Migration and Wellbeing in Ethiopia:

Evidence from case studies in urban and rural sites

Alula Pankhurst and Feleke Tadele

Wellbeing in Developing Countries
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Structure of this presentation

- Why a wellbeing approach?
- Objectives, conceptual framework, approaches
- Review of migration phases in Ethiopia
- WeD research sites, methods and questions
- Key findings and emerging issues
- Policy implications
Why a wellbeing approach?

- Migration tends to be studied in narrow disciplinary ways focusing on geographical or demographic aspects mainly at macro-level.

- Less in known about how migration is related to livelihood strategies, and its impacts on individuals, families and communities.

- The wellbeing approach focuses on needs, resources and quality of life and how they are inter-related.

- The research seeks to understand reasons for migration and effects on poverty inequality, and wellbeing.
Objectives of the Research

- **General**
  - to understand the significance of migration and urban-rural linkages in Ethiopia and evaluate implications for poverty alleviation in the country.

- **Specific**
  - Review existing literature and frameworks on the topic
  - Analyse experiences of individuals and households in two urban and two rural sites,
  - Describe the modalities and forms of rural-urban linkages,
  - Consider emerging issues and implications for poverty policy
Conceptual framework & Approaches I

- **Four stages-discourses**
- **I: Early theories /laws of migration**
  (Ravenstein 1885; Lee 1966, Todaro 1976)
  - Distance/Spatial Proximity
  - Push-Pull Factors between distances
  - Migration Streams and sub-streams
  - Female-Male Patterns
  - Rural-Urban (transition of industrializing society)
  - Individual-economic cost-benefit decision making.
II: Marxist, Structuralism School

(Safa, 1982; McGee 1971, Berman 1985)

Migration is seen as:
- an inevitable transition towards capitalism,
- low-level of individual choice,
- mechanism for exploitation of surplus labor
- precursor to modernization
Conceptual framework & Approaches III

III: The Migration-Development Nexus

- Tacoli, 1998; Kothari, 2003; de Haan, 1999; McDowell 1995, RBlack 2003, IIED, DfID, Habitat)

- Migration as a social process
- essential element of livelihoods,
- households move between rural and urban livelihood options
- Multiple forms and patterns of migration
- Collective-decision making
- Multiple level of consequences
III. The Migration-Development Nexus

(Source: Ellis (2003))

Migration and wellbeing – initial findings
Conceptual framework & Approaches IV

- IV- Towards a new framework: The Wellbeing approach
- Migration- much more than simply livelihoods
- Migration is affected by and has implications for:
  - needs (defined universally, socially, subjectively)
  - resources (material, relational, symbolic)
  - quality of life (individuals, families, communities)
  - A better understanding of migration requires taking into account
    - History and context
    - Structure (social, cultural, political economy, policy regime)
    - Urban-rural linkages
    - Poverty and inequality
    - Age, gender and ethnicity
Potential new research framework

Structure-
Gvt regime,
History,
Agency

Ethnicity,
Gender,
Age

Resources-
Material,
Social,
Natural
Human,
• Migration process has been crucial to the formation of Ethiopia.

I. From Menelik 1887- Italian Occupation 1941

Conquest of the south and nation building process led to formation of garrison towns and attraction of peasants seeking land

Foundation of Addis Ababa in 1888 encouraged influx of labourers for construction and services

Italian Occupation 1935-41 accelerated urbanism based on division of labor and specialization and cash economy

Construction of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa rail way contributed to the mushrooming of towns
Review of migration phases in Ethiopia II

II. Post –Liberation, Imperial HIS (1941-74)

- Construction of High Way
- Zoning of commercial and industrial urban centers
- Devt. of commercial agriculture
- Considerable rural-urban long term migration;
- increasing rural-rural seasonal migration-trade migrants, farmers, civil servants, soldiers, construction workers, domestic workers, sex workers etc.
III. Socialist, Derg Period (1974-91)

- patterns and scale of migration affected by:
  - Confiscation of rural/urban extra lands,
  - closure of commercial farms,
  - introduction of check-points and pass system,
  - red terror in urban areas and exodus - diaspora
IV- The current EPRDF period (1991-to date).

