

MIGRATIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA: CHARACTERISTICS, ISSUES AND ROLES IN THE INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION

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Introduction

Unlike, for example West Africa, we know little about migration in Central Africa. We could even think, seen the rarity of related studies and policies¹ that migration is a marginal phenomenon in this region of Africa. And yet, we know that wars and other political unrests that take place from time to time in the region force the populations in their thousands even in their millions to move inside their countries, or to take refuge in neighboring or faraway countries. In 1994, Wilkinson wrote that "the Great Lakes have been one of the most serious and most complex crises of our time" (Wilkinson, R., in UNHCR, 1997), when he saw a great flood of more than one million Rwandan refugees flock in the small town of Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in the days following the assassination of the Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and of the Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamina. Another tent «city», exclusively occupied by these migrants, established itself in the outskirts of Goma.

Besides, some of the migrants from Central Africa went through tragic events in their new countries of immigration. Some of them were returned and repatriated to their countries of origin in the most inhuman conditions. In Congo, the migrants from the DRC are considered as pests: it is better to kill a Congolese (from the DRC) than a snake, say the people of this sister country of the DRC.

But why all these questions and others as well, have not been thoroughly researched into? It is questions that we begin to answer in this paper. We will recall the importance of internal migrations and their interrelations with international migrations. Then we shall examine immigration in the countries of Central Africa, starting with the migratory exchanges between the countries of the region and all the related issues, namely the problem of migrants expulsions; that of the refugees and in particular the troubling case of the Great Lakes region; and then the immigrants from faraway countries. We shall finally study the emigration of the populations of Central Africa: the predominance of the emigration to the countries of the North, the diversification and the changes in the migratory trends, the heroic migratory movements, and the establishment in the host countries, the brain drain issue, and the contribution of the migrants to the economies of the countries of Central Africa. In conclusion, we shall bring out the aspects that deserve more research on the migrations in Central Africa.

The marginal nature of research on migrations in Central Africa

The survey of migrations in Central Africa is difficult to realize for several reasons. The first is the scarcity of statistical data and studies at national and especially at regional level. In West Africa, this phenomenon was the subject of several national or even regional² surveys.

¹ One can note in this regard that the member countries of ECOWAS in West Africa already opted for the free movement of people and goods, whereas in Central Africa one is still far from there.

² in West Africa, it should be pointed out that, apart from the national surveys on migrations, namely the national surveys of migrations in Upper Volta (Burkina) made in 1974 by J.W. Gregory, V. Piché and S. Coulibaly, the following regional operations: 1) the analysis of migrations in West Africa from the census data of the middle of 1970; 2) the surveys of migrations of the Valley of the River Senegal (Mali, Mauritania, Senegal); 3) the simultaneous National survey of

But similar operations conducted in Central Africa were rare. Most studies were carried out there based on data collected from census. Meanwhile, those operations the census had several limitations towards better study on migrations (Loutete-Dangui and Libali, 2004). They mostly enabled us to study, from the questions about the place of birth and current residence, the problems of migrants-life expectancy, including the aliens in the country (the immigrants), and the nationals who are abroad (the emigrants). They also allowed studies to be conducted on migratory exchanges between provinces; and a few characteristics of migrants. The census that could be used in the study of the characteristics, the places of residence and the migratory movements of the emigrants, just to mention a few, were very rare.

The major socio-demographic data collection, such as the demographic and health surveys (EDS), the UMCEF survey of the children and women condition (MICS) and the 1-2-3 survey, have only little or no interest in migrations, as if these didn't have any link with the problems that these institutions are interested in.

Faced with these shortcomings, some localized surveys and surveys on small samples which were not always representative were conducted on specific aspects:

Cameroon:

- The Survey on the demographic pressure and the rural exodus in Northern and western Cameroon (by the Demographic Training and research Institute (IFORD, 1982-1983);
- The Survey on return migrations (IFORD-CEPED,);
- The Survey on school migrations (Timnou,)
- The Qualitative Survey on the possible return of the Malian migrants in Cameroon
- The survey on Health Professionals (WHO, 2004)

Congo

- Qualitative survey on stories of life with migrants in Paris (MacGaffey and Bazenguissa, 2000) 4
- Survey on 200 Congolese migrants in France (Douma, 2003)

Democratic republic of Congo

- The Survey on the migrations in the family context - MICOFA - (Lututala, 1984)
- The Survey on migrations to secondary cities: case of Inkisi and Kikwit (Lututala, 1987-1988)
- The Survey on Congolese of the Diaspora (Lututala and al.)
- The Survey on the Congolese migrants in Paris (Lututala)
- The Survey on internal migrations and of the demographic behaviour of the women in Kinshasa (Zamwangana, 2002))
- The Survey on migrations in the city of Matadi (Coated, 2005)
- The Survey on international migrations in the DRC from Kinshasa (Mangalu, 2007)

Chad:

- The Survey on Migrations in Chad
- The survey on Migration and Urbanization in Chad (EMUT) (Ministry of Planning, 1998).

In Cameroon, a few surveys are carried out in the rural areas, while elsewhere, in the DRC and in Chad; they are rather conducted in the capital or secondary cities. One can also say that these surveys have, more or less, the same limitations as those pointed out in the census for carrying out a comprehensive study on migrations in Central Africa. It should also be said that there are countries where data is not available on studies conducted such as in Angola, RCA, and Gabon.

Apart from the scarcity of data, there is also the absence of a regional structure in Central Africa that takes charge of the realization of regional or national comparative studies, the dissemination of the results of research to the political decision-makers. In West Africa, the Cerpod (Center of studies and Research on Population and Development) of the CILSS (Interstate Committee of Struggle against Drought in the Sahel) played an major role for a better understanding of the phenomenon and for advocacy on suitable policies for decision-makers.

Central Africa: the socioeconomic and geo-political context of the migrations

Central Africa comprises, in this paper, the following countries: Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Chad. We also include in the region the countries of the Great Lakes (Rwanda and Burundi) because of their location in the migratory space of Central Africa. These countries fall into three historical and political groupings: the former French colonies (Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, RCA), Belgium (DRC and to some extent Rwanda and Burundi), and Portuguese (Angola). This distribution has some consequences on the migratory history of each sub-grouping and on the orientation of the international migratory flows.

The countries of Central Africa can be distinguished distinctly by their total areas : the DRC is the big giant of the region (2 345 000 km²) whereas Gabon, for example, has only 267 000 km² (Table 1). The region is therefore characterized by very unequal national densities: some countries have very low densities and vast stretches of virgin lands, while others don't have enough and are overcrowded. These imbalances expose the populations to migrations and the places of destination to conflicts, notably for access to land. This is how the migrations are described as demographic outlet for some overcrowded countries of the region (Pourtier, nd).

The countries of Central Africa have also different population sizes. The RDC is again the big giant with a population of 60 millions inhabitants; whereas Gabon only has just above 1 million and Congo 4 millions (table 1).

At the geographical level, this region spans across the equator, and enjoys an abundant rainfall, except Chad. Its vegetation is characterized by a vast forest space, the savanna and the mountains of the Congo-Nile range. The equatorial forest that covers it is dense and vast: 85% of the surface of Gabon, 60% of that of Congo, 50% of that of the DRC, a substantial part of Cameroon and the CAR. Only Chad is deprived of it. In total, 1,8 millions of km² are covered by this equatorial forest, which makes it the second largest tropical forest massif after the Amazon. Its wood reserves and its role in biodiversity make of this forest a major world issue. The mountains of the Congo-Nile range are equally so because of its fertile soil and the micro-climate that allows the practice of animal husbandry and agriculture.

