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Migration and Urban Livelihoods: A Quest for Sustainability in Southern Ethiopia

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Keywords: migration, rural-urban migration, sustainability, urban livelihoods, and wolaita sodo.

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Migration and Urban Livelihoods: A Quest for Sustainability in Southern Ethiopia

Befikadu Esayas Amphune [α], Zerihun Berhane Weldegebriel [σ] & Yonatan Dessalegn Enaro [ρ]

Abstract- This article explores migration as a livelihood option in one of the emerging cities in a region that is considered as a development corridor in Ethiopia, Wolaita Sodo. In doing so, it shades light on the major forces behind Rural to Urban migration, migrants' access to livelihood resources, and major livelihood activities, coping mechanisms, and outcomes achieved. Concurrent mixed research design was used to generate data both from primary and secondary sources. Mix of migration theories from three different perspectives were reviewed and Sustainable Livelihood Framework was applied as an analytical framework to critically examine the problem in its context. Results show that the main factors behind Rural-Urban migration were, poverty and unemployment (95.7%); intermittent income and limited job opportunities (93.2%), limited mobility (80.9%), poor health facilities (80%), shortage of cheap energy sources like electricity (79.1%), seasonality of agricultural employment (74%), and insecurity of asset ownership (73.4%); on the other hand, 100% of surveyed migrants reported that "better outlook and hope for the future," "hope that there are no poverty and unemployment challenges", and "hope for better health, education and other services" were the major pull factors; migrants' vulnerabilities to shocks, trends, and seasonality were highly determined by their available and accessible assets, context within which they are operating and transforming structures which determine their access. Moreover, diverse livelihood activities where short-term coping mechanisms and long-term survival strategies co-exist, livelihood outcomes of migrants were reported both as (positive and negative) but the positive impacts exceeded as measured by livelihood asset indicators. These results broadly attest to the importance of applying migration theories in a comprehensive way as opposed to the conventional wisdom of using a theory. Therefore, pro-migration policies and programs should be considered at different scales in the design of development interventions, which may help to improve migrants' livelihoods.

Keywords: migration, rural-urban migration, sustainability, urban livelihoods, and wolaita sodo.

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I. Background And Justification Of The Study

By 2050, world population is expected to exceed 9 billion people, and nowhere will population growth be more dramatic than in the cities of the developing world. Indeed, according to United Nations estimates, the world became more Urban than Rural in 2008, for the first time in human history [1, 2]. Migration is considered as the movement of people from one geographic region to another, which may be on temporary or permanent basis. The reasons for it vary from one person to another depending on the situation that brought about the decision [3]. Hence, Rural-Urban migration dominates the domain of research as its role in changing the lives of migrants and families at the place of origin and destination [4].

In this respect, dramatic increases in permanent Rural-Urban migration accompany sustained overall Urban population growth rates across the developing region [5]. In many countries, there are substantial gaps in returns to labor in agriculture versus other sectors of the economy [6], implying that there is potentially significant pressure in many countries for additional Rural-Urban migration to take place, for returns to labor to equilibrate between Rural and Urban sectors. With respect to persistent vulnerabilities of households to livelihood insecurity, Rural Ethiopia provides a typical case in point and Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world with human development index ranks 173 out of 187 countries reported [7]. Ethiopia faces complex challenges of food insecurity, overpopulation, political instability, ethnic conflict and large-scale out-migration flows, land scarcity, and lack of agricultural resources, ecological degradation, drought, and poverty are historically among the major causes of migration in Ethiopia [8, 9, 10].

As a result, migration tends to be seen as problematic, both in academic and policy debates. However, this position reflects a simplistic view of migration and underestimates the complexity of the migration processes. Despite of one-directional understanding of the migration process, the reality reveals that migration is the result of continuous interchanges of livelihoods that characterize spatially and temporally various labor markets. Usually, migration studies focus on economic problems in the area of origin and economic opportunities in destination

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areas [11]. Largely, this view has facilitated the isolated treatment of issues affecting each space and, it has as a result failed to acknowledge the important poverty reducing inter-linkages that exist between the two spaces, and the many variants of the spaces [12]. However, Rural-Urban migration is attributed to have both negative and positive consequences at community, household, and individual levels [13, 14]. Moreover, migration is a medium to offset or cope with risk factors that threaten the level of resources or the conducive institutional and policy contexts that are relevant to an individuals or households' livelihood [15].

A livelihoods approach places households and their members at the center of analysis and decision-making. The important implication of the approach's focal point is that household-centered methods of analysis must play a central role in developing and understanding the livelihood strategies and in program and project planning and evaluation [16]. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF), which focuses on the things people do and the resources they access in pursuit of a living, is very much connected with migration since the mobility of people is about the movement of human capital including the mobility of labor together with a person's experience, skills, educational level and health status.

According to [17] Wolaita Sodo town had a total of 76, 780 population, of which 40, 495 (52.7 %) and 36, 285 (47.2 %) were male and female population respectively. From the same source, Sodo *Zuriya Woreda* had a total of 19, 319 migrants who stayed between 1-10+ years, of which 9, 268 (48 %) were male population. On top of this, the town is in a close proximity to surrounding *Woreads* of the *Zone,* which are characterized by land fragmentation, over population, Rural poverty, unemployment, and others that increase the influx of migration. Despite of this, with the research and community services experiences to the area, to our knowledge, academic evidences as to whether migration, particularly Rural-Urban migration, is actually working for the poor as livelihood strategy at the local level or not is rather scanty. Therefore, detailed analysis and in-depth case studies are critical in understanding the issues that are essential to livelihoods of Rural-Urban migrants. This research aims at bridging this gap between theory and reality with an in-depth study of migration (from the perspective of livelihoods of migrants).

The research aims at identifying critical factors determining opportunities and constraints for migrants by taking Wolaita Sodo town as a case study to enable better understanding of the migration process and make recommendations to help formulate policies that enhance the positive role of Rural-Urban migration for the livelihoods of migrants. In response to the problem, this study tried to achieve the following basic research questions. These were, (1) what are the major forces behind Rural to Urban migration in the study area? (2) How do migrants access different form of assets or capitals in the study area? (3) What are the major livelihood activities, coping mechanisms, and outcomes used by migrants?

II. Conceptual, Theoretical And Analytical Framework Of The Study

a) *The Concept of Migration*

Theoretically, migration is defined as a process of personal movement from one area to another. It usually takes place at a variety of scale; intercontinental (between continents), intra-continental (between countries of a given continent), and interregional (with in countries) [18]. Migration is understood as a spatial separation of one or more family members from the location of their residence for different reasons over varying periods, and in so doing is able to make new and different contributions to their well-being [3]. This study capitalizes on recent perspectives on the migration-development nexus and in particular builds on the discourse of the migration-livelihood framework. It pledges to the argument that migration is an essential element, and one of the most important methods of diversifying Rural livelihoods in many parts of developing countries, including Ethiopia.

b) *Theories of Migration*

i. *Optimistic Views: Neo-classical and Development list Theory*

Neo-classical migration theory perceives migration as a form of optimal allocation of production factors to the benefit of both sending and receiving countries. In this perspective of 'balanced growth', the re-allocation of labor from Rural, agricultural areas to Urban, industrial sectors (within or across borders), is considered as a prerequisite for economic growth and hence, as a constituent component of the entire development process [1]. According to dominant views of the 1950s and 1960s in development theory, return migrants were seen as important agents of change and innovation. It was expected that migrants not only bring back money, but also new ideas, knowledge, and entrepreneurial attitudes. In this way, migrants were expected to play positive role in development and contribute to the accelerated spatial diffusion of modernization in developing countries [19].

