

# AN APPRAISAL OF GLOBALIZATION AND THE PARADOX OF MIGRATION IN AFRICA

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## **Abstract**

Globalization underscores the belief in the oneness of the whole world; that is, different nations of the world coming together through different channels (which may include information technology) and organizations such as UN, UNESCO, WTO, etc to discuss matters of interest. One expects that this fraternity should break the barriers associated with migration but this has not been the case. Migration policies and conditions today for Africans are somewhat inhumane and tedious to meet and this begs the question on the import of globalization. The huddles and ill treatments the African immigrants pass through make mockery of the essence of Globalization and cosmopolitanism. The paper questions the essence of globalization in relation to migration. Does globalization possess any rudiment that can help ameliorate migration challenges confronting Africans? It (the paper) resolves that although Globalization in its ideal sense should tackle these immigration challenges but in the real sense of it, experience has shown that economic power determines the control of the world's politics. The paper therefore, suggests that African countries should look inwardly and build the capacity that will help bring them to the level where the high rate of Africans immigrants will be reduced and also qualifies them to partake in deciding what globalization means as been done today by the Western powers.

**Keywords:** Globalization, Migration, Paradox, Africa

## **Introduction**

Globalization as a concept that underscores the coming together of the world's population has provided man with the feeling of filling a vacuum in him that was naturally created. This vacuum is the non-self-sufficient nature of man that places him in an unending dependency on the fellow man. Man by nature is not self sufficient and therefore needs the assistance of his fellow human beings for his

sustenance. In seeking for this assistance, there are always barriers in the way of man; these barriers may take the form of the government not providing the enabling environment that will empower the people towards helping one another in filling this natural vacuum. This first form is more prevalent in Africa where political leaders have failed the people and this propels the Africans to seek for alternative which is to reach out to humanity across the globe. This has contributed to the increased rate of African immigrants as compared to other continents. This was captured by 'A Project of Suny Levin Institute', "according to polls taken from 2007 - 2009, 38 percent of sub-Saharan Africans want to migrate." (Levin Institute:2) Seeking for assistance across borders to fill this natural vacuum marks another barrier to Africans because of lack of accessibility. In his bid to cross over in search for assistance, Africans are made to face so many hurdles and inhumane treatments. Against this backdrop, globalization comes with a hope of at least ameliorating the second barrier of accessibility. This is because with the rapid development in information technology, transportation, trade, international organizations etc, people of the world are brought together thereby breaking the barrier of accessibility. In spite of this hope that comes with globalization, Africans are still battling with meeting up with the requirements to migrate to European and North American countries.

This natural vacuum is not restricted to the African person but to every human person. In spite of the developed nature of Europe and Northern America, they still have a vacuum to be filled. With the help of globalization, this vacuum may come in forms of trade (Africa harbours a good number of European companies. This is because, Africa is seen as a good market), tourism (a good number of Europeans usually see Africa as a natural tourist attraction as against their polluted environment) amongst other forms. The twist is that the Europeans that immigrate to African countries are not subjected to the same harsh treatment as the African counterparts thereby begging the questions: if globalization is a means of bringing the people of the world together, then, why this disparity?

What actually does globalization portend to the less developed countries? Who/what determines the rudiments and principles of globalization? Why has globalization not helped to facilitate a hitch free immigration policies for genuine African immigrants? This paper is an attempt to resolve the above questions and more but before going into this, let us first of all clarify the meaning of globalization.

### **Globalization: Concept and Problems**

Globalization covers wide areas of human endeavours such as economy, politics, information, culture, sports etc. it is a concept that encapsulates all the attempts made towards the unification of the world. The term *globalization* derives from the word *globalize*, which refers to the emergence of an international network of economic systems (Online Etymology Dictionary). One of the earliest known usages of the term as a noun was in a 1930 publication entitled *Towards New Education*, where it denoted a holistic view of human experience in education (Oxford English Dictionary Online). According to Martin Albrow and Elizabeth King, globalization is defined as "all those processes by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single world society" (Albrow and King, 1990).

