

Migration between Rural and Urban Sectors of Lower-Income Countries

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Two Main Motivations

A. Since beginnings of development economics, sectoral transformation and migration tied together

Yet dominant empirical evidence = migration between administrative regions
not rural-urban

“Migration is almost always operationally defined to be a move across a political boundary.”
Plane and Rogerson (1994: 93).

B. Recent exception Young (2013)

"About one out of every four or five individuals raised in rural areas migrates to urban areas as a young adult. Surprisingly, it is also true that one out of every four or five individuals raised in urban areas migrates to rural areas as a young adult."

"a world where the population sorts itself geographically on the basis of its human capital and skill"

"the urban-rural gap *{in living standards}* reflects the efficient allocation of labor in response to the regional demand for skill"

Data Sources Utilized

Restrict to

Nationally representative

Identify rural or urban birthplace or childhood spent

Some direct

Some imputed by area

1. IPUMS

Large samples but little economic information

2. LSMS

Disappointing migration information

3. DHS

Childhood spent, not where born

Focus females 15-49 (some only married women)

4. Few country surveys

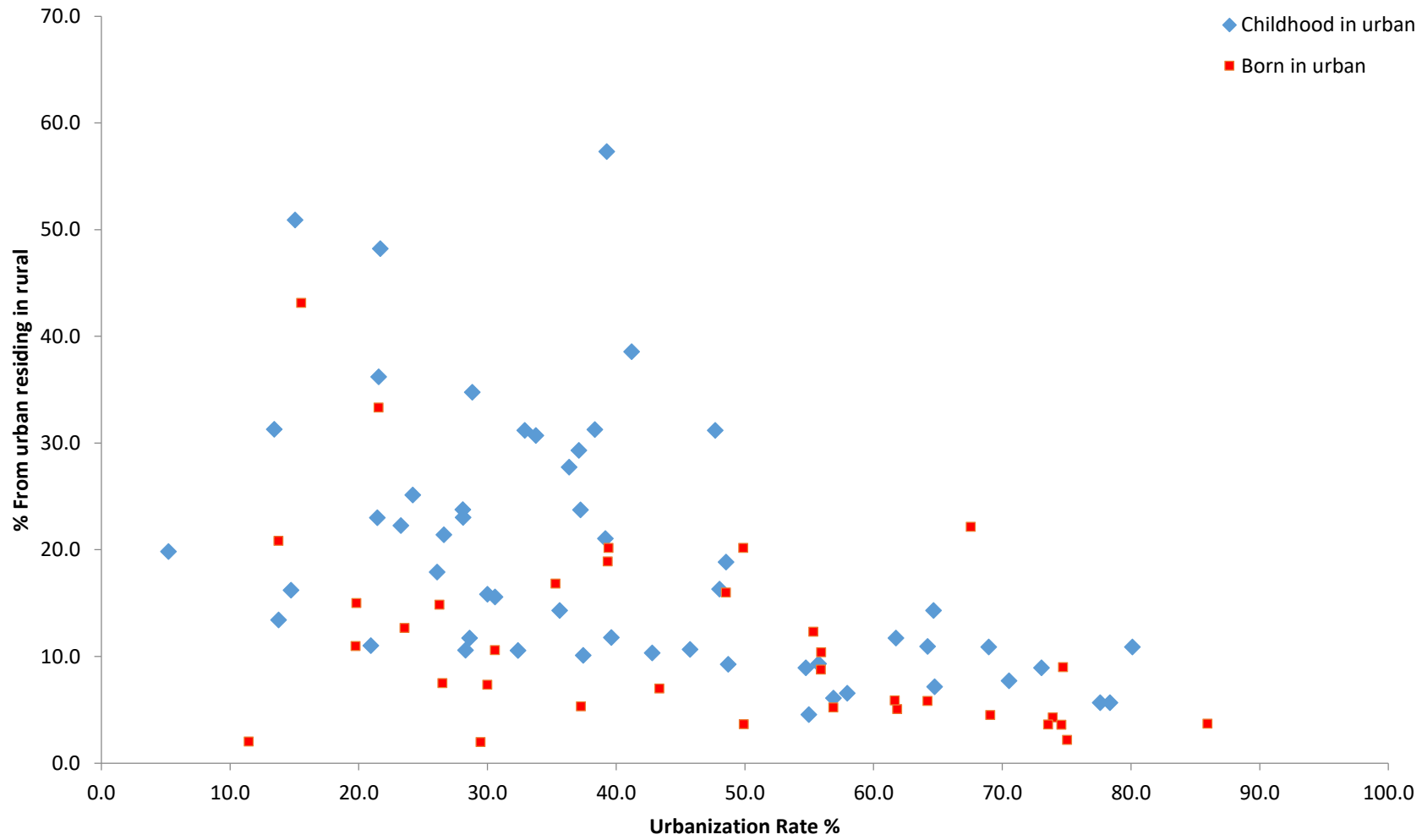
SEE HANDOUT PP: 1-2

Comparison of Lifetime Migration Rates by Type of Data Source: Females Ages 25-49.

	RU	UR	RU	UR
Data by birthplace	0.375	-7.227	1.587	-7.901
	0.23	-3.74	1.22	-4.25
Urbanization rate	0.517	-0.256	0.048	-0.243
	12.38	-5.61	0.13	-0.46
Year			0.238	0.002
			1.09	0.00
Intercept	-0.214	29.594	-457.636	26.912
	-0.14	10.91	-1.08	0.04
Country fixed effects			Yes	Yes
No. observations	96	96	56	56
R ²	0.646	0.322	0.260	0.479
F-statistic	78.893	26.160	2.930	7.658

T-statistics beneath coefficient estimates; heteroscedasticity robust standard errors.