Dual Economy of Rural-Urban Migration (Lewis Theory of Development) is one of the best known early theoretical models of development that focused on the structural transformation of a primarily subsistence economy was that formulated by Nobel laureate Arthur Lewis in the mid 1950s and later modified, formalized, and extended by John Fei and Gustav Ranis [1]. In the Lewis model, the underdeveloped economy consists of two sectors: a traditional, overpopulated Rural

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subsistence sector characterized by zero marginal labor productivity a situation that permits Lewis to classify this as surplus labor in the sense that it can be withdrawn from the traditional agricultural sector without any loss of output and a high-productivity modern Urban industrial sector[iii]. Both labor transfer and modern-sector gradually transferred [20]. The primary focus of the model is on both the process of labor transfer and the growth of output and employment in the modern sectoriii. Both labor transfer and modern-sector employment growth are brought about by output expansion in that sector [1, 21]. In the optimistic view, migration is viewed as a form of optimal allocation of production factors [19], in particular in a strict neoclassical view. Although the Lewis two-sector development model is simple and roughly reflects the historical experience of economic growth in the West, four of its key assumptions[iv] do not fit the institutional and economic realities of most contemporary developing countries [1].

On the other hand, [22] develops a general schema into which a variety of spatial movement can be placed, based on the arguments in which he divided the forces influencing migrants perception into push and pull factors which is entitled as "Push and Pull Factors Approach of Rural-Urban Migration" [23].The former are negative factors tending to force migrants to leave origin areas, while the later are positive factors attracting migrant to destination areas in the expectation of improving their standard of living. Generally, [22] considered all factors associated with migration to be included in the following categories. Factors associated with the areas of origin (push factors); factors associated with the areas of destination (pull factors); and personal factors. Similarly, one theory to explain the apparently paradoxical relationship of accelerated Rural-Urban migration in the context of rising Urban unemployment has come to be known as the Todaro migration model and in its equilibrium form as the Harris-Todaro model. [24, 25], starting from the assumption that migration is primarily an economic phenomenon, which for the individual migrant can be quite rational decision despite the existence of Urban unemployment, the Todaro model postulates that migration proceeds in response to Urban-Rural differences in expected income rather than actual earnings [1, 10]. The fundamental premise is that migrants consider the various labor market opportunities available to them in the Rural and Urban sectors and choose the one that maximizes their expected gains from migration.

In essence, the theory assumes that members of the labor force both actual and potential compare their expected incomes for a given time horizon in the Urban sector (the difference between returns and costs of migration) with prevailing average Rural incomes and migrate if the former exceeds the latter [1]. In a full-employment environment, the decision to migrate can be based solely on the desire to secure the highest paid job wherever it becomes available. Simple economic theory would then indicate that such migration should lead to a reduction in wage differentials through the interaction of the forces of supply and demand in areas of both emigration and immigration [1]. However, authors also criticize this model. Since, the message they have provided is that internal migration can be harmful which is exacerbated. This model only explains the static but migration is a dynamic phenomenon by nature. Other important aspects are missing, including the heterogeneity of migrants that is not accounted for, the possibility of return migration the existence of Rural unemployment etc [19]. Although the neo-classical approach mainly considers migration as determined by economic motive, some of the arguments are still valid in analyzing the factors of migration [10].

ii. *Pessimistic Views: Neo-Marxian and Structuralism / Dependency "migration syndrome"*

As from the late 1960s, optimistic views were increasingly challenged under the combined influence of a paradigm shift in social and development theory towards historical-structuralist views [26, 27]. In fact, these new views turned the argument of neo-classical and development list approaches completely upside down: instead of decreasing migration was now seen as increasing spatial (interregional and international) disparities in developmental levels [16]. Quite on the contrary, migration is seen as aggravating problems of underdevelopment. According to this theory, migration is the result of the existence of uneven dependency relationship in which the industrialized centers dominate the agricultural sector [1, 28, 29]. In the pessimistic perspective, migration increases inequalities [19]. These pessimistic views seemed to fit particularly well into cumulative causation theory elaborated by Myrdal [19]. Cumulative causation theory holds that capitalist development is inevitably marked by deepening spatial welfare inequalities.

Although positive “spread effects” shall occur such as increased demand for agricultural products and raw materials, trade from the periphery (or remittances), yet not all these match the negative “backwash effects.” Myrdal therefore argued that, without strong state policy, the capitalist system fosters increasing spatial inequalities [19]. This approach focuses on political and institutions that determine migration and emphasis the negative aspects of migration [16]. Structuralist theory of migration deal with unequal distribution of economic and political power in the world economy where migration was seen mainly as a way of mobilizing cheap labor for capital [30]. The theory assumes migration is inevitable to transition to capitalism where poor people are much dependant on it as only way of survival [30]. The pessimistic view was highly criticized for its failure to

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consider the internal factors for the problem than mere externalization [29]. [30] Criticizes the theory for being too one-sided to adequately analyze the complexity of migration and less attention to motivational factors and actions of migrants. However, some of the ideas, such as the institutional factors "transforming structures" [31] that prevail in Rural areas, especially the land redistribution process, which make farmers landless, are relevant for the contemporary situation in analyzing the factors of migration [10].

iii. *Pluralistic Views: The 'New Economics of Labor Migration'*

In the 1980s and 1990s, the new economics of labor migration (NELM) emerged mainly within the American research context as a response to development list and neoclassical theories (the migration optimists) and structuralist theory (the migration pessimists). Such approaches seemed too rigid and determinist to deal with the complex realities of the migration and development interactions. NELM offered a much more subtle view of migration and development, which links causes and consequences of migration more explicitly, and in which both positive and negative development responses are possible [19]. There are two main innovative aspects of this view. The first is to recognize that migration decisions (who goes, where to go, for how long, to do what etc.) are not individual decisions but joint decisions taken within the ambit of the household and for different members of the household [32]. Thus, the household for this view of migration is both decision maker and an actor. The second is that rational-choice decision-making is not only about wage and income maximization but is also about income diversification and risk aversion. Taking these two perspectives together, it can be seen that families and households are in an appropriate position to control risks to their economic well-being by diversifying their income earning and livelihood resources into a 'portfolio' of different activities, spreading their labor resources over space and time [19].

In addition to its contribution to more stable and secure household livelihoods, NELM scholars argue that migration plays a vital role in providing a potential source of investment capital, which is especially important in the context of the imperfect credit (capital) and risk (insurance) markets that prevail in most developing countries. Therefore, migration can be considered as a livelihood strategy to overcome various market constraints, potentially enabling households to invest in productive activities and improve their livelihoods [10, 15, 16, 19]. It assumes, moreover, that intra-household relationships are harmonious, leading to unanimous collective decision-making. Finally, it does not apply to the common situation where the entire household migrates [32]. Overall, the theory has not received much following or empirical testing. Essentially a social choice account, it has also been critiqued for overlooking dynamics within households (i.e. gender roles) and being too heavily future oriented [33].

