

## Transnational Smuggling and Illegal Migration in Africa: Causes and Effects

Paul Nwala & Lolia Gesiere

Department of History and International Diplomacy, Rivers State University

Corresponding author: princepaulnwala@gmail.com

### Abstract

Transnational smuggling and illegal migration have become pressing issues in contemporary Africa, with profound social, economic, and political implications. This research study aims to investigate the root causes and far-reaching effects of these phenomena on the African continent. Through a comprehensive analysis of historical, socio-economic, and geopolitical factors, this research sheds light on the motivations behind illegal migration and the networks facilitating it, including human trafficking, drug smuggling, and arms trafficking but the center of this study is focused more on human illegal migration and goods smuggling which has somewhat contributed to the underdevelopment of Africa. It also highlights the consequences, effects or impacts these activities have on Africans, ranging from increased security concerns to strained resources in host countries, as well as the exploitation and vulnerability of migrants. The study adopted a qualitative form of research method gotten from primarily secondary sources of online and journal materials with some bits of statistics and rate numbers of areas it was necessary. By providing an in-depth examination of the causes and effects of transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of these complex issues and inform policies and interventions that address them through the remedy provided here in.

**Keywords:** Transnational, Smuggling, Illegal Migration, Migrants, and Crimes.

### Introduction

Transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa are critical issues that warrant close examination due to their profound and far-reaching consequences. These phenomena involve the unlawful movement of people and goods across international borders, driven by an array of intricate factors that shape the socio-economic and security landscape of the continent. To address these challenges effectively, it is essential to comprehend both the underlying causes and the effects they produce. This study will discuss some of the remote and immediate causes of transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa, encompassing factors like economic disparities, political instability, environmental pressures, and human rights violations in the countries of origin. Simultaneously, it will explore factors enticing individuals to seek opportunities in foreign lands, including economic prospects and security. Furthermore, it scrutinizes the multifaceted repercussions of these activities. These effects extend beyond the migrants themselves, influencing countries of origin, transit nations, and destination

countries, thereby creating diverse socio-economic and security challenges. Through an in-depth analysis of the causes and effects of transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa, it aims to foster a better understanding with brevity of the complexities involved and the imperative need for comprehensive solutions to address these issues.

### Clarification of Concepts

#### Concept of Transnational Smuggling

This is a compound word that requires individual clarification so, 'transnational' means, 'extending or going beyond national boundaries' and 'smuggle' means 'to import or export secretly contrary to the law and especially without paying dues imposed by law and in violation of customs laws' (Merriam Webster Dictionary). Transnational smuggling refers to the illicit or illegal movement of goods, people, or substances (such as drugs, weapons, or wildlife) across international borders. It typically involves organized criminal activities that transcend the boundaries of one or more countries. Transnational smuggling networks

take advantage of differences in legal regulations, enforcement, and economic conditions in various countries to facilitate their illegal activities. This type of smuggling can have significant social, economic, and security implications and often requires international cooperation to combat effectively (Albanese, 2009).

### **Concept of Illegal Migration**

There is no universally accepted definition of Illegal migration. From the perspective of destination countries it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of the sending country, the illegality is, for example, seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country. There is, however, a tendency to restrict the use of the term to cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. Conceptualizing illegal migration has been the subject of considerable debate; terms such as irregular, undocumented, non-documented, and unauthorized migration can have different connotations in national policy debates. Due to this and the association with criminality the term illegal migration should be avoided, as most illegal migrants are not criminals. Being in a country without the required papers is, in most countries, not a criminal offence but an administrative infringement (ec.europa.eu).

Illegal migration refers to the movement of people across national borders in violation of the immigration laws of the destination country. It is a term used to describe the act of crossing borders and residing in a foreign country without following the legal procedures and requirements set by that country's immigration system. It also refers to a voluntary or forced displacement of people across national or administrative borders of territories for the purpose of changing their place of residence or domicile, deliberately committed violations of migration legislation in force in the territory of migration and having not expressed a criminal nature. Also, Illegal migration is the broad word for illegal immigration and illegal emigration, as both serve as the types of illegal migration

and therefore have similar meaning with a little difference of the movement of people, goods and so on across borders (Rima, cyberleninka.com).

