

Sub-Saharan Africa: Is Regional Economic Integration a Relevant Factor Affecting the Changes Taking Place in International Migration?

Dominic Milazi

Department of Sociology, University of North West, Mafikeng, South Africa

KEYWORDS Economic Integration. Migration. Factors. Structural Network

ABSTRACT The paper in question focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa as a study. Within this terrain, it seeks to address the issue of regional economic integration and the related question whether such integration is a relevant factor affecting the changes taking place in international migration. The paper presents the ensuing discussion within the general framework of migration and development on the sub-continent and further examines the following dimensions: internal and external influences on international migration in terms of theoretical perspectives, or schools of thought. This is followed by a brief discussion of sub-continental or regional economic integration in relation to sub-Saharan “centers of development” which correlate with urbanization and inter-territorial rural-to-urban migration. The inter-governmental efforts towards the management of international migration under the rubric of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are examined in greater detail. The argument is made that as the starting point, and for the central purposes of the study, South Africa, as the hub of the sub-continent’s structural networks and economic activity, provides the vantage point for addressing the issues in question. As test cases for regional integration and its causal effect on international migration, the case studies of Malawi, South Africa’s Afrikaner “trekkers” and Lesotho are discussed at length.