

# Chapter 1

## Migration in West Africa: An Introduction



Joseph Kofi Teye

This book examines the dynamics and impacts of international migration within and from West Africa. Although population mobility is not a recent phenomenon in West Africa, the sub-region has become the focus of policy discussions on migration in recent years because it is characterised by high levels of labour migration (Olsen, 2011) and forced displacement (UNHCR, 2020a). West Africa is experiencing ‘mixed migration’, which refers to “cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities” (Mixed Migration Centre, 2021: 2). While media narratives suggest an exodus of Africans to the global North, intra-regional mobility is the dominant type of movement in West Africa, with more than 70% of migrants from West African countries moving to destinations within the sub-region (UNDESA, 2018). Although West Africans are among the most mobile people in the world, there is a general paucity of data on population mobility and its development impacts in the sub-region. Existing knowledge gaps make it difficult to integrate migration into development planning processes in the region. This book discusses theoretical perspectives and empirical findings on patterns, drivers, and socio-economic impacts of both voluntary and involuntary migration in West Africa. The authors raise key research questions and outline recommendations for improving migration governance, protecting migrants and harnessing the benefits of migration for socio-economic development for both countries of origin and destination of migrants.

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J. K. Teye (✉)  
Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana  
e-mail: [jteye@ug.edu.gh](mailto:jteye@ug.edu.gh)

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## 1.1 Trends and Patterns of Migration in West Africa

Current migration patterns in West African are deeply rooted in historical antecedents (Awumbila et al., 2014; Teye et al., 2015). During the precolonial era, population mobility, in the West African sub-region, was largely driven by economic factors, especially the search for fertile lands for farming, and trading in goods. The trading in various commodities crystallized into the famous trans-Saharan trade routes (Adepoju, 2003; Manuh, 2005). There were also population movements for religious activities and security reasons. Many of the ethnic groups of the sub-region are thought to have moved to the present locations in search of safe havens (Teye et al., 2015). Most of the population movements, in the pre-colonial period, were not regarded as cross-border movements because the sub-region was seen as a borderless area within which goods and people moved freely (Adepoju, 2003; Manuh, 2005). The economic policies adopted by the various colonial administrations and the establishment of national boundaries has significantly changed the patterns of migration from and within West Africa. The slave trade led to the forced migration of millions of West Africans to North America, Europe and the Caribbean. With specific reference to intra-regional mobility, the construction of railways and roads by the colonial administration facilitated large-scale, male dominated, seasonal and cross-border labour movements within the sub-region. Colonial economic and recruitment policies, such as contract and forced labour legislation and agreements, stimulated labour migration from countries in the northern savannah zone (e.g. Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali) to countries in the south (e.g. Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire) where plantations and mining communities are located (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003).

Intra-regional mobility patterns, in the early post-colonial era (in 1960s) continued to follow the north-south direction, with labour migrants largely moving from landlocked, Sahelian countries (e.g. Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger) to the plantation and mining communities in coastal countries, such as Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and The Gambia. Migration flows to these coastal countries were motivated by high demand for labour for the booming agricultural and mining sectors. For instance, in view of its prosperous cocoa and coffee plantations, Côte d'Ivoire received labour migrants from Burkina Faso, Niger, Guinea, and Mali (Teye et al., 2015). Ghana also attracted labour migrants from Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria because of its booming mining and cocoa industries (Awumbila et al., 2014). Similarly, seasonal migration of farm labourers from Guinea Bissau, Guinea, and Mali to the groundnut fields in Senegal and The Gambia, which started in the colonial era, intensified during the early post-colonial period (Zachariah et al., 1980). As a result of dramatic increase in oil prices and a booming oil industry, Nigeria became a major destination of West African migrants in the 1970s. It attracted migrants from several countries including Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea (Teye et al., 2015).

Intra-regional migration flows since the 1980s have largely followed these historical patterns, where labour migrants tend to move from Sahelian countries (e.g.

Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger) to mining and plantation communities in the coastal zone. The dominant typologies of migration in contemporary West Africa include permanent migration, seasonal migration, cross-border movements, and transit migration (Adepoju, 2005). Intra-regional migration in West Africa is largely facilitated by the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment which was adopted in 1979 by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), made up of 15 of the 16 in countries in West Africa. The West African sub-region has also been experiencing large-scale forced displacements (UNHCR, 2020a), caused by civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s; political conflicts in Togo and Côte d'Ivoire as well as activities of religious extremists in Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria (UNHCR, 2020b). As a result of increasing conflicts, economic challenges, and social transformation, migration flows within and from West Africa have increased, in recent years (Awumbila et al., 2014). Males continue to dominate migration streams, but the flows are being feminised.

While intra-regional migration flows, in the contemporary era, continue to follow north-south direction, traditional migrants-receiving countries, such as Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Nigeria, have since 1980s been sending out several migrants, especially highly skilled professionals, such as doctors and nurses, to Europe and North America (Teye et al., 2015). It is, however, important to stress that while political narratives and media images suggest an 'exodus' of West Africans to Europe, a majority of migrants from the sub-region (about 72%) move intra-regionally (UNDESA, 2018). Olsen (2011) asserted that, with more than 3% of the sub-regional population circulating within West Africa, migration within the region is about six times higher than intra-European mobility. As shown in Table 1.1, all the West African countries receive migrants from neighbouring countries, while the popular destinations of emigrants are also the neighbouring countries. In absolute terms, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Ghana are major receiving countries (Table 1.1), while Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali are the major migrant sending countries (Table 1.2). The countries with the highest stock of international migrants as a share of total population are Côte d'Ivoire (9.72%) and the Gambia (8.92%). In most cases, the top countries of origin of a country's immigrants are the same as the top countries of destination of a country's emigrants. For instance, as shown in Table 1.1, Burkina Faso is the first most important country of origin of immigrants in Côte d'Ivoire, while Côte d'Ivoire is also the most important (first) country of origin for immigrants in Burkina Faso. Similarly, Togo is the topmost (first) country of origin of immigrants in Ghana, while Ghana is the second most important country of origin of immigrants in Togo. The destination analysis of migrants shows similar patterns. For instance, as shown in Table 1.2, Côte d'Ivoire is the most popular destination of migrants from Burkina Faso, while Burkina Faso is also the most popular destination of migrants from Côte d'Ivoire.

Proximity appears to determine the choice of destination for many migrants, as in the case of migration flows between Togo and Ghana, as well as migration flows between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Colonial legacy and common official language also explain intra-regional mobility patterns, such as high level of migrant flows

**Table 1.1** Stock of immigrants by country of destination and top five countries of origin

No	Country of destination	Immigration		Top five countries of origin				
		Frequency	Percent	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
		2020	2020					
1	Benin	394,276	3.25	Niger	Togo	Nigeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Ghana
2	Burkina Faso	723,989	3.46	Côte d'Ivoire	Mali	Ghana	Togo	Niger
3	Cabo Verde	15,788	2.84	Guinea-Bissau	São Tomé & Príncipe	Senegal	Portugal	Russian Federation
4	Côte d'Ivoire	2,564,857	9.72	Burkina Faso	Mali	Guinea	Liberia	Benin
5	Gambia	215,659	8.92	Senegal	Guinea	Guinea-Bissau	Mali	Mauritania
6	Ghana	476,412	1.53	Togo	Burkina Faso	Nigeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia
7	Guinea	121,437	0.92	Sierra Leone	Liberia	Mali	Côte d'Ivoire	Senegal
8	Guinea-Bissau	17,945	0.91	Senegal	Guinea	The Gambia	Liberia	Portugal
9	Liberia	87,947	1.74	Côte d'Ivoire	Guinea	Sierra Leone	Ghana	Nigeria
10	Mali	485,829	2.40	Côte d'Ivoire	Burkina Faso	Guinea	Mauritania	Senegal
11	Mauritania	182,286	3.92	Senegal	Mali	Guinea	Algeria	France
12	Niger	348,056	1.44	Mali	Nigeria	Burkina Faso	Benin	Togo
13	Nigeria	1,308,568	0.63	Benin	Ghana	Mali	Togo	Niger
14	Senegal	274,929	1.64	Mauritania	Guinea	Mali	Guinea-Bissau,	Sierra Leone
15	Sierra Leone	53,746	0.67	Guinea	Liberia	The Gambia	Nigeria	Ghana
16	Togo	279,936	3.38	Benin	Ghana	Nigeria	Niger	Côte d'Ivoire

