



The Socio-Economic Impact of Rural-Urban Migration on Rural Livelihoods in Southern Tanzania: The Case of Tunduru District

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Abstract

This paper analyses the impact of rural-urban migration on rural livelihoods. It specifically looks at such impacts as jobs or other sources of income which give someone the money to buy the goods and services needed in the daily life. The study was undertaken in Tunduru district in southern Tanzania. Research methods used included structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, observation, focus group discussions and literature review. The χ^2 test indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between migration and support received for rural livelihoods as the calculated value of 9.609 was higher than the table or critical value of 3.841 at $p > 0.05$. A high proportion of families with migrants received support compared to those without. From this, the paper recommends that in areas lagging behind in development, rural -urban migration can be considered as a strategy for poverty reduction. This, however, does not preclude other strategies for reducing poverty in rural areas including improved agricultural techniques and government support for non- farm activities.

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1. Introduction

‘Migration pessimists’ have argued that out-migration undermines traditional rural livelihoods and social institutions by removing the young, healthy, and educated from local populations. They also charge that migrant remittances are spent largely on conspicuous consumption (Binford, 2003; Reichert 1981). ‘Migration optimists’ on the other hand’ argue that rural-urban migration can make important poverty-reducing contributions to household incomes, with multiplier effects across communities (Durand, 1996; Taylor et. al., 1996). In addition, conservationists have pointed out that rural out-migration can lead to land abandonment and reforestation as part of a “forest transition” (Rudel et.al, 2005). The post 2015 global development agenda as enshrined in sustainable development goal 10 points out the need to reduce inequality within the country by facilitating responsible migration through proper migration policies. Bhagat (2017), however, argues that experiences of impact of migration on rural livelihoods from developing countries are relatively few. The current paper aims at contributing to the existing debate on rural-urban migration by highlighting the impact of rural-urban migration on rural livelihoods in Tunduru district, southern Tanzania.

Tunduru district is one of the districts in southern Tanzania that has experienced a high rate of rural-urban migration (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2011; URT, 2002). This is the case because almost the whole of southern Tanzania was, during the colonial period, a labour reserve area. Thus, URT (1997, 2011) notes, for example, that from the colonial and post-colonial era to the present, Tunduru district experiences rural-urban migration. Furthermore, Tacoli (2003) points out that in Southern Tanzania, 60 percent of those who participated in the study had at least one person in their household who had migrated.

People have been migrating from one place to another for a number of reasons. Most migratory movements in developing countries are internal, mainly rural-urban, occurring as circular mobility or permanent migration to commercial attraction poles like the coastal city of Dar es-Salaam (URT, 2014). The motive behind people’s decision to move and consequences of migration are among the important areas in the study of migration (Miheretu, 2011; Amrevurayire & Ojeh, 2016). Rural-urban



migration in Tanzania tends to influence social, economic, political and cultural dynamics in rural areas as large numbers of people are moving to urban areas and may contribute to changes in people's livelihood in the area of origin. An analysis of the 2002 and 2012 Population and Housing Census data, for instance, shows that interregional migration in Tanzania is characterised and determined by differences in development and proximity of origin to areas of employment opportunities. Overall the migration census results show that the turnover (gross migration) of lifetime migrants increased from 1,103,229 in 2002 to about 1,526,365 in 2012. This is an increase of about 423,136 migrants in 10 years (URT, 2015).

Migration is, generally, a process that redistributes and transforms the population from poor areas to areas that are relatively better off economically (Black et al., 2004; Macharia, 2003). Besides the spatial dimension, the movement also transforms the skills, attitudes and motivations of migrants so that they can be integrated into new areas (Mabogunje, 1970). Thus return migrants bring knowledge, skills and innovation i.e. social remittances (Bhagat, 2017). This paper adopts a conceptual framework from Mabogunje's System Approach Model which describes the environment as a system having two sub-systems, namely, rural and urban. Within these systems, migration is considered a continuous process and there is a control mechanism that encourages or discourages migration (Figure 1).

