

AN OVERVIEW OF RURAL MIGRATION  
AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE  
STRUCTURE IN AFRICA\*

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I - INTRODUCTION

Africa's predominantly rural population is located in areas where most inhabitants do not have ready access to social amenities, land and capital. Over the past two decades or more, the living standards of this destitute group have deteriorated with the result that increasing poverty has been associated with widespread underemployment and rural exodus (Adepoju, 1979 ; Ghai and Radwan, 1983). Indeed, it has been suggested in the literature that maldistribution and access to land is a cause of rural poverty and rural exodus, thus the land tenure system and land ownership cannot be divorced from the incidence and rate of rural migration and agrarian change (Dasgupta, 1980 ; Connell et al, 1976 ; Eicher and Baker, 1982).

Among the major components of demographic change, migration exerts both the strongest and fastest impact on the development process : it influences and is in turn shaped by the employment situation and especially the age structure of the population. In general, all socio-economic policies and programmes have both direct and indirect, expected and unanticipated effects on migration. Hence in the African context, the following areas of migration-agricultural interrelationships are pertinent : - the extent - and how - land use adjusts to family labour availability and the need for the increasingly expensive and scarce migrant labour ; the effect of population pressure on migration, patterns of land use, agricultural productivity and rate of adoption of technical innovation in agriculture (Ahmed, 1977) ; socio-economic and production characteristics of different regions and sectors, their relation to the level and distribution of income and the implications

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for migration and related policy issues ; and very importantly the causes, magnitude, pattern, characteristics and role of migration (immigration, return migration and out-migration) in the rural areas with respect to agricultural development.

These themes are crucial when we recall that over four-fifths of Africa's population live in rural areas and that the rural sector provides employment for about three-quarters of the working population, mostly on small family farms. The farming, small wage sector and a growing informal sector (small-scale cottage industries, handicrafts and services) make up the main domains of economic activities in the rural areas ; nevertheless, the agricultural sector tends to overshadow the other sectors. Yet, Africa's predominantly agricultural base is structurally weak : low production and productivity and rudimentary agricultural techniques are its main features (Eicher and Baker, 1982).

The climatic and ecological conditions in Africa are varied between and within sub-regions and countries and the distribution of good agricultural land is highly skewed. The last feature - distribution of fertile agricultural land - is indeed a vital factor in the study of rural migration and its relationships with agricultural programmes and policies. In the following sections we present a brief sketch of the traditional migratory movements in Africa, followed by an analysis of the effects of migration on labour force structure. The fourth section deals with the emerging patterns of migration in response to agricultural policies, and the concluding part summarizes the key issues outlined in the paper.

## II - TRADITIONAL MIGRATORY MOVEMENTS

Migration is not a homogeneous phenomenon in Africa. The situation is dynamic and complex, as are the socio-economic conditions in the region which give rise to - and sustain - the various forms of migrations. Africa is equally heterogeneous with respect to population size, land area, resource endowment, economic development and ecological features. The countries of Africa also vary importantly in land use pattern and population density, urban-rural composition, level of urbanization and rate of growth of both national and urban population. Within the sub-regions, countries with small and relatively large population size and land area coexist ; some are sparsely settled while others have relatively high population density. The economies of the coastal African countries are relatively less precarious than those in

the hinterland, including the Sahel region, and land-locked countries. Wide variations also exist in climate, soil quality and terrain. All these factors affect and are influenced by migration (Adepoju, 1977).

Historically, Africans have always migrated within and across so called national frontiers (internal and international migration, respectively) prompted by trade, pastoralism, natural disasters and the like. The various movements served as means to restore ecological balance, achieve better conditions of living and were in most cases undertaken in search of more food, better shelter and greater security (Adepoju, 1977).

