



# **Managing Migration in Southern Africa: Tools for Evaluating Local Government Responsiveness**

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## Abstract

Southern African cities are on the move. As elsewhere in the global south, populations are continuing to grow, shrink and transform in response to demographic and economic pressures (Crush *et al.* 2005; Potts 2009). As the foundation of government, local authorities are on the frontlines of managing the transformations of their communities in ways that provide stability and economic opportunities. Through an examination of six South African municipalities and Gaborone, Botswana's economic and political capital, this report helps us come to terms with local governments' responses to population mobility. This research suggests that few authorities across Southern Africa are positioned to capitalise on migration's counter-poverty potential. This is partly due to general difficulties of grappling with structural poverty and their expanded mandates. Authorities also face specific migration-related challenges: the availability and use of data; patterns of budgeting and popular participation; and political resistance to newcomers. If addressed, these concerns would not only enable local authorities to respond more effectively to migration, but also to plan for economic development in a more strategic and sustained manner. This report provides a tool for assessing municipalities' ability to respond and to help explain capacity variations. Our work identifies six primary indices for evaluating municipalities' abilities and practices surrounding the management of human mobility and other population dynamics. Each of these includes a series of sub-measures for calculating aggregate and sub-area scores. While the measures outlined within are more indicative than exhaustive, they nonetheless allow for comparative analysis and point to areas for future interventions to improve local government strategies for poverty alleviation.

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## Introduction

South African cities are on the move. As elsewhere in the global south, populations are continuing to grow, shrink and transform in response to demographic and economic pressures (Crush *et al.* 2005; Potts 2009). Although long more urbanised than many countries on the continent, almost two thirds (62.2 per cent) of South Africans now live in urban areas with a 1.4 per cent annual urbanisation rate. In Botswana the figures are similar, with 61.7 per cent urbanised but an urbanisation rate of 2.5 per cent (UNDESA 2011). Much of this growth is due to natural increase: longer life expectancies coupled with relatively high fertility rates. Yet some of the most dramatic changes in cities' morphology, dependency ratios, and productive potential stem from people moving. Importantly, secondary cities and peri-urban areas are growing at the fastest rate, often quickly outstripping service and physical infrastructure and far outpacing growth in employment opportunities (see Roberts and Hohmann 2014). In 2013, the South African municipalities of Polokwane, Rustenburg, Vanderbijlpark, Nelspruit and Ekurhuleni were the five fastest-growing urban areas, with average annual population growth rates of between 1.6 per cent and 2.9 per cent over the last decade. Compare this with the country's second city, Cape Town, which was growing over the same period at an annual rate of only 1.4 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Even when human mobility does little to change absolute numbers, it remains an important dynamic with people frequently shifting within and between cities or between towns and more rural 'homes'.

There are always risks associated with moving, but when successful, mobility represents a route out of poverty for migrants, for kin and for sending communities. Given the scarcity of services and employment, moving towards economic and service nodes is often one of the most rapid and effective mechanisms for improving people's welfare (White *et al.* 2008). Mobility of various forms can also contribute entrepreneurial energy, skills and labour in ways that benefit migrants and host communities. For sending communities, human mobility can decrease demands for services and promote investment through social and material remittances. Yet these opportunities are potentially countered by risks of resource and service scarcity, heightening inequality, declining labour productivity, social conflict and public health risks. Ensuring that the benefits outweigh these risks demands effective management and planning.

As the foundation of government, local authorities are on the front lines of managing the transformations of their communities in ways that provide stability and economic opportunities. So while debates over migration's specific drivers, dynamics and developmental consequences continue (see Bocquier 2005; Potts 2011; White and Lindstrom 2005), two messages are clear. First, mobility is a hallmark of the contemporary era, with the most socially and economically significant movements taking place within the global south, most usually within domestic borders. Second, if migration is to help counter poverty in sending and receiving communities, local governments at both ends of the migration process need to proactively respond to human mobility.

The importance of local officials and institutions has been dramatically enhanced over the past two decades by a wave of decentralisation across the developing world (Crook 2003). Growing evidence suggests that while there have been significant benefits of

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<sup>1</sup> Figures from: <http://www.southafrica.info/news/urbanisation-240113.htm#.U1lnPSib-ZY#ixzz2zpnPgb68>.

decentralisation across sectors in many places, significant challenges remain and many authorities have largely failed to capitalise on the potential decentralisation presents. Among other factors, these shortcomings stem from conditions under which additional local government responsibilities are not supported by increased authority, technical and institutional capacity, or budgetary allocations. Underperformance is further exacerbated by unclear mandates, inter-governmental squabbling, and political incentives that often privilege 'upward' versus 'downward' accountability. These challenges can negatively affect all citizens as they work against all forms of planning and programme implementation. This is particularly likely to compromise long-term initiatives to help the poor and other marginalised groups who are ill-positioned to make demands on local or national authorities.

Through an examination of six South African municipalities and Gaborone, Botswana's economic and political capital, this report helps us come to terms with local government's responses to population mobility. As this and previous research suggest, few authorities across Southern Africa are positioned to capitalise on migration's counter-poverty potential (see Landau *et al.* 2013). Part of this is due to general challenges facing local authorities as they grapple with structural poverty and their expanded mandates. Amidst these general challenges, there are identifiable factors that work against planning for mobility. If addressed, these concerns would not only enable local authorities to respond more effectively to migration, but also to plan for economic development in a more strategic and sustained manner. Understanding the factors working against effective responses helps us go beyond normative appeals and political calls for improved governance by providing practical guidance for advocates, those providing technical assistance and local authorities themselves.

The research underlying this report was supported through the Migrating out of Poverty Research Consortium coordinated by the University of Sussex, with support from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. It builds on preliminary research sponsored by the Programme to Support Pro-poor Policy Development (*PSPPD*) based in the President's office of the Republic of South Africa. The recent phase of fieldwork was carried out in both South Africa and Botswana. The South African case studies, Lephalele and Bushbuckridge, was conducted by researchers from the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at Wits University in Johannesburg. The Botswana component was led by the University of Botswana. The following synthesis represents the views and perspectives only of the authors and the African Centre for Migration & Society.

