Exploring the Migration-Food and Nutrition Security Nexus: How Aid Policies Can Maximize the Migration-Related Sustainable Development Opportunities

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1 Introduction

Migrations have always been intimately linked to social and economic development processes: they are considered both the result of imbalances determined by development processes, and as factors that can influence these. The international community's vision of the nature of the complex migration/development relationship has changed over time, alternating optimism and pessimism depending on the ideologies in vogue; naturally, such visions have also played a key role in determining the relevant policies.

The 2014–2015 refugee crisis gave a sharp turn in the European vision and policies on migration. Their external dimension has been shaped through the strengthening of tools like international development cooperation, technical and political dialogue with the aim of preventing further migration flows to Europe. One of the key strategy for this purpose, drawn up in the new European Agenda on Migration adopted in 2015 (European Commission 2015), is to intervene on the so called "root causes" of migration, based on the principle of "more for more". This principle is based on the idea that more financial resources are given to migration countries that are origin and/or transit of migration in return of their increasing commitment to

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combat irregular migration, support refoulement and return of migrants in the framework of bilateral agreement (partnership framework).

The main source of funding for the implementation of this strategy comes from the European Development Fund (EDF) which is the main funding source of the most important financial instrument developed by the European Union to support its externalization of border strategy: the EU emergency Trust fund for Africa (EUTF).[1] The EUTF is an emergency trust fund adopted as a follow up of the Valletta Summit on Migration in 2015 (European Council 2015) and aimed at addressing the "root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa to foster stability and to contribute to better migration management, including by addressing the root causes of destabilization, forced displacement and irregular migration".[2] With this instrument, the European Commission wants to carry forward aid programs at European and national level aimed at the maximization of the positive impact of development on migration. Namely, the commission wanted to prevent migration flow by taking as assumption that behind migration there are driver like poverty, insecurity, environmental, demographic pressure and humanitarian crisis (European Commission 2015). Beyond the creation of alternatives, the EUTF aims to strengthening resilience, including governance and conflict prevention and, it seems to be the main scope given the share of money received, to improve migration management, namely containing and preventing irregular migration through the externalization of the EU border control.

2 Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In the Millennium Development goals agenda migration was not taken into account. This was due to several reasons. Firstly, the magnitude of the migration phenomena was not like today: since 2000s international migration has increased by 32% and recorded remittances have increased (Lönnback 2014). Secondly, "when migration pathways were available, there was—rather paradoxically—a high degree of concern about the so-called brain drain" (IOM 2017). Finally, and this is the most important reason for the actual debate around migration and development, migration itself has assumed strongly negative connotations and it was prioritized as a security issue focusing on border control and repression of movements (*ibidem)*.

Migration has been included in the 2030 Development Agenda with a specific target 10.7, which prescribes the facilitation of "orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well managed migration policies". The SDGs Declaration recognizes migration as a dimension of sustainable development. What it seems less clear reading target 10.7

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/

[2] More info at: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa/eu-emergency-trust-fund-africa_en

text is the kind of role migration can play for development. As a matter of fact, migration interacts with all dimensions of development. Beyond the specific target 10.7, the 2030 Agenda includes a number of targets which recognize the economic value of migrants including SDGs 4, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17 (Foresti et al. 2018). As underlined by Foresti et al., "the multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral nature of the 2030 Agenda is a useful platform to assess the impact of migration and human mobility on a range of development issues This is not just important in terms of problem analysis but also offers opportunities for finding policy solutions" (*ibidem)*. Nevertheless, the SDGs agenda is silent on the migration broader contribution to development outcomes. How migration can help in achieving the SDGs goals needs to be investigating through the analysis of the multiple linkages, its positive impacts and potential challenges and developing clear strategy and a coherent approach.

The Global Compact for migration (GCM)[3] represents an opportunity to bridge the gap among global development and migration policies. The text recognizes that the GCM aims to leverage the migration potential for the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals,[4] stating that Member States commit to aligning the implementation of the GCM, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, recognizing that migration and sustainable development are multidimensional and interdependent (Foresti et al. 2018).

3 Going Beyond the "Root Causes", Exploring Migration and Development Nexus

European policies aimed at containing the flows of recent years have reduced the nexus to a cause-and-effect relationship that sees the development of a country as a solution to stop migration. In reality, in the short term, greater development generally constitutes a push factor to migrate, by putting people in conditions to move owing to the increased resources available (Carling and Talleraas 2016). These simplifications have led to erroneous justifications to resolve the so-called "root causes" of migration, through additional investments in development in origin countries, making the instrumental ambition to put a stop to the more evident flows.