Internal migration can be classified by the major streams - rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and urban to urban ; by distance covered - short, medium and long distance - or by administrative boundaries (intra and inter provincial, state or district movement). Also, migration can be classified by duration of stay at destination into short-term, medium-term and permanent or long-term residence (sometimes based on intentions regarding duration of stay at the destination). The literature on migration in Africa also distinguishes between target, circular and seasonal labour migration (Adepoju, 1977). The strategy and philosophy of development adopted and pursued by African governments have reinforced the existing inequality in regional resource endowment, the uneven development potentials and employment opportunities within their countries. These have been exacerbated by the growth-centered development strategy which led to the bifurcation of their economies distinctively into the urban and the rural sectors. Consequently, the wide and growing inequality in income distribution between the urban (industrial) and rural (agricultural) areas has contributed significantly to the rapidly accelerated rural to urban migration (The World Bank, 1984 ; Ghai and Radwan, 1983).

For the past decades, the development strategy in Africa has been consistently biased in favour of urban areas, a situation which is both a cause and consequence of migration. Indeed the path of colonial development, reinforced by postindependence development strategies was geared towards the development of the urban-industrial centres. The concentration of administrative, political and economic functions and invariably of employment and related opportunities in the towns had the effect of attracting migrants, at first, gradually and later at an accelerated pace. In most African countries, the small scale of the economy and population precluded the development of several (viable) dispersed

urban-industrial centres, thereby diversifying the points of attraction for migrants (Adepoju, 1977 ; Livingstone, 1981). Hence the momentum for city-ward migration was intensified by the dualist nature of African economies and the planning strategies.

The ecological differences between the coastal rain forest areas and the savannah subsistence cropping zones in the hinterland are also reflected in both the causes and directions of migration. The introduction of cash crops especially coffee and cocoa in the forest coastal zones is a case in point. The rapid expansion of the plantation economy resulted in high labour demand as the case of C te d'Ivoire illustrates. As the plantation economy there thrived, it attracted and continued to receive migrants initially drawn from the savannah areas of the north and outside the country. Over the years, the north of C te d'Ivoire, an ecologically disadvantaged region, remained a labour reserve, along with Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, while the south thrived and emerged as the main centre of economic activities, and an attractive centre for migrants (Ghai and Radwan, 1983). Another example will suffice. In Kenya, the large farms are located in the Rift Valley of the former White Highlands. In the Central and Western parts, population density is high and sedentary agriculture has been the main occupation. The desert and semi-desert areas of the north is where the nomadic pastoral people live. The direction of rural migration has thereby been predetermined : from the ecologically disadvantaged areas to the locations of fertile land resources.

Until recently, the literature on internal migration in Africa gives the impression that migration is synonymous with rural-urban movements, a misconception that reflects the concerns of policy-makers who daily face and try to solve the problems exacerbated by migrants located in the major cities : unemployment, congestion and the like. However, studies focussing at the rural end, or utilising survey and census data conclude that rural to rural migration, much of it female, is in fact the dominant form of migration in Africa. This finding is to be expected as the majority of Africans live and work in the rural areas. That apart, agriculture remains the dominant sector, the industrial sector trailing a far distance behind (Adepoju, 1984c ; Livingstone, 1981).

Out-migration of members of households - even those who have land is a feature of the African migratory scene. Such migration is mainly rural-rural and is designed to meet differing peaks of labour demand in various parts of the region. In fact rural-rural migrations include a high component of temporary moves.

This is the case of migrants who seek salaried employment in plantations or cash-crop export areas, often in neighbouring areas. At the micro level of the household, out-migration of the landless farmers, either of seasonal or more permanent nature, is regarded as a survival strategy.

Urban to rural and rural to rural migration take the form of either colonization or return migration. In general, colonization migration, either of the urban to rural or rural to rural type implies movement from a more developed to a less economically endowed area, the main aim being to exploit the hitherto neglected potentials there. According to Mabogunje (1972) so-called colonization migration serves as an important means of intensifying the utilization of resources which otherwise would have remained idle or poorly utilised. Besides, it serves importantly as a means to diffuse skills, activities and ideas to different parts of the region.

The scanty information that is available on return migration shows that return migrants often serve as agents of cultural and economic diffusion. All too often successful return migrants serve as agents of change, opinion leaders and innovators by, for instance, introducing new crops or improved varieties of existing ones, by employing new or improved techniques of production and by encouraging education and organization. Unsuccessful return migrants pose the problem of reintegration back home.

