

number of female international migrants in 2013 **111,193,961**



48% of migrants globally



42% of migrants from Asia



52% of migrants from Latin America

"Succinctly put, poverty, political chaos, war, and natural disasters and gender inequalities in the countries of origin are responsible for the decisions that lead to the migration of women."

-Monica Boyd, University of Toronto

pull factors

- Family reunification
- Education & job opportunities
- Greater opportunities for women
- Freedom and protection from persecution

push factors

- Poverty, unemployment, and economic instability
- Violence, armed conflict, natural disasters, and political instability
- Cultural traditions that hinder women's development



Feminization of Migration

parallels feminization of poverty & feminization of work



migration hump

women's migration is highest in between extreme poverty and advanced development

limited resources in extreme poverty make migration less likely; when a better life is found at home in advanced development, migration is also less likely

Migrant women's work, income & remittances



low wages, poor career development

long hours heavy workloads lack of safety



at risk of abuse, violence, or lack of freedom of movement

migrant women often in occupations



retail, waitress, housekeeping, textiles & garments, hotel cleaners, entertainment & sex industry

associated with traditional gender roles

Annual remittances

\$200 billion

3X international development aid

Some studies indicate women remit greater percentage of income

Sources: Caritas Internationalis, "Female Face of Migration"; Mary Delorey, "International Migration: Social, Economic, and Humanitarian Considerations"; UN Department of Economic Affairs, Population Division, "Trends in Immigration Stock"; United Nations Population Fund "Female Migrants: Bridging the Gaps Throughout the Life Cycle, Selected Papers from the UNFPA-IOM Expert Group Meeting."

exploitation & abuse

"By undertaking the migration journey, women are much more vulnerable than men to abuses, smuggling and trafficking."

-Caritas Internationalis



Violence at the Border

undocumented women crossing the U.S/Mexico border regularly experience sexual violence

According to Olivia Ruiz Marrujo **sexual violence** refers to any "physical and verbal affront that a migrant woman identifies as an offense to her sexuality."

Sexual violence is an attack to a woman's physical body, and by extension, her identity as woman. It includes physical assaults and threats, such as threat of rape. Women are also often fearful of threats to their family at home, often known to their abuser.

Women displaced by armed conflict, violations of human rights, and natural or human-made disasters are more vulnerable to trafficking.

"They will continue in spite of having been assaulted, having been robbed, having been shot at, and having been raped. Because it has been a real long journey, a very dangerous expensive one. And for them to report it to the authorities would mean they will more than likely be deported."

- Santa Cruz County (Arizona) Sheriff Tony Estrada



Women's Experience of Migration

Migration often separates women from family members. Women may migrate ahead of children in order to find a job and housing before bringing their children.

family
separation

Women may be the ones left behind to keep the family together when their husband, father, or other family members migrate.



Fewer legitimate work opportunities are available to migrant women. Often employed in informal jobs without work permits, women may not have financial resources or immigration papers needed to visit family or country of origin.

Unauthorized female migrants may be separated from family during detention or deportation proceedings.

empowerment & agency

"Migrant women have often felt disempowered in their own countries and so sought opportunities elsewhere."

-Caritas Internationalis



Migration can provide opportunities for higher education not available to women in country of origin



Migration can lead women to nurture underdeveloped skills and potential, especially when living in a culture with different gender dynamics



Migration can help women provide for their family, with many becoming the primary bread winner



Migration can open up new possibilities and directions in the lives of women