In short, the three abroad perspectives distinguished along time and other salient features vis-a-vis migration are the building blocks of the study along with SLF upon which the study is embedded. This is because, there is no single theory which clearly explain the dynamics of migration as the optimistic sees migration as something with positive results both to the sending and receiving areas; pessimistic conversely views the negative aspects of migration due to unequal or imbalanced relationship between geographical areas; while more recently, pluralistic views on migration has come up with broad views which tried to understand the dynamic nature of migration both positively and negatively.

c) *Analytical Framework: Sustainable Livelihood Framework*

The concept of Sustainable Livelihoods has been traditionally applied in the Rural context but in recent scholastic works on Urban poverty adapted the approach as a guiding map for understanding Urban livelihoods [31, 34]. Drawing on [35] a livelihood is defined as comprising the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities required for a means of living.

> A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation, and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in short and long term [36].

Vulnerability, defined as a degree of exposure and susceptibility to risks, its sources are embedded on *trends* (economic, population, resources stock, technology and governance); *shocks* (conflicts, climate, diseases and illness); and *seasonality* (prices, health, employment, production) [31] (Figure 1). Given this, the livelihood activities of people are influenced by exogenous and endogenous factors, which are referred to as 'context' [35, 37]. Assets are either destroyed or created as a result of the trends, shocks and seasonality of the 'context' [37]. According to [31] assets that are owned, accessed and utilized by the Urban poor, strategies they employ and livelihood outcomes are highly influenced by context within which they live. [38] broadly categorized Urban contexts as environmental, economic, political, and social. Moreover, the Urban poor are linked into structures of governance through their dependence on the delivery of services by city institutions as well as through the impact of meso and macro level policies [31]. By livelihoods, it is to mean, broadly, the assets (natural, physical, human, financial, and social), activities, and the access to these

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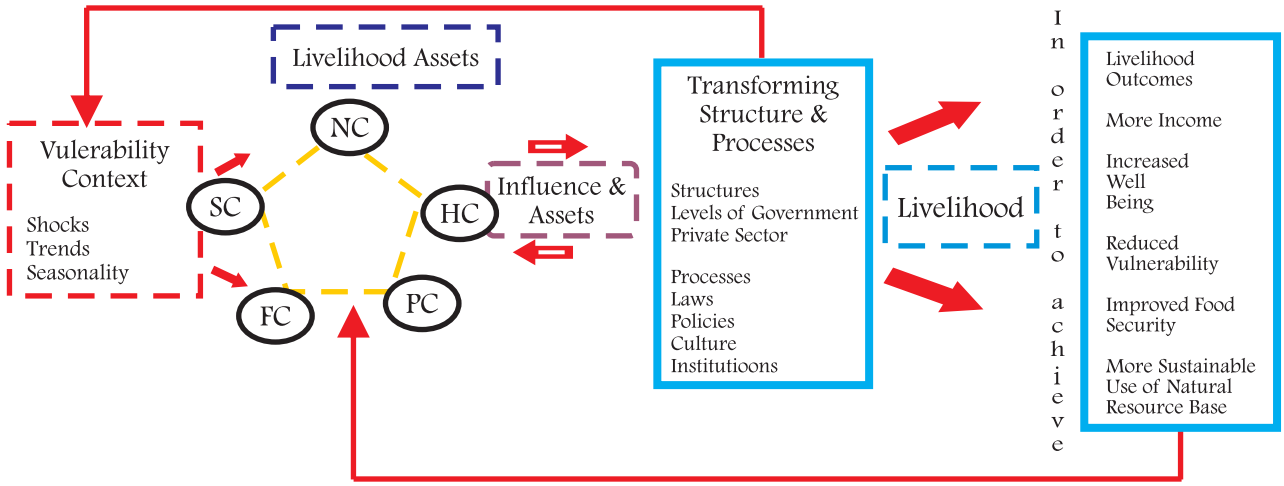
(mediated by institutions, organizations and social relations) that together determine the living gained by individuals or households' [31, 37].

According to [31] transforming structures refers to (levels of government and private sector) and processes (laws, policies, cultures and institutions) operating from local to global level can be formal or informal. Livelihood strategies are comprised of a range of activities that are used by households for survival [31]. The intricacy and dynamic nature of the interface between components of the SLF determines whether the livelihood outcomes are desirable or undesirable [34]. The asset pentagon lies at the core of the livelihoods framework, 'within' the vulnerability context. The shape of the pentagon can be used to show schematically the variation in people's access to assets. The idea is that the centre point of the pentagon where the lines meet represents zero access to assets while the outer perimeter represents maximum access to assets.

d) Linking SLF with Migration

According to [31, 37] firstly, the approach is 'people-centered'. Under the SLF model, the making of policy is based on realistic understanding of the struggle of poor people. The practical advantage of the model's focus on the actual life of the poor is that it highlights the participation of the poor themselves as indispensable for determination of priorities for practical intervention and in the institutions and processes that govern their lives. Secondly, it is 'holistic' in that it is 'non-sectoral' and it recognizes multiple influences, multiple actors, multiple strategies, and multiple outcomes. Thirdly, it is 'dynamic' because it attempts to understand change, complex cause-and-effect relationships, and 'iterative chains of events'. Fourthly, it starts with analysis of strengths rather than of needs, and seeks to build on everyone's inherent potential. Fifthly, it attempts to 'bridge the gap' between macro and micro levels. Sixthly, it is committed explicitly to several different dimensions of sustainability: environmental, economic, social, and institutional.



Source: After (31, 34, 39)

FC-Financial Capital, HC-Human Capital, NC-Natural Capital, PC-Physical Capital, SC-Social Capital

Fig.1: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF)

III. Research Methodology

Research Method: Concurrent mixed research approach was used to look into the dynamics of Rural-Urban migration by taking Wolaita Sodo town as a case study area. 120 migrants were surveyed using both purposive and snowball-sampling techniques, as migrants were available yet hardily accessible. Then, trained data collectors interviewed 120 of the surveyed migrants in a face-to-face manner.

Types and Sources of Data: Qualitative and quantitative data were generated both from primary and secondary sources. The former was collected directly from the respondents while the latter were generated from different scholastics works and organizational reports pertaining to the topic. Due attention and cross checking of different materials were made to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the secondary sources.

