

*Review*

# Migration and policymaking initiatives as appeals to national crises: The Zimbabwean case

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Migration and policymaking questions have become topical issues in regional and international debates, conferences and policies. In July 2010, the Zimbabwean government in consultation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) enacted the National Migration Management and Diaspora Policy (NMMDP) to harness the fundamental and meaningful contributions by the diaspora population to national development in exchange of citizenship rights (of voting in the diaspora). Government line ministries linked to the policy were tasked at soliciting for ways to end the Zimbabwean migration and diaspora crisis. It is unfortunate that the resultant policy failed to identify and outline how a plethora of migration causes were going to be addressed. This article thus basically critiques the Zimbabwe government policy document on migration and development (NMMDP), arguing that the policy is elitist, ineffective and self-defeating, insofar as it is based more on maintaining foreign remittances from diaspora residents without addressing the causes of migration and other needs. This article also briefly discusses the negative impacts of market based social relations that help undermine the traditions and cultures of the African people. This article thus calls for an inclusive and democratic approach to policymaking, arguing that the migration policy initiatives will remain unproductive as long as migrants' experiences are not considered and highlighted in the process. This concurs with the current global socio-economic and political set ups, emphasizing on human freedoms, participation, human movement, job search and settlement, a new phenomenon on national and international development concerns.

**Key words:** National migration management and diaspora policy (NMMDP), human development, labor migration, diaspora, migrants.

## INTRODUCTION

Between 2007 and 2010, Zimbabwe engaged in a migration and diaspora policymaking process, technically supervised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The policymaking process was finally enacted by parliament in July 2010 as the National Migration Management and Diaspora Policy (NMMDP). This article makes a critical survey of the process leading to this policy. The main objectives of this article are thus; to encourage effective policymaking processes that emerge from the roots, to avoid making counterproductive elitist policies that serve neoliberal economic interests and to

encourage broad based visioning that leads to useful alliances with foreign nations. In all, this article calls for democratic policy-making mechanisms and channels, involving all Zimbabweans at home and in the diaspora. This includes civil society, the academia and legislators, to make the policy legitimate and useful for current and future government policies on migration and development. It also needs to be known that all actors must be managed, even if it is not the object of this paper, to control their differing and conflicting interests.

However, we quickly admit that a number of limitations could not be avoided given the length of this article and that no empirical study of the process was done. Secondly, we neither benefited in the visits to India and the Philippines, nor were we involved in national consultation processes and diaspora debates. Thirdly,

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the article has heavily depended on secondary information from written literature, media reports and other publications on the Bible. Despite these limitations, the writers have spent many years in academic study and cultural exchange in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and Germany irrespectively. Finally, assumptions due to personal experiences and exposure to tendencies by key players in policymaking processes in the country have been used. This article has observed that four strategic workshops were held in formulating the Zimbabwe Migration Management and Development Vision (ZMMDV) and these are: generating research interests, debates and consultations by philosophers, researchers and policymakers in Zimbabwe and in the Diaspora. The NMMDP however has not critically provided an answer to skills acquisition, remittance improvement and the national benefits it envisioned because the contentious issues and causes of migration have not been addressed. The causes of migration have been listed as inclusive of “unfulfilled expectations”, “push and pull factors”, political intolerance, professionally-related disincentives and poverty, some of the unaddressed issues causing migration. Migration in most cases is an involuntary escape from hunger, deprivation, disease, violence and ignorance. Therefore, ignoring the causes of migration negates the purposes, objectives and intents of making such a policy. Thus, migration and development calls for better policing strategies. This article thus argues for broad based approaches to policymaking, highlighting the need to address a variety of issues if Zimbabwe is to achieve its intended developmental goals. The article also suggests the need for a better NMMDP in African countries to avoid international manipulation.

## **ECONOMIC FACTORS AND THE NATIONAL POLICYMAKING PROCESS ON MIGRATION**

The NMMDP was discussed by Zimbabwe government ministries (Justice, Finance, Education, Social Welfare and Foreign Affairs), and technically supervised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Unfortunately, critics argue that technical experts are influenced by western religious, cultural, political, economic and social motivations. For instance, the 2008 economic credit crunch has yielded the UN through the WHO to unscientifically supported projections of the spread of the influenza virus to justify quarantining people so as to prevent a global protest against the global economic melt-down. Chossudovsky (2011) adds that, the projections also serve to distract people’s attention from a devastating global economic crisis which is leading the world into mass poverty and unemployment, not to mention the war in the Middle East and the broader issue of US-NATO war crimes. The real global crisis is marked by poverty, economic collapse, ethnic strife,

death and destruction, the derogation of civil rights and the demise of State social programs. The EU announcement of the swine flu pandemic inevitably serves to weaken the social protest movement which has spread across Europe.

