

Strategic Foresight under Deep Uncertainty

State Resilience and Failed States:

A Systems Perspective on Migration: From (Potential) Situations of Conflicts, Repression, and Food Scarcity to Economic Opportunities

Background

Although the 2015 refugee crisis has taken many Western European governments by surprise, in retrospect the inflow of migrants from war-torn neighboring regions was not surprising. And by utilizing a holistic and dynamic systems view, the 2015 refugee crisis would not have been surprising at all if simulation-based strategic foresight under deep uncertainty would have been used for anticipating dynamic events of such a historical magnitude.

Analyzing the root causes of migration, and simulating them under deep uncertainty enables one to generate large sets of widely divergent (yet plausible) scenarios, which can be used to develop robust policies that work – especially when really needed. There are multiple root causes of migration that need to be addressed to anticipate future/potential migration shocks. Root causes of migration include, but are not limited to, wars and conflicts, corruption, repression, injustice, the lack of good governance and institutions, natural disasters, lack of health services, scarcity, as well as economic opportunities.

Although the current inflow of refugees into Europe is much lower than last year, the actual situation is still urgent: there are many internally displaced persons and refugees in problematic regions. Moreover, migration is likely to become a much larger phenomenon: several root causes in more regions are developing in the wrong direction. We need to act now to be able to face future waves of refugees and immigrants. But how? What do we need to do to deal with refugee crisis without turning them even bigger humanitarian crises? How could the root causes be solved? How to better deal with humanitarian crises? How do we ensure that crises elsewhere do not turn into long-term problems for other nation states and citizens?

With our Strategic Foresight methodology, we are able to run situation rooms, workshops and other activities related to migration due to conflicts and repression, food and land scarcity (population and climate pressure), disasters, and (traditional and new) economic migration *for all countries in the world*, but with a particular focus on Africa.

With our simulation-based Strategic Foresight methodology, we will enable participants to virtually experience many different plausible futures and will allow them to assess the possible consequences of their virtual policies and decisions across many such futures. We will organize different activities, all based on suites of plausible simulation models related to potential conflicts and repression, and other types of crises, and possible future waves of migrants they could cause are used to generate scenarios. In one of the workshops, targeted at *policy makers*, we will – based on suggestions by the participants – simulate potential migration scenarios and display them on the spot by means of visually attractive geo-spatial animations. Based on these scenarios, we will involve the participants in a discussion of possible policies and test them on the spot across plausible scenarios. In another workshop, targeted at *policy analysts*, we will (1.) demonstrate how to simulate tens of thousands of plausible scenarios (i.e., simulation runs under deep uncertainty), (2.) how to perform on the spot analysis of these ensembles of scenarios, and (3.) how to perform advanced policy analysis. Apart from these workshops, participants/visitors will be able to test their own policy skills across a plethora of possible scenarios in individual serious policy gaming sessions on laptops provided in our situation room. Finally, we will be bringing all pieces of the big picture migration puzzle by means of a large systems map of the (underlying) system displayed – possibly to be extended and altered by participants/visitors.

