



Are Migrant Households better off than Non-Migrant Households? Evidence from Ghana

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationships between migration and poverty outcomes in Ghana. It draws upon data collected in 2013 on a sample of 1412 households. We provide a description of the survey methodology and interrogate the data to explore key characteristics of households with and without migrants, features of the migration decision and remittance patterns, and associations between migration and perceptions of poverty.. Our results suggest that while poor households find it difficult to embark on international migration, they are more able to access destinations within Ghana. Many of the migrants moved to another town or village in Africa for work-related reasons, notably job transfer, work, or seek work/better work. In view of inequalities in resource endowments, internal migrants tend to move from the relatively poorer Volta Region and the Northern Savannah zone to the Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions. Women are less likely to migrate than men because of their reproductive and care responsibilities. A higher dependency ratio lowers the probability of migrating for women, but not for men. This may imply that women's capacity or inclination to migrate is often constrained by their having to stay behind to take care of very young children or ageing parents. Young adults and highly educated people are more likely to migrate than other groups. Whereas majority of migrants were engaged in agricultural/farm activities before migration, the occupational dynamics of migrants changed and in favour of 'sales worker-ship'. Majority of the migrants sent remittances back to their families left behind, either in the form of cash or goods. Using questions around perceptions of poverty and well-being, we find that generally migration is viewed as being a route out of poverty. A slightly higher percentage of migrant households felt that their financial situation had improved a lot or somewhat improved compared to non-migrant households. Having current migrants within Ghana, either male or female, is associated with greater perceptions of adequacy of financial situation of the household, possibly suggesting a steady remittance flow helping to smooth income and consumption. However, male migrants are more likely to belong to households who report an improvement in their financial situation, while female migrants seem to be drawn more evenly across households. We conclude that internal migration is contributing positively to wellbeing of migrant's households. We therefore urge the need to incorporate internal migration into development policy in Ghana.

Table of Contents

List of figures	4
List of tables.....	5
1. Introduction.....	6
2. Conceptual Issues	7
2.1. Defining Migration	7
2.2. Definition and Measurement of poverty	8
2.3. Drivers of Migration and Determinants of Propensity to Migrate.....	9
2.4. Migration and Well-Being	11
3. Research Methodology	13
3.1. Study Areas.....	13
3.2. Data Collection and Sampling Strategy	13
4. Patterns and Characteristics of Migrant and Non- Migrant Households	15
4.2 Patterns and Incidence of Migration	15
4.3 Comparing Wealth Status of Migrant and Non-migrant Households	19
4.3. Multivariate Analysis of Propensity to Migrate	20
4.4. Migration Processes and Economic Activities of Migrants.....	23
4.4.1 Reasons for Migration.....	23
4.4.2 Role of Social Networks in the Migration Process	26
4.4.3. Financing Migration	29
4.5. Occupational Dynamics of Migrants and Remittances	30
4.6. Effects of Migration on the Well-being of Migrant Households	32
5. Conclusions	37
References	42

List of figures

Figure 1: Share (%) of destinations of internal current migrants.....	17
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Figure 2: Migration Incidence by Gender and Age Group.....	18
Figure 3: Migration incidence by Gender and Educational Attainment.....	19
Figure 4. Percent Distribution of Migrants by Reason for Migration.....	25
Figure 5: Financial situation of migrant households by type of migration.....	35

List of tables

Table 1: Determination of Sample size.....	15
Table 2: Migration Incidence by Region.....	16
Table 3: Household types by landholding and migration status.....	20
Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Migration by Gender, Age and Income Quartile.....	26
Table 5: Distribution of migrants by whether there was a contact person at destination prior to migrating	27
Table 6: Distribution of migrants by whether jobs were fixed for them prior to migration by gender and category of migration.....	29
Table 7: Person who helped migrants to find job prior to migration.....	29
Table 8: Source of Financing Migration by Gender (Multiple Responses).....	30
Table 9: Migrants' Occupation (Before and After).....	31
Table 10: Distribution of amount of remittances received by gender of migrant (sender) within last 12 months.....	32
Table 11: Subjective perception of financial situation and change over the past five years..	33
Table 12: Distribution of Households by Financial Situation by migration status.....	34
Table 13: Subjective perception of change in financial situation in past 5 years by migrant type.....	35
Table 14: Subjective perception of change in financial situation in past 5 years by main income source.....	36
Table A1: Propensity to Migrate Ghana.....	40

1. Introduction

With increasing globalization and urbanisation, migration flows have been on the increase (Skeldon, 2005; de Haas, 2008). In Africa, studies indicate that population movements are not only growing, but feminizing, diversifying and urbanising (Adepoju, 2005; Awumbila *et al.*, 2014), and also that their linkages with poverty reduction and wellbeing outcomes are complex and mixed. There is increasing evidence through micro-studies as well as larger surveys that migration can reduce poverty, inequality and can lead to the accumulation of household wealth and contribute to overall economic growth and development in both sending and receiving areas (IOM, 2005, Ravallion *et al.* 2007; Yaro, 2008; Murrugarra *et al.* 2011).

While migration can represent a livelihood and adaptation strategy in response to a wide variety of events and structural shifts (Awumbila *et al.* 2014a), the actual welfare impacts of this phenomenon has been a source of debate in the literature. About three decades ago, the negative effects of migration dominated the literature. It was argued that migration often negatively affects socio-economic development of sending areas, as a result of shortage of labour, declining productivity, and brain drain. Migrant receiving areas were also assumed to record many problems, including pressure on social amenities, emergence of slums, increased unemployment, and declining standards of living (Owusu *et al.* 2008). In recent years, it has been recognised that if properly managed, migration can contribute to the socioeconomic transformation of the economies of both developed and developing countries. There is increasing evidence to suggest that migration can be a reaction to severe poverty, or a chosen livelihood strategy to improve upon household wealth (Srivastava 2005). According to Ajaero and Onokala (2013:1), migration acts as a catalyst in the transformation process of not only the destiny of individual migrants but also the conditions of family members left behind, local communities, and the wider sending regions thereby improving their welfare. Despite its potential for improving livelihoods of poor people, as well as the positive changes in both sending and receiving areas, the relationship between migration and wellbeing of migrants' households has, historically, received little attention in both academic and policy circles (Srivastava 2005; Awumbila *et al.* 2014a).

In recent years, the migration literature has given considerable coverage to international migration and its welfare impacts (see for instance, Adams and Page 2005; Mazzucato *et al.* 2005; Ratha *et al.* 2011), yet only few researchers have examined the welfare impacts of internal and intra-regional migration in Africa (see Litchfield and Waddington 2003; Adams *et al.* 2008; Castaldo *et al.* 2012). In the West Africa sub-region, the focus is often placed on migration to the global north, even though about 84 percent of emigrants from West African countries travel to destinations within the sub-region (Awumbila *et al.* 2014b).

As in other parts of Africa, even though internal migration is a very important feature of households' livelihoods in Ghana, the relationship between internal migration and socio-economic development, in the country, is neither adequately explored nor understood. While some studies have shown that large differences in income and living standards between rural and urban areas contribute to rural-urban migration (Anarfi *et al.* 2000; Awumbila *et al.* 2011), it is not clear if such movements lead to poverty reduction in migrants households. Against this background, this paper aims to examine the relationships between internal and intra-regional migration and poverty in Ghana, and in particular throw more light on the factors that mediate the impacts of migration on poverty, human development and wellbeing in sending areas. The overarching research question is: 'under what circumstances does migration help poor people move out of poverty in Ghana in sending areas?'

2. Conceptual Issues

In order to provide an illuminating context for the analysis to be performed in this paper, this section presents the definitions and measurements of the key concepts that are used in the paper. More specifically, the section reviews the literature on the concept of migration, measurement of poverty, propensity to migrate, and the nexus between migration and wellbeing.

2.1. Defining Migration

While migration is an important human strategy which has been part of the human history, there is no universally accepted definition for the process. This is partly due to the heterogeneity of the processes and experiences involved (Awumbila *et al.* 2014). Consequently, a person considered a migrant in one context may not be seen as such in another (Songsore, 2003: 5). The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) defines a migrant as a person

who has moved and stayed at his/her current place of residence for at least a year (GSS 2008). This definition does not capture seasonal migrants, who tend to stay at their places of residence for less than a year (Awumbila et al. 2014a). Drawing on Bilsborrow et al (1984, 146), we define a migrant as anyone who used to live in the household and left to go away from the village/town/city in the past 10 years, and with duration of absence, or intended absence, of at least 3 months. We also used the term return migrant to refer to an individual who has been away for at least 3 months over the past 10 years, and who has lived in his/her native place for the last 12 consecutive months.

2.2. Definition and Measurement of poverty

Poverty is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon and means different things to different people. Each definition has its own implicit assumptions that cannot be overlooked. According to the World Bank (2000:15), poverty is defined as “pronounced deprivation in well-being”. This definition entails achievement in education and healthcare and not only material wellbeing or income. Sen (1999:87) also defines poverty as “the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of incomes”. Based on this multidimensional view we conceptualised poverty to entail lack of capabilities to function which may include lack of income, malnutrition, lack of access to education, poor health, insecurity and shelter among others (see also GSS 2007:1).

There are various approaches to the measurement of poverty. One of this is the use of income to measure absolute poverty, which is defined by reference to particular quantitative measure used to distinguish the poor from the non-poor (Frye, 2005). The absolute terms reflects the lack of sufficient resources to meet a specified minimum quantum of basic needs which is usually established based on the cost of purchasing a minimum basket of goods and other essential items necessary for human survival (Todaro and Smith, 2011:212). The World Bank’s definition of poverty with reference to this specified amount is a minimum threshold of \$1.25 US a day. In Ghana, there are two poverty lines, namely an Upper level and Lower or extreme level (GSS, 2007). The Upper poverty line is defined as incomes of up to GH¢ 371 (USD\$ 166.90) a year per adult. The lower or extreme poor refers to the people with incomes below GH ¢ 285 (USD\$ 128) a year. While the above income measurement is useful for comparing poverty levels in different geographical regions (World Bank 2000:16), it ignores

other dimensions of well-being such as literacy, good health, security among others (Cohen 2009:24). As Lima et al. (2011) have argued, poverty is complex and multidimensional, and hence it is difficult to be reduced to a single dimension of human life. While being aware that no combination will be sufficient to reflect the multi-dimensions and diverse types and experiences of poverty (Sabates-Wheeler *et al.* 2005), we collected data on income levels but also measured poverty based on respondents' subjective assessment of the overall well-being of their households.