## Key Findings

The capacity and activities of municipal governments varied tremendously among the seven sites included in this study. At one end of the spectrum was Botswana's capital, Gaborone. As the host to the country's relatively well functioning national administration, Botswana's national capital is the focus of an extensive municipal structure with a relatively sophisticated planning department (see Maphunye 2009). Within South Africa, the wealthier Mossel Bay was much smaller, but similarly organised albeit within a less conducive political structure. Oddly, Pretoria – South Africa's political capital – exhibited a dearth of planning capacity due to a dramatic purging of positions associated with population planning during the post-apartheid transition. At the other end of the spectrum was Bushbuckridge, where

one person is responsible for research, planning, and local development, but whose work was on hold at the time of research as the municipality had been put under provincial administration. Lephalale was a middle ground in terms of government's role and capacity. The municipality had been designed to serve a small agrarian town, and could do so relatively effectively. However, from 2006, a large swath of nearby villages had been incorporated into the municipality in ways that greatly increased the area the municipality served. Soon after came an influx in private sector actors and job seekers linked to the power station construction (according to Statistics South Africa, it has had an annual growth rate of 3.06 per cent from 2001-2011. Almost all of that growth was in the last five years).<sup>2</sup> As a result, a relatively effective municipality was being pushed to its limits, at times finding creative ways of boosting its capacity, such as developing a liaison committee with mining companies. At other times it was evidently overstretched and unable to cope.

Rather than provide a summary of each of the seven case studies, this report provides a tool for assessing municipalities' ability to respond and to help explain capacity variations. Our work identifies six primary indices for evaluating municipalities' abilities and practices surrounding the management of human mobility and other population dynamics. Each of these includes a series of sub-measures for calculating aggregate and sub-area scores. While the measures outlined below are indicative more than exhaustive, they nonetheless allow for comparative analysis and point to areas for future interventions.

The six primary indices are:

- Perceptions and attitudes among municipal officials regarding human mobility and their ability and responsibility for addressing its varied forms.
- Data collection and management systems.
- Budgeting systems' responsiveness to demographic change.
- Popular engagement and participatory mechanisms.
- The inclusion of 'migrant interests' in political and bureaucratic accountability and incentives.
- The degree to which approaches to human security and social cohesion appropriately consider human mobility.

Using these six categories as an assessment guide, it is possible to evaluate the degree to which local government is responding to mobility affecting a given municipality and many of the reasons enabling or discouraging proactive, progressive responses. These measures have been designed to guide comparative, qualitative analysis. Through application and further research they may be refined for more specific administrative or political contexts.

Although imprecise in their measures, each of these areas can be scored according to indicators introduced below. A fictional municipality responding fully to mobility in ways that capitalise on its potential for economic development would score highest marks across all six indices. Such a (fictitious) finding is represented below as Figure 1. This ideal is unlikely to be achieved anywhere, let alone in the kinds of communities considered here. Nonetheless, it

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<sup>2</sup> See: [http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/?page\\_id=993&id=lephalale-municipality](http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=993&id=lephalale-municipality).

offers an analytical and normative framework with which to assess a wide variety of municipalities.

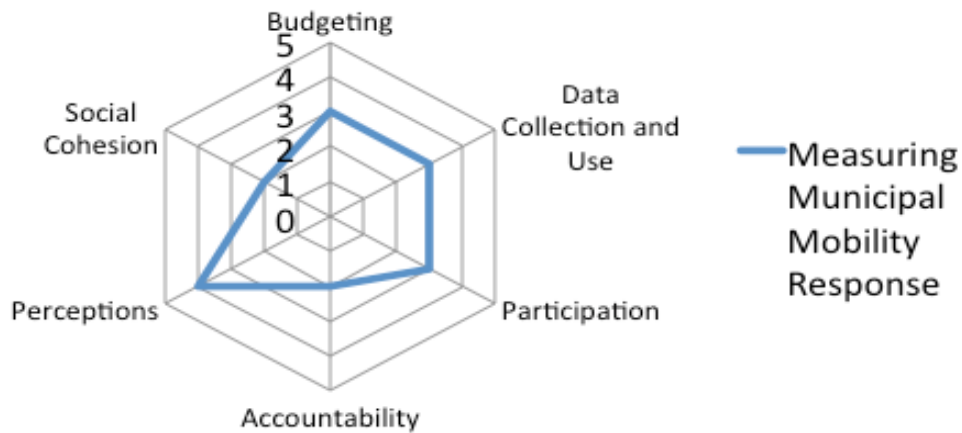
**Figure 1: A Fully Capacitated Municipality**



A more realistic (yet still hypothetical) version of a municipality appears in in Figure 2, below. In this somewhat more probable scenario, a municipality has some systems in place, but falls short elsewhere. Moreover, it points to where internal and external actors may wish to intervene. In this case, it appears as though officials recognise their role in addressing mobility but may be hamstrung by a range of other factors including budgeting, data, and forms of popular participation. Even if there is no single recipe for addressing these shortcomings – and every country and municipality will require tailor-made assistance – this framework provides a normative guide for municipalities and advocates while allowing for comparison across space and time.



**Figure 2: A Partially Capacitated Municipality**



### Case Selection, Questions and Data Collection

Migration affects almost all communities in highly mobile regions such as Southern Africa. Whether due to people leaving, transiting or settling – however temporarily – their movements potentially shift trade patterns, political authority, and social membership. Recognising that mobility is all but universal, this research nonetheless represents work in a limited number of municipalities selected during two phases. In the initial phase (2009-2010), the research team visited four municipalities in South Africa alone: Mossel Bay, Tshwane (formerly Pretoria), Nelson Mandela Bay (formerly Port Elizabeth), and Merafong. For reasons detailed in previous reports, these municipalities were selected to represent a geographic spread, varied party leadership structures, relative wealth, and the incidents of ‘xenophobic’ attacks. While there were variations on these criteria, all four of the municipalities had remarkably high levels of in-migration. During the second phase (2013-2014), we targeted three additional municipalities. These were chosen to expand our geographic spread and include examples of sites grappling with specific migration forms, including high levels of out-migration. They also demonstrated a recognition of the fact that secondary cities remain understudied in Southern Africa and are affected variably by migration. The inclusion of Gaborone allowed us to extend the research beyond South Africa’s borders.

