

The Lives of Migrant Remittances: Challenging the Migration and Development Nexus

Prof. Denise Spitzer
University of Alberta

Abstract: Migration has been promoted as a tool of development by institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Union, and embraced by countries who seek to export labour migrants, and by those who hope to benefit from their labour under the framework of migration control. In what is known as the migration and development nexus, temporary, circular migration is thought to contribute to household, community, and national poverty alleviation through the leveraging of both financial and social remittances. Our transnational participatory study challenges this discourse. Our multi-method study, *The Lives of Migrant Remittances: An Asian Comparative Study*, focused on a representative sample of Filipino and Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong and followed the remittances they generated back to three focal communities in each country. As remittances were predominantly utilized for basic household needs, we found virtually no evidence that the promise of poverty alleviation was fulfilled. We advocate for a greater appreciation for the *life trajectory* of migrant remittances including what is required to generate, manage, and deploy them. This research interrogates the weaknesses so far (re)presented by the migration-development nexus and will suggest ways to improve migration governance.

Bio: Denise Spitzer, PhD is a professor in the School of Public Health at University of Alberta and an adjunct professor in the Institute of Feminist and Gender Studies at the University of Ottawa, Canada. Her research interests include migration, migrant workers, participatory research methods, and intersectionality.



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Room G4702

Yeung Kin Man Academic Building
City University of Hong Kong

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