

CHAPTER 5

MIGRATION AND POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

5.0 Migration and Population Distribution

5.0.1 Summary

Migration and mobility are complex realities with far-reaching consequences. Reasons for mobility range from professional to life threatening catastrophes.

Migrants are people who move for a variety of reasons, some voluntary and others not. The dramatic economic, demographic, political, and social changes in Kenya in the last decade have been accompanied by rapid urbanization, significant population displacement, and migration. The increased exchange of goods, launching of development projects has prompted many people to move within and beyond the country. Conflicts, economic crises, natural disasters and environmental degradation have forced many to flee. The migration studies investigated the impact of migration on women status to determine whether it was linked to poverty, household, socio-economic and demographic characteristics, health status, agricultural activities, access to agricultural technology, and whether it was participatory in labour force. The flow of wealth through remittances to relations and other support were other studies undertaken in the decade.

Mostly, refugees flee their countries due to well-founded fear, while Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) flee their homes, but remain within their country.

5.0.2 Methodology

The methodologies used in reviewed studies were surveys and estimated inter-censal net migration rates; and the applicability of National Growth Estimate Rate Technique to unstable population through the survey method.

5.0.3 Issues

- Risks experienced by mobile populations such as seafarers, fishermen, domestic workers, and informal traders.
- Gender relations as an important dimension of morbidity and migration.
- Migrant labour issues.
- Factors that give rise to refugees and IDPs.
- Mobile workers and HIV/AIDs prevalence.

5.0.4 Findings

These studies have focused on adoption of migration as a strategy to escape the unconcomitant poverty. The studies have examined the impacts of various migration trends, and thereby brought to the fore the silent but often neglected features associated with migration, particularly those relating to poverty. The transient nature of migrants' lives put them at risk.

It was established that migration from rural areas is a strategy to escape low status and extreme poverty. This is not a surprising view of development planning and programming in Kenya, which is characterized by concentration of resources and centre periphery approach which places premium on priority development zones.

Other studies have estimated inter-censal net migration rates in Kenya; assessed applicability of National Growth Estimate Rate Technique to unstable population; established whether this method can be used successfully to compute net migration rates in unstable populations, as the Kenyan situation, and the pattern of net migration in Kenya between the inter-censal periods. They have also attempted to identify the rate, pattern and direction of inter-censal net migration in Kenya.

The findings show that National Growth Rate Method can also be used to compute migration rate in a stable population, because it is capable of computing migration rates by ages. These studies have proved the assumption that National Growth Rate (NGR) can only be used to compute migration rate of the total population. Most of these studies have concluded that the push and pull factors of migration in Kenya have remained almost uniform.

The migration process was found to be selective by age and sex. For example, males migrate more than females and the period of migration is mainly between the age 20-39 years, with return migration noted at the age 50 years and above. Regional differentials in migration in Kenya were also studied.

It has been documented that Kenya plays host to many refugees from neighbouring countries who have escaped perils of war or civil strife in their countries, while internally, Kenya has IDPs who are vulnerable to sexual abuse and break up of stable relationships.

Sometimes, migration succeeds in improving women's status from extreme poverty and access to resources in spite of the numerous cultural and structural barriers. These barriers are more prevalent and deeply embedded in rural institutions and need to be addressed through deliberate gender sensitive planned or programmed migrations.

It was established that population mobility resulted in positive and negative results. For example, it facilitates the spread of STIs and along main transport route and border regions reporting higher seasonal and long-term migration having higher rates of infection.

5.0.5 Recommendations

- Ensure the representation of mobile populations in decision forums and integration into national strategic plans.

- Develop income generating, education, sports and cultural programmes. Effective programmes must include all stages of the migration process.
- Speed up and harmonise immigration and custom regulations across the borders to minimize time spent at the borders. Speed up border crossing formalities and HIV/AIDS complementary programmes coordinated across the border and revise the immigration and visa policies to include a category for traders such as the many going to Dubai

5.0.6 Research Gaps

- Researches in migration are wanting and, therefore, more studies are urgently required at all levels. Deliberate and proactive initiatives are required to ensure that the academia, demographic practitioners and other researchers undertake frequent researches in migration.
- Existing studies are largely focused on road transport and thus there are gaps in policies for the air/rail and water sectors.
- Critical information is missing on the persistence of the low status accorded to women and its direct link with poverty that is prevalent among them.
- There has been little research on refugee women and the evidence available needs to be improved on their vulnerability especially to HIV infection because they receive little attention at conferences, policies and programmes.
- No research on the challenges of globalization on immigration and HR outsourcing to match jobs and workers, in case of labour shortages and in boosting economic growth. Refugee migration has also not been adequately addressed.