The following factors are assumed to affect migration flows:

- Ethnic-based regionalization said to discourage inter-regional migration;
- Continued state land ownership said to limit migration to towns.
- However, there seems to be increased rural-urban migration for both long-term and seasonal migration.
Research Sites and Methods

- **Research sites**
  - Two Urban: Addis Ababa and Shashemene
  - Two Rural: Turufe Ketcheme (Oromia) and Yetmen (Amhara)

- **Methods**
  - **A) Community Level** - to establish current patterns and types of mobility
    - 16 Focus groups and Key informants = Adult (male, female) Young (male, female) from better-off, middle, poor wealth categories interviewed.
  - **B) Household Level** - to identify roles in and effects of migration;
    - (12 HHs from rich/medium and poor)
  - **C) Individual Level** - learn strategies, risks, costs and benefits of migration as experienced by individuals 64 individuals involved in seasonal, long-term and distress migration

*Migration and wellbeing – initial findings*
WeD Research questions

- What are the patterns and trends of migration in the research sites?
- Why are seasonal, distress, and long-term migrations important?
- Who makes decisions in migration process?
- Do migrants invest in rural home communities or towns?
- What are the policy implications of urban-rural migration?
Key Findings and Emerging Issues I

- **Pattern of Migration:** Comparatively more seasonal than permanent.
- **More rural-urban and urban–urban migration** than rural-rural and urban–rural migration pattern over the past five years due to destitutions in the rural areas and increased construction work opportunities in urban areas.
- **Ethnic networks** are important in shaping chain/circular migration and getting permanent employment in urban areas.
- **Gender** dimensions are important with significant migration of women particularly from the North due to socio-cultural conditions - early marriage, divorce, death of husband, limited access to land, drought etc.

*Migration and wellbeing – initial findings*
Key Findings and Emerging Issues II

- **Child Migrants**: children as young as age 7 have moved from Gamo areas to Kolfe to supply the intensive labour required for the traditional weaving sector.

- **Decision-Making**: Migration strategies are influenced by the experiences of migrants who have kept in touch with their kin and friends in the rural areas and returnees or visitors from town.

- **Small Towns**: 39 percent of the urban poor households seem to have stronger connection with Woreda towns and rural market centres. They often sell and buy good from these rural towns.

- Small towns provide market functions but also social support (23.5 percent), health facilities (7.2 percent), employment (6.9 percent), information / technology (4 percent) and entertainment (4 percent).
Key Findings and Emerging Issues III

• Consequences of Migration
  - Important safety net mechanism to offset shocks, pay debts, land tax or by livestock but not to make a break-through in life.
  - Rural-Urban Migration trend increasing pressure on urban infrastructure and services, increasing unemployment, commercial sex work and begging, in major cities.
  - Supply of child domestic labour to urban inhabitants with extremely low wage exposed a number of them to exploitation and abuse.
Key Findings and Emerging Issues IV

- **Urban-Rural Linkages**

- 36 percent of the respondents reported that they transferred cash and in-kind gifts to their families and relatives in rural areas. The transfer of cash is estimated to be birr 300-1000 birr/ migrant/ year.

- 25 percent of the migrants are involved in provision of information and advice to rural counterparts. (legal advice, education of children, market speculation selling of livestock, health services, house technology)
Policy Implications I: Rural Development

- Government should consolidate implementing rural development policies.
- This can help to limit rural-urban migration due to rural destitution, limited rural livelihood opportunities, heavy dependence on rain-fed agriculture and increased population pressure.
- The strategy can improve off-farm employment, small-scale agro-industries, small-scale irrigation, agricultural extension; adult education, integrated population and reproductive health services.
- More emphasis should be given to women’s rights in access to and control over land entitlements, protection of minimum age for marriage, promotion of affirmative girls education and advancement of rural technologies for women.
Policy Implications II: Urban Development

- Government and donors should invest more on the development of small urban centres than the mega cities.
- District or sub-district urban centres can have more significant contribution than the capital city or the regional capitals in terms of facilitating markets, creating employment opportunities, diffusing information and technology and using basic social services such as education and health.
- Community development and self-help programs that generate employment opportunities for the urban poor and primarily targets the youth will have significant value in minimizing the social problems that have become common in the capital city and other secondary cities.
- The particular challenges and problems faced by women and child migrants should be given more attention.
Policy Implications III: Rural-Urban Linkages

- Rural-urban linkages benefit both rural and urban communities, households and individuals and should be promoted rather than restricted.
- The construction of roads, the expansion of telecommunication infrastructure, the enhancement of the rural transportation system and the establishment of rural banks can have significant contributions to promote fair and equitable development between rural and urban areas.
- Migrants remittances are important and their networks can be involved in mobilizing development resources and implementation of projects that can benefit both rural and urban areas.

Migration and wellbeing – initial findings