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### STUDYING MIGRANT EXCLUSION WITHIN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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In recent decades, hosting migrants has in- In my book project, I theorize that if migrants creasingly been met with public backlash in the Global North, as highlighted by a large literature (Dancygier and Laitin 2014; Adida, Lo and Platas 2018; Hangartner et al. 2019)<sup>1,2</sup>, Migration scholars have predominantly focused on Latin American and Asian migrants entering the U.S. and Canada, and on African and Middle Eastern migrants entering Europe. Xenophobic reactions in these contexts are rooted in fears and animus over racial, ethnic, and religious differences (e.g. Hajnal and Rivera 2014; Adida Laitin and Valfort 2016). Yet migrants within the Global South are often located in the border regions of neighboring countries. In these contexts, they can share ethnic, cultural, and linguistic ties to local communities. Absent cultural differences, one might expect that there would be less discrimination and greater inclusion of migrants into local host communities. However, my work challenges this assumption.

are framed as threatening by (political) elites, host citizens who share cultural ties with those migrants will reify other boundaries of exclusion. When migrants are highly stigmatized, co-ethnic host citizens may fear being "migrantized" or mistaken for migrants themselves. These citizens will seek to emphasize the social and political identities (e.g. national identity) that will distance themselves from migrants, thereby further ostracizing them. In this essay, the term co-ethnicity not only refers to people believing they share a social identity based on common cultural, linguistic, religious, and descent-based ties, etc., but it also accounts for how individuals believe they are perceived by others as belonging to an ethnic group or not. If an individual does not wish to be perceived as co-ethnic with a marginalized group (e.g. migrants), what steps might they take in changing their own social identity to distance themselves

1. To clarify the term migrants, this essay focuses on individuals affected by displacement crises, such as conflict, economic collapse, natural disasters, or persecution. There is ongoing debate over what to call these individuals. This group includes refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and individuals that the UNHCR calls "people of concern"- those who do not meet the legal definition under the 1951 Refugee Convention. Scholars and practitioners have also used the dichotomy, "voluntary" vs. "forced" migrants. However, I take on a broader conceptualization, because it is often unclear where the line between forced migrants and voluntary migrants lies and the term "forced migrant" removes agency from the people making well-informed choices to migrate (Holland and Peters, 2020). I recognize that the term "migrant" is not value neutral either, but increasingly politicized (Crawley and Skleparis 2018; Mourad and Norman 2020).

2. I also use the term "host (country) citizens" instead of "native-born citizens," which is a common term in this literature for two reasons: first in countries with jus sanguinis citizenship, not all those who are born in the state are citizens, and second to acknowledge the indigenous societies that are often not included in these studies.

from that group? I explore these dynamics by presenting evidence from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, and Colombia. I also highlight other recent, path-breaking work in this area.

To structure this essay, I highlight three types of transitions and the research questions they raise. The first is migration itself; when migrants from the Global South migrate and settle to an-

> other country, how is that transition different if they are going to a country in the Global North versus a neighboring country within the Global South? We might assume that the transition to the latter is smaller particularly if there are ethnic and cultural ties across the border. Second, how does the presence of these migrants

change the social and political landscapes of host countries, particularly if the migrants become politicized? Lastly, how do host citizen attitudes and identities shift in light of these changes? Are they more accepting and inclusive of co-ethnic migrants, or do they seek to exclude and try to differentiate themselves from the migrants?

# Migrant-Hosting Dynamics in the Global South

Although most migration research has focused on receiving countries in the Global North, regions of the Global South host the vast majority of the over 80 million people affected by displacement events such as large-scale conflicts and economic and environmental insecurity (*see Figure 1*) (UNHCR 2020).<sup>3</sup> They are expected to house and integrate larger migrant populations for longer periods of time. Host governments in these regions tend to be under-resourced, and they not only face domestic but to a large extent, international pressures. In this section, I consider how hosting migrants within the Global South may differ from our

3. The slight increase for OECD countries starting in 2013 is due to Turkey hosting Syrian refugees.

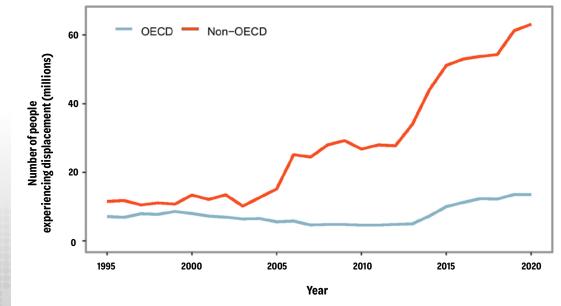


Figure 1. The vast majority of people affected by displacement are located in non-OECD countries. Data source: UNHCR population statistics database.

