

# Chapter 1

## Sources of Data on Migration and Urbanization in Ethiopia

*By Mohammed Said*

### 1.1. Introduction

In Ethiopia, migratory movements have been going on for ages. The movements may be short distance or long distance, short-term or long term. They may be confined within the rural areas or rural to urban or urban to rural. They may either be influenced by socioeconomic or political factors. Moreover, these migratory movements have also created the currently observed uneven distribution of population in the country. Among the different types of population movements, rural to urban migration continues to be the key causes for the emergence, growth and development of urban centers.

Until recently, there has been limited awareness and knowledge about the importance of the information concerning the movement of people for economic, social and political planning. However, over the past two to three decades, there has been a growing awareness of the need for information on population movements at local, regional and national scale for economic and social planning purposes. This has led to the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on internal migration and urbanization in Ethiopia.

### 1.2. Sources of Data

Although, various government institutions keep records of changes in residence of the people, censuses and sample surveys have been the two principal sources of data for the study of internal migration and urbanization in Ethiopia. Two rounds of Population and Housing Censuses (1984 and 1994) and several rounds of Sample Surveys, starting from early sixties to late nineties, were conducted. While the censuses were taken at ten years interval, the Sample Surveys were not regular but were taken on *ad hoc* basis.

The Sample Surveys include the 1964 Household Survey, usually known as the First Round Sample Survey, which was conducted in the rural areas and the 1967 Sample Survey, known as the Second Round Sample Survey, which covered only the urban centers. Then, there was the survey of the 17 major towns and the Labor Force Surveys, which are the few among the many different surveys. However, the data in this paper are based on the 1994 Population and Housing Census and the 1999 Labor Force Survey.

The two censuses were preceded by the construction of or updating of maps showing enumeration areas (EAs) boundaries over the whole country and preparation of Household Lists. These maps and household lists were used for allocation of enumerators and supervisors and as sampling frames for subsequent surveys.

As is common with all censuses, both the 1984 and 1994 censuses were characterized by:

- a. Individual enumeration, i.e., each member of the household was interviewed separately and the characteristics of these individuals were recorded separately.
- b. Universality, i.e., the census covered the whole country, except inaccessible and security problem administrative units.
- c. Simultaneity i.e., all administrative units were enumerated simultaneously. To avoid or reduce omissions and duplications, the enumeration was conducted within a very short time (ten days) and a well-defined reference period

Another characteristic feature of the censuses was the design of forms and questionnaires, recruiting and training of large number of enumerators and supervisors. For example, during the 1994 census, over sixty thousand enumerators and supervisors were recruited and trained at various levels of administrative structure.

The third phase of the censuses was the enumeration process. The enumeration process lasted for ten days as planned. However, in some administrative units it lasted well over fifteen days due to distance and other problems.

The fourth and the last phase of the censuses were the compilation, tabulation, analysis, printing and dissemination of information obtained by the censuses. The information of the 1984 census was published in one volume (Analytical Report), while that of the 1994 was in two volumes (Statistical and Analytical Reports)

### **1.3. Types of Data Collected**

#### **a. Migration Data Collected by the 1984 Census**

“Birthplace” information was the basic question asked in the 1984 census. The “birthplace” of an individual is the “usual place of residence” (see concepts and definitions) of the mother at the time of the birth of the individual. The information on the number of movers from “birthplace” to “place of enumeration” has been used to measure the volume of in-migration, out-migration and net-migration for each administrative and geographical unit.

A question on “birthplace” alone is unsatisfactory variable for the measurement and analysis of internal migration. The “birthplace” information gives no indication on the time of movement but provides only a total of all moves made by all individuals from “birthplace” to current place. For this reason, in the 1984 census, the “birthplace” question was used in association with the question on “duration of continuous residence” at place of current residence. First the “birthplace” question was asked and if the birthplace refers to a place different than the current place of residence, then the “duration of continuous residence” question was asked.

“Duration of Continuous residence” data was obtained according to the following number of categories. Those who continuously resided in the current place of “usual residence” for less than 1, 2, 3, 4, 5-6, 7-9, 10 years and above and “since birth”. Thus, “duration of continuous

residence” question has enabled not only to differentiate migrants and non-migrants but also to obtain information on the timing of migration.

