

Internal Migration and Social Livelihood Networks in Uganda

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Africa is standing tall despite the economic downturn that has plagued most of the developed world. As the continent is gearing up to take more active role in the world economy it is only suitable to ask how moving labor force impacts to the cohesion of a multiethnic society on the one hand and to traditional social relations on the other. This paper observes internal labor migration in Uganda, where we have seen signs of frustration between internal migrants and local population. Currently Ugandan migration policies are concerned with international migration and its side effects such as brain drain and remittances. Despite the wide scale of internal population flows in the country the phenomenon has not attracted attention from policy makers nor from local academics.

This paper explores internal migration from the point of view of location of arrival. The questions this paper presents concerns (1) the operation of migrant networks and (2) how wide scale internal migration impacts to the cohesion of the multiethnic society and lastly (3) how high economic growth impacts to internal population movement patterns in Uganda. This paper produces information on how internal migrants adapt to life in their new surrounding and suggests possible policy options on how institutions, labor market and society at the location of arrival could be transformed to be more inclusive towards migrant population.

This paper draws on from quantitative and qualitative fieldwork undertaken for a PhD research between May-July 2010 in Kampala, Uganda. The material consists of a survey with a sample size of 645 combined with in-depth interviews with internal migrants and policy makers. The data was collected in Kampala which is the capital of Uganda and also the preferred destination for internal migrants in the country.