

---

This item was submitted to [Loughborough's Research Repository](#) by the author.  
Items in Figshare are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

## City dynamics: mobility and livelihoods of urban residents

PLEASE CITE THE PUBLISHED VERSION

[http://rurbanafrica.ku.dk/publications/rurbanafrica-project-reports/3\\_d3-2\\_main\\_report.\\_city\\_dynamics.\\_mobility\\_and\\_livelihoods\\_of\\_urban\\_residents.pdf](http://rurbanafrica.ku.dk/publications/rurbanafrica-project-reports/3_d3-2_main_report._city_dynamics._mobility_and_livelihoods_of_urban_residents.pdf)

PUBLISHER

Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

VERSION

VoR (Version of Record)

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

This work is made available according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Full details of this licence are available at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

LICENCE

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

REPOSITORY RECORD

Gough, Katherine V., James Esson, Manja H. Andreasen, Helene Mainet, A. Namangaya, Paul W.K. Yankson, J. Agergaard, et al.. 2019. "City Dynamics: Mobility and Livelihoods of Urban Residents". figshare. <https://hdl.handle.net/2134/21567>.



**Project no. 290732**

**RurbanAfrica**

**African Rural-City Connections**

**2012-2016**

**SP1-Cooperation**

**FP7-SSH-2011-2**

**Deliverable No. 3.2**

**Title:** City dynamics: mobility and livelihoods of urban residents

<b>Authors:</b>	Katherine V. Gough, Manja Hoppe Andreasen, James Esson, H��l��ne Mainet, Ally Hassan Namangaya, Paul W.K. Yankson, Jytte Agergaard, Ebenezer Amankwah, Robert Kiunsi, Lasse M��ller-Jensen, Aristide Yemmafouo
<b>Work Package:</b>	3
<b>Due date, month:</b>	March, 2015
<b>Date of first draft, month:</b>	March, 2015
<b>Final version, month:</b>	

# City dynamics: mobility and livelihoods of urban residents

## 1. Introduction

The RurbanAfrica project is exploring the connections between rural transformations, mobility, and urbanization processes, and analysing how these contribute to an understanding of the scale, nature and location of poverty in sub-Saharan Africa. This project is thus advancing the research agenda on rural-urban connections in sub-Saharan Africa by addressing a range of crucial components: agricultural transformations, rural livelihoods, city dynamics, and access to services in cities. In this respect the project challenges a number of generally accepted ‘truths’ about rural and city development, and the importance and implication of migration in shaping these, and is generating new insights into the relationship between rural-urban connections and poverty dynamics.

Work Package 3 focusses on providing a comprehensive understanding of ‘City Dynamics’ through an analysis of urban growth rates, mobility patterns and urban-rural connections. This report (deliverable 3.2) builds on extensive primary data collected in six cities: Accra and Sekondi-Takoradi in Ghana, Bafoussam and Douala in Cameroon, and Arusha and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. The specific aim of the report is to assess the mobility of urban residents and highlight how their mobility and links to rural areas form part of their livelihood strategies. This includes an examination of who is moving into and out of cities, where they are moving from and to, and why they are moving. The various livelihood activities that urban residents engage in are explored, as well as how mobility and links to rural areas feed into these. An important aspect is to explore how these experiences differ according to the gender, age, and socio-economic status of urban residents.

The report is divided into five main sections. After this introduction a brief outline of the methodological approach is provided, the key concepts of mobility and livelihoods are discussed, before an overview of the findings from each city are presented in a results section divided into four discrete but interrelated sections: (1) Migration into the city; (2) Livelihoods in the city; (3) Intra-urban residential mobility; and (4) Regular mobility. Emerging trends across the three countries are drawn together in the concluding comments. Details of the methods are in appendix 1 and detailed settlement studies (28 in total) on which this report is based are included in appendices 2-7.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Selection of cities and settlements

Within each of the project countries, two cities were selected as fieldwork sites: the largest city and a rapidly growing intermediate-sized city (see table 1); the rationale being that it is essential to understand the dynamics of the largest city in order to understand the factors driving urban growth within a country but that only studying this city would result in a misleading picture. Conducting a similar study in a second smaller but still rapidly growing city facilitates an exploration of city dynamics in an intermediate-sized city and enables comparisons with the major city and the other intermediate cities in the other project.

Table 1 Selected cities

<b>Project country</b>	<b>Major city</b>	<b>Intermediate-sized city</b>
Ghana	Accra	Sekondi-Takoradi
Cameroon	Douala	Bafoussam
Tanzania	Dar es Salaam	Arusha

In the case of Ghana, Accra is the capital as well as the major city, whereas in Cameroon and Tanzania the capital cities are Yaoundé and Dodoma respectively which, despite being the seats of government, are smaller and economically less important than Douala and Dar es Salaam. The intermediate sized cities are all capitals of their region/province hence play important administrative roles. They also act as important service centres for a large rural hinterland and agro-industry is present in all three cities. Sekondi-Takoradi's growth is being stimulated by the oil and gas industry, Bafoussam's growth is due to being an important trading centre with a strategic location, while Arusha's growth is linked to a booming tourist industry.

Within each city up to five residential areas were studied in order to cover a range of types of neighbourhoods. These included older and newer areas, a range of income levels, differing locations within the city, and differing types of population movement (see appendix for overview of settlement types selected).

## *2.2 Methods*

In order to achieve the aims highlighted above, this project employed a predominantly qualitative methodology. This was both a methodological and pragmatic decision. First, qualitative research methods are particularly adept at obtaining data capable of expanding an understanding of the ‘sets of meanings which people use to make sense of their world and their behaviour within it’ (Cohen et al. 2011, p.9), in this research in relation to urban residents’ mobility and livelihood strategies. Secondly, there were not the resources to undertake a statistically valid large-scale survey in all of the selected cities, and in many cases there are census and other surveys which can usefully be drawn on to extract quantitative data.

