, Morocco has been transited by sub-Saharan migrants on their way to Europe. Fès has now for a few years started receiving sub-Saharans who are neither students nor pilgrims, and who the research team contacted through snowball sampling. Almost all migrants in the sample had followed formal education, with 76.7 per cent having secondary-level qualifications and a remarkable 14 per cent having university-level qualifications. Before departing, most had lived in an urban setting and the majority had been

economically active or studying. While economic determinants partly explained their decision to migrate, these were combined with non-material factors such as fleeing from war, family problems, or desire for travel and adventure. While most of these migrants were aiming to get to Europe, about 38 per cent had other plans. The research thus questions the stereotypes of African migrants as being motivated merely by economic factors and, particularly for those who have moved to North Africa, as transit migrants headed towards Europe. Expenses incurred on transport and bribes during their journeys forces these migrants to stop and find work in various transit areas, including Fès. Here they tend to socialise with previously arrived migrants, but remain marginalised from the local society. Fès has not normally been part of the itineraries on the journey to Europe. But due to tougher border controls and more restrictive immigration policies in Europe, as well as the ties of solidarity with people in various parts of Morocco established by the migrants *en route*, Fès is becoming a new destination – usually only after the migrants have been staying in other Moroccan cities, failing to move onwards to Europe. These journeys differ from the traditional migration projects which would involve the entire family and would follow well-established paths. Instead, their journey is characterised as an adventure (*aventure*), which is more spontaneous and with less certainty about the final destination. Settling in Fès has rarely been planned in advance and usually occurs after the migrants meet compatriots or other sub-Saharan migrants who know the city. The migrants tend to live in isolation from city life, and most are struggling to find work. Many are day labourers or contracted on a short-term basis. More than half of the sub-Saharan migrants in employment work in call centres, a recent activity employing those with university-level education.

The main destinations for Moroccan emigrants are France, Spain and Italy. International migration from Fès is recent, becoming visible in the 1980s and significant since the 2000s. Urban increase in Fès is mainly due to internal migration. Interestingly, internal migrants do not continue to migrate internationally, but remain settled in the city. Migrants abroad often invest in urban housing and they then transfer their families to the urban residence. Hence, the ‘rural exodus’ towards Fès is not linked with poverty, but is related to a search for a comfortable lifestyle, a better quality of life, and somewhere for the migrants to invest or spend the savings made abroad.

By the end of the 1990s and increasingly in the 2000s, it became fashionable, among Westerners in particular, to own a *ryad* (traditional house) in the *medina* (old town) of Fès. The buyers are mostly Europeans, but there are also Americans and various other nationalities. The relatively low prices were attractive to these foreigners and also, Fès appealed to those who were looking for ‘authenticity’ and who were interested in experiencing a different kind of life. The Westerners in Fès share the aspiration to escape the stressful daily life in the West and to ‘live life at a better rhythm’. But they also have varied personal motivations for settling in the city, including the economic advantages of moving, particularly for people in financial difficulties; mid-life crises, including the desire to ‘start a new life’; and due to the presence of other family members. The term ‘lifestyle migration’ tends to be applied particularly to Europeans, who migrate to places where living costs are relatively cheap, allowing for a comfortable lifestyle, and which they perceive to have a better climate and a less stressful social environment (Benson and O’Reilly 2009). The Moroccan research pointed out that such lifestyle concerns are not particular to Northern migrants, but also apply to Moroccans, who move to the city from the countryside; and even

to sub-Saharan immigrants who consider themselves 'adventurers' and who are looking to broaden their horizons by experiencing other parts of the world. The identification of lifestyle migrants as Western and economic migrants as African is misleading. The migration decisions of Westerners settled in Fès were to a large degree motivated by economic concerns.

The study in Fès differs from the Congolese research in the sense that it considers the impact of mobility on places rather than its impact on particular people. Hence, the study looks at the settlement patterns of different migrants groups and whether there is any spatial overlapping which brings these groups into contact. By way of comparison, the three migrant groups in Fès insert themselves in different parts of the city: Westerners in the medina; Moroccans in the periphery where they can afford to buy property; and sub-Saharanans either near their compatriots at the university, or just outside the city centre in cheap accommodation. Hence, the three groups live in isolation. The Western immigrants express a sense of responsibility towards and belonging to the city of Fès, and they consider their restoration of the *ryads* as contributing to local development and creation of employment. Meanwhile, there is an emerging gentrification in the old city as the *Fassi* (established residents of Fès) begin to sell off their properties to wealthier foreigners, and the neighbourhoods with more foreign investments stand out from areas with houses of poorer quality.

Many of the sub-Saharanans and Westerners do not see Fès as their final destination. Rather than considering Fès on a par with other metropolises attracting immigrants, the city should perhaps rather be seen as a hub for various African and Euro-Mediterranean migratory systems. The research team argues that, 'it could be said that Fès has been integrated at a late stage into a migratory field by capturing part of the flows destined for other cities' (p. 69). So while the sub-Saharanans for example are not seen as permanent residents of Fès, and their turnover is significant, this population group does perhaps retain a permanent presence in the city, as more sub-Saharan migrants pass through and settle.

3 ANALYSIS

What then do these four studies together contribute to our understanding of mobility and African cities? We now turn to review the broad findings of these studies in the context of the wider literature. We begin by turning to the literature on migration and urbanisation in Africa, starting from the colonial period, which shows how cities have emerged as a place of attraction for migrants. This story has focused almost exclusively on internal migration, but, with the exception of South Africa, very little attention has been paid to international migration towards African cities. Even less attention has been paid to immigration from beyond the continent, such as the Chinese moving to Lubumbashi or Europeans moving to Fès; they may not see themselves as migrants, but there is no analytical rationale for not including them under that rubric.

Despite the common portrayal of African cities as dangerous, squalid environments, part of their attraction has been associated with their purported role in preparing potential migrants for onward journeys – especially in Morocco for onward movement to Europe. To this extent, African cities are recognised as zones of departure. However, this leaves little space for acknowledging the extent of movement of those travelling from the city for their businesses. The city does enable, and to some extent require, its residents to move out into the wider world. But this international, often intercontinental mobility is little understood. What is clear from the APHM research is that there is no direct link between the international travel of traders and the longer-term settlements of African migrants in destination countries.

We next turn to the question of the impact of migration on African urban life. Once again there is a long record of research into the role of rural–urban migration in transforming African societies, and even discussion on the emergence of multi-racial societies. However, with a few notable exceptions, such as South Africa and situations of potential conflict, there is far less recent analysis of the integration of international migrants. The APHM research starts to cast a light on the extent to which integration may be evident in the everyday lives of Africa’s cities.

As our research shows – in agreement with many other studies – it is far too simplistic to consider African cities primarily as places of arrival or departure. The challenge is to understand, on the one hand, how mobility interacts with the development and change of urban space, and on the other, how the life of the city transforms people’s mobility; both their needs and aspirations to travel further afield. In the expanding literature on global cities and their interconnections, the continent of Africa has tended to be identified with the periphery and largely bypassed. The APHM research shows how even second tier cities, such as Kumasi and Lubumbashi, are entwined in global networks.

3.1 The city as a place of attraction for migration

Africa, together with Asia, is the least urbanised major region in the world (Zlotnik 2006). However, it has the fastest rate of urbanisation compared to all other regions; over the next two decades its urban population will probably more than double (Pieterse 2009). Some famous towns and cities, such as Fès and Kumasi, were established long before the modern

era (see Anderson 2000), but many of these declined or were completely transformed during the colonial period. Often their decline was associated with the establishment of new urban centres (like Lubumbashi in the DRC) that emerged as direct products of colonialism (Epstein 1967). The colonial centres of business and commerce grew rapidly in the twentieth century and the growth continued in post-independence capitals. For example, the population of Lagos grew from 75,000 in 1939 to 675,000 in 1962 (Anderson 2000). Today, estimates range from eight to fifteen million people (NPC 2009; UN-Habitat 2000; CSAR 2000). Likewise, between 1948 and 1960, Accra's population grew from 135,000 to 325,000 (Anderson 2000) and today is close to four million.²

The management of urban growth was a major preoccupation for the colonial governments as they attempted to control the expansion of the cities while ensuring there was a sufficient African working population to serve colonial enterprises and administrations (Bakewell 2008). Initially much of this growth was driven by migration from rural areas. This stimulated a large body of literature which set out to explain the reasons for people moving to cities.

Classic studies showed how the introduction of taxes forced subsistence peasants into the cash economy providing wage labour for colonial enterprises, such as mines, plantations and armies. Hence, many moved to work in the growing urban centres (Burawoy 1976; Meillassoux 1983; Wolpe 1972). While this may have contributed to the beginnings of urban growth (although some would dispute that; see Gewald 2007; Manchuelle 1997), it does little to explain why such growth continued long after the colonial strategies to force people into the capitalist system had ended. Other incentives to draw people into wage labour in the cities included the need for cash to meet the desire for manufactured goods and the enhanced services of education and health care which were associated with urban settlement (Gilbert and Gugler 1992).

The growth of urban unemployment and poverty along with the inadequate infrastructure made the continuation of rural–urban migration seem increasingly irrational. One of the explanations offered for this behaviour was the 'bright lights theory', which argued that rural dwellers were naïvely curious and attracted to the adventure of city life, and largely unaware of the social problems they would encounter once they settled in the urban area. However, while such theories which present rural–urban migration as irrational behaviour have retained some popular resonance, they have not been supported by empirical evidence (see Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004).

The Harris-Todaro model provided a more convincing theory, suggesting that people's decisions to migrate were more concerned with expected, rather than actual earning (Harris and Todaro 1970). This was further refined first by the recognition of the important role of the 'informal sector' which provided livelihoods for many of the new migrants arriving in the cities (see Todaro 1980), and then with the development of household economics and the acknowledgement that migration decisions were also concerned with spreading risk and

² According to preliminary 2010 census results:
www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4712:2010-provisional-census-results-out
accessed 26 July 2011.

diversifying income streams (the new economics of labour migration – see Stark and Bloom 1985). Such theoretical advances shed some light on the puzzle of why people continued to move to cities despite the limited job opportunities (Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004; Hart 1973; Hansen and Vaa 2004; Gilbert and Gugler 1992).

Nonetheless, while the economic and social rationales for migration from rural areas to cities may now be better understood, the attraction of African urban areas continues to remain a puzzle for many. As Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch (2005) points out, African cities are often associated with concepts like the informal sector, urban bias, and rural exodus, and cities are stereotypically seen as evil. Meanwhile today, migration plays a smaller role in urban growth, and under conditions of economic decline there has been evidence of migration out of cities (Ferguson 1999; Potts 2009; Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004).

For almost all of this literature looking to explain migration to African cities, the focus has remained resolutely on internal migration rather than international migration (e.g. Tacoli 2001; Gugler and Flanagan 1978; Bocquier 2004; Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004; Mitchell 1987). Some exceptions include long-standing work on the southern African regional labour migration system to urban mining areas of South Africa (see Crush 2000), recent studies on xenophobia in South African cities (Nyamnjoh 2006; SAMP 2008; Africa Spectrum 2009) and a growing body of work on urban refugees in African cities (Campbell 2006; Grabska 2006; Landau 2006; Kibreab 1996). However, the role of international migration in urban development across the continent has generally been neglected.

The APHM research draws attention to three mechanisms involving international migration that contribute to urban migration in Africa. First, as noted in Lubumbashi and Fès, there is the return of international migrants to their country of origin. In many cases, returning migrants settle in larger urban areas in their country of origin rather than moving back to the smaller towns and villages from which they started. The numbers involved may be relatively small, but their contribution to urban development and change may be significant if they bring investment capital and new ideas and practices with them.

The second mechanism is more indirect, where African international migrants send remittances which fund the relocation of rural families to the cities. This phenomenon was highlighted by the Moroccan APHM research in Fès, where emigrants in Europe have transferred significant resources to build urban residences to enable their families to move. The residential mobility of these families in Morocco is directly related to the success of migrants in Europe. These moves may be much harder to explain with reference to the existing migration theories which struggle to incorporate the extended decision-making of households spread over (transnational) space and time. Such interactions between transnational mobility and resources transfers and internal migration have been little explored across Africa.