Labour migration is male-dominated ; so is seasonal migration from the savannah regions of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger to the coastal countries. Labour migrants - seasonal, oscillatory, etc... - are unskilled, uneducated and predominantly adults. In general, internal migrants in Africa include a high proportion of young adults of working age especially the age group 18-35 years and who sometimes have lower levels of schooling than the population which they join. The generalization is not always correct. Rural-rural migrants are mostly illiterate, married persons in their late thirties or beyond. While labour migration is confined to the transfer of physical strength and is essentially male dominated, there are nevertheless women who migrate for marriage in exogamous societies and the so-called "commercial" migrants who transfer business acumen and which include men and women, as was the case of Nigerian migrants in Ghana before the expulsion order of 1969 (Adepoju, 1984d).

Urban to urban migration is in most cases a continuum of the rural to urban movements, sometimes representing a stage of the step migration from secondary towns. Such movements feature in countries with a wide urban base and where employment and related opportunities are dispersed over core areas of development as in Nigeria.

In the African context, except in Southern Africa, the distinction between internal and international migration is blurred by the cultural affinity between societies arbitrarily demarcated into separate nation-states. Thus, rural-rural migration pattern is not confined to domestic (internal) movements; most inter-country migration is also of the rural-rural type, as is especially the case of the frontier workers (Adepoju, 1984d).

The traditional migratory flows are from the hinterland countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger) to the coastal countries - Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria (recently) and until the seventies, Ghana. Cote d'Ivoire and to a lesser extent Senegal are historically the major countries of immigration in West Africa. Nigeria recently joined this category, while Cote d'Ivoire has been and remains a major receiving country. In West Africa, the free flow of labour migrants that prevailed historically between Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin to Nigeria and from Mali, Burkina Faso to Cote d'Ivoire was reinstated by the ratification of the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons by ECOWAS countries.

In Southern Africa, the main migratory stream is from the BLS countries (Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland) to the Republic of South Africa's mines and plantations. The migration is male-dominated (wives are not allowed to follow or join their husbands) and circulatory, for a period of not more than two years at a time. Internal migration takes a subsidiary position, being directed in Swaziland to the two main towns (Mbabane and Manzini) and the agricultural-cum-industrial centres; to Maseru, the capital of Lesotho and to both the mining centre of Selibe-Phikwe and Gaborone in Botswana (Central Office of Statistics, Gaborone, 1984).

In Central Africa, Gabon, Zaïre, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe are the principal countries of immigration. Gabon and Zaïre contain rich mineral deposits which attract both skilled and unskilled workers. The cocoa, coffee and sugar plantations in Sao Tome and Principe and Equatorial Guinea attract labourers in their thousands from Angola, Cameroon and Niger. These migrations are usually rural-rural.

In Eastern Africa, the rich plantation agriculture in Uganda, Zambia and Kenya ; copper mines along the Copperbelt line-of-rail in Zambia and the plantations in Zimbabwe have been and continue to attract migrant workers from Malawi, Burundi and Rwanda.

### III. EFFECTS OF MIGRATION ON LABOUR FORCE STRUCTURE

It is perhaps useful to emphasise that given an initial farm population, demographic factors (fertility, mortality and migration) determine the trends in the number and structure of households. The trend in the number and composition of households in combination with initial resource endowment in turn influence changes in the farm size distribution and tenural patterns. Besides, institutional factors, non-farm opportunities and technological progress also influence the agrarian structure (Sinha, 1978).

The effects of migration on labour force should appropriately be viewed from both the origin and destination areas. It is also obvious that the type of migration would influence importantly the kinds of impact these exert on the labour force. The effects of migration on both the origin and destination areas depend to a large extent on the characteristics of the migrants. Thus, for instance, the exodus of young educated people normally has adverse effect on age structure, family formation and composition, family labour, farm productivity and population growth in the rural areas. It is for these reasons that the age-sex selective nature of out-migrants reduces the population of working ages relative to the total population in the rural areas. The smaller the locality, the more visible is the effect.