The primary data collection method was qualitative interviewing. In particular, three key methods were used: focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and in-depth interviews. While these can be employed as ‘stand-alone methods’, we used them in combination in the selected areas in order to draw on their respective strengths. While there is no formula to calculate the ideal number of qualitative interviews in a study, we adopted a target sample size of at least 100 one to one interviews (i.e. semi-structured and in-depth) and 15 focus group interviews per city. The country teams each decided the precise distribution of the interviews across the selected areas within the cities. The remainder of this section provides an overview of the three key interview methods (focus groups, semi-structured interviews and in-depth interviews), explaining how they were used in the field.

## *2.3 Focus group discussions*

A focus group discussion is collection of individuals who meet in a setting to talk about a topic set by the researcher. The moderator (typically the researcher) of the focus group discussion keeps the group focused on the topic but is otherwise non-directive, the aim being to allow the group to explore the topic from as many perspectives as they deem necessary. A key trait of this method is the interaction between members of the group, which makes it different from one-to-one interviews that rely solely on the interaction between interviewer and interviewee. Focus group discussions are an excellent way to gather views and opinions about a topic or research area in a group setting (Longhurst 2010).

In this project, focus group discussions were used as a way to provide perspectives on people’s livelihoods and mobility within a neighbourhood and how this has fed into changes

in residential areas over time. The data from the focus group discussions thus provides a general picture of the physical and social form of urban change taking place in the selected areas. The individual country teams decided on the precise composition of the groups taking into account factors including gender and age according to local customs and norms to ensure that no member of a group felt intimidated. In most instances four focus group discussions were conducted per residential area: one with elderly males, one with elderly females, one with younger males and one with younger females. There were instances though where some of these groups were combined either for practical reasons or on the request of the participants. Each focus group discussion consisted of about 6-8 participants per group and was held in a suitable location such as a school classroom or a community room. All of the focus group discussions were taped and subsequently transcribed hence they contain a wealth of data on residents' views and opinions expressed in a group setting.

#### *2.4 Semi-structured and in-depth interviews*

Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted with residents in the selected neighbourhoods as these allow for individuals to provide details of their lives and thus an exploration of the ways in which mobility and livelihood strategies vary according to gender, age, ethnicity and socio-economic status. The *semi-structured interviews* were used to generate a picture of the participants' everyday and long term mobility, and livelihood strategies. Potential questions were grouped thematically but were not always posed in the order listed in the schedule (see appendix 8). Instead the aim was to allow the discussion to unfold in a conversational manner as this enabled the participant to explore issues they felt were important. The *in-depth interviews* were used to obtain individual accounts of people's lives in their own words. This method allows researchers to investigate how people confront and negotiate changing circumstances and events over the life course (Langevang 2007) hence in this project provided a means to obtain insights into the temporal nature of urban mobility and livelihoods. Whilst semi-structured interviews are often better at providing a more immediate snapshot of a participant's life, in-depth interviews which adopt an oral history approach provide a greater understanding of how people have arrived at this point in their lives.

In both types of interviews the question guides were used in a flexible guiding manner. In the case of the in-depth interviews, these were often conducted chronologically inviting the interviewee to talk about specific moments and situations throughout their lives (Elliott 2005).

The aim was to conduct around 20-25 semi-structured/in-depth interviews per neighbourhood. The individuals were purposively selected by the research teams taking into account gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, place of origin, occupation etc. ensuring that a wide range of participants were included.

### **3. Concepts**

As the key concepts referred to in this report are mobility and livelihoods, a brief discussion of their conceptualisation and how they are used in the research is provided here.

#### *3.1 Mobility*

Mobility is a ubiquitous word having both a spatial and a temporal dimension (van Dijk et al. 2001) and exists in a 'myriad of forms' (de Bruijn et al. 2001) at a range of scales from the local to the global. Mobility is thus 'engrained in the history, daily life and experiences of people' and is 'inspired by different motives, aspirations and obligations' (de Bruijn et al. 2001, p. 1). Linked to the so-called mobility turn of the last decade in the social sciences, it has been claimed that mobility is so widespread that it should not be seen as a rupture in society but as a normal way of life, with immobility being the anomaly (Sheller and Urry 2006). However, despite mobility being a widespread practice, not everyone has an equal opportunity to be mobile, as moving between places can be a source of status and power (Sheller and Urry 2006), consequently, mobility 'means different things, to different people, in differing social circumstances' (Adey 2006: 83). Although there has been a particular focus in mobility research on advances in new technology and new ways of living and interacting in a global North context, Rigg (2007), among others, has sketched out an alternative new mobilities paradigm which highlights the linkages between mobility and livelihoods in the global South.

In this research we bring together Rigg's (2007) call for mobility to be examined in relation to livelihoods with Kaufmann's (2002) conceptualisation of mobility into four main forms: daily mobility, travel, residential mobility and migration. The four forms are linked to differing temporalities: the day and the week for daily mobility, the month and the year for travel, the year and the life course for residential mobility, and the life history for migration (Kaufmann 2002). Each form does not exist in isolation but affects and is affected by the

other forms. As households move around the city they contribute to the shaping and reshaping of urban areas. Adopting such a process-orientation approach to the mobile city enables an examination of ‘the interrelationships of movements of people, objects, capital and ideas in and through the overlapping scales of the local, the body, the national and the global’ (Oswin and Yeoh (2010: 170). The city can thus be envisaged as ‘a mobile networked whole – messy, moving and morphing – rather than as compartmentalised sections’ (Skelton and Gough 2013: 460). In this report we merge Kaufmann’s daily mobility and travel into one category that we call ‘regular mobility’ resulting in a three-way distinction between migration, residential mobility and regular mobility.