2.3. Drivers of Migration and Determinants of Propensity to Migrate

All over the world, wage differentials, economic disparities, and unemployment differentials, often explained by the "push-pull model", are considered as the most important drivers of migration flows especially from a less wealthy region to a wealthier one (see for example Hannan 1970; Harris and Todaro 1970). The unbearable or threatening conditions (push factors) in the originating place triggers migration whereas the incentives (pull factors) in the destination communities pulls migrants (Lee 1966). These incentives may represent better employment opportunities, easier access to social services and favourable political or cultural environment. However, these factors represent a very complex set of inter-relationships that determines the propensity to migrate. Faced with the same economic situation, some people will migrate while others may choose to remain (Nowok 2011:1). This is because various socio-demographic variables (e.g. age, gender, marital status, income levels, level of education etc) determine the propensity to migrate (de Hass 2008; Teye et al. 2014) as discussed below.

In terms of age and migration, some studies have established that young adults are more mobile than older people. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM, 2013), the youth constitute about 30% of international migrants. In Ghana, Ackah and Medvedev (2010) found that the probability of being a migrant rises until a person turns 36 years old, and decreases thereafter. There are also gender variations in propensity to migrate. Although migration is increasingly being feminised in West Africa, males still dominate migration streams in the regions (Adepoju 2005; Awumbila et al 2014b). Gender also influences the purpose of migration (Eapen 2004; Banerjee and Raju 2009). In Ghana, women move internally for marriage much more often than men, while men moved for education much more than women in Ghana (Awumbila et al, 2014a). Similarly, Castaldo et al. (2012)

found that, in Ghana and India, women are more likely to migrate for marital reasons than men. However, men are more likely to migrate for work related reasons (job transfer, business, or to seek employment) than women. Evidence from other studies also suggest that for women, the probability of getting married to a wealthier husband tend to be the main economic motive to migrate but not employment. A study by Behrman and Wolfe (1984) in Nicaragua supports this assertion as women moving from rural to urban areas of Nicaragua generally did so not for economic reason but the probability of finding a spouse is a motivating factor. However, Findley and Diallo (1993) study in rural Mali as well as Chen (2004) study of women in rural China did not support the earlier assertion that women migrate to the cities to find a wealthier husband. Rather, they migrate from rural to urban areas primarily for employment reasons and not just for the probability of marrying a rich husband. Marital status also determines propensity to migrate, especially among women. Single women have a greater probability of migrating than married women.

The educational background of a migrant also determines the propensity to migrate. Most studies of on international migration revealed that increase in schooling stimulates migration. The more educated people tend to move more compared to less educated (Richter and Taylor, 2007). Ackah and Medvedev (2010) have reported that in Ghana a migrant's educational attainment is correlated with an increased probability to migrate. Their study further revealed that once people complete a secondary or tertiary education, their probability to migrate rises significantly. Their study showed that at the household level, however, migrants are less likely to come from households with a more educated head. The more educated household head may serve as a proxy for opportunities available to the migrant at home. Thus, the more educated the household head, the better-off the household, which reduces the economic incentives to migrate (Ackah and Medvedev 2010:7).

Income is another important determinant of the propensity to migrate. Evidence from the literature suggests that due to the financial cost of travelling, migrants are often not from the poorest households or regions (Shaw 2007). According to van der Geest (2011), poor people are likely to travel for only short distances internally. However, Sabates-Wheeler et al. (2005) argued that in Ghana, the poor are most likely to migrate than other groups. Access to natural resources, including land and range of economic activities, also determine whether a person

will migrate or not. Castaldo et al. (2012:11), using the 2000 Population and Housing Census of Ghana, observed that there is a high level of migration from less economically successful to more economically successful regions in Ghana. The study revealed that in Ghana, Upper West migrants tended to go to the Brong Ahafo and Ashanti regions primarily, whilst Upper East migrants went to the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Western regions (Castaldo et al. 2012). McKay and Quartey (2008) observed that the Ashanti region in Ghana attracts more migrants from the north of the country, due to its cocoa plantations, whilst the Western region has been a major point of attraction due to cocoa production and mines. This explains that the range of economic opportunities available in some of the regions is also another important factor determining propensity to migrate and the choice of destination by migrants (Castaldo et al. 2012).

Additionally, Afsar(2005) has argued that limited access to land and ecological vulnerability can also induce migration. According to Kuhn (2000), land holders tend to migrate less compared to the landless households. However, this view was contested by Hossain (2001), who reported that households who have larger land properties actually migrate more often than those with smaller bits of land. His explanation is that in some rural communities, those with large land properties are wealthy, and therefore able to finance the migration of their members. Therefore the issue of land ownership and migration is not always straight forward in the migration literature. Social networks have also been identified as a key determinant of propensity to migrate (Yaro et al 2011; Richter and Taylor 2007). Networks convey information and provide assistance to prospective migrants (Yaro et al. 2011).

2.4. Migration and Well-Being

Migration has featured prominently as a livelihood strategy adopted by many people to improve living standards. Whether the decision to migrate is made at the individual or household level, usually the motivation to migrate is to improve one's well-being (Lipton 1980; de Haan 1999). The economic theories of migration also assumes that migrants move from one place to the other if there is an expected net gain to lifetime utility from doing so (Andrews et al. 2007:2). Notwithstanding the cost of undertaking migration in search for employment opportunities, integrating into a new environment amongst others, there is also the benefits of enhanced job opportunities, remuneration and remittances to enhance

migrant's well-being and the family members left behind (Sjaastad, 1962; Clark and Whittaker 2007). As such migration can act as a catalyst in the transformation process of not only the destiny of individual migrants but also the conditions of family members left behind, local communities, and the wider sending regions thereby improving their welfare (Ajaero and Onokala, 2013:1).

It is often assumed that one of the mechanisms by which migration can improve the wellbeing of households left behind is through remittances (Quartey 2006; Guzman et al, 2007; World Bank, 2013). Remittances from migrants serve as a source income for savings and investment (Quartey and Blankson 2004), thereby leading to growth and development of the economy (Taylor 1996). In Mali, remittances are used to cover basic food and cash needs and for paying for irrigation in agriculture (Findley and Sow 1998). Internal remittances play a potentially important role in improving welfare and reducing poverty in Ghana and India (Castaldo et al. 2012). Awumbila et al, (2014) report that in Ghana, parents encouraged the migration of their sons and daughters to the cities in order to enhance the financial situation of the family at the origin.

The actual impact of migration on home country welfare and development is not simple. Remittances reduce poverty in some countries but not in other countries (Cuong et al 2009:3; Quartey and Blankson 2004). According to Cuong et al, (2009:3), as an insurance, migrants will tend to remit more money when their family members who stayed behind experience a decrease in income. On the other hand, recipients may become dependent on remittances, and fall into poverty when the migrant stops sending money. This makes the relationship between remittances and poverty reduction unclear. Uncertainty about the net effects of internal migration and welfare patterns are recorded in empirical literature in Ghana. Litchfield and Waddington (2003) using GLSS rounds 3 and 4 examined the welfare outcomes of the migrants in Ghana using welfare indicators such as household consumption expenditure, poverty status, and school enrolment of children. Multivariate analysis provided mixed results: migrant households have statistically significantly higher standard of living than non-migrant household consumption expenditure. However, in terms of non-monetary welfare indicators the difference was not statistically significant.

Boakye-Yiadom (2008) found that even though a small percentage of migrants incurred welfare losses, migration on the whole enhanced considerably the welfare of migrant's from rural areas to the urban areas. One of the more recent studies by Ackah and Medvedev (2010) found that internal migration turns out to only be beneficial for a subset of Ghanaian households who send migrants to urban other than the rural areas. Despite this, the study however found evidence that households with migrants tend to be better off than similar households without migrants.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Study Areas

This study aimed at providing data on migration patterns and welfare impacts in dominant migrants sending areas in Ghana. The study was conducted in five regions, namely the Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Brong Ahafo and the Volta regions. These regions were selected on the basis of data provided from the 2010 Ghana Population and Housing census by the Ghana Statistical Service, which indicated that these regions were the major source areas of internal migration in Ghana. In addition, the Brong Ahafo region was selected because it is both a major source as well as a major destination region (GSS 2010). These regions also represent various ecological zones of Ghana. The Northern, Upper East, Upper West regions are located in the northern savannah zone. The climate of this zone is relatively dry, with a single rainy season that begins in May and ends in October. The annual rainfall amount varies between 750 mm and 1050 mm. The natural vegetation of the area is that of the Guinea Savannah woodland and the Sudan Savannah. Most of the people in these regions are farmers, although some people are also involved in trading activities. On the other hand, the Brong Ahafo and the Volta regions are located in the forest zone of Ghana, although the vegetation of the Volta region has been largely converted into savannah. These two regions experience double rainfall maxima in May – June and September – October. Majority of the people in these two regions are also farmers although trading activities are also important.