### **Review of Related Literature**

The scope of this study is relatively wide and complex in range even though it narrows to Africa. Some notables and materials from other related works to the subject matter is of key importance to guide this research towards relevance.

Africa has been aptly described as a continent on the move. Africa today experiences all migratory configurations within and outside the continent but the most visible are labor migration, refugee flows and internal displacement. Over 31 million Africans live outside the country of their birth, the majority within the African continent. In fact, the majority of migration is intra-regional or intra-African, especially in west and southern Africa, and only about 25 percent of African migrants go to Europe. Although migration data is fragmentary, fluid and often imprecise, it is estimated that African migrants are overwhelmingly located within the eight sub-regional economic communities in Africa: 80 percent in the west, 65 percent in the south, 50 percent in central Africa and 47 percent in eastern Africa. The exception is northern Africa, where about 90 percent of its emigrants move to other localities outside Africa. Of the number of migrants on the move in Africa, the majority of them are young people. Africa's population is young with 20 percent between age 15 and 24 and they constitute 54 percent of the total labor force. By 2050, 25 percent, 1 in every 4, of people of working age in the world, will be African (Adepoju, 2020).

However, the rapid growth of the labor force coupled with sluggish growth of employment creates the trigger for the youth migration, both for the skilled and the less skilled. While over 100 million jobs are needed for the youths that joined the labor force in the last 10 years, the continent was able to barely create remunerative jobs for 37 million. Poor quality education and a lack of skills limit employment opportunities for young people. There is additionally a mismatch between skills and jobs because technical and vocational education and

training has been neglected for a long time. At the moment, Africa's jobless growth implies that more jobless Africans are forced into unsafe, irregular channels of migration to rich countries with all the harmful effects that this entails. Indeed access to gainful employment is a major developmental challenge for governments and societies in Africa today. Although, increasingly a global phenomenon, migration in Africa and refugee flows, displaced population, labor migration ? is essentially intra-regional, and should be addressed within a regional framework (Adepoju, 2020).

Globally, Africa has the largest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who outnumber refugees 5:1. For instance, at the end of 2013 there were 12.5 million IDPs in the 21 sub-Saharan countries that the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre monitors, a figure more than a third of the global total. Significantly, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan had the largest population of IDPs in Africa. In 2014 Nigeria topped African countries with 3.3 million IDPs, about a third of IDPs in Africa and 10 percent of global IDPs, aggravated largely by the Boko Haram. The challenge of insurgency still persists in Mali, Nigeria, Kenya, Somalia and neighboring countries in Western Africa and Eastern Africa. The promise to root out Boko Haram by December 2015 was not achieved (Adepoju, 2020).

Though weakened, the sect continues to kill, maim and displace populations not only in Nigeria but also in neighboring Cameroon and Chad. One consequence is the likely increase in the number of internally displaced persons and a strain on infrastructure to provide for the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women and children. The African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, which came into force in 2012, is the world's first continental instrument that legally binds governments to protect the rights and wellbeing of people forced to flee their homes by conflicts, violence, disasters and human rights abuses. However, implementation has been lackluster (Adepoju, 2020).

### ***North and West Africa***

Regional estimates on the irregular migrant population do not exist, but partial evaluations have been done. For example, in 2004 ICMPD estimated that 100,000 to 120,000 irregular migrants crossed the Mediterranean Sea each year, of which 35,000 were from sub-Saharan Africa, 55,000 from southern or eastern Mediterranean countries and 30,000 from other countries. According to the UNODC report published in 2006, the numbers are higher: possibly as many as 300,000 African migrants each year try to reach Europe without the proper documentation, and smugglers are involved in many of these movements. According to that 2006 UNODC report, at least 200,000 Africans enter Europe illegally every year, while another 100,000 try but are intercepted, and countless others lose their way or their lives. An overall estimate of smuggling of migrants in North Africa has not yet been made, and too little is known about the share of irregular migrants using smuggling services.