As far as hydrography is concerned, Central Africa swims in water, so to speak. The Congo basin with 3 700 000 km² is in itself the most important water resource of Africa. Thanks to its rate of flow of (40 000 m³/sec), the Congo River made it possible for the construction of one of the largest hydropower dams in the world (the Inga dam in the DRC), that supplies

power to several African countries: the DRC, Congo, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, etc. These water resources represent another world issue, insofar as they are the subject of "covetousness" on the part of the neighbouring or faraway countries that don't have enough water and would therefore like "to globalize" the hydrographic basins of Congo.

For a long time, Central Africa has been rather known as a geological scandal because of the large variety of mineral resources it has. Angola, Congo and Gabon have oil and produce it on a world scale. Chad has joined them recently, whereas the DRC is yet to start exploitation of its oil from Moanda on a larger scale. The DRC is widely known for its deposits of copper, gold, manganese, bauxite, diamond, coltan, etc. The CAR also has important mine deposits. These mining resources represent a 3rd economic and political issue in Central Africa. They were unfortunately the cause of the wars known in the region, namely the one of the DRC and lent financial support to them.

The numerous issues mentioned above have an impact on the political context of the countries of this region. The exploitation of the mining deposits and other resources led to the destabilization of the political regimes, to their submission to the major financial and political powers of the world, to the neglect by those in power of the interests of the population. This situation created frustrations within the populations, class struggles for access to power, several series of military coups, murders of the Heads of State, bloodiest dictatorships as in DRC (32 years of Mobutu) and in the CAR (the coronation of Emperor Bokassa). The democratic process launched in these countries was not particularly successful. It started with the "popular consultations" of 1988-1990 in DRC, followed by the sovereign national Conferences (CNS) and finally the organization of presidential and legislative elections rather dictated by the international community. It is necessary to wait maybe for some years before reaping the fruits of this process.

In the meantime, the populations of Central Africa are living in a precarious condition that contrasts with the potential resources that they have in their countries. The predation, the extrovert nature of the economies rather of the gathering type, corruption, absence of transnational road networks, etc. are elements that characterize the economies in this region (UNECA 2004). All these conditions don't allow the populations to enjoy a decent life. The Human Development Indices (HDI) vary in this region between 0,353 (CAR) and 0,633 (Gabon).

Table 1: The countries of Central Africa in 2004: some parameters

Country	Area (km ²)	Population (in million in 2005)	Infant mortality rate (2001)	Human Development Indices (HDI)	Assistance per capita (in current USD)
Gabon	267 000	1,4	60	0,633	6,8
Congo	342 000	4,0	81	0,520	24
Cameroon	475 400	16,4	96	0,506	26
Rwanda	26340	8,7	96	0,450	33
Angola	1,2 million	15,4	154	0,439	19,9
RDC	2,3 millions	60,8	129	0,391	4,8
Burundi	27830	7,8	114	0,384	18,8
Chad	1,3 millions	9,7	117	0,368	22,6
CA R	623 000	4,2	115	0,353	20

Source : UNECA (2004).

Three countries of the region have HDI that show a high human development: Gabon, Congo and Cameroon. Angola should be part of this group because of its oil and especially because of the end of the war. These are by the way the countries that are the most attractive in the region, and are countries of immigration. Gabon recorded, at the time of the last census conducted in 2003, 15% of immigrants (a few more than 150 000), mostly of African origin. It may be probably the leading country of immigration in Central Africa.

In the CAR, 11 003 immigrants were recorded as against 11 458 emigrants at the last census of 2003, that is a negative balance of - 455 which suggests that we are dealing with a country rather of emigration. The recorded migrants came mostly from the neighboring countries: the DRC (51%), Sudan (18%), Chad (17%), Cameroon (5%), Congo Brazzaville (3%), France (0,6%) and Lebanon (0, 3%). Angola has a net rate of migration of 3,55% (census of 2005); it therefore stands as a country of immigration. We should therefore admit that Central Africa is a real migratory space for its populations.

The internal migrations within the countries of Central Africa

We should first note that it is about migrations taking place inside the States. The main aspects tackled in the studies of this type of migrations are: 1) the rural exodus to the big cities and to the secondary or medium size cities; 2) the return migrations to the village or to the secondary cities; 3) the contribution to rapid urbanization; 4) the forced migrations; and 5) the displaced populations.

The strong media coverage of international migrations, namely the pictures on the heroic struggle of the African migrants that attempt at all cost to arrive in the countries of the North, has the tendency of relegating internal migrations and particularly their issues to secondary importance. And yet, the international migrations are less frequent than the internal migrations: the Central African Republic (CAR) noted that international migrations only represent 3% of the whole migrations recorded at the time of the census of 2003.

Moreover, the internal migrations are at the origin of a deep redeployment of the populations across the national territories and, we will see it, of the great tragedy that the displaced populations are experiencing. They also reflect the socioeconomic inequalities concerning the development of the countries of the region, as well as of the socio-political crises that they are going through. It is anyway one of the features of Central Africa and the most important peculiarity of the context of the migrations in this region.

Besides, several authors drew the attention to the interrelations between internal migrations and international migrations. Prothero (1988) stigmatized the fact that the migrations related to natural disasters and socio-political unrests that are frequent in Central Africa, should not be considered as international migrations even though it involves crossing national borders. This is because the migrants concerned don't take into account of these borders given the prevailing situation. We can say the same thing about clandestine migrations due to the precariousness of the socioeconomic situation in the countries of origin. These migrations which are also embarked upon for reasons of survival, are facilitated by the porosity of the national borders.

The rural-urban migrations "pour" people, who come to inflate unemployment, increase the slums, etc. in the cities. They contribute to the impoverishment of the cities and also of the

rural areas that are abandoned. They are, from this fact, the base of international migrations, the assumptions being that the South-North migrants in particular, mainly leave the cities in crisis to look for better living conditions in the more developed countries. In an article published lately, Cheru (2007: 49) concludes that there is in Africa an "urbanization without development", which is reinforced by globalization.

A reflection of the socioeconomic Inequalities...

The analysis of the migratory balances shows that the most affluent provinces are also the most attractive, whereas those that are poor are rather repulsive. This suggests that migrations are made mainly to escape poverty in the rural areas of origin and to expect a better living condition in the cities or the most affluent regions. In Cameroon, the percentages of migrants are respectively: 20.5%; 18.9% and 13.9% in the western, central and extreme northern Provinces, whereas the poorest provinces retained only few migrants, (3.9% in Adamoua). But this attractiveness doesn't mean an absence of propensity of the populations to migrate from the most affluent provinces. This led Ngwe (1989) to conclude that "the pressure and the [low] level of the development reached are not enough to explain the propensity to migrate."