In Phase II, the first municipality, Gaborone, was chosen because it was the capital of Botswana and a destination for migrants from across the country and neighbouring states, particularly Zimbabwe (see Campbell and Crush 2012). Although its population is modest in absolute terms – 231,626 based on the 2011 census – its residents nonetheless represent about 10 per cent of the country’s total population. It is a relatively new city, built only in the 1960s for the newly independent country. Its founders naively expected it would originally house only 20,000 people and would grow no larger than 60,000-70,000. Although the country relies heavily on exports of diamonds and beef – industries taking place largely beyond Gaborone – the city has an active financial services sector and hosts a broad array of

public services, commercial enterprises, government departments, and international organisations. Moreover, located close to the border with South Africa, it is both a destination and a transit point for migrants from across the country and elsewhere in the region (most notably the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe). Not surprisingly, its growth rate of 3.4 per cent is the highest in the country (Central Statistics Office 2005). Perhaps because of its small size, relative wealth and impressive political stability, Botswana remains particularly understudied in both the development governance and contemporary migration literature. While it has a different history, public administration, and political characteristics from towns in South Africa, it also shares some demographic and geographic characteristics with South African secondary cities and illustrates the relevance of these research themes across multiple countries.

Within South Africa, we chose two additional case studies specifically for their unique migration dynamics. The first, Bushbuckridge, has long been affected by regional migration. Known primarily as a sending community, as a former homeland (i.e. Bantustan), much of the labour force historically went to the mines around Rustenburg in search of work, and these linkages and mobility patterns continue today. Furthermore, traditional leaders remain important sources of authority in the area, having the legal right to allocate land. They work closely with the municipality on many aspects of their work, including disbursing social grants, resolving disputes, and consulting with community members. It is a community with a high dependency ratio and a skewed sex balance with disproportionately high numbers of women, as well as very high rates of unemployment. These characteristics drive much of the municipality's planning and community engagement. They also imply certain limitations on the work of the municipality, for example, through a lack of tax base. Somewhat oddly, even as it sends its residents elsewhere it receives significant numbers of migrants from neighbouring countries. The area has a particular history of migration with Mozambique, which established patterns of migration during South Africa's liberation struggle and the civil war in Mozambique (1977-1992). These ties have remained strong, with many Bushbuckridge residents maintaining active family ties across the Mozambique border. Mobility remains an important empirical factor and a critical aspect of political discourse in the municipality, with key political issues including the issuing of South African identity documents to second generation undocumented Mozambican migrants, planning for remittances of migrant workers, and access to land by new arrivals (see Polzer 2008). In Bushbuckridge, there can be few doubts of mobility's role in shaping the tasks facing the municipality.

The final case was Lephalale, a small town located near the Botswana border in South Africa. Although unexceptional until half a decade ago, it is now distinguished by an exceptional rate of population growth due almost entirely to in-migration. Until recently, Lephalale was a sleepy agricultural outpost with a small coal mine forming the backbone of the local economy. After discovering that the municipality sits atop of one of the world's largest coal reserves, South Africa designated it as a site for one of the world's largest coal mines and a new, massive coal fired power stations (see Faku 2013). At the time of the 2013 fieldwork, construction was in full swing with workers from South Africa and across the globe with specialised skills, as well as private sector corporations in the construction and energy sectors. The municipality envisages a transformation of the town into an urban area in a short space of time. However, the planning challenges of this kind of transformation are

tremendous. Lephalale is an example of a municipality that is particularly affected by mobility, but also proactively engaging with migration as a force that is actively shaping the community, and as a driver of change.

In each municipality, we aimed to answer three key questions that would lead us to a better understanding of how mobility was shaping local economic development, and what local authorities needed to respond to it effectively:

1. Who are the local authorities in the municipality, and how do they understand and respond to demographic changes?
2. What are the key migration dynamics, and how are they shaping the municipality?
3. What does this mean for planning, service delivery, and human development?

Our comparative answers to these questions allowed us to make relevant recommendations on how municipalities can take mobility into consideration to build a vibrant, democratic community.

The first phase of data collection was conducted between March and June 2010 by a team of researchers. The limited research period meant that the team spent approximately two weeks in each municipality. Given time limits, we placed emphasis on attitudes and accounts of practice rather than deep observation of institutional culture, population dynamics, or political configurations. At each site, a four-person research team conducted individual and focus group interviews with representatives of the police, municipal government, political parties, unions, community organisations and the private sector. Where possible, the team verified claims through secondary data analysis or interviews, but the emphasis remains firmly on institutional practice and assumptions rather than concrete consequences and impact evaluation. As our intention is largely to highlight concerns for further research and policy intervention, even our modest findings can provide the basis for additional research, which will confirm the relative importance and impacts of the themes discussed in the remaining pages.

Phase II of the data collection lasted through much of 2013, with two months of fieldwork in each municipality. Research partners helped to arrange introductions to the municipality, including meetings with the municipal managers in all three localities. Although we had hoped to secure full cooperation from local officials, there was initially some degree of hostility to the research. Over the course of our inquiries we came to recognise the degree to which officials wished to shroud many of their municipalities' management shortcomings. Nonetheless, we continued with an initial scoping visit, which led to a mapping of the community and main stakeholders. From this, we developed a list of key stakeholders and arranged interviews accordingly. Specific interview guides were drawn up for each respondent, based on their knowledge of the community. In spite of guidelines and goals drawn up for each interview, interviews were largely open ended, to be flexible enough to adapt to the knowledge of the respondent. Generally, the focus remained similar to that informing Phase I.

## The Importance of Local Government in Botswana and South Africa

The nature of decentralisation across much of Africa creates a sometime unresolvable tension in developing appropriate responses to human mobility. Theoretically, decentralisation in both Botswana and South Africa was to help ensure that democratic structures reached communities, particularly in rural areas (Wunsch 1998). As a result, local government structures in both countries are now largely responsible for critical portfolios ranging from disaster management to service provision. But while this places local government at the forefront of shaping economic development in communities, local governments often lack the resources, skills and political support to deliver on these promises.

While immigration and urbanisation are international phenomenon demanding national policy frameworks, the effects of human movements are highly spatialised, with the most dramatic effects taking place at the local level. People move from and into specific sites where the impacts will be felt most. The formal strengthening of municipal authorities across much of the developing world means that local governments should hypothetically be empowered to capitalise on the opportunities and mediate against the challenges such movements present. Failing to do so, or responding inappropriately, will only help realise urban planners' Malthusian fears of expanding poverty, public health crises and conflict.

