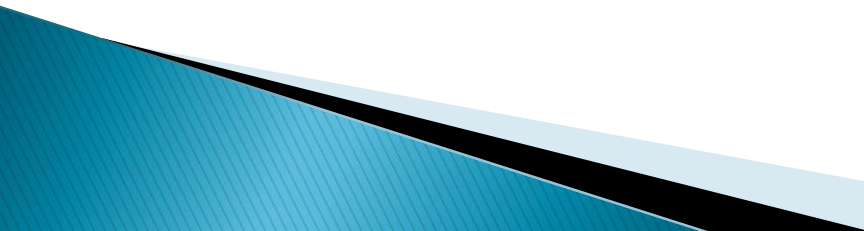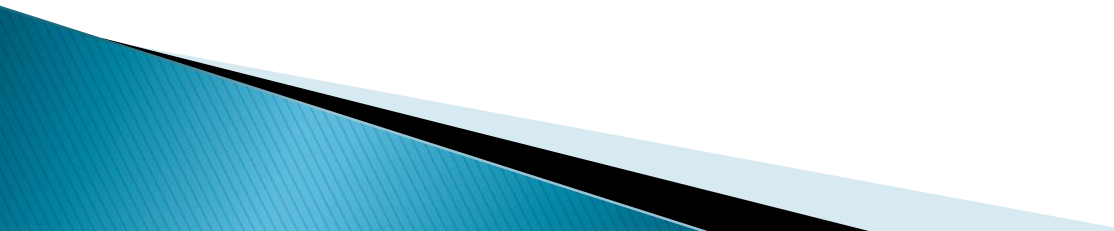# AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA) AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LABOUR MOBILITY IN AFRICA

MAKEN–PHILIP, ELIZABETH MCIPM

PROF. HAMZA ABDULLAHI YUSUF
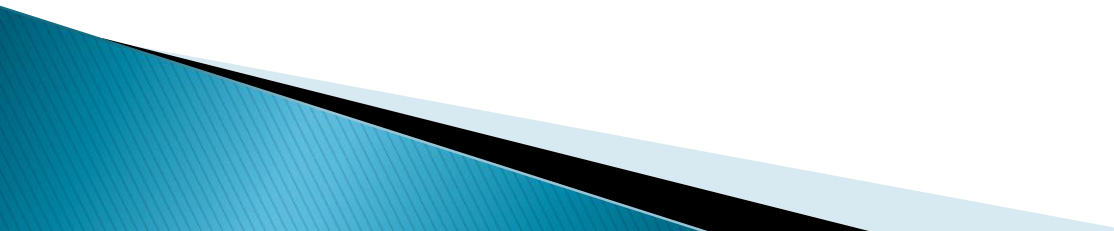
# OUTLINE OF THE PAPER

- Introduction and Problem in Context
- Objectives of the Study
- Research Assumption
- Literature Review
- Conceptual Clarification
- Theoretical Framework
- Push–Pull Theory
- Research Methodology
- Intervening Obstacles to Labour Mobility
- Conclusion and Recommendations

# Introduction and Problem in Context

- Historical background of African as a continent of migration.
- Patterns of migration in traditional African societies and Nigeria.
- Modern trends of migration involving persons of working age group. (Labour Migration).
- Benefits of labour mobility to host countries and countries of origin.
- Nexus between AfCFTA and Labour Mobility

# Objectives of the Study

‣ Examine the prospects and benefits of labour mobility in the aftermath of signing the African Continental Free Trade Area by many African countries.

‣ Identify the intervening obstacles affecting free movement of labour across the continent.