3.2. Data Collection and Sampling Strategy

The specific primary data collection technique was a questionnaire survey, which was undertaken between September 2012 and May, 2013. Even though the researchers were

aware of the limitations of such a dichotomous approach, especially regarding its rigid nature and not providing opportunities for in-depth exploration of issues (Bryman 2006), it was deemed appropriate for this study because of its strengths such as providing quantifiable data for establishment of trends, patterns, comparison, and generalisation of findings (see. Castro *et al.* 2010; Teye 2012)

A two-staged stratified sample design was used. At the first stage, a sample size of 1500 migrant and non-migrant households were selected from the five migrant source regions in Ghana. The list of enumeration areas (EAs) from the 2010 Population and Housing Census within the five selected regions was used as the sampling frame. Number of EAs selected from each region was proportional to the total number of out-migrants from that region as shown in Table 1. The Ghana Statistical Service produced a map of each region, showing the boundaries of the selected PSUs. At the second stage, a systematic sampling technique with a random start was used to select migrant and non-migrant households from the selected EAs. A screener survey was used at this stage to determine households which have absent migrants, seasonal migrants and or returned migrants. Field Assistants made a sweep of the PSU to enumerate and list all inhabited domestic addresses. The household records were then compiled into an address sampling frame stratified by non-migrant and migrant households. The migrant category was then stratified into the following three groups: seasonal migrants, returned migrants and absent out-migrants. Four households in the non-migrant stratum and 11 households in the migrant stratum (the two categories added up to the required 15 households in each EA) were then randomly selected for interview. The selection procedure thus ensured that about 400(26.7%) of the 1500 households come from non-migrants households (i.e. control group), while the remaining 1100 are selected from migrants households. We selected more people from migrants' households so as to ensure that we have more respondents in the various categories of migrants. In total, 1412 households eventually took part in the research, giving a response rate of 94 percent, though response rates for certain questions (especially those on income of migrants and training at the destination) was much lower due to insufficient knowledge on the part of the respondents about absent migrants.

Data concerning the selected households as units, and individual members of those households, was collected through face-to-face interviews with household members, usually

an adult who could speak for the household. Respondents answered questions about the household itself and also about themselves, if they have been migrants during the previous ten years, and were also asked to supply information about household members who were currently absent as migrants.

Table 1: Determination of Sample size

Region	Number of out-migrants	Number of EAs Selected	Total Number of Households (based on number of EAs)
Volta	681,833	32	480
Brong Ahafo	399,687	19	285
Northern	433,121	21	315
Upper East	328,990	16	240
Upper West	252,841	12	180
Total	2,096,472	100	1500

Source: Computed by authors based on data from GSS (2010)

4. Patterns and Characteristics of Migrant and Non- Migrant Households

This section begins by describing the incidence of migration across the whole sample and then by key characteristics including gender and education. We then explore characteristics of migrant and non-migrant households, in particular focusing on assets and well-being.

4.1 Patterns and Incidence of Migration

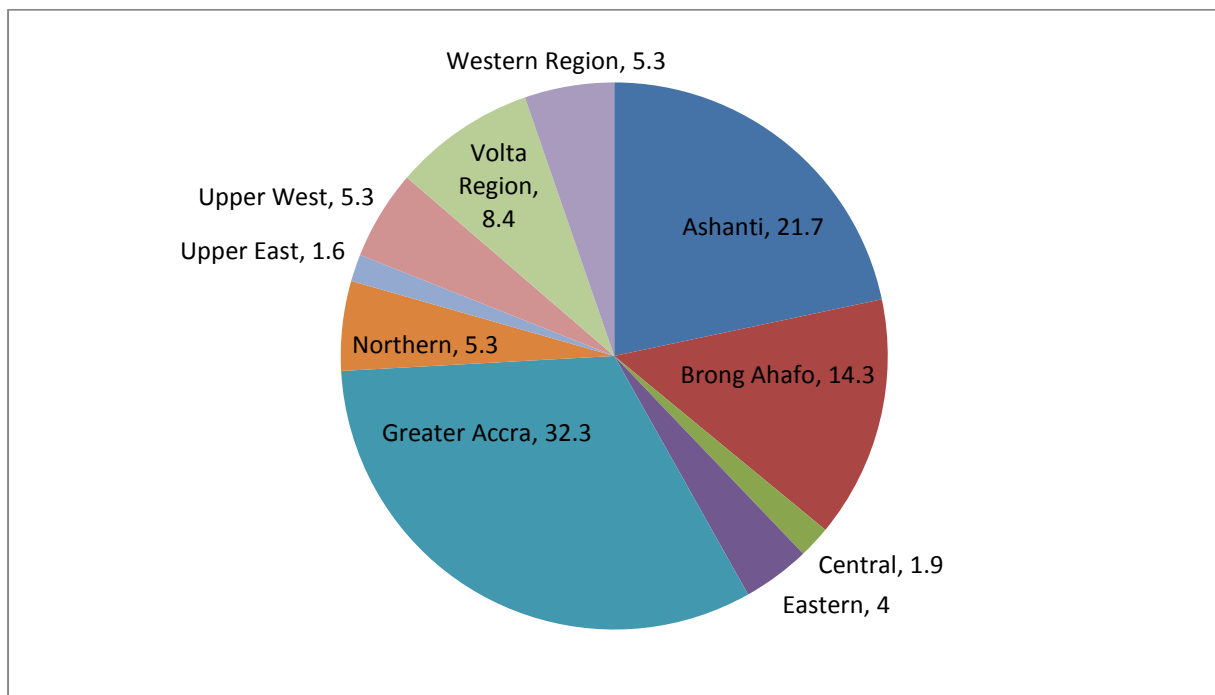
Given that incidence of migration may vary across space and among different groups (GSS 2008; Ackah and Medvedev, 2010), we examined the relationships between incidence of migration and certain socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status, and level of education. We define migration incidence as the number of migrants, expressed as a percentage of the total number of migrants and non-migrants, where the non-migrants are the migrants' former household members who have remained at the migrants' place of origin. The overall migration incidence of the sample is 16.40 percent. However, there are differences in the incidence of migration across the five administrative regions of Ghana. As shown in Table 2, the Volta Region registered the highest incidence (34.35 percent), whilst the lowest incidence (13.94 percent) was found in the Northern Region.

Table 2 Migration Incidence by Region

Region	Total		Male		Female	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Brong Ahafo	279	17.05	188	18.82	91	14.29
Northern	228	13.94	143	14.31	85	13.34
Upper East	292	17.85	202	20.22	90	14.13
Upper West	275	16.81	170	17.02	105	16.48
Volta	562	34.35	296	29.63	266	41.76
Total	1,636	100	999	100	637	100

With regards to the destinations of the migrants, the largest group (32.3 percent) of internal migrants moved to the Greater Accra Region, followed by the Ashanti Region (21.7%), and Brong Ahafo Region (14.3%) (see Figure 1). The Upper West, Central, Eastern and Volta regions received a very small proportion of internal migrants. The regional breakdown reveals that overall women have a lower incidence of migration than men, but that there is regional variation. Notably the Volta recorded a higher incidence of female migration. The migration patterns observed here can be explained in terms of inequalities in socio-economic conditions in Ghana. The greater Accra region, which hosts the capital city of Ghana, tends to attract many migrants because it has the greatest access to modern infrastructure and services. It attracted a net increase of 310 per 1000 population in 2000, while the least developed Upper West and Upper East regions recorded net loss of 332 per 1000 and 219 per 1000 population respectively (GSS 2005a; Awumbila et al 2014a). Similarly, the Ashanti region attracts many migrants because it is relatively more developed with its capital (Kumasi) serving as the second largest city in Ghana. The region is also quite wealthy as a result of the production of cocoa, minerals, timber and a growing service sector. The Brong Ahafo Region has also historically served as a migrant destination for poor farmers from the northern savannah zone (Van der Geest, 2011), as well as the eastern and the Volta regions. Our findings are consistent with the argument of Castaldo et al. (2012) that people tend to migrate from poor areas to more economically successful regions in Ghana. Consistent with the Mobility Transition Theory (see Zelinsky, 1971; Skeldon, 1997), our findings suggest that poorer regions (e.g. Upper East, Upper West, Northern and Volta regions) tend to produce rural –urban migrants, while resource rich and developed regions (e.g. Greater Accra; Ashanti and Brong Ahafo) tend to produce international migrants (Mazzucato *et al.* 2008).

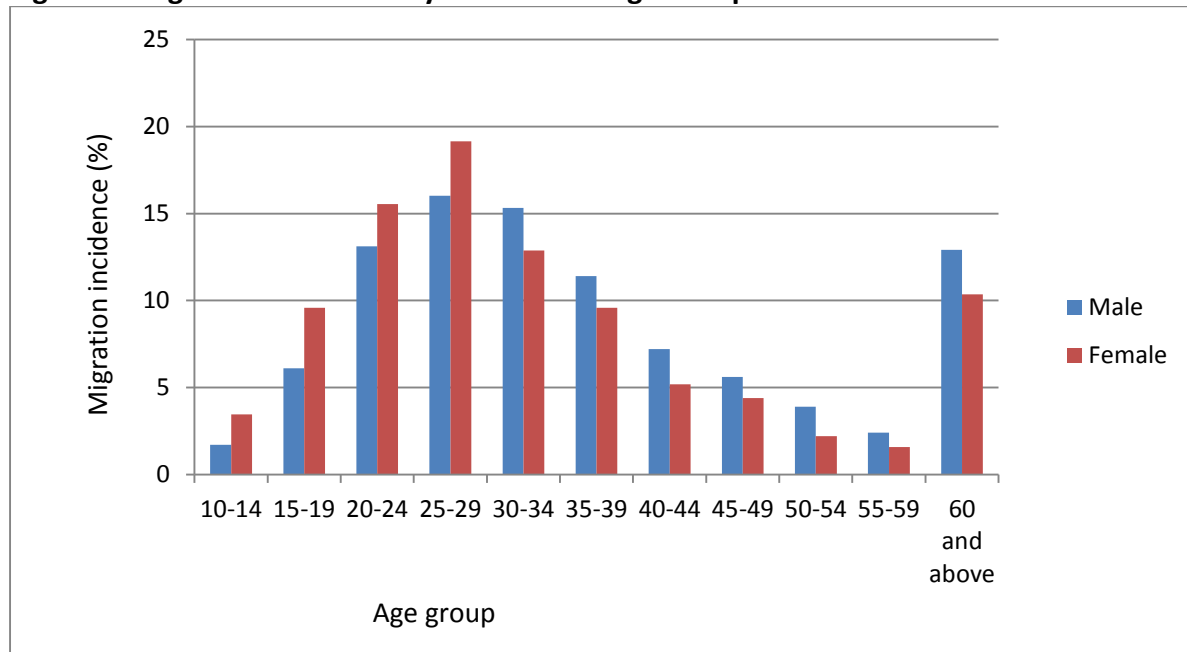
Figure 1: Share (%) of destinations of internal current migrants