Similarly, the Zimbabwean NMMDP was driven by national economic interests guided by trained minds (IOM professionals) without involving those experiencing what it feels to be in the diaspora. The elitist approach thus leads us to question the ethical commitment and effectiveness of installing such a policy. Further, there are traces of irresponsible behavior by politicians, justifying the accusation that the UN is ineffective and toothless. Rather, the NMMDP can be criticized as a yielding of the nation to international pressure on regularizing political transformation, the land reform and mining concessions such as the infamous Chiadzwa diamond mining in Marange, Mutare. On diamonds, a controversy over the sale of diamonds divided rich nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) against the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) government arguing that Zimbabwe was not complying with the Kimberley Process although the state argued to the contrary. For this, the Minister of Mines Obert Mpfu was quoted saying:

This study was used as an opportunity to advise that Zimbabwe will be immediately exporting its diamond stockpiles because we are Kimberly Process compliant and we need the money to drive the economy forward. We have invited the Kimberly Process monitor (South Africa’s Mr Abbey Chikane) to continue discharging his mandate under the supervised export arrangement. Zimbabwe will be contributing more than 30 percent of the diamonds produced in the world. We shall be selling with certificates issued by ourselves and in his regard the Kimberly Process monitor will be free to supervise the exports (The Herald, 2010).

In concluding this part, the economic normative framework that was used in giving birth to the NMMDP can be classified along with the parasitic designs of the market economy beginning with the 18<sup>th</sup> century slave trade that saw 20 million Africans taken into the Americas to work on mines and plantations. The capitalist economic framework makes the NMMDP an imposed policy from the international society to further impoverish Zimbabwe through skills trade and diaspora labour (Johnston, 2001; Murove, 2009).

## **The NMMDP principles and values**

The NMMDP has been justified for its contribution to skills trade and transfer; international partnerships and cooperation; national development and economic growth. However, to produce a policy with uttermost respect from both rulers and the ruled, it is fundamental to outline from the outset how the sending country and its citizens will

benefit from this process. Unfortunately, a policy guided by elites and produced by specialists limit the scope of the policy to labor, skills, money and human rights, failing to understand the conditions in which people in the diaspora live. For instance, if civil society was not involved in framing the policy, how will the NMMDP address issues of impunity, abuses to political power, needs for political freedoms and related rights, career development and job opportunities, among others? Rather the migration policy document must envisage on the causes that lead people to migrate and then seek to find out if those causes have been addressed. In the draft, there is no reference to fundamental principles. With uncontrolled corrupt tendencies across the Zimbabwean social divide, and with natural untrustworthiness of government officials, a policy that is not integrative and founded on fundamental principles risks being used as a project proposal for privileged individuals and entrepreneurs. It is our view that, lack of values and adequate empirical data thus is a withdrawal to the bedrock of national policing on migration, especially in a country with poor technical and institutional capacity. Thus, to restore normalcy on migration; ethical and moral behavior by politicians may be a sufficient and necessary condition. For that to happen, practice of politics and economics must be informed by a normative framework in a bid to foster national responsibility towards citizens and national resources. Further, there is need for approved civil institutions, responsible individuals and cooperative societies to guarantee political responsibility like the academia, labor and political parties. Unfortunately, Zimbabwe has had problems in policymaking since 2000, and its institutions have been affected by politics, making us suspect that the country is dancing according to the tune of the international market. In this scenario, an ethical approach that encompasses migration and the geographies of settlements for Zimbabwean migrants makes a lot of sense, especially where a normative framework is nurtured by our own ethical values and principles. In all, the first step towards an ethically informed policymaking process is the step towards human and economic development.

Further, the drive towards the NMMDP demands that policy processes are externalized to involve people living within the conditions justifying the process. Two methods of policymaking, the bottom up and the top down, may be applied here especially with the findings of the research committee on their visit to India and the Philippines. These success stories however, cannot invalidate locally informed strategic approaches to policymaking. Zimbabwe has unfortunately been affected by colonial history, its development and failure has been hinged on how this history is redefined and reinterpreted by the new generation of legislators. For instance, Zimbabwe does not fairly treat its own indigenous languages, internalizing colonial stereotypes in how business, education, sport

and table manners reflect the culture of the colonizer. In this, being materially well, matters more than virtue and humanity, and social wellbeing matters very little compared to individual wellbeing, a development that contradicts the traditional Zimbabwean way of life. Thus, to have a big house in Borrowdale extension or Mukuvisi Woodlands, several Porsche cars and/or a “fat” account is the goal of life. The loss of African identity and personhood, “Unhuism” among the Shona has led to distorted mindsets; unfortunately, not sparing the academia, activists and theologians. Finally, lack of principles and values in a policy renders it weak, especially given the dichotomy of the migration-development nexus due to the involvement of foreign professionals who may not quite articulate the national problems and cannot adequately hold the government responsible for causing people to migrate.

### **Public policing and migration challenges**

The Zimbabwean migration policy document arises in a context of poor public policing that began in 2000. In Gore, public policing is about setting broad directions and responding to changing circumstances. This however is done in cognizance of policy targets, delivery and research. The policy further needs to address benefits to individuals and to assess burdens, to improve risk management and communication to the community (Gore, 2011). For improved public policing, the varied ways need to be employed to seek input from a wider range of stakeholders including a large cross section of ordinary citizens. In the end, reforms are not achieved at the expense of broader issues of concern to society. So, the policy process matters in this endeavor especially where government institutions are reported as uncooperative. As such, policymaking divorced from policy delivery becomes a barrier to government effectiveness. The decline in effective policy research in Zimbabwe since the late 1990s has also affected policymaking capacity. The government that has retained a traditional posture on policymaking fails to accommodate the complexities brought in by overlaps in issues of jurisdiction. The ZANU PF ideology [of the party is the state and government] has failed all government ministries to keep policymaking and implementation above the current challenges the country was going through, making it difficult for them to find ways of improving local initiatives on policing and implementation processes.