In *The Consequences of Modernity*, Anthony Giddens writes: "Globalization can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990: 64). According to Thomas Larsson , Globalization "is the process of world shrinkage, of distances getting shorter, things moving closer. It pertains to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact, to mutual benefit, with somebody on the other side of the world" (Larsson, 2011: 9). In its economic sense, there have been several attempts and policies towards ensuring free flow goods and services across the globe; these involve the formation of international bodies such as World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC),

International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other bilateral trade agreements between countries of interest. "Economic globalization refers to the free movement of goods, capital, services, technology and information. It is the increasing economic integration and interdependence of national, regional, and local economies across the world through an intensification of cross-border movement of goods, services, technologies and capital" (Joshi, 2009).

In its political sense, globalization has also made it impossible for countries not to hide under the veil of sovereignty to perpetuate crimes that are related to the violation of the fundamental human rights of their citizens. Most countries of the world are united in fighting such crimes under many international umbrellas such as United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), International Criminal Court (ICC) etc. William R. Thompson has defined Political Globalization as "the expansion of a global political system, and its institutions, in which inter-regional transactions (including, but certainly not limited to trade) are managed" (Thompson, 2007: 59). Valentine M. Moghadam defined it as "an increasing trend toward multilateralism (in which the United Nations plays a key role), toward an emerging 'transnational state apparatus,' and toward the emergence of national and international nongovernmental organizations that act as watchdogs over governments and have increased their activities and influence" (Moghadam, 2005: 35). Manfred B. Steger in turn wrote that it "refers to the intensification and expansion of political interrelations across the globe" (Steger, 2003: 56).

Cultural globalization on the other hand refers to the transmission of ideas, meanings, and values around the world in such a way as to extend and intensify social relations (Paul, 2006). This process is marked by the common consumption of cultures that have been diffused by the Internet, popular\_culture media, and international travel. This form of globalization may take the form of religion; for instance, the religious affiliation of a good number of Nigerians is the brainchild of globalization. Traditionally speaking, Africans

have their own religion but was introduced to the Western religion through evangelism and colonialism. Cultural globalization can also be seen in music where there is global exchange of style of music between countries and continents.

Information technology is another area globalization has manifested. With the introduction of internet, the world is close and accessible. Emphasizing the importance of information technology to globalization, Eleanor states:

Without technology, globalization would probably not be a topic for discussion. In particular, communications technology, in which the Internet plays a major role, has revolutionized how people work, expanded the global knowledge base and provided a variety of ways of bringing people and cultures closer together. The Internet provides a platform where companies that are thousands of miles apart can communicate and share information. On a social and cultural level, the Internet provides access to the same music whether you are in Beijing, Boston or Beirut, and people can make new friends around the globe via social networking sites.

Immigration is made easier today as a result of globalization and this is facilitated by the internet. Internet facilities made possible for people to first study places of the world that will satisfy their desires which was not previously possible when there was no internet

One may not exhaust the enormous areas globalization has covered as the world is still devising several means of coming together. Globalization has affected the world both positively and negatively.

A good number of countries have recorded economic progress as a result of globalization policies. The following are some of the effects of globalization:

### **Positives of Globalization**

1. Due to increased globalization in developed countries, there is more scope for developing countries to benefit from it. This way they can lead themselves towards economic success and ultimately achieve better standard of living as well.
2. Globalization also boosts the ongoing competition between countries all over the world as well as within any particular country; hence making sure that prices of commodities are lowered to a considerable extent. This is a great chance for all end- users to procure goods at low rates.
3. Thanks to the reach and influence of media these days, increased media coverage helps in drawing attention towards those parts of the world where human rights are violated for the benefit of the rich and powerful. This leads to improvement in human rights.
4. When globalization takes place across a nation, it gets wider worldly exposure in the form of food, movies, art, music, clothing, culture, etc. This is a great way of forming closer bonds with the rest of the world.
5. Globalization in one country/ community leads to a sense of competition in others; hence helping in keeping the prices of commodities under check during all times.
6. All developing countries can benefit from the already existing technologies without the need to undergo the stress of developing any particular technology.
7. Globalization helps in bringing different governments together so that they can work together towards achieving common goals; which is a great way of spreading global awareness regarding common concerns and issues.

