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Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria

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Youth Unemployment, Poverty and National Development

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The Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

*Atah Pine*

Book Review

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# Rural-Urban Migration in Nigeria: Trends, Patterns and Perspectives

P.F. Adebayo

&

Usman A Raheem

This article provides an overview of rural-urban migration in Nigeria as it exists in sub-Saharan Africa pointing out its basic causes, trends, features and consequences. The paper suggests policy directions to reduce the drift of rural dwellers towards cities as well as urban policy options to cope with the already established momentum in terms of population growth in the cities. It is hoped that the paper will contribute to the literature on migration studies in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular.

## Introduction

The most important feature of human population is the ability to move from place to place thereby making man to be one of the most dynamic creature on earth. This also creates uneven distribution of human population over space. According to Kasarda and Crenshaw (1991), the proximate determinants of urban growth can be grouped into three.

- (a) the natural increase of urban populations;
- (b) migration, both intra-national (rural-to-urban and urban-to-urban) and international; and
- (c) boundary redefinition through annexation of surrounding areas.

While boundary change may account for as much as 20% of Third World urban growth in recent years (Preston & Green 1985), most research has concentrated on the relative contributions of natural increase and migration. Of these two, rural-to-urban migration has been the principal focus of scholarship for two reasons. First, excessive rural outmigration fits nicely with several dominant theories of development and is thought to be responsive to rural adversity and the allure of modern wage structures in urban areas (Todaro 1969, Lipton 1977, Gilbert & Gugler 1982, Kasarda and Crenshaw 1991). For this reason, many believe that migration is easily modified by national rural and urban policies. Second, the belief that migrants to cities presents greater challenges in terms of labor absorption and political stability naturally

leads to intense focus on this phenomenon (Bienin 1984, Herrick & Hudson 1981).

This paper examines rural-urban migration in Nigeria in relation to the basic causes, features and consequences for both the origins and destinations. The paper also suggests policy directions to reduce the drift of rural dwellers towards cities. It also suggests urban policy options to cope with the already established momentum in terms of population growth in the city.

#### **Rural-Urban Migration and Urban Growth in Africa: Issues and Perspectives**

Simply put, migration refers to the movement of people from one place to another for the purpose of establishing permanent or temporary residence. There are two main types of migration: first, internal migration, referring to migration within one country, and secondly international migration, which means the movement from one country to another. The reasons for migration can be divided into two main aspects, the so-called "push" and "pull" factors. Push factors are those in their old place, which force people to move. For example, there may be civil wars or wars in general in the country, but political or religious oppression, climate changes, lack of jobs or simply poverty are all important push factors. Pull factors are factors in the target new area which encourage people to move; these include peace and safety, a chance of a better job, better education, social security, a better standard of living in general as well as political and religious freedom.

Migration, both internal and international, is a common feature of both developing and developed countries. In Nigeria, especially both types of migration continue to increase. Migration is an inevitable part of human existence, with a long history. However, its pattern has changed considerably over time, from the search for space, especially in the middle ages, to that of congestion in large cities (rural-urban migration) in the modern age. This is especially so in the last millennium. By 2030 three-fifths of the world's population is expected to live in urban areas (Stephens, 2000). Migration may be associated with development, urbanization or the forced movement of people fleeing from violent conflict or national disaster.

No single definitive statement can be made about the proportionate demographic contributions to city building. The negative contributions of rural-urban migration are enormous and obvious compared to the contributions of other types of migration. The United Nations UNDESA (1985) asserts that approximately 60% of urban growth can be attributed to natural increase and the remainder to migration. This finding has

been corroborated by empirical studies across the world (Rogers 1982, Preston 1979). On the other hand, this assertion is based on averages and some evidence points to the relativity of migration's contribution to urban growth (Oliveira & Garcia 1984, Newland 1980, Martine 1975).