Regions of the Global South host the vast majority of the over 80 million people affected by displacement events. predictions based on existing research in the Global North. The main factors of difference I consider are economic concerns, focusing on 1) aid spillovers or resentment as opposed to labor competition; 2) repressive, ambiguous, or liberal asylum policies; and 3) cultural similarity, i.e. the presence of co-ethnic kin.

Much of the migration scholarship about public opposition to migrants in Europe and North America examines economic competition. Host citizens may oppose migration in ways that affect their personal labor prospects (Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Peters et al. 2019), their industries (Mayda 2006; Dancygier and Donnelly 2013; Malhotra, Margalit and Mo 2013), the national economy (Citrin et al. 1997), or whether they will contribute or draw from the social welfare system (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010; Goldstein and Peters 2014). Turning to developing contexts, economic competition may play a larger role if migrants have similar skills, as opposed to complementary ones. For example, Adida (2014) shows that economic competition between co-ethnic migrants and locals in the informal sector in West Africa creates pressures for exclusion. Nevertheless, since hosting large migrant populations who are affected by crises often brings an influx of humanitarian aid, host citizens are likely less concerned about migrants accessing their welfare state and more concerned with whether their communities can benefit from this aid. Lehmann and Masterson (2020) find a reduction in anti-migrant hostility in Lebanon when cash transfers to Syrian refugees also benefited locals. In multiple African countries, areas hosting refugees also experience greater market activity, electrification. and access to education and health care facilities, improvements to sanitation infrastructure, and road expansion (Tatah et al. 2016; Betts et al. 2017; Alix-Garcia et al. 2018; Maystadt and Duranton 2018; Zhou and Grossman 2021).

On the other hand, when migrants are segregated from host communities, such as through strict encampment politics, citizens are prevented from interacting with migrants and benefiting from positive spillovers. Through conducting interviews, focus groups, and a regionally representative survey in northwest Tanzania in 2015 and 2016, I learned that the communities geographically proximate to the large refugee camps expressed greater resentment (Zhou 2019). These citizens were able to observe the aid going to Burundian and Congolese refugees, but they were unable to access it for their own underserved communities: "We have no electricity, no running water. In the camps, we know the UNHCR provides the Burundians all these things."<sup>4</sup> This sentiment was echoed by aid officials: "It's very often that host communities resent camps because they are such a visible place of people being assisted. Very often in places where refugees are isolated and have no work permits, no land, when they are sitting in camps they are being assisted while the other population has to fend for itself."5

Host country policies within the Global South also differ from those in the Global North due to the greater numbers of migrants who are hosted for often protracted periods of time. Domestic and international pressures (such as the externalization of U.S. border control into Mexico, and EU borders into North Africa) lead these host states to strategically choose repressive, liberal, or even ambiguous policies (Adamson and Tsourapas 2020; Frost 2020; Norman 2020;

5. Interview conducted with senior UNHCR Official, September 12, 2018.

<sup>4.</sup> Female focus group participant in Kibande, July 29, 2015.

Abdelaaty 2021). For instance, Blair, Grossman and Weinstein (2020) find that political elites are more likely to enact liberal asylum policies when their co-ethnics in neighboring countries are marginalized. Scholars have also found that migrants in North America and Europe often choose to settle in areas where there are more co-ethnics, and they integrate more successfully in these "ethnic enclaves" (Portes 1981; Edin Fredriksson and Åslund 2003; Martén, Hainmueller and Hangartner 2019; Mossaad et al. 2020). In these contexts, migrants typically differ from majority citizens in terms of ethnicity, race, and religion. Thus, anti-migrant attitudes there are often attributed to perceived threats on the majority citizens' culture and national identity (Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior 2004; Adida, Laitin and Valfort 2016; Bansak, Hainmueller and Hangartner 2016).

Whereas most of these theories focus on cultural differences, it is less clear whether perceived cultural similarities increase support among host communities. It is possible that migration between developing countries results in more empathetic responses because of cultural and ethnic similarities (Cogley, Doces and Whitaker 2018; Alrababa'h et al. 2021). But as others have pointed out, there is variation in how migrants and their descendants choose to identify ethnically and culturally with host citizens, depending on how they might be stigmatized (Waters 1994; Malkki 1995). Mirroring this logic, co-ethnic citizens will also alter how they identify with migrants - either in solidarity or active opposition - based on strategic calculations around discrimination. For example, Gaikwad and Nellis (2017) find that in Mumbai, marginalized minority communities welcome co-ethnic internal migrants to bolster their social and political influence. However, in contexts where migrants are labeled by political rhetoric and

the media as dangerous (e.g. bringing conflict, crime, disease), I argue that co-ethnic host citizens will fear being mistaken as migrants by the state and other non-co-ethnic co-nationals. These fears, in turn, will lead to further out-group distancing of migrants even amongst their own ethnic kin. In this way, identities and boundaries are malleable and remade depending on context (Brubaker et al. 2004; Wimmer 2008).