However, according to a survey carried out in Morocco, 87 per cent of sub-Saharan migrants arriving in that country used the services of smugglers.<sup>130</sup> As regards Europe, UNODC recently assessed that it is very difficult to travel there clandestinely from Africa without the support of smugglers.<sup>131</sup> According to the same source, the profits of the migrant-smuggling business are at least \$300 million per year. Detailed research carried out by de Haas shows that a relatively small proportion of people from sub-Saharan Africa entering Maghreb countries actually get to Europe. It has been estimated that between 65,000 and 120,000 people from sub-Saharan Africa enter the Maghreb countries overland every year; only between 20 and 38 per cent of them eventually proceed to Europe. While the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is probably the North African country with the largest number of sub-Saharan migrants,<sup>134</sup> de Haas also insists on the importance of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia as destination States. According to him, demand for cheap labour is no longer specific to European or Western countries: thousands of irregular migrants are attracted by large developing areas of North Africa, where underground economies are flourishing (UNODC, 2011).

### ***East and Southern Africa***

The phenomenon of smuggling of migrants in East and Southern Africa remains largely under researched. The literature shows that there is a growing phenomenon of smuggling of migrants mainly across the Gulf of Aden (from Somalia to Yemen) and from East Africa and the Horn to South Africa. However, it does not include any comprehensive information about quantitative flows of migrants smuggled. The April 2009 IOM report assessing the irregular movement of men from East Africa and the Horn to South Africa offers an interesting, although incomplete, assessment (UNODC, 2011).

In attempting to establish a realistic number of irregular migrants being handled by smugglers based on a variety of evidence, the study estimates 17,000 to 20,000 male irregular migrants per year. Not all of these men successfully enter South Africa, but all make at least part of the journey south. Such an estimate is possible only because a large number of the irregular migrants (almost 60 per cent of the Ethiopians and 80 per cent of the Somalis), while in route through Malawi, pass through a camp where registration is disaggregated by nationality. Based on the number of Somalis and Ethiopians registered per year, and the estimate of how many of them pass through Malawi, the report gives an estimate of the number of Somalis and Ethiopians travelling from their home countries towards South Africa. Meanwhile, the proportion of people dying during the crossing has been decreasing over the recent years (UNODC, 2011).

Also, some key findings to the practical instances on the issues of transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa are explained here in for ease of understanding., despite the fact that, the type of transnational issues that runs in Africa are mainly human and goods migration smuggling. The recent flood of 10,000 to 20,000 firearms from Libya does represent a serious threat to stability in the region, a threat that appears to have been realized in northern Mali. The prevalence of fraudulent medicines is highest not in the markets where profits would be the greatest, but in those where chances of detection are lowest. At least 10% of the imported medicines circulating in West Africa are fraudulent, posing a grave threat to public health and safety.

Maritime piracy has generated renewed attention in the Gulf of Guinea, with 22 pirate attacks occurring off the coast of Benin in 2011. In 2012, Togo became the new hotspot for attacks on petroleum tankers. These vessels are attacked because there is a booming black market for fuel in West Africa. Unless the flows of contraband are addressed, instability and lawlessness will persist, and it will remain difficult to build state capacity and the rule of law in the region. Each of these flows requires a tailored response, because the commodities involved respond to distinct sources of supply (UNODC, 2011).

### ***Modi Operandi***

Regarding North and West Africa, the literature reviewed shows that the modi operandi of smuggling organizations are highly flexible and have evolved greatly since the early 1990s in order to adapt to law enforcement strategies and to serve an ever expanding market.

According to Monzini, three distinct evolutionary phases can be distinguished:

"The first phase is characterized by the growth in the professionalization of smuggling organizations and the establishment of new routes". The second phase begins with the articulation of new techniques in response to counter-smuggling strategies". The last phase is marked by withdrawal from a route when the cost becomes too high and the process of skills transfer to other geographical areas (Monzini, 2007).

Smuggling of migrants by sea from Morocco and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has been studied in a way that allows for a depiction of its evolution. In order to understand how the smuggling market works, it is important to note its adjustments to changing institutional frameworks in the countries of embarkation.

Coslovi shows how pioneer smugglers of migrants who began by organizing "single passages" from Morocco in the 1990s were subsequently able to sell full package solutions". These consisted of a complete package to go to Italy or Spain (boat ticket +

documents + work permit), at a higher price, offered to urban would-be migrants already aware of the high risk of travelling with pateras. In parallel, the same organizations continued to offer their traditional patera services, which were cheaper and more dangerous, to rural and more naive people (Coslovi, 2010).