In terms of gender, the incidence of migration is higher amongst males (20.95 percent) than females (11.80 percent). This shows that even though there is a general feminisation of migration in the entire West African region (see Adepoju, 2005; Awumbila et al 2014b), internal migration in Ghana (especially from dominant migrant sending areas) is still male-dominated. An analysis of the data further shows an interesting pattern of variations in migration incidence across age groups. As seen in Figure 2, the gradual feminisation of migration is suggested by the higher incidence of migration among younger women than younger men, and the switch at around age 30 may be due to a combination of increased reproductive responsibilities for women and simply a larger historical stock of male migrants. Generally migration incidence increases with age until a peak (25.5 percent) is reached at age group 30 – 34 years, after which the migration incidence decreases consistently across the remaining age groups. The lowest migration incidence (2.0 percent) is registered for the 10 – 14 age group. Similar to earlier findings reported elsewhere (see GSS 2008; Ackah and Medvedev 2010), young adults, aged 25 to 29 years, constitute the largest proportion of migrants. The high level of youth migration has been noted in many developing countries. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM 2013), the youth are the most mobile social groups in migration, constituting about 30% of international migrants. Similarly,

the World Bank (2007) reported that young people are 40 percent more likely to move from rural to urban areas or across urban areas than older individuals.¹

Figure 2: Migration Incidence by Gender and Age Group

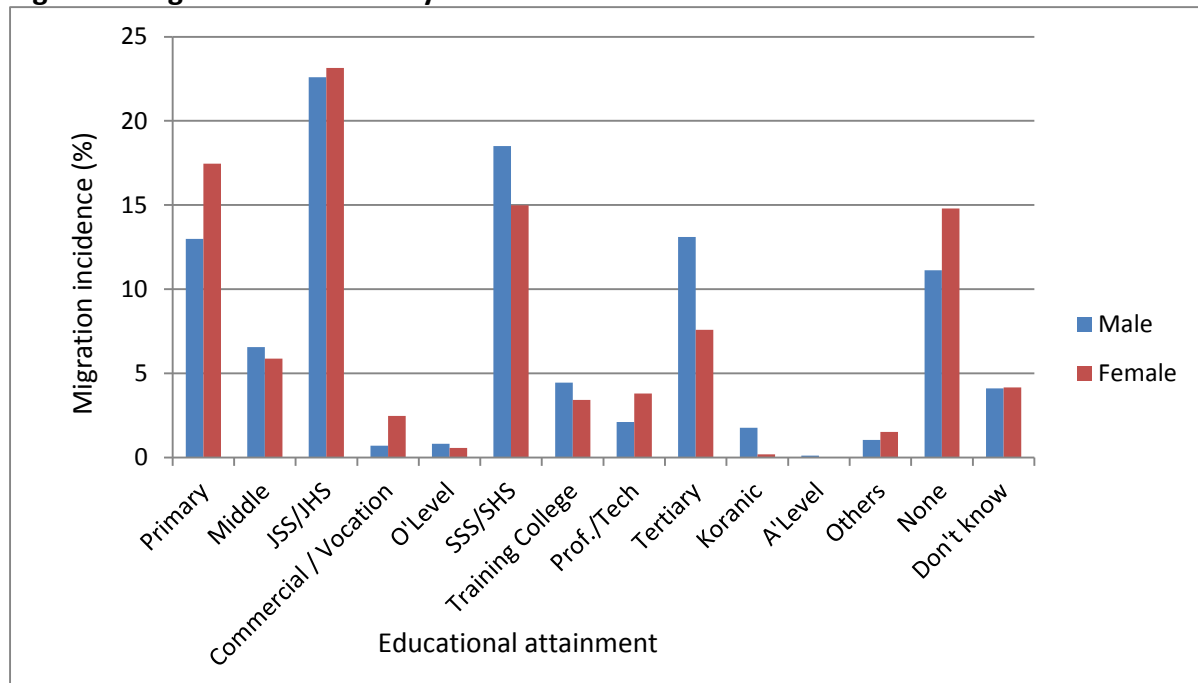


Regarding the migration incidence for different categories of marital status, the highest incidence (20.2 percent) is found amongst the divorced, followed by married (18.1%), single (15.9%), separated (11.6%) and widowed (3.3%). It is important to note, however, that the uncertain nature of marital status makes it difficult for definite conclusions to be drawn from these statistics, especially since marital status is not a permanent characteristic.

The incidence of migration also varies across educational attainment categories. The highest incidence of 32.9 percent is found among persons with professional or technical educational attainments, while the lowest incidence of 5.3 percent is found among persons whose highest educational level is Koranic education (see Figure 3). The data shows that the higher the level of education, the higher the incidence of migration. Similar findings have been reported elsewhere. In one study in northern Ghana, Van der Geest (2011:170) reported that educated people prefer to migrate to urban centres than illiterate or less educated people. There is little difference by gender among the main education groups of primary, and secondary level.

¹ The high incidence of migration among those aged 60 or over is likely to reflect longer term migration.

Figure 3: Migration incidence by Gender and Educational Attainment



4.2 Comparing Wealth Status of Migrant and Non-migrant Households

A number of studies have suggested that wealth status determines whether a person will migrate or not (William Shaw 2007; Mazzucato *et al.* 2008; Van der Geest, 2011). In order to answer the question of whether migrant-sending households are wealthier than non-migrant-sending households, we first used mean income levels to compare the two groups. While it would have been more useful to compare the mean incomes of non-migrant-sending households with that of migrant-sending households prior to their “sending out” of migrants, we do not have information on income status of migrant-sending households prior to their “sending” migrant(s). Consequently, we have to rely on the current income levels of the two groups. Our results indicate that the average income² of non-migrant-sending and migrant-sending households were, respectively 3,949.03 Ghana Cedis and 3,191.05 Ghana Cedis. The results indicate that non-migrant-sending households are economically better off than migrants sending households. Our findings contradict the general view that poor households are less likely to migrate compared to wealthy households (Mazzucato *et al.* 2008; Awumbila *et al.* 2014a). The findings, however, support the observation of Sabates-Wheeler *et al.* (2005) that in Ghana, the poor are most likely to migrate than wealthier groups. It is possible that

² Income here is defined as income from all sources, including public and private transfers but not net of any taxes.

one reason why migrant-sending households are poorer is the fact that this study largely focused on internal and intra-regional migrants who move within Africa. We therefore argue that while poorer households may find it difficult to embark on international migration to destinations outside the African continent, they tend to migrate internally, often in search of economic opportunities, while wealthier households are more likely to migrate internationally.

Given the assertions in the literature that land ownership is related to propensity to migrate (Kuhn (2000; Hossain 2001; Afsar 2005), we also examined land ownership status of migrants and non-migrants households. As shown in Table 3, our results indicate that there is a greater tendency for migrant-sending households to be landholders. While 53 percent of non-migrant households are landholders, the corresponding statistic for migrant-sending households is 62.7 percent. This finding was unexpected given the claims in the literature that landholders tend to migrate less compared to the landless households (Kuhn 2000). Again, care must be taken in interpreting this result, as it is not clear whether the land was purchased after experiencing migration. It is possible that some households with migrants were landless at the time of migration, but acquired their lands subsequently, perhaps with the help of remittances.

Table 3: Household types by landholding and migration status

Landholding status	Household Type					
	Households with no migrants		Households with migrants		Total	
Landholding	224	53%	620	63%	844	60%
Non-landholding	199	47%	369	37%	568	40%
Total	423	100%	989	100%	1,412	100%

4.3. Multivariate Analysis of Propensity to Migrate

While the above descriptive statistics on incidence of migration are useful to the extent that they provide a very simple way of establishing relationships between variables of interest, they are limited because other factors that might also have an influence on the variables being considered were not controlled. Given this limitation of descriptive statistics that are based on cross-tabulations, we employed econometric analyses to enhance our understanding of

factors that might influence migration decisions. Our econometric analysis of factors that influence the migration decision has generated results that complement the information provided by the descriptive statistics. In discussing these results, however, we acknowledge the limitations posed by some of the variables, in view of the fact that their values are not necessarily the values at the time of the decision to migrate. Nevertheless, we believe that the results are worth noting and provide useful insights and pointers for further analysis.

In order to shed light on some of the factors that affect the migration decision we model the determinants of an individual in our sample being a current migrant or not. Recall that our sample contains households that have migrants and also households that do not, and that furthermore households with migrants will also have individuals that have remained at home. We therefore model the migration decision at the individual level using characteristics of the individual person such as age, gender and education; characteristics of the household such as land ownership, dependency ratio and gender of the household head; and a variable that captures migration from the local area. We use a probit estimation approach to model the binary decision of being a migrant or not, and we estimate three models, one for the whole sample and then for males and females separately. Our results are shown in Appendix 1.³ We caution again about drawing conclusions about causality from these results which we aim to address in further work and stress that these results can only be taken to show associations.

The first striking result is that women are less likely to be migrants than men, once we control for other differences between men and women. Furthermore, male migrants are more likely to be from female headed households.⁴ These two findings are plausibly a reflection of the likelihood that as male household heads migrate, their wives often assume headship of the household. Studies in northern Ghana for instance, have shown a scenario whereby men usually migrate seasonally or permanently to work on cocoa farms in the forest zone (Van der Geest, 2011), thereby leaving their wives behind to serve as *de facto* household head.

³ The table reports both probit coefficients and marginal effects. Marginal effects are the more readily interpretable results and indicate the effect on the probability of migrating of a unit change in the corresponding explanatory variable. Thus a positive marginal effect indicates that an increase in the value of the X variable increases the probability of a person being a migrant; a negative suggests it decreases the probability.

