

**FACTORS OF MIGRATION AND
URBANIZATION IN
AFRICA**

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Introduction

- One of the major outcomes of migration is urbanisation, which refers to the increasing shift of the total population from rural to urban places, or a consistent rise in the proportion of the population living in towns and cities (Owusu, 2017).
- The proportion of the world population living in towns and cities rose from about 30% in 1950 to 47% in 2000 and then 54% in 2015. This figure is projected to rise to about 66% by 2050 (United Nations Population Division, 2014), with most of this urban growth occurring in Africa and Asia.
- The rapid urbanisation, and the resulting pressure on employment and social amenities has led to a largely negative policy position of African governments and metropolitan authorities on rural-urban migration and urbanisation (Awumbila et al, 2014).
- This presentation will focus on the drivers, effects and linkages between migration and urbanisation in Africa.
- It is argued that despite the largely negative view of rural-urban migration, urban areas provide livelihood opportunities for migrants. There is a need for city authorities to consider the interests of migrants in the process of urban planning.

Key Features of Migration in and Out of Africa

- Although political narratives and media images suggests an “exodus” of Africans to Europe, Africa has the lowest intercontinental outmigration rates of all world regions (Flahaux and De Haas 2016; UN 2017).
- About 53% of African migrants remain in the region (Kamdem 2017).
- Nearly 79% of migrants in Africa are from the region.

Region	AFRICAN EMIGRANTS LIVING WITHIN AFRICA AS SHARE (PERCENTAGE) OF TOTAL STOCK OF EMIGRANTS
Eastern Africa	71%
Middle Africa	78.8%
Northern Africa	13.2%
Southern Africa	51.7%
Western Africa	71.7%
Total	53%

Region	PERCENTAGE OF IMMIGRANTS FROM REGION AS SHARE OF TOTAL STOCK OF IMMIGRANTS
Eastern Africa	88.7
Middle Africa	84.1
Northern Africa	49.6
Southern Africa	55.8
Western Africa	89.2
Total Africa	78.5

Key Features of Migration in and Out of Africa

- In 2017, the main receiving countries of intra-African international migrants were South Africa (2.2 million) and Côte d'Ivoire (2.1 million). Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya (each exceeding 1 million, in descending order) were also major receiving countries of intra-African international migrants.
- In 2017, the countries with the highest stock of international migrants as a share of total population were Equatorial Guinea (18 per cent), Gabon and Seychelles (14 per cent each) and Djibouti (12 per cent) (UNTACT, 2018)
- Outside Africa, Europe is still a major destination of Africans but increasingly more people are moving to other regions, e.g. Gulf states. The share of African-born people living outside of the continent has shown a slight increase from 1.1 per cent in 1990 to 1.4 in 2015.
- Although international migration has received more attention in recent debates on migration, internal migration within individual African states is far more significant in terms of the numbers of people involved and perhaps even the quantum of remittances (Awumbila et al, 2014)
- Rural-urban migration remains a dominant migration stream in Africa.

Conceptualizing the Drivers of Migration

- **Drivers** of migration are 'the factors which get migration going and keep it going once begun' (Van Hear, 2012: 1).
- There are various theories on these drivers:

Neo-Classical Economic Theory

- Migration is due to wage differentials. Workers migrate for economic reasons, from low-wage, labour-surplus regions to high-wage, labour scarce regions.

Push-Pull Framework

- Decision to migrate is determined by : Push factors at origin; Pull factors at destination; and Intervening obstacles (e.g. long distance, immigration laws; psychological and economic cost).