Instruments of Data Collection: Quantitative data were obtained using self-administered questionnaires collected via primary household surveys. With the help of the questionnaires, migrants' background; the major Rural push and Urban pull factors; migrants' vulnerability contexts; available and accessible assets; livelihood activities and strategies used; and the outcome data were generated. On the other hand, qualitative data were collected through Focused Group

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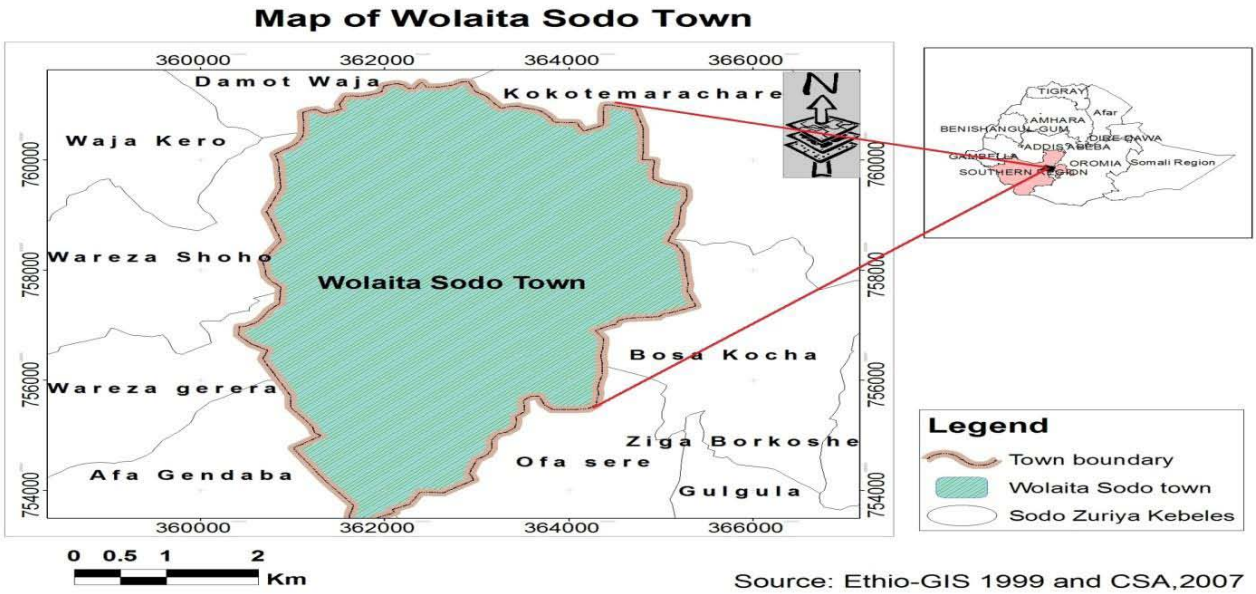
Discussions (FGDs), Key Informants Interviews (KIIs), Non-participant Observation (NPO) and Filed Notes (FNs).

Instrument Validity and Reliability: To ensure reliability of the data, questionnaires were translated from English to the local language and back again. The data were also centrally followed regularly until the data collection was completed. Double entry of data was employed to reduce data entry errors. Instrument validity was ensured by resorting to pre-prepared standard question items for each of the indicators used. This was further strengthened by conducting pilot test of the instruments and modifying them to meet the level of reliability required.

Methods of Data Analysis: Both qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources were, edited, organized, analyzed, summarized, and presented by employing qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. On the other hand, quantitative data were analyzed, summarized using axial coding method (*Thematic analysis along the SLF and theories of migration*) then given interpretations. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 20.0) and Stata version 12.0) were alternatively used to enter the raw data and present the results in different forms. The quantitative analyses include descriptive statistics, chi-squre test, Fisher exact test and Radar diagram of livelihood assets of surveyed migrants. The results of were subsequently explained with the help of qualitative data to arrive at valid conclusions.

Description of the Study Area: The study was conducted in the administrative center of Wolaita Zone[v], Sodo, which was established in 1984[vi]. Relatively; Wolaita Sodo town is located South of Damot Waja *Kebele*[vii], East of Wareza Shoho *Kebele,* West of Bosa Kocha *Kebele*, North East of Ofa Gendeba *Kebele,* and North West of Ofa Sere *Kebele* (Figure 2). Sodo town is located 327 KM far from Addis Ababa and 168 KM from the regional capital, Hawassa. Wolaita Sodo town had a total of 76, 780 population, of which 40, 495 (52.7 %) and 36, 285 (47.2 %) were male and female population respectively. Sodo Zuriya Woreda[viii] had a total of 19, 319 migrants who stayed between 1-10+ years, of which 9, 268 (48 %) were male population [17].



Source: Based on [17]

Fig. 2: Map of the Study Area

IV. Result and Discussion

a) Background of the Migrants

Nearly 97% of respondents covered in the study were below the age of 40. This result is consistent with [17]. This result is indicative of the migratory tendency of the younger section of the population. Migrants background shows that about two third (67.2%) of the studied migrants have little or no education. Only 27.7% of the migrants have a junior (grades 6 to 8) level of education and 2.5% of migrants have a tertiary level education (Table 1). Male are typified as the breadwinner of the household and the migration of sons re-establishes this conventional wisdom. Males account for about eighty % of the studied migrants. The share of unmarried migrants' account (70.5%) is close to migrating sons (66.4%) of the sending families. This hints that male children of Rural households are under some kind of pressure to start a livelihood than their female counter parts. In addition, migrants marital status implies that being unmarried relieves a son from responsibilities that would otherwise might have

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inhibited his migration. Close to 65 % of studied migrants are Protestant religious followers and this figure is slightly inflated in comparison with the regional figure (55.5%) [17]. The relationship status of migrants surveyed showed that 67% were not in a relationship. This, perhaps, reveals that migrants do not have plans of kick-starting long-term relationships like marriage and co-habitation. About 32% of surveyed migrants have their own children. This tells that migrants support not only their sending families but equally also their own children.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Migrants
Age Frequency %

Age %		Frequency
< 20	42	35.29
21 - 30	60	50.42
31 - 40	13	10.92
41 - 50	2	1.68
> 51	2	1.68
Educational Level		
Illiterate	19	15.97
Literate (Read and Write)	4	3.36
Between 1 - 5	24	20.17
Between 6 - 8	33	27.73
Between 9 - 10	32	26.89
Between 11 - 12	4	3.36
> = Certificate	3	2.52
Religion of Migrant		
Orthodox	30	25.21
Protestant	77	64.71
Muslim	12	10.08
Relationship to Family		
Husband	15	12.61
Wife	8	6.72
Son	79	66.39
Daughter	15	11.76
Grandfather	2	1.68
Marital Status		
Single	84	70.59
Married	33	27.73
Widowed	1	0.84
Monogamous	1	0.84

Source: Own Survey

b) Major Driving Forces behind the Decision to Migrate

According to [3, 16], the motivational factors for migration vary from person to person and across places. The determinants of migration are complex and context specific and cannot, therefore, be generalized to all places and individuals. Table 2 reveals that migrants stated poverty and unemployment as the most important (95.7%) Rural push factors followed by intermittent income and limited job opportunities (93.2%), limited mobility (80.9%), poor health facilities (80%), shortage of cheap energy sources like electricity (79.1%), seasonality of agricultural employment (74%), and insecurity of asset ownership (73.4%) (Table 2). However, not as strong, in the view of respondents, the other indicators were also considered as important Rural push factors that forced migrants to leave their places of origin. These results coincide with the conclusions of the report by [40], which clearly showed that Rural poverty was more severe that Urban poverty on account of three different poverty indices and this pattern has consistently prevailed over time. An almost equally important Rural push factor identified was intermittent income and limited job opportunities in the migrants' places of origin. Previous theoretical works such as [1] empirical findings [12] richly support this finding.