At low levels of urbanization, migration is the prime engine driving city growth, as is now the case in much of Africa. As the urban base grows, however, more and more migrants are required to match urban natural increase, and the pattern reverses itself (Keyfitz 1980, Rogers 1984). Therefore, although natural increase is responsible for most urban growth in the Third World, the age-selectivity of migrants (through their contribution to natural increase) as well as regional variations in urbanization and development complicates this picture. Structural forces that lead to rural-to-urban migration also vary by region. In particular, although some emphasis has been placed on the appeal of cities to potential migrants, considerably more attention has been devoted to the interaction between agrarian structures, rural adversity, and rural-to-urban migration. In Latin America, rural adversity arises primarily from a high degree of land inequality, a by-product emerging principally from colonial heritage but also due to the commercialization of agriculture and land speculation as a hedge against inflation (Furtado 1970, Oberai 1983, Wood, et al, 1988, Berry & Cline 1979). In many regions of Asia, population densities on arable land lead to diminishing returns and excessive subdivision of peasant holdings. African agriculture, while not burdened with shortages of land, is hampered by the low carrying capacity of soils, biological pests that spread disease, traditional production methods, and problems in articulating labor supplies with seasonal requirements (Todaro 1989). Consequently, there is gross under-investment and outmigration from rural areas of most African countries. This is coupled with the generally poor infrastructural base of villages in terms of availability of potable water, electricity and access roads that serve to link villages with their farms and with markets. Hence, the circumstances that engender the drift of villagers to cities are different for regions of the world; thus their impacts and perspectives through which scholars view the problems and proffer solutions are expectedly different over time and space. This chapter provides an overview of rural-urban migration in Nigeria, as it is arguably typical for Sub-Saharan African, underscoring the trends, patterns and perspectives in which the phenomenon had been discussed.

#### **Migration in Nigeria: Causes and Consequences**

In Nigeria, migratory flow is not labour-driven but opportunity-driven because people respond only to circumstances that provide an



opportunity to subsist; a situation that leads to an export of skills from rural areas where they are needed to towns where they are irrelevant. Rural-urban migration is therefore uncontrolled and undocumented thus creating a mismatch between migration and availability of employment as a major source of urban discontent.

Causes of migration have been discussed mainly from two perspectives. These are the push and pull factors. Many other push factors that influence city ward migration can be enumerated. The import-substitution strategies of many Third World nations siphon off agrarian surplus to fund industrial development in urban areas through such mechanisms as pricing differentials that disadvantage small agriculturalists and the overvaluation of national currencies, which lowers the costs of capital-intensive imports but makes primary commodity exports less competitive in the world market (Lipton 1977, Oberai 1983). Moreover, agriculturalists in the small-farm sector suffer from monopsonistic market configurations, a severe lack of marketing information, the lack of storage and transport facilities, the inability to obtain credit through formal channels, and the lack of vocational/technical training in rural areas (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978). Therefore, even when land is available in sufficient quantity and quality, the combined influence of rapid population growth and poor market infrastructure and weak supporting institutions singly or jointly serve to push many from the land toward cities. Although basic causes seem straightforward, migration is of a highly variable nature. Also since most demographers and urbanists have focused on rural-to-urban migration, recent evidence points to a much more complex set of migration streams. Urban-to-urban migration, rural-to-rural migration, and, at early stages of development, circular migration are among the types of migration found to predominate in many Third World countries (Thomas & Mulvihill 1980, Deere & Leon de Leal 1982, Russell & Jacobsen 1988, Goldstein 1987). Once again, the type and rate of migration depends on region and level of development, among other things, a fact borne out by such examples as Sao Paulo, where one third of growth can be attributed to urban-to-urban migration (Faria 1988), and many nations of west Africa, where circular migration has been very common (Gugler & Flanagan 1978, Colvin et al 1981). Further complexities arise in considering the composition of migration streams. At least two distinct flows appear in research, one flow of the reasonably well-off in search of urban opportunities in employment and education, and another of the poor and landless in search of subsistence. Moreover, idiosyncrasies in migration flows occur due to such factors as the availability of secondary employment in nearby cities and towns, caste

or ethnic connections that predispose certain groups to migrate to specific cities, the configuration of roads and the accessibility of transportation, and the institutionalization of rural-to-urban migration as a part of the life course (Connell et al 1976). Nonetheless, few doubt that most rural-to-urban migration is used by households as a survival strategy, although the poorest segment of rural populations may find the cost of such strategies prohibitive. Given the importance of international migration in the development of Europe, the influence of migration across national borders on urbanization and agrarian structures should not be overlooked. Developed nations such as the United States, France, Germany, and Switzerland have served as destinations for millions of Third World citizens from Mexico, Turkey, and many nations of north Africa, and more elite streams of immigrants from around the globe. Furthermore, a few Third World countries such as the Ivory Coast, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Ghana, Zaire and Gabon play host to citizens of nearby nations. Although these international migration streams are small in comparison to historical European migrations, they do relieve some pressure on many Third World cities and provide important sources of capital in the form of remittances (Martin & Houstoun 1979, Cornelius 1976).