Further, with the involvement of the legislature, some continue to argue that Zimbabwe has been making good laws even during the difficult times between 2000 and 2009. However, it has been difficult to implement these policies because they were reactive to subsequent and emerging problems, making them quick fixes that did not accommodate reflection and long term insight from

evaluation and research (State Services Commission, 1999). Like in any government public policy, the NMMDP lacks outcomes evaluation and erroneously identifies the wrong issues in the attempt to address the migration-development nexus for the country. New Zealand on policymaking produced a report: *Essential Ingredients: Improving the Quality of Policy Advice*, which highlighted issues that needed to be addressed in short-term development policies, namely, evaluation of outcomes and identification of issues (Curtain, 2000; Venturini and Villosio, 2008). The Zimbabwe policy on the other hand lacks correct issue identification and the major objective of public policy is not to make quick fixes focusing on remittances without addressing the major causes of migration such as unfulfilled expectations. From experiences in USA, Germany, UK and Australia, public policy is foremost to determine goals that are important to society, find ways to promote such objectives to best meet the needs of citizens and to make major changes in the life of society. Thus, policymaking that lacks goal setting lacks a forward-looking perspective and thus is inattentive to the contributions of those who are going to be affected by the policy or to implement it. This shoots down key principles on civil participation to achieve effective policymaking processes outside government legislative processes on national issues.

From our experience in Zimbabwe, migration is a progressive problem requiring creative and on-going policy initiatives that continuously redress current problems using past experiences and research. Ideally, even the NMMDP's proposed options need to be tested in a pilot research scheme to iron out possible loopholes, problems, and to encourage innovation in governmental line ministries before it is adopted. In so doing, the objectives of the policy can be specified and evaluated, publishing the results of the findings of the pilot migration-development scheme's successes and failures. In all, the NMMDP has a short life cycle such as meeting deadlines and schedules for new elections, harnessing remittances, which manipulates Zimbabwe's weak constitution and the 2008 inconclusive presidential results. In conclusion, the consultation in India and the Philippines indicate desperation and defensiveness given that the two countries are also suffering from migration problems. It also means the NMMDP did not benefit from alternative policy advice on migration from receiving countries such as the UK, USA, South Africa and Canada. The involvement of IOM further indicates that the Zimbabwean government was left without obligations because pressure groups from civil society were not part to the process.

### **Tension between migrants' rights and responsibilities highlighted**

The major impression one gets from the NMMDP is that

the government is addressing many of the major correct issues of migration and the diaspora problem. However, migration is motivated by objection to the ZANU PF government's hostile records which presumably means many are unwilling to comply with the NMMDP stipulations that end up supporting a regime system they are not happy with. It is rather unfortunate that the document spends a lot of time discussing issues that are *given* in a democratic system, issues like voting rights for individuals in the diaspora. The NMMDP further assumes the Zimbabwe government has converted leaders and fails to understand that the environment is not normal. It is interesting that the government finally allowed such a discussion to ensue but fails to understand that individuals who left because of unfulfilled expectations such as political intolerance, poor job opportunities, poor working conditions and lack of career development opportunities may react differently. In other words, a fraudulent electoral process by a corrupt government cannot be trusted by migrants especially the effect of the diaspora vote to national politics (counting of votes and the effect of the policy). Taking from the biblical example of patriarchs like Abraham (Genesis 12; 20), Isaac (Genesis 26) Joseph (Genesis 27, 28) and Jacob (Genesis 46) who migrated because of famine, the Zimbabwean case has a plethora of issues not supported by such historical and religious cases.

In the NMMDP, the idea that migration and development can be approached to benefit the nation seems to introduce an interesting phenomenon. The first idea has to do with tension where migration itself is flight from problems while development demands that those who fled from problems should sacrifice in resolving the problems they ran away from. In this however, how do we deal with the tension between rights, responsibilities and causes, against duties, obligations and effects of migration? Some migrants are even suggesting that parliamentary sessions must be broadcasted to allow non-constituent diaspora parliamentarians to participate in policymaking at home. While the idea of rights raises people's hopes, some still fear that the government will not stop at anything to control remittances, demand income taxes, and charge for goods sent into the country. The list of rights outlined in the NMMDP however fails to encapsulate the totality of migrant rights such as access to labor markets, legal protection in hosting countries, settlement assistance and family reunion arrangements in their destination of choice (Ruhs, 2009). Unfortunately, earlier debates on this nexus focused on economic development in developing nations and not on migrants' rights (World Bank, 2005). The debates were disconnected from moral and legal considerations to vulnerable migrants. Quite recently, migrants' rights have been incorporated into this debate especially the recognition that migrants can broadly contribute to economic development if their rights are protected (Abella, 2008). The interrelationship between rights and

responsibilities of migrants towards development need further conceptual and analytical investigation. Therefore, limiting migrants' rights to voting, policymaking and parliamentary representation is tunnel sighted and thus inadequate, especially where two forms of rights for migrants are at stake, "human" and "citizenship" (Bosniak, 2006). These rights can be emphasized in both sending and receiving nations. Thus, rights can be understood in light of both human development and contemporary migration challenges.