Local leadership and engagement are the first steps to developing effective, pro-poor responses to human mobility. But an acceptance of responsibility will accomplish little unless local government planners are adequately informed, resourced and supported by bureaucratic capacity and political superiors. Although by no means guaranteed, larger municipalities are more likely to leverage the skills and resources to fashion such a response. However, growth is fastest among towns and peri-urban settlements and it is the relatively under-resourced administrations that need the greatest assistance in responding to movements into and through their jurisdictions. Small towns or rural communities, which are often the source of migration, are often similarly disadvantaged. This puts local government in a challenging position of managing current crises associated with socio-economic and ethnic diversity while planning for future populations and broader development initiatives. This research aims to help address this gap.

## A Framework for Comparing Municipal Responsiveness

Our research documents a continuum of capacity in responding to mobility. Unsurprisingly, there are strong correlations between generally high levels of service delivery and security with more proactive responses to human mobility; well managed cities are those also best able to manage migration. These municipalities have the resources and capacity to function effectively, and recognise migration as an important element in responding to the community's population dynamics. However, even with such recognition, there are still obstacles linked to data quality, and participation and budgeting processes. In this scenario, a municipality can score well on all of our indices except those where they are hampered by institutional structures that limit their local responsiveness. These include centralised party systems and control over financial resources. Although these factors cannot be addressed solely at the municipal level, it is nonetheless important to analytically incorporate them for programming and advocacy purposes.

At the other end of the spectrum, we found that municipal authorities with limited capacity for planning even the most basic elements of service delivery are typically unable to respond effectively to population dynamics. Such shortcomings are rarely only administrative in nature, but are driven by political factions that often immobilise the municipality. Using the indices outlined in greater detail below, these municipalities would score poorly on all fronts. Represented graphically, almost none of their stars' arms would be coloured.

Importantly, there are significant variations both within the municipalities that were responding relatively well and among those who were not. It is not enough to simply say a municipality is or is not developing an effective pro-poor response to migration. For one, even where responses are relatively strong, they can always be improved. And where municipalities are not doing well, it is critical to understand the primary obstacle(s) to developing an effective response. The following section provides more details on the primary indices and predictors of success first outlined in the introduction. Each of the primary indices includes the sub-components (reiterated below) that can be individually assessed and aggregated to develop both an overall and a metric specific representation of the municipality.

- Perceptions and attitudes among municipal officials regarding human mobility and their ability and responsibility for addressing its varied forms.
- Data collection and management systems.
- Budgeting systems' responsiveness to demographic change.
- Popular engagement and participatory mechanisms.
- The inclusion of 'migrant interests' in political and bureaucratic accountability and incentives.
- The degree to which approaches to human security and social cohesion appropriately consider human mobility.

### ***Perceptions, Attitudes, Roles and Responsibilities***

Across the case studies, officials continue to react to foreign and domestic migrants by implicitly denying their presence, excluding them from developmental plans, or tacitly condoning discrimination throughout the government bureaucracy and police. In almost all instances, migrants (domestic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and all legal residents) are members of the community entitled to government resources (Götz 2003). In many cases, government officials see them as an illegitimate drain on public resources. As such, it is all too common at the municipal level for relations to be strained between the political and administrative arms of government. In some municipalities, there is a distinct sense that current residents or 'ratepayers' deserve to be privileged over new arrivals or temporary residents. In others, officials hold fast to the idea that migration worsens violent crime, disease, and unemployment. Still, others insist that matters related to migration and human mobility fall exclusively within the national government's bailiwick. These perceptions place migrants outside of the local government constituency, preventing officials from adopting pragmatic policies to address their developmental impact and provide for their needs.

Staffing, transitions, and coordination within municipalities have also limited local authorities' ability to develop appropriate frameworks. In some municipalities, leadership and staff turnovers have resulted in the redeployment of staff into positions where they do not have adequate technical background or knowledge to manage migration and urbanisation. The rapid turnover within some municipalities has also resulted in the loss of institutional knowledge that could provide important insights into municipal population dynamics. Perhaps most critically, different departments or divisions within local government often disagree over the validity of data or ongoing population dynamics. Often these disagreements are tied to broader concerns about performance targets and evaluation. Consequently, even where relatively accurate data exist, they may be selectively ignored by officials.

While Gaborone possibly had greater scope for improved coordination given that it houses both municipal and national authorities, there was little evidence that such coordination occurred. Indeed, Campbell (2014) notes that:

There is also strong evidence that failures of interdepartmental coordination further inhibits an effective response to mobility relates and generates poor institutional coherence. Given that mobility is an interdepartmental issue impacting on every arena, strong coordination mechanisms are essential. But for this to occur, there would need to be a reconsideration of a range of policies – health, security, education, trade, infrastructure development, etc. – to ensure a greater degree of policy coherence.

Due in part to the challenges local government faces in some areas in establishing themselves as a legitimate authority in various arenas, many municipalities find that there are overlapping nodes of power at the local level. Therefore, coordination becomes not just an intra-governmental problem, between and among different municipal and sectoral structures, but between the state and traditional leaders, private sector actors, and others

*Indicators on perceptions, attitudes, roles and responsibilities:*

One of the more critical steps for municipalities to take in addressing mobility is to take ownership of the issue. This dimension explores the extent to which municipal officials are prepared to address migration, see it as their responsibility, and understand how human mobility falls within their specific mandate:

- Do municipal officials recognise their responsibilities to plan for mobility within, into and from their respective geographic area?
- Can municipal officials identify the formal and informal roles and responsibilities of various role players in local government vis-à-vis migration?
- Can municipal officials identify the formal and informal roles and responsibilities of various role players outside of local government and how these responsibilities may impact on their mandates?
- Do local officials prioritise the needs of taxpayers or long-term residents or specific 'indigenous' ethnic groups over other current or future residents?
- Can municipal officials identify and articulate the links between varied forms of human migration, security, economic development and counter-poverty initiatives?

## ***Data Collection and Management***

Mobility researchers in Southern Africa are often frustrated by limited data availability and poor data quality when it does exist. South Africa and Botswana have more sophisticated data collection structures in place than many countries in the region, but data linked to mobility nonetheless remains weak. Even the South African national statistical agency (Statistics South Africa or StatsSA) recognises that national data on migration is:

[...] generally scanty, patchy and skewed. Such shortcomings tend to negatively influence policies, debates, dialogues, etc. as well as distort communication about migration. This contributes to anti-migrant sentiments that could lead to harmful stereotyping, discrimination and even xenophobia.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, in Botswana '[a]t the most basic level, demographic data is not available or sufficiently nuanced to provide the basis for urban planning. Yet it is not data paucities alone that are at issue. Rather, it is political and institutional structures that work most strong against forward looking planning' (Campbell 2014).