Almost all population growth in the near future will occur in urban areas, mostly in developing countries. The linkages between population growth, urban population growth and emissions involve several multiplicative factors, each of which varies significantly among population sub-groups within countries, across countries and over time. A large percentage of the world's poor are also rural dwellers who engage in small scale subsistence farming. The International Fund for Agricultural Development estimates that about 75% of the world's poor are rural dwellers and majority of this group live in developing countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, and South and East Asia (IFAD, 2001).

Nigeria is one of the countries in the world with very high rural-urban dichotomy. Although the nation is generally characterized by poor social amenities, both in quality and quantity, rural communities are disproportionately more disadvantaged than urban centres due to governmental neglect. Consequently, the number of rural inhabitants that migrate to cities with high hopes of overcoming powerlessness consistent with rural life is unprecedented. In the contemporary Nigeria, rural to urban migration is caused by forces that are more important than the mere lack of social amenities in rural areas. Indeed, many cities in Nigeria present more infrastructural decadence and exhibits greater multiple deprivation as to preclude any affinity for intending migrants.

Thus, there are other reasons why rural dwellers flee the countryside for cities. Some of these reasons are enumerated under different headings.

#### *Forced Migration*

Forced migration results either from a planned (or unplanned) movement following either infrastructure implantation (most typically, dams but also roads and other buildings (Shettima 1997) or following civil strife. This type of movement, which typically raises major concerns about human rights and involved compensation claims in developed economies is hardly documented in Nigeria in part because it occurs mainly in rural areas and because of the attenuated state of the statistical services. The Jos crisis in the last 10 years had produced fresh flow from the northern part of Nigeria towards the south particular the south-west and the middle belt regions of Nigeria. This flow constitutes the households that flee either Jos Metropolis or its rural suburbs during the carnage engendered by ethnic strife that heightened since 1999.

#### *Displacement following Infrastructure Implantation*

The oil-wealth of Nigeria combined with its dense population has given it the capacity to engage in infrastructure development on a scale unparalleled in any other African country (Blench and Dendo, 2003). Consequently, the Nigerian Government has been funding large projects since the 1970s, and many large engineering companies keep permanent bases in the country. Dams are a good example of this. Nigeria's largest dam, Kainji, dating from the late 1960s, was the subject of numerous pre-impoundment studies and a fairly detailed resettlement plan which was largely implemented. Results were not always as envisaged and the human health consequences have been considerably worse than was predicted at the time, but the principle of engaging with the socio-economic survey data and evolving a rational plan for displaced populations was an impressive model which unfortunately has hardly been replicated (Mabogunje 1973). Subsequent dam-building was carried out in a much less consultative manner, and in the most extreme example, farmers who protested being moved off their land at Bakolori, were simply shot (Blench and Dendo, 2003).

In a manner analogous to dams, urban development, of which the capital, Abuja, is the most marked example, has similarly displaced or dispossessed numerous village communities. New infrastructure has paradoxical effects; while displacing resident populations it often attracts migrants who are better placed to take advantage of new economic opportunities. This is most evident in the case of new roads and the transformation of settlements along them, where traders and

officials come in and the original residents move out to the surrounding countryside. Abuja represents a rather extreme example, where the allocation of land to elite purposes within the FCT has meant that all the commercial development has been eastwards along the Keffi road into Nassarawa state, where the resident populations have been unable to protest at the seizure of their land. The Tinubu/Fashola administration in Lagos since 1999 also represents an impressive development initiative, which had also created along its path, a migration flow to cities like Ilorin in Kwara State and Oshogbo in Osun State because of the displacement following the expansion of roads and upgrading of informal housing.