### **Negatives of Globalization**

1. The most common drawback of globalization is that it is widening the gap between the rich and poor; where rich people are becoming richer and poor are becoming poorer.
2. As a result of outsourcing, globalization may deprive an entire country of its jobs and resources. This is because globalization takes jobs away from one country and provides it to another country; hence leaving lots of people without the opportunities that they deserve.
3. Although people belonging to different cultures and countries get a chance to interact with each other, it causes a loss in tradition and values.
4. As species are deprived of their non- native ecosystems, there are increased chances of them spreading diseases and disrupting other natural ecosystems and their native species (8 my essay point)

Globalization has affected Africa positively and negatively; it has opened vista of economic opportunities to African countries through which they can tap and harness their God's given resources and compete in the international market with benefits accruable from the global economic treaties. There is always a tendency of the developed economy to dictate the rules of the game and to this end, African countries are always the victims of such European and American dominated economic policies. Political globalization portends the same negative effects for Africa. This is because; all the mercenaries of political globalization are been dictated and controlled by the some European countries and America, for instance, United Nations (UN) today of which almost all countries of the world are members takes and sanctions its decisions by its Security Council that is composed of fine countries (America, France, Russia, China and Germany) and its General Assembly wing is now reserved for other member countries which can easily be cajoled and threatened into okaying the decision reached by the Security Council. African as a continent has no representation in the Security Council which means that the fate of a continent as big as Africa can be globally decided without any input from her. A good

number of persons have raised the fear that globalization is equivalent to Americanization of the world. In an exclusive interview with the Washington Report, Minto opined that:

The United States is advancing its corporate interests all over the world," he stated. "The grand design is to maintain itself as the sole, unchallenged power in the world. Over the past two decades the U.S. went into Latin America, it went after Venezuela, it toppled governments, installed its own stooges. What did it want? Resources! Now it claims it is going after so-called Muslim fundamentalists. Iraqi President Saddam Hussain was not a fundamentalist. Yet they sent their troops, invaded a sovereign nation, and the whole world knows it is about oil! (Poole, 2005)

Globalization philosophy, which is a reflection of integrative humanism "strenghtens our conviction that though tongue and tribe may differ, but it is possible to establish a universal community, oneness of brotherhood under one universal godhead"(Obiajulu,2017:1). Globalization is meant to be a bridge builder, a conciliatory apparatus that gives individual nations the '*impetus agitate*' to participate responsibly and intelligently in world affairs energizing them for the task of citizenship of the world. Globalization cosmopolitanizes and harmonizes all things in their diversities thereby aiding in exchange and debate of ideas for life-long learning. Without migration such exchange and sharing of ideas will be impossible. The good life for man and woman is living together in humanity and how can this togetherness be achieved where there is mutual intolerance which is rampant in a pluralistic world like ours. Absence of freedom of migration creates a chasm

among people of different nations of the world, such a steep-sided rift can only be bridged by a kind of intelligence which is subsumed in free but fairly regulated migration policies. Existence is being-with-others and Umeogu vividly captures it this way “*so humanity is a brotherhood and a bridge with which man or woman crossover to God with a convivium of fulfillment and a common Crown of life*” (Umeogu, B:2017).

There are so many other grey areas on the effects of globalization which this research does not cover. The research is only concerned with why in spite of the togetherness globalization preaches the world is still divided. The division which the research wants to address is in the area of migration. Why has globalization failed to address some immigration challenges facing Africans? Why do we still have disparity in the way we treat African and European/American Immigrants?

### **Concept of Migration**

Migration is the movement of people from one civil division to another. It may be movement out of one's country (emigration) or the onward movement of people into a country (immigration). When people move within a country, it is referred to as internal migration (Teriba; 1986:12). For movement from one place to another must be for various reasons which span commercial, economic, social life, exposure, permanent settlement, safety, security of life and to have new lease of life, etc. (Mbah, C. C.; 2009:72). Migrants may be refugees who are fleeing from armed conflicts, war and other disasters which are endemic in any (African) country.

International migration is a complex phenomenon that touches on a multiplicity of economic, social and security aspects affecting our daily lives in an increasingly interconnected world. Migration as a term encompasses a wide variety of movements and situations involving people in an era of deepening globalization. It is interwoven with geopolitics, trade and cultural exchange and provides opportunities for states, businesses and communities to benefit enormously (World Migration Report; 2018:1).