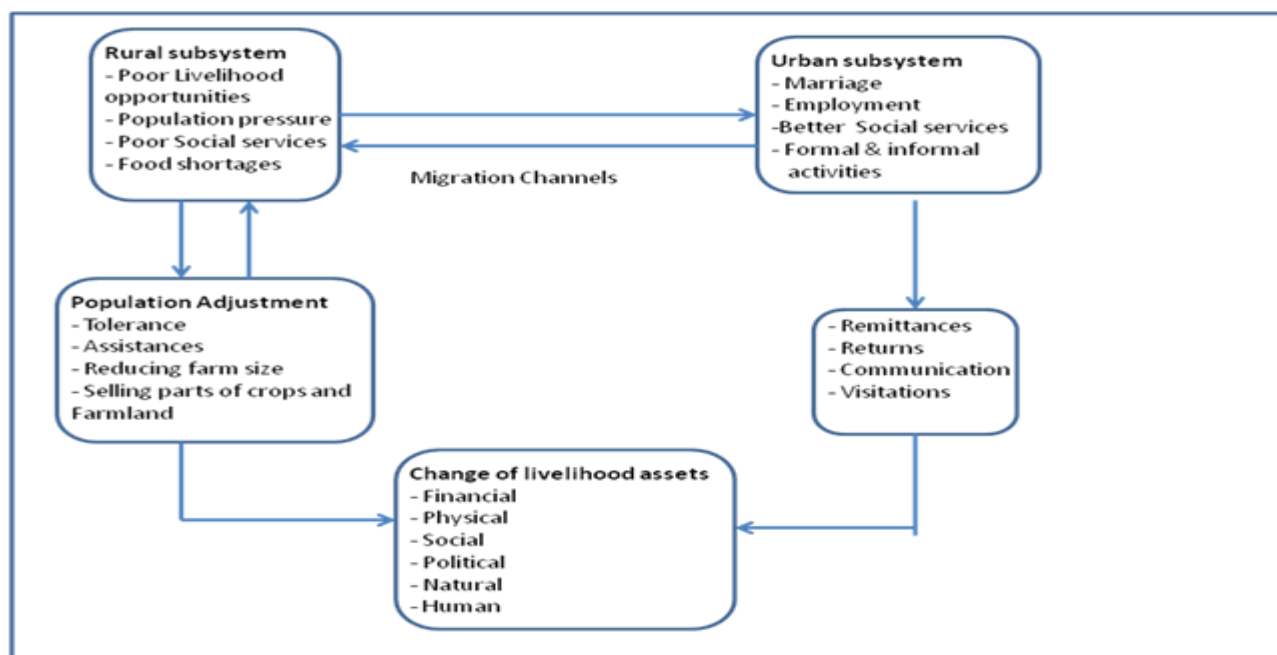


Figure 1: Rural-Urban Migration Model

Source: Modified from Mabogunje (1970)



This model was introduced by Mabogunje (1970) to explain the rural-urban migration in Africa. He sees migration as a circular, interdependent and progressive, complex and self-modifying system with several interrelated linkages (Mabogunje, 1970). The System Approach model is made up of three system components which include the potential migrant who is encouraged to leave the village from the environment. Secondly, there are two sub-systems namely urban and rural sub-systems in which interaction is taking place resulting in the flow of migration, and thirdly there is adjustment and feedbacks. Feedbacks can either be positive, encouraging the system to produce further migrants or negative, causing migration to decline (Mabogunje, 1970).

The model portrays that in the rural areas control sub-system and adjustment mechanism involve the family or household relationship and reallocation of risks (family responsibilities) when the migrant leaves. Landholding factors may also expel migrants due to landlessness. In urban areas sub-system, the urban area is characterised by more complex and specialised industrial and commercial economy. This may encourage or discourage the absorption of migrants. This includes the social networks, means of accessing work, living space as well as the nature of work opportunities (Mabogunje, 1970).

Nonetheless, the model depicts that there is a linkage between rural and urban sub-systems. Rural-urban migration may deprive the rural labour force causing a decline in agricultural production which in turn may lead to food shortages with consequences on both rural and urban areas. On the other side, it may be advantageous as in the case where the departure of those young people does not lead to more land fragmentation (Mbonile, 1993).

The model has been used by both geographers and economists trying to analyse migration as a total process that involves migrants, institutions and sub systems operating in a certain environment (Karlsson, 2008; Sokoni, 2011). However, the model has been criticised for using strong terms like mechanism, forces, system and feedback that make migration laws rigid as in physical sciences which might not be the case in the social sciences (Tacoli, 2003; Nanavati, 2004).



2. Material and Methods

The study was conducted in Tunduru district, Ruvuma Region, this area was selected as it experiences high rate of rural-urban migration. This movement can be traced back from pre-colonial era, whereby, with the development of long distance trade, the Yao community formed the southern route; which stimulated them to migrate from one place to another. During colonial and post- colonial era to the present, the district is experiencing increased rate of rural-urban migration as a coping strategy against rural poverty (TDMP 2011; RSEP, 1997). The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches which complemented each other in providing information on rural-urban migration's impacts on rural livelihoods. Three wards out of a total of thirty-five wards, which constituted 10 percent, were randomly selected using a table of random numbers. The selected wards included Nandembo, Namiungo and Ligoma wards. In each of the wards one village was randomly picked, namely, Namiungo (Namiungo ward), Makokoteni (Ligoma ward) and Amka village in Nandembo ward as shown in Figure 2.

