<center>**Characteristics of migrants in Nairobi's informal settlements**</center>

Introduction

Rural-urban migration continues to play an important role in the urbanization process in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa although this role is somewhat diminished compared to the post-independence trends. In sub-Saharan Africa, migration into the urban centres has slowed down in the face of a down-turn in urban economies precipitated by measures such as the structural adjustment programs (SAP) imposed on most countries by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as due to general decline in governance (Potts, 1995). However, migration from rural to urban centres is still a factor that contributes to the growth of urban populations despite the limited economic opportunities in these centres.

Nairobi, Kenya's capital and commercial hub attracts young migrants who most often leave their origin homes in search of better livelihood opportunities to later return to these places of origin without establishing a permanent residence in the city. Nairobi's migration dynamics are characterized by high levels of circular migration between the city and the origin homes, since most migrants still retain strong ties with their place of origin (Agwanda et al 2004). For many rural households, migration represents an important livelihood strategy of diversifying their sources of income. Rural-urban migration has been attributed to perceived wage differentials in the origin and destination towns/cities (Todaro, 1970). However, with declining urban incomes and employment opportunities, wage differentials might not fully explain the observed migration streams into cities. In addition to circumstances at the destination that favor migration; individual and household characteristics also play an important role in determining migration into urban areas (Bilsborrow et al 1987).

Migration in most African countries has been explained in economic terms but other factors such as state regulation as happened in colonial times influenced rural-urban migration streams substantially. Social networks in the rural and urban areas are also very important in determining the migration process of individuals. It is through these ties that new migrants get accommodation or information on job opportunities from kin or friends already established in the urban centers where the cost of living is high and jobs are scarce (Anderson, 2001). The importance of these networks is high as shown by the investment of money earned in urban centers in the rural areas where migrants often purchase land and build homes to which they can later return (Anderson, 2001; Ross and Weisner, 1977).

Most of the migration literature in developing countries concentrates on labour migration and remittances by migrants who mostly are based in an urban centre or a developed country. However we have few studies that have looked at the process of migration from an individual's birth to the time of interview. One such study in Ghana used a life history calendar to record yearly, the places one resided since birth and key events that happened in the interim such as marriage, births and deaths. In this study, the authors characterised different types of migration and their determinants, departing from the traditional dichotomy of rural-urban migration. This provides a new dimension in the migration processes in an African setting. The study found that smaller towns/cities were used as transitory points by migrants on their way to large cities

(White et al 2005). This is likely to be observed in the case of migrants coming into the city of Nairobi.

This paper seeks to describe the process of migrating into the slums settlements and Nairobi City by examining the characteristics of migrants currently living in Viwandani and Korogocho slum settlements where APHRC is carrying out longitudinal research. The paper draws on data from the migration and employment histories collected from 12,638 randomly selected participants aged 12 years and above in both sites, under the Urbanization, Poverty and Health Dynamics, a research project nested in the Nairobi Urban Health Demographic Surveillance System. This paper gives a more detailed picture about the migration patterns and process – clearly separating issues to do with the migration to the slums and those relating to Nairobi as a whole. Indeed, while it is important to understand the process of migration to the slum settlements, it is equally important to understand the process of migration into Nairobi as a city for those who did not land in the slum settlement directly from their places of origin.

Data and Methods

The data used for this paper were collected under the migration component of a 5-year research project, the Urbanization, Poverty and Health Dynamics (UPHD) conducted in two Nairobi slums. This research project is nested in the Nairobi Urban Health and Demographic Surveillance System (NUHDSS). The migration arm of this project set out to collect ten-year retrospective migration histories from a sample of 12,638 individuals aged 12 years and above who were resident in the two slum communities at the time of interview. Interviews were conducted between October 2006 and April 2007. The sampling unit was the household and all individuals aged 12 and above in each sampled unit were interviewed.

For this paper, we examine the timing and reasons for the current and first migration to Nairobi, the duration of stay in the current slum, and the place where an individual was living before moving into the current slum. We also examine linkages with place of origin and future migration intentions. A migrant is defined as a person who was not born in the current place of residence or the reference place of residence (in the case of Nairobi city).