Sources: Immigration: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>

Top (5) countries of origin: <https://www.knomad.org/data/migration/immigration>

between Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso as well as between Ghana and Nigeria. Ethnic ties also influence the choice of destination of migrants. For instance, some Ewes in Togo often move to stay and work with their relatives in the Volta Region of Ghana. The Kpelle ethnic group is also spread across Liberia and Guinea, with some members moving across the boundaries of Liberia and Guinea for economic and social reasons. Members of the Kissi ethnic group, found in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, have also been moving across the boundaries of these countries (Teye et al., 2015). These ethnic groups that spread across regions see the national

**Table 1.2** Stock of emigrants by country of origin and destination

No	Country of origin	Emigration		Top five destination countries				
		Frequency 2020	Percent 2020	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
1	Benin	681,800	5.62	Nigeria	Côte d'Ivoire,	Togo	Gabon	France
2	Burkina Faso	1,600,000	7.65	Côte d'Ivoire	Ghana	Mali	Niger	Togo
3	Cabo Verde	187,600	33.74	Angola	Portugal	United States	France	Netherlands
4	Côte d'Ivoire	1,100,000	4.17	Burkina Faso	Liberia	France	Mali	Ghana
5	Gambia	139,200	5.76	Spain	United Kingdom	United States	Nigeria	Sweden
6	Ghana	1,000,000	3.22	Nigeria	United States	United Kingdom	Côte d'Ivoire	Italy
7	Guinea	550,800	4.19	Côte d'Ivoire	Sierra Leone	Senegal	Liberia	The Gambia
8	Guinea-Bissau	111,800	5.68	Portugal	Senegal	The Gambia	Spain	Cabo Verde
9	Liberia	233,600	4.62	Guinea	Côte d'Ivoire	United States	Sierra Leone	Ghana
10	Mali	1,300,000	6.42	Côte d'Ivoire	Nigeria	France	Gabon	Niger
11	Mauritania	130,200	2.80	Senegal	Nigeria	France	Mali	Spain
12	Niger	399,700	1.65	Nigeria	Benin	Côte d'Ivoire	Cameroon	Togo
13	Nigeria	1,700,000	0.82	United States	United Kingdom	Cameroon	Ghana	Italy
14	Senegal	693,800	4.14	France	The Gambia	Italy	Spain	Mauritania
15	Sierra Leone	152,500	1.91	Guinea	United States	United Kingdom	Liberia	Senegal
16	Togo	545,400	6.59	Ghana	Nigeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Benin	France

Source: Emigration. [https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=stock\\_abs\\_origin&t=2020](https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=stock_abs_origin&t=2020)

Top (5) destination countries: <https://www.knomad.org/data/migration/emigration>

boundaries created during the colonial era as 'artificial' (Awumbila et al., 2014). The recent closure of land borders in West Africa since March 2020 to reduce the spread of Covid 19 has generally affected the intra-regional mobility in the West African region.

West African migrants have also been increasingly migration to other African sub-regions. Libya used to be a popular destination for those intending to enter Europe through the Mediterranean. However, the political crisis and insecurity in Libya have led to a reduction in the flow of migrants towards Libya. In recent years, many West Africans have been moving to oil-rich countries in Central Africa,

especially Equatorial Guinea and Garbon. Increasing number of West Africans have also been migrating to South Africa.