#### **b. Migration Data Collected by the 1994 Census**

During the 1994 census, “duration of continuous residence” question in association with “place of previous residence” question was used. “Place of previous residence means the last place where the individual usually resided before moving to the current “usual place of residence”. The question on “duration of continuous residence was asked first in order to identify the migration status of an individual. If the response for the “duration of continuous residence” question indicated that the individual has been in the place of enumeration “since birth”, then, the “place of previous residence” question does not apply, since the individual is a non-migrant.

However, since the 1984 administrative units were reconstructed in 1991 and as a result, it is anticipated that the migrants would be in a difficult position of knowing to which administrative units their “previous place of usual residence” fall in the new administrative structure. Because of this problem, migrants were required to identify “place of previous residences” as urban or rural only. The urban and rural areas refer to the situation at the time of the census. The classification of the “place of previous residence” as rural and urban has allowed to generate only intersectoral flows of migration as rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and urban to urban.

#### **c. Migration Data Collected by the 1999 Labor Force Survey**

The 1999 Labor Force Survey also used “ duration of Continuous residence” question in association with “place of previous residence” question. Unlike the 1994 census, the 1999 LFS included weredas, zones and regions in addition to rural and urban areas. This has improved the analysis of migration data significantly. The availability of information on migration at wereda, zonal and regional level has enabled the calculation of in-migration, out-migration and net migration rates. This has paved the way for inter-regional comparisons.

Another significant contribution made by the 1999 Labor Force Survey to the improvement of migration data is the inclusion of the question on reason for migration. The questions on reason for migration focused on economic and social factors that initiated the move. The availability of the information on reason for move has helped the identification of the determinants of internal migration in Ethiopia.

#### **d. Other Data Collected by Censuses and Sample Surveys**

Besides the information on migration status of the population, detailed information on characteristics of migrants, such as demographic, social and economic characteristics were collected by both censuses and surveys. These included age, sex, marital status, ethnicity, religion, education, economic activity and occupation. All the characteristics of the migrants refer to the situation at the time of the census, not at the time of migration.

## **1.4. Concepts and Definitions**

In urban areas, a person is a migrant if he or she has lived in other urban or rural areas, which are found in the same wereda, zone or region or different wereda, zone or region. Similarly, in rural areas, a person is a migrant if he or she has lived in a wereda different than the wereda of enumeration or in an urban area which are found in the wereda of enumeration or different wereda. Thus, in the rural and urban areas, movers within the same wereda or urban center are not considered as migrants.

Thus, spatially, wereda and urban area are migration defining units in rural and urban areas, respectively, while temporally, an individual has to have a “usual place of residence”, which must satisfy the following definition. The “usual place of residence” is:

- that place in which an individual had resided six months or more, or
- less than six months but intended to stay there permanently, or
- had been away from that place for more than six months but intended to return, or
- had been away for less than six months but intend not to return.

However, there are individuals who do not easily fit into these categories. There are those who do not have place of usual residence such as students, soldiers, inmates of prisons or hospitals who may be away from the place of usual residence for more than six months but who usually live there. In the census, these people were enumerated where they actually were found at the census moment (i.e., on de facto basis), except those in hospitals, which were enumerated on de jure basis.

In the census, an urban area is defined as a locality with 2000 or more inhabitants, wereda, zone and regional capitals (regardless of population size), localities with urban Dwellers Association (regardless of population size) and localities with 1000 or more inhabitants who are primarily engaged in non-agricultural activities.

## **1.5. Incomparability of the 1984 and 1994 Census Data**

There are no ways of generating inter-regionally comparable migration rates from the two censuses. Comparison is affected due to two factors. The first is due to the changes in the 1984 boundaries and the second is due to the inconsistency in data collection.

### **a. Boundary Changes**

Changes in the 1984 boundaries took place in two ways. The first is the restructuring of the 1984 regional administrative units in 1991 to meet new economic, social and political needs. Restructuring has changed the structure and size of the regional administrative units. The census office knowing these changes in administrative units has attempted to maintain data for comparison of the administrative units by reclassifying the data from the 1994 census into the

1984 administrative units. However, this attempt has not materialized due to the difficulty of the work.

The issue of the boundary changes has a wider significance than just the analysis of migration data. It touches on the topics of population redistribution and growth, particularly with reference to urbanization when changing urban boundaries have to be accommodated. In 1984, the area of Addis Ababa was **222.04** km<sup>2</sup>. After ten years, in 1994, the area has increased to **530.21** km<sup>2</sup>. That is, the area has increased by **108.7** km<sup>2</sup>. The increase in area of Addis Ababa occurred through expansion, reclassification and absorption of villages and surrounding small towns and barren land to accommodate the fast growing population of Addis Ababa mainly due to rural to urban migration.