⁴ It is possible that in the temporary absence of the male head, his spouse may take on head responsibilities. We enabled households to identify their own heads of household rather than imposing a strict set of criteria.

Continuing with the gender story, we observe some sensitivity of both male and female migration to household reproductive and caring responsibilities than men. A higher dependency ratio (defined as the share of children and elderly people in the household) lowers the probability of migrating for both men and women. This suggests that an individual's capacity or inclination to migrate is often constrained by their having to stay behind to take care of young children or ageing parents. This life-cycle feature of migration is supported by our next result that young adults (i.e. aged 15-24 years) are more likely to be current migrants, although interestingly this is only true for men.

Turning to wealth and income, our results appear to suggest a negligible negative effect of household income⁵ on the probability of a person migrating. As noted already, given that the income variable captures current income, and not income at the time of the migration decision, our comments on this finding can only be very tentative. As argued already, the fact that this study largely focuses on internal migration which is relatively cheaper to undertake may explain why there is no significant relationship between income levels and intention to migrate. Additionally, since income is plausibly also captured by other variables, such as the educational attainment of household members, the small income effect is not surprising. Our results for land holdings suggest there is no significant effect of owning land on being a current migrant, so again there is no evidence to suggest that migrants are more or less likely to come from poorer households.

Our data allows us to identify migration levels from the district and we find that previous migration from the district encourages further migration, and this is slightly larger for men than women. This variable may reflect differences between districts in employment opportunities, agricultural productivity or availability of public services, all of which are plausibly linked to push factors for migration. However they may also serve to act as a proxy for network effects, lowering information asymmetries facing potential migrants. Individuals with a contact at the prospective destination are much more likely to be migrants, thus lending credence to the influence of network effects.

⁵ Income here is annual total income per capita from all sources. Alternative model specifications included income measured in natural logarithms but results were not qualitatively different to those presented here.

Regarding the role of education, our regression results suggest that relative to having no education, the acquisition of secondary and, in particular, tertiary education significantly increases a person's likelihood of migrating. As noted already, given that the education variables are capturing the current educational status of migrants, and not their educational attainment at the time of migrating, caution must be exercised in drawing any strong link between the acquisition of secondary/tertiary education and the decision to migrate. However, as we show further in this paper, most migrants cite the reason for migrating as related to employment rather than education. This might give us the clearest evidence that migration is less common among people from very poor backgrounds. This finding is consistent with a study by Ackah and Medvedev (2010) which shows that migrant's educational attainment is correlated with increased probability to migrate. Their study revealed that once people complete a secondary or tertiary education in Ghana, their probability to migrate rises significantly.

4.4. Migration Processes and Economic Activities of Migrants

We now turn to an analysis of the migration process itself, exploring reasons for migration, how migration is financed and the importance of social networks.

4.4.1 Reasons for Migration

The distribution of current and returned migrants according to the main reasons for migration is shown in Figure 4. About 84 percent of all migrants moved to another town or village in Africa for work-related reasons, notably job transfer (15.6 percent), work (56 percent), or to seek work/better work (12.3 percent). A number of people also migrated for the purpose of getting married or joining a partner (10.4 percent). The fact that majority of the migrants moved to other places because of economic reasons imply that internal migration in Ghana can be attributed to inequalities in development indicators. This observation is consistent with earlier findings which indicated that a key characteristic of internal migration in Ghana is the strong 'pull' of income, employment, and other opportunities for personal success and development in the southern urban centres (Awumbila et al. 2011; Black et al. 2006).

Given recent suggestions that environmental change and associated declining agricultural yields are contributing factors in many migration flows, especially in poor regions of the world (Dietz et al., 2004; Odada et al. 2008; Warner, et al. 2009; Foresight 2011), we had expected that a greater percentage of migrants households would cite declining agricultural yields for migration of some of their members. Surprisingly, however, only 3.6 percent of the migrants reportedly migrated to other places because of declining agriculture yields. These unexpected findings may be explained by the fact that although environmental change and associated declining yields can be important contributing factors in many migration flows, they never act alone (Van der Geest, 2011). Again, as our recent regional research in two informal settlements in Accra has shown (see Awumbila et al. 2014), in quantitative studies, respondents are more likely to link their decisions to migrate to proximate economic opportunities (i.e. pull factors) at the destination (e.g. job opportunities) rather than the indirect push factors at the origin (such as declining yields). Indirect push factors, such as climate change, may only emerge more strongly during qualitative interviews.

Figure 4. Percent Distribution of Migrants by Reason for Migration

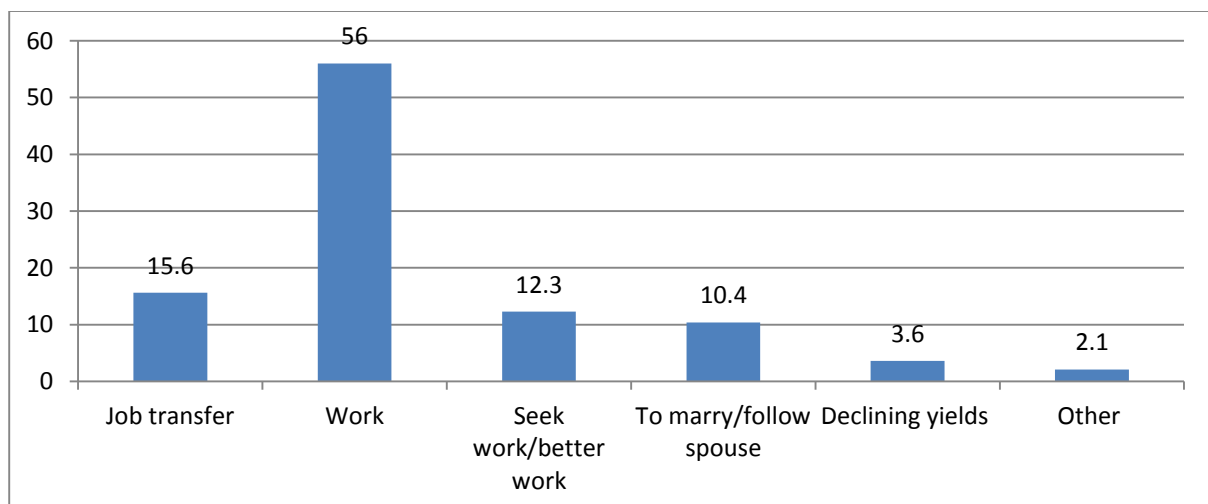


Table 4 presents the distribution of reasons for migration according to specific background variables, namely gender, age and income quintile. It is clear from this table that when reasons for migration are differentiated by gender, women moved for marital purposes (i.e. marriage or joining a partner) much more often than men (21.1 percent versus 3.9 percent). This may be related to the fact that, in the Ghanaian culture where patriarchal traditions are still strong, married women generally tend to move to stay with their spouses. On the other hand, men moved for work related purposes (e.g. work, seek work or transfer) much more than women (89.4 percent against 74.8 percent).

Younger migrants (aged 20 or less) were more likely to migrate for marital reasons than older migrants. This may be explained by the fact that older migrants may already be married at the origin and as such the propensity to travel for marital purposes may be low. When differentiated by income quintile, the reasons for migration do not vary significantly across the various groups. However, it was noticed that people in households in the top (5th) income quintile were more likely to migrate for job transfer than those in the poorest group.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Migration by Gender, Age and Income Quintile

Reasons for Migration		Job Transfer	Work	Seek work/better work	Get married/follow spouse	Declining yields in agriculture	Other	No of Respondents
<i>Variable</i>								
Gender	Male	17.8	60.3	11.3	3.9	4.4	2.2	992
	Female	12	49	13.8	21.1	2.1	2	608
Age (years)	10-15	11.8	14.7	44.1	23.5	0	5.9	34
	16-20	6.8	47.9	30.1	11.6	3.4	0	146
	21-30	12.6	57.4	14.7	9	2.9	3.3	578
	31-40	16.2	60.6	8.8	9.5	3.3	1.7	421
	41-56	24	55.6	2.9	9.9	6.6	1.2	242
	57-max	20.7	58.4	5.2	11.2	2.6	1.7	116
Income Quintile	1	13.9	55.7	11.1	12.7	4.9	1.6	244
	2	13.8	56.9	9.5	13.8	4.3	1.7	232
	3	18.1	57	10.1	7.2	6.8	0.8	237
	4	16.2	58.5	15	6.4	3	0.9	234
	5	26.3	44.7	15.7	8.8	2.3	2.3	217

4.4.2 Role of Social Networks in the Migration Process

The enabling role that networks of social capital play in the migration process has been extensively discussed in the literature (Jacobsen, 2002; Ostrom, 2005). Social capital refers to a resource held in networks made up of kin and non-kin which are implicit in the migration process (Boateng, 2012). Networks convey information and provide assistance to prospective migrants (Yaro et al 2011; Richter and Taylor 2007). The research team examined the importance of social capital in the migration process and job search at the destination. Various groups of respondents relied extensively on social networks for information on opportunities at the destination even before migrating. Data on contact persons at the destinations was collected on a total number of 1,611 return and current migrants. The majority (58.3 percent) of these migrants had a contact person at the destination prior to migrating. These findings support the view that social networks are relied upon by migrants in many parts of the world (Glick Schiller et al. 1995; Boateng, 2012; Teye and Yebileh, 2014).

Table 5. Distribution of migrants by whether there was a contact person at destination prior to migrating

Socio-Demographic variable		Migrants with a contact person
Gender	Male	541 (54.1%)
	Female	398 (65.1%)
Category of Migration	Internal Migrant	686 (59.1%)
	International Migrant	51 (71.8%)
	Internal return	180 (52.3%)
	International Return	22 (62.9%)
Region of Origin	Brong Ahafo	195 (67.7%)
	Northern	136 (48.2%)
	Upper East	121 (50%)
	Upper West	75 (32.8%)
	Volta	412 (72.3%)

As shown in Table 5, the proportion of women who had contact persons at the destination prior to migration was higher (65.1 percent) than the proportion of men with contacts at the destination prior to migrating (54.1 percent). This finding chimes well with the observation above that women are more likely to move for marital reasons but also suggests that men are generally more risk-taking than women. Consequently, women may be more likely to migrate to a new environment only when they have a contact person to assist them to settle down.