The third mechanism, and perhaps the least explored, is international migration to African cities, in particular second tier cities. This includes immigration from other parts of Africa, such as the *Ouestaf* in Lubumbashi and the Senegalese in Fès, and from other parts of the world, including European immigrants to Fès and Chinese in Lubumbashi, Accra, Kumasi and Lagos (and many other sub-Saharan African cities, see Mohan and Tan-Mullins 2009).

While the attractions of Fès may be evident for the European so-called 'lifestyle migrants', it is less obvious for the sub-Saharan Africans. Likewise, Lubumbashi has rarely been considered a destination for migrants from across Central and West Africa. The APHM research offers explanations for these particular movements, but in addition, these rare studies make all the more clear the curious absence of other research into international migration towards other African cities.

3.2 The city as a zone of departure

Another strand of research on African cities has examined them as zones of departure. The dominant discourses on African international migration portray movements as linear progressions, whereby migrants move stepwise from the village to the town or cities, which in turn become springboards for further migration to Europe or the US – possibly via some transit zone elsewhere in Africa (Afolayan 1985; Conway 1980; Paul 2011; Baldwin-Edwards 2006). While most international migration originating in Africa is to other African destinations, the vast majority of this research has looked at international migration beyond the continent. In particular, there have been countless studies of migration from West and North Africa to Europe – particularly to the former colonial powers, such as France and the UK – as well as to the US, Asia and the Middle East. These have addressed questions about the numbers, directions, and routes for emigration; and the role of networks in international migration beyond the continent. Clearly, such questions are related to Western policy concerns with managing migration and especially, surveillance and reinforcement of the southern borders of 'fortress Europe'.

While it may be true that sub-Saharan Africans in a city such as Fès neither planned nor desire to stay there, the evidence from the APHM research is that the sub-Saharan population is establishing a permanent presence in the city. Although many individuals may move on, new people arrive and there are also some individuals who are staying for prolonged periods in Fès. The analysis of the migration of sub-Saharan Africans to Fès as 'transit migration', as if the city is merely a place of sojourn ready for departure elsewhere, both denies historical trans-Saharan connections and distorts many of actual patterns of international migration and settlement. It is based on the assumption that African international migration is a uni-directional, linear movement from South to North, which leads to problematic claims like the widespread idea that all sub-Saharan migrants in North Africa are necessarily *en route* to Europe (Bredeloup and Pliez 2005).

The Ghanaian and Nigerian studies highlight another aspect of the idea of African cities as places for preparation for departure from the continent, which takes us beyond the notion of stepwise migration. Starting from a study of market behaviour, the studies in Ghana and Lagos start to show how economic life in the city stimulates mobility and initial phases of migration across the world. The huge markets of Accra, Kumasi and Lagos draw in products and people from all over the world (most notably the Chinese traders) and also encourage further movement across the world. In order to function as a city and to have functioning markets, the people, even quite poor, relatively low-skilled people, must move for trade. This takes us beyond the notion that people migrate out of African cities because of the lack of employment, poor living conditions and poverty, which is the prevailing view underlying much of the migration literature.

What is remarkable about the findings from Ghana and Nigeria is the extent to which intercontinental mobility is playing such an important role in sustaining economic activity – especially market trading – far below the elite level. The informal sector tends to be seen as the end of the global commodity chain, where international trading businesses import goods on a large scale and may then use local traders for wholesale and retail distribution within African states. Instead, the APHM research shows evidence of African traders travelling directly to manufacturers in China to place orders for specific products, even on a relatively small scale.

This mobility is creating new linkages and destinations giving rise to new migratory patterns. This can be seen in the emergence of substantial movement back and forth from West and Central Africa to the Middle East, India and China. However, as both the studies show in Nigeria and Ghana, for many of those involved, the African city remains a zone of very short-term departure. In general, the four projects challenge the ‘finality’ of the word migration (cf. DRC report p. 3). They argue that the people they are studying are more flexible and mobile than the stereotypical image of a migrant, who moves from one place to another for a long period without any immediate plans to return or continue elsewhere. Traders need to be mobile and move back and forth between various localities rather than being fixed in one place. Similarly, the Lushois get on by being strategic nomads, as do the immigrants in Lubumbashi. In Fès, a number of Western immigrants consider themselves as ‘new world nomads’ (p. 101) with an immense desire to migrate constantly, without becoming fixed anywhere or absorbed by the culture of the host society.

Even informal markets are now embedded in the global political economy, not just as a result of incorporation into the tail-end of global commodity chains that shift from formal international trade to informal markets. The African transnational traders are not passive recipients of global forces but they are going out there and making and taking opportunities in face-to-face encounters in other countries. This argument might be taken beyond the markets to apply in a broader context of urban life. Here we might suggest that the city acts as a forge for migratory behaviour – where migration is shaped or fashioned through urban life. The concentration of people, ideas and economic exchange in the city requires international mobility for its energy to be sustained, in order to create livelihoods. This is widely recognised in industrialised states and the ‘global cities’, but there tends to be an assumption of what we might call ‘segmented mobility’ which focuses on the movement of elites and those engaged in the formal sector of the economy. These issues are picked up below in the section on African cities in the world.

3.3 The impact of migration on urban life

Cities are, almost by their nature, sites of encounters and exchanges among very diverse groups of people. As the growth of African cities was initially driven primarily by migration, the consequences of rural–urban migration for urban society became an early theme for social scientific research. Colonial authorities were keen to ensure the circulation of labour migrants so they would return to their ‘homes’ at the end of their contracts or on retirement (Mitchell 1987; Peil 1984; Epstein 1967; Bakewell 2008).

Scholars at the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (RLI) in Zambia were among the first to draw attention to the fundamental social and cultural changes related to rural–urban migration in Southern Africa. Their work explored the extent to which Africans living in cities became ‘detrilledised’ and cut off from their traditions (Van Velsen 1960; Watson 1958). Philip Mayer (1961) for example did a study of rural Xhosa migrants in urban South Africa and found that many of these migrants remained ‘tribesmen’, dedicated to the rural Xhosa community and its way of life, while others became ‘townsman’, committed to education, Christianity, and enjoying the pleasures of city life. He thus showed that it would be wrong to assume that prolonged stay in town would eradicate migrants’ traditional customs and beliefs and replace these with a modern, urban lifestyle. Epstein’s study of *Politics in an Urban African Community* (1958) focused on the ways labour disputes were settled in the mines where increasingly, African migrant workers would rely more on the younger, educated urban administration than on the traditional authority of the elders; here, class more than age or ethnicity was becoming the marker of social stratification.

More provocatively for the colonialists, some of the RLI researchers posited the emergence of urban societies cut across racial divides, highlighting the interactions between black African migrants and European mine managers; an ‘integrated multi-racial society’ (Simons cited in Gewald 2007p. 28). Racial separation was extreme during colonialism (and continued in apartheid South Africa), and African urban dwellers were almost universally housed on their own separate estates outside the cities where they worked during the day (Epstein 1967p. 277). Nonetheless, Gluckman and other RLI scholars argued that these different social groups formed one urban society which translated into urban African identities that were distinct from tribal identities. Gluckman’s seminal text, ‘The Bridge’ (Gluckman 1940), was a study of a social situation in modern Zululand intended to show that the white colonial administrators and missionaries formed part of the same system as the Zulu – even if their relationship was asymmetrical and their interests opposed, they were all part of the capitalist economy of South Africa. According to James Ferguson, Gluckman challenged Malinowski’s notion of culture contact, arguing that:

Malinowski’s “culture contact” formulation obscured the fact that colonialism in Africa was not simply a matter of one “culture” influencing another, it was a matter of the forced incorporation of Africans into a wholly new social and economic system. Largely through land alienation and the system of migrant labour, Africans had come to participate with Europeans in a “single social system” (Ferguson 1999p. 26).

Besides studying the urban cultural encounters and contact zones between Africans and extra-continental migrants, research in this field has of course also considered *African* immigrants of different nationalities. In 1970, Schildkrout pointed out that political development and social change in urban Africa was often analysed according to a traditional-modern model, which posited the colonial period and the intrusion of European civilisation as the starting point for analysis of change. This omitted the fact that long before the colonial period, African migrants were at the forefront of social, cultural and political change (Schildkrout 1970p. 253).

Common research questions in this area have centred on the relationships between ‘hosts and strangers’ in African cities, which has particularly been a focus of research in West

Africa, where Africans of foreign ethnicity tended to live in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods (or 'stranger communities') often referred to as *zongos* (Skinner 1963; Schildkrout 1970; Agier 1983; Schildkrout 1978; Shack and Skinner 1979; Rouch 1956). Schildkrout (1970) for example wrote about the 'strangers' in Kumasi in what is today Ghana. There were the Muslim traders from the north, who had settled in the city in the nineteenth century and became socio-culturally integrated into local Ashanti society; and then there were the immigrants of the colonial period, who came as seasonal labourers and eventually settled as the cocoa and mining industries developed. Schildkrout shows the changes in how these two groups participated in local politics, how they viewed each other, and how the local authorities and the autochthones related to them.

However, in more recent work, such ideas of multi-racial integration seem to have largely faded from consciousness outside the confines of ex-apartheid South Africa (and possibly Zimbabwe). Despite the slew of material on the integration of immigrants in other parts of the world, in particular Europe and North America, there is a dearth of such research in the African continent. There is research on social cohesion, reflecting concern about the different language or ethnic groups found in almost every African city, but this concerns citizens and not migrants. There has been some exploration of the politics of national identity and notions of autochthony, but generally focused on areas threatened by violent political conflict (Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005; Konings 2001). The other side of the coin, namely cosmopolitanism and pan-Africanism, has also been highlighted; but relatively little research deals with the inclusion of migrants on the African continent, including what Landau and Freemantle call 'tactical cosmopolitanism' (Landau and Freemantle 2009; Sichone 2008; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010; Kihato 2010); or the transnational linkages and engagements of international migrants settled in African cities (see Whitehouse 2007). While there is a growing body of research dealing with the phenomenon of diasporas around the world, including African migrants overseas, very little attention has been paid to African diasporas within the African continent (Bakewell 2008).

In contrast, the research in Fès and Lubumbashi highlights the importance of the more everyday experiences of integration of international migrants from elsewhere in Africa and from other continents. Despite the tendency in the literature to emphasise the *exclusion* of immigrants in Africa, the APHM research projects did not find autochthony or xenophobia as particularly prominent themes, when analysing the experiences of immigrants in various African cities. Rather, the focus of the APHM research has largely been on the agency of the migrants, and not merely their victimisation by a dominant host society. The West African immigrants in Lubumbashi, DRC, appeared to espouse a pan-African outlook, stressing that they had no problem with 'integration': they spoke French, were married to locals, and their children grew up as Congolese.

Migration is part of the changing social dynamics in the city and the transformation of the urban space. The Congolese APHM research draws attention to the notion of 'crowding', which reflects the gathering of the population, the concentration of the crowd on a particular site, in a particular place, and at a particular time. 'Crowding' in cities entails that people relate to each other and live their lives in a particular way. Hence, there is something distinct about social dynamics in the city, as houses pop up like mushrooms and people mix across boundaries. We might even argue that a particular city identity is emerging in some

contexts. A distinct term actually exists to denote the urban residents of Fès and Lubumbashi: the *Fassi* and the *Lushois*. No such equivalent terms were identified for residents of Accra, Kumasi or Lagos. It might be that this is a particular francophone construction, which is less common in English. We may talk of Londoners or New Yorkers but there is rarely a similar term for the inhabitants of smaller cities and towns; a distinct urban identity is perhaps only granted to the residents of global cities. Meanwhile, the francophone constructions such as *Fassi* and *Lushois* imply a sense of belonging to the city and seem to suggest that these cities have their own distinct ways of life and of functioning, into which their residents are tied.