- Few policies and programmes address the specific economic conditions that increase HIV risk for mobile workers, and their vulnerability to different risks is seldom addressed.
- Relationship between internal migrations and health.
- Ways of reducing population flow from rural to urban areas should be established as well as reduction in economic disparities and creation of jobs in all areas.
- Interaction between environmental and socio-economic factors as causes for migration e.g. destroyed local livelihoods and how various types of migrants resulting from or induced by environmental disruptions with special attention to women and other vulnerable groups;
- Greater efforts are required to determine how the economic prospects of the areas of origin could be boosted and the particular type of vulnerability that beset migrants' families in the areas of destination.

5.0.7 Research Agenda

- Development policies and programmes requiring use of scarce agricultural land will have to be assessed against this growing background of land scarcity.
- Assess the effectiveness of refugee management programmes in relation to Kenya's economy.
- Undertake research into the traditional practices, and their influences on women's migration policy leading to policy review or formulation and viable strategies to effect it.
- There is need for studies on migration-source, transit, destination and return as well as its characteristics and underlying conditions. The use of the National Growth Rate Method (NGR) should also establish the socio-economic and cultural determinants of the already established migration rates and patterns in Kenya from the censuses' results.
- Have studies on risk factors that affect mobile populations such as truck drivers average duration spent away from home, poor working conditions, delays at border crossings, high risk behaviour, insecurity, lack of access to health services, and terms and conditions of service. Conduct in-depth studies into the sexual behavioural pattern of the transport workers.
- Determinants of migration that sustain long-term trends in migration to areas of destination and assess the root causes of undocumented immigrants.
- Migration and population events and dynamics, contraceptive use and fertility behaviour and health consequences e.g. RH needs of migrants.
- Relationship between migration and urbanization.
- Migration patterns and effects on population distribution.
- Establish Maximized benefits of migration.
- Investigate impact of globalization on immigration, economic, social and health consequences of immigration.

5.1 URBANIZATION

5.1.1 Summary

The rapid urbanization taking place in Kenya has been of economic and social concerns to researchers. However, the area has not attracted many studies.

5.1.2 Issues

- High rate of urbanization.

- Dynamics of urban population.

5.1.3 Findings

Currently, urban areas make up a relatively small proportion of all land use in Kenya, yet urban areas are expanding as rapidly as population growth. The urban areas are the locations of high economic activity and transport modes. Throughout the country, urbanized areas are expanding into the surrounding areas that are under agriculture or forest. Reportedly, urban areas are facing many problems in relation to growth, housing, revenue, garbage collection problems etc.

5.1.4 Recommendations

- Strict adherence to urban plans.
- Control population growth through policies.
- Better urban management through professionalism.

5.1.5 Research Gaps

- Effect of migration on urbanization.
- Urbanization and fertility dynamics.

5.1.6 Research Agenda

- Establish the significant impact that urbanization places on the eco-system, services, biodiversity, hydrological systems and local climate, which may impact on health.
- Undertake research on how to increase capacities of national and local government officials and NGOs to meet growing need for improvement of immigrants lives rapidly growing urban areas.
- Assess urban growth economic expansion, in relation to the health of eco-systems and the

implications on human existence e.g. hawking or street traders.

- Review policies and mechanisms that contribute to excessive urban population concentrations.

5.2 SLUM DEVELOPMENT

5.2.1 Summary

Slums form part of the informal settlements with highest population densities in the country. These are also places where many urban poor live and many crimes are planned and committed.

5.2.2 Issues

- Rapid development of slums.
- High crime rate in the slums.

5.2.3 Findings

The authors agree that one of the major challenges facing local authorities in Kenya is how to meet the ever-rising demand for urban environmental services. The problem is prominent in urban informal settlements where service provision and management seems to have failed to cope with rapid expansion and intensification of land-use development. The status, constraints and environmental health implications of service provision and management and need for urgent upgrading of the living conditions of these informal settlements where many urban poor live, were other topical areas covered.