Urban to Rural Migration Incidence: Females Age 25-49

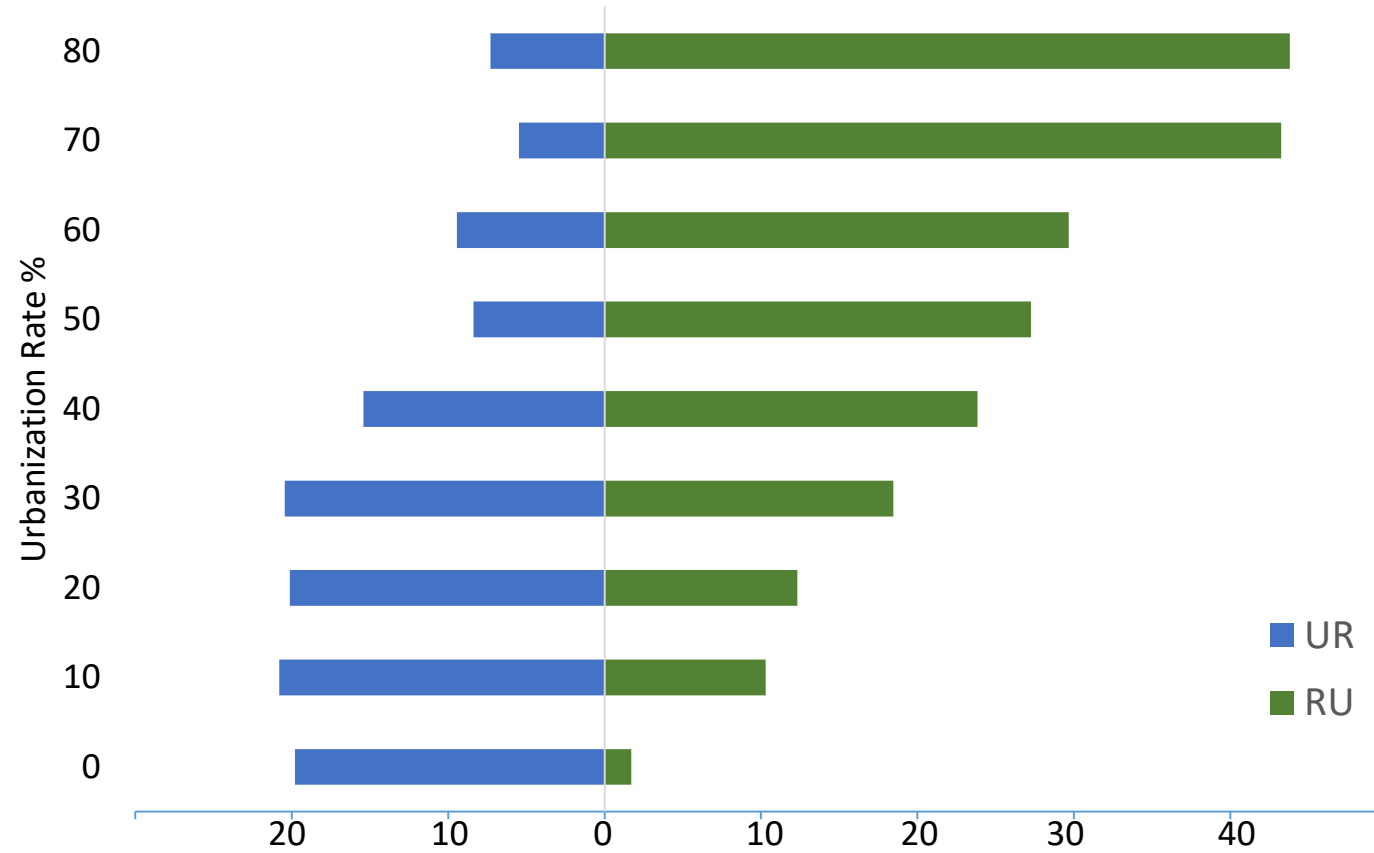


UR and RU are symmetric on average across countries in DHS data
Confirmed here

But are they symmetric

within individual countries
at the same time?