According to these studies, the realities of unemployment and under-employment in Rural areas will incite huge Rural-Urban migration. However, cities and towns do not have the capacity to accommodate such large population movements and the migrants end up settling for less than their expectations. According to the same theoretical arguments, this in turn, partly, contributes to increased Urban poverty. However, this paper has set out with the objective of establishing migration as a sustainable livelihood strategy standing in contradiction to the existing conventional theories. A growing body of literature [31] supports this paper's contention. On the other hand, a measure of association between Rural and Urban patterns of different seasonality indicators identifies that there is a statistically insignificant association, except for "seasonal fluctuation in level of employment" indicator ($p=0.005$).There is a strong evidence to suggest that the there is a true dissociation in the level of exposure to seasonality in Rural and Urban contexts of the studied migrants as to the (Chi-square and Fisher's Exact test p-values 0.000, and 0.056).

Problems associated with property rights, which was represented by the indicator "less security of one's natural, physical, and financial assets" were also rampant among the respondents. This may suggest that the property rights scheme in Rural areas is based on social norms that are usually less stringent as opposed to formal and better-enforced laws in Urban areas. The results also reveal that Rural areas are characterized by limited mobility that may be explained by absence or poor availability of transportation and a sparse settlement pattern in comparison to Urban areas. Social amenities such as health services, electricity and other cheap energy sources, though not as strong push factors as those discussed previously; have a reasonable share in forcing migrants to leave their places of origin.

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Table 2: Rural Push Forces for Rural-Urban Migration Possible Rural Push Factors

Possible Rural Push Factors	Responses		
	Yes	%	Total
Slack Agricultural Seasons / Seasonality of Agricultural Employment	85	73.91	115
To Escape from Traditional Practices such as Female Genital Mutilation, Early Marriage, Kidnapping Females for Forced Marriage,	72	62.61	115
Exposed to Wild Animals Casualty	24	20.87	115
Exposed to Malaria and other Epidemics and Pandemics	69	60.00	115
Limited Mobility	93	80.87	115
Poor Health Facilities	92	80.00	115
Absence or Shortage of Electricity and other Cheaper Energy Source	91	79.13	115
Less Security of One's Natural, Physical and Financial Assets	80	73.39	109
Large Household Size	52	44.83	116
Intermittent Income and Limited Job Opportunities	109	93.16	117
Poverty and Unemployment	111	95.69	116

Source: Own Survey

In line with the conventional theories of Rural-Urban migration, the migrants seem to be pulled not by the actual existence of better conditions in the towns and cities but because of the migrants' perception of better conditions. This is clearly visible in Table 3, that over 100% of surveyed migrants reported, "better outlook and hope for the future," "hope that there are no poverty and unemployment challenges", and "hope for better health, education and other services" as the reasons for their migration. "better job opportunities", "better health services", and "other glittering of Urban life" were found to be important motivating factors to leave their places of origin.

Another interesting finding is that the availability of "friends living in Sodo" was identified as an important (61.1%) Urban pull factor. Even though Urban pull factors such as cheap food, clothing, and house rents have traditionally been considered important, the respondents in this study identified these factors to be of minimal impact on their decision to migrate as witnessed by the 41%, 11.5%, and 3.3% response rates for each factor respectively (Table 3).

Table 3: Urban Pull Factors for Rural-Urban Migration

Possible Urban Push Factors	Responses		
	Yes	%	Total
Relatives / Family Members Living in Sodo	43	38.05	113
Friends Living in Sodo	69	61.06	113
Better Employment Opportunities	112	99.12	113
The Glittering of Urban Life	107	90.68	118
Food is Cheap	25	40.98	61
Clothing is Cheap	7	11.48	61
House Rent is Cheap	2	3.28	61
Better Health Service	99	88.39	112
Better Outlook and Hope for the Future	117	100.00	117
Hope that there are no Poverty and Unemployment Challenges	113	95.76	118
Hope for Better Health, Education and other Services	107	94.69	113

Source: Own Survey

c) *Capitals Available and Accessible to the Migrants*

i. *Availability*

Migrants' livelihood assets available in rank order were found to be financial (85), social (77), physical (74), human capital (73), and natural capital (36) (Figure 3). As expected, financial capital ranked highest while natural capital was the lowest. Migrants' high financial set rank was reported because of their diversified source of income that can be saved in various forms while the natural capital is least available because of the nature of Urban areas. In light of this, [31] coined natural capital as stock from which resource flows useful to livelihoods. These resources are abundant in Rural habitats but they are less significant in towns.

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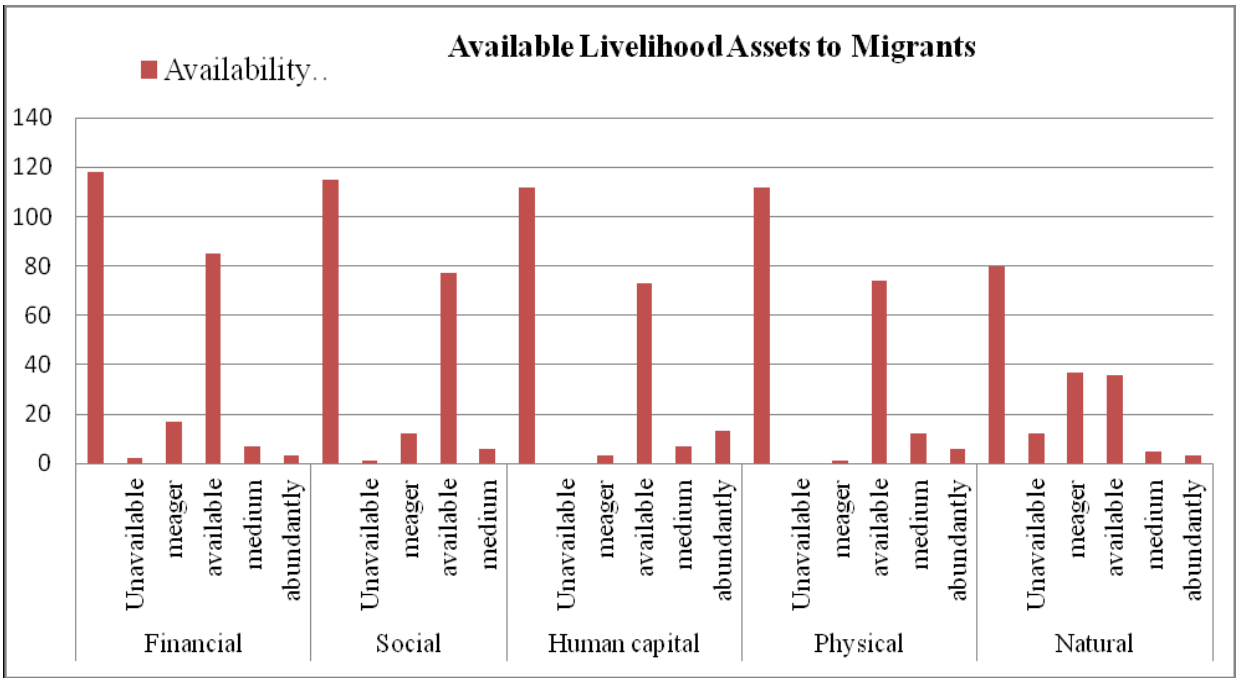


