

Mobility & Development in South Africa: Demographics, Dynamics & Policy Challenges

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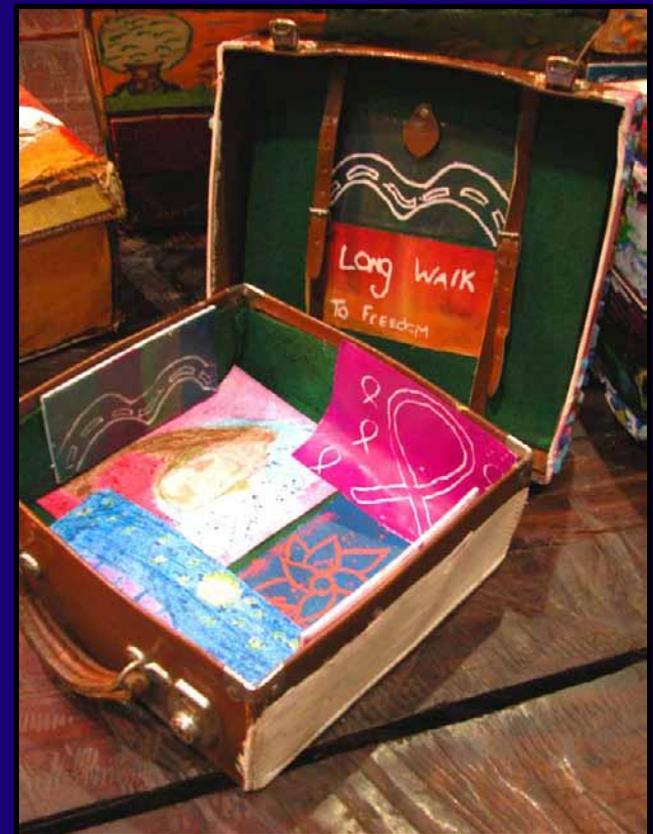
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Initiative for Policy Dialogue

Task Force on Migration

Mexico City, 15-16 January 2009





The Forced Migration Studies Programme at Wits

An internationally engaged; Africa-oriented; and African-based research and teaching centre dedicated to shaping academic and policy debates on migration, development and social transformation

- Graduate degree programme with students from across Africa, North America, and Europe;
- Research in 12 African countries on related to migration, human rights, development, governance, and social change;
- Partnerships on 4 continents;
- Growing record of academic publications, consulting, and outreach: provides key support to NGOs and advocates;
- Regional reference point for public and scholarly debate

Why migration is on the South African policy agenda



Members of the SAPS try to
Ramaphosa informal settle
Picture: HALDEN KROG





Why it should be:

Ineffective and inappropriate responses to migration include economic losses, threats to security and health, low degrees of social capital, and a less liveable region.

Rather than ensuring that all residents participate in planning processes and have access to markets, accommodation, and critical social services, South African responses to migration negatively affecting *Southern Africans'* physical and economic security

Issues for today:

- South Africa as critical case
- Dynamics: who, what and where
- Migration and development practice
- Recommendations and the possibility of progressive reform

Approached through lens of
'politico-demography'



Who, What and Where

- Poor data quality worsened by legal and bureaucratic apparatus, proprietary data collection, and limited scholarly research
- Estimates ranging from 400,000 to 10 million non-nationals out of app. 45 million residents
- Probably close to 1.5m or 3% of total population
- Vast majority of migrants from SADC neighbours and Africa. Growing numbers from S. Asia and China.
- 'Mixed flows': profit, protection, and passage
- Estimated loss of 1 million skilled South Africans since 1994
- Deportations of 300 000 in 2007
- Highly spatialised and inseparable from rapid urbanisation



Unstable and Transitory Population: Expected Location in 2 Years

	DRC	Mozambique	Somalia	South Africa
Where I am now	36.4	51.7	54.8	46.3
In another part of South Africa	7.5	7.9	12.9	31.1
In my community of origin	12.3	20.2	6.5	3.7
Another part of home country	0.4	0.0	1.6	0.0
In a third country	29.2	4.4	11.3	3.2
Other	0.8	0.0	0.0	2.1
DK/RA	13.4	15.8	12.9	13.7
n	253	203	186	190

Who are they and what do they do?

- Generally better educated and entrepreneurial – capable of replacing S.A. brain drain
- Twice the employment rate of South Africans
- Little evidence of aggregate ‘replacement’ or wage suppression
- Increasing numbers of women, children (including unaccompanied minors) and less skilled migrants



Migrant Street Traders

Policy and its effects?

- Policies neither prevent migration nor protect migrants
- Skills shortage demands migration but few means of legal movement and bureaucratic inefficiency
- Migration not part of regional integration agenda; Zimbabwe undermines SADC-wide initiatives
- Local government not interested and unsupported in addressing migration and immigration
- Insecure migration and immigration status & hostility limits investment, promoting social and financial investment elsewhere



Institutional effects

- Poor data and engagement mean poor planning
- Poor access to banking, health, education and housing for migrants result in loss productivity and investment
- Predatory and ineffective policing
- Social fragmentation, and widespread violence hostility fostered by opportunistic local leadership
- Lack of integration and political engagement. Instead, scapegoating, exclusion and reduced accountability



“The more they come to South Africa to do business, the more the locals will continue to kill them”



Newly Registered Displaced Non-National, Johannesburg, 2008

Recommendations

- Admit that current policy frameworks exacerbate negative outcomes and undermine regional integration agenda
- Need for more and better data: re-spatialised, re-categorised, and regularly collected
- Enhance local and regional dimensions of policy making and implementation
- Need for multi-sectoral, multi-level 'migration mainstreaming'
- Develop inclusive mechanisms for promoting political and social participation
- Pragmatic realisation of limits of implementation capacity

But will it happen? Probably not

- Political structures do not promote regional or local involvement
- Migrants and South Africans show little interest in participation and institutions remain fragmented. Issues on civil society agenda
- Nationalist, populist turn in South African politics
- Paucity of analytical skills and creativity in local, national, and regional bodies
- Strong influence of security agenda from IOM, EU, and US and misplaced faith in ability to regulate mobility
- Spatial development strategy promotes investment in already productive areas. Promotes restrictions on 'new poor'
- Little control over police, private security, and non-state actors
- Migration will remain a critical regional dynamic but with unintended developmental consequences

General analytical lessons

- Institutions and politics matter as cause and consequence. Development is more than money and remittances
- Inseparability of domestic and international migration; displacement and voluntary migration
- Disaggregate impact of different migrant trajectories
- Spatialise development effects and actors. Where states are weak, local authorities matter: cities, chiefs, councilors, and gangsters



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