### **Problematic Issues of Smuggling and Illegal Migration in Africa**

Africa serves as both a source and transit region for illegal migration (Lucia, 2020). Migrants often embark on perilous journeys, crossing borders and continents to reach Europe, the Middle East, or other African countries. These migration routes are often exploited by transnational smuggling networks, which profit from facilitating the movement of people. Human trafficking is a significant concern in Africa, with individuals, including women and children, being exploited for forced labor, sexual exploitation, or other forms of abuse. Human trafficking often involves the cooperation of transnational criminal groups. Economic factors play a significant role in driving both illegal migration and transnational smuggling in Africa. High unemployment rates, economic disparities, and limited opportunities in some African countries lead individuals to seek better economic prospects elsewhere (Lucia, 2020).

Armed conflicts and political instability in various African regions contribute to internal displacement and the emergence of refugees and asylum seekers. These vulnerable populations are at risk of exploitation and illegal migration. Organized criminal networks operate across African borders, profiting from various forms of smuggling, including human trafficking, drug trafficking, and wildlife trafficking. These networks often exploit the vulnerabilities of migrants and asylum seekers. Many African countries face challenges in securing their borders and enforcing immigration laws effectively. This can lead to porous borders that facilitate illegal migration and transnational smuggling. The intertwined issues of transnational smuggling and illegal migration can result in humanitarian crises, with migrants facing life-threatening conditions during their journeys, such as in the Sahara Desert or the Mediterranean Sea. Addressing

these challenges often requires regional and international cooperation. Initiatives such as the African Union's Migration Policy Framework for Africa and partnerships with European and other countries aim to manage migration and combat smuggling more effectively (Lucia, 2020).

### **The Problematic issues of Smuggling and illegal Migration in Africa includes:**

**Humanitarian Crises:** The perilous journeys undertaken by migrants and refugees can result in humanitarian crises. Deaths, injuries, and human rights abuses are common, particularly during desert crossings and dangerous sea voyages (Lucia, 2020).

**Exploitation and Trafficking:** Migrants, especially vulnerable groups like women and children, are often subjected to exploitation, human trafficking, and forced labor. Human traffickers take advantage of their desperation (Lucia, 2020).

**Conflict and Instability:** The movement of people across borders can exacerbate political tensions and conflicts, both within and between countries. It may also hinder efforts to stabilize regions affected by violence and insecurity (Lucia, 2020).

**Public Health Concerns:** Migrant populations can be susceptible to the spread of diseases, including infectious diseases. This was particularly evident during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa (Lucia, 2020).

**Border Insecurity:** Widespread illegal migration and smuggling can lead to porous borders, making it difficult for countries to maintain security and enforce immigration laws effectively (Lucia, 2020).

**Economic Implications:** While migrants can contribute to host economies, there are challenges in integrating undocumented migrants into the labor market, potentially leading to exploitation and downward pressure on wages (Lucia, 2020).

**Crime and Insecurity:** The same networks that facilitate smuggling and illegal migration often

engage in other criminal activities, such as drug trafficking and arms smuggling, contributing to insecurity in various regions (Lucia, 2020).

**Social Integration Challenges:** Integrating large numbers of migrants and refugees into host communities can pose social and cultural challenges, potentially leading to tensions and conflicts like the xenophobic attack on Nigerians in South Africa in 2020 (Lucia, 2020).

**Lack of Legal Protections:** Undocumented migrants often lack legal protections and access to basic services like healthcare and education. This makes them more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse (Lucia, 2020).

### **Causes of Transnational Smuggling and Illegal Migration in Africa**

Understanding the causes requires examining both push and pull factors that motivate people to engage in these activities. Some of the key causes include:

#### ***Push Factors (From Countries of Origin)***

**Economic Hardship:** High levels of poverty, unemployment, and limited economic opportunities in many African countries can drive individuals to seek better prospects elsewhere.

**Political Instability and Conflict:** Armed conflicts, civil wars, and political instability create insecurity and displacement, pushing people to flee their home countries in search of safety.

**Human Rights Abuses:** Human rights violations, persecution, and discrimination can force people to leave their countries to escape abuse and repression.

