

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523 BIBLIOGRAPHIC INPUT SHEET	FOR AID USE ONLY
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1. SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION	A. PRIMARY Agriculture	AE10-0000-G220
	B. SECONDARY Agricultural economics--Sierra Leone	

2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
An integrated methodology for research on migration, the Sierra Leone rural-urban migration survey

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4. DOCUMENT DATE 1975	5. NUMBER OF PAGES 12p.	6. ARC NUMBER ARC
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7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS
Mich. State

8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (*Sponsoring Organization, Publishers, Availability*)

9. ABSTRACT

10. CONTROL NUMBER PN-RAA-508	11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT
12. DESCRIPTORS Migrations Research Rural workers Sierra Leone	13. PROJECT NUMBER
	14. CONTRACT NUMBER CSD-3625 Res.
	15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

AN INTEGRATED METHODOLOGY FOR RESEARCH
ON MIGRATION: THE SIERRA LEONE RURAL-
URBAN MIGRATION
SURVEY.

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April, 1975.

The Sierra Leone Rural-Urban Migration Survey is being undertaken with financial support from the Population Council and a subcontract from Michigan State University to Njala University College, under (AID/). Data collection is still in progress and findings reported here should be regarded as preliminary.

INTRODUCTION

The problems of urbanization, urban unemployment and rural labour, shortages associated with high rates of rural-urban migration are widely recognised by policy makers. Unfortunately migration research in Africa and Sierra Leone in particular, has often failed to provide sound solutions to these policy issues. Research has tended to be descriptive rather than analytical providing a good knowledge of migrants characteristics but less understanding on why they move. Often, research is centered in urban areas despite the fact that the decision to migrate is made in rural areas. Finally and most importantly, economic variables have not been adequately measured although there is general agreement that they dominate in the decision to migrate. Incomes of urban wage and salary earners are usually easy to measure but a large number of urban workers are self-employed in small-scale industry and trading where incomes are more difficult to measure. The problems are even more formidable in rural areas where most households derive a large share of their income from subsistence agriculture. These problems of income measurement help account for the fact that some important theoretical contributions such as Todaro (1970) have not been adequately tested in Africa. Moreover we have very little evidence on whether urban migrants originate in poor rural households or better off rural households although this clearly has considerable policy significance^{1/}.

In our research underway in Sierra Leone we have as a major objective the formulation of a comprehensive policy matrix for dealing with the migration problem. We are doing this in several steps. First we are describing the characteristics of migrants and the migration process with particular care to accurately measure economic variables. This is then being used to quantitatively analyse the determinants of the individual decision to migrate or not to migrate as well as the aggregate rate of migration between specific rural and urban areas. This will enable

1/ In Sierra Leone we note that there are two main migration streams - the secondary school leavers and the uneducated. We hypothesize that school leavers originate in relatively better-off rural households and regions who can afford to educate children while the uneducated originate in poorer households. Policies to increase the income of the rural poor are likely to reduce migration of the uneducated. However the income differential for secondary school-leavers is so high that it may be best to decentralize industry to provide jobs in smaller towns to alleviate the school-leaver problem in large towns. (Byerlee and Tommy 1975).

us to evaluate the effects of a range of policies on migration such as rural income policies, urban income and employment policies, locational policies, policies affecting information flows, and a range of macro-economic policies such as food pricing policies and sectoral investment allocation. Finally in this policy evaluation we are also interested in the magnitude and determinants of rural-urban resource transfers in the form of educated migrants and urban-rural remittances.

THE INTEGRATED METHODOLOGY

The methodology we are employing in Sierra Leone is designed to overcome some of the obstacles to policy analysis inherent in current methodologies. Essentially there are six elements in this methodology which lead to an integrated set of data on rural-urban migration.

1. Rural and Urban Data Collection

As we have noted, exclusive emphasis on studying migration in rural areas or urban areas alone gives only one side of the picture. In the present survey data is collected in both rural and urban areas. This allows direct comparisons to be made between rural and urban socio-economic variables and attitudinal characteristics. Furthermore, expectations of potential migrants in rural areas can be compared to the reality of actual migrants in urban areas. Finally both rural-urban migration and urban-rural migration can be surveyed providing greater insights into the migration process^{1/}.