### *3.2 Livelihoods*

The livelihoods approach is a framework for carrying out research, particularly in the context of the global South, which has been commonplace within the work of many major international aid agencies as well as academics since the 1990s. The initial livelihoods approach is generally traced back to Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway who published an IDS discussion paper in 1992 on ‘Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21<sup>st</sup> century’. They viewed livelihoods as comprising of people, their capabilities and their means of making a living including food, income, tangible assets (such as resources and stores) and intangible assets (such as claims and access). Although the approach was originally developed in a rural context it was transferred to an urban context where arguably it works equally well (see Rakodi with Lloyd Jones 2002). A succinct definition of a livelihood is “the activities, the assets and the access that jointly determine the living gained by an individual or household” (Ellis 1999: 2). Livelihood analyses are often linked to sustainability discussions with a livelihood being defined as sustainable “when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in future, while not undermining the natural resource base” (Carney 1998: 2).

Despite being widely used as an analytical framework, the livelihoods approach has been critiqued in a range of respects. In particular there have been calls for the livelihoods approach to become more analytically powerful through a deeper engagement with transforming structures and power, and analyses of how these impact on issues of social inclusion and exclusion (de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). This plea for greater theoretical depth to the livelihood approach is addressed within this project through analyses of the micro scale, everyday decision making and negotiation of the needs, aspirations and limitations of

individuals, as proposed by de Haan and Zoomers (2005). Hence, rather than use the rather rigid classification of five capitals (human, social, physical, natural and financial) that characterises most livelihood studies and treating the household as an altruistic entity, in this study we adopt a holistic approach to livelihoods from the perspective of individuals living in the survey settlements.

#### **4. Results**

An overview of the findings of the research conducted in the six cities are presented here in four sections. First, the nature of migration into the cities is discussed looking at the social composition of the migrants, their motives for migrating, and their initial destinations on arriving in the cities. Second, the livelihoods of the residents in the settlements are presented dividing these into two areas – more centrally located neighbourhoods and peripheral neighbourhoods. Turning to focus on intra-urban residential mobility, in the third section the social composition of those moving, their motives, and the origins and destinations of their moves within the cities are highlighted. And in the fourth and final section, the regular mobility of urban residents is analysed looking at who is moving around the city, why they are moving, where they are moving from and to, and which forms of transport they are using. In each section the key findings from Ghana, Cameroon and Tanzania are presented in the same order (see appendices 2-7 for greater detail of the findings at the settlement level).

##### **4.1 Migration into the cities**

###### *Social composition of migrants*

Migrants moving into Accra and Sekondi-Takoradi are primarily young people of both genders. A wide range of ethnic groups move into the cities from all corners of Ghana, especially neighbouring regions. These migrants come from all socio-economic backgrounds and have varying education and skill levels. They move from rural areas and urban settlements of all sizes including the major cities. Moreover, there are international migrants especially of West African origin including Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire and Togo. Many people move at least initially as individuals. Migrants who have families often subsequently bring them to the city once they have settled.

In a Cameroonian context, the primary migrating group consists of young people, typically young men from the age of 18 years and young women aged 15 years and above. In the case of Doula these migrants come primarily from Western Cameroon (Bamilike) and the Littoral Region as well as in smaller numbers from the English speaking regions of northwest, southwest, the far north and southern Cameroon. Migrants into Baffousam come primarily from the surrounding areas and the Western Region though northern Cameroon (Fulbe); Yaounde and Douala are other key places of origin. There are also migrants from neighbouring countries including Gabon and Guinea. It proved difficult to distinguish between rural-urban and urban-urban migration as many people will state the nearest town they have come from even if they have moved from a rural area.

Turning to Tanzania, in Arusha most people also migrated in their youth between the ages of 18-35, whereas in Dar es Salaam most people migrated in their youth between the ages of 15-30. There were also some people who migrated as children, often together with their parents. No gendered patterns in terms of migration were found; both men and women had migrated on their own as well as together with spouses and other family members. In Arusha most migrants originated from the Arusha region or from regions around Arusha including Kilimanjaro, Singida, Dodoma and Tanga, whereas in Dar es Salaam there was no clear pattern in terms of the origins of migrants, rather they originated from all over the country. There were only a few international migrants in the settlements studied in Dar and Arusha.

### *Motives for migrating*

Most people moving into cities in Ghana are primarily moving for economic reasons in search of better livelihoods. Many of these migrants end up establishing their own businesses or working for others in the informal economy. In the case of Sekondi-Takoradi the new oil economy is attracting new migrants seeking job opportunities related to the oil and gas industry. Many young people moving to the cities do so to attend schools and tertiary institutions that are of better quality than in their hometowns. As well as entering the formal education system, some young people move to train as apprentices in a wide range of trades. Migration also occurs for social reasons such as marriage, joining family members who have already migrated, and to support family members as househelps.

In Douala, most young men moved in relation to potential jobs and employment opportunities whilst for young women, marriage as well as jobs and employment opportunities were seen as the primary motivations for migration. Other motivations specified were in search of a

better quality of life and to join family members already in the city. In Bafoussam, while the older generation came to settle from surrounding rural areas during the war for independence in the 1960s, today young men come to the city for economic reasons seeking job opportunities, as well as for schooling and skills (vocational) development. As in Douala, young women move for jobs, employment and to gain skills but they also migrate due to marriage/relationships, and to join family members already in the city. Since Bafoussam is a regional capital some migrants are civil servants. The rural areas around Bafoussam are high intensity agricultural production hence they also have high population densities making the distinction between rural and urban rather difficult to make.