Migration Hump Theory

- There is a relationship between migration trends and socio-economic development

New Home Economics of Labour

- Migration is undertaken to diversify household income and as an insurance strategy

Migration network theory

- Migration is facilitated by social networks between earlier migrants at the destination and potential migrants at the destination

- ***No single theory is adequate for explaining migration***

Drivers of Migration in and Out of Africa

- Following works of Van Hear (2001), De Haas (2008) and Teye (2018) three categories of factors/drivers contribute to migration in and out of Africa: (1) Underlying factors/ Root Causes; (2) Proximate Factors (drivers)/ Triggers of migration; (3) Mediating /Facilitating factors (drivers).
- This presentation will focus on the underlying drivers, though there is a thin line between underlying and proximate factors:
- Following foresight (2011), broad groups of underlying drivers include: **Economic, Social, Political, demographic, and Environmental factors**

Types of Drivers of Migration

- **Economic Factors (drivers):** Economic opportunities and challenges. Structural disparities between countries or rural and urban areas shaped by the macro-political economy; Unequal terms of trade; Low prices of agricultural commodities in rural areas.
- *Direct causes of migration, such as unemployment, are products of underlying economic challenges.*
- Poverty was at first held to be a key driver of migration. However, recent scholarship has shown that **economic development** can also result in increased emigration. The poorest often cannot migrate for long distances since resources are needed to do so (UNDP, 2009, Van Hear et al, 2012; Teye, 2018).
- African countries with comparatively higher levels of economic development (such as in the Maghreb or coastal West Africa) also tend to have the highest intensity of extra continental migration.

Drivers of Migration

SOCIAL FACTORS

- **Movements for better education**

About 66,000 African students were in the United Kingdom alone (Maringe and Carter 2007). According to Marshall (2013), about 170,432 African students were in 28 European countries for higher education in 2012.

In Africa many students move from rural to urban areas for higher and tertiary education.

- **Marriage/ join spouses and families;**

- **Social factors/drivers tend to be over-reported in studies because many economic migrants may state them to get access to Europe (e.g *Phony marriages*)**

- ***Social prestige and culture of migration (Migration to enhance status in society)***

- **Misconception that life abroad or in urban areas is easy**

“I was first farming but later managed to buy a taxi so I started driving. .. I sold the car last year and gave the money to a connection man to help me go to Spain but he chopped the money. I have met another man who is charging 3000 Euro . I asked my uncle to help me with that so that if I get there I will work to pay within one month” (Nunu, 34 years)

Drivers of Migration

- **Political factors:** Quality of governance, discrimination or persecution, levels of security and policy incentives (Visa regimes)
- **Demographic factors:** Population density and structure and risk of disease. High fertility rate in Africa.
- **Environmental factors:** Migration as a strategy to deal slow onset environmental processes (e.g. drought, land degradation) and rapid onset environmental events (floods, earthquakes) (Teye and Owusu, 2016)

Trends of Urbanisation in Selected African Countries

COUNTRY	1980	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2050
Gabon	54.7	80.1	83.4	85.7	87.2	88.0	88.5	91.0
Libya	70.1	76.3	76.9	77.6	78.9	79.6	80.7	85.7
Djibouti	72.1	76.5	76.8	77.0	77.3	77.8	78.5	82.7
Algeria		59.9	63.8	67.5	70.7	73.4	75.6	82.1
Cape Verde		53.4	57.7	61.8	65.5	68.6	71.0	77.6
South Africa		56.9	59.5	62.2	64.8	67.2	69.4	77.4
Congo		58.7	61.0	63.2	65.4	67.4	69.4	77.2
Tunisia	50.6	63.4	65.1	65.9	66.8	67.9	69.2	76.6
Sao Tome and Principe		53.4	58.0	61.9	65.1	67.6	69.5	75.5
Mauritania			53.1	56.7	59.9	62.6	65.0	74.1
Morocco		53.3	55.1	57.7	60.2	62.6	64.9	74.0
Côted'Ivoire				50.6	54.2	57.5	60.5	70.9
Ghana				50.7	54.0	57.2	60.0	70.5
Cameroon				51.5	54.4	57.1	59.6	70.0
Botswana		53.2	55.1	56.2	57.4	58.9	60.5	69.9
Namibia						51.3	55.4	67.8
Nigeria						51.7	55.3	67.1
Africa	26.7	34.5	36.3	38.3	40.4	42.6	44.9	55.9