Outside Africa, Europe is the most popular destination of migrants from West Africa. The migration flows from West Africa to Europe are also rooted in historical antecedents. There is some level of movement between the two regions during the colonial era. In the 1970s and 1980s, economic crisis and political conflicts contributed significantly to migration from West Africa to Europe. Since then, both highly skilled and unskilled migrants continue to migrate to Europe, either regularly or irregularly. Although irregular migration from West Africa to Europe is not a new phenomenon, it has recently received more attention in the media and policy circles. Data provided by IOM shows that West Africans constitute a significant proportion of irregular arrivals in Italy, Spain, Greece and Malta. The irregular migrants usually travel through the Sahara Desert and then enter Europe through the Mediterranean (IOM, 2020).

In view of recent strict visa regimes in popular European countries, many low skilled West African migrants have, in recent years, been recruited by private recruitment agencies and individual intermediaries for job placement in the Middle Eastern countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and United Arab Emirates, where they have been working as domestic workers in people's homes and also in the construction sector. For instance, figures provided by Ghana Labour Department indicates that in 2015, about 1550 Ghanaians were recruited by private employment agencies for placement in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait. This figure increased to 2372 in 2016. Similarly, from January to May 2017 alone, private employment agencies in Ghana recruited about 1589 Ghanaians for job placement in these Middle East countries (Awumbila et al., 2019). It is estimated that more than this number are also recruited by informal intermediaries for job placement in the Middle East. A majority of these migrants are women who work as domestic workers. In response to reported cases of abuse of these migrants, a number of West African countries, such as Nigeria and Ghana, banned recruitment of low skilled citizens for job placement abroad (Bisong, 2021).

## 1.2 Drivers of Migration Within and from West Africa

In the literature forces which lead to the inception and perpetuation of migration are collectively referred to as the 'drivers' of migration (Van Hear, 2012: 1). The drivers of migration in West Africa fall under the four categories of migration drivers identified by Van Hear (2012). These are *predisposing or underlying factors/drivers*, *proximate factors/drivers*, *precipitating factors/drivers* and *mediating drivers*. Predisposing drivers contribute to the creation of a unfavourable socio-economic context in which out-migration is likely. Such predisposing factors are outcomes of broad processes, such as globalization, unequal terms of trade and demographic transformation. For instance, the colonial economic policies (e.g. establishment of plantation in southern areas at the expense of northern communities) which created

the context for the north-south migration in West Africa can be seen as types of predisposing factors (Teye et al., 2019). Similarly, as a result of declining fertility in Europe and high fertility in Africa, surplus labour tends to move from West Africa to Europe which has high demand for labour.

The *proximate drivers* of migration directly cause migration and are products of the working out of the predisposing factors. At migrant sending areas, these factors include macro-economic challenges, security problems, and environmental change which cause migration (see Van Hear, 2012). At migrant destination areas, these factors include opportunities that open up as a result of economic upturn and peaceful communities.

The *precipitating drivers* of migration are the conditions that actually trigger departure. At migrants sending areas in West Africa, these are usually found in the economic sphere, including high level of unemployment, low incomes, poverty, and low prices of agricultural products (Van Hear, 2012). Other precipitating factors that drive migration in West Africa include the poor health, education, and other welfare services. In countries, such as Mali, Niger and Nigeria, security problems created by Boko Haram, for instance, can be seen as precipitating driver as they contribute to out-migration (UNHCR, 2020b). The *mediating drivers of migration* are made up of factors which facilitate or constrain migration. These include the presence and quality of transport, improved communications, social networks and availability of resources needed for migration. While the earlier migration industry literature tends to emphasize the exploitative aspects of the relationship between brokers who facilitate migration and migrants (Salt & Stein, 1997), recent studies have shown that although migration brokers and other intermediaries sometimes play a key role in the precarisation of migrants, there are occasions where they freely help potential migrants to realise their migration dreams (Deshingkar et al., 2019).

