

CALL FOR CHAPTERS

New edited collection on LGBTQI+ displacement in and from East Africa

Since the early 1990s, political, social and economic instability in East Africa,¹ including long-running conflicts in Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Burundi, has produced high rates of displacement. Movement within and from the region has led to substantial refugee populations being housed in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, as well as a large diaspora of East Africans scattered across the globe.

Among those leaving their countries of origin are a significant number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons. Many are fleeing state-sanctioned violence, including arrest, prosecution and imprisonment, while others seek to escape oppressive social norms and community opprobrium, often experienced as gossip, beatings, outings, extortion, familial abuse and forced marriage. These efforts to preserve the heteronormative social order are buttressed by the expansion of colonial-era penal codes, the growing influence of anti-LGBTQI+ religious movements and the strategic use of anti-LGBTQI+ discourses by political elites looking to consolidate their power and authority.

While LGBTQI+ refugees and asylum seekers in East African have recently begun to attract media attention, there is yet to be sustained academic engagement with their lives and experiences. This collection will address this knowledge gap by bringing together diverse scholarship on the drivers, impacts and consequences of displacement linked to sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression. It will do so by exploring all aspects of LGBTQI+ migration, including displacement catalysts, mobility pathways, transit routes, migration governance, encampment policies, humanitarian interventions, resettlement challenges, integration strategies, livelihood programmes and public advocacy. By centring the experiences of LGBTQI+ East Africans who move, the collection will produce new insights into the geographical, historical and cultural specificities of a region that both produces and hosts individuals fleeing homophobic and transphobic persecution.

This will be an interdisciplinary publication, and we therefore invite submissions from all academic fields, including migration studies, gender studies, border studies, religious studies, media studies, legal studies, literary studies, public health, history, sociology and anthropology. We also welcome abstracts that consider the lives of LGBTQI+ East Africans in the diaspora and/or the impacts of LGBTQI+ East Africans on global, regional or local protection mechanisms. Those working outside of the academy (humanitarian workers, legal practitioners, service providers, etc.) are welcome to submit abstracts of a scholarly nature.

Possible topic areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

¹For the purposes of this publication, we take East Africa to include the following thirteen countries: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

- The state of research: Trends in LGBTQI+ migration research and knowledge gaps.
- Theorising LGBTQI+ displacement: Looking beyond South-North migration trajectories, rethinking movement, boundaries and borderlands, challenging European 'exceptionalism' and so on.
- Methodological tensions: Unpacking the ethics and practices of researching and representing LGBTQI+ mobilities, the use of arts-based methodologies, decolonial approaches to migration research and so on.
- Law and justice: Making sense of legal challenges and opportunities relating to LGBTQI+ migration, including local, regional and international protection mechanisms, state responses to decriminalisation and so on.
- Structures of asylum and migration: Encampment, waiting, documentation, border controls, online fundraising campaigns, illegality as orientation, the finitude of language and so on.
- Documenting, archiving and disseminating knowledge: Partnerships (civil society, government, policy-makers, etc.), research uptake beyond the academy, data security, keeping LGBTQI+ communities safe when 'going public' and so on.
- Representations in film, literature and media: Reflections on how LGBTQI+ displacement in/from East Africa is produced, discussed and circulated through creative works.
- The role of religion and culture: The relationship of institutions, practices, networks and discourses with migration, with faith as a mediator of belonging or dispossession.
- Research in action: Empirical findings from recent studies on LGBTQI+ displacement in the region.

Prospective authors are asked to submit an abstract (500 words max) and a short bio to queerdisplacementtea@gmail.com by 1 April 2022.

Editors:

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