## National Identity and Political Ideology as Boundaries of Exclusion

When co-ethnic host citizens fear being "migrantized," how do they differentiate themselves from this out-group (migrants) and signal affinity with their desired in-group (non-coethnic co-nationals) (Tajfel and Turner 2004)? Through my work in Tanzania (Zhou 2019) and Colombia (Holland, Peters and Zhou 2021), I find that citizens emphasize their national identity and political ideology as new boundaries of migrant exclusion.

Similar to most sub-Saharan African countries, Tanzania has hosted several waves of migrants from neighboring countries since its independence. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, under the "Open Door" refugee policy of President Julius Nyerere, Tanzania was generally receptive of migrants. However, in recent decades, the government has increasingly scapegoated refugees for political purposes and enforced restrictive hosting policies such as strict encampment (refugees must remain within 4km of camp boundaries), forced repatriation, and arbitrary detainment (Chaulia 2003; Kweka 2007; Schwartz 2019). In April 2015, a political crisis in Burundi led to over 250,000 Burundians fleeing into Kigoma region in northwest Tanzania, where, along with the already present 64,000 Congolese refugees, they settled into three

camps – Nyarugusu, Nduta, and Mtendeli. Compared to the Tanzanian population of 2 million in Kigoma, hosting these Burundian refugees posed a sudden and sizable demographic shift. It is also important to note that the majority citizen ethnic group in this region, the Ha people, is not the majority ethnic group in Tanzania. In fact, the Ha people share strong linguistic and cultural ties with the Burundian Hutus across the colonially constructed border. Due to the porousness of the border, the two groups often engage in trade, use of common markets and water sources, inter-marriages, and share many historical, socio-cultural, and economic connections (Whitaker 2002; da Costa 2018).

To explore Tanzanians' attitudes towards the recent Burundian refugees, in the summer of 2015, my research team and I conducted ten focus groups with 150 adult Tanzanian citizens in communities near the border and near Nyarugusu camp. I randomly selected half of the focus groups to start with a discussion about refugees (treatment):

Can you tell me about the refugees in Tanzania? Have they affected your community? If yes, how? After discussing refugees, I then asked about the main outcomes of interest, the meaning of their national identity and granting access to citizenship:

When I say 'national identity' or 'to be Tanzanian,' what does that mean to you? And if a foreigner wants to become Tanzanian, do you think he or she should be given the opportunity to do so?

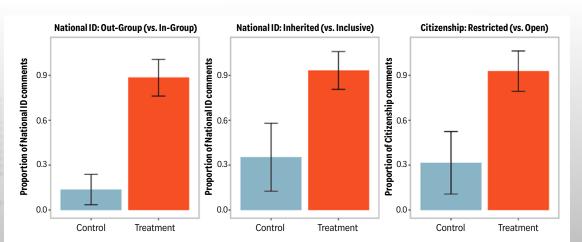
For the control focus groups, I reversed the order of these questions, asking about refugees after discussing national identification and citizenship. When referring to Burundians, a typical quote from the control groups would emphasize shared ties: "We have villages on either side of the border that use the same river. Of course, we know each other. You will find a Burundian with uncles in Tanzania."<sup>6</sup> However, for the treatment groups, a more typical quote emphasizes Tanzanian national identity and distance with Burundians: "For me, I am proud to be Tanzanian because it is a peaceful country. If any disagreement happens, we sit and discuss. Not like our neighbors. When they have disagreements, they become violent quickly, then a misunderstanding blows up into war."7

#### Figure 2.

These figures compare the proportions of responses by national identity and citizenship type between control (blue) and treatment (orange) citizen focus groups in Kigoma, Tanzania (95% CIs and standard errors clustered by group). The treatment is prompting discussion of refugees before discussing their national identity. Treated groups make significantly more references to an outgroup and describe their national identity as innate or inherited. Additionally, they are more likely to say that citizenship access should be restricted.

6. Male participant, Buhigwe focus group, July 27, 2015.

7. Male participant, Makere focus group, August 4, 2015.



To assess whether national identification was discussed differently between treatment and control groups, my team and I coded the comments blind to treatment status on the following dimensions: whether statements about national identity are based on in-group values or out-group comparisons (distancing), whether national identity is inclusive of others versus an inherited/innate trait, and whether access to citizenship should be open to others or restricted. From *Figure 2*, participants in the treatment group made significantly more references to Burundians as an out-group, described their own national identity as innate or inherited, and supported citizenship restrictions.