Another common theme across municipalities was the challenge of data collection and management. Disaggregated census data were not being used in a single municipality studied, for reasons ranging from a lack of awareness of capacity to access it, to questioning the validity or relevance of the data. While a few municipalities used other sources of data for planning, there was generally a lack of consistency and quality of data being used by municipalities.

### *Key indicators on data collection and management:*

Responding effectively to demographic changes requires, first and foremost, the availability of current a reliable data, and the ability within the municipality to use it effectively. Key measures around data collection and management include:

- Are spatialised data available that allow for population projections at the sub-municipal, municipal, and national levels? Do these allow analysts to disaggregate on the basis of key socio-economic variables including migration status?
- Is there agreement within the municipality and within the national bureaucracy on what constitutes reliable data sources for planning purposes?
- Do municipal officials have the skills to analyse available data or are they able to call on these skills from other places in the public administration?
- Are there political or financial incentives for accurately collecting and incorporating data into policy making and programmatic planning?
- Are available data or empirically informed estimates used for budgeting and planning at the local and national levels?

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<sup>3</sup> Cited in : <https://africacheck.org/reports/how-many-zimbabweans-live-in-south-africa-the-numbers-are-unreliable/> See also Budlender 2013.

### ***Budgeting Systems' Responsiveness to Demographic Change***

While municipalities across the region have a limited revenue raising mandate, most of their resources stem from inter-government transfers, usually from the national treasury. Across much of the world, decentralisation initiatives have fallen short of their potential due to the ineffectiveness of such transfers. Indeed, with little leverage over the central government and party systems and potentially limited capacity to manage funds, municipalities often struggle to mobilise the resources needed to fulfil their service delivery, security, and infrastructure development mandates.

Even when financial resources are available, there are no guarantees that they will be used in ways that are productive or pro-poor. Resources are often 'captured' by the political and economic elite and directed into areas where they serve the interests of the already relatively well-endowed. This is due in part to those groups' ability to mobilise politically along with close kin, class or professional connections to decision makers. Even where resources are dedicated to poorer areas, their allocations may adhere more to political logics than principles of social justice or poverty alleviation.

Budgeting for human mobility adds an additional dimension to the already complex process of local and inter-governmental resource allocation. Effectively planning for population growth requires investments in people who may not yet be present or in areas that have yet to be occupied. That it may also mean allocating resources to services that will only be fully utilised in the future demands compromises on expenditures for current residents. Where current populations have acute needs, this is often difficult to sell politically. In areas of out-migration, municipalities have a somewhat different challenge as they must provide services and infrastructure without the presence of many of their most productive residents. In such sites, dependency ratios are often disproportionately high, creating elevated demands on clinics and schools whilst generating little local revenue. Remittances may help address families' needs, but they are private funds and unlikely to support public goods or services.

#### *Indicators on an effective budgeting process:*

In all instances, effective budgeting for human mobility requires: (a) strong assessments of population and economic trends; (b) spatialised analysis of these trends' implications for public expenditures; and (c) incentives and mechanisms for allocating national or local resources to meet current needs while preparing future residential patterns and economic strategies. These are difficult criteria to meet, all the more so during periods of rapid economic or political transformation. With this in mind, indicators of an effective budgeting process include:

- Do budgetary authorities at the municipal level use accurate and forward looking data on settlement patterns and economic activities to plan resource allocations and inter-governmental transfers?



- Do budgetary authorities at the provincial or national level use accurate and forward looking data on settlement patterns and economic activities to plan resource allocations and inter-governmental transfers?
- Are there mechanisms which allow resource allocation and inter-governmental transfers to be reconsidered in light of dramatic changes in settlement patterns?
- Are an adequate proportion of municipal resources allocated to investing to prepare for future population patterns (work and settlement)?
- Are an adequate proportion of public resources dedicated to meeting the needs of economically marginalised populations including recent migrants?

### ***Popular Engagement and Mechanisms of Participation***

Participatory planning emerged in the post-independence and post-apartheid periods as means of realising democratic transformation at the local level (see Botes and van Rensburg 2000). Although more pronounced in South Africa than in Botswana, varied forms of participation are nonetheless employed to help set the course for municipalities towards common development goals. In Gaborone, these tend to be organised by the national government. In South Africa, the municipalities have greater latitude in determining priorities. While laudable on many grounds, the emphasis on participatory planning is not without its drawbacks. At the general level, people's self-assessments of their public service needs are rarely balanced by objective empirical evidence. This is not to belittle local or personal knowledge, but often participants lack technical knowledge (around sanitation and public health for example) or may be subject to political pressure or influence. Regardless, the needs expressed through consultation are then aggregated and filtered in ways designed to meet political imperatives and capacities.

It is also worth noting that migrants are often *de facto* excluded from popular participation and planning processes. Part of this is due simply to the fact that they may not yet be at the sites where assessments take place. For circular or oscillating migrants, they may also be absent when meetings occur. In other instances, people intending to move elsewhere may not make the effort to invest in public participation even when they would benefit from (and certainly plan to use) public services. Beyond that, our research found that even where there were no overt prohibitions on migrant participation, foreigners and recent migrants rarely participated.

For the reasons described above, what is ultimately reflected in popularly determined planning and budgeting documents consequently represents the needs of only those sections of the poor population that accessed consultation forums at one specific moment in time. In addition, this limited array of needs is articulated in terms of the political interests and priorities of office bearers. Moreover, communities rarely have the capacity to project demographic trends, and are unlikely to ask municipalities to dedicate resources to potential future residents over their own acute sense of immediate need. Given public attitudes towards migrants, and a limited knowledge of migration dynamics, officials are unlikely to insist that resources be dedicated to an unpopular group of potential residents. This can result in what might be termed 'backward-looking programming,' a situation in which planning represents the prior needs of the specific section of the current poor population that has accessed consultation forums.