Some interesting reflections on exclusion arise when we compare the finding of the APHM research teams on the Chinese in Lubumbashi to those on Western 'lifestyle migrants' in Fès. Both groups appear to live in 'ghettoes', secluded from the surrounding local population; but whereas the Chinese were deliberately accommodated together in compounds provided by their employers, in Morocco this isolation was self-imposed. Perhaps echoing the inherent racist assumptions evident in the RLI studies which, despite proposing multi-racial integration, refer to Africans in the cities as *migrants* while Europeans are *settlers*, it is telling that the Europeans in Fès do not see themselves as migrants and are rarely considered in the same category as sub-Saharanans in the city.

Nonetheless, the isolation of these immigrant groups did not appear to be linked to xenophobia or other forms of exclusion on the part of the wider local population. Despite seeming to live apart, as the APHM research shows, in the urban environments of Fès and Lubumbashi there are symbiotic economic and even social relationships between the different migrants and the native *Fassi* or *Lushois*. Migrants mix with other people in the city and accumulate social capital which cuts across boundaries, such as religion, nationality, and class. Hence, the sub-Saharan immigrants in Fès sometimes go to church to make connections with Westerners, or they may join the Moroccans or Tijani pilgrims in the mosque. Migrants need to engage in such strategic cosmopolitanism in order to get by in the city. These practices of quotidian integration are no doubt replicated across many cities in Africa but have yet to be researched.

Landau (2010) raises the important question as to what exactly it is that migrants in African cities become included (or 'integrated') into. These cities are not necessarily characterised by strong social coherence but instead, ethnic heterogeneity, economic disparity, and cultural pastiche; hence we cannot assume that there is any longstanding, dominant host community and political order with identifiable values and institutions, into which migrants become included (or excluded). This may result in the migrants themselves negotiating alternative forms of inclusion, which may be rather strategic and partial rather than constituting wholesale 'urban citizenship'.

This leads us to consider what kinds of belonging are possible in African cities. Simone (2004p. 137) has pointed out that there is a generalised claim that Africans – and we may add, immigrants – have a limited sense of belonging to their cities. This claim seems to be based on a rather static and inhibiting notion of belonging, which entails cutting one's ties to other localities and cultures and adopting an introvert, city-focused lifestyle. Yet, other forms of belonging are possible in the city – for example, people multiplying their social ties

and adopting a 'citizen of the world' attitude, where migrants and locals appreciate their respective differences. Sichone (2008) makes the case that cosmopolitanism is not merely for the elite but is an attitude and a practice that is evident among people from different layers of society and different parts of the world – which he exemplifies with the story of a Somali migrant he encountered in Cape Town, 'a perfect example of the cosmopolitan postcolonial subject who does not have a college education but is fluent in four languages, has lived in over ten countries on three continents (...)' (*ibid*: 320). Sichone also argues that, 'even though cosmopolitanism implies mobility, not all citizens of the world are mobile. Some people live transnationally while remaining rooted at home, waiting for the world to come to them and provide the opportunity for tapping into other human experiences.' (Sichone 2008p. 310). This includes, he argues, the 'xenophilia' displayed by women in the congested urban slums of Africa who, 'greet the stranger with a tray of food'. Such theories of cosmopolitanism are certainly insightful; meanwhile, they are also relatively normative and only provide limited insight into the actual practice of cosmopolitanism among migrants in urban Africa. Landau and Freemantle (2009) offer a slightly different perspective in their analysis of 'tactical cosmopolitanism': to navigate in a highly xenophobic environment, immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa, 'draw on a variegated language of belonging that makes claims on the city while positioning them in an ephemeral, superior and unrooted condition where they can escape localised social and political obligations' (Landau and Freemantle 2009p. 380). This practice of cosmopolitanism is not intended to promote universal values or address the root causes of exclusion but rather, it is a tactic used to justify and legitimise the migrants' presence.

3.4 African cities in the world

Finally, we turn to consider how the findings from the APHM research relate to the broader literature on urbanisation reaching beyond Africa. Reviewing the state-of-the-art literature on urbanisation and migration within Africa, we were struck by the fact that it hardly discusses the international, let alone the global, ramifications of these processes. At best, it points out the mutual constitution of rural and urban areas by highlighting the multiple connections and exchanges between these spaces. But the further entanglement of African cities and migrants into the global webs of mobility and flows, particularly through trade and migration, are less prominent in current accounts of African migrants and cities. While the isolation of African cities has indeed been questioned by researchers, the counter-argument tends to be that cities are connected with other locations within or just across the national borders. As Bocquier notes, African cities tend to extend beyond their administrative barriers (Bocquier 2004p. 149). Although Bocquier is here referring to rural-urban connections, this argument could be developed to include locations far beyond such a relatively small geographical reach.

World systems theory and other structuralist approaches to migration have dealt with the links between the international capitalist economy and migration from poorer parts of the world (Gilbert and Gugler 1992). Such thinking was developed in Africanist scholarship in the 1970s, particularly by Samir Amin (1974), who argued that migration in Africa was related to the incorporation of an area into the international capitalist economy, as the introduction of capitalism into peasant economies in Africa substituted the capitalist for the domestic mode of production (cf. Peil 1984p. 116; Gilbert and Gugler 1992). Such research

usually had Marxist underpinnings, and there was an implicit normativity which rendered this involvement of Africans and their cities in wider global structures as essentially negative and exploitative. The research conducted by the APHM teams emphasises a different side to this involvement, as they show how transport, telecommunications, and the availability of mass-produced cheap goods enables traders in African markets to engage in import of foreign goods from Asia and the Middle East. This poses new and interesting questions about the boundaries and reach of the African city. Indeed, the local markets in Accra have fluid boundaries, as noted by the Ghanaian research team. The APHM research emphasises how migrants and natives are connected to locations far beyond the city through trade, migration, travels, and translocalism. Such dimensions and perspectives are conspicuously absent from much of the contemporary literature.

Possibly as a consequence of the move away from structural and functionalist approaches to a focus on agency and meso- and micro-levels, more recent studies of migration and African cities hardly deals with how African cities and migration relate to larger international and global structures and processes. Moreover, the global cities literature, much in vogue in the past couple of decades, has largely bypassed the African continent (cf. Sassen 1994, 1991; Knox and Taylor 1995). Global cities are often described as the 'control and command centres' of the global economy. Few attempts have been made to inscribe African cities into global city hypotheses. Onyebueke (2011) discusses the place and function of African cities in the global urban network; and van der Merwe (2004) considers whether there are arguably any 'global cities' in sub-Saharan Africa. It might appear a bit far-fetched to put cities like Cape Town or Lagos on a par with New York and Tokyo, and to analyse the networks and functions of African cities with theoretical models derived from studies of a narrow range of prominent world cities. But the endeavour to inscribe Africa in contemporary theoretical debates is certainly welcome.

Much of the world cities literature draws on Friedman's seminal essay on 'The world city hypothesis' (Friedmann 1986) analysing cities in terms of specific attributes, mainly economic ones, which are then used to determine their status in an international ranking of world cities. Revisions of Friedman have argued that the changed nature of the world system meant that such hierarchical classification according to attributes was becoming less convincing, because cities' hierarchical position could be reversed, depending on the kinds of functions considered (Knox 1995); hence the hierarchy should not be measured as a static structure but as a dynamic ordering of cities (Taylor 1997). Newer approaches place more emphasis on the networks rather than attributes of cities, arguing that hierarchies can only be described through relations, since the relations between world cities is the basis of their power (Taylor et al. 2002; Sassen 2005; Beaverstock, Smith, and Taylor 1999). Yet, the empirical focus of analysis tends to be on transnational business and finance networks, i.e. economics. The diverse experiences of cities and empirical knowledge about these places are given little priority (Robinson 2002; see also Taylor et al. 2002).

Saskia Sassen (2005p. 28) distinguishes between what she calls global cities, which are specific to the way the global gets structured in the contemporary period; and world cities, which have existed over the centuries, at different times in different places around the world. In the current period of globalisation, it is not only national states that articulate cross-border economic processes. Other spatial units or scales are on the rise, such as sub-

national regions, cross-border regions, and supra-national entities; global cities have emerged in this context of 're-scaling'. While the global economy is geographically dispersed, it is organised and serviced by locally based specialised firms. These service firms are situated in various global cities, which in turn are connected to each other through their provision of services to large global firms. Hence, 'there is no such thing as a single global city – and in this sense there is a sharp contrast with the erstwhile capitals of empires' (Sassen 2005: 128). These are all important insights which have not only informed urban theory but also, migration studies. Indeed, the move away from methodological nationalism implicit in studies of the global urban network is appealing to many contemporary social scientists interested in other global actors than the state.

One prominent thesis of the world city literature is that these world/global cities become destinations for large numbers of migrants (Friedmann 1986; Sassen 1988) :

Linkages between global cities and distant hinterlands created paradoxes wherein enormous wealth and highly remunerated professional employment coexisted with growing unskilled service industry employment and Third-World-like employment conditions in underground industries. The casualization of labour and growing illegal alien employment were characteristic of global cities. (Castles and Miller 2009p. 240).

Hence, global cities are destinations for flows of high-skilled, low-skilled and unskilled migrants. The problem with applying this theory to African cities and specifically, using it in the APHM projects, is that it is derived from world systems thinking, where Africa, along with other poor regions, is relegated to the periphery – the 'hinterland' – and merely plays the role of supplying cheap raw materials and migrant labour to the global economy and global cities (eg. Friedmann 1995p. 42). As a result, the implications of the APHM research – that ordinary, medium sized African cities are attractive destinations for migrants, not only from other African countries but Europe and China too; or indeed, that Africans play an active part in global commodity chains, importing products that they themselves (i.e. highly mobile African traders) have sourced from outside the continent – do not register.

We conclude that African cities, alongside many other cities in poor countries, and 'ordinary cities', do not really fit these models of contemporary urban theory. As Robinson argues, they appear so far down in the hierarchy of global cities (or in the periphery of the world system) that they are deemed structurally irrelevant to the global economy and hence, to urban theory (Robinson 2002; Robinson 2006). However, rather than claiming that African cities constitute an exceptional category that cannot be analysed alongside other urban areas of the world, we prefer the argument that urban theory is simply not developed in relation to the experiences and trajectories of these cities (Robinson 2002; Pieterse 2010). Robinson (*ibid*) argues that urban studies are divided between urban theory focused on the West, and development studies focused on the 'Third World'. Because of this geographical divide, theoretical research tends to draw on examples from Western cities which are 'deemed, implicitly, more developed, complex, dynamic and mature. Thus, urbanism is largely equated with complex social, natural and material interactions that unfold in Western cities' (Pieterse 2010p. 207). The developmentalist approach, on the other hand, generalises about poor cities, focusing on the lack of infrastructure and economic stagnation, thus obscuring other aspects of city life (Mbembe and Nuttall 2004; Robinson 2002).

In contrast to this binary of urban theorising, a number of prominent, contemporary Africanist scholars are arguing that researchers need to take African cityness or worldliness seriously – meaning, accounting for the sense of creativity and the celebration of innovations and novelty that characterises urban modernity (see Pieterse 2010; Mbembe and Nuttall 2004; Robinson 2002; Simone 2004; Coquery-Vidrovitch 2005). Mbembe and Nuttall lament that scholars continue to describe Africa as an object apart from the world, which ‘underplays the embeddedness in multiple elsewheres of which the continent actually speaks’ (Mbembe and Nuttall 2004p. 348). Instead, they argue, scholarship on Africa should be de-provincialised – thus echoing Robinson’s (2002) call for urban studies to embark on a cosmopolitan project of understanding ordinary cities.

The APHM research shows that African cities are not static and isolated spaces, whose connectivity is limited to provincial rural–urban webs. Cities in Africa are nodes in translocal, transnational and also global webs and flows – not merely as departure points for migrants but also, significantly, as attractive spaces for migrants and mobile traders. Hence, it seems that certain processes similar to what is going on in the global cities are occurring in African cities, albeit on a very different scale; we might consider these African urban spaces to some extent as ‘control and command centres’, not at the global level but perhaps at a regional or transnational level. This would imply a kind of ‘globalisation from below’ (Portes 1997) – albeit in a broader sense than that described by Portes. The transnational processes that we are witnessing in Africa, as documented by the APHM research, do not merely implicate flows and networks between migrants and origin communities, but also goods being exchanged by individual, mobile market traders without the involvement of state institutions or multinational firms and seemingly without any transnational community ties.