2. Tracing of Migrants

Greater rural-urban comparability can be achieved if migrants from specific locations are traced into urban areas. By focusing on migrants from given villages or other well defined areas (e.g census enumeration areas), the variance of variables describing the rural environment such as agricultural production systems, incomes, ethnic group, distance etc. is greatly reduced. This enables a reduction in overall sample size of urban migrants, and hence a more indepth study of this smaller sample. Furthermore a check on some variables such as urban-rural remittances can be obtained by interviewing both the rural recipient and the urban sender.

^{1/} Surprisingly little information is available on the extent and nature of return migration in Africa although it could have potential policy significance if it is found for example that return migrants are unsuccessful job seekers (Byerlee, 1974)

3. Integration of Migration and Farm Management Surveys

The difficulty of obtaining accurate rural income data can be overcome if a migration survey uses the same sample as a recent or ongoing farm management or household expenditure survey where economic data are collected through continuous interviews over a period of time (or even a detailed one contact interview). Of course, this presumes that the sampling method for the economic survey is appropriate for the migration survey. In Sierra Leone the migration survey is integrated with a nation-wide farm management survey.

4. Complete Coverage of Migration Streams

Migrants can be classified into various streams; (a) male migrants in the labour force which may be further subdivided by educational level (i.e. school-leavers and uneducated). (b) women migrants who may be subdivided into those who migrate to seek work, to seek marriage or as a dependent of a husband, (c) scholars who migrate in order to attend school and (d) children who are sent to town as wards. Each of these streams is being included in the survey to take into account the various decision makers and motives involved. This will allow a more comprehensive analysis of the migration process than is afforded by surveys which only include male adults (e.g. Rempel (1972)).

5. Interrelationships between the Decisions To Educate And Migrate

Education plays a crucial role in the magnitude and direction of migration largely because of higher income and employment opportunities. We contend that a fuller analysis of this stream of educated migrants must take into account the decision of rural households to educate since this ultimately determines the rate of migration. A modified cost/returns approach is being applied to analyse the decision to educate simultaneously with the decision to migrate. This expands the range of policy variables that can be analysed to policies which affect the costs and returns to education.

6. Multi-disciplinary Research On Migration

The fact that migration research is in the domain of several disciplines suggests that a fuller understanding of the migration process can be achieved through involving more than one discipline. In our case we are combining agricultural economics and a rural sociology.

THE MIGRATION SURVEY IN PRACTICE

The migration survey is conducted in three phases beginning in the rural areas then moving to urban areas and finally back to the same rural areas.

Phase 1: - Rural Areas

Since one of the features of the migration survey is its integration with a nation-wide farm management survey, the rural sample is essentially the same for both surveys. The country was divided into eight resource regions reflecting different ecological zones and hence farming systems. Within each resource region, three census enumeration areas were chosen at random with the exclusion of localities exceeding a population of 2000 (- the former Sierra Leone definition of an urban area). For the farm management survey, twenty four households were randomly chosen within each enumeration area. Each of these households is being visited twice weekly over a cropping year to obtain data on labour inputs, output, expenditures and incomes.

The first phase of the migration survey is conducted over all households in each area including the 24 selected farm management households. A census was taken of all people in the E.A. to collect data on general demographic characteristics of the people such as age, sex, education, occupation etc. At the same time, data were collected on fertility, mortality and in-migration (See Appendix). Finally each household was asked to provide the names and demographic characteristics of persons who had left that household. For those who had gone to urban areas addresses were collected where possible^{1/}. Together these data enable population changes in an area to be explained in terms of births, deaths, and in-and-out-migration.

Phase 2: - Urban Areas

The collection of names and addresses of urban migrants from about 2500 rural households in the first phase resulted in about 1400 migrants 15 years old and above in urban areas. Of these over one third had gone to Freetown the capital and main city. Overall we were able to obtain some form of addresses for about two-thirds of all migrants although this proportion is considerably lower for the diamond mining areas. We have had little difficulty locating migrants since once we have found one or two migrants from a given village they are able to tell us the whereabouts of other migrants from that same area. Indeed through this process

^{1/} Addresses were obtained from several sources including (a) letters written home (b) school children in the household who often know the whereabouts of brothers and (c) return migrants from town.

we have located many migrants who were not originally identified thus increasing the total number of migrants by about a third^{1/}

Migrants who are located are interviewed to obtain in depth information on jobs, migration history, initial support in town, remittances, expectations, plans to return home and socio-cultural factors (See appendix). The incomes are obtained using separate forms for wage and salary earners, self-employed traders and workers in small industries and the unemployed. Incomes for the self employed which are particularly difficult to estimate are being checked against incomes estimated separately in an ongoing small industries and marketing survey by Njala University College.