African charter on human and peoples right makes it explicit in the principle of “non-refulgent” that refugees or migrants for whatever reasons, are free from enforced return to their countries of origin (Mbah; 2009:75). This is because migration is one of the ways humanity quests to build strings of interaction, independence and mutual cooperation across borders, cultures and races. True globalization process begins with migration to any part of the world “to find jobs and hence, improve standard of living; to escape from religious, political or social situations in a country; to live in a more suitable climate; to study or acquire skills and for the sake of change and adventure” (Teriba; 1986:12). Migration as a part of expression of human freedom is strengthened by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 13, 1, thus; “Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own and to return to his country.” (Ezeani, 2014:159).

Movement of people from one country to another, either as emigrants or immigrants enhances the ideas of brotherhood of all people which is the heart of globalization. The right of people to spend their life in any part of the world lies at the heart of cosmopolitanism. With this *prima-facie* understanding and apprehension of what globalization stands for and the meaning of cosmopolitanism, most countries are deluded from the reality. Most nations of the world especially the 3<sup>rd</sup> World nations are today crazy for the globalization drive, which in reality symbolizes continuous enslavement (Abdulhakeem, 2011:35).

The pejorative idea of globalization as a tool for enslavement of the weaker nations discourages migration which is supposed to enhance globalization – a tool for the unification of the world. Hence, the big nations “use globalization in enforcing their secular values and imperialist policies on the weaker nations of the world (Abdulhakeem, 2011:35).

### **Migration: A Challenge to Africa**

Migration can generate very large benefits to immigrants, their families and countries of origin. The wages migrants earn abroad can be in any multiples of what they could earn doing similar jobs at home. For example, a study conducted in 2009 found that the ratio of wages earned by workers in the United States to wages by identical workers (with the same country of birth, years of schooling, age and sex, and rural/urban residence) abroad ranges from 15:45 (for workers born in Yemen) to 1:99 (workers born in Dominican Republic), with a median ration of 4:11. The wage differences and relative income gains from migration are largest for lower skilled workers, whose international movements are the most restricted. The increase in migrants' earnings can also lead to considerable improvements in the welfare of human developments of migrants' families, either directly if they are with migrants in the host country, or indirectly through remittances. The beneficial effects of migration for migrants, most importantly, and their families go beyond economic impacts and frequently include improvements in other dimensions of human development, such as education and health (UNDP; 2009).

Apart from the above gains migration has its disturbing challenges to Africa. Instead of the modern man "increasingly acknowledging the dignity and worth of human persons" (VAT. II Doc, p. 1993), bigger nations are busy establishing ways of making their authorities felt by the weaker nations and one of these ways is by tactically discouraging them from migrating for greener pastures except where such migrations would generate income to their nations. This is a kind of treating the citizens of developing nations as of no value or sub humans not worthy of any dignity.

There should largely be more frequent contacts with each other, and this will encourage migration as "a country with ... no migration will have an increasing number of old people ... that requires more expenditure on medical care, persons, etc." (Teriba; 1986:24). Men have become aware of pluralism and indeed should have come to see it as a hallmark of our age. True pluralism, however, is impossible

unless men and communities of different origins and culture undertake dialogue. Such dialogue that will strengthen up formation of community of nations and international organization does not sincerely involve Africans and underdeveloped world. Rather exclusion of developing nations from being participants in such dialogue existentially subordinates them to overdependence and signing of treaties that further under develop them and make them underdogs. Africans are excluded from participating in universal common good.

Aware of the value of interconnectivity of the world and no nation is self sufficient in everything, United Nations 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants had to state that “states were charged to develop a global compact on migration as well as a separate global compact on refugees by the end of 2018.

