

The gender turn: How the migration of women is challenging the empirical adequacy of the Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF)

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Abstract

The number of women migrating around the world has increased dramatically in the last two decades. While the traditional migratory route for many women has been through family re-union visa systems, recent studies and immigration statistics show that most women now migrate (across regions and continents) as primary asylum seekers and economic migrants. Captured in studies as *feminisation of migration*, this “gender turn” in migration, has however not sufficiently been reflected in most policies and migration governance frameworks. Informed by these empirical developments and intersectionality theory, this presentation will focus on the challenges faced by women migrants due to the lack of empirical adequacy of contemporary migration governance frameworks, particularly the IOM’s Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF, 2016) – which is a largely gender-blind policy prescription. On the other hand, be it *intra vires* or clandestine, the migration of women across national borders has challenged extant policies governing socio-economic integration of migrants in receiving countries – as women migrants exert pressure to carve socio-economic spaces within gender-blind institutional systems. It is becoming apparent that when considered – as recommended here - the gender dynamics of migration will lead to new migration governance prescriptions, approximating realistic and inclusive migration practices.

Biography

Nyamadzawo Sibanda is a second year PhD candidate at the African Centre of Migration and Society (ACMS), University of the Witwatersrand, in South Africa. His multidisciplinary academic background ranges from philosophy and public policy analysis to development evaluation. He has a master’s in Policy and Development Studies (University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa), and advanced master’s in Development Evaluation and Management (University of Antwerp, Belgium). He has over eight years of experience working with non-government organizations and the tertiary academic sector, in South Africa. Sibanda’s research interests are in social policy, including international migration, local (community and regional) development, and poverty and inequality, with a current focus on the socio-economic integration of economic and humanitarian migrants, within the South-South and South-North migration pathways.