Preliminary results

Age at arrival in the DSA for migrants

Figure 1 displays the age at which individual migrants arrive in the study communities. Results indicate that most people in-migrate into the slums when they are in their adult stage both for males and females. The curvilinear pattern of age at in-migration is observed; the percentage of migrants increases up to a peak and then declines. Thus in Korogocho, about 22% females and 13% males moved into the slum when in their adolescent stage (15-19 years old); while the corresponding percentages were 24% and 14% in Viwandani. The percentage of migrants increases up to a peak at 20-29 years old for both slums and for both male and females. Indeed, at the time people moved into Korogocho, about 33% females and 39% males respectively were aged 20-29. Higher percentages are observed in Viwandani, with 50% males and 53% females

coming in between 20-29 years old. This high proportion of adult migrants in Viwandani reflects the fact that this slum is close to an industrial area where people in working ages typically come to seek job opportunities. The percentage declines and reaches a low level at 50 years old and above where only 6% males and females in Korogocho and 2% females and 3% males in Viwandani migrated into the slums at that age.

Figure 1.   Age at arrival in Korogocho and Viwandani
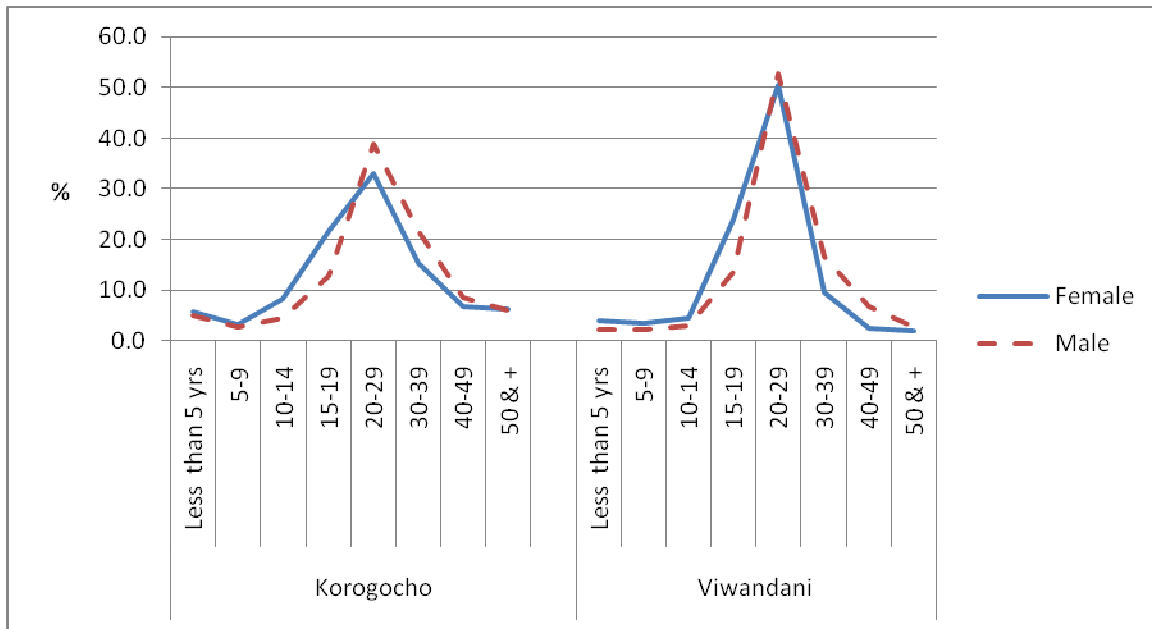
Source: Nairobi Urban Health Demographic Surveillance System – Urbanization, Poverty and Health Dynamics.

Reasons for leaving the previous place of residence to move into the DSA

Respondents were asked to report the main reason that led them to leave their previous place of residence to move into the DSA. The reported reasons are showed in Table 1, by gender and previous place of residence, for the whole DSA. In both Korogocho and Viwandani, economic motives are most important for males whereas females mostly left for family reasons, which mostly revolve around joining their spouse or leaving because they had been divorced or widowed, etc. Indeed, over half of females (55%) reported having left their previous place of residence because of family reasons while about two-thirds of males (63%) moved because of poor job opportunities in their previous location. Overall, about a quarter of the women reported that they left their previous place of residence for economic reasons. It is also worth noting that economic reasons are much more prominent push factors for both males and females coming from rural and other urban areas than for those coming from other parts of Nairobi. For instance, cost of living becomes quite a significant reason for moving to slums (for 22% of females and 34% of men) for those who came from non-slum parts of Nairobi.