Years of research and experience in development field suggested the relation between migration and development is hardly this simple (Fratzke and Salant 2018a). The debate on the nature of the migration and development nexus highlights a basic political issue, which emerges increasingly in the European approach to the

[3] In the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted in September 2016, the General Assembly decided to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The process to develop this global compact for migration started in April 2017. The General Assembly will then hold an intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018 with a view to adopting the global compact. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Migration/Pages/GlobalCompactforMigration.aspx

[4] Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, final draft 11 July 2018.

topic: i.e. that the objective is to curb or accelerate the flows, and that the underlying policies and approaches have instrumental characteristics and are not intended to maximize the positive impact of migration. The goal of working on the root causes of migration should not be reduction of the flows, but to make migration a choice rather than a necessity (FAO 2017): an option among the various ones available to people to improve their lives from every point of view.

The EU vision contributes to consider migration as a "development problems" instead of as part of wider development processes and structural transformations *(ibidem)*. It would be more correct to consider migration as a part of wider development processes and structural transformations, depending on specific social, economic and political contexts and the nature of the development processes, which make it impossible to infer *a priori* the type of impact that this relationship will produce on one or other factors (UNESCO 2017).

4 Migration and Food and Nutrition Security: Exploring the Nexus

To better understand the relationship between migration, agriculture, and rural development, the FAO has developed a standard conceptual framework highlighting how the drivers that determine the migration of young persons from rural areas are due to a lack of employment opportunities and situations of underemployment (FAO 2016). The lack of decent work opportunities—inside and outside the agricultural sector—is the result of a series of factors linked to specific contexts, which can be defined as "root causes". These include: rural poverty and food insecurity, lack of income, strong inequalities between urban and rural areas, limited access to social protection mechanisms, climate change, natural and environmental disasters, and depletion of resources (*ibidem)*. These causes relate in turn to specific conditions that characterize rural contexts: low or stagnant agricultural productivity, poorly developed markets (in terms of financial services, physical infrastructure, technical assistance) plus a lack of adequate protection networks and social infrastructure (*ibidem)*. Also taken into consideration are factors at the family level: the age of the household head, gender and level of education, size and composition of the family, its social network, social and cultural standards, and basic assets (*ibidem)*. Lastly, the individual determinants: age, work, and personal aspirations (*ibidem)*.

Rural migration can be a strategy to diversify risk and family income in the face of food insecurity, the latter being influenced by risk factors that include variable rainfalls and climate change. At the same time, to address the risks of food insecurity, choices other than migration can be made (Herrera and Sah 2013), which is therefore seen as an important strategy, but not the only one, to face situations of food insecurity.

Migrations involve risks and opportunities for origin, transit, and destination countries. For example, they can reduce the pressure on the natural resources of a specific territory, accelerating more efficient allocation of jobs in rural areas, and

potentially causing an increase in farm income (FAO 2017). At the same time, they may cause the loss of the most vital and dynamic part of the workforce: the youth, and therefore determine the ageing of local communities and the "feminization" of the rural population, with a consequent increase in the workload on the shoulders of women.

To understand the nexus between migration and food and nutrition security it is necessary to consider a series of elements that often receive scarce attention, especially in the European debate.

For instance, for political contingency reasons, literature on migration policies focuses more on analyses of international migration, ignoring the fact that most migrations occur within the borders of the same country (740 million people) or even within the same region (Flahaux and De Haas 2016). West African countries, for example, have the most mobile population in the world: intra-regional mobility is seven times greater than the volume of migrants from West Africa to the rest of the world. In addition, particularly in Africa, most of the attention is on migration in rural areas, geared to agricultural and rural development (FAO 2016). This is entirely understandable, since most migrants are from those same areas. However, in view of today's high rates of urbanization, it is fundamental to pay more attention to food security in urban contexts within a broader analysis of food economies. The effects of urbanization on rural areas can no longer be interpreted exclusively as an exodus from the countryside to the cities (Global Donor Platform 2017); rural areas, small and medium-sized cities and conurbations are closely interconnected, and their interactions can be seen as a part of broader food economies and transformation processes, both rural and urban. This implies the development of new and complementary approaches to food and nutrition security strategies, such as the planning of interventions on food systems starting from an improvement in context data (*spatial data*) and a greater attention to social protection systems.[5]

Another factor to be carefully considered is nutrition. Nutritional transition in Africa,[6] associated with the "double burden" of malnutrition,[7] is occurring in a context of high rates of migration between the rural and urban areas, along with high urbanization, and represents one of the most significant threats to public health, particularly among the poor. Nutritional transition also occurs in the context of

[5] Social protection policies can, in fact, promote economic and social development in both the short and the long term, ensuring people an income, access to medical care and other social services, strengthening their capabilities and making them better able to manage risks and economic opportunities.