### Migration and human development in the NMMDP

A proponent of a widely used concept of human development is Amartya Sen. He states that human development is a process of "enlarging people's choices and enhancing *human capabilities* (the range of things people can be and do) and *freedoms*. Human development enables people to live a long and healthy life, gives them access to knowledge and a decent standard of living, helps them participate in the life of their community, as well make decisions on problems affecting their lives" (UNDP, 2011). Sen takes capability as representing "the various beings and doings that the person can achieve" (Sen, 1998). Therefore, in this sense, a person is a free agent that can choose from among available options and opportunities that enhance their choices and freedoms on "combinations of functionings". By capability, thus, a person has the capacity (freedom) and ability (integrity) to do so but may decide otherwise. Amartya Sen alludes to the multidimensionality of human wellbeing. In this, Sen identified basic capabilities concerning "the ability to move about", "the ability to meet one's nutritional requirements", "the wherewithal to be clothed and sheltered", and "the power to participate in the social life of the community" (Sen, 2005). When those capabilities lack the pre-requisite conducive environment, people are then forced into migration. Martha Nussbaum makes a definite list of important factors to human development central to human life and related to human capability. Further concrete attempts at enlisting capabilities sees a differentiation of the experience of poverty by poor people from their bodily, material, emotional, social and psychological well being (Narayan, 2000).

Although the idea of human development has a common motivation with *human rights* on promoting human dignity, freedom and wellbeing, the two are incompatible, in that, *rights* focus on legality, power-play, justice and motivated interests while *development* starts from disengagement with human relations and interactions in politics and law (UNDP, 2007, 2011). From these conceptual parameters, *human rights* are created needs that can be classified into first and second generations while *human development* is a universal need with no classifications. To do one or the other

makes a reflection of your morality (Christiansen, 2007; Dennis and Stewart, 2004). Thus, human rights and development are two sides of the same coin because *human development* takes place within the socioeconomic and legal-political contexts of people's rights. Thus in discussing human development in the migration-development debate, *human rights* enter at the level of socio-political and legal-economic interactions (UNHRC, 2008). In a world of scarce resources, human rights are indivisible from policy choices and institutional concerns leading to resource prioritization (UNDP, 2007). The link between human rights and human development needs to be taken seriously in policymaking such as in the Zimbabwean NMMDP. Further discussion outlines this.

### Resource prioritization and the political dimension

The success of this policy depends on how contemporary political uncertainties are addressed. In Zimbabwe, bad political decisions led to bad economic decisions and thus bad economic results (Masengwe, 2010). IOM (2007) report states that:

It is clear then that political instability and economic decline in Zimbabwe are driving cross border migration to South Africa at an accelerating rate. This movement of people in unprecedented numbers is also fuelled by South Africa's skills shortages and comparatively robust in regional perspective of growth performance (Bond, 2011).

When pushed away, people look for alternatives. For Zimbabwe, migrants found the robust economy of South Africa where the economy could absorb labor and reduce its own skills shortage. In developed countries like Canada, Australia, UK, Germany and USA, attracting skilled migrants are clear national policies. Skilled migrants are granted permanent residence or citizenship. In Canada and Australia, skilled migrants can become permanent residents with a complete set of rights and privileges on arrival (Murove, 2009). In UK, the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) attracts migrants of high professional quality to migrate to UK without job offers and can be residents for up to 5 years. In Germany, where the Green Card system failed to attract significant numbers of IT workers, it was legislated in 2004 that such highly qualified migrants could stay indefinitely with their families. So, with these measures, highly qualified migrant workers are a potential source for deskilling where in high income countries their wages, working conditions and rights are lower than those of nationals as mandated by international norms, standards and laws. Unfortunately, most migrants cannot claim equal treatment because their frames of reference to insignificant labor markets and very low wages in their "countries of origin" delimit their demands. Even skilled laborers too, face difficulties with language skills and

networks until they settle.

Besides deskilling, host countries in some cases negatively accept low skilled laborers. Employers hire as many people as they like at very low wages and reduced worker rights. If workers demand their work-related benefits and health insurance, safety standards and minimum wages; employers find ways of denying workers all those rights that directly affect income without affecting production like in the case of Zimbabwean workers who were exploited in various South African workplaces between 2000 and 2008. Skilled professionals like teachers are placed at temporary teacher categories as a way to deny them all work related benefits. At the same time, their sending countries depend on remittances, wage taxes, and imported goods. The fact that sending countries benefit from migrants' remittances in fiscal income without safeguarding migrant workers' rights is a cause for concern especially women who find it difficult to secure jobs in the public labor market and end up as domestic workers. Also, some migrant workers left at under-age and may be compromised by age, education, gender and class. Unfortunately, most are ineligible for public service and government benefits host countries (and are regarded as resource burdens). Any discussion about migration-development policy needs to take into account that some migrant workers do not automatically translate into remittances (Lucas, 2005). Sending workers into the diaspora failed to be an effective development strategy in the Philippines, Mexico and Egypt (ILO, 2004). So, while skilled laborers find it relatively easy to migrate to high income countries, low skilled laborers have little access to foreign labor markets (ILO, 2004).