The situation is similar in the DRC where the provinces of Katanga, Bas-Congo and Kasai Oriental showed, at the census of 1984, positive migratory balances and the highest percentage of migrants: 39,6% for Kinshasa, 10% for Kasai Oriental and 7% for Katanga. We can see, from these figures, the impact of the development poles policy and of the concentration of the investments in Kinshasa city, Katanga province for its various mineral resources and of Kasai oriental for the diamond (Lututala, Mr. and al, 2007). These three provinces have the lowest poverty indices: 41,6 for Kinshasa, 69,1 for Katangas and 62,3 for Kasai Oriental. On the contrary, the poorest provinces of the country, that is Equateur (poverty index = 93, 6) and the Bandundu (IP=89, 1) (RDC, 2006) have the lowest percentages of migrants, that is respectively 2.3%; and 2.6%. In the Central African Republic, the capital city Bangui, , receives and keeps 58% of the national migrants as a whole and 59% of all international migrants. The situation is the same as in Congo: Brazzaville had received, at the census of 1984, 47% of all the migrants of the country, out of which 35% were from the rural areas and 7% from the neighboring countries including the DRC (Foo, 1990).

... And a low intermixture of the populations

The internal migratory exchanges take place between neighboring provinces. They contribute only very little to the cultural intermixture and to the unification of the countries of this region. Thus, in the DRC, 65% of migrants in Kinshasa came from the neighboring provinces of Bas-Congo (32,3%) and of Bandundu (32,6%). Likewise the migrants in Bas-Congo come mainly from Kinshasa (75%) and Bandundu (12%).

Various factors can explain this situation, namely the rundown state or quasi absence of road infrastructures linking the different provinces, which make transportation costs prohibitive. But there is also lack of interdependence in the economies of the different regions of the countries: few trade exchanges and lack of economic complementarity, etc. the ensuing result is that the populations of Central Africa are somehow intermixed, they remain even attached to their "residential areas", that is the land of their forefathers (Lututala (1989).

Rapid urbanization: the contribution of migrations

It is mainly towards the national cities that people from the rural areas migrate. It is not only about the capital cities, but also and maybe mostly the provincial or local cities.

In fact, the internal migratory networks follow the colonial logic and the socio-political circumstances. The mining of natural resources by the colonial powers concentrated on a few places which are endowed with these resources (case of the mining or agricultural zones). The concentration of investments in these areas required a manpower that cannot be found there in sufficient number. Hence, the recruitment of first forced and then persuasive migrant workers from the rural areas. These people therefore left their native villages for these areas that gradually became big, medium or small size cities. Other places were also chosen to concentrate investments in, either because of their geo-strategic locations, or for their political roles (case of the capital cities or the county towns of the decentralized entities). We showed how, in the case of the DRC, this process was at the origin of the modern migrations in this country (Lututala, 1985).

These migrants were essentially males at the beginning of the process. But later they were reunited with their wives, whom some of them were going to see for the first time. The urban fertility rate resulting from these reunions is going to combine with what some people term rural exodus, that is going to continue forever, to sustain the urban growth. The consequence is spectacular!

Indeed, the rates of urbanization in Central Africa are among the highest of the black Africa: 41% against 39% for Africa in general, 23% for eastern Africa and 44% for West Africa. There are great differences in the rates of urbanization of the various countries of Central Africa: Gabon (85%), Congo (61%), Cameroon (56%), Angola (55%), and CAR: 38%, the DRC: 33%; Chad: 26%. But it is above all the urban growth rates that distinguishes Central Africa; they were estimated at 4, 1% between 2005 and 2010, against 3,2% for the whole Africa, 2,6% for eastern Africa and 3,7% for West Africa (UNFPA, 2007, page 90).

Another aspect that characterizes the urbanization in Central Africa is the concentration of the urban population in the capital city and in one or two other big cities of the country. This phenomenon is common to all the countries of the region. However, these capital cities are also running out of steam, so that their native as well as migrants populations don't hesitate to leave to come back to the village or to go in the secondary cities near the rural areas of origin. This trend has been observed in Cameroon (Gubry and al,...), in the DRC (Lututala, 1989) and should also be found in other countries.

The forced migrations

By forced migration we mean the one that individuals are compelled to embark upon within their country. The history of the countries of Central Africa, as it is the case in other African countries, shows that these countries experienced important forced migrations, for economic, religious and ethnic reasons (Makwala, 1999). The economic reasons concern the work for the development the colonies: portage; buildings, roads and railways construction, mining and agricultural exploitation; setting up of industries; etc. These operations required local but also foreign manpower. The populations, who were very attached to the land of their forefathers, didn't want to go far, and it was therefore necessary to use force to oblige them to go. We showed, in the case of the DRC, how these migrations have been triggered and has established, so to speak, the present migratory networks in the country (Lututala, 1986).

According to Makwala (1999), the number of workers recruited and displaced by force in the DRC has gone from 47 000 to 125 000 from 1917 to 1920 and to 278 104 in 1924.

With regard to the religious factor, the issue was essentially about the repression in the DRC of the religious and political movement launched by Prophet Simon Kimbangu which led to the forced displacement of his disciplines and their families who were natives of the Bas Congo Province to other provinces of the colony: Equateur, Bandundu, Kasai and Katanga.

Some inter-ethnic conflicts also broke out during the colonial period, causing displacement of thousands of people. For instance in the DRC, the conflict between the luba and the luluwa was favored by the inequalities maintained by the colonial rulers. As a result of this, whole families and tens of thousands of luba were forced to flee the places that they were occupying in the western Kasai (Makwala, op.cit). Later, the DRC went through a phenomenon of expulsion of non natives. Men, women and children who established themselves in the area since time immemorial or were even born in the Eastern provinces of Katanga and North-Kivu were forced to leave everything behind and go back to their provinces of origin, where some had never set foot before. The failures of the democratization process that was started in 1990, the state of lethargy of the political structures, insecurity, 1991 and 1993 lootings, etc. are some of the factors that led to these expulsions. It was estimated that a total number of 1, 2 millions were sent back to the two Kasais from Katanga.

The displaced populations: an indicator of political instability in Central Africa

Unlike the forced migrations that are carried out under constraints, the displacements, which this section deals with, are decided by the populations themselves in order to protect themselves from risks of wars and other social and political upheavals. Indeed Central Africa experiences these events on a recurrent and almost cyclical basis. As a result of these, there are massive displacements of the populations. In the DRC, it was estimated that a total number of 3,4 millions people were displaced in 2003. This number increased, from 400 000 in December 1998, to 700 000 in July 1999. then in December 2003 it reached 3,4 millions (UNDP-RDC, 2003). Almost all the other countries of Central Africa, with probably the exception of Cameroon and Gabon, went through these massive displacements of the populations because of wars.

Angola managed to get its independence in 1975, after Unita, the MPLA and the FNLA led armed struggles against the colonial power, Portugal. These struggles caused the displacement of thousands of Angolans within and outside their country. The accession of Angola to independence didn't put an end to the socio-political unrests in the country. The rebellion of the Unita, led by Jonas Savimbi, continued until his death in 2002, that is 27 years of civil war. The country has therefore experienced violent military confrontations, in spite of the signature of several military and economic agreements, the cease-fire agreements, peace plans, organization of parliamentary and presidential elections in 1992, the condemnations by the United Nations of the violations of the agreements, the embargo on weapons, the promulgation of laws of amnesty, the constitution of a national union government, the elimination of food aid, the demobilization and the integration of the rebels in the national army.