Overall we plan to interview a target of 1000 migrants in 15 urban areas.

Phase 3: - Rural Areas

The final phase of the study involves a return to the same rural areas to interview three sets of respondents:

a) Out-migrant Households: Heads of households from which migrants have left for urban areas are interviewed to supplement the interviews with migrants in urban areas. This is important since in many cases these households heads have been heavily involved in the migration decision of a household member. In the case of migrants who are initially school children or wards and who leave the rural areas at an early age the decision to migrate is almost entirely made by the rural household head. Thus a short interview is conducted on his motives and reasons for sending or encouraging someone to live in town. At the same time estimates of remittances and the extent to which these remittances are invested in agriculture and other businesses are obtained.

b) Returns Migrants: Phase 1 of the survey indicated that for every two rural-urban migrants there was about one return urban rural migrant. Hence of particular interest to us are the determinants of the rate of return migration. A sample of return migrants is being interviewed to obtain information on their stay in town, their reasons for returning and the impact that migration has had on their rural social and economic status.

^{1/}Enumerators are paid a bonus of Le0.20 - 25 for every migrant located and interviewed in lieu of overnight allowances etc. (Le1.00 = U.S.\$0.80)

c) Non-Migrants: Since it is important to also understand why people do not migrate, attention is being given to non-migrants. They may be classified as not intending migrants and intending migrants. In the latter case expectations are being measured to determine the gap, if any, between rural expectations and urban reality. The sample of non-migrants is weighted toward those mostly likely to migrate; i.e. single, young and educated persons.

The sampling for all three questionnaires is drawn such that selected farm management households are included in the sample if they fit one or more of the categories, outmigrant households, return migrants and non-migrants. Additional respondents are chosen randomly from other households to make a total of 10 in each category. For the selected households accurate income data is available. For other households a short questionnaire on total output of crops is being administered. This will then be converted to household income through correlations derived from the farm management survey.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Although the Sierra Leone migration survey is not yet completed our experience to date does suggest that undertaking the surveys in both rural and urban areas linked through a tracer study provides considerable benefits, and improved rural-urban comparability. A by-product is the high degree of cooperation experienced in urban areas when we explain to migrants that we have visited their home and a relative has provided their name and address. Furthermore, the problem of locating migrants in urban areas has not been nearly as formidable as expected partly because a high proportion of addresses were obtained and migrants usually maintain contacts with other migrants from their home even in the larger towns^{1/}. It should be remembered, however, that Sierra Leone is a relatively small country with the largest city Freetown having a population of less than 300,000, so the problems are likely to be less than in larger countries although Essang and Mabawonku (1974) reported similar success in Western Nigeria. It is also possible that there is a bias in the sample of traced migrants toward those with jobs in government and the large-scale sectors who are easy to locate.

^{1/} We have noted a considerable variation in the number of traced migrants according to enumerator ability. This would suggest that higher quality enumerators are required for the task.

The integration of the migration and farm management survey has clearly helped economies in scarce resources and supervisory personnel. However the rural sampling procedure based on resource regions is not necessarily the best sample for a migration survey. For example resource regions often cut across ethnic boundaries and if ethnic variables appear to be an important factor in the migration process we may have to disaggregate resource regions in the migration analysis. None-theless we feel this is a small price to pay for accurate rural economic data.

Finally in trying to survey various migration streams such as school-leavers, unskilled workers, scholars and married women from both an economic and sociological perspective we have arrived at rather long and complex questionnaires which require good enumerators and coders.