Further, an assessment on Zimbabwean healthcare professionals clearly portray that most of them left Zimbabwe for a number of reasons. However, most professionals were not comfortable to stay because their work did not guarantee the basics, security and opportunities they needed. Further, the political and economic landscape in Zimbabwe did not offer security of personal investments through the rule of law and good governance. According to Chikanda (2005), healthcare workers wanted basics such as "the provision of housing and a transport allowance, call and stand-by allowances, a performance management system, salary reviews, fellowship and scholarship programmes, advanced training programmes and bonding of newly trained graduates", among others such as safety at work in the era of HIV, moderate workloads and economic and financial factors. Therefore, for most healthcare workers, continued political intolerance, fear of crime and violence, pessimism about Zimbabwe's future, the impossibility of making ends meet on public sector salaries, the need to ensure children's future, the demanding nature of their work, lack of opportunities for professional advancement and fear of contracting HIV and AIDS at work due to the absence of basic equipment such as gloves led many to

leave the country and others not to return early (Chikanda, 2005).

Most of these professionals relocated in developed countries where skilled labor markets had opened, as shown in UK, Canada and Australia. This rectified the shortages of nurses, teachers, doctors, social workers and engineers in developed countries which "coincided with a deepening economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe from the late 1990s" (McGregor, 2006). However, migration is not new in Zimbabwe. It began during the Smith regime and increased tempo during the senseless massacres of Ndebele civilians in Matabeleland in the early 1980s which Robert Mugabe acknowledged as 'time of madness' (Machinguru, 2010). Thus, a mass exodus of Ndebele militants and others led to the exclusion of the Ndebele from the state and the nation (Alexander et al., 2000). In the mid 1990s, professionals began to escape the effects of neoliberal structural adjustment policies which were exacerbated by corruption and economic mismanagement (Gaidzanwa, 1999). At the end of the decade, economic decline was transformed dramatically into an economic plunge and political crisis as an embattled ruling party resorted to a violent and exclusive brand of populist nationalism to try to bolster support in the face of a new political alternative in the MDC (Bond and Manyanya, 2003; Raftopoulos, 2003). So, professionals went away as an escape from assaults and to meet their aspirations for further education and gainful employment. Most of the migrants argue that they needed better salaries to live. Many were hopeful for an early return but continued political intolerance, economic malpractice and patronage led more people to leave the country and those already in the diaspora, to stay without any hope to return.

### **What should happen in policing in Zimbabwe?**

To deal with the tension in the migration policies as in the case of Zimbabwe, we need "the ethics of responsibility". African governments have tended to blame the West for failed policies but when their citizens demand thorough working, elites are arrogant and obstinate. The trend by African governments is to look for scapegoats on policies they appended their signatures to, like the 1990 Zimbabwean Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP). These programs are accepted in exchange for charity and partnership without establishing principles in the process. Rather, foreign standards and principles originating from different ethical and moral grounds are adopted crudely along with other practices such as corruption and greediness (Murove, 2009). A few elites who benefit by exchanging African resources and identity can attract donor presence and western partners to improve the economy. The idea of democracy popularly acknowledged has failed to make African leaders responsible towards public goods (Murove, 2009;

Nunn, 2003). Justly, some African leaders spend more than half of their political career begging for assistance and investment from former European masters and fear being defrocked for failing to follow western doctrines of democracy. Ideally, the principles are good but need interpretation and application to solve African problems. Some regard them as threatening bastards on a family's inheritance. The late Hoyni Bhillah, professor of history at Africa University, explicitly demonstrated African underdevelopment as partly a contribution of Europe (Rodney, 1970). The extent of European contribution included Europe's and America's civilizing mission that transferred European products to the African market today, which tells us that the people affected by the NMMDP needed to further engage on this policy before its publication by parliament.

Further, citizens behave according to national etiquette where they imitate the practices of their leaders. If they are humble, the ruled become humble; if they are proud, the ruled become proud but if they are deplorable, the ruled run away. In 1822, UK House of Lords introduced a statement that has become common place in politics today, "to act for the sake of the public". Discussing the internal state of the country, the legislators observed that secrecy should be allowed if government advances "consistently with the safety of individuals and with good faith to them. Magistrates have often been called to act for public peace, but not justifiable on the letter of the law" (Scott, 1822). Since then, it has always been observed that public officials must act in unison with the primary obligation "to act for the sake of the public" good. The NMMDP thus has to meet high expectations, and Tendai Biti (Minister of Finance, Zimbabwe) has to protect the NMMDP from abuse by political leaders (to use revenue raised by remittances for vote buying, wayward spending, and excessive borrowing to support personal-party-political campaigns (ZDN, March 30, 2010). Further, food politics has been effectively used during elections in most Southern African countries because the hungry and vulnerable are ready to do anything to survive (Murove, 2009; ZDN, 2010). In most parts of Africa, politicians distribute handouts to desperately struggling communities, commonly food, and only during elections; and the incumbent government would do this with public funds. The use of personalized and stratified benefit distributions to discredit the legitimacy and credibility of the opposition has been popular with several African regimes like that of Bakili Muluzi of Malawi (Tambulasi and Kayuni, 2005), Robert Gabriel Mugabe of Zimbabwe (Schaffer, 2007), clientelism in Kenya and Zambia (Young, 2009) and Jacob Zuma of South Africa (Gumede, 2008), among others. Note worthily, most African politicians are skilled solicitors but not credible leaders. Their track records are unimpressive and they are not role models. If migrants painfully experience marriage breakdowns or exposure to HIV and AIDS, the African spirit of communitarian