Indeed, globalisation and the global economy are processes which affect *all* cities of the world (Robinson 2002). Moreover, a persistent feature of cities in general is their diverse range of links with places around the world (*ibid*). Pieterse has recently argued that the high levels of migration in Africa suggests that urban territories are ‘nodal points in multiple circuits of goods, services, ideas and people’; and that economic globalisation reinforces ‘the imperative of mobility as a constitutive dimension of livelihood strategies of both the poor and middle classes in many African cities’ (Pieterse 2010p. 208-9). Moreover, as Robinson argues, the global economy is only one of many forms of global and transnational economic connection (Robinson 2002p. 539). Rather than focusing on segments of city economies, she suggests looking at the diversity of city economies in poor cities, where local and trans-local informal economic activities co-exist with national and trans-national formal economic connections (*ibid*p. 542). She calls for a spatialised account of the multiple webs of social relations which produce ordinary cities – that is, ‘networks which stretch beyond the physical form of the city and place it within a range of connections to other places in the world’ (*ibid*p. 545).

Landau’s (2010) analysis takes these arguments further: based on observations in various Southern and Eastern African cities, he argues that in these contexts, moving to the city is a means of accessing globalised networks: ‘for many domestic and (especially) international migrants, the process of moving to the city – or toward larger, more networked cities – is also, if not primarily, a step into a global “imaginary”’ (Landau 2010p. 180). The city, he

argues, is a space to access opportunities not available in less networked settings. But these networks differ from those described in the standard 'global cities' literature that we have dealt with above:

the networks they join are also those shaped by their diasporas of kin, coethnics, coreligionists, and conationals. This can be seen both within the city and at a more global level. Within cities, these networks can provide advice on making one's way in the city: finding accommodation, securing work, and eluding police surveillance and corruption (...) Viewed from a global vantage point, movements to the cities allow people to access networks and own international familial diasporas. As primary nodes of communication, banking, and cultural exchange, the movements of people into cities represent what Portes (1997) terms a "globalization from below" (Landau 2010p. 180)

Landau (*ibid*) further argues that migrants in the African cities may feel a stronger sense of inclusion in the globalised networks they can access there, than in more localised networks and cultures.

4 CONCLUSION

The studies conducted for the African Perspectives on Human Mobility programme have identified a number of gaps in the literature on mobility in Africa, particularly in relation to the evolution of urban spaces. The prevalence of studies that look at African cities as either zones of attraction for internal migrants from the rural hinterland or stepping stones for emigration beyond the continent draws attention away from the rich patterns of mobility to and from urban areas across Africa. The literature on urban Africa does not adequately address the issue of international migration and mobility that characterises not only capital but also secondary cities on the continent. In stark contrast to many other parts of the world, in Africa the integration of international migrants in metropolitan areas has hardly been explored beyond South Africa.

Nonetheless, as the APHM research demonstrates, this immigration and settlement is changing the face of some cities. Moreover, as we have shown in this paper, contemporary urban theory does not shed sufficient light on social processes in African cities. They are considered as lying on the periphery of the global economic and social system and hardly figure at all in discussions of global cities. Their complex and deeply embedded links in the global networks of mobility and trade remain largely unrecognised.

If the APHM research projects have started to make clear the existence of these lacunae in the academic literature and offered some initial findings that start to fill the gaps, they are serving their purpose. We can summarise the basic findings from the four projects very simply as follows:

- Africans are circulating, migrating, and intimately connected to locations very far afield, both within and outside the continent. Hence, Africans are not only moving as migrants who settle permanently elsewhere. They are also moving as traders, who circulate between distant locations overseas where they source their goods, and their stalls in the major markets in cities of Africa.
- International migration in Africa is not just about people leaving. It is also about people arriving and settling in Africa, and about circulation and mobility between Africa and elsewhere.
- Migrants from several countries, both within and outside the continent, settle in African cities – migration in Africa is not just a question of rural–urban migration.
- Primary motives for moving to and from cities in Africa are not only labour, but also trade, education, retirement, and entrepreneurship.
- Local markets in African cities are connected to distant markets outside the continent.

On reflection, to a large extent none of these findings should be a surprise; the same points could probably be made of mobility in relation to any part of the world. However, these findings do fall outside the boundaries set by the highly circumscribed studies of African migration that focus on only a few strands of the rich tapestry of mobility.

The question remains as to how we can develop more comprehensive analyses of mobility that can help to dissolve these boundaries. One step forward is to escape the separation between 'sending' and 'receiving' or 'origin' and 'destination' areas. Over many years, scholars have argued that African towns are not self-contained entities but that they are placed within a wider field of social, economic and political relationships, with other urban and rural areas (Epstein 1967; Tienda et al. 2006; Mitchell 1987; Gutkind 1974). Many rural migrants do not simply settle in towns and cut ties with rural areas. There is a coming and going between different localities and rather than an urban/rural dichotomy, it has been suggested that we need to acknowledge a continuum of possibilities for mobility and settlement, with implications both for migration patterns and different ways of adapting one's lifestyle (Tienda et al. 2006: 338).

However, we need to go further to take account of the international dimensions of this mobility and understand how internal, regional and inter-continental migration are linked in the African context, and what role the cities play in this. This echoes a general concern in migration studies to understand the interplay between internal and international migration (Skeldon and King 2010). As Coquery-Vidrovitch (2005) argues, African cities are not solely destinations, but poles in networks of exchange; and they are sites of modernity from below. As the APHM research findings show, migration and cities in Africa are tied into transnational and global networks and constitute 'globalisation from below'. These endorse the views of authors like Coquery-Vidrovitch (2005), Mbembe and Nuttall (2004), and Simone (2004), who differ from the often static and pessimistic analyses of migration and cities in Africa, instead highlighting that cities in Africa are spaces for creativity, connections, and exchange.

A useful theoretical starting point for exploring these complex interactions between the movement of people (and also goods, ideas and other resources) between different places at various scales is the notion of migration systems. The systems approach put forward by Mabogunje (1970), based on empirical findings from Nigeria, is one of the few strands of migration theory to emerge from African universities. It was put forward as a way of explaining the perpetuation of migration to cities after its initial driving forces appear to have faded. Mabogunje's observation of the feedback of ideas and support to rural areas to support further migration directly contributed to Massey's later formulation of 'cumulative causation' as a mechanism by which migration between localities was perpetuated, calling into question the push-pull models which dominated the field (Massey 1990).

Ironically, Mabogunje's theoretical insights on migration systems have been enthusiastically applied to international migration in other regions of the world (Kritz, Lim, and Zlotnik 1992) but have not been followed up in Africa. His formulation was based on the general systems theory that was fashionable in the 1960s. It adopted a functionalist approach where different aspects and participants in social life were seen as working together in a rather mechanistic manner to support the overall integration and functioning of the social structure. This has been heavily criticised on many grounds, not least for its failure to take account of the agency of different actors. While the term 'migration system' continues to be widely adopted in the literature, it is often so loosely defined as to undermine any theoretical value. Nonetheless, as King and Skeldon argue 'the systems approach remains

attractive and it seems to offer a means to integrate internal and international migrations through different system layers and linkages' (King and Skeldon 2010p. 1633).

De Haas (2010) also provides a strong argument for the reassessment of migration systems but notes that one of the main weaknesses in their formulation is the absence of any discussion of how systems emerge. The APHM studies provide some examples of emerging systems and the mechanisms by which they take hold. We conclude this report with a tentative discussion of these in the case of the intersection of internal and international migration in Fès and the Africa–China links examined in Ghana and Nigeria.

The findings from Fès show how international migration to Europe is related, through family networks and remittances, to further internal migration from rural areas into the city. Here we see a clear relationship between different types of migration (internal and international) which results in movement in different directions. Moreover, there is no evidence that this is a process of 'stepwise' migration. Instead, we can see this is a process of induction, akin to the electro-magnet induction where change in one circuit induces change in another.

A more indirect example of induction is provided by the Africa–China system. This is concerned with induction between different types of mobility (short-term and long-term) between the same destinations. The studies show the initial evolution of extended mobility between Africa and China driven by trading relations; but one of its perhaps unexpected results is the limited evidence of direct involvement in migration. The transnational traders of Accra, Kumasi and Lagos show little sign of settling into longer-term migration to China. The evolution of any migration system does not appear to come from the people who actively engage in mobility for trade. However, it may play a vital role in stimulating longer-term migration as people move to service the traders, providing translations, food, shipping and so forth.

There has been a longstanding relationship between trade and migration routes across the African continent, starting from the caravan trading of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which required large numbers of labourers, supplies of food etc. to function. However, even before such relatively formalised networks were established, evidence from south central Africa (upper Zambezi, Kasai) suggests that individuals were moving over very long distances to trade, establishing contacts but perhaps not generating the requirement for trading infrastructure that came later with the caravans and subsequent forms of trade (von Oppen 1995). Hence, from very early days, Africa and Africans were immersed in global trading systems.

Through the twentieth century with the growth of formal global trade, container shipping, air cargo, the expanding road network, and the multinational corporation, a formal infrastructure of mobility and trade has been established. As we have shown already, many have argued that Africa remains at the margins of the globalised world. However, this must be called into question given the central role of African resources in driving the global economy. Instead we should be focusing on the different ways in which Africa is incorporated into the global system. Ferguson contrasts the socially *thick* investments in early industrial development, particularly mining, in southern Africa, with the much thinner

contemporary resource extraction of the modern industrial processes which operate in enclaves cut off from the majority of African societies (Ferguson 2006).

Perhaps we can trace a similar distinction in international trading networks. The formal systems which have emerged over the last 50 years have tended to rely on large-scale operations which have tended to exclude the local entrepreneurs. Intercontinental transport costs have remained high and international trade has been an area beyond the scope of most small-scale business people. They have had to rely on the large-scale import-export businesses. They have been the informal end of formal international trade links. Hence, this form of international trade has been socially thin.

However, with recent reductions in transport costs, the expansion of air routes and the drop in fares, and the massive growth in Chinese business, the scope for small-scale international trading has expanded enormously. As a result, moving anywhere in African markets, one can come across people who have travelled across the world for their business. This would appear to be a much socially thicker form of trade. Are we seeing a return to the days of the caravans where the movement of individuals for trade requires others to move to provide services? In other words, trader mobility induces longer-term migration and settlement by others.

The APHM research does not provide a sufficient empirical base to pursue such arguments further. However, it does show that the analysis of mobility within Africa can provide a rich source of stimulation to new thinking on migration within the continent and across the world.

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APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF FINAL REPORTS (2011)

Democratic Republic of Congo: 'La dynamique migratoire en RDC : morphologie, logique et incidences à Lubumbashi'

Lubumbashi is situated in the Democratic Republic of Congo near the country's southern border, just north of Zambia. Hence, moving to Lubumbashi entails placing oneself at a point of exit (Tshibambe and Kabunda 2011: 23). The city is therefore both a place of origin and transit for migrants. But it is also a point of destination. The APHM research conducted in this city focused on Asian and African immigrants, as well as Congolese returnees. While inter-ethnic conflict among local residents in Lubumbashi has been rife, leading to refugee outflows, there is not any noticeable xenophobia towards non-citizens.

For the Congolese, the morality of migration is associated with risk and being brave. In the 1970s and 1980s, migration was the dream and ambition of many Congolese families. In the 1990s, there was a drastic increase and feminisation of migration, largely due to unemployment and the informalisation of the economy, particularly towards the end of Mobutu's reign (1992–93). The current discourse has become more 'realistic' about the limited possibilities for making a living abroad, particularly in the light of the global financial crisis. Public authorities are not very conscious about developing relations with the Congolese diaspora. The dominant public discourse on the relative unattractiveness of migration is reflected in a current campaign run by NGOs to convince people to 'stay in the country' (*demeurez au pays*).

