

EXTENDED Abstract- IUSSP, 2013

Patterns and Causes of Rural Youth Out-migration and Family Dynamics in Ethiopia: Influence on Fertility of Sending Households and Migrants' Transitions to Adulthood

Charles Teller, Assefa Hailemariam, Fitsum Zewdu;, Mehret Habte, Teshome Desta and Yordanos Seifu

Description of Topic: The National Population Policy of Ethiopia includes a strategy to reduce rural-urban migration, and also to reduce fertility and balance population growth with resource development. There has been little Ethiopian research on patterns and causes of rural-urban youth migration, and even less on the effects of these migration patterns on both the fertility of sending households as well as the fertility expectations of the migrants. Can rural-urban migration delay the transition to marriage and, at the same time, address the potential of reaping the demographic dividend?

Research Methods and Data: A purposive sample of 1098 unskilled youth migrants in Addis Ababa found two main rural sending weredas, Kindo Didaye in South-West Wolaitta, and Mecha in North-West Gojjam. Thus these two weredas and their close by rural-urban fringe areas, Sodo Zuria and Bahr Dar Zuria, respectively, were selected for study. A total rural sample survey of 838 households was carried out in these four weredas, within which 14 kebeles were randomly selected. These surveys included mobility experience, parental background, poverty, environment and food insecurity, fertility preferences and reproductive behavior. These were complemented by qualitative key informant interviews of adults, focus groups of female and male youth, as well as observations and kebele transects in 8 randomly selected kebeles, all carried out between Nov. 2010 and Feb. 2011. Both descriptive and multivariate analyses are employed in this initial paper.

DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS: Three different patterns, permanent, short term/temporary and planning/immediate future, were identified, and their respective characteristics and selectivity. Over one-third of the households has had a least one permanent outmigrant in the past 10 years, while 10% and 11% of the households had short-term or members planning to migrate. A greater volume of youth outmigrated from the 2 sampled Wolaita weredas than the two sampled Gojjam weredas: 50% of the Wolaita

households had an outmigrant, while only 23% of the W. Gojjam households. Temporary migrants in the last 12 months (who returned) ranged from 12% in the Wolaitta sample, and 7% in Gojjam sample. Firm expectations and plans to outmigrate in the next 12 months were 17% for Wolaitta and 5% for Gojjam. While most of the permanent migrants reside in urban areas, only a minority of these permanent migrants are now residing in Addis: one-third of the Wolaitta sample, and one-quarter of the Gojjam sample. Lower percentages went temporarily in the last year to Addis and returned (15% and 3% respectively). In terms of the immediate future, many of those planning to leave the rural Wolaitta sample are planning on migrating to Addis (40%), but only 5% planning from the W. Gojjam sample. In terms of fertility, the adjusted TFR for migrant household women is 4.2, vs 3.1 for non-migrant household women. However, migrant households were not more likely to desire additional children, and in fact CPR was higher (32%) among these households than non-migrant households (22%) (Fig. 3)

Discussion of Drivers and Transitions : Education was the main reason for having permanently left the sampled Gojjam weredas, and even more so for girls than for boys. But work-related reasons predominated for those leaving Wolaitta. For those planning to leave in the near future, most (71%) were related to push factors in places of origin, and 29% to pull factors in places of destination.

Interestingly, while households owning greater assets/consumer durable were more likely to have a permanent migrant, households perceiving a lack of meeting their basic needs were more likely to have a permanent migrant (Fig. 2). Migration and off-farm labor was also used in the past 3 years as an important adaptation response to perceived hazards and shocks of climate variation. Moreover, no evidence was found for the "replacement" fertility effects on migrant-sending households. The most important factors affecting rural contraceptive use were education and older age.