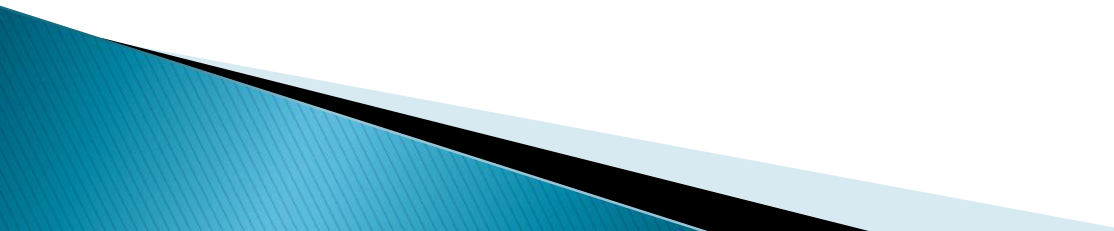‣ Proffer solutions to facilitate labour mobility in Africa.

# Research Assumption

- The assumption of our study is that despite the potentials of labour mobility under AfCFTA implementation, this lofty objective is being undermined by a myriad of intervening obstacles which needs to be addressed.
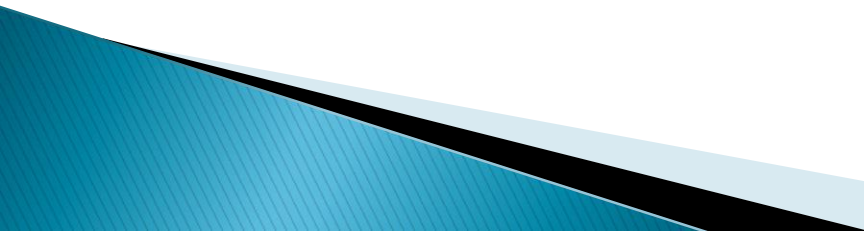
# LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Conceptual Clarification**
- African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)
- Labour Mobility /Migration
- Labour Migration Governance in Africa.

- **Theoretical Framework**
- Push-Pull Theory

# Research Methodology

▸ The study adopted a documentary research methodology.  We relied on secondary sources of data sourced from publications by international organisations such as the African Union (AU), International Organisation of Migrants (IOM), African  Development Bank (ADB) etc.  Other sources are academic journals, textbooks, conference publications and newspapers.

# Intervening Obstacles to Labour Migration
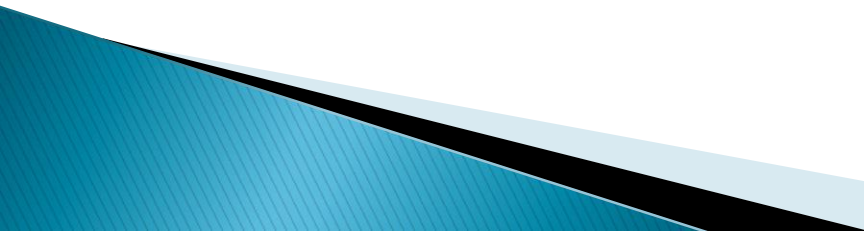
- **Visa Restrictions**
- Ease of entrance into African countries is still low despite the free movement of persons protocols.  Africans still need visas to travel to 46% of other African Countries. (ADB & AU 2020)
- The 2021 Visa Openness Index shows that only nine countries offered visa-free access or a visa on arrival to Africans.
- The average VOI score is 0.444 in 2021. This is a down turn from 0.484 in 2020.

# Visa Openness in Africa 2021: Country Scores and Ranking

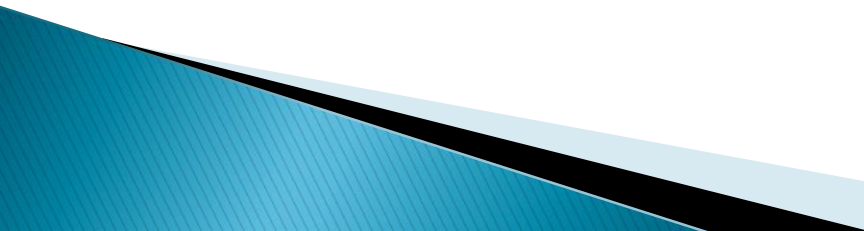| SN | Country | Score | Rank |
|----|---------|-------|------|
| 1 | Benin | 1.000 | 1 |
| 2 | Seychelles | 1.000 | 1 |
| 3 | The Gambia | 1.000 | 1 |
| 4 | Senegal | 0.883 | 4 |
| 5 | Ghana | 0.875 | 5 |
| 6 | Rwanda | 0.868 | 6 |
| 7 | Nigeria | 0.864 | 7 |
| 8 | Uganda | 0.853 | 8 |
| 9 | Guinea-Bissau | 0.849 | 9 |
| 10 | Cape Verde | 0.845 | 10 |
| 11 | Togo | 0.838 | 11 |
| 12 | Mauritania | 0.830 | 12 |
| 13 | Mauritius | 0.826 | 13 |
| 14 | Mozambique | 0.804 | 14 |