A P P E N D I X

Summary of Questionnaires and Sample
(Questionnaires are available on request)

Questionnaire	Sampling Procedure	Contents of Questionnaire
<p><u>PHASE I</u> Origin Questionnaire MG-1</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Country divided into eight resource regions 2. Three census enumeration areas chosen randomly from each resource region but omitting towns over 2000 persons. 3. All households in each E.A. interviewed (Total approx. 2500 households) 	<p><u>Current Household Members</u> Basic Demographic Data (Age, Sex, Education etc)</p> <p>Age Specific Fertility</p> <p>Last place lived</p> <p>Years in current locality</p> <p>2. <u>Household Members Migrated</u> Basic demographic data Place moved to Years since migrated</p> <p>3. <u>Deceased Household Members</u> Age-specific Mortality.</p>
<p><u>PHASE 2</u> Urban Migrants MG-2</p>	<p>All towns (2000+ population) where at least 25 migrants were identified in Phase 1 are selected for Phase 2. All migrants from the 24 E.As located in those towns are interviewed with particular emphasis on migrants from selected farm management households (Target Total 1000)</p>	<p><u>Present Situation in town</u> migrant household characteristics.</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Occupation and Earnings (special forms for wage earners, traders, other self-employed and unemployed)</p> <p>Job Search</p> <p>Giving and Receiving support</p> <p>Rights to property</p> <p>Social Participation</p> <p><u>Deciding to Move to Town</u> Migration History Information channels Reasons for Moving Decision Making</p> <p><u>Moving and Settling in Town</u> Transportation Initial support in town Finding a job</p> <p><u>Contacts with Home</u> Visits Exchange of Gifts Plans to Return</p>

Questionnaire	Sampling Procedure	Contents of Questionnaire
<p><u>PHASE - 3</u> Outmigrants Households - MG - 3</p>	<p>Ten households in each EA which currently have migrants in town are chosen randomly but with the selected farm management households which are also out-migrant households included. Household head is interviewed (Total 240)</p>	<p><u>Education</u> Costs of schooling Paying Education Costs Supporting Others Education <u>Opinions of Rural & Urban Life</u> Attitudes to Rural & Urban Living Expectations of town life Expectations of scholars Expectations of Freetown Practice of Traditional Customers.</p> <p>Decision Making and Support of migration Exchange of Gifts Uses of Cash Remittances Return Home Perceived good and bad Effects of migration.</p>
<p>Return Migrants MG-4</p>	<p>All persons 15 years and above in each E.A. who have lived in town in the previous 5 years form the population. Ten return-migrants are then chosen at random but including those from selected households (Total 240)</p>	<p><u>Migration History</u> <u>Life in Town</u> Support Finding a Job Job and Income History in town Social Participation in town Difficulties experienced <u>Returning Home</u> Reasons Money brought Use of money Employment at home Perceived Economic and Social benefits of stay in town.</p> <p><u>Migration Plans for the Future</u></p>
<p>Non-Migrants MG-5</p>	<p>Population is made up of male single adults 15-30 years in each E.A. who have not lived in town or moved out of the chiefdom. Ten non-migrants are chosen randomly with stratification by education. Non-migrants in selected households are included. (Total 240)</p>	<p><u>Migration Intentions</u> <u>A. If not intending to migrate.</u> Reasons Perceptions of urban jobs Relatives or Friends in Town Visits to Town</p>

Questionnaire	Sampling Procedure	Contents of Q uestionnaire
Supplementary Income Question naire - MG - 5	All households for MG-3 MG-4, MG-5 who are not selected households	<p><u>Intending to Migrate</u></p> <p>Reasons for leaving.</p> <p>Destination and Reasons</p> <p>Expected job and income.</p> <p>Information channels</p> <p>Perceived Benefits</p> <p>Perceived Costs</p> <p>Output of Major crops last season, other sources of income.</p>
Characteristics of Rural Villages MG-6	All enumeration areas completed by Enumerator who has lived in the E.A. for over a year (Total 24)	<p>Government</p> <p>Communications</p> <p>Schools</p> <p>Other Ammenities</p> <p>Agricultural Change Agents</p> <p>Type of Leadership</p> <p>Social Environment</p> <p>General Environment.</p>
Attitudinal Analysis - MG-7	A random sample of 50 non- migrants in rural E.A.'s and 50 urban migrants in the largest towns (Total 100)	<p><u>Attitudes to:</u></p> <p>rural and urban life style</p> <p>extended family ties</p> <p>social participation</p> <p>social ammenities</p> <p><u>Aspirations for:</u></p> <p>education</p> <p>employment</p>
Various Question naires of the farm management survey	24 randomly selected hou- seholds in each E.A. (Total 550)	Daily labour inputs, ex- penditures output and incomes
Consumption Questionnaires	Subsample of half of farm management households (Total 275)	Daily expenditures for one week/month including education expenditures.

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