#### *Displacement following Civil Strife*

Nigeria is both densely populated, has large urban complexes and is driven by ethnic and religious divisions, exacerbated by *laissez-faire* governance. As a consequence, civil conflict is common and has indeed increased markedly under the present democratic regime, partly because of local perceptions of the self absorption of politicians and officials. These conflicts are usually only weakly covered in the media when they occur, especially if they are in rural areas, and they may or may not be settled by various conflict resolution processes. For instance, Akinteye et al. (1999), provide a lucid account of the Zangon Kataf crisis. The consequences are hardly ever investigated and documented because this could present an image contrary to that considered desirable by government. The victim population moves either to another area or to goes to stay with relatives in town and the refugees are much less visible than in the standard African situation with its tents, camps, predatory media, NGOs and donor conferences.

#### *Political and Social Cleavages*

Most West African economies have a high demand for low-paid, unskilled labour; thus, the pattern of migration tends to be of men aged 20-40 leaving a rural farm household, often seasonally, for the city or the plantation. The common pattern is north-south, where farmers take advantage of the long dry season to work in areas of higher rainfall. In Nigeria, migration is much more household oriented, partly because of the predominance of urban civil service jobs and supplying services to large urban economies.

Riots and protests in many towns, especially against alcohol vendors, have caused the displacement of these communities, especially southerners in the north, causing them to move their businesses to more

favourable cities. The examples of Zango Kataf in Kaduna State, Jos in Plateau and the activities of Boko Haram sect in Borno and Bauchi States are relevant here. Similar problems have been experienced by Muslims in rural areas of the Middle Belt; Hausa constitute a large body of traders and officials in this region and heightened anti-Muslim feeling in many communities has caused a flight back northwards to more tolerant zones.

### Migration Trends in Nigeria

Nigeria is a large country with a land area of 923,766 km<sup>2</sup> and a population size of about 154 Million. The country also exhibits a great diversity in physical conditions, economy, natural resources and ethnic groups (FMED 1975). The country's economy is primarily agrarian: about three-quarters of the people live, work and earn their livelihood in the rural, agricultural sector (UNESCO, 1983). Indeed agriculture was once the principal foreign exchange earner; since the late 1960s, however, the oil industry has become the prime mover of the economy; even so, the industrial sector remains *small* indeed (Adepoju 1976). The bulk of the population—76 per cent—live in rural areas while the level of literacy is generally low; open unemployment is an urban phenomenon concentrated heavily in the younger age groups and among school leavers. Disguised unemployment is a feature of rural areas, while underemployment poses serious problems in the urban informal sector (Adepoju and Farooq, 1977). The major cities are growing fast; in particular, Lagos has been growing at 10-14 per cent per year. Such a high growth rate has been sustained by a combination of high natural increase and increasing migration from villages and other towns (Sada and Adegbola, 1976). The rural-urban income gap has widened, giving rise to considerable population shifts from rural to urban areas. Although, expectations and aspirations are high, the possibilities for fulfilling these are severely limited in rural areas. Nigeria's experience at systematic (economic) planning dates back to 1946. From then until 1966, the development in commerce, manufacturing and urbanization were located in three distinct areas: the Lagos Federal Territory; Kano, Zaria and Kaduna in the north; and Port Harcourt, Aba, Enugu and Onitsha in the southeast (Green and Milone, 1972). In the process, metropolitan Lagos dominated the industrial scene; it also serves as the major sea and airport, and the administrative centre for the country. These rapid growth rates were fostered by the concentration of industry, commerce and administration, which in turn attracted additional infrastructure. The rapid growth of cities is attributable to both the prevailing high rate of natural increase and increasing in-migration

from rural areas and smaller towns. Such migration has been triggered largely by rural poverty (Gugler and Flanagan, 1978) and social disorganization (Imoagene, 1976) in rural areas. It is therefore useful to set the present migration trend and urbanization in its historical perspective, linking this to the stages-and process of economic development strategies in the country. In order to facilitate the movement of the cash crops from the hinterland to the coastal ports, a network of transportation systems was developed. Railways and roads were constructed to connect the centres of production to the main ports of Lagos. In particular, the development of the railways during the period 1901 and 1930 greatly facilitated rapid transportation of goods between the hinterland and the coastal towns, mainly the sea ports. The railway opened up regions of the country; it facilitated the exchange of manufactured goods between urban and rural areas and stimulated the rapid expansion of market opportunities (Ekundare, 1976). This also paved the way for population movements to the newly developed or greatly expanded urban areas.