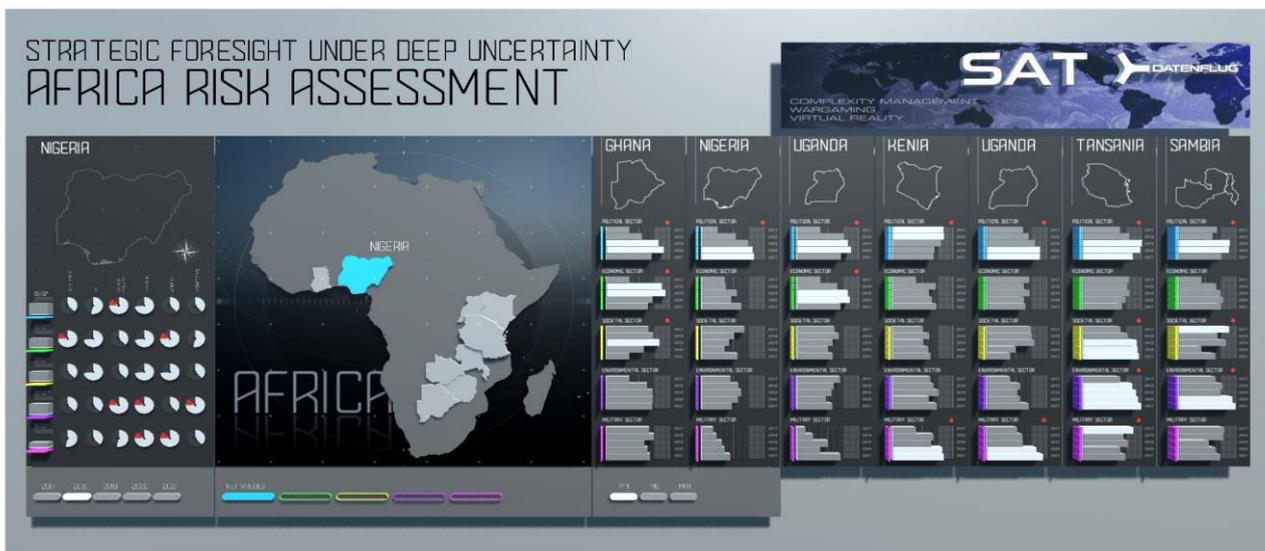
Holistic Systems Simulation and Strategic Foresight under Deep Uncertainty

Our activities are built around holistic and dynamic simulation models with structures to simulate migration due to conflicts and repression, food and land scarcity (population and climate pressure), disasters, and economic migration, as well as the capabilities of transition and reception countries to accommodate/deal with these migrants. Although our dynamic simulation models focus on the root causes, they also show the short and long term political, economic, and social consequences of potential refugee and migration crises under deep uncertainty, including:

- The potential evolution of current and potential conflicts and other root causes of migration and their consequences for dealing with future migration shocks
- Internal displacement, refugee flows between countries, and accumulation of refugees in countries
- Capacity struggles in countries with high inflows or numbers of refugees, and the effects of policies
- Consequences of futures & policies: capacity shortages (administration, housing, police), costs, social tensions, political instability, ...

For the case of State Resilience and Failed States, our dynamic simulation models can be used as “Test-Bed” for:

- Further plausible developments in regions across the world with potential conflict, ecological disasters, and food and land scarcity
- Potential effects of national, regional and local reactions and policies
- Refugees on their way to the developed world and refugees in various developed countries and resulting socio-economic-political problems and tensions
- State resilience analysis and state fragility in the face of socio-economic and ecological stressors



Prototype Cockpit: State Resilience Analysis under Deep Uncertainty and Risk Assessment for African Nations

Advantages of Simulation-based Strategic Foresight under Deep Uncertainty

Our Strategic Foresight methodology combines the most powerful modeling techniques available today and embraces:

- Holistic & systemic simulation modeling paradigms to capture volatility and dynamics of all complex systems
- Robust optimization of existing operative policies, structures, and processes
- Strategic decision support, adaptive crisis management, and emergency response preparation
- Fast and low cost solution which is easy to implement, no special training required to operate simulation models

Services offered with regards to Simulation-based Strategic Foresight

While setting up simulation-based Strategic Foresight projects, we provide the following services:

- Model-based scenario generation and scenario selection, Exploratory model development workshops
- Sensitivity analysis, stress testing, resilience analysis, agility & systemic fragility, and policy robustness testing
- The “Bigger Picture”, forward visibility and “Strategic Radar” for pre-emptive measures; Early Warning Systems
- “Management Flight Simulators” to assess and explore systemic vulnerability
- Model conception workshop (3-5 days), fast model development (2-4 months); models can be used by the client

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