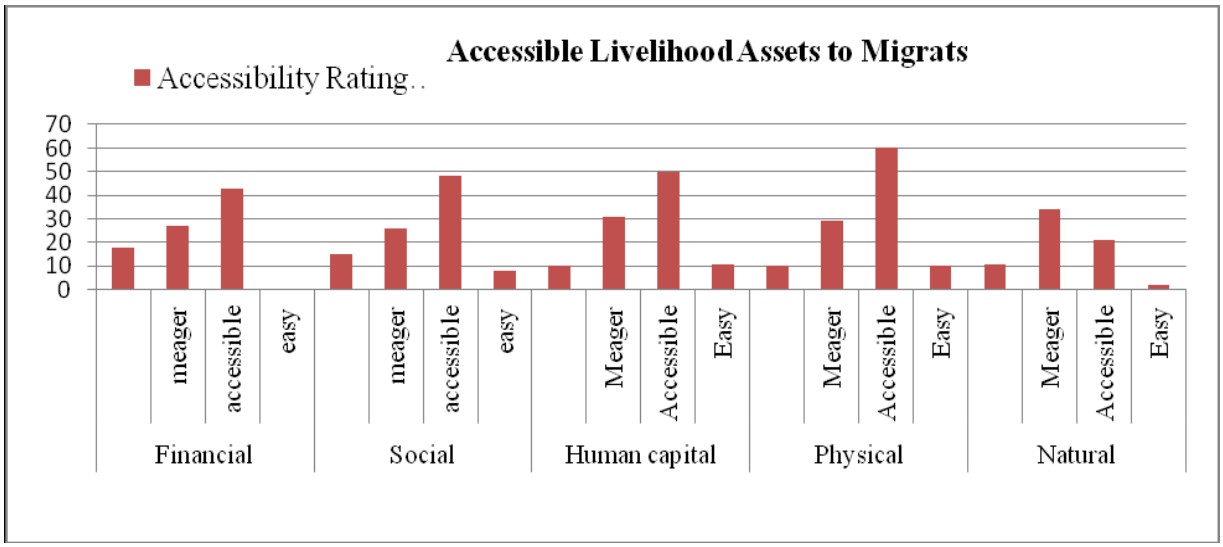
Source: Own Survey

Fig. 3: Assets Available to Studied Migrants

ii. *Accessibility*

From the survey on asset accessibility, physical capital was ranked first while human, social, financial, and natural capitals were ranked in decreasing importance (Figure 4). Physical assets facilitate the movement of people between places offering different income earning opportunities [37]. This may be explained by the better availability of social amenities in Sodo town. The response of the respondents ranking human capital accessibility is only a naturally expected response of the migrants. This result seems to supplement the responses obtained for Rural push and Urban pull factors in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.

Despite the availability of financial assets (ranked as the most available, it is not as accessible as it was available. This is because access to financial assets such as savings, Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) loans, and cooperative loans require collateral and compulsory savings in addition to other deterring requirements. Natural capital was reported as the least available capital after Rural-Urban migration. It is no surprise that it scored the lowest response frequency in accessibility from the five livelihood assets. [41] Supplement this view, the natural resources and/ or common property resources (such as rivers, forests or grazing lands) are, generally, less significant assets for Urban residents.



Source: Own Survey

Fig. 4: Assets Accessible to Studied Migrants

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d) Livelihood Activities, Copying Strategies, and Outcomes

Livelihood strategies are composed of a range of activities that are used by households for survival depending on availability and accessibility to assets and their vulnerability context [31]. The Urban poor households can diversify their livelihood strategies by engaging in activities[ix] (Table 4) which are regarded by transforming structures and processes as formal and informal. Even if it is difficult to have a sharp delineation between coping and surviving strategies, they are different on two grounds. The first is the time dimension of their commencement and the other is the acceptance of the strategies by the households. Consequently, coping strategies are employed for short period in response to livelihood shocks and may or may not be desirable; on the other hand, surviving strategies are those strategies accepted by households as desirable and run for long period of time [42].

According to the surveyed migrants, they have resorted to "income diversification through diversifying activities" as the most preferred livelihood activity followed by organizing oneself into Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) "agricultural intensification" (Table 5). The qualitative extracts from open-ended questions revealed that migrants employ both short-term coping mechanisms and long-term survival strategies against asset vulnerabilities they face within in the contexts where they are operating their livelihood activities. These livelihood strategies center on income earning activities, either in formal or informal sector or as wage employment, unpaid family works, and in self-employment. A detailed presentation of these mechanisms is presented in (Table 4).

Table 4: Mapping of Migrants Asset Vulnerabilities and Copying Strategies

1	Short Term Copying Mechanisms	Long Term Survival Strategies
Social Capital	- Informal dealing on issues; - Report to concerned bodies; - Change the place of resident rented.	- Avoid and have a better outlook on the issues; - Strengthen socialization skills'; - Adjusting life style to the context.
Physical Capital	- Renting out home and get low cost house in the outskirt of the town; Shift place of work; - Use locally available working equipment.	- Register for low cost houses and/or "government sponsored housing schemes"; Formalize own business; Apply modern equipment.
Financial Capital	- Drop out of school; Non-motorized transports; - Limit holly day celebration costs; - Reduce frequency of trips to family; - Begging and use of "*firifari/or bule*"; - Adding the values of products on customers; - Support from fiends and/or relatives; - Sharing assets with co-migrants; - Limiting "basic needs" like using second hand clothes, shoes; and other items; - Cut-off the quality and quantity of meals; - Get food and material support from families back home; Purchase low quality food items; Sending children's to relatives; Use own saving in time of difficulty; - Use traditional medicine in time of health risks; Minimizing unnecessary costs "variable costs".	- Strengthening asset bases; - Looking for better alternatives in the future; - Continue with education; - Migrating to towns and/or big cities; - Switch to other Income Generating Activities; - Joining SMEs as additional sources of income; - Empowering oneself with various trainings to work in better pay works; - Strength saving habit to start a new business; - Diversifying sources of income; - Adjusting life style to the context; - Mobilize family and/or human capital available; - Receive startup capital from NGOs and government.
Human Capital	- Work in low paying jobs "casual works"; - Switching among jobs seasonally; Seasonal migration into place with job opportunities.	- Looking for better alternatives in the future; Continue with education; - Migrating to towns and /or big cities; Switch to other Income Generating Activities; Have a positive attitude for any kind of job; - Empowering oneself with various trainings to work in better pay works; - Mobilize family and/or human capital available.