On this paper, however, we recognize that migration issues are complex and precise, so “the complex dynamics of global migration in an increasingly interconnected world can never be fully measured, understood, regulated and appraised. The problem facing migrations in an increasingly interconnected and independent world, especially in Africa, we find ourselves are as follows:

### **Ideological Imperialism**

According to Ochuba (2016:7) “this kind of imperialism is one of restricted ideology or culture on the people of diverse cultures and the consideration of such as the only truth of which all must adhere”. Indoctrination and dogmatism bracket the freedom of expression of the ‘inferior race’ and thereby making them hewers and drawers of water. This ideological imperialism is against multiculturalism which “*is the coexistence of many cultural within a state or society. It is a school of thought that condoms the cultural hegemony of the white aristocratic leaders towards the minority, advocating strongly for the defence of the full recognition of the minority*” (ochuba 2016:7). It is from the multiculturalism that the idea of globalization came up. The ideological imperialism with its importations of particular culture stultified the spirit of migration and of course globalization. The problem of relational inequality is endangered by

the stultification and consequently paradoxical to globalization. In this way, globalization which ideally supposed to reinforce co-habitation, agglutination and togetherness of people of different culture and places has now become a powerful instrument of oppressing the under- developed and developing countries by the developed countries.

We at this juncture join issues with Ochuba in saying that “this (oppression) manifests itself in diverse ways of which few are; the brain drainage syndrome, the exploitation of our natural resources, child abuse in labour market, segregation, marginalization, racism etc.

Africans are seriously challenged by the issues raised above as their major constraints to effective migration. Poverty and hunger makes many Africans to seek for better life abroad whereas it is not easy in any part of the world. Few Africans that successfully migrated to other parts of the world are treated badly like sub-humans; they are meant to take horrible and indecent jobs which the western world would not like to do such as forced harlotry, forced organ transplantation, forced servitude; women are sexually abused and used as objects of sexual gratification, forced marriage, forced labourers, etc. The case of treatment meted to Nigerian migrants in Libya of recent exemplifies the point we are making. The kidnap and torture given to some migrants caught going to Europe via the Sahara desert is alarming. Some of them are converted as maids and house boys under serious incarceration, severed from communicating with their people, in the house of Morrocans and others.

Contrary to the mandate of different conventions in Africa plus that of United Nations Organization which allow free migration that brings about increase in inter-activity, the level of segregation practices by stronger nations discourages the weaker (African) Nation from seeing migration as “improving people’s lives and

offered opportunities for millions of people worldwide” (World Migration Report 2018.4).

However, one cannot, because of certain ill feelings undermine the importance of migration in improving lives of people. According to Thaddeus Metz (... Africans would be suffering even more than they are now suffering without the influence of colonialism ( Thaddeus Metz 2012.57). This statement portends that the ever presence of European in Africa would continue to divide and partition Africans to the point of their losing the center. Globalization is another name for colonialism. It has nothing to do with unification and brotherhood of everybody otherwise everybody will be free to migrate to any part of the world, including Europe to spend part of their life. The failure of migration is as the result of antagonism expressed by stronger nations and their desire to perpetually dominate the weaker and developing nations of the world in Asia and Africa.

### **Globalization in Service of Migration**

Globalization has brought with it a tremendous increase in the number of international migrants who at least nurture the thought of leaving their countries of origin in search of means of satisfying the natural vacuum that is coeval in the human person (as no man is self sufficient). Globalization has increased the interconnectedness between the people of the world thereby breaking the age long bottle-necks associated with people migrating from one place to another (more especially in the international scene). According to Li, “globalization has increased the interconnectedness of nation states, speeding up the flow of goods, services, ideas and people across national boundaries. There was international migration long before the age of globalization, but the speed, scope, complexity and volume of world migration under the global era are unprecedented” (Li, 2008:1). This point was corroborated by Mathias Czaika and Hein de Haas (2009):

This assumed increase in the *intensity*,  
*diversity*, *distance* and overall

*complexity* of international migration is commonly linked to globalization and associated processes such as rapid advances in transport and communication technology. It is commonly assumed that technological progress has facilitated migration by lowering resource constraints on mobility (the threshold levels of wealth necessary to migrate, particularly internationally), but also because it has become easier for migrants to stay in touch with family and community members, to remit money and to travel back and forth between host and origin countries. Increasing transnational ties and transnational identities (cf. Vertovec 2001) are also thought to have fortified migrant networks and to have stimulated migration along increasingly diverse geographical pathways. Improved access to ‘global’ information through satellite television, mobile phones and internet along with improved education has increased the awareness of people around the world about new opportunities in previously unknown places and countries and has exposed them to new, ‘modern’ and attractive lifestyles, which can change notions of the “good life” (Mabogunje 1970). Such awareness may increase people’s life aspirations and feelings of relative deprivation, independent from absolute incomes and living standards. Combined, these processes seem to

have increased people's capabilities  
and aspirations to migrate.