RU and RU Average Adult Propensities by Urbanization Rate



Migration is not symmetric in both directions

RU propensity very high where rural base small

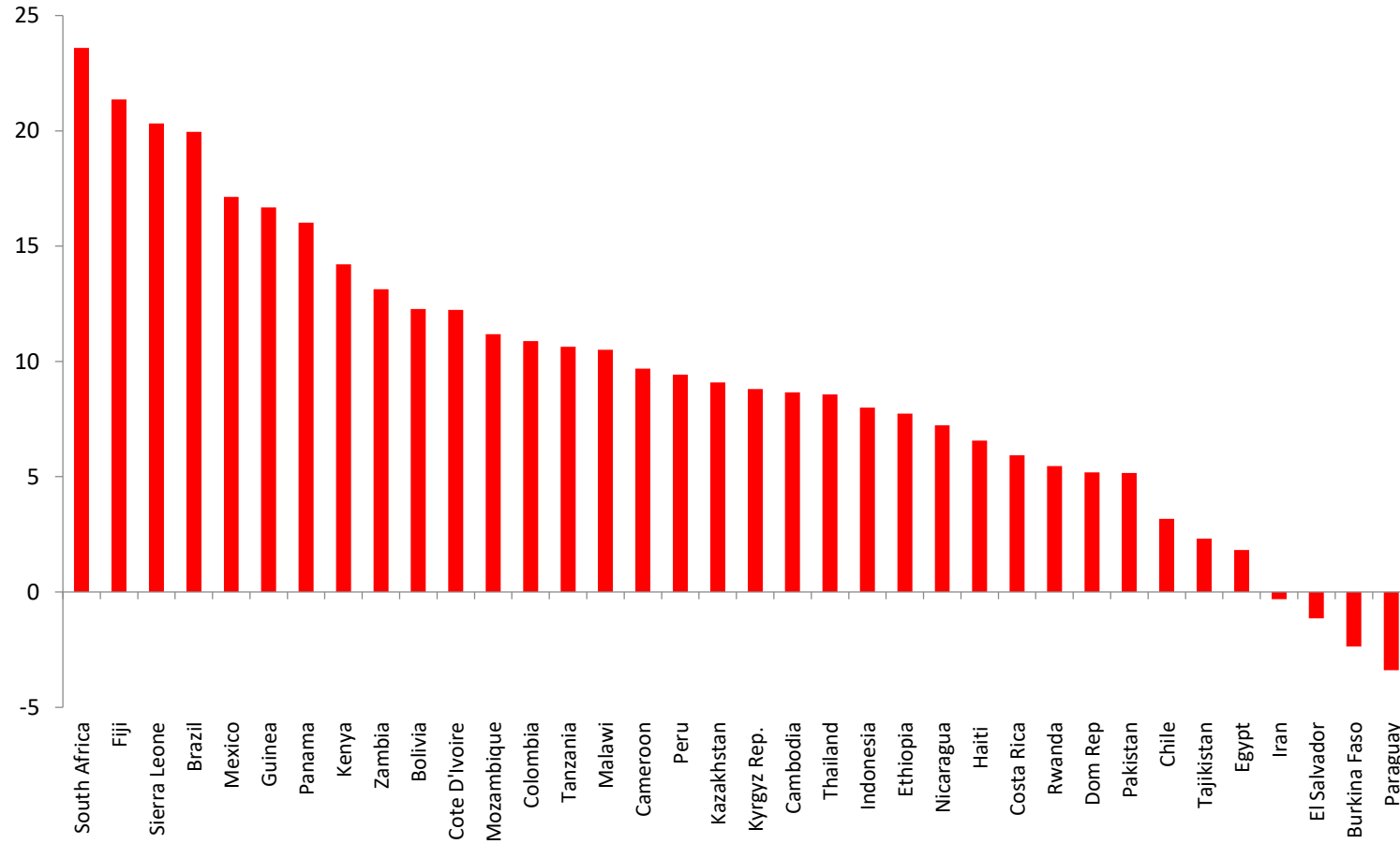
UR not so high where urban base small

Outcome=

Net rural-urban migration dominates almost everywhere

Revealed both in by-birth and by-childhood data

Net Rural Urban Migration Rates: All Adults by Place of Birth



Some basic migration propensities

SEE HANDOUT PP: 3-5: Rural Born and Urban Born Adults, by Migration Category and Gender

- All adults ages 15+
- Stay = always lived here
- RR or UU = moved place within rural or within urban since birth
- Known return = Born rural/urban, now in same, but known abroad or cross urban-rural at some point
BUT clearly undercounts (over count stay or within)
- RU or UR = residence crossed rural-urban divide since birth

Substantial literature on gender mix in migration, though most attention on international migration

In India NSS shows 3/4 persons who had ever changed usual residence by 2007-8 are female.
Much discussion of this as marriage (not labor) RR migration.
Propensity RU slightly higher among women than men.

Fafchamps (2012:461) puts it well:

“Once we recognize that these women join a self-provision unit where their labor is valued, their migration should be seen as an equally important labor allocation process.”