Echoing the sentiments expressed by both local and national political elites that refugees are dangerous, participants associated the Burundian refugees with unsubstantiated claims of spreading disease and violent crime: "Some of their behaviors are not our culture, like robberies and killing people."8 In contrast, the control focus groups were more likely to describe Burundians as their co-ethnic neighbors and kin. The following year, through a survey with over 2,000 Tanzanians in this region, I found greater exposure and proximity to refugees substantially increased one's own national identification and resource resentment, particularly for co-ethnic citizens. It is precisely these citizens, due to their cultural and geographic proximity to the migrants, who would fear being "migrantized" themselves.

In related co-authored research on the reception of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, we examine how in another case of cultural similarity, differences in political ideology become the boundary for migrant exclusion (Holland, Peters, and Zhou 2021). Venezuelan migrants and Colombians speak the same language (Spanish), practice the same religion (Catholicism), and have similarly mixed skin tones. Yet, for electoral gain, certain politicians have spread misperceptions that the 1.8 million Venezuelan migrants leaving an economic crisis into Colombia also bring far-left populist ideology. This rhetoric seems to have worked; areas hosting more migrants voted against left-wing parties (Rozo and Vargas 2021). When we surveyed over 1,000 Colombians and 1,600 Venezuelans living in Colombia in 2019, we found that Colombians viewed Venezuelan migrants as left-wing even though they reported being more politically right than Colombians. These misperceptions are consequential: Colombians who viewed migrants as left-wing were less likely to support welcoming border policies. Compared to Colombians in the interior, those living on the border with Venezuela who have long had cross-border ties also reported that they were less culturally similar with Venezuelans.

Both cases reflect how in times when migrants are portrayed by political elites as threatening, host citizens who are culturally and ethnically proximate to migrants will seek to shift their own identities to put greater distance between them. In place of co-ethnic solidarity, we would observe greater tension, animosity, and rejection. This leads to both theoretical and practical implications for interventions aimed at reducing exclusion.

# Implications for Reducing Migrant Exclusion

The ability of migrants to transition to another country and live with dignity depends on the extent to which host communities welcome them. In contexts marked by prejudice and

8. Female participant, Kibande focus group, July 29, 2015.

discrimination, what works in reducing negative attitudes towards migrants and migration? At the individual level, relatively light-touch primes or exercises that ask participants to complete a perspective-taking exercise imagining themselves as refugees (Adida, Lo and Platas 2018); or consider their own families' histories of migration (Williamson et al. 2020); or listen to personal narratives of refugees in Kenya (Audette, Horowitz and Michelitch 2020) have promoted empathy toward migrants. Similarly, in Rosenzweig and Zhou (2020), we found that reframing a major national event - a football match win, in ways that celebrate diversity and highlight a shared superordinate identity (pan-Africanism), led Kenyan survey respondents to express greater solidarity with migrants.

While these interventions are promising and relatively simple, they are not substitutes for interventions that need to take place at the structural level. Undoubtedly, asylum policies, which determine whether migrants are encamped and must rely on aid or can self-settle and legally work, structure migrant-host relations. Thus, instead of concentrating resources within segregated migrant camps, international migration organizations and host governments can ensure that host communities benefit from positive spillovers and are able to interact with migrants. This is in line with the 2018 UNHCR Global Compact on Refugees and initiatives like the "30-70 Principle" in Uganda, which states that 30 percent of humanitarian aid for refugees also target host-community needs. Intentionally

designing migrant hosting policies and practice to be more inclusive of both migrants and local host communities may prevent resentment and promote public support for migrant integration. It might also make scapegoating of migrants by elites an untenable political strategy. These are open questions for future research.

Finally, this essay raises several implications for the study of migrant exclusion and inclusion. First, this essay makes the case for generating new research questions about why co-ethnic host societies might exclude migrants, particularly within the Global South. In these contexts, even when ethnic and cultural bases for migrant exclusion are weaker, elites and host societies can still construct out-groups and reify national and political boundaries. Second, when we as scholars research issues of migration, we cannot treat host societies as a monolith. We often assume the majority citizen group to be the "host community" and speak on behalf of all citizens. But when we explicitly examine heterogeneity among migrants and citizen groups, and the cross-cutting identities between them, we can generate new theoretical expectations. Third, the fear of "migrantization" by minority citizens is not only a Global South phenomenon (e.g. Asian-Americans feeling the need to emphasize our American-ness in light of COVID-19-related anti-Asian discrimination). Nevertheless, studying migration issues within the Global South can help us further unpack these dynamics and bring much-needed attention to regions where most migrants live.

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