[6] By nutritional transition is meant a shift in food consumption determined by changes of an economic, demographic, and epidemiological type. Specifically, the term is used to indicate the transition that is happening in developing countries from traditional diets characterized by a high rate of consumption of cereals and fibre to a more "Western" one characterized by sugars, fats, animal proteins and processed food.

[7] With the term "dual burden of malnutrition" the United Nations intend the coexistence of the problem of malnutrition together with that of overweight and obesity, the latter also defined as non-communicable diseases linked to diet, between individuals, families, and populations throughout their life. http://www.who.int/nutrition/double-burden-malnutrition/en/

international migration, where migrants tend to adopt the diet of the destination country with an increase in the consumption of processed and less nutritious food.

Additional items to be added to the conceptualization of the nexus between migration and food and nutrition security are the need to consider the impacts of migration both at a family level (remittances as a network of social protection, loss of agricultural workforce, etc.) (Lacroix 2011) and at a macro level (agricultural investments, impact on workforce, prices, and agricultural production, etc.) plus the characteristics of individual families that might affect the impact of migration (Warner and Afifi 2014).

Policy coherence is also essential, whether we are talking about migration policies, or others that may have negative consequences on food systems (e.g. climate, trade, investment, energy or development cooperation policies) (Concord 2009). For example, in the case of Kenya, due to the drought in 2008, shepherds were forced to migrate to neighbouring countries in search of new pastures; the borders were closed (also thanks to the incentives that donor countries offered in exchange for a stricter control over borders) and the shepherds were forced to move into the urban suburbs ending up depending on the humanitarian aid system (Adow 2008).

Greater attention must also be paid to the gender dimension and the younger population (two fundamental components constantly growing in migration). Men and women aged between 15 and 24 years living in rural areas are among those having greater propensity to migrate because of a lack of jobs and economic opportunities in the agricultural sector (ActionAid 2017a). However, aspirations and perceptions play a fundamental role in this choice that should not be considered merely "rational", i.e. as a response to specific economic or environmental vulnerability. Women account for 48% of migrants (IOM 2016) worldwide, even if in many areas of Africa, due to conflicts and increased risks associated with migration, this share is decreasing. Women are also a sizeable proportion of "highly professionalized" migrants: in 2005, 11.3% of the nurses from Malawi were working in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (Fleury 2016).

It should also be considered that much of the vulnerability in agricultural production and in food and nutrition security is due to climate and environmental phenomena. Climate change and extreme events (floods and drought) can produce devastating effects on rural communities, which largely depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Support for policies and interventions to improve resilience and adaptation, as well as social protection systems and safe movement, are all fundamental elements that have to be considered in any analysis (ActionAid 2016).

A final priority is the adoption of long-term food and nutrition security strategies for issues inherent to emergencies. In recent years, donors' strategies have gradually embraced the need for a better understanding of the effects of extended internal movements on food and nutrition security in order to prepare medium-long term strategies to ensure access to sufficient food for internal and international refugees. In fact, crisis situations for prolonged periods are an understandable driver of food

insecurity. Over the last 30 years, the types of crisis have evolved from short-term disasters – serious and visible events – to more structural longstanding situations determined by a combination of multiple factors, in particular, conflicts and natural disasters, with climate change and financial and price crises accentuating the seriousness and persistence of these predicaments. Exposure to natural disasters is without a doubt one of the major causes of food insecurity.

5 The Challenges of Evaluating the Impact of Livelihood Intervention on Migration from Rural Area to Cities

Addressing the migration implications is undoubtedly complex since both the causes and consequences of migration are multifaceted and difficult to monitor and predict. The FAO indicate demographic unsustainable growth, rural poverty and food insecurity, high inequalities between urban and rural areas, limited access to social protection mechanisms, climate change and the natural and environmental disaster linked to it and the depletion of resources as the primary factors responsible for migration (FAO 2016).

Among these factors, the linkages between development, migration, agriculture, food security and nutrition, is one important nexus that is influencing the migration from rural to urban area. Together with migration, urbanization is another phenomenon that is shaping the current world. By the middle of 2009, for the first time in human history, more people are living in urban areas then in the rural ones due to population growth and internal migration. The migration from rural to urban areas involves especially internal migrants, that represent the vast majority of migrants since it was calculated that more than 10% of the world's population had migrated internally while, international migrants represent approximately 3% of the world's population (UNDP 2009). A progressively greater proportion of the population is moving to towns and cities, not least because usually the rural areas do not offer households the prospect of a decent livelihood or many future perspectives (Crush 2013). Moreover, other main migration drivers in the rural area were found to be the search for a job, the desire to escape social pressures in rural communities, the access to basic infrastructure (e.g. water and electricity) as well as to education and health services (FAO 2018).