The effect of various factors on migration flows is context-specific. For instance, while poverty is often blamed for irregular migration towards Europe, social transformation can also increase migration flows. Irregular migrants are not the poorest of the poor as some resources are needed to embark on irregular migration to the global north. Data on irregular migrants' arrivals in Europe shows that poorer Sahelian countries do not really send out many irregular migrants to Europe. In fact, Niger and Burkina Faso which are experiencing serious climate induced poverty and are located on the route towards Europe are not among the top 10 countries of origin of irregular migrants from the West African sub-region (IOM, 2020). Data provided by IOM (2020) indicates that from 2017 to June 2020, for instance, the nationalities and number of irregular migrants arriving in Europe were: Guinea Conakry (24,442), Côte d'Ivoire (20,838); Nigeria (20,348); Mali (17,864); The Gambia (11,101); Senegal (9845); Ghana (1284); Mauritania (1193). Irregular migrants coming from countries experiencing climate change tend to come from more ecologically favourable regions than dry regions.

While poverty is blamed for massive outmigration from certain West African countries, recent data shows that social transformation and facilitative drivers (e.g social media and social networks) are the key drivers of migration. Many West Africans also migrate because of the cultural values attached to emigration. Indeed,

international migration is seen as a 'status symbol'. Current and return migrants are highly respected in many West African societies. For instance, during funerals in Ghana, the number of the dead person's children living abroad, as captured on the 'obituary poster', is used as a measure of the family's economic and social status, and the importance that people in the community will attach to attending such funerals. Therefore, people sometimes migrate just to enhance the social status of their families.

### 1.3 Return Migration in West Africa

Although West Africans are highly mobile, many migrants from the region have been returning to their origins, either voluntarily or involuntarily. Although there is a paucity of data on return migration situation in West Africa, there is enough evidence to suggest that in view of strict visa regimes in many of the popular host countries, political conflicts, and increasing economic opportunities in a few West African countries, return migration to West Africa has been slightly increasing, in recent years. While some migrants have been returning to the West African sub-region voluntarily because they have achieved objectives of their migration projects, some migrants also return involuntarily as a result of failed migration projects, deportations, poor health conditions, Covid 19 pandemic, and insecurity in host countries, among others.

In the last decade, a significant proportion of the vulnerable migrants that returned to West Africa were supported by the EU-IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program. Since 2016, thousands of vulnerable migrants have been assisted to return to West Africa by the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration programme. A greater proportion of these returnees were migrants who were trapped in other African countries. In 2017, for instance, about 67% of vulnerable migrants assisted to return to their countries in West and Central Africa were persons trapped in other countries (mainly Niger) within the same region. Another 21% of vulnerable migrants assisted to return that year were persons brought from Middle East and North Africa (mainly Egypt, Tunisia, and Sudan), while 10% were from the European Union (mainly Italy, Germany and the Netherlands) (IOM, 2021).

Additionally, the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) has, since 2017, been supporting vulnerable West Africans trapped in Libya and Niger to return. Many of the persons assisted to return from Niger, Libya and other North African countries were largely people trying to irregularly enter Europe but were trapped in Libya. The European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN), established by 15 European partner countries to ensure that migrants return to their home countries in a dignified and humane manner, has also been facilitating the return of West African migrants. Unlike the IOM-EU return migration programs, which tend to support return of vulnerable migrants, GIZ implements a program that seeks to facilitate the voluntary return of highly skilled migrants under a 'Migration for Development' project (Teye et al., 2021).