The Republic of Congo also went through several episodes of ethnic confrontations, coups and wars. The first confrontations took place in 1959 in Brazzaville and opened the way, so to speak, to the rip between the Larises from the South and the Mbochises from the North. Since the country's independence and prior 1991, when the Sovereign National Conference (CNS) was held, the country experienced resignations of Heads of State, Army takeovers, the

murder of President Marien Ngouabi, parliamentary elections and a constitutional referendum in 1979. After the CNS, Congo has gone through a rather agitated transition, with contested parliamentary and presidential elections, and very violent urban guerrilla warfare. In 1993, some militias confront each other and whole districts of Brazzaville "were purged ". Tens of thousands of inhabitants were expelled and were obliged to move out. In 1997, the civil war started again, and opposed the regular army and the militiamen of the ex-President Dennis Sassou-Nguesso. This led again to the displacement of thousands of people and refugees.

In 1997, Dennis Sassou-Nguesso returned to power and this has ushered in a period of normalization of the situation, marked nevertheless by the extinction in 1999 of the opposition militia. As a result, there were important displacements of populations. 800 000 people allegedly fled their homes; but several among them returned starting from May 2, 1999. On May 9, 1999, new fights broke out at Maya-Maya Airport and caused the displacement of nearly 15 000 people toward the DRC. The election of President Dennis Sassou Nguesso on March 10, 2001 for a 7 year-mandate does not completely put an end to the unrests, at least during the days following the elections. There is still a persisting insecurity in the Pool. This armed conflicts caused the displacement of 15 000 people in the Pool and more than 50 000 people in Brazzaville. Finally, it is estimated that more than 100 000 natives of the Pool take shelter in other regions of the country.

The CAR got its independence on August 13, 1960. David Dacko, who was the first President of the country, was overthrown by Jean Bedel Bokassa in 1965. The latter proclaimed himself life President-Marshal, then, on December 4, 1976, the Emperor Bokassa the 1st of the Central African Empire. He therefore established a real tyrannical regime, with bloody repressions, including those of school children in 1979. This event was the major element that led to the toppling of Bokassa, and to his replacement by David Dacko. The advent of multiparty system in 1981 led to the organization of elections whose results were contested. André Kolongba thus came to power, and he lost that power in 1993 to Angel-Felix Patassé. After the arrival of the latter to power, the country plunged into a deep recession, and mutinies within the army. To put an end to this situation, an African monitoring team of the Bangui agreements was constituted, and was replaced by the United Nations Mission in the CAR (Minurca). In 1999, Angel-Felix Patassé was reelected President, but in a context characterized by instability in the neighboring countries, namely Chad and the DRC whose troops and rebels helped General Bozize to overthrow President Patassé.

Immigration in the countries of Central Africa

The immigrants who enter the countries of Central Africa come from neighboring countries of the region or faraway. Some arrive on their own volition, others are refugees forced to abandon their countries to go into exile in the neighboring countries, namely at the time of political crises or natural disasters.

Migrations among the countries of Central Africa

The origins of modern migratory networks and labour migrations

The migratory "exchanges" among the countries of Central Africa date back to the colonial period. There are three contributing elements: the needs for manpower for the development of the colonies on the one hand and the high labour cost and the demographic indigence (the

expression is of Loungou, nd) on the other hand. As said above, the development of the colony required a relatively sizable manpower that can be exploited at will. However, the studies indicate that several countries could not have the number of workers wanted, hence, the need to recruit some in neighboring and faraway countries. Thus, for example, Bouet (1973) indicates in the case of Gabon, that the enterprises were always short of manpower and, for that matter, had to recruit people in Congo, Cameroon, in the CAR and in Benin. Besides Roumegous (1966) points out that the French company of Gabon (CFG) recruited hundreds of Chad workers from sara ethnic group to work in the installation of the veneer manufacturing factory of Port-Gentil

The literature also points out the presence since the colonial time of Chad migrants in Cameroon. After independence and precisely in 1965, other Chad workers arrived in Cameroon for the account of the SOSUCAM (Cameroon Sugar Company).

Nowadays, these migrations continue and sometimes clandestinely. They are facilitated by the permeability of the borders. Besides, some twin cities are located on either side of the border, and this poses the serious problem of national identity. Whereas the migrants are accused of selling off the nationality of the host countries, they claim in their turn that they are fully-fledged citizens of these countries. This, as it is in the case of the DRC, creates enormous problems of cohabitation between these migrants and the natives, and they went, as it is in the case of the DRC, to wars that caused thousands of deaths.

Expulsion of the migrants or solidarity put to the test

Migrations are often shown as a factor capable of fostering economic or even social integration of the countries of origin and the host countries and their populations as well. The migrants who arrive in an area of destination not only contribute to production and economic growth, but also to socio-demographic dynamics that are profitable to their host environment. The same migrants, through the goods and funds that they remit to their areas of origin, contribute to the economy of the latter and the survival of their families back at home. That is the role that the migrations should also play between the countries of Central Africa.

We have just shown in the previous point how decisive is the contribution of the migrants in the development of resources in the different countries of Central Africa during the colonial time. But even after independence, several countries were obliged to resort to recruiting labour from neighboring "sister and friendly" countries. This is notably the case of Gabon, which, following the oil boom, felt a need for an important manpower that its demographic potential could not satisfy. This was followed an economic euphoria that led to the development and the implementation of ambitious development projects, which required labour in sufficient number. Agreements were signed between Gabon and other African States to encourage the recruitments, the entry into Gabon of the recruited migrants and their repatriation at the end of the work contracts.

But the paradox appeared quickly: right from 1986, Gabon started experiencing an economic crisis, and promulgated the policy of "gabonisation" of jobs, and abandoned the state-controlled recruitment of migrant workers. President Omar Bongo considered in 1995, that "things have gone beyond the threshold of tolerance" (Young Africa Economy, n° 190, February 1995). The scientists followed suit, or fuelled this feeling. To some exceptions, these latter considered the migrants as "economic parasites that propagate social scourge" (Loungou,...). Immigration is even seen by some as a threat to the cohesion, or even to the survival of the Gabonese nation (ibidem).

In other cases, it was about hosting populations from neighboring and sister countries in distress following wars or socioeconomic hardships. Hundreds of thousands of Chadians went into exile in Cameroon following the wars and the ethnic intolerance in their country (Temgoua,...). But there too, the paradox was quick to appear! As the migrants were integrating in the economy and in the society of the host countries, a feeling of xenophobia developed against them. The solidarity that the host populations showed at the arrival of these migrants gradually gave way to a frustration resulting from the feeling that these migrants represent a real or an imaginary burden in their new host environment. Temgoua specified that "the load was especially heavy since a lot of heads of family were polygamous, had a lot of children and relatively low incomes." Those who went to the Cameroonian cities engaged in all sorts of activities to earn a living; they were a source of an abundant, laborious and cheap labour. This, in the long run, ended up creating the underemployment of the Cameroonian natives that "the employers considered from that moment, proud and too demanding" (ibidem), hence, the development of xenophobia against these migrants, and police harassments for the payment of taxes among others. Land issues caused by these migrants were also raised, and one can even question the territorial and economic capacity of Cameroon to offer asylum to Chad migrants.

This organized immigration has, as the migratory theory points it out, created migratory networks that will be supplied by clandestine migrants who come to also try their luck in this prosperous Gabon. This type of immigration was quickly described as "unmanageable", hence the need felt to slow it down while making the entry conditions and of stay conditions hard to comply with. For Loungou (op.cit.), this policy "corrupted the phenomenon" and therefore led to the "clandestinisation" of the migratory flows. All these migrants, clandestine or not, were gradually going to play an economic role in several sectors: trade, household work, handicraft, etc. Loungou stated: "faced with native populations traditionally attracted by the public service or more globally by salaried work, immigrant communities of African origin distinguish themselves by an acute sense of 'business' and resourcefulness that guarantee for them the control of large sectors of the economy." And as it was observed in the case of Cameroon, the employers also preferred to recruit the foreign workers, to the big frustration of the natives. This resulted in the expulsions of the Congolese (in 1962)³, of the Cameroonians (in 1981) and of other Africans among whom, probably, Congolese for the DRC in 1991.