The number of Congolese abroad is unknown and no official statistics are kept. Returned Congolese migrants were difficult to sample, because they were often stigmatised and considered a failure by the residents in Lubumbashi. Many returnees therefore preferred to remain invisible, or pretended to be back in the DRC only temporarily. The interviewed returnees were generally well-educated, most of them possessing either secondary school or university level qualifications. There seemed to be two prominent 'ideal types' of return migrants living in Lubumbashi: the successful retirees who returned voluntarily and who had invested in property, into which they settled; and younger people who had been forcefully expelled or repatriated due to lack or expiry of their residence permit. The latter group desperately wanted to leave the DRC. The former group claimed to have returned due to a lack of happiness (*bonheur*) abroad: while life abroad was fulfilling in terms of having many liberties and possibilities of improving one's life conditions, the lack of human contact and community and the many expenses were considered as drawbacks.

In terms of destinations, these returnees had been to various places, some within the continent (South Africa, Angola, Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville, Senegal, Tanzania, Zimbabwe), and others to the United Arab Emirates, Europe, or the US. There was not one dominant migratory route, as several routes were employed. South Africa was often perceived as a transit place before entering Europe; but due to Europe's restrictive immigration regime, South Africa had rather turned into a substitute destination. Less than half of the interviewed returnees claimed to have received any financial assistance to enable them to go abroad when they had emigrated. Increasing poverty in Lubumbashi means that parents are unable to support their children and often the reverse becomes the case. Indeed,

many of the returnees had sent remittances to their families from abroad; but curiously, almost a third of them had not sent anything, and more than 15 per cent actually received rather than sent remittances while living abroad.

Upon return, the less successful former migrants in Lubumbashi tended to work on the street, earning money by exchanging currency. The more successful ones would use their knowledge of migration to travel and engage in transnational businesses, purchasing goods from abroad that they would sell in Lubumbashi. Hence, they turned from migration to commercial mobility. Owning a house in the city was a strong priority for these returnees, since being a property owner rather than renting is a sign of prestige in Lubumbashi.

Several African immigrants have settled in Lubumbashi. Malians and Senegalese mainly started arriving in the 1960s. Other African immigrants mainly come from neighbouring countries, such as Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, Cameroon and Zambia. Many of these, apart from the Zambians, arrived in Lubumbashi as refugees, and many fled from xenophobic violence during the ethnic conflicts in the city, especially from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s. But migrants from neighbouring countries have started returning to Lubumbashi. Zambian migrants in Lubumbashi often have the same ethnic identity as the autochthon Lushois population, and they therefore share a sense of transnational community (*transnationalisme communautaire*). Finally, as Nigerians began to diversify their migration destinations in the 1990s, Lubumbashi became one of their new places of settlement.

The West Africans in Lubumbashi, colloquially referred to as *Ouestaf*, are popularly defined by maraboutism and commerce, particularly renowned for trading in diamonds and gold; these were their main economic activities when they arrived in the 1960s, and continue to be so. But these migrants have also diversified into running butcheries, jewellery shops, small stores and grocery shops. In fact, the West African immigrants are involved in an array of informal economic activities, often involving a front-stage life combined with less overt activities, including trade in precious and semi-precious stones.

Zambians, Malians and Senegalese have typically stayed more than 20 years in Lubumbashi. They consider themselves 'rooted' in the city – that is, they are well-established and married. Immigrants of these nationalities tend to have only elementary schooling, which is largely explained by their economic activities, which require little formal education. In contrast, many younger African men have started arriving in the city. These are unmarried and looked after by their families at home, and they have come to 'explore the terrain' and the possibilities of settling down as immigrants. Cameroonians are for example a new category of immigrants in the city. Together with migrants from Angola and Burundi, these immigrants tend to be relatively well-educated with university degrees. Cameroonian immigrants often deal in raw materials and sell dresses to women from China and Dubai. Many Cameroonians have also registered with the University of Lubumbashi, particularly as medical students. Nigerians are also recent arrivals. They tend to sell music CDs and movies, run cyber cafes, and sell auto spare parts. Nigerians have also opened Pentecostal churches, which have created an occasion for Nigerians and Congolese to meet and worship together.

The African migrants in Lubumbashi are generally characterised by a culture of mobility – not merely in the sense of crossing international borders, because many immigrants in fact perceive Lubumbashi as an ‘Eldorado’ where they can succeed; but also in the sense that even when the migrants are settled in Lubumbashi, they constantly move back and forth between the city and other locations within the country, conducting business. Generally, their relationship with the native population is characterised by conviviality, and the popular Lushois understanding of this relationship is that ‘if you act like us, you are no stranger’. Hence, marrying a Congolese, sharing living space, and participating in events like sports or funerals, reinforce this conviviality and sense of community between African immigrants and the Congolese population.

Asian immigrants in Lubumbashi mainly started arriving in 2000, except for the Lebanese who have been present in the city since the 1970s. Asian women mainly arrive to accompany their husbands and most Asian migrants are men, who arrive single with no children. These migrants retain strong ties to their home countries. By contrast, Asian migrants who have more children tend to be more disconnected from their origin country and more settled in Lubumbashi. Indian immigrants tend to live with their spouses and children in the city.

The global financial crisis which erupted in 2008 has been strongly felt in Lubumbashi. Thirty thousand people lost their jobs as a direct consequence. Before the crisis, Chinese immigrants were running casinos and restaurants and there appeared to be a number of Chinese women working as prostitutes in the nightclubs in Lubumbashi. All of this disappeared with the crisis and many Chinese left the city. However, since 2010 more Chinese have been arriving or returning to Lubumbashi.

The Asian immigrants tend to live in groups, either with their extended family or their co-workers. They either rent an annex of the house of their Congolese associates; or they share a rented house together with a bigger group of co-nationals; or they live in the same space where they work. Larger groups of Asian migrants who share their living space in the city are often stigmatised by landlords, as they are perceived to overcrowd and damage the rented property. The wider population in Lubumbashi also holds certain negative stereotypes, especially about the Chinese: since these migrants often live at the place where they work, separated from the surrounding society, a certain social distance has been created. Meanwhile, there is no sign that this has led to insurmountable barriers between the Chinese and the rest of the local population in Lubumbashi.

Many of the Asian immigrants work in the informal sector. Those working at the mines are usually recruited informally through friends, ethnic, or family networks. Generally, these migrants have little education and they hope to improve their life in ways they are unable to at home. A common impression these migrants hold before arriving in the DRC is that it is a country rich in resources with many possibilities to make money.

Some Chinese and Indian migrant workers in Lubumbashi have been recruited, sometimes forcefully, through patrimonial networks, and often work on miserable contracts, where they are badly paid, exploited, and entirely dependent on the patron who recruited them in their home country. The employer might take away their passport to limit their possibilities of leaving the job and returning back home.

Other Asian immigrants in the city work in many varied sectors, particularly in commerce. They run construction companies, hotels, restaurants, bakeries, and garages. A new area is health, including pharmacies, clinics and hospitals run by Indians and Chinese in Lubumbashi. The Chinese use medicine and special equipment imported directly from China, for example to practise acupuncture.

The Congolese have mixed feelings towards the Asian immigrants. On the one hand, these migrants provide an excellent service, in the garages they run, in their clinics and hospitals, and in construction and architecture. On the other hand, these services are considered overpriced and are unaffordable to the average Lushois. Moreover, imported Chinese goods are despised by the local population, as they are considered to be of extremely poor quality. And while the law in the DRC stipulates that only the Congolese are allowed to engage in retail, many immigrants are involved in running small shops and selling tools and implements. Hence, the immigrants – and it seems, the Asians in particular – are both appreciated and denigrated by the Congolese. The Asian immigrants provide services and goods that would not otherwise be available to the local population and thus, they perform an important function in this society; but clearly, their motive for doing so is self-interest, rather than wanting to improve society or living standards for the Congolese population – in fact, their activities seem to reinforce the position of the wealthy, who can afford their exclusive goods and services, thus creating a sense of relative deprivation among Lubumbashi's poorer inhabitants. These immigrants are therefore received with mixed blessings.

Concerning social contact between immigrants and autochthones, there are noticeable differences between the Asian and African groups. African immigrants engage frequently and easily with the Congolese; they speak the local language and often marry Congolese. The Asian immigrants maintain more of a social distance and only really get into contact with the local population in professional contexts. This distance is partly due to the way their migration to Lubumbashi is organised. Whereas many African immigrants consider themselves 'adventurers' who have migrated on their own initiative and who are able to get by on their own, many Chinese and Indian migrants have been recruited through clientelist and, at times, neo-feudal types of arrangements. Many Chinese immigrants have arrived straight from their rural villages with no prior migration experience. Rumour has it that Chinese prisoners are being sent to the DRC to work. These migrants' lives in Lubumbashi are very restrained: they eat very modestly and are often housed in camps, under the strict control of their employers.

Lubumbashi is part of the 'liquid world', characterised by global flows and circulations of people and goods: the city receives migrants of many different nationalities; and both foreigners and Congolese contribute to the global circulation of goods, importing, selling and consuming objects like modern technology and food from all over the world. The city of Lubumbashi is perceived to provide opportunities for social mobility – whether for migrants coming from elsewhere or as a springboard for local residents conducting transnational business. Hence, the city facilitates and provides strategies for getting by and for managing on one's own – what in French is termed *se débrouiller* – with migration being one of such strategies: 'La ville devient ainsi un laboratoire où se préparent des initiatives sociales de la débrouille et d'autres stratégies de la quête de la survie. Aussi, est-il possible de considérer

la migration comme faisant partie des stratégies de la débrouille. Or la débrouille est au cœur de la vie urbaine en RDC en général et en Lubumbashi en particulier' (Tshibambe and Kabunda 2011: 74).

Morocco: 'Mobilités nouvelles autour du Maroc à travers le cas de la ville de Fès'

Fes was founded in the year 789 and is the oldest capital of Morocco. Recently, the city has been undergoing urban renovation, and its international profile has been enhanced. Tourism is an important economic sector, together with industry and the local university. Fes also receives investments from Moroccan migrants abroad and their families in Fes. The research project in the city focused on three groups of migrants: the families of international migrants, originating from outside the city but who had relocated to Fes; sub-Saharan migrants seemingly on their way to Europe; and Westerners (Europeans and Americans) settled in Fes (Berriane et al. 2011).

The Moroccan emigrants whose families live in Fes come from relatively large families (average 6.4 members) where the members have little education and a high rate of illiteracy (35.1%). Yet, economically, these families are well-integrated, largely belonging to the middle class and most of them owning their own residence (91%). The emigrants from these families are mainly men aged 18–29; some women have also migrated, mainly by following their husbands abroad. Economic downturn has meant that women have had to work outside the home, which has entailed significant social changes in Morocco, as women suddenly became more independent and started to migrate. The migrants abroad are relatively well-educated, particularly those going to the traditional migration destinations, while those who have headed for newer destinations are less educated. The 1990s witnessed significant transformations in Moroccan migration patterns, as both the areas of origin and of destination widened. The main destinations for migrants from Morocco, including Fes, are France, Spain and Italy. International migration from Fes is recent, becoming a visible phenomenon in the 1980s and significant since the 2000s.

Of all the households in Fes which have migrants abroad, 73% originate from outside Fes. These families rarely live in the rich neighbourhoods or the modern city centre of Fes. However, they are residentially very mobile, on average moving five times over 20 years. Residential mobility is directly related to the migrants' successes in Europe.

Urban increase in Fes is mainly due to internal migration. Interestingly, internal migrants do not continue to migrate internationally, but remain settled in the city. Migrants abroad often invest in urban housing and they then transfer their families to the urban residence. Hence, the 'rural exodus' towards Fes is not linked with poverty, but is related to a search for a comfortable lifestyle, a better quality of life, and somewhere for the migrants to invest or spend the savings made abroad.