This migration pattern can put enormous pressure both on politics agenda in terms of sustainable development since host cities and countries must take into account the needs of internal migrants and enhance their living conditions. For example, the African Food Security Urban Network highlighted that poor neighborhoods in most cities were dominated by migrants (Frayne et al. 2010). These migrants often work in precarious occupation in the informal sector and thy represents a vulnerable group when it comes to food security. The way in which these urbanization processes are managed, the types of jobs that internal migrants can access and their living conditions, will have a great impact on many of the SDGs (ODI 2018) (see Box 1).

Box 1. How Internal Migration Can Help Sustainable Urbanization (SDG 11) and Reduce Poverty (SDG 1)

Migration can give a fundamental contribution to sustainable development and to reach some of the SDGs. According to a recent series of studies from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the migration phenomenon can help to achieve all 17 SDGs (ODI 2018). In relation to internal migration from rural to urban areas, migration can contribute to SDGs n 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 17 (Lucci et al. 2016). In particular, internal migration was shown to have a fundamental impact on reducing poverty and on improving livelihoods of both migrants and their families that remains in the rural areas. Evidence suggests that urban migration can lead to an economic benefit for both urban migrants (Deshingkar 2006; World Bank/IMF 2013; OECD 2014) and hosting cities since migrants can contribute to city economy by filling labor gaps (IOM 2015) and many industries nowadays rely on migrant work. Moreover, migration opens up new job opportunities to migrants both in rural and urban areas and the role of remittances can result in reduction of poverty at the macro-level by also increasing the living standards of migrants' families (Castaldo et al. 2012; Hagen-Zanker et al. 2017). However, urbanization with benefits also brings challenges and urban migrants are faced by a number of them when they move to cities (Tacoli et al. 2015). First of all, most of them find employment in the informal sector with all the vulnerabilities and disadvantages brought by this working condition (e.g. unstable incomes, exploitation, lack of social protection). Secondly, often cities do not offer the adequate housing infrastructures to migrants who ends up living in informal settlements without water and sanitation. Despite their potential, internal migrants are usually neglected by local and national policies. This is for example the case of Accra and Kumasi two of the largest cities in Ghana that host high numbers of urban migrants (Lucci et al. 2016). National policies promoted urban migration but half of the migrants in the country live in temporary shelters in informal settlements (Awumbila et al. 2014). Moreover, due to their work and home illegal status migrants in both cities are faced by frequent eviction and harassment by the cities' authorities which pursue slum clearance (*ibidem*). In 2014 and 2016 two different attempts of National Policy on Migration tried to improve the situation by improving policies coherences and promoting 'fair settlement planning' in urban areas in order to maximize the migration benefits (GoG 2016 and 2014).

By following these examples, both local and national governments should promote more inclusive polices in order to:

– Improve the data on internal migration, its effects on urbanization and the generated remittances to demonstrate the potentiality of urban migration in reducing poverty.

– Facilitate migrant living and working conditions in the cities. For example, the report from Lucci et al. (2016) suggests to recognize the informal sector where the majority of migrants works and extend state protections. In this way, migrants will have access to workers' rights, to social security programs and basic housing services. As well, the creation of supporting structures and services for informal workers like markets may help to improve migrants' livelihood (Awumbila et al. 2014).

In this migration context it has become more and more important to understand the dynamics and the factors that affect the nexus between migration and food and nutrition security in order to create and sustain development actions in this directions. In the last decades, different stakeholders have organized development initiatives worldwide to improve conditions in the countryside aimed to prevent migration fluxes to cities by improving rural living conditions; these actions are based on the idea that economic development will allow to reduce migration outflow. In recent years, especially livelihood interventions in the rural areas have gained prominence as a potential way to reduce pressures to undertake irregular and unsafe migration and so contribute to the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, even if the interlinkages between migration and development have been studied since long time, there is a lack of evidence about how livelihood interventions and opportunities impact migration (Fratzke and Salant 2018b). As highlighted by a report from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the World Bank (Laczko 2017) this lack of an evaluation culture in the field of migration interventions is due mainly to the technical expertise required, the costs in terms of both money and time to collect the data, and a general "fear factor" of discovering negative findings of a development project since migration is a sensible political issue. For this reason, development promoter stakeholders are often faced with key gaps in their understanding of how their actions may impact migration flows. In the migration field, an answer to the questions about how, to what extent and in which time-order development interventions affect both regular and irregular migration has still to be elaborated.