Finally let's consider the tragedies suffered by Congolese migrants (of the RDC) in Angola. In 2004, 20 000 Congolese workers (of the DRC) were alleged to have been expelled from Angola. Other sources advocated that an impressive number of 100 000 Congolese were waiting, to be repatriated from Angola in 2004. (<http://hrw.org/french/docs/2004/04/23/congo8492.htm>). In July 2007, 12,565 Congolese migrants were expelled from Angola and hosted by the Kasai Western province. And in conditions that were deemed inhuman by the Congolese authorities. All this irritates the Congolese who remember that during the whole period of war that Angola went through, the DRC welcomed thousands of Angolans to its territory. Contrary to what happens in the Kivu provinces with the Rwandans, the cohabitation between these Angolan refugees and the indigenous populations of the Bas Congo and Bandundu never experienced any shocks. In

³ Loungou (op.cit) points out that by way of retaliation, some Gabonese were also expelled from Congo.

some townships of this province, Angolans and Congolese live in such a symbiosis that it is difficult, without reconstituting family trees, to make any distinction between them.

The refugees in central Africa: a record?

We cannot talk about migrations in Central Africa without mentioning, separately, the phenomenon of refugees in which this region set a record in Africa. It is indeed in Central Africa that we find the largest number of refugees in the world. The refugees are also displaced populations, the only difference being that they have found shelter in other countries. Such organizations as the UNHCR (the United Nations High Commission for Refugees) can take charge. Of them But this fact doesn't remove in anyway the sufferings that they endure.

The socio-political context that underlies the refugee status is the same as that of the forced internal displacements. We are going back to the subject. The problem of the integration of these refugees as well as their political aspects have been analyzed by several authors (Bazenguissa-Ganga, 2004; Poyer, 2004). We shall limit ourselves to showing the importance of the refugees in this region (table 2).

Table n° 2: Number of refugees in some countries of Central Africa

Country	Hosted refugees	National refugees
Angola	12000	432 800
Burundi	40500	57 4400
Congo	109200	27 100
RCA	50700	25400
DRC	333 000	414500
Rwanda	30900	75000
Sudan	328 000	505 000

Source: UNHCR: Annual Statistical Report, 2002, in Guichaoua, 2004.

This table shows that the DRC is a true centre for refugees in this region: it welcomes almost as many refugees as it sends to other countries. And there lies the whole complexity of the phenomenon. Sometimes the countries play the role of host countries facing the socio-political crises that break out in the neighboring countries; but the same countries also experience crises that lead their population to find shelter in the neighboring countries. This suggests a concerted policy to face this phenomenon.

The particular and troubling case of the region of the Great Lakes

We mention the particular case of the region of the Great Lakes because the DRC, and to a lesser extent, Congo, were and are still greatly marked by the migratory issues in this sub-region. We were considering these migratory issues as a cyclical time bomb (Lututala, 2000). Indeed, the migrations in this sub-region are at the beginning and at the end of socio-political crises. For several decades, these crises have caused, underlain and made indispensable, these migrations to the extent that they became merely simple displacements: it is a true life style of the populations in the sub-region which is difficult, or even impossible, to prevent today. We mention some of the facts below in table n° 3.

Picture n° 3: socio-political Crises and migratory facts in the Great Lakes sub-region

Examples of political crises	Migratory facts	
	Upstream	Downstream
Demarcation of pre colonial borders		"Creation" of floating populations (ex: the Banyamulenges)
Forced or persuasive recruitments of labour for the development of the colony		- Displacement of migrants in neighboring countries (ex: Rwandan in Kivu) – Autonomous status of the migrants in relation to the natives
Kanyarwanda rebellion (displaced people and other migrants)		Return Migrations to Rwanda forced by the local authorities
Rwandan) in host regions in the DRC		in retaliation
Inter-ethnic wars in Rwanda on the eve of the independence		1 st important wave of emigration of the Rwandans, mostly Tutsi, to the countries of the sub-region (close to 300 000)
Repression of the authorities of Kigali following the attempts of conquest return migrations	Conquest attempts of former migrants of return migrations	2 nd important wave of emigration of the Rwandans, mostly Tutsi, to the countries of the sub-region,
Demographic pressure, famine, economic crises, inter-ethnic tension		Waves of clandestine migrations - Widening of the family life space -Instauration of family migratory chains
Murder of President Ndadaye in Burundi		Forced migrations of more or less 700 000 Hutus to the neighboring countries (Uganda, Rwanda, DRC)
Murder of Presidents Habyarimana (Rwanda) and Ntaryamira (Burundi)	Return Migrations Conquest	Flow of refugees, mainly of Hutu origin - Displacements of the populations inside the countries
War for the reconquest of the power by the FPR	Return Migrations of conquest	Asylum in the neighboring countries
	Existence of former migrants militiamen (Interhamwe)	Violations of the borders for punitive "expeditions" in the neighboring countries
War of liberation of the DRC by AFDL	Return Migrations of conquest by the Congolese migrants (diasporas)	Asylum of the former dignitaries and populations in the neighboring countries
War of aggression of the DRC	Return Migrations forced by AFDL fighters	- asylum of the Congolese in neighboring countries - massive Displacements of populations inside the country

The migrations are also upstream of the socio-political crises in the region in the sense that the migrants represent a reservoir for return migrations of conquest (the rebels). The

migration appears here like a fall back to re-conquer power on the occasion of the return migrations of conquest. It is the case of the FPR (Rwandan Patriotic Front) which, from its exile in Uganda, went to re-conquer power in Kigali in 1994 following a return migration of conquest. The same thing applies to AFDL (Democratic Forces Alliance for the Liberation of Congo), composed mainly of the Congolese of the Diaspora (of migrants), that crossed the country from the East to Kinshasa to chase President Mobutu out of power. Longtime migrants or those freshly "uprooted" from their countries, sometimes because of rebellions or by the rebellions themselves. Migrants who are in faraway countries as the United States or those that lurk around their country.

The immigrants from faraway countries

In the survey-synthesis Sadio (1993) carried out, indicated the presence of migrants from West Africa in the countries of Central Africa. That is the Malians, Mauritians, Senegalese,... in Cameroon, the DRC, Gabon, Congo and, more and more in Angola. These are ancient movements but which have undergone recent development notably due to the fact that it has become more and more difficult to gain entry to the countries of the North.

Unfortunately it is difficult to know the exact number of these immigrants. But they are particularly numerous in the border regions. Thus, in the sector of Bashali in the DRC, (Masisi, North-Kivu), 85% of the population were composed of immigrants, probably of Rwandan origin. In the other sectors of the same territory, the rate revolves around 50%.