In a Tanzanian context, most of those who migrated young moved for economic reasons though they often formulated this rather vaguely as pursuing “life opportunities” more generally. There were some though who migrated for a specific job, for example, to learn a trade (often from a relative), to become plot caretaker or a housemaid. Some, especially older, migrants moved to take up formal jobs, such as a nurse, soldier or school teacher and in Dar es Salaam to work in government and in Arusha for NGOs. Some of those who migrated young did so to pursue an education, predominantly secondary school in Arusha plus in Dar es Salaam to attend university and take short courses. Most of those who migrated as children did so to follow their parents or to live with a close relative already residing in the cities. Some of those who migrated in their youth followed migrant spouses or women migrated to marry a man already residing in the city. More mature migrants sometimes moved to be taken care of by relatives already residing in the city in instances where they had become sick, widowed, divorced or just old.

#### *Arrival destination in the city*

Many of those moving into the city in Ghana stay with family members and friends on arrival living in shared accommodation while they become established (i.e. seek employment and a place to live of their own). It is more common for migrants to move into central areas of the city than peripheral areas but both act as receiving areas for migrants. The central areas are more attractive for many migrants due to the greater number of commercial activities hence the increased possibility of finding casual work.

Similarly in Douala, the central settlement of New Bell has long been a destination for incoming migrants due to the relatively low rents. An emerging trend, however, is for migrants to move directly to peripheral areas to live with family members/friends who are

residing there rather than moving into the central areas. In Bafoussam, by contrast, migrants tend to have strong links with people already living in the city. This means that they do not have to take the level of rents into consideration when deciding where to move to since they move in with their relatives/friends on arrival in the city. This results in the migrants moving into a more diverse range of areas of the city.

Similarly, in both Arusha and Dar es Salaam most of the migrants initially settled in central areas of the cities. In Arusha these areas provided new migrants with cheap rental accommodation, good transport connections, and the possibility to set up small businesses such as food stalls and small shops due to the large number of potential customers. In Dar es Salaam most of the migrants first settled in areas generally located inside and just around the Nelson Mandela Ring road which were characterized by good transport connections to the city centre, vibrant local business life, and the availability of rental accommodation, though different areas offer different standards of rental accommodation. In both cities a smaller group of migrants, especially some of the more recent migrants, had settled directly in the peripheral settlements when migrating to the city. In Arusha many of these had done so to engage in agriculture or horticulture and had later found themselves engulfed by urban expansion. In Dar es Salaam, most migrants who had settled directly in peripheral areas either migrated for a specific job located in that particular area or to live with relatives residing there. Others started out living in peripheral but more consolidated areas along the main radial roads, which share some of the same characteristics as the central areas.

## **4.2 Livelihoods**

### *Types of livelihoods in central settlements*

In the central areas of the Ghanaian cities, most of the inhabitants work in the informal economy. Some of these activities are home-based whilst many are linked to centrally located markets. They primarily involve retail though there is a growing service economy as well as a limited number of production activities. In some settlements, however, certain activities are peculiar to the area. For example, in New Takoradi (Sekondi-Takoradi) fishing is an important activity among male residents while female residents engage in processing and the sale of fish due to the location of the settlement on the coast. In Accra New Town there are many printing presses and wholesale retailers located in the area which provide specific employment opportunities and are resulting in the area becoming increasingly commercial

with reduced residential opportunities. Among middle class residents there are a greater number who are formally employed such as office workers.

Within central Douala, especially in the area of Deido primarily inhabited by indigenes, most people work within the settlement especially in the many restaurants, bars and shops, some of which are informal though others are formally registered. Many of these businesses have been set up using remittances from the diaspora living in the West (Europe and North America). The businesses have thrived due to the central location and the fact that motorbike taxis are not allowed to come into the settlement, hence it is quieter and considered to be safer. Consequently Deido is gradually moving from a predominantly residential to commercial (mixed) settlement. The other centrally located settlements are primarily dominated by informal activities such as traders/retailers, hawkers, motor-taxi/taxi drivers. Neighbourhood enterprises appear to be more prevalent than home-based enterprises, but both are evident.

In the central settlements of both Dar es Salaam and Arusha residents have predominantly urban-based livelihoods. While some are formal employees most are engaged in informal sector activities including in home-based enterprises which are mostly run by women. Interestingly, in Arusha most of those working as itinerant traders/street traders are female, whereas in Dar es Salaam they are primarily male. In the most centrally located settlement of Olmatejo in Arusha there was a predominance of informal trading or working in the informal service sector whereas in Sokoni-1, located a little further from the centre, there were many workshops as well as informal trading activities. By contrast, in the central area of Br. Mwinyi in Dar es Salaam there were no settlement-specific activities. Some of the residents have formal employment in government or private companies while others are low-skilled manual labourers of various kinds. Many residents are also self-employed with various informal trading and business activities.

#### *Types of livelihoods in peripheral settlements*

Many residents in the peripheral settlements in Ghana are engaged in trading often from their homes or nearby transport hubs and markets. In the settlements where residents still have access to land nearby, such as Assakae (Sekondi-Takoradi), some are small-scale farmers whilst others work as labourers on nearby palm oil plantations. Some residents who would like to continue farming are losing their land to large companies. Residential location near a transport hub can also influence occupations. In Kojokrom (Sekondi-Takoradi), for example,

there is a railway station and associated maintenance facility which is a source of employment for some men while women in particular benefit from living close to the station where agricultural produce is brought in on the railway.

Turning to Cameroon, the majority of people living in peripheral areas are engaged in informal businesses though there are also some activities specific to certain settlements. In the peripheral area of Bonendale (Douala), urban agriculture is prevalent as a secondary activity as is sewing at home (mainly women). The settlement's proximity to the industrial zone also provides formal and informal employment opportunities. In City Biege which is located in/close to mangrove swamps there are boatmen, sand extractors and wood finders as well as pig breeders (urban agriculture). Nkolbong is primarily a residential area although there are some informal activities such as shops, restaurants and bars located along the main road. Due to its location near an army base there is a significant proportion of Army personnel as well as a number of private sector workers and traders operating in Ndokoti and Central Market.