ownership, social vitality and cosmological holism is lost (Kasenene, 1998). In this, the migration policy should not fail to recognise the double loss encountered by migrants in their own and families' safety, and more so their meaningful contribution to their own community integrity.

### **The *Ubuntu* or *Unhu* philosophy and migration**

Taking our cue from the infamous *Ubuntu* philosophy, the well-being of a migrant is inseparable from that of his/her kith and kin at home (Tambulasi and Kayuni, 2005; Ndebele et al., 2008; Machingura, 2010). The interconnectedness of humans can thus be fostered by countering segregation and fostering reconciliation and justice in the community (Haws, 2009). With the African *Ubuntu* philosophy, individuals in the diaspora are encouraged to contribute in developing their families and communities in Zimbabwe. This affirms the humanity and morality of the vulnerable as well as the responsibility and obligation of those in the diaspora. Unfortunately, corruption and greediness that came with the myth of state sovereignty and territorial integrity has undermined sound policymaking and human security leading to human migration because national leaders put less value on people in exchange of personal economic aggrandizement, and this tone is very clear in this policy (Shutte, 2009; Nunn, 2011).

One of the unmentioned and unfulfilled expectations has to do with empowerment of local communities by investing in their districts and provinces. Further, empowering local and traditional systems to establish customs, laws, ethics, conventions and rituals that bring social harmony and national economic development does not only free the government from overseeing the problems of the local communities but also allows government to focus on bigger and better visions. In the present Zimbabwean constitutional process, some sections of the Zimbabwean society have been calling for the devolution of power to local communities arguing that they want their respective communities to determine their own future. Zimbabwean people have witnessed lack of responsibility by local institutions that choose to enforce political orders at the expense of local community problems thereby not fulfilling people's expectations. In the old adage, *Ubuntuism* alluded to had three main principles to fulfill: communalism, holism and vitalism (Kasenene, 1998). According to these principles, the community was obligated to the life of individuals through the same individuals or rather the individual was obligated to the life of the community. Communalism refers to the life of equitable sharing, solidarity and hospitality shown to every member of society for the sustenance of the community during difficult moments (Ndebele et al., 2008). Sharing, solidarity and hospitality were the cornerstones of the *Bantu* survival strategy in a cruel world (Murove, 2009). These values were regulative

elements of social organization where no individual expected payment for saving the community (Murove, 2009). By holism, the *Bantu* viewed life as holistic where the spiritual and the material could not be separated. Both were important at the same time. As a building block to communalism, the spiritual world was part of the community and so were the future generations who were implied by the concept of vitalism. Vitalism refers to energy and power to live shown by self development and life enhancing strategies. Reproduction is numbered among examples of vitalism where children represented one's energy and a promise for community survival.

However, the NMMDP departs from this radically; assigning a market value to human life because its agenda is controlled by neo-liberal-private ownership of labor, profit making, marketing, prize deregulation and reduced public spending. The thrust of the policy is financial, and the machinery, migrants. This policy may also further reveal a number of things such as contextualizing the Zimbabwean economy along capitalist/liberalist agendas thereby abandoning nationalist and culturally related practices of nepotism and corruption adopted earlier at the inception of neoliberal policies (Murove, 2009). Further, this reveals that the nation has to prepare to be a multicultural society, opening up to ideological and political pluralism, bringing challenges and opportunities for economic transformation and replacing African traditional values and practices with post modern practices and beliefs which they use for self-glory.

### Policy as a shared product and shared vision

The NMMDP comes as a top down command by the government instead of an initiative that involves all stakeholders in Zimbabwe and the diaspora. Sceptics believe that even though a lot has been written about neo-liberalism,<sup>1</sup> no government or legislator takes a pinch of salt from all these warnings and experiences. In fact, migration and development is a manifestation of bad economic policing in our world today which is deliberately designed by international institutions to symphony poor countries' resources. Such policies allow ruling classes to absorb all types of neoliberal economic products and such policies are unfavourable to indigenous economies and societies (Murove, 2009). The success of the migration policy thus depends on involvement of individuals and communities through movements,

organizations and activities because "effective change cannot be imposed from outside". If individuals are not adequately involved, "it will be difficult to sustain participation if participants sense that they are not being listened to, and their views are not taken into account in decision making (Stiglitz, 2003)". Instead, the migration policy is a higher level project that can only become successful if fewer erroneous assumptions are made "about the needs and capabilities of beneficiaries" both in the diaspora through voting and at home through sustained remittances (Stiglitz, 2003). In that way, people feel passionate and more committed to participate, knowing that they are not being taken for granted and that they own the activity (Murove, 2009).