Migrants are not only mainly male-dominated ; they tend to be at the prime of their productive life. That is not all : rural-urban migrants include a high proportion of persons with some years of formal schooling and embody a substantial investment by their parents. In African countries, the increasing drain of the family labour pool through the out-migration of young persons has adversely affected labour supply and food production in the rural areas. The adult dominated rural exodus, leaves the young, the old and women on the farm who must take on additional work burden. Consequently, the rural population age structure is old - a fact which poses considerable problem for the uncertain prospects of replacing the farm population especially when the old farmers eventually phase out. The situation is likely to become more critical in the decades ahead, more so when farm production still relies heavily on physical labour input.

Thus, in most of Africa, the out-migration of young persons and the rapid ageing of the labour force seriously impedes technological change and lowers agricultural productivity (Adepoju, 1986 ; Okereke, 1975 ; Standt, 1985 ; Palmer, 1985). All these have resulted in increasing reliance on food imports in countries whose primary resources in fact include abundant land and labour. The increasing reliance on migrant labour, which has become increasingly scarce and expensive, has not ameliorated the situation satisfactorily in that such labour is not normally available during the peak periods of clearing, weeding, planting and harvesting. The situation is exacerbated by the weakening of the traditional communal exchange system. The situation whereby migration creates shortages in the agricultural labour force is indeed a paradox of the migration process in Africa (FAO, 1984).

It is argued that the transfer of human capital from agriculture to urban areas in the form of out-migration of educated youth constitutes a substantial drain on scarce rural resources. It is also argued, however, that out-migration from rural areas and the resulting shortage of family labour could lead to induced technological change, including more rational and intensive use of land, labour and capital resources and simple mechanization (Boserup, 1984). The evidence on this aspect is limited. However, a transitional community to be transformed to a modern society requires certain change agents to stimulate or accelerate the pace of such change. The change elements may be internally or externally induced, in both cases, the rapidity of the change depends to a large extent on the responsiveness of the communities. In most of the rural areas, the ability of the system to internally generate its own momentum for change without an external intervention is limited. Migrants tend to serve as catalysts or change agents, especially in the rural areas (Mabogunje, 1972)

Migrants have been known to be instrumental in breaking some of the institutional constraints that inhibit the expansion of farming. By their personal examples, successful migrants can generate considerable demonstration effects on members of the host community. If the migrant's mode of agricultural production is successful, it is highly likely that their organization and handwork may be emulated by members of the host communities and other migrants that settle there later. In like manner, in communities where the land tenure tenancy agreement requires the tenant (migrant) farmer to pay the landlord in kind or cash, the migrant has to be highly motivated and efficient to cover and earn more



than the cost of the migration, in order to attain the objectives of the migration which is essentially to improve his living conditions.

A distinction must however be made between the types of activities and the sexual division of labour. All over Africa, land preparation and clearing are essentially men's tasks. In general, women's domain includes planting, weeding and harvesting as well as marketing of the farm produce. The absence of male migrants often implies that females imperfectly substitute for the more arduous tasks, consequently the need to hire additional hands is often at its optimum. The alternative, as Palmer (1985) noted, involves "additional seasonal work stress for women".

All too often, the shortage of labour means that household production unit could no longer adequately undertake specific farm tasks. One significant aspect of male-dominated migration is the growing number, or in recent times, better recording in official statistics of the magnitude of female-headed households. This situation, prevalent in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, is increasingly visible in Zambia and Kenya. In several parts of Zambia, especially the Northern, Eastern and Central districts for instance, between 39 and 50 per cent of rural households are in fact female-headed (Safilios-Rothschild, 1985)

In the BLS countries where a significant number of the men migrate to work in the mines and plantations in the Republic of South Africa for a contract period of two years (or less) at a time, only to return home periodically between contracts, these migrants often spend up to between fifteen and twenty years in South Africa during their active working ages 15-50 years. It is not surprising then that in Lesotho, between 60 to 70 per cent of rural households are female headed. In such cases, the men are not readily available for the arduous tasks of ploughing and planting, consequently it has become increasingly difficult for women with or without the assistance of their children to adequately offset the labour contribution of their absentee husbands. This is especially the case in situations of seasonal labour demand at peak periods.