The data also shows that international migrants (i.e. migration to other parts of Africa) were more likely to rely on contact persons at the destination than internal migrants. For instance, while 71.8 percent of current international migrants had contact persons at the destination, only 59.1 percent of current internal migrants had contact persons at the destination prior to migrating. Similarly, 62.9 percent of international return migrants had contact persons at the destination, while only 52.3 percent of internal return migrants had contact persons at the destination prior to migrating. The differences may be explained by the fact that the challenges associated with international migration are many (e.g. problems of language, travel documents etc), and as such migrants are more likely to establish contacts before migrating to international destinations.

In relation to region of origin, the study shows that the proportion of migrants with contacts at the destination prior to migration was highest among migrants from the Volta (72.3 percent) and Brong Ahafo (67.7 percent) compared to the three northern regions (Upper East, Upper

West, and Northern regions). Only 32.8 percent of migrants from the Upper East region had contacts at the destination before migrating. This pattern may be explained by the fact that the northern regions are quite far from the main migrant destination areas in Southern Ghana. Consequently, migrants from these far and poorer regions may not have relatives and friends in the major destinations for such contacts. Poverty may also be an intermediate variable here. Given that the northern regions which are found in the savannah ecological zone are poorer (Songsore, 2009; Yaro, 2011), it is likely that the migrants from these regions are poorer and hence have no resources to establish such networks.

An attempt was also made to find out if most of the migrants had a job fixed for them by their contact persons prior to migrating to their new destination (Table 6). Only 21.6 percent responded that jobs were fixed for them prior to migrating to the destination. This figure shows that majority of the migrants moved at a time when they did not have a job at the destination. Not surprisingly given that women have a high probability of moving for marital reasons, men were slightly more likely to have a job fixed at the destination prior to migration than women (22.6 percent versus 19.8 percent). Current international migrants were less likely to have a job fixed for them prior to migration than internal migrants (17.4 percent versus 21.9 percent), despite having established contacts at the destination. However, international return migrants were more likely to have job fixed for them prior to migration than internal return migrant (25.7%). Thus, the relationship between category of migration (or destination) and the probability of having jobs fixed before migration is inconclusive. This may be related to the fact that the sample size for international migrants was small, as the study focused on internal migration.

Information was also gathered on persons who helped the migrants to find jobs before migrating to the destination. The responses are shown in Table 7. For both male and female migrants, relatives at the destination (e.g. aunts, cousins etc) provided a more significant role in securing a job. More specifically, 24.5 percent of female migrants and 26.4 percent of male migrants relied on relatives to fix a job before migrating. Recruitment agencies assisted 17.1 percent of women and 14 percent of men in securing a job. The relatively high percentage of migrants relying on these formal agencies to find jobs at a destination was unexpected, given

that the West African labour markets have historically been largely informal (Quartey, 2009; Awumbila et al 2014b).

Table 6: Distribution of migrants by whether jobs were fixed for them prior to migration by gender and category of migration

Socio-demographic Variable		Job fixed up prior to migration
Gender	Male	223 (22.6%)
	Female	119 (19.8%)
Category of Migration	Internal Migrant	251 (21.9%)
	International Migrant	12 (17.4%)
	Internal return	70 (20.8%)
	International Return	9 (25.7%)

Table 7: Person who helped migrant to find job prior to migration

Person who helped migrant to find a job prior to migration	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
Self	25	11.6	12	11.3
Father	15	6.9	6	6.4
Mother	6	2.8	5	3.4
Siblings	26	12	12	11.7
Relative	53	24.5	33	26.4
Community members	4	1.9	0	1.2
Recruitment agent	37	17.1	11	14.7
Others	50	23.1	31	24.8
Total	216	100	110	100

4.4.3. Financing Migration

The cost of travelling to a destination and arranging for initial accommodation have been identified as key intervening obstacles that can prevent people from migrating from economically deprived regions to places with better opportunities (de Hass, 2008; Teye et al 2014). In view of this, respondents in our study were asked to state how they financed their migration to the destinations. As shown in Table 8, majority of migrants (61% of men and 55% of women) relied on personal savings made at the origin for migration. This means that most of the migrants had prepared before embarking on the journey from the origin. Family and friends were another important source of financing migration for both males and females. This does not only support arguments about the important role of social networks in the migration process (see Yaro, 2011; Boateng, 2012; Teye and Yebleh, 2014), but more so

support the New Economics of Labour model which posits that migration decisions are not made by isolated individuals but by families or households to minimise the effects of economic shocks on household welfare (de Haas, 2008; Kwankye and Anarfi, 2011). A significant proportion of migrants also sold assets to finance their migration. However, males were slightly more likely to sell their assets (12.43 percent) than females (9.53 percent). This may be linked to the fact that men, in Ghana, tend to have more assets than females, or simply reflect that women migrants were often joining a spouse.

Table 8: Source of Financing Migration by Gender (Multiple Responses)

Sources of Finance	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female		No.	% of Cases
	No.	% of Cases	No.	% of Cases		
Savings	579	61.01	321	55.63	900	58.98
Formal loan	17	1.79	14	2.43	31	2.03
Loan from family	74	7.8	42	7.28	116	7.6
Borrowing from money lender	7	0.74	8	1.39	15	0.98
Advance from recruitment agent	13	1.37	5	0.87	18	1.18
Sale of assets	118	12.43	55	9.53	173	11.34
Gov't schemes	17	1.79	4	0.69	21	1.38
Scholarship	8	0.84	2	0.35	10	0.66
Remittances from other migrants in the HH	34	3.58	32	5.55	66	4.33
Family and friends	133	14.01	110	19.06	243	15.92
Others	26	2.74	29	5.03	55	3.6

4.5. Occupational Dynamics of Migrants and Remittances

As our findings indicate above, employment is a major reason for migrating. We analysed the occupational dynamics of migrants by identifying whether migration has led to a change in the migrant's occupation. Although data was available on only about 541 migrants, it is clear from Table 9 that migration has led to large changes in the occupation of migrants. Whereas majority of migrants were engaged in agricultural/farm activities before migration (about 41.8 percent), this drops to around half that after migration. We see increases in construction, production and services, with a notable increase in sales work (both formal employment in retail and informal street selling). Despite this trend, an analysis of the data, not shown here,

shows gender differentials. Of the 55 women previously engaged in farming, almost all remain in agriculture after migration.

Table 9: Migrants' Occupation (Before and After Migration)

Occupation of Migrants	Occupation			
	Before migration		After migration	
	N	%	N	%
Technician and Professionals	19	3.51	25	4.62
Administrative Staff	10	1.85	4	0.74
Sales Worker	79	14.6	133	24.58
Service Worker	75	13.86	87	16.08
Agricultural/farming	226	41.77	115	21.26
Transportation Operator	13	2.4	24	4.44
Construction Worker	41	7.58	64	11.83
Production Staff	19	3.51	28	5.18
Self employed	59	10.91	61	11.28
Total	541	100	541	100

We also examined the flows of remittances from migrants to the households left behind in our study communities. This was deemed very important given what we know that remittances still remain one of the mechanisms by which members of migrants households reap benefits of migration (Quartey, 2005). In many developing countries, a significant proportion of migrants, both internal and international, send remittances back to their families at home either in the form of cash or goods (Chiodiet *al.* 2010; Castaldo et al. 2012). Remittances are associated with greater human development outcomes on health, education and gender equality (World Bank, 2013). Remittances might also contribute to poverty reduction in areas of origin because of heavy cash flows (UN, 2002). While remittances may flow from both international and internal migrants, not much attention has been paid to internal remittances. The low attention paid to internal remittances, according to the World Bank (2011), is due to the fact that domestic transactions are not captured in the balance of payments by the central banks which are the main source used to compile data on international remittances. The low attention paid to internal remittances may also be a result of the informal channels used in sending money, which makes it difficult to capture them in official estimates of remittances.

Regarding non-financial remittances (goods received), the study shows that about 54.7 percent of male and 45.3% of female migrants sent remittances in the form of goods to households over the last 12 months. The goods received by households are diverse and include both food, clothing, medicine and school items as well as, electronic appliances, items for business and agricultural inputs. In relation to financial remittances, our data shows that many of the migrants have remitted money home in the 12 months prior to the research. Table 10 shows the total amount of money received by households according to gender of the sender. Around 46% of migrants send cash remittances, although the majority (75.4%) migrants who sent cash remittances remitted less than 1000 Ghana Cedis within the last 12 months prior to the research. When differentiated by gender, about 72.4 percent of the male remitters had sent less than 1000 Cedis whereas about 81.5 percent of their female counterparts had done same in the last 12 months. Only 2 percent and 2.8 percent of males and females respectively sent 5000 Cedis or more over the last 12 months. We intend to explore remittance behaviour in more detail in future comparative work.

Table 10: Distribution of amount of remittances received by gender of migrant (sender) within last 12 months

Amount received (GHC)	Gender of Migrant (sender)		Total	
	Male	Female	N	percent
	percent	percent		
< 1000	72.4	81.5	573	75.4
1000 – 1999	17.4	11.2	117	15.4
2000 – 2999	3.5	2	23	3
3000 – 3999	3.7	1.2	22	2.9
4000 – 4999	1	1.2	8	1.1
5000 +	2	2.8	17	2.2
Total	100	100	760	100

4.6. Effects of Migration on the Well-being of Migrant Households

Although the data set does provide some information on household incomes and assets, this is rather limited, since capturing reliable estimates of income and assets is difficult. We therefore chose to conduct our first analysis using the subjective self-perceptions of each household's financial situation and the change in this situation in the five years prior to the survey. A household is thus defined as being poor if, in its own view, its financial situation is less than adequate to meet its needs. While poverty is multidimensional and hence difficult

to be reduced to a single dimension of human life (Cohen 2009; Lima et al. 2011), such a subjective approach to its measurement is useful in understanding the feelings and experiences of the people involved (Bellu and Liberati 2005).