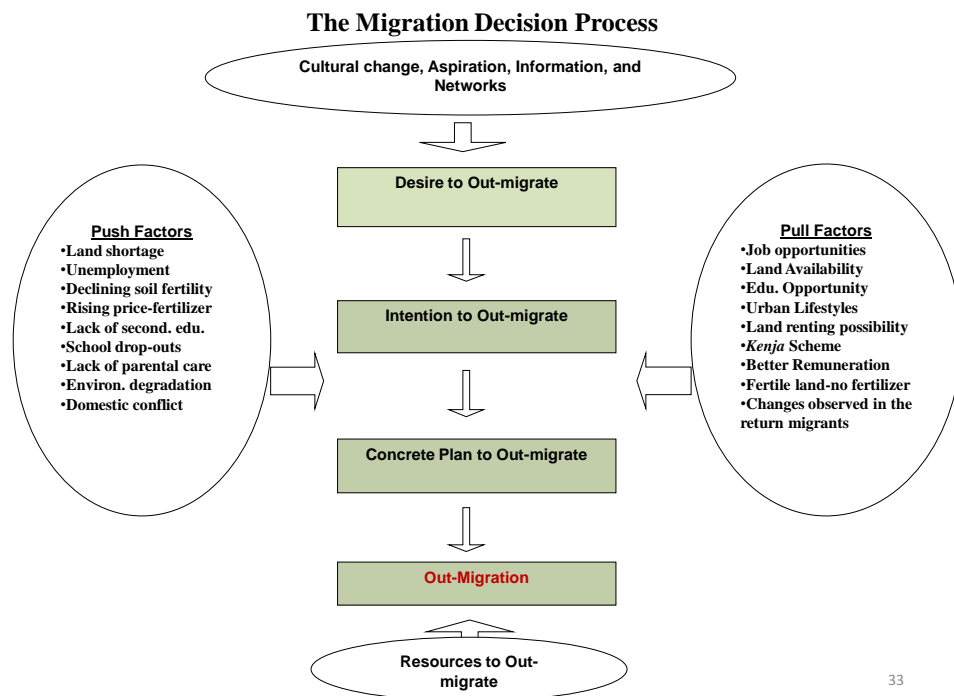
Qualitative methods on the migration decision-making process revealed a complex of multiple factors (Fig. 1). These included, among others, strong peer influence (successful return and visiting migrants), social networks, information (use of mobile phone communications, conflict with family (over land and aspirations), and poor education quality (creating school dropouts who can't return home). Overall, youth and adults in both zones agreed that rural out-migration is more advantageous and less risky now (eg., roads for safer travel, mobile phone use, etc) than it used to be. The shorter-

term rewards are employment, cash income and higher education, and longer-term include investment in land and businesses.

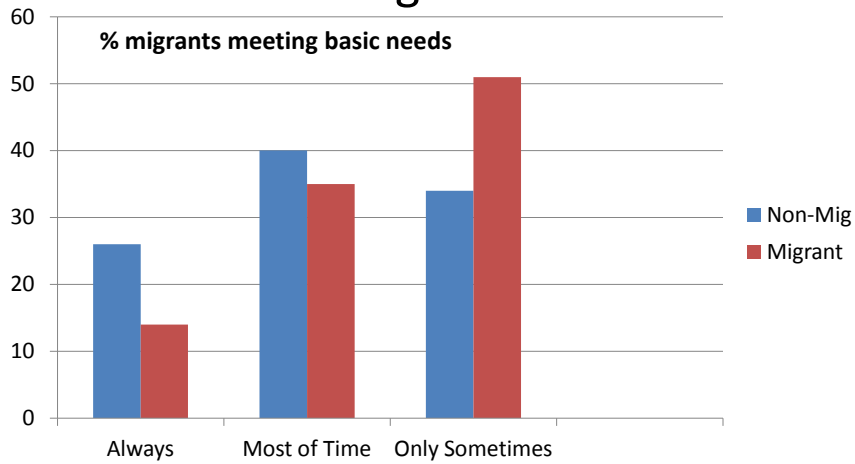
Transitions to adulthood by migrants were delayed through much greater high school attendance, non-farm labor and urban residence which combined to delay marriage and reduce desire family size.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS: While it is hard to generalize about Ethiopia from these two high outmigration zones, we believe that youth migration, while contextual, is important from these different types of weredas as a strategy to improve their transitions to a more enlightened and productive adulthood. The NPP objective to reduce rural-urban migration should be revised and updated, particularly for youth, and adapted to specific local conditions and patterns of permanent and temporary outmigration. Overall, it appears to improve the potential of the demographic dividend, with skill and job creation and later age at marriage, including residence in multiple urban areas other than Addis Ababa. Migration and off-farm labor are also important adaptation strategies to the shocks and hazards of climate change, and should be added to the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Finally, larger and more representative studies and surveys of migration are urgently needed.

=====



Permanent Out-Migrant HHs less able to meet basic needs than non-Migrants



21

Current CPR much higher in outmigrant households, esp. in Gojjam