The sub-Saharan presence in Fes dates from pre-colonial times when Fes played a major economic, cultural and religious role in the region. The Sahara used to be a space of circulation and commercial exchange as well as a route for the penetration of Islam from the north. Two population movements marked this space: spontaneous mobility linked with commerce and pilgrimage; and forced movements linked with military conquest and slavery. Hence, the sub-Saharan population movement to Morocco is not a recent phenomenon but is imposed structurally by history and geography. Colonisation interrupted these movements; but with the birth of independent nation-states after colonisation, and the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity, these movements

took on the character of modern migrations, regulated by borders, visas, and migration policies. Morocco welcomed residents of the new African countries it considered as 'friends', particularly Senegal, from where students, pilgrim tourists, and migrants came. Since the 1980s, Morocco has been transited by sub-Saharan migrants on their way to Europe. Fes has now for a few years started receiving sub-Saharans who are neither students nor pilgrims – particularly over the last five years.

Most of the sub-Saharan migrants in the snowball sample collected in Fes were from West Africa. A number of factors might explain why these migrants were attracted to Fes, including the shared understanding of French; the dimension of brotherhood particular to Islam, which is shared by Moroccans and West Africans, and which provides the migrants with networks facilitating contact with Fes; and the presence of West African compatriots, particularly in the form of students, who can be relied upon for support. For the Senegalese, there are additional factors: the Muslim brotherhood Tijani is predominant in Senegal and the grave of their founder is in Fes, so there is already a community in place receiving pilgrims and migrants. Moreover, the Senegalese don't need a visa to enter Morocco. However, some migrants did not deliberately choose or prefer Fes as a destination, but ended up there by chance of circumstances and encounters.

The sub-Saharan migrants are mainly single men aged 20–35, while 27% of the sample were women. After departure from their origin country, many migrants had developed relationships with a partner, usually to establish ties of mutual solidarity during the journey or on arrival. These unions sometimes resulted in the birth of children. Almost all the migrants in the sample had received formal education, with 76.7% having secondary-level qualifications and a remarkable 14% having university-level qualifications. Before departing, most had lived in an urban setting and 60.7% were economically active, while 36.9% were studying and only 2.7% unemployed. It seemed that they had not been the poorest of the poor, but had managed to get by in the urban space: 'C'est une catégorie d'urbains dont certains sont originaires de la campagne ayant appris le sens de la "débrouillardise"' (Berriane et al. 2011: 42).

The experiences of these sub-Saharan migrants differ from more traditional forms of migration in terms of their itineraries and the means by which they migrate. They consider Europe their main destination and Morocco merely as a place of transit or, in case of failure, a space of refuge. While economic determinants partly explained their decision to migrate, these were combined with non-material factors such as fleeing from war, family problems, or desire for travel and adventure. Most migrants arrived with a visa via a major Moroccan airport; but even so, they were still considered 'clandestine' (irregular) and not treated as normal travellers. After departure from their origin country, the transport costs and bribes the migrants are required to pay on their journeys force them to stop and find work in various transit areas. Here they tend to socialise with previously arrived migrants, but remain marginalised from the local society.

Fes has not normally been part of the itineraries on the journey to Europe. But due to tougher border controls and more restrictive immigration policies in Europe, as well as the ties of solidarity with people in various parts of Morocco established by the migrants *en route*, Fes is becoming a new destination – usually only after the migrants have been staying

in other Moroccan cities, failing to move onwards to Europe. These migrants' journeys differ from the traditional migration projects which would involve the entire family and would follow well-established paths. Instead, their journey is characterised as an adventure (*aventure*) which is more spontaneous and with less certainty about the final destination: 'Ce qui caractérise leur profil c'est d'être des voyageurs qui font appel à des ressources propres, et parfois à ceux de la famille proche, d'avoir une faible maîtrise sur l'aboutissement du projet migratoire dans lequel ils s'engagent, de ne pas suivre des cheminement tracés à l'avance, de nouer des relations passagères au grés des circonstances, et d'avoir de faibles occasions de s'intégrer aux territoires traversés ou dans lesquels ils cherchent à s'installer' (Berriane et al. 2011: 47).

Settling in Fes has rarely been planned in advance and usually occurs after the migrants meet compatriots or other sub-Saharanans who know the city. The migrants tend to settle near the university (near the sub-Saharan students) or the tomb of the Tijani founder (near the pilgrims); but since this has resulted in an increase in rent in these locations, they are now starting to settle on the periphery of the city. They tend to live in isolation from city life, and most are struggling to find work. Many migrants are day labourers or contracted on a short-term basis. Some are trading in smuggled goods or goods imported from their origin country, and they earn very little profit. Others perform trades as mechanics, hairdressers or builders, and some are domestic workers. Employment is generally undeclared and marred by many irregularities, and salaries are below the minimum wage. More than half of the sub-Saharan migrants in employment work in call centres, a recent activity employing those with university-level education.

Most sub-Saharan migrants consider Fes as a religious city. The city does have a long history as a centre for studying theology and later also as a centre for pilgrimage. However, religion generally does not appear to have been a factor in their migration decision. Some migrants have frequented the churches in Fes since arriving, hoping to meet Europeans or Americans who might help them. But these people rarely attend church and if they do, they tend to avoid contact with the sub-Saharan migrants. The people working at the churches often do support the migrants. The Europeans have an image of the sub-Saharan migrants as people living in very precarious and irregular conditions, begging in the street. The migrants in turn consider the Europeans as tourists. There is hardly any contact between these two groups, hence the stereotypes. Migrants also go to the mosques to make contacts, but these are even more anonymous places than the churches, and the migrants are often rather disappointed with the Moroccans. Meanwhile, these migrants also enjoy retreating to the quietness of the mosque, and attending prayers helps structure the day for those who are unemployed.

For the sub-Saharan migrants, church-going is a form of leisure and sociability. Originally built for the French, and later serving the Western expatriates, today the churches in Fes are more frequented by Africans than by Europeans. A similar function is played by the place of worship for members of the Tijani brotherhood and other Muslims from sub-Saharan Africa, who gather there especially for religious celebrations and Ramadan; it's a place where the migrants feel connected to home. This is also a place where they can encounter Moroccans more easily.

By the end of the 1990s, it became fashionable, among Westerners in particular, to own a *ryad* (traditional house) in the *medina* (old town) of Fes. The buyers are mostly Europeans, but there are also Americans and various other nationalities. The sales increased in the 2000s: the *medina* in Marrakech was saturated; Morocco was being promoted in Europe as a tourist destination; and low-cost airlines started flying directly to Fes. The relatively low prices were attractive to these foreign buyers, and Fes appealed to those who were looking for 'authenticity' and who were interested in experiencing a different kind of life. After 2007 though, there was stagnation in sales, and with the global financial crisis in 2008 and subsequent closure of direct flights to Fes, sales of *ryads* began to decline.

Westerners were particularly seduced by the 'originality' of Fes, which played into their tourist imaginaries of the Orient with its myths, charms and secrets. The TV, written press, internet, and movies have contributed to reproducing and diffusing this imaginary of Fes, as have famous literature and paintings depicting the place. The Westerners in Fes shared the aspiration to escape the stressful daily life in the West and to 'live life at a better rhythm'. But they also had varied personal motivations for settling in the city, including the economic advantages of moving, particularly for people in financial difficulties; mid-life crises, including the desire to 'start a new life'; and the presence of other family members.

As for why these migrants specifically chose Fes as their destination, the reasons are varied and often linked to the particular image the Westerners had of the city. For many, the choice was a coincidence, made after having visited the place for one reason or another. Their decision was guided by their image of Fes as an 'authentic' place, characterised by beauty, mystery, magic and peace, with a dynamic tourism sector and offering many opportunities for these migrants. Many chose Fes because of the opportunities for investing in tourism. Another reason for choosing to settle in Fes was related to its status as UNESCO heritage, as the city's medieval aspects have been preserved with original architecture and the splendour of the *ryads*. In fact, the term *ryad* has attained a different meaning in Fes than its original significance as a house with an interior garden; now it evokes certain exotic and orientalist image of an exclusive residence in the old city (*medina*) of Fes, appealing to the relatively wealthy foreigners. Even among the Moroccans in Fes, the term is now being used to refer to 'the house of the foreigner'. The possibility of living in ancient surroundings in the *medina*, rather than in the new part of the city, and the welcoming and friendly attitude of the inhabitants there were also mentioned as reasons for settling in Fes.

The Western immigrants express a sense of responsibility towards and belonging to the city of Fes and they consider their restoration of the *ryads* as contributing to local development and creation of employment. But their presence is also related to the current political context and to globalisation: the Moroccan government wants to attract tourists and foreign investment and the law provides certain tax benefits to foreign investors as well as to European retirees. The foreign buyers have pushed up the prices of the *ryads* and the traditional role of local estate agents has changed, as foreign agents are now selling packages which include the restoration and decoration of the house. The foreign buyers use the houses for residence – either permanently or for holidays – or for commercial and cultural purposes, as guest houses (starting in the 1990s), cafes, restaurants and cultural institutions.

In the 1960s after independence, the Moroccan state did little to preserve the old heritage of Fes, and the *medina* became overcrowded and marked by poverty, as rural–urban migrants settled in. In the 1970s and 1980s, the focus of the state was more on progress and modernisation and less on conserving the past. The *medina* became degraded and the new city was considered far more attractive by the inhabitants. In the mid 1990s a project was implemented to rehabilitate the *medina*, linking patrimony with tourism and creating openings for private investments in the *medina*. These changes came at the same time as the legislation on tax benefits for foreigners, and this context led to the influx and settlement of Westerners. The foreigners played an important role in developing the patrimony of Fes, which has in turn been appropriated by local inhabitants, and returning migrants have now started investing in the old city. Several Moroccan families are now involved in a new programme where tourists can ‘live with a local inhabitant’ and where the revenues go towards maintaining the old houses. Hence, the image of the historical city has drastically changed among the local population.

Meanwhile, there is an emerging gentrification in the old city as *Fassi* residents begin to sell off their properties to wealthier foreigners and the neighbourhoods with more foreign investments stand out from areas with houses of poorer quality. This has impacted on social life as the areas with foreigners are less open to the public and more focused on the private residential space. But at the same time, jobs in restoration and artisan trades, demand for local labour, and sales of crafts have increased. In their daily lives, the Western residents rarely leave the old city and often have little spare time from the restaurants and guest houses they are running. They generally are not interested in ‘the new city’, which is the other, more modern face of Fes.

The research team decided to conceive of these Westerners not as tourists but as migrants. There were various ways in which the interviewees considered their migration project: some were cosmopolitan travellers, often with a family history of migration, who did not consider Fes as their permanent residence, but as somewhere they were passing through. In fact, they wanted to migrate permanently without ever settling for good – as a kind of modern nomad or ‘vagabond’. This has interesting parallels with the figure of the ‘adventurer’ evoked by the sub-Saharan migrants. Another category of Western migrants seek to blend in with the local population and settle in permanently. They have learnt the local language, married a Moroccan, converted to Islam, and participate in local associations; they consider themselves as *Fassi*. Thirdly, there are those who have a dual sense of belonging – split between their origin country and Fes. For some, this results in an identity crisis, while others accept that they have a ‘double identity’. This group often see themselves as intermediaries between their origin society and Fes, correcting the Western misconceptions about Morocco. Some of these migrants are Christians, who are anxious they might get expelled by the police, following the expulsions in 2010 of 27 Christians, mainly Western ex-patriates, who were accused of proselytism. A final group of migrants consider themselves as world citizens. They are seeking a unifying, universal identity based on solidarities that stretch across social and territorial boundaries.