Source: Own Survey

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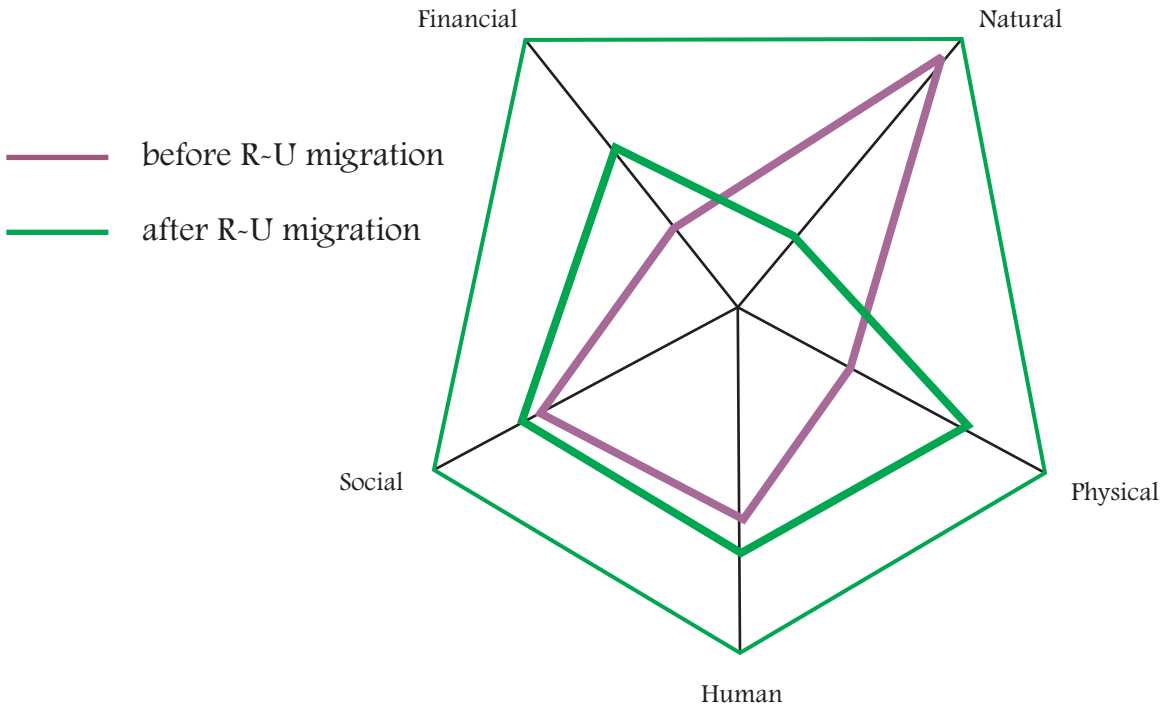
Table 5: Livlihood Strategy Indicators

Livelihood Strategy Indicator	Rank 1st		Rank 2nd		Rank 3rd		Rank 4th		Rank 5th		Total
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Income Diversification through Diversifying Activities	55	47.01	40	34.19	18	15.38	4	3.42	0	0	117
Agricultural Intensification though use of Modern Agricultural Inputs	8	6.9	13	11.21	21	18.1	31	26.72	43	37.07	116
Migration from Rural to Urban	1	0.85	2	1.69	13	11.02	40	33.9	62	52.54	118
Organize Oneself in SMEs	42	35.59	23	19.49	35	29.66	14	11.86	4	3.39	118
Look for other Options	11	9.57	38	33.04	30	26.09	28	24.35	8	6.96	115

Source: Own Survey

e) Livelihood Asset Pentagon

A healthy livelihood strategy has to result in improved livelihood outcomes. Besides, migrants or households adopting these strategies have to sustain these outcomes over the long run. The asset pentagon portrays these two important aspects. First, the more stretched out an asset pentagon is on any of its corners, it is good news because it indicates that households have a relative abundance of the asset. If, however, any corner is closer to the center of the asset pentagon, the asset represented by that corner is in relative short supply [31]. Second, an asset pentagon that has the same distance from its center to all corners has a relative balance of all the five livelihood assets. If, on the other hand, the measure of the distance from the center to its corners varies greatly, an imbalance in the migrant's livelihood asset mix is implied. Based on these two features the asset pentagon represented by the distance from the center to the corners of the pentagon and the equality or inequality of these distances for all the corners of the pentagon, the livelihood asset mix of the studied migrants is illustrated in Figure 5.



Source: Own Survey

Fig. 5: Asset Pentagon of Studied Migrants Before and After Rural-Urban Migration

On the other hand, the intricacy and dynamic nature of interface between components of SLF determines what the livelihood outcomes are; either desirable or such as more income, increased wellbeing, sustainable use of natural resource base, increased food security and reduced vulnerability or undesirable such as impoverishment, ill-being and food insecurity [42]. As it follows from the discussion of results in the

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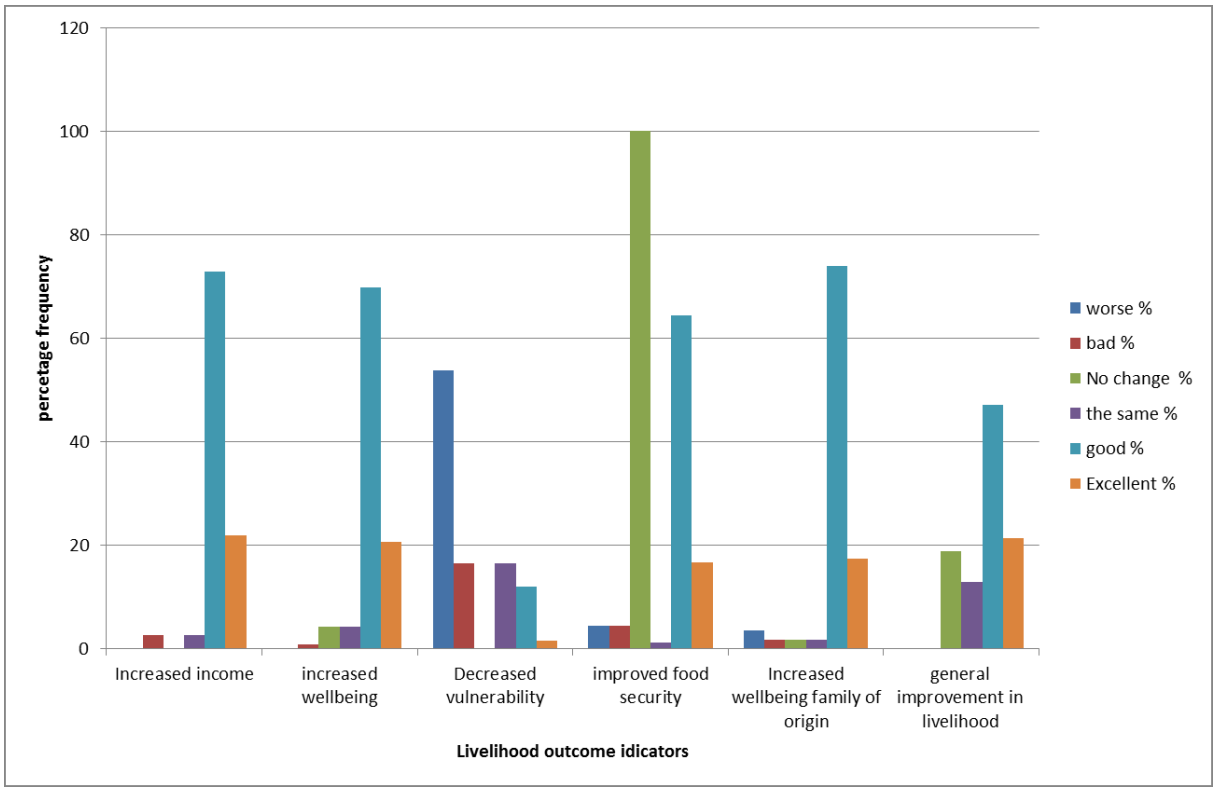
previous sub-headings and Figure 5, there was an overall improvement of the livelihoods of migrants as a result of their decision to migrate. For example, membership in unions and/ or SMEs was found to be better after migration. Unions and SMEs membership could improve access of migrants to credit and provide them with opportunities to save their earnings. Such membership also enhances their bargaining position in dealing with brokers and merchants. Migrants will also be able to create wealth and self-employment and test their entrepreneurial dimension [43]. This is clearly indicated by the blue bars in the bar graph shown in Figure 6. Therefore, the core premise held at the outset of this study has been consistently supported so far.