**Environmental Factors:** Environmental degradation, climate change, and natural disasters can displace communities, making them more vulnerable to illegal migration.

**Lack of Basic Services:** Inadequate access to healthcare, education, and social services in some African countries can drive people to seek these services abroad.

**Demographic Pressures:** Rapid population growth in some African

nations can lead to competition for limited resources and economic opportunities, driving migration (Research Report, 2014).

#### ***Pull Factors (In Destination Countries)***

**Better Economic Opportunities:** Destination countries, often in Europe or the Middle East, offer the prospect of higher wages and improved living standards, making them attractive to migrants.

**Family Reunification:** Many migrants are motivated by the desire to join family members who are already living in destination countries.

**Perceived Safety and Stability:** Migrants often seek safety and stability in host countries, particularly if their home countries are affected by conflict or insecurity.

**Labor Market Demand:** Host countries with labor shortages or specific demands for certain types of work attract migrants to fill these roles.

**Access to Social Services:** Migrants may be drawn to host countries with better access to healthcare, education, and social services.

**Transnational Smuggling Networks:** The existence of well-organized human smuggling networks that profit from facilitating illegal migration by providing transportation, fraudulent documents, and logistics.

**Criminal Activities:** Criminal networks engage in various illicit activities, including drug trafficking and wildlife smuggling, and often expand into human trafficking and smuggling.

**Corruption:** Corruption within both source and destination countries can enable and sustain transnational smuggling and illegal migration.

**Lack of Law Enforcement:** Weak or inconsistent law enforcement, especially at borders, can provide opportunities for illegal migration and smuggling. The causes of transnational smuggling and illegal migration are complex and interconnected, and they can vary significantly by region and country

within Africa (Research Report, 2014).

### **Effects of Transnational Smuggling and Illegal Migration in Africa**

There have been many real-life effects of these activities in Africa. Here are a few instances and examples:

**Human Trafficking in the Sinai Desert:** In Egypt and the Sinai Desert, human traffickers have been known to exploit African migrants, often Eritreans and Sudanese, who are seeking to reach Israel. These traffickers subject migrants to physical abuse, extortion, and ransom demands in exchange for their release (unodc.org).

**Mediterranean Migration:** African migrants, including those from countries like Libya, Somalia, and Eritrea, often attempt dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe. This perilous voyage has led to countless tragedies, with migrants drowning at sea or facing harsh conditions (unodc.org).

**Trans-Saharan Migration:** The Sahara Desert serves as a dangerous corridor for migrants traveling from West Africa to North Africa and, in some cases, Europe. Migrants, including sub-Saharan Africans, traverse harsh desert conditions, often guided by human smugglers who exploit their vulnerabilities (unodc.org).

**Ebola Outbreak and Cross-Border Movement:** During the West African Ebola outbreak in 2014, there were instances of illegal border crossings as people sought to evade disease control measures. This kind of movement raised concerns about the potential spread of the virus (unodc.org).

**Armed Conflict Displacement:** Ongoing conflicts in regions like Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia have led to mass displacement and refugee flows, including illegal migration, as people seek safety and stability in neighboring countries (unodc.org).

**Ivory and Wildlife Trafficking:** Transnational criminal networks in Africa engage in the illegal trade of wildlife and natural resources. This often involves smuggling ivory, rhino horn, and other endangered species' products across borders, leading to the endangerment of many species (unodc.org).

### **Drug Trafficking:**

Some African countries, like Nigeria, have become transit points for drug trafficking operations. Criminal networks smuggle drugs, such as cocaine and heroin, through Africa on their way to other destinations (unodc.org).

**Mixed Migration Routes:** The Horn of Africa and the Sahel regions are known for being key transit points for mixed migration flows, including refugees, asylum seekers, and economic migrants. These flows are often exploited by human smugglers. These examples demonstrate the diverse and complex nature of transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa. They involve a wide range of activities, from human trafficking and dangerous sea crossings to the smuggling of drugs and wildlife products (unodc.org).