Table 1.   Reasons for leaving the previous place of residence, by gender

			Previous place of residence				
FEMALES	Non-DSA	Other Nairobi slums	Nairobi non slum area	Other urban Areas	Rural Areas	Outside Kenya	Total
Family reasons	52.3	44.2	47.2	60.2	59.3	18.7	54.9
Poor job/business prospects	14.4	15.5	14.9	25.9	31.8	36.1	26.1
Poor housing/Amenities	2.1	8.1	3.9	1.7	0.6	0.0	2.1
High cost of living	12.4	11.7	21.8	1.0	0.2	0.0	6.2
Education related	2.7	0.7	1.0	3.7	4.2	0.0	3.1
Other reasons	16.1	19.8	11.2	7.6	3.9	45.3	7.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	40	441	984	117	2,849	21	4,452
MALES							
Family reasons	16.4	12.1	15.5	7.1	11.0	3.9	12.1
Poor job/business prospects	32.2	43.5	33.3	66.1	79.1	49.2	62.7
Poor housing/Amenities	9.7	11.3	4.2	1.1	0.2	0.0	2.6
High cost of living	14.1	11.2	33.9	1.1	0.3	0.0	9.9
Education related	1.7	0.5	0.7	2.0	5.7	0.0	3.6
Other reasons	26.0	21.4	12.4	22.6	3.9	46.9	9.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	72	709	1,528	299	3,675	21	6,304

Source: Nairobi Urban Health Demographic Surveillance System – Urbanization, Poverty and Health Dynamics.

Contact with their place of origin

Some questions about the links with place of origin or rural homes and migration intentions were asked to those who identify some place other than Nairobi as their place of origin or home. This concerns around 95% of the whole sample. Table 2 displays the proportion of individuals that visited or had visitors from their place of origin in the last 12 months. The figures in brackets are the mean number of visits to and from the place of origin. The results show that slum residents continue to have strong links with their rural homes through frequent contacts and that these links are much stronger in Viwandani than Korogocho. The vast majority of residents visited their place of origin during the last year in Viwandani (82%), compared to almost half in Korogocho. Again, this shows that Viwandani residents come to the slum communities to work and have stronger roots back home while those in Korogocho are likely to have a long term perspective about living in the city. In general, men (75%) are more likely to visit their home place than women (62%). This pattern prevails in each slum community (56% vs. 46% in Korogocho and 87% vs.75% in Viwandani).

When turning to the visits from place of origin, results also indicate greater interaction with the rural folks for Viwandani than Korogocho residents; people in Viwandani (62%) are more likely to receive visitors than those in Korogocho (40%). Moreover, the proportion of males having had visitors in the last 12 months is higher than that of females, overall (56% vs. 49%) and in each slum area (43% vs. 37% in Korogocho and 64% vs. 59% in Viwandani).

Table 2.   Visits to and from place of origin in the last 12 months

	Visit to place of origin		
	Female	**Male**	**Total**
Korogocho	45.6 (2.4)	55.8 (2.7)	51.2 (2.6)
Viwandani	74.8 (3.5)	86.6 (5.6)	82.2 (4.9)
Total	61.6 (3.2)	74.7 (4.8)	69.4 (4.2)
N	5,006	6,986	11,992
	Visit from place of origin		
	Female	**Male**	**Total**
Korogocho	36.7 (2.7)	43.3 (2.5)	40.4 (2.6)
Viwandani	59.3 (3.4)	63.6 (3.5)	62.0 (3.5)
Total	49.0 (3.2)	55.8 (3.2)	53.1 (3.5)
N	4,992	6,969	11,961

Source: Nairobi Urban Health Demographic Surveillance System – Urbanization, Poverty and Health Dynamics.

These preliminary results will be completed by further investigations of the factors driving rural people to the slums. Multivariate analysis regression will be performed to capture the net effect of economic factors, taking into account other factors (e.g environmental, social, cultural factors) as control variables. Qualitative data collected will also be used to examine further unclear issues that may emerge from the quantitative analysis.