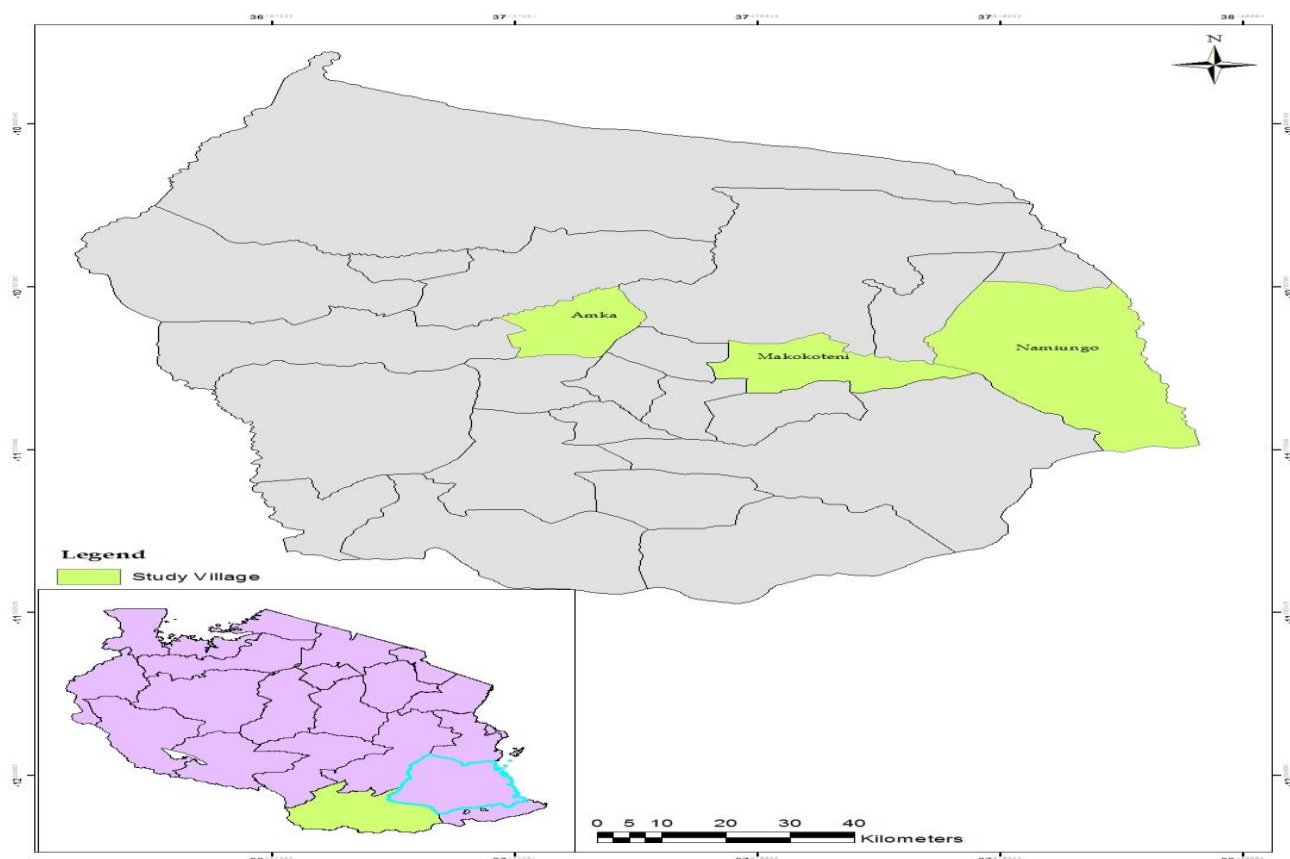


Figure 2: Location of the selected villages in Tunduru District

Source: Cartographic Unit, University of Dar es Salaam



A household formed the study unit and it composed of a husband, wife, children and dependants living in the family, single father and mother, unmarried or widow/widower. Namiungo had four hundred and ten (410) households, Makokoteni had three hundred twenty two (322) households and Amka village had four hundred twenty (420) households as shown in Table 1. Having these households in the study area, at least 10 percent of them were manageable and representative for this study as suggested by Kombo and Tromp (2006) and Kothari (2004). Also, Healey (1999) suggests that a sample size of 100 or more respondents can be used to draw statistical significance of the conclusions resulting from the data.