As it is in the case of the migrants from the neighboring countries, those from faraway countries also have difficulty establishing themselves in the countries of Central Africa. They are blamed for all sorts of ills: selling off of the nationality, confiscation of land, corruption, refusal of a true integration, etc. in the face these barriers, they develop their own integration strategies. In the case of the Nigerian migrants in Douala in Cameroon: investment in the uninhabited or in areas unfit for habitation, creation of extra territorial spaces, renting of the houses for long periods to get safe from the harassments of the owners, regrouping of dwellings and trades, associations of solidarity between immigrants, professional monopolies to make themselves indispensable, regrouping in merchant organizations for common strategies, churches fellowship and donations, engagements or marriages with the natives, etc.

The emigration of the populations of Central Africa

We shall examine here the emigration of the populations of Central Africa to more faraway countries, on the continent or elsewhere, mainly the countries of the North. The main features are the following: 1) predominance of the emigration to the countries of the North; 2) diversification of immigration countries; 3) heroic migratory movements, 4) a migratory integration rather difficult; 5) brain drain to the countries of immigration; 6) residential ubiquity between the countries of residence and the countries of origin; and 7) a contribution of important enough of the migrants to the economy of the countries of origin.

About the predominance of the emigration toward the countries of the North

The migrants who leave their countries and the Central Africa region go especially to the countries of the North and in South Africa. They are in any case in minority in West Africa (Demba Fall, 2003) and certainly in East Africa. But we can also find them in North Africa that serves as a transit point toward Europe.

The migrations to the countries of the North have been triggered by the existence of political and economic relations between the former colonies and their respective metropolis. Thus, the Congolese of the DRC found themselves in Belgium, since the 50s, while the Gabonese, Congolese (of Brazzaville), Cameroonians, Chadians rather go toward France. And the Angolans presumably toward Portugal. Some statistical data can be found in the census of host countries (table 1).

These first migrations have mostly been embarked upon for reasons of study or preparation for political life. Indeed, several Africans could get scholarships to go and pursue their studies in the universities of the North, either because they are more famous, either because there were no universities (in sufficient number) in their countries. In this regard, we note that many Congolese (of Brazzaville) have left for the ex USSR to study, as Congo was of Marxist obedience, while the Congolese of the DRC mostly went to Belgium.

At a second stage, it was anybody that could afford it that migrates. The main reasons are 1) search for more remunerative employment, 2) family reunion for the case of the women, 3) furtherance of studies, 4) political asylum. And since then, the African population in the countries of the North never stopped growing (picture 4).

Picture 4: Evaluations of the number of immigrants from Central Africa in some countries of the North

Country of origin	Country of destination	reference Period	Estimated/observed Number	Data source
Gabon	France		5794	
Angola	South Africa	1965	11 169	Crush hand Williams, 2002
Cameroon	France	1999	32541	1999 census
DRC	France	1990	22740	1990 census
DRC	Belgium	1994	11828	1994Census
DRC	Quebec	2005	801	Lututala and al, 2007
Chad	France	1992	1418	Amougou, 1997
CAR	France	1992	4059	Amougou, 1997
Congo	France	1992	12755	Amougou, 1997

A diversification of countries of 'immigration

Several countries of the North reinforced the conditions and criteria of entry for the African migrants in general and those of Central Africa in particular. The latter were obliged to review their strategies, namely by changing their migratory space. First, they relocated in other European countries. This is why we can see that the number of the Congolese migrants (from the DRC) has increased in France, England, Germany, Switzerland, etc, to the detriment of Belgium. But that was not all. The European countries adopted almost similar migratory policies. It obliged the migrants of Central Africa to move more and more toward other continents, namely the North America (Canada and the United States of America) and even Asia (China, Japan,...).

Heroic migratory movements

One of the more used strategies is to pass by several countries before reaching the country of destination. In a survey that we conducted among the Congolese migrants leaving in Paris,

we noted that only 33% of these migrants arrived directly in France, that means without transiting through one or several countries (table 5).

Tableau 5 : migratory movements of some Congolese migrants in Paris

N°	Sex	Year of arrival in Europe	Year of arrival in France	Migratory movement from Kinshasa (RDC)
01	M	1991	1994	Angola - Belgium - Holland - France
02	F	1994	1994	Angola — ex URSS - France
03	F	1994	1994	Gabon - Côte d'Ivoire - France
04	F	1990	1991	Angola — Germany — France
05	F	1994	1995	Angola - Portugal - France
06	F	1995	1995	Angola – South Africa - Nigeria - France
07	M	1984	1986	Angola – Checoslovakia - ex URSS - Italy - France
08	M	1993	1995	Nigeria – England - Germany - Belgium - France
09	F	1995	1995	Mozambique – South Africa – Belgium - France
10	F	1992	1996	Angola – Germany - Belgium - France
11	F	1992	1996	Mozambique – South Africa - Holland - France
12	M	1995	1998	Gabon - Nigeria – Morocco - Spain - France
13	M	1983	1990	Angola – Switzerland - France - Switzerland - France
14	M	1991	1992	RCA - Uganda - Kenya – Spain - Italy - France

Source : Lututala, 2002.

The choice of the transit countries is not done at random. We first notice that in almost all cases, the first countries of transit are in Central Africa, to confirm that the latter is truly a migratory space and of life for the populations of this region. For these populations the first destinations are almost naturally the "neighboring and sister countries." The latter offers them the possibility to achieve their migratory ambitions. It is indeed easier for the Congolese to get their visas for France from Gabon, from Cameroon, from the CAR; or their visas for Europe in general from Angola.

The migratory movements described above also reveal the struggle the migrants had to engage in before reaching the countries of final destination. Some migrants (case of the migrant n° 14) had to go through 5 countries before reaching France. In each of these countries, they struggle to integrate, just to get accommodation and have an economic activity, to learn the language of the environment, to enter into the networks that would enable them pursue of the migratory course, etc. The case of the women is obviously more preoccupying, because it's true that it is while they trying to take these risks that some of them became victims of rapes and other degrading treatment, or they were compelled to engage in prostitution, with all the risks involved, to be able to earn some income to enable them survive there and continue their migratory course. We should finally emphasize the risks that the migrants run to be repatriated from one or the other country of transit. The case of repatriations from Morocco is known well!

A rather difficult socioeconomic Integersion

We have just mentioned in the previous point the difficulties that migrants have to face in integrating in the countries of transit. We can say the same thing concerning their economic and socio-cultural integration in the countries of final destination. The economic integration boils down to the issue of access to income, and therefore of jobs that the migrants do in the

countries of destination. The data indicate that the situation is far from being rosy: the French census of 1990 reveals that the rate of unemployment of the Cameroonian female migrants in France, for example, was 36,4%, that of the Congolese female migrants (from the DRC) was even higher: 53% as against 35% for the migrants. The proportion of employed migrant seems therefore to be higher than the unemployed people. But which total number does it refer to? They are mostly employees of service companies (restaurants, those who prepare orders, hairdressers, servers, newspaper vendors,...) and workers (security guards, chambermaids, housework, reception service in old people's home etc). The question is why this low rate activities and why the concentration on this type of activities. Is it due to discrimination or lack of qualification?

The problem faced by the migrants from Central Africa in positioning themselves well on the labour market can easily be perceived in the multiplicity of the migratory regulations. The Congolese migrants (from Brazzaville) in France, for instance, had migratory regulations covering seven categories as follows:

- (1) Public service trainees,
- (2) Students,
- (3) Visitors,
- (4) Workers' families,
- (5) political asylum seekers,
- (6) members of French families,
- (7) 'firemen'.