The introduction of education facilitated communication and created a labour pool of teachers, and clerks in the expanding administration (Abernethy, 1969). The need for artisans, clerks, and categories of low-level *skills* also expanded. At that time a primary school leaving certificate guaranteed the holder urban wage employment. The rapid expansion in education, beginning with the introduction of free primary education scheme in western Nigeria in 1955 and later in the eastern region in 1956 created a pool of young school leavers. Four main options were open to the products of this policy. They could go on to higher educational institutions; learn a trade or craft as an apprentice or to search for wage employment. All of these activities were located in large and medium sized cities. The aspirations of young school leavers in rural areas therefore found fulfillment in the cities (See Adepoju, 1978). The social, economic and administrative programmes of the various regional governments prior to self government (1945-59) and after independence (1960 onwards) enhanced the status of provincial and regional headquarters. The provincial capitals in each region became centres of political and administrative activities for their respective provinces. Most of these were transformed into centres of administration, education and industry as a result of which they attracted social amenities such as hospitals, piped water, electricity, tarred roads, etc. The development of these regional centres and some provincial headquarters stimulated migrants who were attracted as traders and workers in the new centres of commerce, industry and administration and students in pursuit of higher education. In the latter



case, most students remained in the cities to work when they had completed their education.

The sectoral and spatial disparity in the growth of the economy intensified the growing migration from rural to urban areas. The rural and urban economy increasingly became polarized into the agricultural and industrial sectors. The focus of planning efforts in the urban sector initially promoted economic growth, averaging about 6 per cent per year. Consequently, income and employment opportunities in the urban sector became relatively more attractive than in the agricultural rural sector. The worsening of social and economic conditions in Nigeria's rural areas at a time when all indications are that the economy is growing at an unprecedented rate is also a measure of the failure of our urban centres to adequately 'serve' the rural population. Such service goes beyond mere welfare functions of making educational, health and other social amenities easily accessible to people living in rural areas. It includes in particular the function of stimulating increased rural productivity through creating a constantly expanding market for agricultural products and inducing farmers to greater productive effort through making easily available to them a wide range of consumer goods. (Mabogunje 1974) Thus, the development strategy has inadvertently paved the main migration route from rural areas to the major cities. In the process, medium-sized towns have not been effectively integrated into the development process. More important, their potential role with respect to migration is inadequately exploited.

#### *Migration and Sustainable development: Some Conceptual Clarifications*

Some scholars have reckoned that rural-urban migration can be of immense benefit to a country. Their positions are based on the Western demographic and development paradigms that views urbanization as a key variable in social and economic change (Zarate et al, 1975). Some of the positive aspects of rural urban migration relate the upsurge of rational behaviour, innovations in social life and technology, and the shift toward universalism and a nontraditional *modus operandi* (Wirth, 1938; Simmel, 1950). The alterations in social organization and interpersonal relations are attributed to the large, variegated populations which are constantly evoking new and insatiable interests, tastes, and other cravings.

The study of rural-urban migration and its understanding is however important for the many negative consequences on the points of destination. The demand for urban socioeconomic amenities constantly exceeds their supply making the urban areas to become spectacles of multifarious problems. Thus, social phenomena like

overcrowding, congestion, inadequate housing, high rates of unemployment and underemployment, crime and other forms of delinquency are almost discussed exclusively with reference to cities only. Liebenow (1986) summarized this assertion in a most encapsulating paragraph as follows:

The mass exodus ...from the impoverished countryside leaves not only fewer hands to grow the nation's food but more mouths to feed... Many analysts view Africa's urban unemployment, uncollected garbage, carbon monoxide and lead-polluted air, and growing crime rate as time bombs soon to detonate, destroying the lives and dreams of those who expected a better existence after the achievement of independence ...Over-urbanization does become a real problem in the face of two other factors. The first of these is the rate of urban growth in states that not only lack many of the basic ingredients of industrialization, but that are not able to produce the food required to feed their growing urban population ... (Secondly) In the face of the general poverty of the African states, most large and expanding cities simply cannot cope with the management problems associated with garbage collection, disposal of human wastes, the provision of clean water, the regulation of traffic, and the orderly development of roads, lighting, and other services for a burgeoning population ... (The rate of) urban crimes in most African cities is escalating, as are the problems of unemployment and lack of school facilities for the young, as well as prostitution, homosexuality, and other phenomena related to the imbalance between male and female ratios in the cities" (pp. 180-84).

Apart from this, rural and urban settings possess distinct social organizations that promote contrasting normative and behavioural standards. The world-view and behaviour of people who have been reared in either social setting are affected by their respective social structural impingement (Twumasi-Ankrah, 1985). For rural-urban migrants, therefore, a change of social environment is expected to generate conflicts when the structural mechanism no longer supports the value orientation nor the previously established behaviour. The need to re-socialize the migrants for their successful adaptation to the new (urban) environment is often times a major emotional challenge for the migrants.

Historically, West Africa developed large urban centres as capital cities of great empires, and as commercial and religious centres (Beauchemin, 2008, 2011) but urbanization in this region of the world is mostly a recent phenomenon. It is estimated that the proportion of

urban population in Africa as a whole was 5% in 1900, 12% in 1950, and 28% in 1980 (Bairoch, 1985). Now, Africa is the continent with the highest rates of urban growth in the world. Despite its recent character, the history of migration and urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa remains controversial. First, some authors have argued that urbanization is an 'explosive' process for which migration is mainly responsible and which has a negative impact on development through excess demand for urban services, increasing unemployment, etc. (Todaro, 1997).

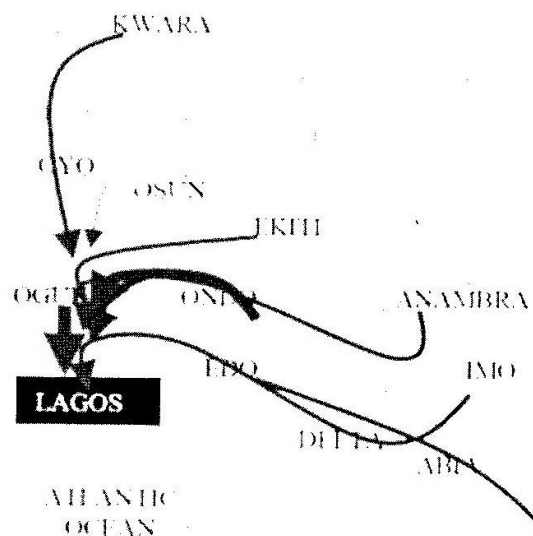


Fig 1: A Typical Migratory Flow Pattern into Lagos (Source: Okuneye, et al, 2006).

The opinion of governments, reported by the United Nations (UN), with regard to migration and urbanization reflects this viewpoint fairly well (UN, 2005). On the other hand, since the mid-1980s, other authors contend that the pace of urban growth is now slowing down, that migration is no longer the main factor of urban growth, and finally, that urbanization is a factor of socio-economic development (Becker and

Morrison, 1995; Bilsborrow, 1998). The most important conclusion from this is that Rural-urban migration might have declined in magnitude since the 1980s, but its implications are too significant to be ignored.