Linkages between Migration and Urbanisation in Africa

- Although the rate of natural increase in towns (as a result of high fertility), as well as re classification of settlements into urban areas accounts for a large percentage of urbanisation Africa, significant long-term migration into urban settlements accounts for a significant proportion of urban growth.
- The Large cities include: Lagos, Nigeria (21 million); Cairo, Egypt (20.4 million); Kinshasha, D.R. Congo (13.3 million); Luanda, Angola – 6.5 million; Nairobi, Kenya -6.5 Million; Abidjan, Ivory Coast, 4.8 Million; Alexandria, Egypt – 4.7 million; Johanesburg, South Africa (4.4 Million); Dar es salaam, Tanzania (4.4 million); Casablanca, Morocco – 4.3 million and Accra, Ghana – 4.1 million
- Most of the projected urban growth will take place in intermediate and small cities and not in the megacities such as Lagos and Cairo.
- The vast majority of the additional urban dwellers will continue to add to the intermediate and small cities. This implies that the need for urban management is greatest in these intermediate sized and smaller cities (UN Habitat, 2014).

Effects of Urbanisation

- Historically, urban living is linked with higher levels of education, better health, lower fertility greater access to social services (UNDESA, 2014).
- However, recent urbanisation in Africa has caused rapid and unplanned urban growth resulting in poor and inadequate housing, water and sanitation, transport and health care services.

Effects of Urbanisation on Housing and Sanitation in Africa

- About a third of urban inhabitants live in impoverished slums and squatter settlements (UN-Habitat, 2012).
- Slum in Africa tend to be associated with:
 - Overcrowded houses and with limited electricity supply
 - Poor access to water supplies
 - Insecure living conditions: slum dwellers tend to be forcibly evicted by city authorities.
 - Little or no sanitation and no solid waste disposal, which leads to a polluted and degraded local environment.

Slum and Pollution



Availability of Basic Services in two Slums in Ghana

Availability Of Services		Nima	Old Fadama	Total
Water	Within residence	33(28.0%)	9 (7.7%)	42(17.9%)
	Within residence but not reliable	14(11.9%)	0 (0.0%)	14(6.0%)
	Not available in residence	71 (60.2%)	108 (92.3%)	179(76.2%)
	Total	118 (100.0%)	117(100.0%)	235 (100.0%)
Toilet Facilities	Within residence	42(35.6%)	6(5.1%)	48(20.4%)
	Within residence but not reliable	2(1.7%)	1(9%)	3(1.3%)
	Not available in residence	74(62.7%)	110(94.0%)	184(78.3%)
	Total	118 (100.0%)	117(100.0%)	235(100.0%)
Bath House	Within residence	103(90.4%)	12(10.5%)	115(50.4%)
	Within residence but not reliable	4(3.5%)	1(0.9%)	5(2.2%)
	Not available in residence	7(6.1%)	101(88.6%)	108(47.4%)
	Total	114 (100.0%)	114(100.0%)	228(100.0%)
Electricity	Within residence	107(90.7%)	101(86.3%)	208(88.5%)
	Within residence but not reliable	2(1.7%)	13(11.1%)	15(6.4%)
	Not available in residence	9(7.6%)	3(2.6%)	12(5.1%)
	Total	118(100.0%)	117(100.0%)	235(100.0%)

Effects Rural-Urban Migration on Health in Africa

- Urbanisation can have both positive and negative effects on health of migrants and families.
- The main **benefits** are associated with easier access to hospitals, clinics and health services in general. Also access to information on modern health practices.
- **Negative Health Effects:** Poor environment and housing can affect health. Contamination of water sources can cause diseases.
- The polluted air can also cause respiratory diseases.