It is also true that ordinary members of society understand much better, their problems and can suggest better methods and solutions compared to professionals and public servants (Kok and Gelderblom, 1994; Taran, 2000). Further, it needs to be understood that different communities approach different problems differently because of the differences in norms, values and conceptions of reality; hence their laws and ideas of what constitutes public interest may differ. Further, we can note the following to understand the difference of the NMMDP policymaking process from other processes by Szeftel's quoting the British government. He states that:

Where a government wants aid to help with transformation to democracy, to strengthen its institutions, to weed out corruption and incompetence - we will give it. But where a government turns its back on democracy, ignores accountability, flouts human rights and allows corruption to flourish, our aid will only be of humanitarian nature to help the people in real need. No tax payer in any donor country should be asked to contribute to the Swiss bank accounts of corrupt third world politicians. There are courageous leaders undertaking difficult economic and political transformation without seeking personal gain. These are the countries Britain should help (Szeftel, 2000).

Szeftel's statement is impressive, but we question why the British government does not demand the return of such monies to its fiscus. If western governments want to help change African policies, they should share the process with African legislators, civil society and the general public as well as to expose the corrupt tendencies of government officials who stash monies stolen in African countries into their personal foreign accounts. In other words we need better ways of approaching partnership between Europe and Africa without patronizing their help or our processes. It is our belief that Africa cannot benefit from deep-seated western experiences and solutions designed to solve Europe's problems. It lacks sound indigenous principles and values, and threatens African history and identity. To say the least, we differ in climatic conditions, disease patterns, development needs and communication strategies. This fails to satisfy local ethical and moral

<sup>1</sup> Neoliberalism has been condemned by outspoken economists such as Joseph Stiglitz's *Globalization and its Discontents; The Roaring Nineties*, and *A Fair Trade for All*, just to mention but a few. These writings spell out extensively and precisely the problems of globalization, international development institutions like the IMF, World Bank and the WTO among others, and the economics of development, notwithstanding the pessimism that was fulfilled, on the world economic system that was going to crash, which culminated in the Global Economic Crunch in 2008



demands (Murove, 2009). Thus, such solutions are inadequate for African problems because they do not germinate from the depth of African culture, norms, values and experiences (Murove, 2009).

### **MIGRANT WORKER CONVENTIONS: REACTIONS TO MIGRATION POLICIES**

Before concluding this paper, one needs to take note of how countries have reacted to policies on migration. Ruhs (2008, 2009) says that:

The few countries that have ratified migrant worker conventions are predominantly migrant-sending rather than migrant-receiving countries. Despite having signed general human rights treaties, nation states, especially major immigration countries, are clearly reluctant to ratify international conventions that limit their discretion and ability to restrict the rights of migrants living and working on their territories.

There is dissonance in this legislative process because most people in the diaspora can become illegal migrants, ending up becoming irregular residents who cannot get formal and gainful employment characterizing their lives with running away from law enforcers. Employers thus find ways of defrauding them, making them suffer insurmountable injustices. Thus, their labor outcomes become unfavorable because they have no rights to pursue. In fact, they are blamed for bad economic consequences (becoming victims of xenophobia) in both sending and receiving countries (Ruhs, 2008, 2009). The NMMDP policy however, promises to solve some of the worst ills of migrants but is feared by Zimbabwean migrants that it may lead to legal reduction of Zimbabwean migrants' rights in host countries. Migrants' rights can be traded off in terms of their workers' rights which violate both international norms and individual basic human rights (Wickramasekara, 2008). To this, Carens (2008) argues that even if there is a trade-off between migrant numbers and rights, restrictions of migrant rights are always morally problematic because they violate the state's own understanding of morally acceptable conditions of employment.

### **Possible solutions to migration challenges**

#### **Consulting migrants and their families (for example, through Zimbabwe Council Survey)**

In most cases, better policies are informed by the affected through carrying out various surveys that involve members of the public, and in this case, migrants. Surveys help provide policy feedbacks and new ideas on policing. Surveys may be done through opinions of people using focus group discussions, polls, dialogues and/or samples. For example, a survey of the Council of

Zimbabwe (2010) for 108 respondents on the NMMDP policy, among the estimated 4.5 million migrant professionals was statistically and proportionally insignificant, therefore inadequate, ineffective and weak for a Diaspora policy on Zimbabwe. Fewer respondents indicate the weakness of the methodology employed in the publication and consultation process by legislators where no open dialogue techniques were employed. It may be unfair to criticize the Council of Zimbabwe which at the moment has fewer members but to generalize the feelings of migrants by using its response number is also unethical and inappropriate because of the insignificance of the percentage proportion of respondents to the people in the diaspora. Finally, those who failed to submit ideas may or may not subscribe to the results of the research findings. Further, policy discussions in most progressive societies take a longer period of time before the draft is developed. If public discussions had preceded this formulation, opinions could develop, and society could be better informed on the complexities of migration and development before making an opinion on the migration-development policy. In all, consulting migrants and families can bring more policy insights before the drafts are made.