Within Bafoussam, Kamkop and Banengo are middle class areas dominated by civil servants and professionals working in the formal economy. The other peripheral settlements are primarily dominated by informal activities such as traders/retailers, hawkers, motor-taxi/taxi drivers many of which are fluid and subject to change quickly depending on the immediate market conditions. There are also some farming related activities still taking place though these tend to be supplementary rather than primary activities. Remittances are also very important from family members living in other cities within the country but also from the diaspora living in the West.

Similarly, in the peripheral settlements of both Dar es Salaam and Arusha, residents have predominantly urban-based livelihoods with some working as formal employees but most are engaged in informal sector activities working either from the home, operating out of markets or hawking on the streets. In Dar es Salaam, residents living in formal peripheral areas (all of Ununio and parts of Mjimwema and Mzinga) typically have at least completed secondary education and are formally employed. In the peripheral area of Mjimwema (Dar es Salaam) the presence of stone-quarries provides livelihood opportunities for some of the residents whereas in the peripheral area of Terat (Arusha), a lively goat-trading business provides livelihood opportunities for residents. The presence of livelihood activities using natural resources, such as small-scale production of chickens, eggs or vegetables typically within

individual compounds, is also prominent in the peripheral areas. In Terrat (Arusha), some people are engaged in agriculture either working on their own farms or as agricultural labourers in large-scale coffee plantations and flower farms. In the peripheral coastal areas of Ununio and Mjimwema (Dar es Salaam), fishing was still an important livelihood activity among the remaining indigenous residents.

### **4.3 Intra-urban residential mobility**

#### *Social composition*

In Ghana the primary residential migrants are young/middle aged people of both genders who tend to have expanding families. They often move as households rather than individuals and come from all socio-economic backgrounds. In Cameroon, intra-urban residential mobility is especially important for households of mature adults (moving to access land), but also for young women moving to their husband's or in-laws' place. Young men and low-income households tend to move more often (sometimes very often), depending on housing conditions and sometimes rental insecurity. Most intra-urban residential mobility takes place in a Tanzanian context by well-established mature adults who are long-term urban residents typically moving towards the periphery. No gendered pattern in intra-urban residential mobility was identified as it usually takes place at the level of the household.

#### *Motives for intra-urban residential mobility*

Ghanaians only move house when they really have to. The primary motive for moving is residential either to become homeowners or obtain more affordable rents. Key factors driving this mobility are the availability and price of land, as well as available rental accommodation. Associated with this, some people, especially those of middle and higher income levels, mention wanting to live somewhere with more space and where there is peace and quiet compared with in the more central areas. It is less common for people to move for economic/livelihood reasons, although given the distances that some people move, their relocation can have implications for their livelihood; while some commute to their jobs, others, especially those with their own businesses, try to relocate their businesses in or closer to their home. While people may take the level of services and infrastructure into consideration when deciding where to move, it is not a motive for moving. Generally though, urban residents are accustomed to adapting to poor service levels.

The desire to access affordable and available land for homeownership is also a key motive driving intra-residential mobility in Cameroon. Rents are also more affordable in the peripheral areas, thus providing another reason why people are moving to the outskirts of the city. Services are not necessarily better in these peripheral areas, so this is not a key determinant in the decision to move, but importantly they are not necessarily worse. For middle/high income urban residents, moving provides an opportunity to build large homes in more spacious surroundings. In the case of Bonendale (peripheral Douala), many of the residents are middle/high income individuals and families who moved from central areas (such as New Bell, New Deido, Bapenda and Bonassama) to build new larger homes. Conversely, in City Beige (peripheral Douala), the majority are poorer residents from central Douala desperate to access cheap land even if they have to reclaim it from a mangrove swamp. Interestingly, despite individual family members from Deido (Douala) moving to different parts of the city, unlike elsewhere they tend to maintain a family property in Deido itself. This happens because they are indigenes who have official/recognised land titles and want to maintain links to their area of origin within the city.

Housing and available land are also very important motives for intra-urban residential mobility in Tanzania, especially in terms of moving from the centre to the periphery of the cities. This goes for both migrants as well as city-born residents both of whom value homeownership as a tenure form very highly. In Arusha, migrants had typically only lived for a few years in their first area of residence before they shifted to other, often still central, areas in search of better accommodation and cheaper rents. In Dar es Salaam migrants had typically shifted around between rental accommodation in various central areas before often moving to the periphery of the city. While in Dar es Salaam livelihoods were not an important motive for intra-urban residential mobility, in Arusha livelihood considerations were noted to be important alongside considerations regarding access to housing. Services and infrastructure were rarely the primary motive for residential mobility for either homeowners or tenants though some higher-income people mentioned having a preference for buying serviced land. In Arusha access to public transport was often an important part of settlement considerations for landowners. In Dar es Salaam, residents of the peripheral areas would often highlight the 'good environment' (fresh air, space, greenery) as part of their decision to move there but not as the primary motive.

### *Origins and destinations of intra-urban residential mobility*

The overall trend in Ghana is moving from the central areas of the cities into the more peripheral areas. This is because these are the areas where people can find affordable land and in some cases serviced houses built by real estate companies. Moreover, some of the old villages in the peripheral areas offer cheaper rental accommodation as indigenous households have added rental units to their houses. It is rare for house-owners to sell their properties and move to new ones, however, younger household members may acquire their own properties and move out. Urban residents who are renting are more mobile than homeowners though the substantial rent advances (often several years) that households have to pay act as a constraint on frequent movement. Sometimes, however, there is enforced mobility due to the actions of landlords who may evict tenants. For example, in Accra New Town, some residential properties have been converted into printing presses and in central Sekondi-Takoradi landlords are removing tenants and upgrading the accommodation into either higher quality units for residential use or offices – a phenomenon known as 'dollarising transactions'.