A comprehensive evaluation is defined as an evaluation that includes monitoring, process evaluation, cost-benefit evaluation, and impact evaluation (Gertler et al. 2011). Evaluating impact is critical in order to understand which type of interventions has determinant effects on migration and how they affect livelihood conditions for providing an effective input to the appropriate design of future development programs and projects.

The lack of impact evaluation can lead to misleading or unconsidered effects caused by development strategies and project, especially in such a complex phenomenon as migration. For example, a recent study by Gibson and Gurmu (2012) found out that installing village-level water taps is associated with increased rural-urban migration of young adults. The fact that rural migration is increased by improving livelihood assets was found also by a report from the UK Department for

International Development (DIFD). The report evaluates a total of 121 livelihood interventions through a rapid evidence assessment according to a modified version of the DIFD's Sustainable Livelihoods Framework in order to determine their impact on migration. The investigation outcomes highlighted that education has an effect in increasing migration rates on the long time since individuals with higher education may have more opportunities to migrate. Other drivers for migration were found to be a desire for higher salary and the perception of lack of employment or livelihood opportunities while especially migration to urban areas may be a household adaptation strategy to diversify income (Fratzke and Salant 2018b). However, the report recognize that even if some broad trends can be observed there is a big variability in migration patterns and migration decisions and actions are influenced mainly by the perception about migration as alternative livelihood strategy, the information available about specific migration opportunities and the actual cost of migration.

Evaluating the impact of development initiatives on migration remains a challenge. More effort should be spent for complete evaluations of the migration effects brought by development interventions through a more robust data collection extended on a larger time span. In order to maximize positive impacts of migration and development and reduce the negative effects, each livelihood intervention in a rural area should be carefully planned by taking in consideration all the specific communities and countries conditions and by establishing a long-term impact evaluation framework. For example, the "Food Value Chains" (Hawkes and Ruel 2012) concept may be of interest when planning a development intervention involving agricultural activities in the rural area in order to consider the impact that may have on the rural community and therefore on migration. In this way it would be possible to integrate in the best way the SDGs the new strategies to reduce inequality, poverty and both internal and international migration.

6 Instrumentalization of Aid: The Case of Italy

Development cooperation becomes a key element of the EU externalization strategy. Although the primary aim of development cooperation is to reduce poverty, due to migration priorities aid has been progressively exploited to migration purposes and this approach has now been embedded into EU development policy: tackling migration is included among the goals of the Union's, the European Consensus on Development, which will guide programming until 2030 (European Union 2017).

This instrumentalization of aid is happening in three ways. First, by inflating aid-spending thanks to the fact that aid spent in donor countries to support refugees arriving are eligible as ODA (Official Aid Assistance) for the first 12 months of their stay. Second, as underlined talking about the EUTF, aid is aimed to serve the interest of donor to impede immigration diverting it from its main purpose: alleviating poverty (Concord 2018). Finally, such aid is increasingly conditioned to encourage the

cooperation of developing countries partners in migration and border control efforts, which undermines partner countries' ownership of development policies (*ibidem).*

Italy is a perfect example of what we called "instrumentalization of aid" for migration purposes. Indeed, since the beginning of the so called "refugees crisis", the Italian government has been supporting the new development of EU external agenda on migration. In its contribution to the debate, on April 2016 Italy sent a letter to the President of the European Commission, Jean Claude Junker, proposing a "fair grand bargain" to the countries of origin and transit of migration (Italian Government 2016). Namely, the government proposed new investment projects, measures to facilitate the access to capital markets, cooperation on border management/control, customs, criminal justice, support on management of migrants and refugees, legal migration opportunities and resettlement schemes as exchange for their commitment in reducing migration flows towards Europe. Italy is not only the second major contributor to the EUTF with 102 millions of euro (July 2018), but in 2017 has also launched its own trust fund for Africa (*Fondo Africa*) with an initial allocation of 200 millions of euros which objectives and approach are very much in line with those drawn up in the EUTF.[8]

7 Inflating Aid

The money spent in the first 12 months hosting refugees in donor countries (IDRC—in-donor refugee costs) can be considered as official development assistance (ODA). Until few years ago, It was a small fraction of total ODA but due to refugees crisis this quota reached in 2016 the 11% of the overall ODA (15.960 billions of dollars), doubling since 2000. Supporting refugees arriving in Europe is a legal, as well as, a moral obligation of States, but it should not come at the expense of already relatively scarce aid to developing countries and the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. Labelling this spending as ODA is at least misleading because they do not provide any resources for developing countries. Indeed, the definition of official development assistance endorsed by OECD countries states that ODA needs to have the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective. This is not just a matter of definition. As data in Table 1 shows, recording IDRC spending as ODA is inflating the total ODA figures making donors closer than the reality to the 0.7% ODA/GNI (Gross National Income) target endorsed by all Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members. In 2016, Italy spent 1.5 billion Euro in IDRC, the 32.73% of the overall ODA in 2016 (9% in 2012), making the ODA/GNI a 0.27% instead of 0.18% (excluding IDRC).[9]

The IDRC spending in the last years has inflated the overall ODA of the DAC countries moving from 6628.73 millions of dollars (4.8% of the total net ODA) in 2014 to 15,959.51 millions of dollar (10.8% of the total net ODA) in 2016 (OECD

[8] More info at: https://www.esteri.it/mae/resource/doc/2017/02/decreto_africa_0.pdf

[9] Germany would decrease from 0.7 to 0.51% in 2016.