Economic and Social Effects of Urbanisation

Negative Effects:

- Unemployment
- Rising Urban Poverty: Rural urban migration has been linked to increasing levels of poverty in some African cities: Accra more than doubled its standard poverty incidence (4.4% in 1999 to 10.6% in 2006) and extreme poverty incidence rose from 1.3% in 1999 to 4.4% in 2006.
- Crime and Social Vices: Overcrowded housing and poor living conditions create a fertile ground for crime and social vices (e.g. drug abuse) though the evidence is weak.
- Crime in the cities tend to create a sense of insecurity.
- Lack of social support for children in school and home by their poor parents.

Positive Economic Effects of Migrating to Urban Areas : Entrepreneurial Businesses

- Some slums are booming with various forms of entrepreneurial businesses and activities mostly in the informal sector (Awumbila et al, 2014).
- Type of entrepreneurship in the informal sector were gendered.
- **Men** : artisans, labourers in the construction sector, operation of motor bikes as taxis (okada), truck pushers, and collection and sale of metal scraps (i.e. e-waste business), video operators
- **Women**: Petty traders, food vending, catering (chop bar) assistants, shop assistants, hair dressers, head porters (Kayayei) and plaiting hair, domestic workers

Economic Opportunities in Slums

- **Irregular, but higher incomes than at places of origin.**

“It is now better for me than before migration to Accra because back home in the North I was not doing any work. Even though when I started working it was not moving on as well as I had expected, I am now happily working, able to save some money and remit money to my family back in the north. ... [In addition] “My child has benefited a lot from my migration to this place because I am now able to provide for all his educational needs”

- **Average income of 10.1 Ghana cedis (4 dollars); Median income of 5.4 Ghana cedis. Both were above the minimum wage.**
- **Some migrants, especially in E-waste business, earn far higher than civil servants in Ghana (see the case of Mashud).**

Economic Opportunities in Slums

- Over 76% in the two communities save.
- 24% received remittances whereas 78% sent remittances within last 12 months.
- Remittances sent were both in cash and in kind.
- Informal channels were mainly used for remitting to families and households. These include the use of friends and relatives; transport operators.
- About 88% of respondents assessed their overall household life as ‘improved a lot/somewhat improved’.

*“Migration has been helpful to me based on the things that I told you I have gotten. And even though migration has not improved my education, through migration I have been able to continuously support the education of my brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews at home”
(Hamza, Old Fadama).*

Policy Responses to Migration and Urbanisation in Africa

- Instead of planning for urban growth and providing infrastructure and services for the poor, policy prescriptions focused on discouraging people from moving to urban areas.
- Several slum dwellers are forcibly evicted from their homes each year to make way for infrastructure projects and private development. Slum upgrading has been very limited.
- There is a wrong notion that rural –urban migrants are not contributing to development. However, in reality, urban slums are not just places of despair and misery, but also places where migrants are optimistically making the most of their capabilities, despite obvious difficulties and trying to move out of poverty.
- Given the benefits that migrants get from slums, they are likely to continue to move to these places unless the fundamental causes of migration, such as inequalities in economic development and high fertility are controlled.
- Urban authorities must consider interests of migrants when planning rather than assuming that migrants can be discouraged from moving to the city.

Conclusions

- Africa is witnessing rapid urbanisation, with rural urban migration continuing to play an important role in the urbanisation process.
- While migration and urbanisation bring new challenges, such as pressure on employment and social services, urban zones also represent a source of opportunities for migrants in terms of livelihoods and the possibility to be involved in entrepreneurial projects.
- Current policy prescriptions that tend to slow the rate of urban growth by discouraging people from moving to urban areas and implementing slum clearing policies are bound to fail, unless the underlying drivers of rural urban migration are addressed.
- Sustainable Development Goal 11, commits to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by 2030” (UNDP, 2015), and thus provides the opportunity for African governments to change the negative perception of “cities as vessels of problems” to cities as “accelerators and facilitators of sustainable urbanization and development” as UN Habitat (2014) urges.
- It is hoped that city authorities will consider the interests of all categories of migrants in designing urban policies.

THANK YOU