Part of the concern with participation is conceptual muddiness over what it means to be a 'resident' somewhere. Many homeowners in Bushbuckridge, for example, who could play an important political and economic role in the community, live and work in Gauteng, and rarely return to Bushbuckridge in practice. This clearly impacts on their engagement with municipality structures. The converse is Lephalale, where many people have come in search of work, but have another 'home' in which they hope to invest. The implications this has for service provision are substantial. The housing needs of each place, for example, are significantly different. As is the way people could be expected to access health care, or education. In Gaborone, these demographic realities and their implications were discussed within municipalities, but not fully brought into planning processes.

#### *Indicators on popular engagement and participation:*

Although general levels of political participation and representation are important in combating poverty, the following indicators point to particular aspects of participation that can work for or against planning for human mobility:

- Are public participation mechanisms designed in ways that can reach the politically and economically marginal populations including recent migrants?
- Do participatory budgeting and planning processes leave space for technocrats or others within government to allocate resources to under-represented or absent groups such as migrants?
- Are there groups that have 'captured' public participation processes to the exclusion of other among the poor? (A 'no' answer is a positive outcome in this regard).
- Has the municipality designed special programmes to assess the needs and interests of those who for reasons of vulnerability, stigma or fear may choose not to participate in public meetings?
- Are there mechanisms to assess the interests of migrants who have moved out of communities so as to encourage future investment?

#### ***Political Accountability and Incentives***

Bureaucrats and politicians are rational actors whose actions reflect the interplay between their interests and the perceived opportunities and limitations they face. Infrastructure investments in one area, for example, may be a white elephant when it comes to long term collective benefit, but it may nonetheless provide politicians with tremendous rewards in terms of mobilising their constituency, pleasing party superiors, or securing kickbacks. In highly centralised bureaucratic or party systems, accountability tends to run 'upward' or towards the centre (see Curtis *et al.* 2005; Snyder 1999). Party lists over directly elected representation will only enforce this tendency. Where the citizenry is empowered and active, they are more likely to encourage forms of 'downward' accountability. However, even then certain groups – based on gender, nationality, wealth, location, ethnicity, or other factors – are more likely to have influence, unless there are specific mechanisms to counter capture. More innocently, performance management systems within the bureaucracy can incentivise people to invest their time, energies, and other resources in achieving particular

targets at the cost of others. As illustration, South African housing policy has focused largely on delivering a particular *number* of houses rather than on providing suitable housing in economically viable areas (see Bond and Tait 1997). This has resulted in large, government funded housing developments in areas where people struggle to find work: they may have a house but no livelihood. Shifting service delivery goalposts or the lack of necessary financial support may also encourage municipal officials to underperform or build systems which disguise failures.

Political accountability within municipalities and between municipalities and other branches of government regularly surfaced as a disincentive for addressing human mobility and other planning issues. In a number of the cases, municipalities were paralysed by political contestation as party infighting or ethnic-conflict prevents cooperation within and between departments. Even in those municipalities firmly controlled by a strong central leadership, there were often questions about who was responsible for planning on a number of critical issues. This provided significant opportunities for shirking when it came to planning and the decision making relevant to it. It also opened space for political capture, particularly where it was related to resource allocation. In both countries, resource use, decision making, and allocation are strongly linked to political structures, which include provincial and national linkages. There is a degree of impunity, particularly at the municipal level, which has actually incentivised ambiguity.

For the reasons suggested above, municipal officials and politicians are only likely to plan for migration – to use data appropriately, to engage with migrant populations and to consider the implications of human mobility – where they have reasons to do so. Although the popular participation of migrant groups may, as noted, help to shape pro-migrant behaviour, this will rarely be enough.

*Key indicators on political accountability and incentives:*

Recent efforts to strengthen local government structures have been made in order to strengthen downward accountability and improve bureaucratic performance. However, there are mixed analyses on the extent to which this has been successful. Indicators for political and bureaucratic accountability include:

- Is planning for human mobility explicitly included in planners' key performance areas? Phrased another way, must plans or programmes explicitly consider their viability and impact vis-à-vis population dynamics?
- Do service delivery targets focus on numbers served or on reaching poor and marginalised community members? If yes, are international and domestic migrants considered as marginalised community members?
- Does the party or resource allocation system within the public administration encourage upwards or downwards accountability?
- Are data available and used to track performance and service delivery to marginalised groups including migrants? Alternatively, are officials and bureaucrats able to ignore or suppress data that points to underperformance?

- Is there adequate cooperation within or between government departments to focus on the delivery of public goods, or are officials and bureaucrats instead concentrating on political positioning and advancement?

### ***Social Cohesion and Security***

Human mobility raises the spectre of intergroup conflict and discrimination. If managed poorly, this can result in violence or overt persecution and exclusion in ways that further marginalise the poor and hinder efforts the asset accumulation necessary to counter poverty. Where managed well by the municipality and social institutions, groups with remarkably different socio-cultural backgrounds may create diverse and convivial spaces in which to pursue their individual and family goals.

The first step in addressing migration-related tensions and the possibility of violence is to identify and address the roots of conflict and discrimination. Throughout our research, many officials understood managing or addressing migration as something primarily associated with international movements. As such, its consequences for social cohesion are typically deemed a national competence. Rarely do municipal officials overtly consider the needs to manage the diversity associated with domestic mobility or take responsibility for it, although the need to do so is clearly outlined in the global literature (see Andrew 2007; Schiller 2013). Rather, local government officials typically downplay the significance of discriminatory attitudes as enablers for other forms of conflict. Apart from regularly denying responsibility for managing it, municipal authorities are often largely ignorant of what produces conflict or cohesion in diverse populations.

While officials and police officers vary in the degree to which they explicitly link migration and insecurity, many continue to link unregulated population movement and settlement to the crime within their communities. If it is not migrants, *per se*, that are the problem, it is uncontrolled housing and settlement patterns, the inability to organise and register the population, and the inability of the city to keep up with the infrastructure needed to reach into townships and informal settlements. Some cite the poor quality of education and limited opportunities for schooling as an indirect cause of conflict and criminality. As almost all of these factors are linked to population dynamics, migration remains a spectre hiding just beneath the surface. What few officials seem to explicitly recognise is that the negative outcomes they observe are by no means predetermined. Rather, the ineffective management of population growth has helped heighten precisely the tensions over housing and resources that can lead to intergroup conflict.