Table 1 G7 IDCR spending 2012–2017 (Million USD, current price)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Italy	246.69	403.60	839.94	983.03	1665.24	1802.69
Germany	75.94	138.79	171.36	3018.56	6585.08	6083.90
United States	831.53	976.50	1245.64	1202.12	1701.81	1661.18
Canada	266.53	211.15	216.43	212.99	390.43	466.94
Japan	0.75	0.63	0.57	0.22	0.24	0.29
France	506.94	452.82	485.11	363.35	466.57	566.27
United Kingdom	44.96	50.54	221.92	390.49	574.03	491.07
Average G7	281.91	319.15	454.42	881.54	1626.20	1581.76

Source: OECD-DAC database (7th of August 2018)

2018). The OECD-DAC forecast for 2017 report a small decrease to 9.7% of the total net ODA causing a 0.6% decrease in real terms of the total net ODA (*ibidem*).

Comparing the Italian performance with the other G7 countries based on the OECD-DAC forecast for 2017, the country is the runner-up in relation to the overall IDRC spending, but is the first-place if we take into consideration the percentage of the IDRC spending on the overall ODA (Figs. 1 and 2).

In October 2017, the DAC concluded a review of the rules on reporting in-donor refugee costs as ODA. The revised rules make provision for better transparency and consistency of the donors' reporting practices. However, the review fails to address the fundamental question of whether in-donor refugee costs belong in ODA at all, so recent trends of ODA inflation look set to continue in future years (Concord 2018).

8 Diverting Aid: The Role of Italian Africa Fund

As we said, beside to be one of the larger contributor of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, in 2017 Italy launched its own trust fund (*Fondo Africa*) with an initial allocation of 200 millions of Euro. The *Fondo Africa* is also the Italian finance vehicle for the EUTF. The 2018 Italian budget law (*Legge* 205/2017) has allocated additional 135 millions of Euro (85 million additional) for 2018–2019. The Africa Fund promotes "extraordinary interventions aimed at revitalize the dialogue and cooperation with African countries relevant the migration root".[10] It is considered "as a qualifying element of the overall measures adopted by the Italian government aimed at fighting the irregular migration and human trafficking" (*ibidem)*. The Africa Fund has established 13 priority countries clustered based on different criteria: origin of migration flows (Guinea, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia); relevance for the Mediterranean route management and the fight against human trafficking (Libya, Tunisia, Niger); relevance for interventions along the migration routes (Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Ethiopia).

[10] More info at: http://www.esteri.it/mae/resource/doc/2017/02/decreto_africa_0.pdf

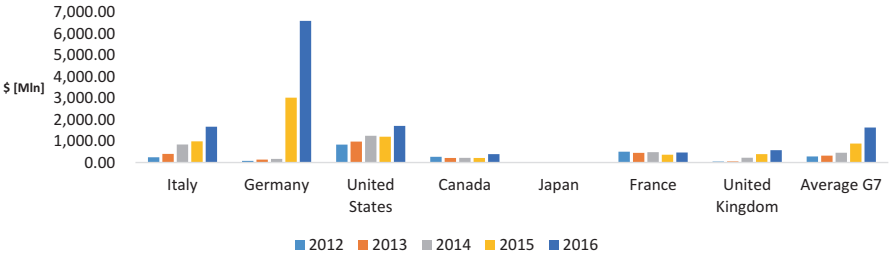

Fig. 1 G7 IDRC spending 2012–2017 (Million USD). Source: OECD-DAC database (7th of August 2018)

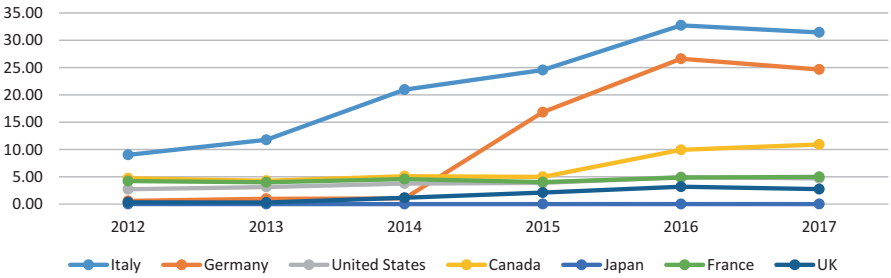

Fig. 2 G7 countries % of IDRC spending on total ODA 2012–2017. Current prices, Million USD. Source: OECD-DAC database (7th of August 2018)