Nigeria has always had a very pluralistic migration economy because of the system of traditional city-states; the flow of processed goods from country to town is widely recorded in pre-colonial sources. Rural-urban migration is probably the most distinctive pattern of migration in West Africa, and indeed throughout much of the developing world. Nigeria has some of the largest cities in Africa and although they may have 'traditional' cores, their present size is entirely a phenomenon of the twentieth century. Kano, for example, is thought to have had just 10,000 citizens when Clapperton reached there in 1821 and today has a minimum of some seven million. Entirely new towns such as Kaduna, Jos and Port Harcourt, now number their populations in millions. Similar patterns of growth are reported from SE Asia, but there is one important difference, the low level of industrialization in Nigeria. Few urban residents are employed in large-scale enterprises, as urbanization rests on an extremely ephemeral basis, with low investment in infrastructure and enterprise. Urban residents either depend on petty trade, manufactures and services or else, directly or indirectly, on government salaries and thus oil-wealth. In the classic model, urban migrants remit profits, stimulate innovation and bring other benefits back to the village; but in Nigeria at least there is a powerful flow of basic foodstuffs from rural areas to urban households and relatively little contra flow of ideas<sup>8</sup>. Indeed this is suggested by the fact that in recent years there has been a significant flow of households who cannot subsist in towns back to rural areas. This in turn suggests that this migratory flow is not labour-driven but opportunity-driven. In other words, you do not move to the city because there is a gap in the labour market you are equipped to fill (as would be the case in Accra or Abidjan) but rather because the concatenation of circumstances provides an opportunity to subsist. Indeed, perversely, the situation in Nigeria has led to an export of skills from rural areas where they are needed to towns where they are irrelevant. For example, managing soil and water conservation in stony soils requires both technical skills and the physical labour of younger men. If this segment of the population leaves for the town then they are lost to the rural area and negative consequences typically follow. Wealthy individuals in Nigeria do not usually represent a combination of talent, enterprise and hard work, but an effective use of kinship and residence networks combined with tenuous government accountability.

Historically, migration was largely confined to pastoral and fishing migration and the expansion of farmers practicing shifting cultivation. In the north, seasonal movement was associated with specific trades such as entertainers, musicians, potters, weavers and dyers. Rural-urban migration was on a negligible scale; pre-colonial cities were small. The coming of colonialism created a rapid change; not only was transport infrastructure improved but many industries opened up, creating demand for seasonal or permanent labour. The railways were an important factor in this; as soon as a north-south line was opened, traders began using it for movement of such high-value goods as colanuts. Tin-mining on the Jos Plateau is a good example of the permanent change wrought by industry; young men from communities all over the Plateau worked in the mines and began to exchange earned cash for consumer goods and to establish links with the city. Nigeria is both densely populated, has large urban complexes and is driven by ethnic and religious divisions, exacerbated by *laissez-faire* governance. As a consequence, civil conflict is common and has indeed increased markedly under the resent democratic regime, partly because of local perceptions of the self absorption of politicians and officials. These conflicts are usually only weakly covered in the media when they occur, especially if they are in rural areas, and they may or may not be settled by various conflict resolution processes. But the consequences are hardly ever investigated and documented, partly for the reason that this would present an image contrary to that considered desirable by government and partly because of the broader inadequacy of sociological research. One of the major consequences is population displacement both in rural areas and between towns and the countryside. The victim population either moves to another area or goes to stay with relatives in town. As a consequence, the refugees are much less visible than in the standard African situation with its tents, camps, predatory media, NGOs and donor conferences. Although the government in Nigeria makes announcements of offers of help, concrete results on the ground are few and displaced populations largely fend for themselves.

### Summary and Conclusions

Rural-urban migration is a critical issue in many developing countries particularly in nations where the gap in well-being between the rapidly growing metropolitan regions and rural areas are huge. The phenomenon portends great implication for rural livelihood, as the people who migrate are usually the more educated, young and determined. Socio-economic factors, such as, better employment and

educational opportunities, etc are the main reasons for people to migrate to Lagos. In the contemporary Nigeria, security of life and property constitute a major push factor in the migration from many communities reflected in the threatened or collapsed security situation in many parts of the country. Infrastructural development is being provided at great cost to many rural dwellers who need to sacrifice their ancestral land and communities for projects like dams and road construction.

Thus to reduce the movement to cities from rural areas, security of people in rural communities is paramount and must be pursued as a policy. Rural areas used to be envied for their serenity and security. This is fast disappearing and being replaced with chaos and sporadic killings by people are meant to be neighbours and friends. Moreover, the inequality between rural and urban economic prosperity must be reduced. Currently, the only place where legitimate aspirations for good quality of life appears to be the city which encourages uncontrolled and seeming uncontrollable movement towards the city. Finally, good governance must replace the present poor governance in both rural and urban centres.

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