Palmer argues that in Lesotho where 51% of the adult males work in the Republic of South Africa, the women left behind bear the key responsibility of farm production management, and increasingly, decision making of short-term nature. Consequently, family responsibilities, decision making processes and the status and role of women are undergoing considerable changes. This is particularly so with respect to the land tenure

system : owners of land left uncultivated for up to two years normally loose title to such land. Increasingly therefore, women have had to keep up the cultivation in the absence of their husbands some of whom visit home erratically. The large-scale oscillatory migration and the relatively higher pay in the Republic of South Africa implies that labour has become expensive ; in spite of that, remittances are often inadequate to cope with the high cost of hired labour. The day-to-day management of the farm is undertaken by migrants' wives and few male kin offer any form of assistance especially in arranging for and supervising (male) hired labour (Kingdom of Lesotho, 1984 ; Palmer, 1985).

It is generally the case that migrants maintain their economic base at home-place. The ties with home are reinforced through periodic visits but more importantly through the network of remittances. A critical issue however is whether the remittances sent by migrants are regular and adequate to maintain household members and also to hire labourers in sufficient numbers at the peak periods to maintain output. This becomes pertinent when it is generally known that the absence of male family labour affects land preparation and other cycles of agricultural production. Research has shown that part of the remittances are used to pay labourers on the migrant's farm and that, in the case of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, the women left behind sometimes purchase small farm equipments to reduce the burden of farming and cope with the labour shortage (de Vletter, 1983 ; Kingdom of Lesotho, 1984).

Perhaps the situation depicted here is different from that in Western Africa. The BLS countries, especially Lesotho, are primarily labour reserves for the RSA, hence most migratory streams are external, unidirectional movements. Only in recent years has internal migration gained momentum in for, instance, Swaziland (de Vettler, 1983). In West Africa, migrant farm labourers tend to fill the critical gaps in labour demand created by the absence of the young out-migrants. Seasonal migrant workers constitute the major source of labour in areas of land surplus but labour-scarce economies. This is the case of the coastal areas of the plantation economies of Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and south-west Nigeria, Gabon and Ghana (Udo, 1975 ; Gwan, 1976).

Apart from satisfying part of the labour demand (as hired labour), rural-rural migrant labourers have also contributed in various ways to the diversification of cropping patterns by exploiting various resources hitherto neglected by the indigenous population (Adepoju, 1984). Examples include the case of migrant

tenant farmers who introduced rice production into the swampy areas of South West Nigeria while the natives produce yam in the dry zones (Udo, 1975). Gwan (1976) also gave an illuminating example in the Republic of Cameroon where most migrant workers on the plantations and their families shifted full-time to food production in response to the increased demand by the plantation workers, urban residents and the neighbouring Gabon. The specialization of work is obvious ; the natives are traditionally hunters, gatherers, and fishermen. In effect, the diversification and specialization of productive efforts and activities reduced the conflict of interest between the indigenes and migrants and minimised tension between them.

In the sixties, the steady supply of migrant workers who performed the arduous tasks which Ghanaians scorned stimulated the growth of the cocoa industry in Ghana. The drastic decline in the supply of such labour after the large scale expulsion of non-Ghanaians in 1969 adversely affected agricultural production particularly cocoa, the country's main foreign exchange earner. Thus, the general situation seems to be that the large farms and plantations normally depend on hired labour for operations on these farms, while the very small farm households supply the bulk of the labour demand. Another variant, a mixture of the above, is the group of small farmers who hire some labour but depend mostly on family labour (Sinha, 1978).

It is also pertinent to emphasise that the changes in demand for children's labour assistance consequent on changing fertility behaviour, the ability of households to hire labour or invest in labour - saving equipment, apprehension about old age and the income available for higher standards of living is a key demographic implication of agrarian reform (Palmer, 1985). The later contention is premised on the notion that one of the purposes of agrarian reform is to raise the income and living standards of the rural poor.

#### **IV - RURAL MIGRATION AND THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL POLICIES**

The observed colonising, seasonal and temporary migration, mainly rural-rural migration, reflects the varying local resources and opportunities, the cyclical demands for labour in the savannah and coastal zones and the marked diversity in ecological conditions and in land tenure systems in various parts of the continent.