Table 1: Number of households in the studied villages

Village	Number of households	Number of households to be selected (10%)
Namiungo	410	41
Makoteni	322	32
Amka	420	42
Total	1152	115

Thus, from the three villages selected, 88 (76.5 percent) households had migrants and 27 (23.5 percent) households had no migrants. Purposive sampling was used in selecting key informants which included ward and village leaders. Also, 36 respondents from Dar es Salaam city whose origin was Tunduru District were selected through snowball sampling to provide insights on their linkages with rural areas. The selection of Dar es Salaam city respondents depended on information provided by the respondents from the study area in Tunduru district.

This study used both primary and secondary data so as to answer the research questions. Primary data were obtained through focus group discussions, interviews with key informants, observation and structured questionnaires to 115 respondents in Tunduru district and 36 respondents in Dar es Salaam city. Secondary data were obtained through review of documents such as books, journals, district and ward profiles which contributed towards the formation of background information on rural-urban migration.

The Pearson Chi-square test (χ^2) was used to find out whether there was statistically significant relationship between rural- urban migration and support for rural livelihoods. The data subjected to χ^2 test were collected using structured questionnaire.



This sought to find out whether the number of households with migrants that received support was higher compared to those without.

Three focus group discussions were conducted, one in each village. The discussions aimed at providing a clear insight on the way migrants contribute to the development of their areas of origin. The groups consisted of eight participants (four males, four females) who were purposely selected from each village. These comprised of both youth and the elderly. The number composition of focus group discussions was in line with Kombo and Tromp (2006) who suggest that focus group discussion should compose of six to eight participants. The discussions aimed at providing a clear insight on the way migrants contribute to the development of their areas of origin.

During the study and data collection, attention was drawn to regulations and rules governing the ethical research issues including research clearance. Prior to actual data collection, a research permit was secured from relevant authorities including the University of Dar es Salaam, the regional and district government authorities in Ruvuma region. Confidentiality was also maintained between the researcher and participants throughout the study.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Profile of the respondents

Table 2 shows that the ages of the respondents in rural areas of Tunduru district ranged from 16 to 84 years. About 41 percent of respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years with 26.1 percent males and 14.8 percent females. About 14 percent were aged between 61 and 70 years with 11.3 percent males and 2.6 percent females.

Table 2: Distribution of rural respondents (Tunduru) by age and sex

Age	Males		Females		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Total Frequency	Total Percent
16-20	2	1.7	1	0.8	3	2.6
21-30	7	6.0	5	4.3	12	10.4
31-40	7	6.1	6	5.2	13	11.3
41-50	30	26.1	17	14.8	47	40.9
51-60	8	7.0	5	4.3	13	11.3
61-70	13	11.3	3	2.6	16	13.9
71-80	2	1.7	7	6.0	9	7.8
81-84	1	1.0	1	0.8	2	1.7
Total	70	60.8	45	39.2	115	100



In Dar es Salaam urban area, the results reveal that about 42 percent were aged between 18 and 28, out of whom, 25 percent were males and 16.6 percent were females. About 25 percent were aged between 28-38 years with 16.7 percent males and 8.3 females (Table 3). These findings support the general perception that youths are more dominant in rural-urban migration as they are the active labour force (Gray, 2009; Perz, 2007). Also men are more migratory than women, as 61.1 percent of the respondents were males and 38.8 percent were females. The same was observed by Macharia (2003) who traced the trend of rural - urban migration in Kenya from the colonial to post-colonial era and found that men dominated in rural-urban migration than women.

Table 3: Distribution of urban respondents (Dar es Salaam) by age and sex

Category	Males		Females		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Total Frequency	Total Percent
18-28	9	25	6	16.6	15	41.6
29-38	6	16.7	3	8.3	9	25
39-48	4	11.1	3	8.3	7	19.4
49+	3	8.3	2	5.5	5	13.8
Total	22	61.1	14	38.8	36	100

3.2. Marital status

Marital status is of vital importance in demographic studies as it is used to study whether a person is single, married, divorced or widowed. From the study, 52.2 percent of the respondents in rural areas were married while 21.7 percent were divorced (Table 4). These results denote marriage instabilities in rural areas which may propel rural-urban migration. In the study area marriage instabilities are related to Islamic religion which allows men to have more than one wife. This brings marital unhappiness among the Yao, thus stimulating rural-urban migration. Likewise, in urban areas about 62 percent of respondents were married. Furthermore, 33.3 percent of the out migrants were single; this is associated with educational reasons whereby young men spend a long time to seek education so that they acquire high qualifications which leads to the delay of marriage (Mbonile, 1993). Only small proportions of 5.6 percent of out-migrants were divorced.