It has several sectors of intervention like receiving and protection of migrants and refugees; development cooperation projects; local communities involvement; awareness raising about the risks of migration, updating and digitalization of population registers; judicial and border authorities trainings; technical equipment and instruments for the control of irregular migration and the contrast of human trafficking; institutional and administrative capacity building; protection of the vulnerable people; assisted voluntary return from the transit to the origin migration countries. With regard to the implementing entities, the Africa Fund can count on the support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (IADC), the Italian ministries (in particular the Ministry of Interior), the European Union (EUTF), the International Organization for Migrations (IOM), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the NGOs.

In relation to its implementation, it is important to underline the lack of sufficient transparency regarding specific project allocations details, in particular for those channeled through the EUTF or the Ministry of Interior. In November 2017, the Africa Fund had allocated almost 150 million out of 200 million. About 42.7 million were partially or totally not ODA eligible (DAC-ability). In relation to the recipient countries, 75% of the money have been given to two countries, Libya and Niger—respectively the 45.3% and the 30.1% of the overall allocations—with whom Italy has signed bilateral agreements for the contrast of irregular migration and human

trafficking and the return of migrants from transit to origin countries. Tunisia was the third major recipient country with around 14 millions of Euro (10% of the total) (ActionAid 2017b).

The lack of transparency in the information and monitoring and evaluation system makes difficult to go deeper in the analysis of each single projects and their related impacts. Anyway, based on the information available, if we look at the three main recipient countries (Tunisia, Libya and Niger) we can observe as the projects funded focus mainly on the strengthening border control capacity for fighting against human trafficking and irregular migration (Table 2). A preliminary conclusion is that the Africa Fund instead of aiming for development as the overall objective, it serves the interests of donor to impede immigration, through a combination of development work and migration management interventions.

When it is subject to the home affairs agenda of the donors, the purpose of aid and its impact can be distorted, contradicting the poverty eradication objectives stated in the Lisbon Treaty, in the development effectiveness principle of ownership and in the Policy Coherence for Development. As migration is going to remain on the political agenda in the next years, the risk of potential aid diversion will be significant. This risk is well represented by the new Multiannual Financial Framework 2021–2027 where the Commission is proposing the adoption of a single external instrument for "Neighborhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (including external aspects of migration)".

Table 2 Sample of project for the three main Africa Fund recipient countries

Country	Title/total cost	Areas of intervention
Tunisia	Italian Ministry of Interior—Support to the Tunisian Authorities (12 mln €)	• Ground vehicles for patrolling (included transport expenditures) • Completion of detection and fingerprints comparison systems • Efficiency and maintenance of six patrol boats • Patrolling equipment aimed at the contrast of the migrants trafficking and to the support of the sea rescue operations • Spare parts furniture for patrol boats and ships' engine
Niger	EUTF—Support to Nigerian Plan against Human trafficking (50 mln €)	• Establishment of new specialized units for border control • New border posts and their renovation • New reception center • Reactivation of the airstrip
Libya	Support to Libyan authorities for an integrated management system on border and migration control (12.5 mln €)	10 mln € through the EUTF for the reinforcement of an integrated management system on border control and migration 2.5 mln € through the Italian Ministry of Interior for: – Efficiency of four patrol boats – Spare parts furniture – Trainings of 22 crew members – Insurance cost

Source: ActionAid, *Il compromesso impossibile*, November 2017

As underlined by Concord, the "EU response to humanitarian crises and the engagement in peacekeeping and conflict prevention operations through the Common Security and Defense Policy missions can play an important role in mitigating the causes of forced displacement. But when it comes to economic human mobility (which represents a significant share of the current migration from Africa), this logic does not stand up to scrutiny. Human mobility is determined as much by investment and opportunity, as necessity or willingness" (Concord 2018). The lack of a clear theory of change on migration and development is resulting in a fragmented and not based-evidence approach. As reported in a recent report released by the NGO Global Health Advocates, "having an impact on the deep-seated drivers of migration would require an in-depth but most importantly contextual analysis of the factors shaping migration flows, a comprehensive set of instruments, and better policy coherence for development" (Global health advocate 2017).