Households were first asked about the adequacy of their current financial situation to meet their household needs. The majority of households (70%) said that they had adequate resources. When asked about the financial situation of their households compared to 5 years ago, 58 percent of the households in the study area felt their financial situation had improved a lot or somewhat improved, with less than 6 percent feeling their financial situation had deteriorated a lot. Table 11 summarises the subjective views on changes in wellbeing. The majority of households in our sample do not consider themselves to be poor, and of these a majority reported that their situation had improved. Approximately a third of households consider themselves to be poor, and of these the majority report a deterioration or at best no change in their financial situation. This suggests a widening of the gap between the poor and non-poor in recent years.

Table 11: Subjective perception of financial situation and change over the past five years

	Inadequate		Adequate		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Improved	97	23.7	712	72.9	809	58.3
Deteriorated	204	49.8	90	9.2	294	21.2
No change	109	26.6	175	17.9	284	20.5
Total	410	100	977	100	1387	100
<i>Pearson chi2(1) = 287.819 Pr = 0.000</i>						

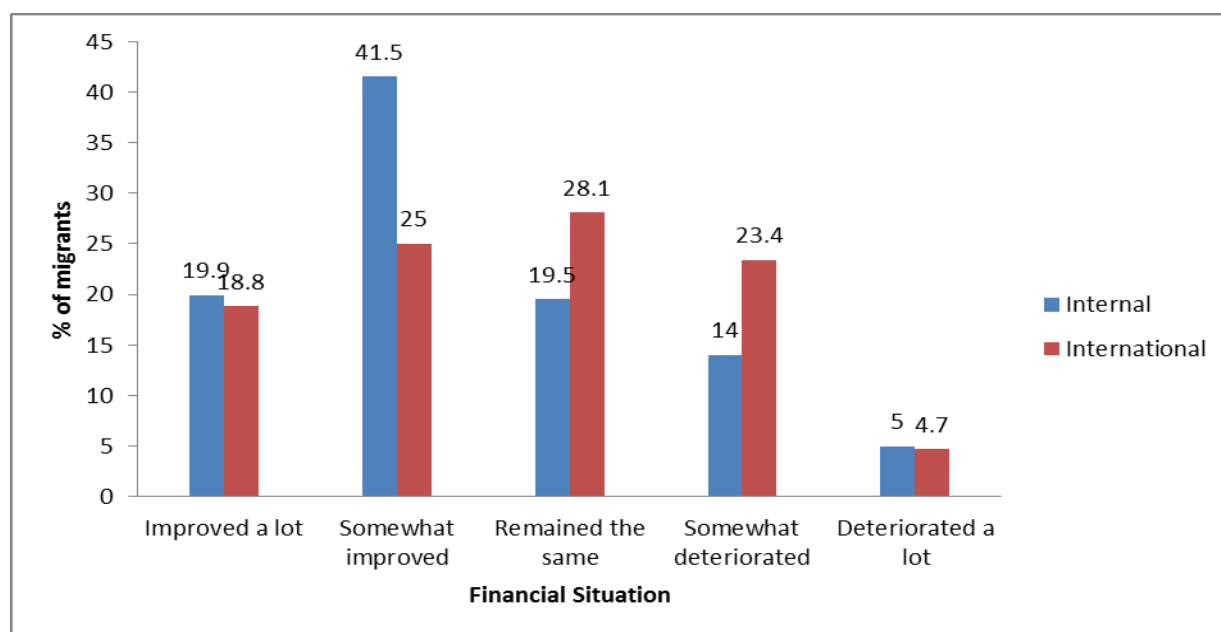
By migration status, however, there was a slightly higher percentage of households with migrants who felt that their financial situation had improved a lot or somewhat improved compared to households without migrants (Table 12), and a correspondingly smaller percentage of households with migrants who feel their financial situation has deteriorated a lot or somewhat deteriorated.

Table 12: Distribution of Households by Financial Situation by migration status

Financial situation	Households without migrants		Households with Migrants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Improved a lot	68	16.6	180	18.3	248	17.8
Somewhat improved	159	38.9	402	40.9	561	40.3
Remained the same	88	21.5	198	20.2	286	20.6
Somewhat deteriorated	70	17.1	148	15.1	218	15.7
Deteriorated a lot	24	5.9	54	5.5	78	5.6
Total	409	100	982	100	1391	100

However when we break down migrants by type, we do observe important differences. Among households with migrants, a higher percentage of households with internal migrants than international migrant households (41.5 versus 25 percent) felt their financial situation had somewhat improved in the last five years, as shown in Figure 5. This finding is at odds with the migration literature which argues that international migration is more welfare enhancing than internal migration because of the quantum of remittances received from international migration (Cuong, 2009; Adams, 2006; Lopez-Cordova, 2005). Similarly, more international than internal migrant households, 23.4 against 14 percent, felt their financial situation had somewhat deteriorated. One reason for this observation may be the fact that the study captured data on international migrants who are in other parts of Africa, rather than in Europe and North America. Socio-economic conditions in these countries are not too different from the situation in Ghana. The findings here also highlight the need to further investigate the potential benefits of internal as against international migration.

Figure 5: Financial situation of households with migrants by type of migration



We further break down migrants into three groups, whether they are international (i.e. outside of Ghana), internal or have returned home.⁶ Table 13 shows that households that have produced internal migrants are more likely to report an improved financial situation over the five years prior to the survey, compared to households with no migrants, but that those with international migrants are the least likely to report an improvement. These differences are statistically significant.

Table 13: Subjective perception of change in financial situation in past 5 years by migrant type

<i>Household has</i>	Deteriorated or no change		Improved		Total	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
return migrants	104	47.7	114	52.3	218	100
internal migrants	260	37.0	442	63.0	702	100
international migrants	36	58.1	26	41.9	62	100
no migrants	182	44.5	227	55.5	409	100
Total	578	41.7	809	58.3	1387	100
<i>Pearson chi2(3) = 17.633 Pr = 0.001</i>						

⁶ Later work will explore the regional nature of migration outside of Ghana, distinguishing migration to other African countries and migration to other continents.

Why might this be the case? One clue may be identified when we examine the livelihoods of households. Wouterse and Taylor (2008) show that migration, livelihood choice and poverty outcomes in Burkina Faso are closely connected: remittances received from migrants to destinations outside of Africa (*inter-continental* in their definition) tend to be larger and long-term compared to those received from migrants to other African countries, which enables household to invest in livestock production which is associated with higher incomes than either staple crop cultivation or other non-farm rural activities.

Our data only provides partial data on livelihoods, namely the main income source of the household. The statistics in Table 14 suggest that households whose main income source is remittances are much more likely to report an improvement in their financial situation: 74% of these households report an improvement. Similarly positive is the experience of public sector workers and those with their own business, and to a lesser extent, households whose main source of income is their own farm or employment in the private sector.

Table 14: Subjective perception of change in financial situation in past 5 years by main income source

	Deteriorated or no change	Improved	Total
<i>Main income source</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>	<i>N (%)</i>
Public sector	40 (22.1)	141 (77.9)	181 (100)
Private sector	39 (41.9)	54 (58.1%)	93 (100)
Own business	162 (42.2%)	222 (57.8%)	384 (100)
Own farm	258 (49.6%)	262 (50.4%)	520 (100)
Remittances	32 (26.4%)	89 (73.6%)	121 (100)
Others	21 (45.7%)	25 (54.3%)	46 (100)
Total	552 (41.0)	793 (59.0%)	1345 (100)
<i>Pearson chi2(5) = 53.9320 Pr = 0.000</i>			

These observations raise the possibility that migration may affect poverty via the choice of livelihood available to households who may be in receipt of migrant remittances. These remittances may completely or partially relieve recipient households of liquidity constraints, bearing in mind that some of these households may have lost a non-trivial income flow from the former household member (i.e. the migrant) owing to migration. In this context, it is important to note that remittances, especially migrant remittances, play a very important role in the livelihoods of households in Ghana. These remittances are used by households to

augment consumption expenditure and to acquire various forms of assets (see Oduro and Boakye-Yiadom, 2014). Our survey data suggest that migrant remittances are prevalent across a wide range of households, with recipient households found in all income quintiles. In general migration is often undertaken with the aspiration to achieve higher incomes at destination, a share of which may be remitted in order to raise, or at least smooth, consumption at home. However, migration also involves the direct loss of income at home, as the household now has a lower level of human capital, that is fewer workers who might generate an income at home. We aim to explore this in future work.

5. Conclusions

This paper sought to examine the relationships between internal/intraregional migration and poverty outcomes in Ghana, as well as discuss the factors that mediate the impacts of migration on poverty, human development and wellbeing in sending areas. The paper also addresses the question of whether migrant households are better off than non-migrant households. Our findings suggest that there is no difference between the income or wealth status of non-migrant- sending households and migrants sending households. Our findings thus contradict the general view that poor households are less likely to migrate than wealthy households (Mazzucato *et al.* 2008; Awumbila *et al.* 2014a). This may reflect a weakness in our data in capturing income and assets at the time of migration. We do however find that the incidence of migration rises with level of education, which is suggestive that perhaps migration is correlated with income. We conclude that that while poor households may find it difficult to embark on international migration to destinations outside the African continent, they tend to migrate to destinations within their own countries and that migration is higher from poorer areas of Ghana.