From the above, it is obvious that migration takes place in large part in response to imbalance between the regions of a country and the dominant directions of such movement is dictated by the locational bias of employment-generating projects. Thus, where both private and public investment is concentrated in the major city as is the case in most African countries, the dominant migration stream will no doubt be directed towards the capital. However, where plantations, mines and other enterprises are located in rural areas and offer readier employment and other opportunities, a substantial flow of intra-rural migration is to be expected. This is the case of migration in the United Republic of Cameroon, Kenya and Tanzania (Adepoju, 1984b ; Bernstein, 1981 ; Livingstone, 1981).

As I once argued (Adepoju, 1984a), rural migration in Africa is an alternative to rural-urban migration in view both of the characteristics of the migrants (who are predominantly uneducated and unskilled people in the middle adult ages) and the features of the rural economy. The diversity of ecological features, the cyclical demand for labour in the region, the varying local resources and the location of agricultural projects in for example, Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, The Gambia, etc... serve as strong pull factors for migration directed at the rural sector.

Another dynamic feature of migration in Africa is the increasing competition by migrants for the limited wage employment in both urban and rural sectors in response to changing industrial and agricultural policies, respectively. Some of these migrants fill the positions vacated by the nationals who have themselves migrated elsewhere. In Cameroon, for example, the shift from rural-rural to cityward migration is largely in response to the low wages in the plantation areas. Here the plantation labourers who migrated to the towns were replaced by Nigerian immigrants, who later engaged in trade and commerce in the towns and sometimes in rural areas. Similar examples include the case in Algeria and Tunisia where rural migrants take up jobs which were vacated by emigrants of urban origin as is the case of emigrants from Burkina Faso and Mali to Gabon (Adepoju, 1984d).

Temporary migrants in Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Za re, Principe and Sao Tome usually shuttle between the mines, plantations and cash cropping areas in the host countries and their homes. In all, the frontier seasonal and short-term migrant workers in West and East Africa regard their movements simply as an extension across

national boundaries of internal movements. A sizeable proportion of these migrants also relocate in rural areas of the receiving countries. This is the case of clandestine and illegal immigrants from especially Ghana to Nigeria.

Nomads are a special category of migrants. These and semi-nomads roam with their livestock over extensive areas and are not normally identifiable with any specific national division. Most of these are found in Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. The drought in the Sahel in the 70s and early 80s prompted a new wave of migrations from the northern zones to the coastal regions, often across international boundaries. The forced migrants include prominently farmers and herdsmen who relocate mainly in the urban areas, jobless and destitute.

Underemployment, which characterises Africa's agricultural sector, mirrors the seasonal nature of employment there : besides, underutilization of labour is a reflection of institutional constraints imposed by the land tenure system resulting in fragmentation of farm land. Consequently, the amount of land available to enterprising farmers is severely limited. Land tenure systems and land use patterns can be influenced and have indeed been altered by increasing population growth and especially rural density, the requirements of new crops and new farming techniques. However, in most African countries, agricultural change and development have been hampered by several constraints pertinent among which are the seasonal labour demand ; competition of non-farm activities for farm labour and the shortage of family labour supply consequent on rural exodus of youths (FAO, 1984).

Several African countries have experimented with a series of programmes aimed at enhancing the income of farmers, improving employment opportunities in the rural areas and arresting out-migration there. A few examples include the Intensive Development Zones and Rural Reconstruction Programmes in Zambia; Intensive Package Rural Development Projects in Ethiopia; Land Settlement Schemes in Kenya ; Cooperative Schemes in Tanzania ; Intensive Agricultural Development Programmes in Sierra Leone. More recent examples include the Settlement Projects in the Terres Neuves in Senegal and the Agricultural Development Project in The Gambia which introduced irrigated paddy production; the Arable Land Development Programme and the Tribal Grazing Land Policy in Botswana ; the Rural Development Areas in Swaziland ;

the Asutsuare Sugar Estate in Ghana, to name a few. The primary aim is to boost agricultural production and enhance the income and living conditions of the rural population. All the same, these programmes exert some impact - both immediate and lagged - on migration (Adepoju, 1984c).