Table 4: Marital status of the respondents

RURAL AREAS			URBAN AREAS	
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Single	13	11.3	12	33.3
Married	60	52.2	22	61.1
Widowed	17	14.8	0	0
Divorced	25	21.7	2	5.6
Total	115	100	36	100

3.3. Migrant's areas of destination

The findings further revealed that most of the respondents migrated to large commercial centres where they could achieve their goals such as employment opportunities, better social facilities, and so forth. 51.5 percent migrated to Dar es Salaam city because it is the major commercial centre in Tanzania. Further, 14.6 percent moved to Songea Town which is a regional centre. These findings are in line with Ravenstein's (1885) laws of migration which point out that most migrants move at short distances, but those who opt for long distances, look for large commercial or industrial centres. Also, 9.9 percent moved to Tunduru town, the district headquarter, 8.2 percent and 7.3 percent migrated to Lindi and Mtwara regional centres respectively (Figure 3).

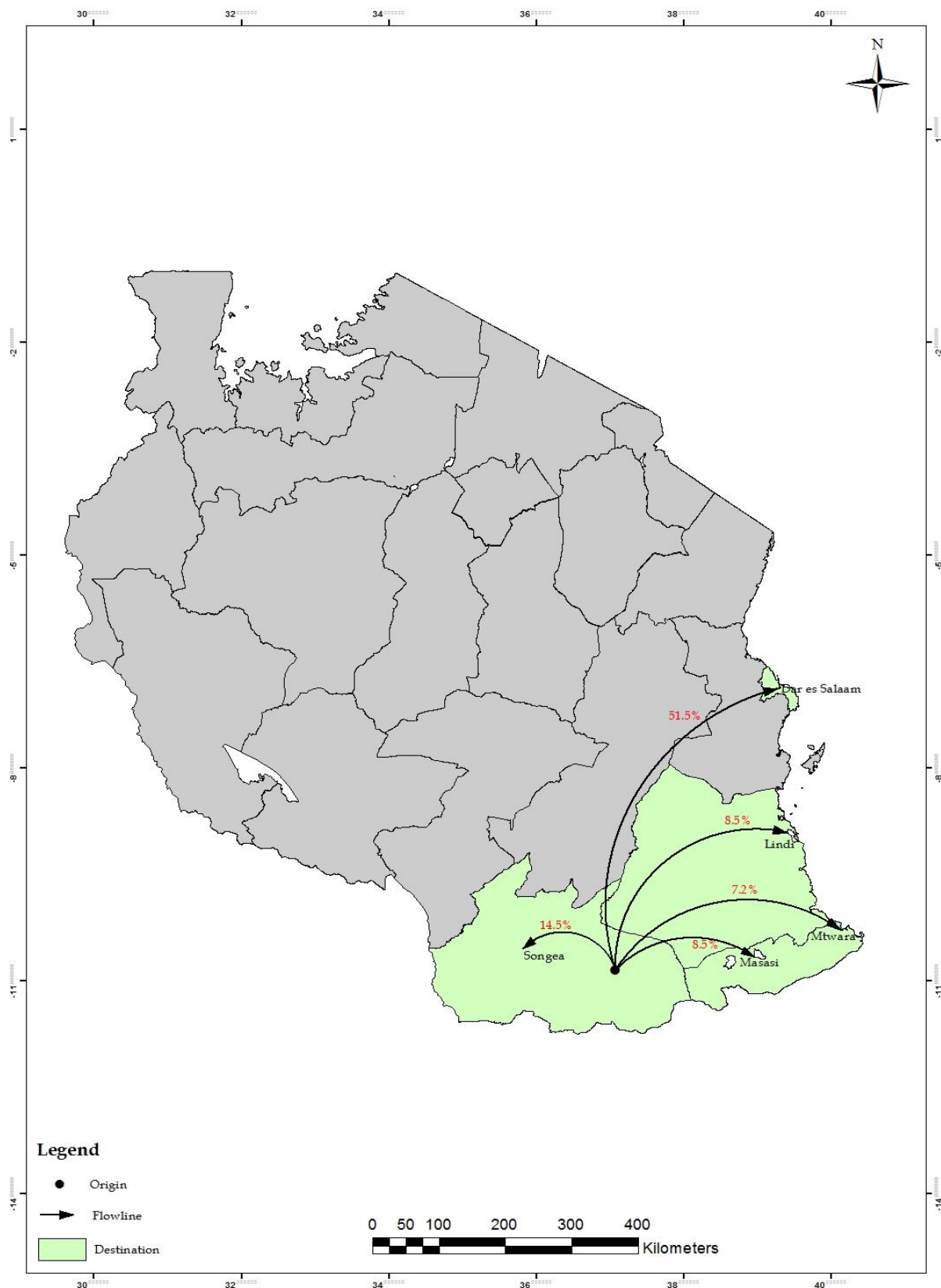


Figure. 3: Migration destinations from Tunduru District
Source: Survey Data 2012.