## 1.4 Outline of the Book

The book is made up of 12 chapters organised into three main parts: Part I. Changing Patterns and Governance of Migration; Part II: Environmental and Forced Migration; Part III: Diaspora, Transnationalism and Development, and Part IV: Return Migration. The four papers in **Part I** discuss the continuity, changing patterns and governance of migration within and from the West African sub-region. The chapters in this part of the book highlight the uniqueness of West Africa as a region that experiences mixed migration flows and high level of intra-regional migration. After this introductory chapter which provides an overview of the trends, patterns and drivers of migration within and from West Africa, Faisal Garba and Thomas Yeboah, in Chap. 2, present a historical analysis of attempts at promoting free movement of persons and regional integration in West Africa. The authors argue that despite the progress made by ECOWAS to promote free movement within the region, a number of challenges, such as harassment at the borders and lack of coherence between the national laws of member states and the ECOWAS Protocols, affect free movement and regional integration in the ECOWAS region. In Chap. 3, Priya Deshingkar and Doudou Dièye Gueye offer a bottom up view on human smuggling facilitation and the rationale behind extremely high-risk and complex irregular migration journeys from Senegal across the Sahara and through the Atlantic sea. While high risk irregular migration from developing countries is often attributed to economic problems (e.g. unemployment and poverty) and ignorance of the dangers of irregular migration (Carling, 2007; Fargues & Bonfanti, 2014), the chapter highlights the role of religious beliefs in preparing for and interpreting the experiences of harrowing journeys with a high risk of harm and death. The study also sheds light on hitherto under-recognised gendered aspects of the infrastructure of migration facilitation, showing that while migration is male dominated, women play a critical role in mobilising religious and financial support. The fourth chapter by Nauja Kleist and Mary Setrana presents a historical analysis of the gendered dynamics of migration in West Africa. This is a significant contribution to the literature because although migration flows in the sub-region are being feminised (Adepoju, 2005; Awumbila et al., 2014), gendered differentials in migration experiences and outcomes are neither well understood nor adequately explored in both academic and policy circles.

The four chapters presented in **Part II** focus on environmental and forced migration. In Chap. 5, Joseph Kofi Teye and Ebenezer Nikoi discuss the trends of climate change and present case studies on how both rapid on-set climatic events (e.g. floods) and slow on-set processes (e.g drought and rainfall variability) cause migration and displacement in West Africa. The chapter also discusses climate immobility in West Africa. The remaining papers in Part II focus on managing displacement and this is important because while West Africa is seriously affected by protracted displacement associated with ethnic conflicts, political instability, and disputes over control of natural resources (UNHCR, 2020a), forced displacement in the sub-region does not attract high level of humanitarian interest and concern. As a way of contributing to our understanding of the needs of refugees in the region, Heaven

Crawley and Veronica Fynn Bruey, in Chap. 6, examine the first-hand experience of Liberian ‘refugees’ living in Ghana and their struggle to secure national and international protection. The authors have argued that many of the refugees have been left living in extreme poverty, marginalised from mainstream development policies and planning, and unable to either contribute to, or benefit from, efforts to rebuild peace and security in their home country. The paper makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of why, given the end of the conflict in Liberia more than 15 years ago and the end of formal protection for Liberian refugees living in Ghana in 2012, so many Liberians remain in situations of protracted displacement. Most importantly, the paper discusses what can, and should, be done to address this and to ensure that “no-one is left behind” in the delivery of Agenda 2030. Chapter 7, written by Leander Kandilige and Geraldine Asiwome Ampah, examines the peculiar protection vulnerabilities that face voluntary migrants in times of crises in destination countries. It argues that while protection regimes broadly exist for involuntary migrants within the ambit of intergovernmental/international organisations, there is a yawning gap in national protection mechanisms for voluntary migrants in destination countries during episodes of crises situations. The chapter offers very good policy recommendations for protection of migrants during times of crisis.