Across the two phases of research, we were repeatedly impressed by how little officials have done to manage the tensions and insecurity associated with population mobility. There are good reasons to do so as we also observe a range of practices by the police and others that suggest a strong bias against new arrivals. In many municipalities, the South African Police Service (SAPS) has arrested and detained non-nationals and other suspect outsiders. Under the guise of crime control, the police in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and a number of other municipalities, spend disproportionate amounts of their time tracking undocumented migrants (Vigneswaran and Duponchel 2009). Even where SAPS is not directly involved, someone often steps in to carry out the same function. Botswana also has a longstanding

history of xenophobia, with recorded incidents when it was still a colony. Campbell (2014) attributes the origins of xenophobia in Botswana to economic and religious factors associated with the British government and European churches in the early colonial period. The fact that Botswana is relatively prosperous, stable and ethnically homogenous has also undoubtedly contributed to anxiety about immigration from their poorer and more fractured neighbours.

*Key indicators of human security and social cohesion:*

Mobility changes the composition of communities, and municipalities are at the forefront of defining how government encourages inclusive community building.

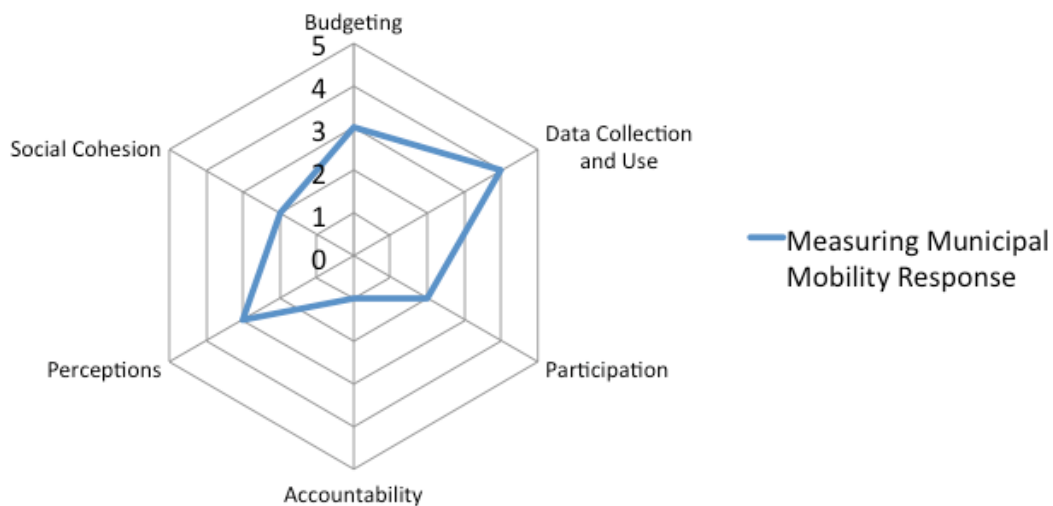
- Does the municipality (or key municipal officials) accept that they have a responsibility for promoting conviviality among residents?
- Do municipal officials demonstrate understandings of the potential sources of conflict or cohesion within or outside of an official policy promoting inclusivity?
- Are there explicit, empirically informed and mainstreamed plans of action in place to support diverse community needs and have these concerns been mainstreamed into service delivery mechanisms across sectors?
- Are residents, regardless of origin or ethnicity, able to access police protection to the same degree or do police regularly harass those they perceive to be outsiders?
- Are there institutional structures and incentives that discriminate on the basis of origins or period of residence?

***Applying the Municipal Measurement Tool for Mobility Response***

To demonstrate these indices' potential utility, we apply them to the two South African case studies included in Phase II of the research. As promised earlier in the document, doing so both illustrates how municipal responsiveness can be rated for comparative purposes and identifies the specific areas most in need of intervention.

Looking at the responses to the indicators in each category, it is clear that neither Bushbuckridge nor Lephalale are well equipped to address mobility. However, the reasons differ significantly in ways that could potentially identify areas for intervention and capacity building.

**Figure 3: Municipal Responsiveness to Mobility in Lephalale**

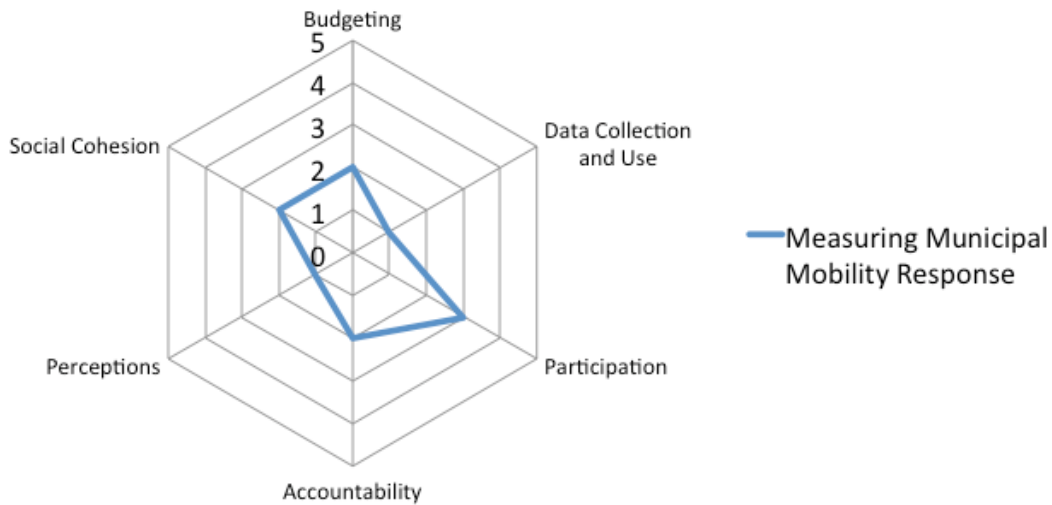


In Lephalale, the overall capacity of the municipality is strong, given its context as a highly rural locality undergoing rapid changes. Because the context is rural, and because economic growth is heavily driven by the mining industry, both the availability and use of data are strong. Of the five indicators developed on data collection, four have been met. Spatialised data is available, and used by skilled officials. However, they are not incentives for accurate data use; to the contrary, divergent interests within the municipality were pulling data in different directions. While data collection in the municipality was not entirely unproblematic (for example, most data used by the municipality was coming from private sources, while centralised government agencies like the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) used data from Statistics South Africa), this is not a barrier in the municipality’s effectiveness to respond to migration. Similarly, while the budgeting process has some shortcomings, it is largely taking place in a way that is functional and transparent. While it may not promote the inclusion of migrants, or be using the potential of migration for economic development, it is also not a key stumbling block.