With regard to their brothers from the DRC, six classes of migrants were identified in Paris, from our previous studies:

- (1) Political refugees
- (2) "Libanguists"
- (3) Students
- (4) Civil servants
- (5) Immigrants received and
- (6) Naturalised (*Lututala, M. and T. Zamwangana, 1998*).

The diversity of the migratory regulations suggests that the migrants perform activities which are interwoven, some are regular while others do not appear to be so. The civil servants concerned are persons sent on posting or on in-service training who apparently are on salary or on scholarship. However, this does not mean that they are free from problems. In fact, it was observed that in the case of Congolese (from the DRC), some civil servants who were sent on posting did not receive their salaries for several months. Faced with this problem of inability to pay their rent, the students were obliged to transform their embassy offices into residential accommodation. A similar situation was observed in respect of students who for several months had not received their scholarships which their home countries should have sent. This compelled them to work in the "food" industry sector to finance their studies.

The political refugees and asylum seekers are persons who endeavour to make it possible for the host countries to accept them while asserting the risks involved with their safety in their countries of origin. They live under the charge of the host countries, but this is just enough for their survival.

Besides, they live in perpetual agony; for they do not know if they will be allowed to stay in these countries or if they will be expelled to their countries of origin. The fear of being expelled compels some of them to adopt various strategies for integration, such as inter-racial marriages, giving birth to children, etc.

“Libanguists” are migrants who generally moonlight and practise all sorts of professions to earn a living. On the whole, they moonlight because of a migration regulation that forbids them to practise a trade and therefore have a regular employment. In fact, the labour market in the northern countries discriminates against certain minority tribes, including African minorities. For example, certain jobs are reserved solely for nationals to the effect that migrants have to be content with precarious ones which the nationals themselves will not like to perform. According to the Geographic Mobility Survey and INED Social Insertion (National Institute for Demography) in France, migrants coming from Sub-Saharan Africa are very much affected by job discrimination.

In certain cases, discrimination leads them to withdraw into themselves. Faced with the problem of finding a job, the migrant becomes discouraged, frustrated and no longer looks for a job; and turns towards unofficial activities or precarious jobs.

Do we have to talk about lack of qualification of the African migrant in the North? If no, we have to consider the migrant’s present educational level and the level he attained prior to leaving his country. Certainly, the first generation of Africans in the West was made up of workers who could read and write a little or not at all. These were recruited to do manual jobs. It was therefore a question of under-qualification which was accepted by the host country. A special case in point is that migrants from Mali, Senegal and to a lesser extent, migrants from Cameroon leave for France. Besides, it seems the relative number of migrants in the socio-professional category of workers increased in France in the 1980s.

The second generation is made up of students who have left for studies or training. With regard to the Congolese immigrants (the two Congos), the students rather constitute the first true generation of migrants in the North. In one case or another, it is a question of decolonisation, sending future executives back to their former metropolis to manage their country. Later on, students were sent to the North to benefit from a quality training as the system of education in the African countries was dysfunctional. They were sent to pursue their studies to the highest level possible. This had affected especially children of well-to-do families. They were capable of taking charge of their children. It also affected 3rd cycle students on scholarship. This practice continues up to today. In 1992 – 93, a total of 4916 students from Cameroon enrolled in the universities in France, including women representing 38%.

They represent a quarter of migrants from Cameroon living in France. In the DRC, the University of Kinshasa, the only university in the country, has

almost 230 students studying in France and especially in Belgium. They are pursuing studies leading to a doctorate degree.

Brain drain towards rich countries

Today, majority of migrants migrate after attaining a very high standard of education. It is because of this that we talk about “brain drain” and “disqualification”. Disqualification refers to the fact that several migrants take up employment at a reduced rate in relation to their level of training. PhD holders teach in the secondary school while medical doctors drive taxis and more.

Brain drain can be examined at two levels (*Lututala, 2006*). It is brain drain because the people who leave their countries have already acquired some professional experience during their training at school which does not directly benefit their countries. Brain drain is also the case of past students who do not return to their countries of origin after their studies.

Countries of Central Africa are confronted with these problems of brain drain. Several executives from these countries go somewhere else because of the precarious economic and socio-political situation in their countries of origin. A case in point is the Cameroonian medical doctors who are found in several countries. Congolese medical doctors in South Africa are gradually increasing in number. There is also the case of Cameroonian and Congolese footballers especially those who play in the big teams in the North. Concerning students who refuse to return home after their studies, it is observed that hundreds, indeed millions, of those students are nationals of Central Africa.

In a study conducted on behalf of the European Union, Docquier, Lohest and Marfouk reveal that Angola, Congo, Mozambique, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Kenya are the African countries where several qualified workers work in the European Union. The number of qualified Angolans reported by these authors (56,000) certainly beats all human understanding, and must be confirmed by future studies. Nevertheless, the brain drain is a real phenomenon in Angola and in the other countries of Central Africa. In Cameroon, a survey conducted on the exodus of professionals in the health sector, commissioned by WHO, revealed that within ten years, this country lost 173 medical doctors, 50 dentists, 155 nurses specialists in paediatrics, intensive care and anaesthesia, 50 midwives and 9 pharmacists. Today, they can be found in Great Britain, United States of America, France and Belgium. The same survey revealed that 49% of health professionals had the intention of emigrating to the following countries: United States of America, France, Great Britain, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Senegal, Switzerland, Australia, Congo (!), Côte d'Ivoire and Holland. The reasons are as follows:

1. Advanced training;
2. Economic reasons;
3. Pessimism about professional career;
4. Poor management of health services;
5. Pessimism about the future of Cameroon (*Awases, Gbary, Nyoni and Chatora, 2004*).

Since we are talking about migration of health professionals, let us note that the *Bouillon Study* (1998) reveals that hundreds of medical doctors trained in the universities in DRC work in health training institutions in South Africa.

Brain drain is also the non-return of past students to their countries of origin after their studies. The brain drain origination from Africa across the world has been estimated at 200,000 (*Assogba, 2002*). Hundreds, indeed millions, of past students, nationals of Central African countries did not return to their countries of origin after the end of their studies. The study of *Ndulu* (2004) is extremely interested in this subject. It indicates that on the whole less than half of past students who obtained their doctorate degrees in the United States did not return to their countries of origin (Table 6)

Table 6: Past students from Central Africa holders of doctorate degree from the United States who returned to their countries of origin.

Country of origin	No. of doctors	Remained in USA	Returned to		
			Their country	Africa	Elsewhere
Chad					
Angola					
Cameroon					
DRC					
Mali (*)					
Nigeria (*)					

(*): for comparison purposes.

Sources: *Zezeza* (1998) quoted by *NDULU* 92004).

Migrants' contribution to the economies of their countries of origin

According to the estimates provided in 2002, funds repatriated by migrants represented 1.3% of GDP for Sub-Saharan Africa. Although the rate for Central Africa is not available, repatriation represents a large financial contribution to the economies of the countries of origin. Certain migrants repatriated as much as 20,000 US\$ a year in DRC.

Repatriation of funds is an indicator of what is called residential ubiquity of African migrants. It shows that the migrant does not lose completely the link with his country of origin and that he remains “present” in this environment while physically he is absent. This leads us to consider migration, in this case, and in any other case, not as a change of place of residence, but rather as an increase in the number of places of residence.