Source: Own Survey

Fig. 6: Livelihood Outcomes of Studied Migrants

V. Concluding Remarks and Ways Forward

a) *Concluding Remarks*

Migration being multifaceted problem per se, it can be viewed in dynamic ways in light of the different development and/or theories of migration. For instance, despite of the pessimistic views of migration, the findings of the study indicated that Rural-Urban migration played great roles for sending area in the form of remittance, hosting areas (Urban labor force), and contribute for unemployment reduction, local economic development when considered in the formal sector. I.e., the benefits are multiple (for the migrants, Urban area, and sending families), which backs the very idea of neoclassic economic development theories.

The fundamental premise of Harris and Todaro model is that migrants consider the various labor market opportunities available to them in the Rural and Urban sectors and choose the one that maximizes their expected gains from migration. However, the study results showed that the forces (*Rural push and Urban full*) for the studied migrates were context specific and even vary from migrate to a migrate. Hence, it is possible to say that migrants' expectation to *"Urban contexts/Urban glaring life"* were the major forces behind Rural to Urban migration in the study area. On the other hand, the findings links the contribution of the push and pull factor theory of [22] and the pessimistic views on migration, as migration is the result of unequal relation between Urban and Rural areas in terms of social amenities as to partly explain the why of Rural to Urban migration. In other words, some of the arguments are still valid in analyzing the factors of migration.

NELM offered a much more subtle view of migration and development, which links causes and consequences of migration more explicitly, and in which both positive and negative development responses are possible [19]. Unlike the Marxian approach of migration, the current thinking about migration goes beyond its negative role by giving emphasis to the positive contributions, one of the position of this paper, (making

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migration as sustainable way of livelihood for migrants) and/or towards improving the livelihood of poor people. Thus, some aspects of Rural to Urban migration can be captured in more pluralistic ways where it is possible to capitalize on both the negative and positive aspects of migration yet it depends on the context within which migrants operate their livelihood activities.

The use of SLF has enabled me to assess multiple factors and their interplay among them that together affect and/or better or worse the livelihoods of Rural to Urban migrants. Migrants' vulnerabilities to shocks, trends, and seasonality were highly determined by their available and an accessible asset along with the context in which they operate and transforming structures that governs their livelihood activities. SLF appreciates that livelihood strategies are both dependant on the opportunities presented and affected, as a result surveyed migrants were engaged in diverse livelihood activities some in more than one type of activities as sources of diversification to withstand the asset vulnerabilities. Based on this, migrants employed diverse livelihood strategies where some were short-term coping mechanisms and the other ones were long-term survival strategies.

The livelihood outcomes of individuals or households were the results of people's success or failure in transforming through variety of strategies, the assets available to them into income or basic goods and services. Besides, depending on the cause and effect interplay between all the livelihood components and migrants' livelihood strategies used, surveyed migrants livelihood outcome were reported to be both positive and negative across used indicators. However, across indicators used to measure livelihoods outcome, it can be concluded, as migrants livelihood outcome were better after their migration to Sodo town.

In short, in light of mix of migration theories postulated in different time and spatial scales, it can be said that time does not imply to the irrelevance of theories rather part of each theory and/or arguments can be applied to study the situation of Rural to Urban migration even at the contemporary period.

b) Ways Forwarded

Based on the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following points were forwarded as ways out at least to address the problems in the study area. Despite of governments' policies and programs that disregard people mobility in many parts of developing economies, including, Ethiopia, currently, a number of scholastic researches in academia at different scales are pro-migration because of the holistic benefits of migration to the migrants, sending families, and hosting areas. If the case is taken on board, efforts should be made to include the positive aspects of Rural to Urban migration and/or pro-migration / migration inclusive / policies and programs at different administration echelons. To materialize this, SMEs, cooperatives, unions and youth empowerment offices of Sodo town and municipality must work hard in close collaboration with stakeholders operating on this issues to include pro-migration activities in as much as possible.

Considering livelihood strategies are both dependant on the opportunities presented and affected by the social, economic, institutional/governance and environmental contexts in which migrants operate their livelihood activities. This is because the productivity of migrants' is highly determined both by the quality and by quantity of their accessible assets. Thus, it is important to empower migrants for better livelihood options. To put into practices, various trainings and certifications can be given by actors, such as Sodo town municipality, finance and economic development (population department), Wolaita *Zone* social security affairs, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working on the issues as well as the University under community service schemes.

One of the challenges of migrants and the results of conventional wisdom is misconception to migrants' and/or attach migration with problems only; we advocate and recommend that migrants should not be seen from the negative perspectives only rather the multiple roles they play should be considered seriously. Therefore, actors who are working on migration issues in collaboration with the University can create and strengthen societal awareness'/outlooks/ towards migration, in general and migrants, in particular.

Given the context specific nature of factors for Rural to Urban migration and being debatable issue, an in-depth analysis of the case at wider geographical scales need be undertaken to understand the dynamics of migration and evaluate the contemporary significances of development theories and/or theories of migration in explaining the grounded realities.

Abbreviations

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Acknowledgments

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Notes

i. It is no small ambition to bring together a comprehensive overview of contemporary migration theories across the social sciences and humanities. The debate on migration and development has swung back and forth like a pendulum, from developmentalist optimism in the 1950s and 1960s, to neo-Marxist pessimism over the 1970s and 1980s, towards more nuanced and pluralist views in the 1990s. Thus, one of the reason for this study is to critically look into diverse migration theories as to whether they will help to understand the grounded realities or not either independently or in a combined ways.
ii. In this research, in line with [10] work, migration is used to describe all kinds of population movements that include small or large-scale, single or circular (involving mobility back and forth between the place of origin and Urban communities), temporary or permanent, voluntary or induced movement of people caused by social, economic and/or political factors including seasonal employment, diversifying livelihoods, political instability, ethnic strife, natural disasters, social distress, marriage arrangements, or by the combination of one or more of these factors.
iii. The modern sector could include modern agriculture, but here it is regarded as "industrial" as shorthand.
iv. Rate of labor transfer and employment creation in the modern sector is proportional to the rate of modern sector capital accumulation; notion that surplus labor exists in Rural areas while there is full employment in the Urban areas; competitive modern sector labor market that guarantees the continued existence of constant real Urban wages up to the point where the supply of Rural surplus labor is exhausted; and assumption of diminishing returns in the modern industrial sector PP 118-120.
v. The third Administrative State Structure in the Country, next to Federal and Regional States.
vi. Habtamu Lemma. 2011. Bibliography on Wolaita Zone: Documenting for Research and Community Service Development. Wolaita Sodo University.
vii. The lowest Administrative State Structure in the Country.
viii. The third Administrative State Structure in the Region, next to *Zone* or the 4th in the Country.
ix. According to surveyed migrants, their livelihood activities identified include shoe shining, car washing; "labyajo," street vending, petty trading, waiters, waitress, waste collector, daily laborer, carpenter, handcrafting, maintenance worker (mobile), and other electronics, prostitution, maid servant, metal work, wood work, "*Woyala*" and/or taxi boy, barber, beauty salon, shop keeper, lottery bender, informal broker and *bajaj* driver.

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