LINKAGES BETWEEN MIGRATION, HIV/AIDS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN ZIMBABWE AND TANZANIA

Coordinator: Antony Chikutsa
Members: Glory Athanasio Minja; Nicholas Jonga; Paul John Salia; Phillipah Usingarahwi

The liberation of the African continent from the bondages of colonialism witnessed expedited urbanisation as emerging African governments scraped the colonial impediments on migration. Studies were thus overwhelmingly centred on the linkages between migration and urbanisation, and recently on migrant remittances. While researchers and policy makers were still trying to come to terms with the rapid movement of people into cities and the concomitant overcrowding, the emergence of HIV/AIDS shifted the focus of research to the impact the virus was having on various facets of development. Of concern has been the depletion of able-bodied members of the population, thus depriving entire nations of well-trained personnel. To date, research studies have established that: Migration is a mixed blessing for rural households, and HIV/AIDS and the associated increase in adult mortality are major setbacks for the development of the continent.

However, the linkages between migration, HIV/AIDS and rural development remain unclear. This comparative study intends to investigate the aforementioned among rural households in Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Those countries share a common history of colonialism and post-independence experiences. A case in point is the land policies adopted by both countries that had an impact not only on the political landscape of both but on migration patterns as well. The then president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere adopted a vigorous land redistribution exercise under the ‘villageisation’ programme (Ujamaa) in the 1970s, and a similar programme was implemented in Zimbabwe by President Mugabe three decades after Ujamaa. Furthermore, both countries have well above 2 million people of their populations living with HIV. In addition, the majority of their labour force is in agriculture (80 percent in Tanzania, and 66 percent in Zimbabwe). Both populations are highly literate (78 percent for Tanzania and 92 percent for Zimbabwe) and mobile.

The overall objective of the study is to compare linkages between migration, HIV/AIDS and rural development among rural households in Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Other objectives of the study include the following: to compare migration trends in Zimbabwe and Tanzania along age and gender dimensions; to compare the impact of migration and HIV/AIDS on household size and structure of rural households in Zimbabwe and Tanzania; to compare the impact of HIV/AIDS and migration on household production dynamics; to compare household responses to the impacts of migration and/or HIV/AIDS.
The major research question for this study is: How comparable are the linkages between migration, HIV/AIDS and rural development among rural households in Zimbabwe and Tanzania? Other Questions: What are the age and gender migration trends in Tanzania and Zimbabwe? Is there a significant difference in wealth between households with migrants and households without migrants? What is the impact of migration and HIV/AIDS on household size and structure of rural households in Zimbabwe and Tanzania? To what extent has migration and/or HIV/AIDS affected household production and consumption? What are household coping strategies against the impacts of migration and HIV/AIDS?