It is important to note that it is not only the African migrants living in the North who repatriate funds. The immigrants in Central Africa also repatriate funds towards their countries of origin, as indicated by Guibert in respect of Malian migrants in Gabon, who repatriated as much as 115,000 FC on the average, to their families staying in Mali, as against 775,000 FCFA for migrants in France and 67,000 FCFA for those residing in other African countries.

Migration policy in Central Africa

The migration policy adopted in Central Africa focuses on internal and international migrations. *Nkounkou, J* (1990) conducted a critical study on it for the DRC, Congo and Cameroon and observed that these countries developed a strategy to create poles of development that can increase the role of secondary cities or even their emergence. Ngwe (1989) remarked that rural development was not necessarily the policy indicated for retaining the population in their villages for the population in most developed rural areas also has a strong propensity to migrate and even with a passion of such intensity. The reflection of Gubry (1990) still defines this question better for Cameroon. This author asks the rural population how according to them, the rural exodus could be fought. Seven strategies were elaborated, namely, in order of merit. (1) providing hydraulic facilities, (2) health infrastructure, (3) job creation in rural areas, (4) school infrastructure, (5) transport infrastructure, (6) access to land and (7) leisure infrastructure.

In the case of DRC, we tried to find out if the secondary cities could really serve as alternatives for migration towards the big cities, in competition with Kinshasa. The report was that the secondary cities certainly attract the rural population, but through lack of sufficient urban conveniences, the secondary cities also serve as relay cities for the migrants who continue their migration journey up to the big cities (*Lututala, 1989*).

Concerning international migrations, it is found, through literature review, that no country really discourages it. Policies are oriented rather towards facilitation of money and goods transfer, either by establishing suitable programmes aimed at preparing to return and/or to finance micro-projects, or by establishing ministries in the originating countries to be responsible for migrants abroad. Thus, the Belgian cooperation finances a programme called Migr'actions aimed at obtaining a cost valuation of the contribution made by Cameroonians residing in Belgium for the development of their country. The DRC has just had a Deputy Minister responsible for Congolese abroad; responsible, inter alia, for accompanying the migrants during the

process of their return or their contribution to the development of the country.

Conclusion

First of all, migration in Central Africa, as it is everywhere, is characterised generally by factors of migration, migrant's profile, orientation of flow, etc. But it has certain distinctive features. Migration in this region is far from being a marginal or trivial phenomenon. On the contrary, a large proportion of the population migrated. Besides, the migration was upstream and downstream of the socio-political change that occurred in the region from the development of colonial resources up to the period of wars and other socio-political troubles. It passed through economic crises, causing misery in the country. It enhanced the exploitation of natural resources and "development of colonies" by the colonial masters at the onset of the period of colonisation.

It has been and is still at the centre of the process of industrialisation and modernisation. But is it so much a factor of development of Central Africa while this country is bogged down in under-development and poverty? In other words, why is it that migration does not help this region to conquer poverty? How can migration be positioned?

Migration is the vector of the socio-demographic dynamics of these countries, especially through concentration of population in urban centres (urbanisation) and spatial redistribution of population. This is one of the greatest changes experienced by African countries. The rural areas have been gradually depopulated by the cities which attract the rural migrants there to swell up the number of the unemployed, the frustrated, the marginalised and the poor. The main investments realised are concentrated in the cities. It is true that the problems posed are of such magnitude that they need the attention of all or almost all decision makers. This contributes towards marginalising the rural areas the more. They give up; and cannot produce enough to feed the cities and themselves and still have sufficient for development. On the contrary, the rural population depends more and more on the migrants and/or native city dwellers while the migrant, on his part, faces problems of unemployment, underfeeding, unhealthiness, housing, or simply cost of living in the urban area that does not allow much room for manoeuvre in the rural areas. Thus, while allowing capital to be accumulated in the cities, migration destroys the structure of African societies and becomes a big challenge for their equilibrium and development.

Therefore, internal migration maintains poverty in the cities and consequently supports international migration. That is the reason why, as suggested by certain authors (cfr. *Prothero, 189*), the international migration study must never be removed from the internal migrations' study. It is apparent, the hypothesis to be examined in the other studies is that the Africans who travel to the countries in the North leave mainly from the cities. Besides, the issue of integration of migrants in the neighbouring countries exists mainly in Central Africa. The "secret" migration of the

minorities who dwell in ghettos or who are compelled to do so, fosters ethnic rivalry which is the basis for the mass movement of the population. This takes place in the interior of the countries; and also towards neighbouring countries, without taking account of countries in Central Africa reflects the fluidity of the concept. Several tribes in this region are splintered in two or three different countries. This is the case especially of the Kongo families in DRC where certain members live in Angola and others in the Congo. For these families, it is absurd to describe international migration as crossing of state borders.

The studies on the international migrations in Central Africa focuses on immigration in the countries in the North. An attempt is therefore made to know the total number of migrants in these countries, the evolution of these migrants within a period of time, reasons for their presence there, how they fit economically, socially and culturally into the system, and how they contribute towards the development of their countries or origin. These research topics overshadow the theoretical basis of the phenomenon that states that labour must circulate freely in order to contribute to production and development. And that migration also benefits the migrants as well as their families of origin, the host countries as well as countries of origin. The study enables us to describe the slight differences in the ideas received.

While the countries in the North shout about the invasion of African migrants, it is observed that it is only a question of the former's racial discrimination that was keeping them in a state of fear: The African migrants, those of Central Africa, constitutes only a tiny minority of the population in the North. Centrally to the idea that they go there to steal employment and benefit from the economies of these countries, it is observed that the structures of the labour market and even the legal and administrative framework confine them rather to precarious jobs which have nothing to do with their professional qualifications and educational level. This leads us to undertake a cost-benefit analysis study to determine which of the countries of origin or host countries benefit more from the African migrations. For, if the profit for the countries of origin results in repatriation of funds and goods by the migrants, it should be imperative to examine what these funds represent in relation to the revenue generated by the migrant and especially the part of the revenue allocated to consumption in the North, and not only the usage to which it was put in the countries of origin. This is more important than the fact that consumption stimulates production and therefore represents to the economies of countries of origin. This is more important than the fact that consumption stimulates production and therefore development. Besides, the contribution of the migrants to the economies of countries of origin represents a better integration of migrants in the host countries. You can only repatriate if you earn a substantial income. Now, the study has shown that the African migrants who are in the North are perhaps more destitute than the non-migrants who remain in their countries.

Finally, in focusing the international migration study on the North-South networks, the researchers and decision makers cannot visualise the inter-regional migrations, that is, the migration between the countries of Central

Africa. Curiously enough, these also have the same symptoms: migrants' devilish behaviour, especially during crisis in the host countries, their repatriation to neighbouring countries often described as sister countries, etc. Above all, it is not a question of racial discrimination. Migration was an outlet for certain rich countries of today. Angola, which expelled Congolese migrants (from DRC) has a large proportion of her population living in exile in the DRC for several years or who were born there. If the DRC received refugees from Rwanda, the latter also received refugees from the DRC. How then do we understand that the leaders of Central African countries are still opposed to free movement of persons (and goods) in this region? How do we bring them, thanks to our studies, to subscribe to it?

This study suggests some research methods to be adopted, demanding an in-depth research and comparative study based on data collected on all countries in the region. The knowledge of migration in this region is still limited. First of all, it is therefore imperative to complete this literature review in order to better analyse what happens in countries such as Angola, Chad and Congo. This will be followed by other studies or surveys to enable us have a more comprehensive understanding and a complete update on the phenomenon.

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