

Protection on the move.

Transnational social protection trajectories of African migrants in Mexico.

Aim of the project:

This project aims to advance our understanding on how mobile populations devise and shape their **social protection strategies during their migration trajectories** beyond sending and receiving states.

Introduction:

This study investigates the **trajectories of social protection of African migrants in Mexico**, a new but increasingly visible migrant group that has emerged in the past years as a result of a combination of global processes.

Migration is a social-protection strategy for individuals and families throughout the globe. At the same time, however, increasingly restrictive migration policies are pushing many migrants to seek new and more risky migration routes.

In the past decades, migration and social protection have taken new forms and consequently different relations between the State and society. Many studies have investigated aspects of social protection for migrants from the Global South in industrialized countries of the Global North, with powerful welfare-states. Yet, such focus on origin and destination countries has failed to understand the complexities *during* the migration process, where people often spend uncertain periods of time in transit countries, frequently affected by violence, socio-economic crises, and a volatile formal social-protection system.

About me

I hold a PhD in Social Anthropology and Geography by the Universities of Maastricht and Aix Marseille (2018). In my thesis I explored how Sudanese families across the Netherlands, the UK and Sudan navigate different forms of social protection, locally and across borders. Afterwards I worked as a Senior Researcher at the Bonn International Centre for Conversion, where I investigated aspects of return and reintegration in Ghana. Besides my academic career, I have worked as a protection assistant at the UNHCR-Khartoum, as a language teacher in London and as a tour guide in Egypt, Jordan and the USA.

Methodology:

Mixed-methods approach:

- ethnographic methods
- social network analysis

(Tentative) Research Questions:

How do African migrants navigate their social protection needs in transit through Mexico?

- How do transnational social networks shape the social protection trajectories of African migrants in Mexico?
- What are the roles and characteristics of these social networks and for which social protection needs do they cater?

Impact:

- Informing social policy and ameliorate social inequalities throughout migration processes.
- Contributing to the theorisation of current approaches of transnational social protection, which to date have only focused on the circulation of resources across sending and receiving countries.



Ester Serra Mingot
ester.s.mingot@gmail.com