Where the municipality falls short, however, is on the metrics related to accountability; specifically participation, and downward accountability. It scored only one of five in this area. Neither systems of resource allocation nor targets for service provision work in such a way that is inclusive of the needs of migrants. Not only is cooperation between government departments limited, competition and disagreements in certain areas was immobilising the delivery of public goods. It is clear that the municipality’s processes and structures of community consultation and engagement are preventing it from successfully responding to mobility.

Similarly, low scores for both social cohesion and participation point to an inability in the municipality to bring the community together meaningfully. Lephalale scored only two in terms of both participation and social cohesion. Social cohesion was not achieved because, while the municipality does see its role in coordinating cohesion among residents, it has largely failed to do so, in terms of any practical programming, or even sophisticated analysis about the causes of conflict. In fact, political party conflict was a leading driver of conflict in the municipality, meaning the municipality itself occasionally played an antagonistic role of social cohesion.

**Figure 4: Municipal Responsiveness to Mobility in Bushbuckridge**



The above figure illustrates the limited municipal capacity in Bushbuckridge. Without any meaningful sources of municipal revenue, and without the capacity to use data effectively, data use for budgeting and planning is poor. A quote on population dynamics taken from the IDP demonstrates the gaps that exist in using data effectively:

The population of Bushbuckridge Local municipality was 545 811 according to the Statistics South Africa 1996 Census, then the 2001 census shows that there was decrease to 500,128 in population. There was an increase in population in the 2011 census as the number rose to 541,248. Contributing factors might be the fertility and mortality rates, migration and influx to increase residential and business development in the municipality as a result of neighbouring countries such as Mozambique and Zimbabwe. A further research on life expectancy, mortality rate and other factors need to be conducted.

This is in spite of Bushbuckridge having several advantages over the ‘typical’ South African municipality on data gathering, due to the presence of several rural research institutions that bring in a range of data at the municipal level.

While Bushbuckridge only fulfilled one indicator on data collection and usage, it did somewhat better on the dimension of participation. While there are still problems of bias in municipal planning towards the needs of specific residents, the municipality has certainly taken on board the needs of marginalised communities within the municipality, and made efforts to extend services to people who may not have access.

While Bushbuckridge has an official policy to support social integration, its score of 2 in terms of social cohesion indicates that there is still progress to be made. While the municipality accepts social cohesion as something within their remit, the other structures for addressing it are not in place. For example, there is neither a plan in place to address the issue, nor is there a shared analysis.

Similarly, on participation, its '3' score reflects that the municipality is aware of how to facilitate participation, and that certain participatory processes were being followed. However, it also points to gaps. On public service delivery, deliberate and active efforts have been made to reach people who are inaccessible, or who may have difficulty accessing a town-based programme. However, there are still major gaps, ranging from the explicit exclusion of some people in engagement with the municipality to a lack of engagement with certain stakeholders.

In this context, the municipality is not clear on its roles and responsibilities, nor does it see how mobility could fit into its mandate. These are significant inhibitors not only to responding to a mobile population, but to delivering services to all inhabitants. However, where Bushbuckridge scores somewhat better is on the dimensions related to participation and accountability. While both Lephalale and Bushbuckridge faced challenges to a local, downwardly accountability system, Bushbuckridge has more inclusive democratic structures in place. Such findings are likely to be apparent to anyone who visited both municipalities. In Bushbuckridge, there is not only a central municipal office that can be walked into freely, but there are over ten service delivery and outreach centres across the municipal area, which engage with citizens on questions and concerns. In Lephalale, however, there is heavy security before even gaining access to the municipal building; citizens are not free to walk in with queries. On the other side of security, doors are locked, and an 'enquiries' desk is not attended. While there are many ways in which Lephalale works more efficiently, it does so in a less open way.

## Conclusions

Local governments around the world face multiple challenges to responding effectively to mobility, and building migration into their planning processes. If nothing else, our research demonstrates that the ability to build cohesive, prosperous and secure communities in this era requires municipalities to engage with issues of human mobility. Although this may require municipal authorities to rethink how they work, it is not an additional task, but rather part of their already challenging mandate to improve the lives of their constituencies. Failure to proactively address migration and other forms of human mobility will yield undesired consequences for all: social fragmentation, economic exclusion, poor planning, and the possibility of protest and violence. If properly managed, domestic migration can bring people closer to services, enrich the labour market, and open important opportunities for poverty reduction. Similarly, international migration need not lead to conflict, tensions and service shortfalls, but can help to provide needed skills and entrepreneurial energy, while boosting regional trade and integration and helping to facilitate post-conflict reconstruction in international migrants' countries of origin.

Migration and other forms of human mobility are by definition deeply spatialised processes. People move from one specific place to another, either within a municipality or into another municipality. As such, local governments have significant roles to play to effectively manage migration. To do this, we need to expand the tools available to guide municipalities and public authorities more generally on approaches to human mobility. The explanations and diagnostic tools included in this document are intended to help address this need. Although they do not outline how reforms and improved strategies may be realised, they help draw



attention to areas where municipalities are doing well, where they are doing poorly, and to some of the political and institutional structures which account for their performance. Only once these have been clearly articulated can we hope to achieve durable improvements in municipal management.

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## About the Migrating out of Poverty Research Programme Consortium

*Migrating out of Poverty* is a research programme consortium (RPC) funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). It focuses on the relationship between migration and poverty – especially migration within countries and regions - and is located in five regions across Asia and Africa. The main goal of *Migrating out of Poverty* is to provide robust evidence on the drivers and impacts of migration in order to contribute to improving policies affecting the lives and well-being of impoverished migrants, their communities and countries, through a programme of innovative research, capacity building and policy engagement. The RPC will also conduct analysis in order to understand the migration policy process in developing regions and will supplement the world renowned migration databases at the University of Sussex with data on internal migration.

The *Migrating out of Poverty* consortium is coordinated by the University of Sussex, and led by CEO Professor L. Alan Winters with Dr Priya Deshingkar as the Research Director. Core partners are: the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) in Bangladesh; the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana; the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore; the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa; and the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC) in Kenya.

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