5.2.4 Recommendations

- Have better security measures in the slums.
- Upgrade living conditions of the urban poor.

5.2.5 Research Gaps

- Ownership of slum houses.

- Attitude towards upgrading of houses.

5.2.6 Research Agenda

Ways of improving the security and quality of life of rural and urban low-income residents.

5.3 BRAIN DRAIN

5.3.1 Summary

Brain drain is defined as the loss of skilled, intellectual and technical labour through its movement towards more favourable geographic, economic or professional environments such as the west. It can also be defined as emigration of highly educated and skilled manpower/workers, professionals or intellectuals from developing countries such as Kenya to developed countries, or depletion or loss of intellectual and technical personnel.

In Kenya, there has been a rising unemployment among the educated, that has led to emigration to industrialized countries such as USA, Great Britain and Canada, where 75% of the total number of professionals go. This has resulted in serious brain drain.

5.3.2 Issues

- High cost of training professionals.
- Low salaries.
- Consequences of brain drain to the country, society, families and individuals.
- Socio-economic disparities between Kenya and the west.
- Resource Remittance.

5.3.3 Findings

Some cited causes for brain drain as inter-racial marriage, lack of employment opportunities in the country of origin, low wages paid to

professionals, globalization, and better and higher availability of education in the developed world. In the light of this, there has been an increased exodus of especially young professional Kenyans to other countries, leaving the country in dire need of expertise in various areas.

The huge demand for locally trained skilled workers especially in the health field particularly nurses, is a subject of the demographic structure in the developed countries where people live longer, have low birth rates hence not enough people to take care of the elderly.

The cited effects of brain drain are: reduction of the number of professionals, causing slow pace in the provision of certain vital services such as healthcare; it also has a social impact because it leads to breakage of families and makes it difficult to create a crucial middle class consisting of professionals such as doctors and engineers, hence the “*missing middle*.” A large educated middle class includes those who have largely emigrated, leaving a two-class society: a massive lower class that is largely unemployed and very poor people and a small number of the very rich people.

Brain drain has an economic impact and a country cannot advance economically if the people with knowledge and skills to drive economic growth have migrated. It is argued that those who leave are Kenya’s best. This explains why the country is bemoaning brain drain.

Those who emigrate keep in touch with home and many of them send money for various purposes. The remittances go directly to the family members to finance basic consumption, education, health, purchasing or building homes, starting businesses and funding retirement.

The problem of brain drain cannot be left unaddressed and urgent solutions are required. As the country gets more and more involved in technological advancement in developing profitable organizations, every resource is required back home, hence the need to address the problem.

Some suggested solutions to brain drain are: Technological advancement to develop profitable organizations, attractive incentives to help retain professionals such as relocation expenses and loans for housing or starting business, help develop emigrants' ego by government establishing communication links with them, seeking their opinion on country-related issues. They should also be offered competitive wages. This is a more permanent solution that would reverse brain drain.

5.3.4 Recommendations

- Adopt development plans that encourage labour-intensive exports and discourage introduction of labour saving processes.
- The government must reverse loss of skills and be faster in job creation and improving terms and conditions to stop the costly loss. Offer emigrants competitive wages as a more permanent solution. Provide attractive incentives to help retain professionals such as relocation expenses and loans for housing or starting business.
- Pressure of the educated but unemployed is also forcing the government to soften the terms for foreign investment.
- Introduce stiff visa requirements to curb the inflow. The rich countries could also compensate the poor countries for the cost of training the workers who end there or tailor the training to their needs to make it harder for them to move away.
- Use technological advancement to develop profitable organizations in Kenya.

- Help develop emigrants' ego by the government establishing communication links with them, seeking their opinion on country-related issues.

5.3.5 Research Gaps

Even the government the largest employer in the country has no answer to the unemployment woes. Hence, the need for research on probable answers..

5.3.6 Research Agenda

- Establish attractive incentives to help retain professionals.
- Challenges of reversing loss of skills and job creation.
- The social impact of brain drain to the Kenyan society.
- Challenges of facilitating integration of return international migrants/measures for reintegration of returning nationals.
- Challenges of arresting brain drain of skilled manpower and attracting domestic and foreign investment.
- Facilitating investment opportunity for Kenyans living in the Diaspora.
- Creation of up-dated databases on Kenyans in Diaspora.

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