I will not dwell on the process and pattern of agricultural development in Africa. It is sufficient to note that, in many African countries, a notable feature is the shift of production in favour of cash crops primarily for exports. The process of commercialization of agriculture set in motion in the colonial era was reinforced by national governments. As Ghai and Radwan (1983) argued, the rise in rural production and increased emphasis on the commercialization of agriculture led to significant changes in the patterns of use and ownership of land, and in the utilization of labour.

In the process, the role of the State in reinforcing this trend has become most visible in settlement schemes and land reforms which actually resulted in inequalities in land distribution ; concentration of extension services, credit facilities and provision of seed to the more affluent commercial farmers and through the provision of subsidies on fertilisers, tools and machinery whose main beneficiaries have been the "progressive" large-scale farmers. (Palmer, 1985b)

The brief review of the effect of agrarian policies on migration patterns is constrained by lack of appropriate data. Thus, only a few case studies : the Asutsuare Sugar Estate in Ghana, the plantation sector in Tanzania, Farm settlement schemes in Nigeria, the Rural Reconstruction programme in Zambia, Land Settlement Policy in Botswana will be used as illustrative cases. A detailed analysis of these programmes is contained in Adepoju (1984c).

The Asutsuare sugar plantation initially faced acute labour shortage, in part because of the physical demand on the farm involving extensive field exposure and hard work. The few adults resident in the estate villages (the others having migrated elsewhere) regarded estate work as distasteful and unattractive. Over-time, about 1,000 migrant labourers including females were attracted to supplement, indeed substitute for the erratic domestic labour supply (Addo, 1981).

Bernstein (1981) indicated that, in Tanzania, the Sisal plantations in Tanga, and Morogoro ; the State Sugar Farms at Mtibwa and Kilombero, Rice and Tobacco in Tabora attracted migrant workers from the traditional

labour reserve areas of Kogoma region, Tabora, Singida, Ruvuma and Iringa districts. In the case of the sisal plantation, Bernstein reported that the migrants recruited from Njombe to the tobacco and tea estates at Iringa include a high proportion of young people and children, both boys and girls.

Zambia's Rural Reconstruction Programme, like Nigeria's farm settlements did not fully achieve the intended objectives of attracting and retaining educated youths on these programmes. Project costs tend to be high, infrastructural facilities are usually delayed and are inadequate, the right kinds of settlers are not always recruited and above all, settlers have expectations and aspirations totally incongruent with those of the architects of the schemes (Adepoju, 1984c ; Spiro, 1985).

The case of Botswana's land settlement policy illustrates typically an example of conflict in policy objectives amongst programmes. While the Arable Land Development Programme and the Tribal Grazing Land Policy encourage disperse settlement pattern and migration to new lands, the Rural Industrialization and the National Settlement policy seek to benefit from agglomeration economy hence the schemes advocated concentrated settlement of population (Adepoju, 1984c).

In Kenya, Livingstone (1981) reported that 75% of the labour on the tea estates are migrants from outside the immediate tea producing areas who were attracted, sometimes recruited to supplement local labour supply. Thus, it does seem that well articulated agricultural programmes that take cognisance of the socio-cultural conditions of the localities and its population could directly and indirectly influence the trend in migration.

## CONCLUSION

The notion that migrants react to perceived economic opportunities, either in the urban and the rural areas is substantiated by the few examples discussed in this paper. In essence, the characteristics of the migrants as much as the location of investment and consequently of employment and related opportunities play major roles in the kinds of responses, the types of migrants and the dominant direction of the migration.

The fact that the economy of African countries is both predominantly agricultural and that the majority of its population live and work in the rural areas would lend strong support to the *a priori* reasoning that the dominant form of migration in Africa is rural to rural movement. Hence, the formulation and implementation of relevant agricultural programmes to more effectively utilise the energies of the rural population and rural migrants, to enhance the living conditions of the rural population, to reduce the burden of agricultural production on the aged, the women and children should engage the prime attention of planners and agricultural specialists, bearing in mind the intended and unanticipated effects of these programmes on migration.



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