# Transportation Difficulties

- Inadequacy of African transportation infrastructure mostly inherited from colonial administration.
- Africa Aviation industry account for less than 2% of international air passengers and air freight (ADB 2014).
- Peculiar transportation challenges of landlocked African countries.
- 16 out of 55 African countries are landlocked e.g Mali, Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, Uganda, Zambia, Burundi, Rwanda.
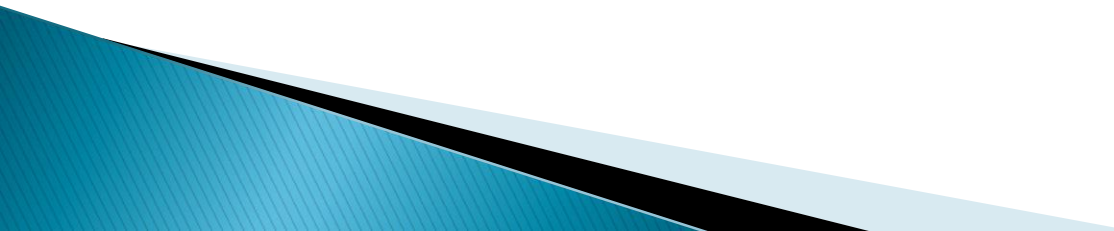
# Aviation Infrastructure Gap

- Top international destination region from Africa is to Europe (41%), followed by Intra Africa (27%) and to the Middle East (19%).

- 30% of international passengers from Africa travelled through connecting flights and even 22% of international traffic between African states were connecting flights.

- 19 African states have no international airline, 22 State have only one international airline and 4 States have more than 3 international airlines.
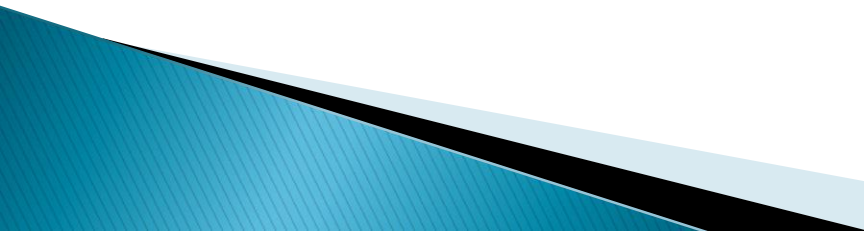
- Source:  ICAO (2019)

# Differences in Professional Licensing and Language Barrier

▸ Categorisation based on colonial heritage ; Anglophone and Francophone countries

▸ Reliance on western international professional certification.

▸ The need for common professional certification in various fields.

# Discriminatory and Unfair Labour Practices

- The ILO Decent Work Framework and core labour standards advocates dignity of labour, non discrimination, freedom from servitude, security etc
- Vulnerabilities of African labour migrants especially in the informal sector e.g irregular migration, trafficking and exploitative employment.
- Direct and indirect discrimination.
- Xenophobia in South Africa.

# Conclusion and Recommendations

- Labour mobility is key to unlocking the potential benefits of AfCFTA.
- Policy makers and Businesses should create the enabling environment for labour mobility through:
- Visa Liberalisation
- Common professional licensing.
- Enforcement of international labour standards in both formal and informal sectors to mitigate discriminatory and unfair labour practices.
- Construction of a network of railway and road transport network across Africa.
- Joint Aviation ventures (e.g Air Africa)

# Thank you for Listening