From the above, it is obvious that globalization has at least stimulated the desire for the migrants from the less developed countries to leave in search of better livelihood in the developed countries. But the problem remains that most African immigrants still face so many hurdles in their bid to pursue these desires stimulated by globalization. Why is it so?

### **Solution to Effective Globalization and Cosmopolitanism**

Having seen that globalization as we know it today has been stupefied by developed nations, it is our responsibility to provide a solution for effective globalization. Globalization needs to be humanized, it needs to be more ethically articulated so as to suit humanity (Pallente, 2007:88). Ozumba and Chimakonam supports Pallente saying:

The world as it stands today is only 'mouthing' globalization. Globalization should be seen as a strong depoliticized and egalitarian contrivance that sets the platform for vigorous emancipation of all humans from various disadvantages arising from a past that was lopsided, unjust, unfair and inequitable ... a society where there is redistribution of wealth, facilities and infrastructure so that men at the farthest reaches of the world will at the end of the day appreciate the nobility and equity in globalization (Ozumba and Chimakonam,2014:77).

Globalization will continue to remain a far cry until globalization begins to globalize by unifying all societies of the world so that the weaker ones will be strengthened by the stronger ones. In this way the idea of being simply a citizen of the world, cosmopolitanism, which globalization promises, will be consummated. Its

consummation will portend, among other things, that anybody can migrate to any corner of the world and lives with full rights and privileges like the rest of the people already living there without any form of discrimination as experienced today by migrants in different parts of the world.

### **Integrative Humanism**

If all humans come from stock and are existentially subordinated to one Godhead, we need to understand the reasons for the acrimony we have in the world today. The facts of exclusion, racism, neo-apartheid, segregation, sectionalism, provenance, tribalism are different ways humans have forged to perpetuate and perpetrate their parochial interests. Whereas the fact of differences among humans based on the ‘isms’ stated above are acceptable as the ‘givens’ of life, humanity can go extra miles in employing the force of cohesion that will strengthen inclusion and help to overcome exclusion. According to Ozumba and Chimakonam in their Integrative humanism *Njikoka*, “Man was not created selfish and self-centred. As soon as he ceased seeking Nke Mbu’s interest which was universal, he started seeking his own interest which turned out to be parochial, narrow and limited”(2014:75).

Integrative humanism is an intercultural philosophy that calls for inclusive society which lies at the core of globalization. It holds that the diversities we find among nations, cultures, races and individuals make for variety and mark out areas of strengths and weaknesses of different nations (Ozumba and Chimakonam,2014:77). In other words, our differences should be the source of our strength because though tribe and tongue may differ in brotherhood we should stand. It therefore becomes necessary to harness this polar of strength in order to agglutinate them for the sake of obviating the many weaknesses of human society. The galvanized strength of the stronger nations should neutralize the weaknesses of the weaker nations. Integrative humanism sees reality as a crisscrossing of different chains for the sake of understanding and strengthening the weak points.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this paper also admonishes African leaders to have a re-think in their respective countries and start taking measures on how to improve the degraded image of an African person. They should provide the enabling environment and create opportunities for the African person to thrive. This will help redeem the battered image of an African person in the international community and help resolve the problems associated with immigration. Looking at the *push-pull* theory of migration, it is obvious that lack of enabling environment and opportunities (as a result of bad governance) are the factors that *push* most African migrants away from their continent and also the better opportunities and enabling environment available in the developed countries are the factors that *pull* Africans emigrants to these countries. Therefore, if all these *push-factors* can be made *pull-factors* by the African Leaders, then, the hurdles associated with migration will be a thing of the past. It is crystal clear that in *pull-factors* laden world, the imperialistic political undertone of globalization will be curbed because; the dichotomy between the less developed and developed is usually the springboard for the imperialistic tendency of globalization which culminates to the ill-treatments meted on African migrants which is not the case if the migrant happens to come from any of the developed countries.

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