#### **Fostering alternative sources of policy advice through scientific research**

In Zimbabwe, the government is the sole source of policymaking. Unfortunately, the chain of command being used in government can translate into policy dictation, making implementation difficult and generating an opportunity for corruption (Hamel, 1999). Monopolizing policymaking may be tragic for individuals can give ascend to bad policing or a rejection to effective policies. For instance, to be the Zimbabwean Head of State infers attitudes of invincibility with knowledge, expertise and experience emanating from the history of the liberation struggle, legitimizing the position holder with legitimacy to make and implement arbitrary laws. For the progressive people, policymaking is not the privy of public servants, presidents nor legislators, but of civil society, the academia, the public and the need to generate greater social contestation on issues of concern before making public laws. In the same way, the NMMDP should not have been dependent on government legislators and IOM but should have used consultants who were independent from government funding and interests to allow them to think constructively and progressively by critically searching for information and publishing insights that benefit members of the public. Even the private sector alone is so insignificant in generating new ideas because Zimbabwe has no government funding to support the establishment of an effective leading private sector on policymaking initiatives (Hamel, 1999). In all, Zimbabwe needs good policymaking mechanisms to generate ideas

for new policies without duplicating processes elsewhere and to allow testing for large scale implementation before they are enacted by parliament.

### Setting priorities in policymaking

The migration policy of Zimbabwe seems to be built on the priorities of remittances and national economic survival. Possible solutions to making a comprehensive policy would require that remittances be measured against improving living conditions of migrants and their families in the country (World Bank, 2008). For remittances to translate into gross domestic product without improving the living and working conditions of migrants, negates the purpose of this policy, for instance, migrants living without legal documents and being undermined on employment, wages, social networks and the choices they make on jobs. This further minimizes development at personal, family and national levels because migrants will spend most of their time and money to avoid arrests, deportations and police harassments without proper investments. Further, there is need to deal with wayward politicians who stash billions of dollars in foreign banks such as the Swiss bank or recently in Argentina, and continue to cite “capital flight” for multinationals withdrawing investments and profits from African countries without making African politicians to be responsible spenders (01 January Sunday Mail, 2011) because externalization of money by government officials lead to “increasing misery of many sectors of the third world population” because “money [life insurance] possessed by some dictators in foreign banks sometimes equals the amount of the debt suffocating the countries over which they rule” (Murove, 2009). So, besides planning for remittances, externalization should be eradicated and corruption which contrasts the African *Ubuntu* philosophy of fairness and sharing should be dealt with if the NMMDP can become a useful policy (Murove, 2009).

### Evaluation of the Zimbabwean migration policy

The Zimbabwean experience makes identifying and analyzing migrants’ needs difficult because in 30 years, many migrants lost hope in the state. Further, consulting India and Philippines to a proposed home-grown policy defeats the purpose where migrants are not offered any scope to support the initiative. Although the policy intends to bring development to Zimbabwe and uphold the migration of its citizens, the policy is drafted in an uneasy environment politically, economically and administratively. A clarion call to this policy is that, migrants may decide to change *remittance-sending strategies* or they may opt to reunite and permanently settle with their families in the diaspora (Carens, 2008). It

is therefore imperative to ask for the appropriateness of the NMMDP policy for Zimbabwe at this time so that we may not frustrate inflows of remittances into the country. Clearly, this policy will advance the aims and objectives of the incumbent government; however, it’s unclear if it guarantees long term values and visions of a greater Zimbabwe (Curtain, 2000). This policy lacks correct information from developed countries but depends on the developing country’s experiences in implementing western policies, and thus fails to integrate the international dimension of the policy-making process and implementation. In all, policies are created to affect all concerned people to determine the kind of services to be given to citizens as well as spell out the kinds of development contributions to society, determining the vision and mission of the policy to the community’s future. Policies are also created to guide in narrow and broad decision-making practices. Thus, the NMMDP has been found wanting on this level and fails to satisfy the objectives for which it was supposed to fulfill.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the article has made it clear that, any migration policy that is constructed by guidance from foreign experts only is bound to fail to contribute to Zimbabwe’s economic development. Hopefully such a policy may increase migrants’ freedom of movement and development but whether that translates into national development is still a question this article cannot answer. As outlined, the migration policy and any future policies if done this way will continue to avoid discussing a plethora of factors behind the mass exodus of skilled and non skilled Zimbabweans. If not addressed, any future migration policies will remain an uphill task to convince African migrants in developing their nations of origin. This article has attempted to respond to the development-agenda-claim by outlining that if migrants’ experiences are not captured, migration policies wherever and in whatever nation will not be trusted, and thus will fail to be effective. Among the suspicions is the possible hijack by foreign actors, and the threat to indigenous experiences, values, norms and principles. The emphasis may end up being on helpless political alliances between Zimbabwe and foreign countries, the policy will not address and resolve the push factors, guaranteeing that Zimbabwe will continue to be haunted by such policies. Finally, the migration policy of Zimbabwe is an important policymaking initiative that will be useful for other countries in future. This article dismisses tunnel visioning to allow broad visioning for public policing in Zimbabwe.

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