### **b. Inconsistency in Data Collection**

Apart from boundary changes, inconsistency in data collection is another factor that has tremendously affected comparability of the 1984 and 1994 migration data. As indicated above, in the 1984 census, “birthplace” data was collected. But this information was not available in the 1994 census. The birthplace question was substituted by the “place of previous residence” question, which only gave information on urban and rural areas as place of previous residence. As a result of this inconsistency in information gathering, data on out-migrants was not available in the 1994 census. Because of this gap in data availability, it was not possible to calculate net-migration rates and identify losing or gaining regions.

### **1.6 Sampling and Sub-sampling**

In both the 1984 and 1994 Population and Housing censuses ‘short’ and ‘long’ questionnaires were administered. The ‘short’ questionnaire was used to collect basic demographic and social characteristics of the total population. The ‘long’ questionnaire, on the other hand, was used to collect both basic and additional characteristics of the population of the sampled households. In the sample, census enumeration areas (EAs) were adopted as ultimate strata and the households in each EA were as clusters. In each EA, one in five (or 20 percent) households were systematically selected. In this respect, the migration data was collected on a twenty-percent sample basis.

However, for the purpose of this paper, the data for rural areas is based on a sub-sample of varying size out of the 20-percent sample collected by the “long questionnaire”, while retaining the original 20-percent data for the urban areas. The sub-sample is based at zonal level. As a result, the analysis is also based at zone level. The variation in the rates was due to variations in population size of zones. The rationale for taking the sub-samples is to save time and workload associated with the processing of data.

### **1.7. Problems Encountered**

“Duration of continuous residence” information is usually affected by memory lapse. The respondents were unable to recall exactly how long they have stayed in the current place of usual

residence. The problem even becomes more acute with the migrants who have stayed for longer periods.

Similarly, “place of previous residence” information is also affected by memory lapse and the difficulty of identifying the current status of the area of previous residence of the migrants. The migrants, especially those with longer duration of stay, were unable to correctly identify whether the areas they came from are currently rural or urban. More than 50 percent of the migrants have stayed in the place of enumeration for 10 years and above. The areas that these migrants have left behind may have changed from rural to urban at the time of the census.

### **1.8. Limitations of Migration Data**

The volume of migration captured by the census is affected by the size of the spatial units, which are adopted to be the migration defining areas. The smaller the administrative units used as migration defining areas, the greater will be the probability of capturing a large number of migrants in the census. Because distance has a powerful effect on human mobility and the majority of the people move over relatively short distances. For instance, restricting weredas and urban areas as migration defining areas has excluded intra-urban and intra-wereda movements.

Due to the absence of intra-urban or intra-wereda movements, population movements or changes accounting for variations in the distribution of the urban or wereda population among the various size categories of the urban or wereda hierarchy within a given urban center or wereda are not available. For instance, Addis Ababa is not just an ordinary urban center. It is a region with six zones and twenty-eight weredas. Movements within Addis Ababa from one zone to another and from one wereda to another are considerable. But the census definition of a migrant prohibits these movements from being considered as migrations. Therefore, migration data should include intra-urban intra-wereda movements, at least for Addis Ababa.

In Ethiopia, short-term mobility is extremely important. Villagers come to the city and return to their villages after a week or two. Such people are considered as “visitors” in the census. Information obtained on the characteristics of the visitors include only age and sex. Since, their current place of stay do not satisfy the “usual place of residence” definition, visitors have no migration information. Thus, any criterion that specifies a definite time period of six months is liable to omission of the short term movements. Hence, in order to improve the accuracy of migration information and to broaden the coverage of the census in relation to internal migration, it is important to incorporate the de facto approach along with the de jure approach.

Finally, as migration is not a random event, particular groups of people move more frequent than others. Never the less, information on migrants collected in the census refer to the situation at the time of the census rather than at the time of migration. By the time of enumeration much of the characteristics of the old migrants might have changed. The age, marital status, occupational and educational status of the old migrants has changed as a result of their long stay in the place of enumeration. Therefore, in the future, it is advisable that the information on migrants collected by the census should refer to the situation at the time of migration not at the time of enumeration.