3.4. Contribution of rural-urban migration on rural livelihoods

The impact of rural-urban migration at the origin was examined in terms of physical, financial, natural, social and political assets which the respondents possessed and the support they got from out migrants.

The χ^2 test showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between migration and support for rural livelihoods as the calculated value of 9.609 was higher than the table or critical value of 3.841 at $p < 0.05$. Table 5 indicates that 62.2 percent of the households with migrants received support for their livelihoods from their family members who had migrated to urban areas and only 30.3 percent of household without migrants received support for their livelihoods from other sources including religious and community groups. Furthermore, the findings revealed that there were only 37.8 percent of households with migrants who did not receive support for their livelihoods but there were 69.7 percent of households without migrants who did not receive support for their livelihoods as shown in Table 5. This implies that rural-urban migration played an important role in providing support for rural livelihood in the study area. This is supported by Bhagat (2014) who points out that remittances provide insurance against risks of households in the areas of origin, increase consumer expenditure and investment in health, education and asset formation.

Table 5: Relationship between migration and support for livelihoods

Households	With Support	%	Without Support	%	Total	%
With migrants	51	62.2	31	37.8	82	100
Without migrants	10	30.3	23	69.7	33	100
Total	61	53.0	54	47.0	115	100
Pearson Chi-square	Value 9.609	Df 1	Asymptotic significance 0.002	P < 0.05		

Thus, rural-urban migration in Tunduru district led to better livelihoods in terms of physical assets whereby out of 66.7 percent who mentioned that they had houses, 52.3 percent were households with migrants and 14.5 percent were without migrants; of the



8.0 percent of the respondents who possessed milling machines, 6.0 percent were households with migrants and 2.0 percent without migrants. Further, of the 7.9 percent who possessed motorcycle, 7.3 percent were households with migrants and 0.6 percent were those without migrants; again of the 6 percent of the households with shops or kiosk, 4 percent were households with migrants and 2 percent without migrants; of the 7.9 percent of the respondents who possessed tailoring machines, 4.6 percent had out migrants and 3.3 percent were the households without migrants; and 3.3 percent of the households which possessed power tiller had out migrants. Moreover, 17.6 percent of the urban respondents reported that they had contributed to physical assets to their rural families. All these assets provided an adequate support in sustaining rural livelihood. This is supported by Anh (2003) who argues that migration is a driver of growth and an important route out of poverty with significant positive impacts on people's livelihoods and wellbeing. One of the participants during the focus group discussion at Amka village remarked:

I wish all my sons and daughters could be living in town so that they could help me, because here they have nothing to do rather than waiting for the assistance from their relatives who are living in town (FGD Participant, male, 72 years, 20/12/2012).

Figure 4 shows a house built by one migrant as a positive contribution to the rural livelihoods (left) and one built by one of the participants whose household had no migrants (right), these were physically observed in the study area.



Figure 4: Household with migrants vs. household without migrants at Makokoteni village



The findings also revealed that 29.3 percent of the people received remittances in terms of money for paying school fees, buying agricultural inputs, paying for medical treatments and installing solar power. In urban areas, 23.5 percent reported that they sent money to support their rural families. The same observation was made by Adam (2005) in Ghana that the migrants sent both cash and non-cash remittances. One villager in Namiungo village noted:

My son, who lives in Dar es Salaam, sends me some money through mobile phone for buying fertilizers and seeds and paying wages to the workers who support me in farming activities. This is particularly the case because before he left for Dar es Salaam he used to support me in farming activities but in his absence he sends me money so that I can pay people who work on my farm (FGD Participant, female, 45 years, 14/12/2012).