In Cameroon, those in established old migrant settlements in the centre (e.g. New Bell in Douala or Tougang in Bafoussam) tend to move to peri-urban neighbourhoods. In Bafoussam, these central/peripheral trends are less noticeable than in Douala as contrasts between neighbourhoods are less clear and as people tend to invest in rural areas (in land and houses) where they plan to retire. Many households engage in regular mobility to rural areas, which are sometimes closeby, affecting their propensity to invest in town and their urban residential mobility. Young adults are clearly less connected with rural areas and plan to stay in town, with an obvious preference for well-serviced or peripheral neighbourhoods such as Kamkop or Banengo.

Movement from the centre to the periphery is also the important direction of intra-urban residential mobility in both Arusha and Dar es Salaam. Urban residents, both migrants and city-born, often had a period of "moving around" within and between various central areas before making the shift to the periphery. In the peripheries of the cities, consolidated homeowners are predominantly lifelong or long-term urban residents with long trajectories and a considerable number of residential moves behind them. In Dar es Salaam, however, some of the homeowners had managed to build homes in the periphery, either directly or quite rapidly after migrating to Dar es Salaam, hence had shorter urban residential trajectories. Often these are mature migrants moving in relation to a work transfer who are able to draw

on resources accumulated elsewhere. Tenants living in the peripheral areas were also typically lifelong or long-term residents with a number of residential moves behind them, though a few had settled directly in the periphery on moving to the city. In the central settlements of Arusha, many residents are new or recent migrants to the city who have not shifted their residence many times.

#### **4.4 Regular mobility**

##### *Social composition*

In all of the cities studied in Ghana, Cameroon and Tanzania, people of all ages, socio-economic levels and both genders engage in frequent mobility, though not everyone is equally mobile. Many of the primarily adult breadwinners rely on regular mobility for their livelihood activities, not necessarily engaging in daily commuting but making regular trips to other parts of the city. Children, youth, housewives and the elderly are much less dependent on daily mobility in relation to livelihood activities but may regularly travel around the city for other purposes.

##### *Motives for regular mobility*

Most of the frequent mobility undertaken by urban residents in Ghana is linked to income-generating activities. Some people, both those resident in the central and more peripheral areas, commute to workplaces (formal and informal) and in search of work (often casual labour) on a daily basis. An example of the former is office workers or market traders who have a fixed place of work. The latter includes especially young men looking for casual work as porters in the port of Takoradi and in supporting activities in the fishing harbour. Other residents, especially young women, make journeys in order to buy goods in the markets and at the fishing harbour that they sell in their residential areas – this may be done daily but more often less frequently. Students move to their educational establishments or place of learning usually on a daily basis on weekdays. On Saturdays working women, and sometimes men, buy foodstuffs in the markets often in the centre of the cities where prices are cheaper, supplemented by smaller purchases in local markets and stores. For the middle and upper classes some shopping is now done in newly established supermarkets located typically near high-income residential areas. Lower-income households tend to buy in small quantities from local markets hence their mobility is more frequent and over shorter distances. Those travelling to the central markets on work related trips, however, tend to purchase goods for

domestic use in association with these trips. Less frequently, social visits are made by all social groups to family and friends.

Turning to Cameroon, the key reasons for young people to engage in daily mobility include attending school, university and attaining vocational skills. For many adults, as well as some young people, key motivations for daily mobility relate to travelling to key economic nodes in relation to their income-generating activities. On top of this, in Bafoussam large numbers of people move to the rural areas for work on a daily basis (for example, to Mount Bamboutos and Noun plain). There are also primarily female traders known as “Buyam sellam” who go to the rural areas to purchase their supplies of crops which they sell in town. Some urban residents, especially the Bamilike, visit family members outside of the city on a regular basis for traditional celebrations and other social events. As they tend to come from the surrounding areas these trips are not very expensive or time consuming. Those living in peripheral areas have to travel into the centre to access healthcare services. In some informal settlements, such as Ngouache and Tougang Ville, young children are often sent to collect water on a daily basis within or closeby the settlement, usually on foot. Indigenes and those who have lived in the city for a longer period of time tend to have more varied and complex intra-urban mobility in relation to their social activities in comparison to recent migrants. Climate, topography and geology also affect mobility; in the rainy season residents of City Biege and Tougang Ville find it very difficult to use the access road leading to the main road which hinders their ability to be mobile.

Economic motivations are also very important for daily mobility in the Tanzanian towns, especially among adult breadwinners. While some commute to their jobs on a daily basis many make regular trips within the city or to central markets in relation to their small-scale businesses and informal trading activities. Most residents of peripheral areas are members of households where at least one breadwinner relies on regularly going outside their residential area for generating income. Far from all members of a household, however, travel outside their areas regularly, either because they are not economically active, or because they are primarily able to work or run a small business locally. Some of the youths depend on daily or regular commuting to be able to attend secondary schools and other higher education establishments, and in Dar es Salaam to attend university. Some of the children living in peripheral settlements of Dar es Salaam have to walk several kilometres every day to attend primary school in a neighbouring sub-ward. Women often mention “visiting relatives” as an important motive for regular trips around the city. Accessing services did not appear as an

important motive for daily or regular mobility, except for education, as specified above, and in relation to accessing health services. Domestic needs, however, were commonly mentioned by women as motives for regular mobility, such as going to a central market to buy household necessities.

### *Destinations of daily mobility*

Most of the daily mobility in a Ghanaian context takes place within the city and is primarily inwards towards the central area in the morning and outwards in the evening. Given the nature of the radial road network, this results in massive traffic jams. There is very little mobility outside of the city by urban residents, rather agricultural produce and other goods are usually brought into the city by rural residents. In Sekondi-Takoradi, however, a few people move out of the city to work as labourers in the new agro-industrial industries such as palm oil and rubber. Some young men resident in Sekondi-Takoradi also move outside of the city to work in small-scale mining (galamsey) and as labourers for construction companies in relation to housing construction and on installation sites linked to the oil and gas companies.