**Part III** of the book contains four chapters on labour migration, diaspora and development. In Chap. 8, Olayinka Akanle and Olayinka Damilola Ola-Lawson contribute to the debates on the link between labour migration and socio-economic development, by analyzing the profile and developmental impacts of diaspora investments in Nigeria. Their findings suggest that the diaspora engages in many different investments for various reasons but not without nearly prohibitive challenges, created by unfavourable economic environment and social systems. Chapter 9, written by Tebkietia Alexandra Tapsoba and Bonayi Hubert Dabiré, examine trends in the flow and development impacts of remittances in Burkina Faso. The chapter argues that remittances receiving households are economically better than those that do not receive remittances. However, a significant proportion of remittances is consumed rather than being invested in productive sectors. The chapter is very useful because while migrants’ remittances have been recognized as important tools for enhancing development and reducing poverty (Ratha et al., 2011), empirical studies on the actual developmental impacts of remittances in Africa are very few (Teye et al., 2019). Again, the paper contributes to our understanding of the effectiveness of programs being implemented by West African governments and their development partners to leverage remittances for socio-economic development. Chapter 10, jointly authored by Nohoua Traoré and Gertrude Dzifa Torvikey, examines the historical trajectories of migration in Côte d’Ivoire. It situates the development of the cash crop economy in Côte d’Ivoire within the history of labour migrations into the country and the later crises that ensued as a result. It argues that whilst the implementation of an open migration policy from the 1960s to 1980s contributed to increased flow of labour migrants into the booming cocoa sector, economic crisis since 1990 and political conflicts since 2000 have influenced the Ivorian state to practice a less open migration policy. This has resulted in a

relative decline in migration flows. However, Côte d'Ivoire still remains a popular destination of migrants, because of the opportunities in its cocoa economy.

**Part IV** focuses on Return Migration. Chapter 11, authored by Amanda Bisong, discusses how return and reintegration programmes for forced internally displaced persons, failed irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers construct and create vulnerabilities. The paper argues that poorly implemented forced return migration management programmes may worsen the vulnerabilities of migrants instead of promoting their integration. The major contribution of this paper is its exposition on the role of local institutions in the reintegration of return migrants. While protection of vulnerable return migrants has been seen as a duty to be performed by the state, the chapter demonstrates that social and societal structures in the communities can help forced return migrants in coping with the vulnerabilities they are exposed to in their places of origin. Chapter 12, written by Joseph Mensah, Joseph Kofi Teye and Mary Setrana, examine the interconnections between immigrant integration, transnationalism, and return intentions, focusing primarily on Ghanaian and Senegalese migrants in the global North. The chapter fills a critical gap in the migration literature by analyzing the links between migrants' integration processes at countries of destination and return migration decision-making processes. Chapter 13 presents the main conclusions drawn from the analyses in the different chapters.

## 1.5 Theoretical Contribution and Historical Perspectives

Apart from its relevance in terms of the geographical region it covers, the book's relevance can be explained by its use of important theoretical and historical perspectives. With reference to contribution to theory, many of the chapters combine empirical findings with theoretical reflections and this makes the discussions in the book relevant to readers outside the West African region. For instance, while migration from labour-surplus areas to labour-scarce destinations is often explained from an economic perspective (de Haas, 2010; de Haas & Franssen, 2018), the papers by Joseph Teye (Chap. 1), Priya Deshingkar and Doudou Dièye Gueye (Chap. 3) and Nauja Kleist and Mary Setrana (Chap. 4) challenge such orthodox conceptualizations of drivers of migration by explaining how non-economic drivers (e.g culture, social networks, and religion) also shape migration decisions. Heaven Crawley and Veronica Fynn Bruey (Chap. 6), Leander Kandilige (Chap. 7) and Amanda Bisong (Chap. 11) applied the concept of 'vulnerability' and models for managing displacement to discuss the specific needs of migrants and displaced populations. The book also contributes to theoretical debates on the relationship between migration and development. While migration is an important survival strategy, there are contesting views on its actual impacts on livelihoods and socio-economic development in migrant sending areas (Ratha et al., 2011; Teye et al., 2019). The papers by Olayinka Akanle and Olayinka Damilola Ola-Lawson (Chap. 8) and Alexandra Tapsoba and Bonayi Hubert (Chap. 9) makes significant contribution to our understanding of the factors that mediate migration and development.