By way of comparison, the three main migrant groups in Fes insert themselves in different parts of the city: Westerners in the *medina*; Moroccans at the periphery where they can afford to buy property; and sub-Saharans either near their compatriots at the university, or

just outside the city centre in cheap accommodation. But these are not fixed behaviours. The Moroccans in particular are very residentially mobile and often when they leave their first residence behind after purchasing property on the outskirts of the city, sub-Saharan migrants will move in instead. The research team was struck by the fact that the three groups live in isolation. The sub-Saharans do get involved in 'circumstantial communities' with each other, for example in connection with work (call centres), hobbies (soccer or music), or religious persuasion. The Moroccan rural migrants tend to differentiate themselves according to ethnic or geographical origins. While some distance themselves from the population of the city, others identify completely with it and they distance themselves from newcomers to the city. They might come into contact with the sub-Saharans via the university or music or sports. The Westerners organise themselves according to socio-economic status, irrespective of nationality. Their relations with their Moroccan neighbours are usually limited to practical, professional, or commercial aspects – except in the case of very wealthy Moroccans, who have access to the same leisure areas as the Westerners. They have no interest in relating to the sub-Saharans, even if they come into contact in the church, for example.

Fes has a cosmopolitan past as a world city inhabited by various immigrant groups and with strong commercial links with various other parts of Africa. In the contemporary era, though, it is only since 2000 that Fes has significantly attracted diverse migrant groups, and many of the sub-Saharans and Westerners do not see the city as their final destination. Hence, rather than considering Fes on a par with other metropolises attracting immigrants, the city should perhaps rather be seen as a hub for various African and Euro-Mediterranean migratory systems.

Nigeria: ‘Dynamics of International Migrant Traders in Nigeria’

The study conducted by the Nigerian team focused on the mobility of internal and international traders. The team was interested in the concept of mobility, which differs from the concept of migration in terms of the distance of the move and the duration of stay in the destination (Afolayan, Ikwuyatum, and Abejide 2011: 8). This switch in focus away from the usual studies of labour migration and to commercial mobility reflects some of the wider economic changes in Africa, where the informal sector has increased while the formal sector is diminishing. Moreover, the contexts of globalisation and urbanisation provide ‘wider trajectories within which traders can source and disburse items of sale’ (*ibid*: 11). For example, access to information about foreign products and destinations, and transport technology connecting distant parts of the globe is central to the activities of the mobile traders.

The mobility strategies of the traders in the study are distinguished from other types of migration decisions. First, the duration of their stay in the destination is directly linked with the *effectiveness* of the move – that is, once they have obtained the goods or the deal they came for, they will leave. Second, their decision to move is part of their wider *economic strategy*, which forms the basis for their business; if they had not been traders, they would not have been involved in this particular type of mobility and hence, their movements are directly linked to their strategies for making economic profit. Third, the choice of destination is partly characterised by *individuality*, since the traders’ journeys are not formally organised or decided by a larger group and since the traders are entirely free to change their destinations at will. Individual perception and subjective evaluation determines where the traders go, for how long, and in what goods they trade.

The study was conducted in the metropolis of Lagos, situated in the south-west region of Nigeria on the Atlantic coast. Lagos comprises both islands and the mainland, separated from each other by Lagos harbour. The metropolis is both Nigeria’s and Africa’s most populous urban centre, and its seaport is one of the largest and busiest in Africa. It also contains Nigeria’s main airport and is well-connected with both internal and transnational roads. Indeed, Lagos is the economic hub of Nigeria and historically, the city has always functioned as an important trading centre.

For the study, internal and international traders were sampled in four major markets in Lagos: Auto Spare Parts and Machinery Dealers Association Market (ASPAMDA); Alaba International Market; Ikeja Computer Village Market; and Balogun-Idumota Market. The latter is known for its female traders, while the other markets were male-dominated. It also has the largest number of traded goods compared to the other markets. Sampling at this market was done among traders affiliated with either the Footwear/Leatherwear Association or the Textile Traders Association. Alaba International Market is one of the biggest markets for electronics, both new and second-hand, and also sells machineries and furniture. The market was built by Lagos State Government; the stalls are small and the market is not very well structured. ASPAMDA market is situated along the Lagos-Badagry Expressway, in the neighbourhood of the Balogun International Centre for Commerce, and the buildings at this market are properly outlined and labelled on the basis of zones. Finally, Ikeja Computer Village Market covers a small area of about 6km²; it is regarded as Africa’s largest IT market,

dealing mainly in computers and telecommunications. The market started expanding in the 1990s and the stalls are located in residential apartment buildings and therefore not easy to identify. Using the trading associations as the basis for sampling, the team conducted a survey interviewing 728 traders, of which 448 were international traders and 280 internal.

The findings on the socio-economic characteristics of the traders show that more than 85% of the traders were male. The mean age was 38.8 years – which is relatively high – with the mean age of international traders being about two years higher than internal traders. Nearly 85% of the international traders were married, while 67.8 % of internal traders were married. The majority (84%) of all traders were not born in Lagos but have moved from other parts of Nigeria to Lagos, usually in the period between 1980 and 1999. The majority of the study population were Igbos from the south-east, who have a popular reputation as skillful businesspeople. Most traders had secondary schooling and on average had spent 13 years in education; but the international traders were more highly educated than internal traders – reflecting the higher level of literacy required to conduct business abroad. Over 90% of the traders were Christians and a tiny minority were Muslims.

Nearly all informants had trading as their main occupation, while for less than 10% trading was their secondary occupation. Usually, traders start as apprentices after leaving secondary school, and at the end of their training their masters offer them some form of assistance to take off in their own business. Very few traders sponsored themselves in starting up their business, although more internal traders managed to do so than international traders, reflecting the lower capital involved in starting as an internal trader. In some cases, those providing assistance were located elsewhere in Nigeria, or even outside of the country.

On average, each trader spends nine hours a day trading. Meanwhile, there are differences between the four markets, with working hours being lower at ASPAMDA and Alaba markets, since these are formally regulated with fixed opening and closing hours, while the two other markets are residential areas that have turned into markets. The majority (90.1%) of all traders owned their own business, while a minority were owned through a partnership or were family businesses. However, most of the traders do not own the premises they occupy, except in ASPAMDA, where Igbo traders ‘pooled resources to build the market of their dream’ (Afolayan, Ikwuyatum, and Abejide 2011: 43). Renting shops is very costly, and international traders spend more on rent than internal traders do. Most traders are members of a market association, from which they benefit in terms of security of goods, environmental sanitation, advice, protection and ‘unity of purpose’. The associations in turn receive taxes, levies and market dues from the traders.

The main reason respondents gave for getting involved in trade was that they perceived it to be a lucrative business. Another prominent reason was family influence, while other reasons include love of the business, trade as an income supplement, or unemployment. Some people turned to trading while travelling abroad for other reasons. This was mainly done to supplement their income, or because a certain commodity was available to purchase at their destination, or because there was an increasing demand for a commodity they were able to get hold of. A minority attributed their decision to ‘failed dreams’ – they were unable to realise their expectations abroad. Most traders’ first international trading trip was facilitated by an international trade partner, or by import and export agencies, or to a lesser degree,

friends of the trader. These would arrange transport, find interpreters, and book accommodation at the destination; they would provide information about goods and local companies; make business connections; and ensure timely deliveries, sales and procurements. Only 18.4% of the study population had relatives in the destination area, serving as an incentive for the mobility of Nigerian traders to destinations outside the country.

Virtually all traders obtained a passport before travelling abroad, and almost 90% travelled on a business visa, while the remainder were people who only turned to trade on arrival, having travelled with other motives in mind. Many traders from the Computer Village market used visitors' visas in order to attend international IT trade fairs in Europe and Asia. Hence, the traders generally conformed to the entry regulations of the international destinations they patronised and were engaged in legitimate business. About one-third of the traders said their experiences of passing through migration checkpoints on their first international trading trip was horrible; but for their most recent trip this rating had dropped to 19.2%, which seems to indicate an increasingly civil attitude of migration officials *vis-à-vis* the traders. Nonetheless, harassment and embarrassment of the traders at migration checkpoints were frequent both in Nigeria and destination countries, and the traders explained that Nigerians abroad are often treated with great suspicion by the authorities.

Most international traders travelled abroad once or twice a year, and many fewer travelled three or four times a year. The peak period for the traders' first international trips was January–March, since they needed to stock new products after the festive season. However, for their latest trip abroad, the peak period was July–September; this is done to stock up on commodities and to avoid the heavy air traffic often experienced close to the end of the year.

Over half (53.4%) of the international traders' first trip abroad was to destinations in East Asia, while 23.7% went to West Asia and only 6.6% to Northern Europe and 6.4% to West Africa. 3.1% went to North America while only 0.3% went to South American destinations. The most prominent destination countries were China (Hong Kong in particular), Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, and Japan. Very little business is conducted between the Nigerian traders and the rest of Africa. All the traders who patronised Western Europe were from the Computer Village market, and just over half of those going to Northern Europe were also from that market. The predominance of Asian destinations is explained by the fact that products from Asian manufacturing countries tend to be cheaper and more accessible compared to those from Europe. In addition, on their latest business trip, the volume and percentage of traders going to East and West Asia had actually increased slightly, and conventional destinations in West Africa, Northern Europe and North America had further decreased.

Most international traders spent 8–14 days on their first trip abroad, and only 3.3% spent more than 30 days. The traders' latest trips were on average 4.5 days shorter than their first ever business trip. The short duration of the trip is probably due to the fact that the goods which the international traders bought were standardized and the traders just needed to choose from the variety of products available. Other factors include the traders' relations with agents and other links, as well as prior communication with relevant actors at the destination before a trader embarked on the trip.

The international traders' choice of destination tends to be influenced by the commodity produced in that country: traders move to destinations where commodities that are in high demand in Nigeria are produced at a relatively profitable price. On their first international business trip, 66.5% of the traders purchased computers, Global System for Mobile (GSM) and accessories. Next are traders who purchased electronic equipment (13.9%), auto spare parts (12.3%), textiles (5.1%) and household utensils (0.9%).³ This pattern is similar to that of internal traders, who mainly purchased computers, GSM and accessories (65.5%) and electronic equipment (27.6%) on their business trips to other parts of Nigeria, their main destination being the South-Eastern geo-political zone. The South-Eastern zone is a major local source of manufactured goods in the country, containing the second largest port in Nigeria which is a major inlet for imported goods, and with important industrial centres manufacturing and re-packaging goods. Here, internal traders could purchase almost the same sets of imported goods that international traders purchase; they could then re-package the imported goods as well as those made in Nigeria, for sale in Lagos and for export to neighbouring West African states.

Goods are usually imported via the international airport in Lagos. A minority use its seaport, or alternatively the port of Cotonou in Benin. Official land borders are also used for import. In terms of the challenges of conducting international trade, the main problem was the language barrier, followed by fluctuating exchange rate, bank charges, separation from family members and multiple taxations. The least cited challenge was safety of destination or inadequate security. Meanwhile, these challenges were generally overcome thanks to existing favourable business environments in the destinations the traders tended to patronise, particularly in East Asia, which the traders therefore preferred. The language barrier was usually overcome by deploying Asian contacts or agencies to help interpret or by using calculators to negotiate prices. Also, fluctuating exchange rates, bank charges, and taxation were accommodated and the challenge usually passed on to the buyers in the form of scarcity of supply or higher prices. Hence, the challenges encountered were not insurmountable and did not lead to the discontinuation of international trading. The traders facing the most challenges were those working at the Computer Village market, since their goods were high-tech and therefore subjected to greater scrutiny by customs, and because they tended to import via the airport in Lagos, where there are more security checks, particularly since it is a major transit route for the hard drug trade.

According to the traders themselves, the Nigerian government benefitted greatly from their trading activities, through the taxes levied on them, import duties and tariffs, and market dues. However, the traders did not feel they got anything in return from the government, in support of their activities – for example, in terms of security of goods, environmental sanitation and welfare; or with regards to roads, police, airport, and education. All the traders considered international mobility as personally very beneficial: they indicated that international mobility in trading had or would enlarge their world views; widen their business network; increase their income; and increase their desire to expand their business. Some also indicated that commercial mobility both outside and within the country had

³ Curiously, though, on their latest trip, food items were the main commodity being purchased by international traders, and only slightly more than one-quarter of the items purchased were computers, GSM and accessories (cf. p. 73 of the report).

made them imbibe new cultural practices. The traders also believed that the destination countries benefitted from their business, which boosted the destination countries' economies through foreign exchange earnings and revenue, and created employment. The traders also claimed Nigeria was benefitting from their trade, in terms of increasing the nation's revenue generation; enabling the globalisation of products and interaction with different markets; ensuring technology transfer; and creating employment opportunities. Some complained of the poor infrastructural developments in Nigeria and of the government's economic policies not having encouraged investors to set up in the country and having adversely affected the traders. Also, inconsistencies in the government's policies, multiple taxation, high import duties and clearing delays were perceived to discourage trading in Nigeria.