The older generation of residents in Douala, especially the Bamilike, are more likely to visit family members outside of the city on a regular basis. Towards the end of their active life, many of them leave the city and return to their home village/town where they usually have a home or place to live (rent free). There are also many unemployed youth looking for employment opportunities and life experiences in the cities who move around the city in search of work on a daily basis. Young people who have not been able to find a job or have lost their job may return to their home village, or move to another city, such as Yaoundé, or smaller towns near their home village. Entrepreneurs looking to start or expand their businesses are also common in the large cities. They move within the central business areas and elsewhere in their search for inputs and customers, and to promote their businesses. Some even move abroad especially to Gabon, Congo and Guinea. Some residents in middle/high income areas also travel abroad, for example, especially some Deido travel to Europe and America. Retail traders, often Bamilike women, travel to rural markets and farms surrounding Douala (such as in Dibombari, Souza, Kapa and Edea) where they often purchase supplies from roadside traders rather than actually going into the town/areas. Many students who are studying at the university in Dschang commute from Bafoussam on a daily basis.

In Dar es Salaam, residents of all parts of the city leave their residential area regularly in relation to their livelihoods. They travel predominantly to central parts of the city, either as regular commuters or in order to buy and sell in the central markets. This is similar for residents of Arusha, as many of those involved in home-based businesses, workshops and informal trading rely on regular exchanges in the central markets. Residents of both cities commonly mentioned travelling outside the city to visit relatives. In Dar es Salaam some participants relied on regular exchanges outside Dar es Salaam in relation to their livelihoods, such as buying fruits in the coastal region to sell in the urban market, or selling clothes and shoes outside of the city.

### *Mode of transport*

The majority of residents in Ghanaian cities rely on public transport both from the public sector (Metro Mass Transit) but more commonly in the form of private informal vehicles such as 'trotros' (minibuses), share taxis and an emerging motorbike taxi service, especially in Accra. These means of transport are used by, for example, traders/market women who travel early in the morning (typically around 4.30 am) to central markets to purchase goods, and by commuters who usually return late in the evening around 8/9 pm from work in other parts of the city. A major challenge faced by urban residents relates to long waiting times during the peak periods and for some, the distant locations of bus terminals/stations. Massive traffic jams increase journey times and consequently many urban residents living in the periphery start their journeys very early in the morning to try to avoid long queues and jams. Urban residents may have to walk considerable distances to access trotros and some find that they have to pay multiple times due to the fragmented nature of the transport system. The rising cost of petrol and diesel has resulted in higher fares which in turn reduces profit margins for those who have to travel in relation to their businesses. Consequently, bulk buying when possible is more profitable and reduces the number of trips and transport costs. This requires either having capital or being on good relations with wholesalers so goods can be obtained on credit. Rail transport is very limited in Ghana and is rarely used by urban residents.

In Douala, the majority of people travel in the city using shared mototaxi or shared taxis (cars). Traffic accidents are a concern and pedestrians often feel unsafe. The weight of traffic has an impact on mobility as people often have to leave very early to get to work and often arrive home late in the evening. This is especially an issue for those living in Bonendale

because they have to cross the bridge into the centre which is a real bottleneck. Some residents, especially those who need to travel outside of city to get supplies from nearby towns and rural areas, chose to travel at night time as a strategy to save time by avoiding day time traffic. Reciprocal arrangements are sometimes made between female traders to reduce the need for individual travel, for example, one person make a journey by taxi bringing back goods for others who share the travel costs. Those unable to make use of these networks take minibuses. This can also take place at an intra-city level; women working in retail will reduce their travel time/costs by taking it in turns to make trips to purchase supplies, a so-called 'chain of solidarity'. In the middle/high income areas residents have private cars but traffic jams is a concern. Depending on income levels, regular visits to family members outside of the city take place using minibuses or private cars. In the peripheral settlements in Douala, in the rainy season residents find it difficult to find transport prepared to go along the access roads. Consequently they have to walk considerable distances sometimes with water at knee height with many residents therefore having to take multiple sets of clothing to work. In Bafoussam, due to the topography and poor quality of roads, the majority of urban residents travel using shared mototaxi or shared taxis (cars). Taxis only use the main roads, therefore, residents often have to switch to motortaxis to complete their journeys. Due to the shorter distances compared with Dar es Salaam, many more journeys are also made on foot in Bafoussam. Some urban residents in all of the neighbourhoods own a car but some of those living in Banengo leave their car in the city centre and take a motortaxi home due to fears of theft and crime in their neighbourhood. Daily mobility to the rural areas for work takes place using trucks and buses.

In both cities in Tanzania the vast majority of urban residents rely on 'public transport', which is often provided by private informal operators. There is also a group though who rely on private cars or motorcycles, especially in Dar es Salaam where distances are further. Especially those resident in peripheral areas appeared to try to purchase a private vehicle if at all possible. Residents who travel to work in rural areas on a daily basis do so on buses. Traffic jams in Dar es Salaam are notorious and result in long journey times. This is less of an issue in Arusha where traffic tends to flow freely most of the time.

## 5. Conclusions

This study has shown that there is a high degree of mobility in all of the cities studied, much of it linked to livelihood activities. Migrants moving into the cities are primarily young people of both genders from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds who have varying education and skill levels. They move to the cities from rural areas and urban settlements of all sizes including other major cities. Most are national migrants but there are a few international migrants. There is a tendency for a greater proportion of migrants to the intermediate-sized cities to move from the surrounding areas compared with the larger cities where there is no key source area of migrants.

Most of the migrants move for economic reasons in search of better livelihoods in the cities but this is often formulated broadly as ‘to pursue life opportunities’ and ‘for a better quality of life’ hence also includes social and cultural factors. Many young people also move to the cities in order to attend schools and tertiary institutions, and some young women move in relation to marriage. Whilst older people are generally thought of as moving out of cities back to their hometowns, there were also instances of older people moving in the reverse direction in order to be taken care of by relatives already residing in the city.