The flow of cocaine through West Africa appears to have declined to about 18 tons, down from a peak of 47 tons in 2007. These 18 tons would be worth US\$1.25 billion at wholesale in Europe, providing West African traffickers with substantial income. Modes of conveyance for cocaine from South America to Europe via West Africa have shifted over time in response to enforcement efforts. Much of the cocaine headed to West Africa today transit through Brazil, where Nigerian crime groups are exporting the drug. Recently, these groups have been moving into containerized consignments and maritime shipping, adopting these methods in addition to their traditional methods of air couriership and postal shipments. From West Africa, an increase in the use of Benin as a departure point for air couriers has been noted (unodc.org).

Methamphetamine production in the region is a growing concern, with two methamphetamine laboratories detected in Nigeria in 2011-2012. The main market for West African-made meth is East Asia, and to a lesser extent, South Africa. The income from trafficking West African-made methamphetamines to East Asia is remarkably high for such a new flow, but the long-term prospects are limited in light of competition from producers located in the destination markets (unodc.org).

Due to the economic downturn, the flow of smuggled migrants from West Africa to Europe has declined in recent years. The prominence of

the many routes has shifted significantly, with routes moving eastwards (unodc.org).

Given the number of weapons still circulating from past conflicts in the region, there is very little need to import large numbers of weapons into West Africa. Most of the illicit flow of weapons in the region is diverted or stolen from licit national stocks by the police and military (unodc.org).

### Remedy

Ending transnational smuggling and illegal migration in Africa is a complex challenge that requires a multi-faceted approach involving governments, international organizations, and civil society. While it's difficult to completely eliminate these issues, the following remedies and solutions can help mitigate the problems associated with them:

1. **Address Root Causes** like issues of good governance, conflict resolutions and economic development through the support of economic growth and job creation in countries of origin to reduce the incentives for illegal migration. This may involve investment, job training programs, and entrepreneurship support.
2. **Expand Legal Migration Channels:** Develop and expand legal pathways for migration, such as work visas, family reunification programs, and humanitarian visas. These can provide alternatives to illegal migration.
3. **Border Control and Security:** Improve border control and management mechanisms to prevent the illegal movement of people and goods, while respecting human rights.
4. **International and Regional Cooperation** through bilateral and multilateral agreements to foster international and regional cooperation through agreements that address border security, legal migration, and the fight against transnational criminal networks. **Information Sharing:** Collaborate with neighboring countries to share information on migration trends, criminal activities, and best practices.
5. **Human Rights and Protection:** Ensure that the rights of migrants and refugees are respected and protected. This

- includes access to legal representation, healthcare, and education.
6. **Public Awareness and Education:** Run public awareness campaigns to inform potential migrants about the risks and dangers of illegal migration, human trafficking, and smuggling.
7. **Economic and Labor Market Strategies:** Engage in dialogue with destination countries to match labor market needs with potential migrant labor from source countries, thus encouraging legal migration.
8. **Research and Data Collection:** Invest in research and data collection to better understand migration patterns, root causes, and the effectiveness of policies and programs.
9. **Strengthening Institutions:** Enhance the capacity and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies and judicial systems to prosecute and deter smuggling and trafficking.
10. **Support for Host Communities:** Provide financial and logistical support to communities that host a large number of migrants to help them cope with the added demands on public services.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, transnational smuggling and illegal migration are complex and interconnected challenges in Africa with profound social, economic, and security implications. The movement of people and goods across international borders without legal authorization is driven by a combination of push and pull factors. Push factors, such as economic hardship, political instability, and human rights abuses in countries of origin, compel individuals to seek better prospects elsewhere. Pull factors, including economic opportunities, safety, and access to social services in destination countries, attract migrants. Transnational smuggling networks, which facilitate these illegal movements, often engage in other criminal activities, including human trafficking, drug trafficking, and wildlife smuggling, adding to regional insecurity. The humanitarian consequences are significant, with migrants facing dangerous journeys, exploitation, and vulnerability to human rights



abuses.

Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes efforts to address the root causes, enhance border security, expand legal pathways for migration, and protect the rights of migrants and refugees. International and regional cooperation is essential, as are long-term development projects in countries of origin. Balancing the interests of both countries of origin and destination, while respecting the rights and dignity of migrants, is a fundamental consideration. Transnational smuggling and illegal migration are ongoing challenges that necessitate a sustained commitment from governments, international organizations, and civil society to manage and mitigate their impact in Africa.

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