Additionally, the historical perspective, adopted by many of the authors (see Chaps. 1, 2, 4, and 10) makes this book very relevant. For instance, the introductory paper by Joseph Teye (Chap. 1), shows how current mobility patterns are shaped by state formation processes and political administration in the pre-colonial and colonial periods as well as social transformation. Faisal Garba and Thomas Yeboah (Chap. 2) provides a temporal assessment of attempts at promoting free movement of persons and regional integration in West Africa. They have shown that the implementation of the free movement protocol has been affected by political changes and international conventions. Nohoua Traoré and Gertrude Dzifa Torvikey (Chap. 10) also provides a historical analysis of the flow of immigrants to the cocoa sector of Côte d'Ivoire. In Chap. 4, Nauja Kleist and Mary Setrana explain how feminization of migration is linked to broader social change occurring in the sub-region. As a result of the historical perspective adopted, the papers discuss broader socio-economic and political transformations beyond migration.

## **1.6 What This Book Does Differently from Other Books**

While the few existing books on migration in the West African region focus on a few migration-related issues usually in one country at a time, this book provides a comprehensive analysis of several migration-related issues (e.g. labour migration, human trafficking, environmental migration, displacement, return migration, remittances) in the entire West African sub-region, by presenting case studies from a number of countries. Information on the various migration-related issues can therefore be obtained from this single book.

Unlike the existing books on migration which tend to provide a cross sectional analysis of migration-related issues within West Africa, this book provides a historical analysis of many migration-related issues. The historical approach employed by many of the authors to analyse their findings means that the papers discuss broader socio-economic and political transformations beyond migration. Additionally, the book clearly demonstrates the continuity and changing patterns of various migration-related issues. While some of the existing books only present empirical findings on mobility within the West African region, many of the authors of this book make efforts to combine empirical findings with theoretical reflections. This has been achieved by using different concepts and theoretical frameworks not only from migration studies, but also from the broader social science literature, to discuss the empirical findings. The theorisation of findings, where appropriate, makes the discussions in the book relevant to readers outside the West African region.

The book also discusses both the positive and negative development impacts of migration, and offers useful policy recommendations for dealing with some of the challenges and harnessing the benefits of migration. This is a departure from some existing books that only present either the positive or the negative outcomes of migration without offering recommendations for improving the status quo. The critical approach adopted by our authors who have in-depth knowledge on migration

issues in the region will make this book useful to students, development practitioners and policy makers.

## 1.7 Target Market and Readership

Written in a very accessible way by researchers who either come from the West African region and or have worked extensively in the region over the years, this book offers comprehensive, first-hand information on migration issues in the sub-region. The book will be an interesting read to students, academics, researchers, migration experts, development practitioners and policy makers and media professionals. In writing the book, many of the concepts have been explained in plain English, and this will ensure that people from different academic background are able to use it. The book will particularly be useful to undergraduate and graduate students and teachers of subjects in the humanities, especially Migration Studies, Demography, African studies, Social Policy, Sociology, Political Science, History, and Economics. In the sub-field of Migration Studies, the topics covered will be useful to students offering many of the postgraduate migration courses offered by universities around the world.

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**Joseph Kofi Teye** is the Director of the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) of the University of Ghana and a co-director of the UKRI South-South Migration, Inequality and Development Hub. He is also an Associate Professor of Migration and Development in the Department of Geography and Resource Development of the University of Ghana. He holds a PhD in Geography from the University of Leeds. His current research interests include migration and development, migration policy development, environmental change and migration, and natural resource governance. He has written several journal articles and contributed chapters to a number of books. He is a co-editor of *Migration in a Globalizing World: Perspectives from Ghana*, which was published in 2017.

Joseph Teye has participated (either as a PI or Co-I) in large research projects funded by international organisations, including, UKRI, DFID, EU, ESRC, ACP Observatory on Migration, and IOM. He has also consulted widely for a number of international organisations and governments. He was the lead consultant for the development of the national labour migration policies for Sierra Leone, Ghana and Malawi.

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