On arrival in the city most migrants move into centrally located areas where they either stay with family/friends or rent accommodation. Central areas are attractive as they are close to income-earning possibilities, have good transport connections, and tend to include areas with cheap rental accommodation. There is an emerging trend, however, for some migrants to move directly to the peripheral areas to live with family/friends who are already settled there, as rents can be cheaper in these areas, or because they have secured nearby employment.

The vast majority of the city residents establish their own businesses or work for others in the informal economy. The activities primarily involve retail though there is a growing service economy as well as a limited number of production activities. Some of these activities are home-based, primarily run by women, whilst others take place in markets, in shops, or along the roadsides. Although many of the income-generating activities are ubiquitous, a few are specific to certain parts of the cities such as fishing, printing presses, and wholesale retailers. Whilst it is rare for residents in the central areas of the cities to leave the city in relation to generating their livelihoods, some residents in the peripheral areas travel outside of the city in order to work as small-scale farmers, labourers on nearby plantations, in stone-quarries or in

small-scale mining. Most farming activities though tend to be supplementary rather than primary income-generating activities for urban residents.

There is an overriding tendency in all of the cities studied for intra-urban residential mobility to occur from the centre to the periphery with the primary motive being to become homeowners or find cheaper places to rent as land/housing/rent falls in price away from the city centres. Consequently, those moving tend to be young/middle aged people with expanding families. Secondary motives for moving include wanting a 'good environment' i.e. peace and quiet, fresh air, space and greenery. Services/infrastructure were rarely mentioned as a reason for moving, though are a factor that is kept in mind when deciding where to move to. Similarly, livelihoods were not a key factor for moving but a move often has implications for income-generating activities. For many urban residents, a move to the periphery often follows a significant number of moves between dwellings within the central areas, though this is reduced in contexts where high rent advances are demanded.

Much of the regular mobility within cities is linked to livelihood activities and is engaged in by people of all ages, socio-economic levels and genders, though not everyone is equally mobile. Some of this mobility takes place on a daily basis, either commuting to a formal/informal workplace or searching for work. Other mobility, often in relation to buying goods to sell, is frequent though not necessarily daily and at times especially female traders will make reciprocal travel arrangements to reduce the length and cost of travelling within the city. Especially in the larger cities, the inadequate transport infrastructure results in long queues, massive traffic jams, and long journey times especially for those living in the periphery of the cities who work in the centre. A few urban residents travel outside the city on a regular basis to work or buy primarily agricultural goods to sell; this is quite rare in the larger cities but more common in the intermediate-sized cities.

Overall this study has shown how mobility to and within cities is widespread occurring at a range of scales and temporalities. Migration to cities and regular mobility are closely linked to livelihood activities, whereas intra-urban residential mobility is more connected to the search for cheaper land/housing/rents in the peripheral areas. Whilst some urban residents, especially those living in the peripheral areas of the smaller cities, have links to rural areas, these tend to be fairly limited though remain important for a minority. As cities expand and as increasing numbers of urban residents are born and grow up in cities, as this study has shown their links to rural areas are likely to decrease over time.

## References

- Adey, P. (2006) If mobility is everything then it is nothing: towards a relational politics of (im)mobilities, *Mobilities*, 1(1): 75-94.
- Carney, D. (1998) Implementing the sustainable rural livelihoods approach in D. Carney (Ed.) *Sustainable rural livelihoods: What contribution can we make*, DFID, London.
- Chambers, R., & Conway, G. (1992) *Sustainable rural livelihoods: practical concepts for the 21st century*. Institute of Development Studies, Sussex.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011) *Research Methods in Education*. Routledge, London.
- De Bruijn, M., Van Dijk, R., & Foeken, D. (2001) Mobile Africa: an introduction. In M. De Bruijn, R. A. van Dijk, & D. Foeken, (Eds.). (2001) *Mobile Africa: changing patterns of movement in Africa and beyond*. Brill, Leiden: 1-7.
- De Haan, L., & Zoomers, A. (2005) Exploring the frontier of livelihoods research. *Development and change*, 36(1): 27-47.
- Elliott, J. (2005) *Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Sage, Los Angeles.
- Ellis, F. (1999) *Rural livelihood diversity in developing countries: evidence and policy implications*. London, Overseas Development Institute.
- Kaufmann, V. (2002) *Re-thinking Mobility. Contemporary Sociology*, Ashgate, Aldershot
- Langevang, T. (2007) Movements in time and space: using multiple methods in research with young people in Accra, Ghana. *Children's geographies*, 5(3): 267-282.
- Longhurst, R. (2010) Semi-structured interviews and focus groups, in N. Clifford, S. French, and G. Valentine, (Eds) *Key methods in geography*. London, Sage: 103-115
- Oswin, N., & Yeoh, B. S. (2010) Introduction: mobile city Singapore. *Mobilities*, 5(2): 167-175.
- Rakodi C. with Lloyd-Jones T. (2002) *Urban Livelihoods: A people-centered approach to reducing poverty*, Earthscan Publications, London

Rigg, J. (2007) *An everyday geography of the global south*. Routledge, New York.

Sheller, M., & Urry, J. (Eds). (2006) *Mobile technologies of the city*. Routledge: New York.

Skelton, T., & Gough, K. V. (2013) Introduction: young people's im/mobile urban geographies. *Urban Studies*, 50(3): 455-466.

Van Dijk, H., Foeken, D., & Van Til, K. (2001) Population mobility in Africa: An overview. In M. De Bruijn, R. A. van Dijk, & D. Foeken, (Eds) (2001) *Mobile Africa: changing patterns of movement in Africa and beyond*: 9-16.