However this is in contrast to Atnafu, et al (2014) who argue in their study of migration in one of the areas that lagged behind in development in Ethiopia, that migration did not lead to immediate flow of remittance from migrants to their households partly because some of the domestic workers were planning to go and work in the Middle East and therefore they had to save a lot of money so as to make it a success. However, in the case of Tunduru, Table 6 shows that 10.5 percent of the respondents acknowledged the contribution of out-migrants in the investment capital namely natural land for production purposes specifically coconut plantations and rice farming. Also 15.6 percent of the urban respondents said that they had bought land in their rural areas which their parents used for farming purposes. Chivumbo (1988) and Mbonile (2005) observed that the major socio-economic impact of rural-urban migration was the investment in terms of fixed assets like land. This is supported by Francis (2002) who notes that migration is of considerable importance to the poor in East Africa. Historically, the migration of millions of rural households in Eastern and Southern Africa had been providing investment capital for rural commodity production and thus enhancing rural livelihoods.

The study further found out that migrants played a central role in dealing with household social issues. About 14.0 percent indicated that migrants participated in funeral and marriage ceremonies as well as traditional dances conducted within clans at their origin. Also 17.9 percent of the respondents confirmed that migrants provided basic needs such as food and clothes needed by household members. In urban areas, 19.6 percent admitted that they used to send food stuffs and clothes when they visited their parents and relatives who lived in rural areas. And 13.7 percent of the urban



respondents agreed that they participated in funerals, traditional dances and marriage ceremonies in their areas of origin (Table 6). This is the same as what Kitali (2007) observed in Moshi Rural District. One of the participants during the focus group discussion at Makokoteni Village noted:

Frankly speaking, my son who lives in Songea town is the one who makes us look good. In the past, we lacked even a piece of cloth to put on, but currently we are happy because our son brings us clothes, so we are really very proud of him (FGD Participant, male, 56 years, 18/12/2012).

In addition Table 6 shows that 10.5 percent of the respondents indicated that, the out migrants visited their areas of origin during election periods so that they could provide support on political campaigns and voting activities. In urban areas 9.8 percent of the respondents reported that during election period they used to go back to their rural areas to participate in campaigns and voting processes.

Table 6: Contributions provided by out migrants to rural households

Contributions	Rural Respondents		Urban Respondents	
	Frequency*	Percentage	Frequency*	Percentage
Money for paying school fees and buying agricultural inputs, Installing solar power (Financial)	67	29.3	12	23.5
Food stuffs, clothes (Social)	41	17.9	10	19.6
Houses, Milling machines, Motorcycles, Tailoring machines (Physical)	40	17.5	9	17.6
Participating in campaigning and Voting (Political)	24	10.5	5	9.8
Participating in Traditional and marriage ceremonies, Funerals (Social)	32	14	7	13.7
Buying Land for farming (Natural)	24	10.5	8	15.6
Total	228	100	51	100

*Based on multiple responses

3.5. Consequences of rural-urban migration on rural livelihoods

There were also some negative impacts resulting from rural-urban migration in Tunduru District. The study findings showed that 33.8 percent of the respondents admitted that there was labour shortage as an outcome of rural-urban migration. This is because the youth and energetic male and females migrated to urban areas leaving



behind young children and old people who could not effectively participate in economic development activities. Also 17.8 percent of the respondents faced the problem of overburden and lack of assistance due to the absence of their parents, wives and husbands. The families were left with a lot of tasks which could have otherwise been performed by the parent, husband or wife who had out migrated. Macharia (2003) observed the same in women who had been left behind. These had to make difficult household decisions and many, though married, expressed a feeling of being a female head of household due to the husband's absence. In addition to that, 15.8 percent of the respondents mentioned insecurity of properties and loneliness due to the absence of young men and women in their households.

Table 7 shows that 8.4 percent of the respondents mentioned the destruction of traditions and customs resulting from the urban migrants who returned home with new way of life abandoning traditional styles. One of the key informants at Amka village remarked:

Our sons and daughters who live in urban areas are totally lost, because they come with new forms of life especially wearing styles which they adapt from urban areas. Previously it was not possible for a Yao indigenous lady to put on a trouser, but currently they do so (Interview participant, female, 59 years, 02/12/2012).

Nevertheless, Bhagat (2017) notes of positive change on the part of migrants as they enhance their knowledge and skills through exposure and interaction with the outside world. The migrants learn new skills from co-workers and friends at the place of destination.

However, 11.1 percent of the respondents reported to have marriage instabilities as couples lived apart for most of the time. This situation led to someone marrying another woman/man resulting into marriage instabilities.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that 6.8 percent of the respondents reported that the rural-urban migration has contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS. This is supported by Macharia (2003) who observed that in recent years in Kenya, most HIV positive migrants decided to go back to their villages to await deaths and burial in their ancestral homes. This contributed to spread HIV/AIDS in rural areas.



