

# Mean Streets

MIGRATION, XENOPHOBIA AND INFORMALITY  
IN SOUTH AFRICA



Edited by Jonathan Crush, Abel Chikanda and Caroline Skinner

*Mean Streets: Migration, Xenophobia and Informality in South Africa*, edited by Jonathan Crush, Abel Chikanda and Caroline Skinner, powerfully demonstrates that some of the most resourceful entrepreneurs in the South African informal economy are migrants and refugees. Yet far from being lauded, they take their life into their hands when they trade on South Africa's "mean streets". This book draws attention to what they bring to their adopted country through research into previously unexamined areas of migrant entrepreneurship. Ranging from studies of how migrants have created agglomeration economies in Jeppe and Ivory Park in Johannesburg, to *guanxi* networks of Chinese entrepreneurs, to competition and cooperation among Somali shop owners, to cross-border informal traders, to the informal transport operators between South Africa and Zimbabwe, the chapters in this book reveal the positive economic contributions of migrants. These include generating employment, paying rents, providing cheaper goods to poor consumers, and supporting formal sector wholesalers and retailers. As well, *Mean Streets* highlights the xenophobic responses to migrant and refugee entrepreneurs and the challenges they face in running a successful business on the streets.

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