There are differences in the incidence of migration across the five administrative regions of Ghana. Of the five migrant source regions, the Volta Region registered the highest incidence (21.6 percent) of migration, whilst the lowest incidence (10.7 percent) was found in the Northern Region. Majority of internal migrants moved to the Greater Accra Region, followed by the Ashanti Region, and Brong Ahafo Region. The migration flows were explained in terms of inequalities in resources endowments and economic opportunities. Consistent with the Mobility Transition Theory (see Zelinsky, 1971; Skeldon, 1997) theory, we argued that poorer regions (e.g. Upper East, Upper West, Northern and Volta regions) tend to produce rural –

urban migrants, while resource rich and developed regions (e.g. Greater Accra; Ashanti and Brong Ahafo) tend to produce international migrants.

The incidence of migration is higher amongst males than females. Furthermore, male migrants are more likely to be from female headed households. This finding is plausibly a reflection of the likelihood that as male household heads migrate, their wives often assume headship of the household. The regression analysis shows that a higher dependency ratio lowers the probability of migration for women and men. This result might be reflecting the real possibility that an individual's capacity or inclination to migrate is often constrained by their having to stay behind to take care of young children or ageing parents. Similar to earlier findings reported elsewhere (see GSS, 2008; Ackah and Medvedev, 2010), young adults, aged 25 to 29 years, constitute the largest proportion of migrants and youth is a strong determinant of the probability of a person being a migrant. In relation to reasons for migration, many of the migrants, particularly men, moved to another town or village in Africa for work-related reasons, notably job transfer, work, or to seek work/better work. Consistent with some earlier findings (see Awumbila et al. 2011; Black et al. 2006), we conclude that spatial inequalities in job opportunities account for internal migration in the country. Only a few households reported that some of their members have migrated as a result of climate change. This finding was not expected given recent assertions that global environmental change and associated declining agricultural yields are the main factors driving migration flows in poor regions of the world (Odada et al. 2008; Foresight, 2011). Based on these findings, we conclude that although environmental change and associated declining yields can be important contributing factors in many migration flows, they never act alone. Widespread poverty in rural Ghana and inequality in development are the proximate factors driving internal migration, while climate variability may be underlying factor.

Our findings also support the view that social networks are relied upon by migrants in many parts of the world (Glick Schiller et al. 1995; Boateng, 2012; Teye and Yebleh, 2014). Indeed, majority (58.3 percent) of these migrants had a contact person at the destination prior to migrating. About 21.6 percent of migrants had jobs fixed for them prior to migrating to the destination. Women were more likely to establish contacts at the destination prior to migration than men. We also found that majority of both male and female migrants relied on personal savings made at the origin for migration, though the proportion of the sample that

relied on personal savings was higher among males than in females. This means that most of the migrants had prepared before embarking on the journey from the origin.

As expected, migration has led to a change in the occupation of many migrants. Whereas majority of migrants were engaged in agricultural/farm activities before migration, the occupational dynamics of migrants changed and in favour of 'sales worker-ship'. Many of the migrants sent remittances back to their families left behind, either in the form of cash or goods, although cash amounts were small. Whether this reflects a difficulty in capturing cash transfers adequately in a household survey or the reality of remittance behaviour is difficult to tell. We hope to return to this issue in future work.

Although our data on income and assets suggest that households with migrants are not significantly better off than households without migrants,, we do observe a positive perception of the role of migration in improving living standards when we explore our subjective data. In particular we find that households with internal migrants had a very positive view of the improvement in their household's situation.

The policy implications of these findings are many. First, it is often assumed that internal migration, especially from rural to urban areas, cannot help promote development and improve livelihoods in Ghana. Consequently, there have been attempts to curb rural urban migration. Our analysis has indicated that similar to the findings of a recent regional study in Ghana (see Awumbila et al 2014a), internal migration is contributing to improved wellbeing of migrants households. We therefore urge the need for the integration of internal migration into development policy. Furthermore rural –rural migration from the poor savannah zone to the mineral and forest rich zones can be promoted as a strategy to diversify incomes. Since most migrants send remittances back home to support consumption, we further recommend the establishment of mechanisms to ensure smooth transfer of remittances from migrant destinations to families left behind at sending areas and to reduce barriers and costs associated with remittance transfers.

Appendix

Table A1: Propensity to migrate Ghana, Probit						
<i>Sample: Individuals 16-64 years old; dependent variable: current migrant (=1, 0 otherwise)</i>						
<i>b's reported are the probit coefficients; mfx's reported are the marginal effects at the means</i>						
	Full sample		Male		Female	
	<i>b's</i>	<i>mfx</i>	<i>b's</i>	<i>mfx</i>	<i>b's</i>	<i>mfx</i>
Household income per capita	-0.000*	-0.0000**	-0.000*	-0.0000**	-0.000	-0.0000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Land ownership	0.000	0.0000	0.003	0.0006	-0.008	-0.0012
	(0.078)	(0.016)	(0.090)	(0.021)	(0.107)	(0.017)
Number of migrants in district	0.004***	0.0009***	0.004***	0.0010***	0.005***	0.0008***
	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)
Dependency ratio	-0.149**	-	-0.144*	-0.0341**	-0.171*	-0.0272**
	(0.055)	(0.011)	(0.069)	(0.016)	(0.074)	(0.012)
Education (base: none)						
Primary	0.002	0.0004	0.100	0.0230	-0.171	-0.0237
	(0.091)	(0.017)	(0.121)	(0.028)	(0.137)	(0.019)
Middle	-0.107	-0.0194	-0.136	-0.0289	-0.047	-0.0068
	(0.153)	(0.027)	(0.192)	(0.039)	(0.200)	(0.029)
High	0.140	0.0280*	0.111	0.0256	0.146	0.0235
	(0.077)	(0.015)	(0.101)	(0.023)	(0.113)	(0.018)
Tertiary	0.516***	0.1182***	0.433**	0.1103***	0.624***	0.1238***
	(0.112)	(0.028)	(0.133)	(0.035)	(0.179)	(0.042)
Female	-0.317***	-	-	-	-	-
	(0.051)	(0.010)				
Youth (15-24 years)	-0.251***	-	-0.390***	-	-0.085	-0.0136
	(0.064)	(0.013)	(0.083)	(0.019)	(0.092)	(0.015)
Ethnicity (base: others)						
Akan	-0.165	-0.0337	-0.059	-0.0148	-0.302	-0.0442*
	(0.106)	(0.021)	(0.130)	(0.032)	(0.154)	(0.022)
Ga-Dangme	-0.384	-0.0722	-0.531	-0.1143	-0.263	-0.0392
	(0.243)	(0.040)	(0.359)	(0.065)	(0.308)	(0.042)
Ewe	-0.098	-0.0205	-0.186	-0.0448	0.048	0.0083
	(0.095)	(0.020)	(0.117)	(0.028)	(0.131)	(0.022)
Guan	0.075	0.0166	0.009	0.0023	0.216	0.0400
	(0.199)	(0.045)	(0.210)	(0.054)	(0.261)	(0.052)
Mole Dagbani	-0.142	-0.0292	-0.101	-0.0248	-0.222	-0.0337*
	(0.088)	(0.018)	(0.106)	(0.026)	(0.133)	(0.021)
Gruni	-0.078	-0.0165	-0.424	-0.0944*	0.351	0.0687*
	(0.154)	(0.032)	(0.218)	(0.044)	(0.189)	(0.040)
Grussi	0.108	0.0244	-0.220	-0.0524	0.657*	0.1454**
	(0.218)	(0.051)	(0.357)	(0.080)	(0.266)	(0.070)
Kusasi	-0.131	-0.0271	-0.114	-0.0279	-0.258	-0.0385
	(0.142)	(0.028)	(0.193)	(0.046)	(0.232)	(0.032)

Dagoa	-0.227	-0.0454	-0.421	-0.0939	0.062	0.0107
	(0.232)	(0.043)	(0.269)	(0.053)	(0.362)	(0.064)
Talensi	-	-	-	-	-	-
Network at destination	1.944***	0.3936***	1.831***	0.4341***	2.139***	0.3406***
	(0.075)	(0.011)	(0.090)	(0.015)	(0.113)	(0.015)
Sex of household head	0.084	0.0170	0.305***	0.0724***	-0.168	-0.0268*
	(0.069)	(0.014)	(0.092)	(0.022)	(0.094)	(0.015)
Age of household head	0.001*	0.0002**	0.001	0.0002	0.001**	0.0002***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Education of household head (base: none)						
Primary	-0.152	-0.0295	-0.255	-0.0576*	-0.037	-0.0056
	(0.121)	(0.022)	(0.144)	(0.031)	(0.177)	(0.027)
Middle	0.181	0.0397*	0.101	0.0255	0.293*	0.0520**
	(0.108)	(0.025)	(0.132)	(0.034)	(0.145)	(0.027)
High	-0.068	-0.0136	-0.107	-0.0253	-0.023	-0.0036
	(0.109)	(0.021)	(0.136)	(0.032)	(0.146)	(0.022)
Tertiary	-0.150	-0.0291	-0.227	-0.0517*	-0.058	-0.0088
	(0.125)	(0.023)	(0.138)	(0.030)	(0.177)	(0.026)
<i>N</i>	4901	4901	2492	2492	2409	2409
Pseudo-R2	0.288	0.2882	0.260	0.2602	0.333	0.3334
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001						

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About the Migrating out of Poverty Research Programme Consortium

Migrating out of Poverty is a research programme consortium (RPC) funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). It focuses on the relationship between migration and poverty – especially migration within countries and regions - and is located in five regions across Asia and Africa. The main goal of ***Migrating out of Poverty*** is to provide robust evidence on the drivers and impacts of migration in order to contribute to improving policies affecting the lives and well-being of impoverished migrants, their communities and countries, through a programme of innovative research, capacity building and policy engagement. The RPC will also conduct analysis in order to understand the migration policy process in developing regions and will supplement the world renowned migration databases at the University of Sussex with data on internal migration.

The ***Migrating out of Poverty*** consortium is coordinated by the University of Sussex, and led by CEO Professor L. Alan Winters with Dr Priya Deshingkar as the Research Director. Core partners are: the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) in Bangladesh; the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana; the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore; the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa; and the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC) in Kenya.

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