Table 7: Negative effects of rural-urban migration on households

Effect	Frequency*	Percentage
Decrease of productive force	64	33.8
Overburdening to families and lack of assistance	34	17.8
Insecurity of properties and loneliness	30	15.8
Marriage instabilities	21	11.1
Destructions of customs and traditions	16	8.4
Spread of diseases	13	6.8
No effects	11	5.8
Total	189*	100

*Based on Multiple responses.

3.6. Coping strategies

Human beings are known to have several mechanisms in coping with different situations specifically when they encounter difficulties in life (Kitali, 2007). The respondents had developed a number of strategies which enabled them to cope with difficulties emanating from absence of their household members like that of lack of assistance, insecurity, lack of labour force, over responsibilities, loneliness and fear. In the study area, 39 percent of the respondents pointed out that one of the coping strategies was to ask for assistance from religious and social groups which lend money to the community members, such as *Jumuiya* and *Almarid*. These religious and social groups provided assistance in cash for which the beneficiaries had to work on the lenders' farms to recover their debts because the borrowers were unable to pay back in cash. Thus, one of the participants in the focus group discussion at Namiungo village remarked:

When we have problems like that of sickness, we normally go to the religious and social groups such as *Jumuiya*, or *Almarid* to borrow some money which we pay back in kind (FGD Participant, female, 47 years, 11/12/2012).

Findings also reveal that 27 percent of the respondents sold some of their crops like maize and cashew nuts as well as part of their farms in order to get money which they could use to solve some family problems. Other respondents, 17 percent, reported that they used to sell livestock such as cattle, goats and chicken so as to get money to be



able to solve their family problems. About 10 percent said that they reduced the size of land under cultivation so as to cope with the problem of labour shortage as shown in Figure 7.

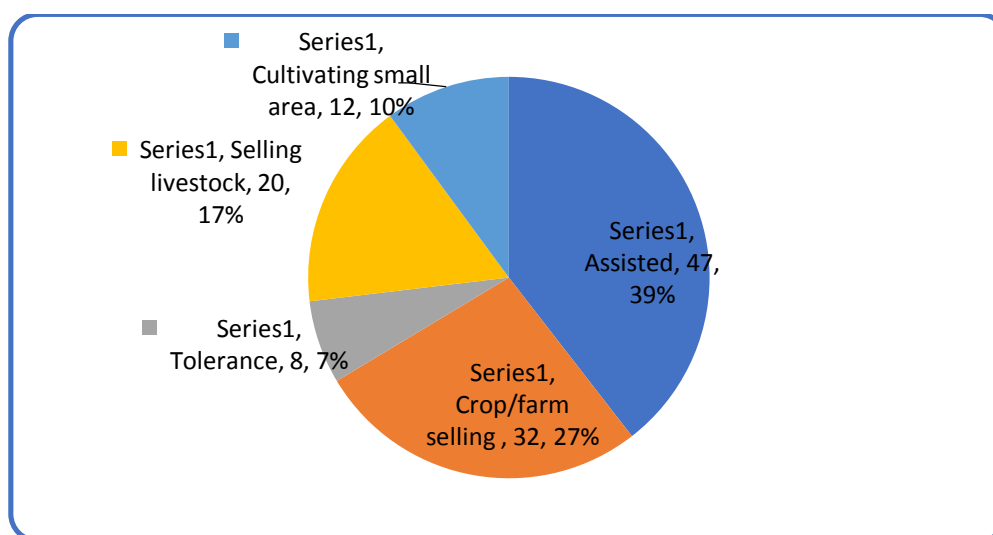


Figure 7: Coping Strategies

4. Conclusion and recommendation

The study intended to investigate the socio-economic impact of rural-urban migration on rural livelihoods. Based on the findings, it is evident that rural-urban migration has both positive and negative impacts. On the positive side, rural-urban migration contributed to increased and improved social, financial, political, natural and physical assets at the place of origin through remittances given by the out migrants. On the negative side, it led to shortage of labour force, spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, destruction of customs and traditions, marriage instabilities, lack of assistance, insecurity and loneliness. However, the people who were left in rural areas adopted several mechanisms including selling crops and livestock, getting assistance from religion and social groups and reducing the size of farmlands so as to cope with the negative impacts. These findings suggest that rural-urban migration can be one of the policy choices for poverty reduction particularly in areas with very low incomes in order to achieve human development, equity and wellbeing. This, however, does not preclude other strategies such as improvement in agricultural activities and supporting non-farm activities for reducing poverty in the rural areas. These too should be encouraged alongside a consideration of supporting rural-urban migration for poverty reduction in rural Tanzania.



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