Finally, the initiatives taken under the new external migration management approach through aid are targeting countries of origin and transit of migration going potentially at the expense of other countries which needs assistance but are not relevant for migration, resulting in the contradiction of the recently agreed 'leave no one behind' principle in the SDGs agenda.

9 The Conditionality of Aid: Agreements for Pushing Control and Return Policies

Under the new Migration Partnership Framework of 2016 (European Commission 2016), European Union and its member states have intensified their efforts for the implementation of the "external agenda" on migration through the establishment of bilateral agreements (migration compacts) with countries of origin and transit aimed at stopping migration flows and accelerating returns. The EUTF as well as the *Fondo Africa* are the main financial instruments for the implementation of these agreements mainly focusing on short term European interest of stopping migration instead of medium-long term development interest of recipient countries. In this way ODA is not just diverted, but politically conditioned to the interest of donors. Countries who will do more on migration will get more funds ("more for more"). In this way, donor countries impose their priorities, interest and perspective on migration that are not the same for African countries (Knoll and Weijer 2016). Furthermore, looking at the program funded, there are serious risk that aid is used for activities which are in contrast and violate basic human rights.

A clear example of that is the case of the memorandum of understanding[11] signed by Italy with Libya in February 2017 aimed at strengthening the role of Libyan authorities in refoulement and detention of migrants whose consequences in term

[11] More info at: http://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/Libia.pdf

for human rights violations of migrants have been widely documented. As Anja Palm from the *Istituto Affari Internazionali* wrote in 2017, "cooperation with Libya on migration and border control is not a new policy choice for Italy: during the 2000s numerous agreements focused on curbing migratory flows and enhancing readmission were concluded with the Gaddafi regime" (Palm 2017). However, the partnership had been suspended in 2012 as a result of both the collapse of the Libyan government and Italy had been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights for violating the principle of non-refoulement (intercepting migrants in the high sea and taking them or escorting them back to the country where they had left) and the prohibition of collective expulsions.[12]

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) contains clear indications of the way in which the Italian government is cooperating with Libya by providing support and finance both development programs and the technical and technological means for the fight against irregular migration (Article 1). In particular, Article 2 refers to Italy's role in financing the local reception centers and their completion 'in compliance with the relevant provisions', supplying medicines and necessary equipment to meet the health needs of the migrants detained there, training of Libyan personnel working in such centers with a special focus on their ability to deal with clandestine immigration and human trafficking; supporting international organizations operating in the migration field in Libya; and investing in development programs in the region, particularly in projects for job creation (Palm 2017).

The above mentioned funding of 2.5 million of Euro given by the *Fondo Africa* through the Italian Ministry of interior to Libyan authorities for, among other interventions, the efficiency of four patrol boats has been highly contested by the Italian civil society and subject to an appeal to the Administrative Tribunal (TAR) by ASGI (Association of legal study on immigration).[13] In a nutshell, ASGI contested the scope of these funding which is direct to the support of military apparatus of Libyan authorities instead of contributing to the solution of the humanitarian crisis diverting aid from their original scope set by law.

To conclude, the degree to which aid delivery through the Africa Fund is associated with these activities is a contentious subject. In the case of Italy-Libya MoU, the language seems quite explicit and the approach and objectives seem to reflect the ones contained in the EC Migration Partnership Framework: "Increasing coherence between migration and development policy is important to ensure that development assistance helps partner countries manage migration more effectively, and also incentivizes them to effectively cooperate on readmission of irregular migrants" (Concord 2018).

[12] Case of Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy (Application no. 27765/09), Judgment, 23 February 2012.

[13] More info at: https://www.asgi.it/asilo-e-protezione-internazionale/libia-italia-ricorso-fondi-cooperazione/

10 Conclusion

Migration is part of wider development process and not its negative consequences. It can be induced by negative factors like climate change, conflicts, lack of economic opportunities, but can also be a choice to make life better off. The main challenge for development shouldn't be to stop migration, but to eradicate poverty by at the same time addressing the root causes of global inequality. Migration has to be considered as an opportunity and its conceptualization into development cooperation needs to be aimed at maximizing its positive impact at the same time minimizing negative consequences. In the medium and long term, agricultural and rural development along with improvement of food and nutrition security can certainly help to respond to some of the root causes of current migrations, creating alternatives and improving the means of subsistence available to people. From a European perspective it means to go beyond the idea of the root causes which resulted in the manipulation of development assistance for security purposes and, at the same time, a blunt tool for reshaping migration patterns. European institutions and member states which have been searching for short-term victories need to be open to the idea of working with, rather than against, migration trends (Fratzke and Salant 2018a). This can only happen with a radical rethink of how success in migration and development policies itself is defined (*ibidem*) and only if impact evaluation programs of development initiatives will be effectively implemented.

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