Nearly all the traders were hoping or planning to buy goods from outside Nigeria in the future, for the following reasons: to make more profit; because the items of trade were not produced locally; better quality and cheaper goods were available outside the country; foreign countries were seen to have better infrastructural facilities and better economic policies; and there was no encouragement for industrial growth in Nigeria. The traders made suggestions for improving the following conditions: improvement of infrastructure and power supply; reduction of tariffs; stabilisation of the exchange rate and of the local currency; encouragement of local investors/producers; establishing good governance and stopping bribery and corruption; and making available credit facilities with low interest rates. They also suggested that port decongestion and clearing of goods be done speedily; as well as regulation of imports in order to prevent dumping of substandard goods on the country.

Ghana: 'Changing Mobility Patterns and Livelihood Dynamics in Africa: The Case of Transnational Ghanaian Traders'

In Ghana there is currently a trend towards greater diversity in international mobility patterns, away from the traditional colonial divisions and patterns, and involving new actors and new and multiple destinations such as the Far and Middle East. This can be linked to shifts in the global political economy as China and other countries in the Far and Middle East have assumed growing economic importance. The Ghana study looked at a new generation of traders who source their goods in these diverse and new destinations and sell them in Ghanaian markets.

The study was undertaken in the two largest markets in Ghana: the Kumasi Central Market in the central belt of Ghana, and the Makola Market located in the capital city of Accra in southern Ghana. Traders were selected from these two main markets, but also from shops in other trading areas of the two cities. This was to ensure that various categories of transnational traders who may not be operating from the 'traditional market' were captured in the sample. For the study, the market was conceptualized not just in terms of the enclosed spaces where shops are located, but as a 'fluid space' connecting different categories of traders – wholesale, retail and itinerant traders.

A sample of 154 transnational traders was purposively selected in the two locations and both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative methods (case studies and in-depth interviews) were used for the study. Most of the traders were women, which is the norm in Ghana. However, the study revealed a relatively high proportion of men involved in transnational trade, representing 40% of the research sample. Most traders come from the south and are Christians; the traders who are Muslims are mainly women. The traders are fairly well-educated, with 59% having at least secondary-level education and only 3% never having attended school. The male traders are more highly educated than females. More than a quarter of the traders were unemployed prior to engaging in transnational trading. More than a quarter of the female traders (26%) came into the business immediately after completing school, compared to 13% of their male counterparts. This might indicate the relative ease with which women can enter into transnational trade compared to men.

A majority of the traders were engaged solely in the trading business, with 84% indicating that they did not have any secondary occupation. This indicates that trading is a demanding job. A higher proportion of men take on secondary activities than women (1% versus 13%). More females went into trading for the love of the business, while relatively more males went into trading for the profitability of the business or for the fact that it was a family business. All those who went into trading because it was a family business had some level of education – highlighting the importance attached to education for the successful running of a family business.

Introduction to the trading business was made mainly through relatives and friends. A higher proportion of females (24%) than males (12%) got into the trading business on their own initiative. The presence of social networks at the onset of trading, and indeed mobility decision-making, was crucial. Almost 69% of traders had used their personal savings as their source of start-up capital. Loans from banks were rarely considered because of the high

interest rates charged by banks in Ghana. However, almost one in five accessed bank loans to start their trading business.

More than half of the traders (53%) operate both wholesale and retail outlets. 36% operated as retailers only, while 11% operated on a wholesale basis only. More men are engaged in the more lucrative and capital-intensive wholesale trade than in retail trade, which is dominated by women.

Apart from the shops in which traders were interviewed and which they indicated that they owned, about 29% indicated that they owned shops in other locations. Some had these shops in and around the central market area while the rest were in outlying areas. The conceptualization of the market as a fluid space was therefore required, particularly in the case of Accra, where the market space goes beyond the Makola Market area.

Ghanaian transnational traders mostly travel to Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and North America in that order of popularity. Dubai in the United Arab Emirates is the most popular destination in the Middle East. In Asia, China is the most frequented destination, followed by Thailand. In Europe, most traders go to the UK, and the second most popular destination is Italy. In terms of African destinations, most traders go to Nigeria and Togo. Ghanaian transnational trading follows a step-wise process with most of the traders starting their activities within and across cities and towns in Ghana, before moving into the ECOWAS sub-region and eventually, to trading destinations outside Africa. More than seven in ten traders travelled by air to their various destinations. More traders in Accra go to other countries in the sub-region than traders in Kumasi, and more females than males go to neighbouring countries for their goods.

Ninety-six per cent of the traders go on business trips more than once a year. Twenty-six per cent go twice in a year, while the majority – three in ten traders – embark on trips four times in a year. Almost 10% of the traders make their business trips on a weekly basis, indicating that their destination is relatively close, i.e. in the West African sub-region. Traders spend between two days and a month away, and the majority spent two weeks on their trip.

Trips abroad are usually made when stocks are low and the traders are ready financially to undertake the trip. They also travel before Christmas and other festive occasions in Ghana when they are likely to sell more. Many also tended to travel particularly to Asia during big fairs, such as the Canto Fair in China, where they are more likely to get a variety of goods at cheaper prices.

The availability of goods at affordable prices is a major determining factor for traders going to these destinations. Other reasons include having a wide range of goods to choose from, as well as the quality of the goods and the possibility of custom-made goods. Another important reason for moving to specific destinations includes the ease and cost of mobility, not only of people but also of goods; specific concerns were the ease of acquiring visas, low transport costs and quick arrival of goods.

The informants trade in a variety of imported consumer goods, including hair care and beauty products, baby wear and products, shoes, bags, lace and other fabrics, kitchen equipment and electronics, as well as household and cooking appliances. Goods for the

building and information, communication and technology sectors include electrical cables for both domestic and industrial purposes, mobile phones and accessories, and computers. There appear to be gender differences in the type of goods traded: men mainly trade in hardware, car spare parts, mobile phones and health care equipment such as blood testing and monitoring equipment. Women tend to trade in a broader range of items and tend to dominate in the sale of cosmetic and beauty products, footwear and handbags, babywear and household appliances.

Only a few of those interviewed used official means of transferring the money for transaction. A little more than two-thirds (67.5%) indicated that they travelled with the money on them. Since embarking on business trips may involve a lot of money and possibly exceed the currency restriction limit, the traders are likely to under-declare the monies they take along on their trading trips, or to bribe the officials to allow their passage with amounts above the limit. The threshold of \$10,000 as the transfer limit allowed by banks was considered too low by a majority of the traders, which explains the low preference for formal bank transfers. Most traders use the phone to communicate with their business partners while a minority use the internet or agents they do business with as means of communication. The common challenge facing the traders had to do with the high cost involved in transnational trading: some of their biggest concerns were the tax system and access to credit. Acquiring tickets, visas, and finding accommodation abroad were far less problematic.

Traders attribute the decision to move from trading destinations in the West African sub-region to the Middle East and China to the rising cost of items in West African cities, thereby lowering their profit margins, as well as the problems they encountered in West Africa especially as they moved their goods across national borders. Moreover, prices have gone up in market destinations in the West African sub-region, and the cost of transporting goods to Ghana has also increased, mainly due to financial demands made by border officials. Most traders absorb these costs themselves. Those traders who transfer these costs to consumers experience reduced sale and less profit. This explains why trading destinations in the Middle and Far East are increasingly popular.

For Ghanaian transnational traders, travelling in groups, building up trust with traders, and using middlemen to overcome language barriers and security issues as well as moving money, are some of the major strategies used to facilitate mobility. Networks are used for facilitating most of the activities involved in trading, including visa acquisition, ticketing, shipping of goods, and clearing of goods from the Tema port or the Kotoka International Airport in Ghana. Ghanaian transnational traders who travel to the Middle East and the Far East have built up camaraderie and trust with middlemen to facilitate their trade. They employ the assistance of middlemen, mainly Ghanaians who have settled in the trade destination countries for some length of time, to guide them around as well as to assist them in purchasing their goods. These middlemen also offer information on informal banking services including currency exchanges, and some facilitate the transport of the goods to Ghana, as shipping agents. Colleague traders and friends are helpful in getting information on favourable trading destinations, and facilitate the business transaction through their recommendations. Networks also extend to family members, church members and financial

institutions. Family members are instrumental in the provision of start-up capital for the trading business as well as in facilitating the smooth running of the business.

Traders use multiple routes and strategies for obtaining their goods. For example, pending a trip to China, Dubai, Indonesia or other Far East countries when their stocks have gone down, quick trips are made to closer destinations such as Lome and Lagos to obtain the same or similar goods to stock their shops to ensure that they keep their customers. For travel in ECOWAS, no visa is required. Those who travel to the UK or US have often secured long-term visas, and others who have travelled extensively also don't have much difficulty applying for a visa. Some of the difficulty of applying for a visa includes the expensive fee, a cumbersome visa process or requirements, delays, short validity of visas, and difficulty as first-time applicants. To deal with this, traders often apply well in advance and sometimes use visa agents.

Traders are often concerned about the cost of tickets. Most traders negotiate with travel agents, who will purchase their ticket and allow them to pay it in instalments. Some traders also receive support from their suppliers. Excessive costs are integrated into the price of the goods when they get sold on the Ghanaian market. Access to credit is another problem for the traders. Financial institutions often deny the traders credit because of their inability to provide collateral securities and proper documentation; also, their interest rates are deemed too high. The traders therefore avoid the financial institutions and only use them in extreme cases, instead relying on friends or their own savings. Another problem is that the traders are restricted from carrying more than \$10,000 out of Ghana, due to the government's fear of capital flight. Some traders instead transfer the money through banks that have a presence in their trading destination. Others will bribe border officials, or ask a travel companion to carry some of their cash; or they will understate the amount of money they carry.

Transnational trading has largely benefitted the traders. Among the economic advantages are having savings in the bank, the ability to meet household needs, improvement in their standards of living, and acquisition of vehicles. Other social benefits include a better lifestyle, education of children in Ghana and abroad, acquiring a higher status in society, as well as a broadened outlook, and for some, learning a different language. However, on the negative side, transnational trade separates the traders from their children and spouses and this creates problems for child upbringing and sometimes for marital stability, as the traders' faithfulness to their spouses may be put into question. This may lead to separation and divorce, which in fact applies to 29% of the traders – a much higher figure than the 6% national average. The relationship between trading and marital status requires further research.

Most of the traders (94.8%) have never considered staying more permanently in their trading destinations, despite the exposure that transnational trade has given them. They do not show an interest in staying permanently in their trading destinations and doing so is not the norm. Factors that could potentially influence a few of them to stay more permanently in their trade destinations include employment within the destination country with a good salary, or the possibility of staying there with all of their family members. Others would only consider staying more permanently if their trade in Ghana collapses. Twenty respondents (13%) knew friends who had gone to stay permanently abroad. While some of

them went to stay in their trade destination areas because of collapse of or losses in their business, others changed the focus of their business or found new business interests, which required that they relocate to those countries. A few other traders had secured long-term visas and therefore decided to go and stay in those countries, or learnt the Chinese language and secured a job in China. Some decided to stay more permanently in their trading destination to further their education, or due to marriage.

It is clear that for most Ghanaian transnational traders, staying abroad for a longer period or permanently is less of a priority. Not even the exposure created by transnational trade could compel them to stay permanently in their trading destinations. Instead, transnationalism allows the traders to pursue their trading activities in multiple countries and to be involved with livelihood exchanges across national frontiers, while spending substantial amounts of time in Ghana.