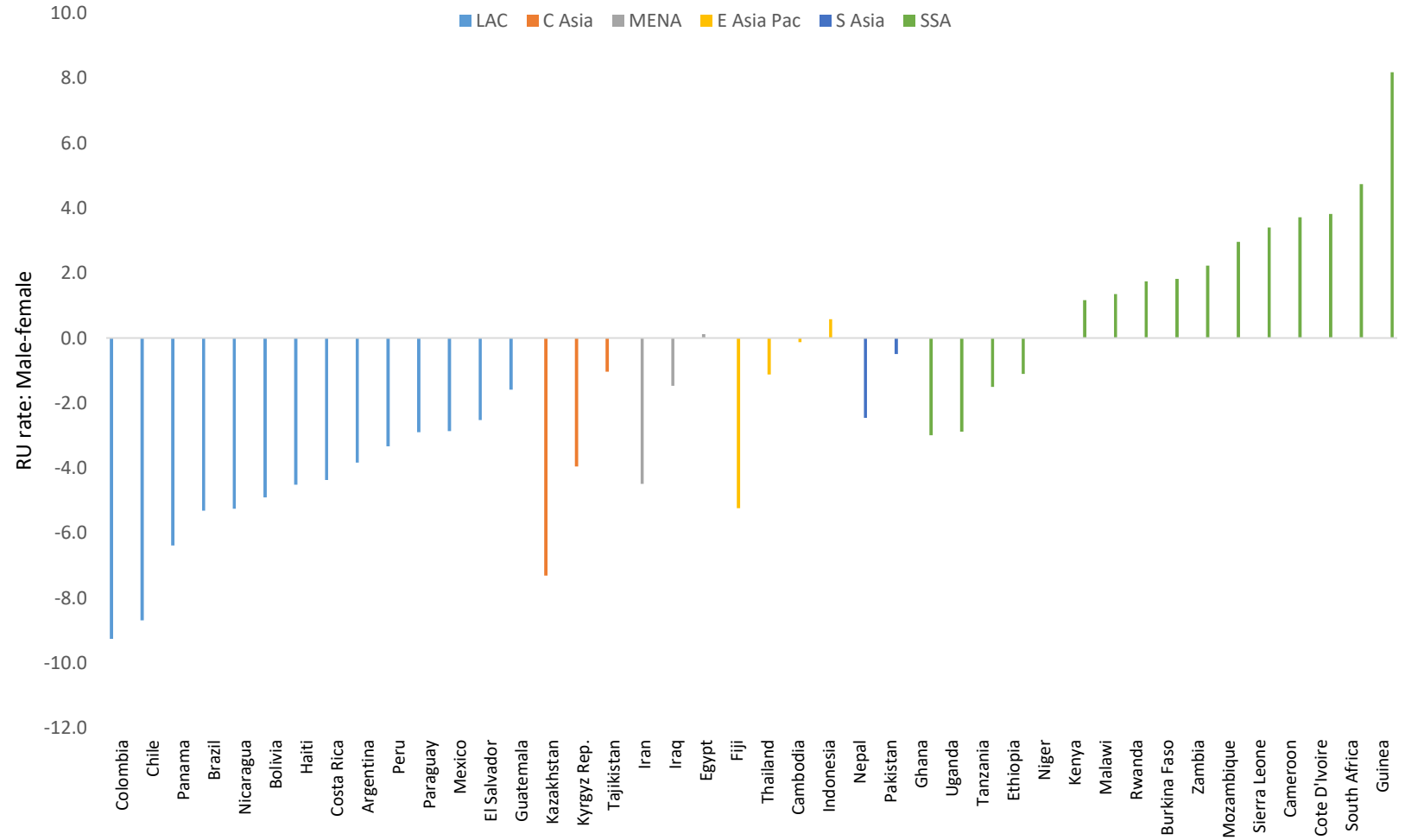
In SSA

“Women’s mobility in sub-Saharan Africa has continued to receive little attention in migration studies, in part because of an enduring paucity of national-level data for the study of sex-specific migration patterns in the region.” (Camlin, Snow and Hosegood, 2014: 528).

In LAC

Common perception women dominate
But evidence?

Gender Mix in Rural-Urban Lifetime Migration



Logit regressions for each country on rural born, move to town or not

Controls:

Age group (15-24, 25-49, 50+)

Education (none, primary, middle, higher)

Marital status (married, never married, separated, widowed)

Ethnic/religious group (varies by country)

Female dummy significantly negative only in Rwanda

Significantly positive even in most SSA

Stigma against 'autonomous' migration of women?

Percent of never-married women migrating from rural-to-urban
Greater in most regions than for never-married men

But never-married male migrants in town more likely to be living without relatives

Never-Married Adults, Age 21+ Cross-Country Averages

	Male-Female %	
	RU propensity	Live alone
C ASIA	-3.9	-0.1
E ASIA	-5.4	-0.9
LAC	-10.4	4.1
MENA	0.6	27.2
SSA	-1.5	16.2

Age of Move and Duration of Stay

Age of RU move peaks around 20 (well known)

Age of return (less well known). **SEE HANDOUT PP: 6-9.**

NB includes only where age of previous move known (excludes where-lived 5 years ago)

Features:

- Return migration of young folk

 - Born rural

 - Spend childhood in urban

 - Return rural

 - Hence DHS UR looks greater

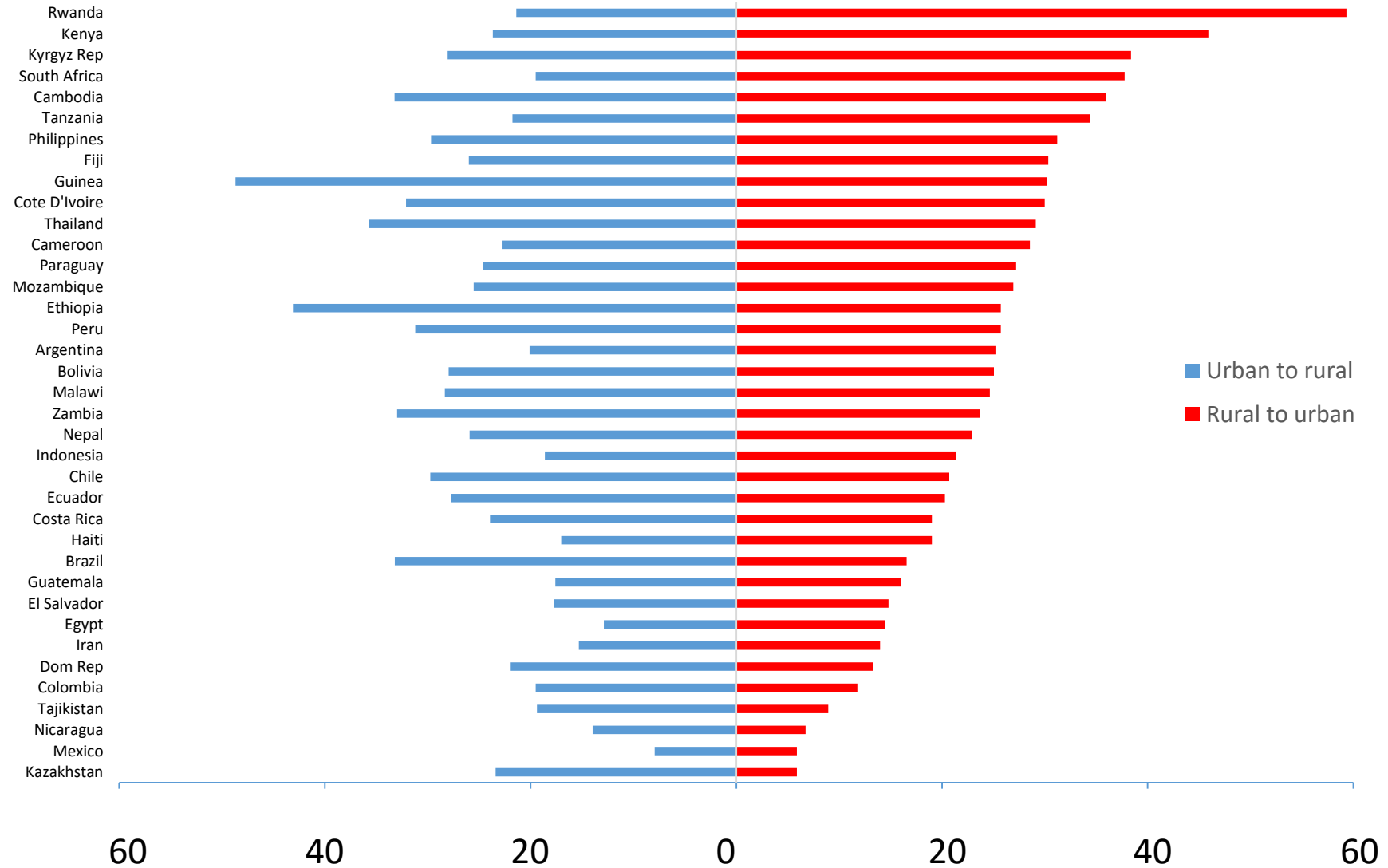
“Africans have generally preferred to return to their place of origin on retirement”

(Peil, 1995: 149).

Not much solid evidence

No clear hint of retirement to village here

Percent of Rural-Urban and Urban-Rural Migrants Resident for Less than 5 Years



For a few countries have two comparable data sets at different times
And also both report duration of residence

Construct numbers that should have been here at later date
If all the earlier migrants stayed

SEE HANDOUT: PP 10-12.

Large gaps: many earlier migrants no longer there
Both RU and UR

Additional view

Age of migration by age group. **SEE HANDOUT PP: 13-21.**

For both RU and UR PDF skews right among older age groups

E.g. Migrants age 50+ had migrated at older ages

Either cohorts migrated at very different ages

Or those who migrated younger had re-migrated

Combined evidence strongly suggests **RU and UR migrations are far from permanent**

Return and Onward Migration are Common

“Migrating is like sinning; after you have done it once it is easier to do again”.

Berliner (1977: 459).

Selection and Sorting on Education

Young (2013)

Notes (using DHS data) on average across countries:

- mean years of schooling among rural-to-urban migrants is higher than for lifelong rural dwellers
- mean education of urban-to-rural migrants is lower than for lifelong urbanites.

Builds model assuming

- Unobserved skills positively but imperfectly correlated with observed education
- No barriers to free internal migration

Combined with equal propensity to migrate RU and UR

Results in efficient sorting: Smarter, better educated in town
Less able, with lower education in rural areas

This completely explains the rural/urban gap in living standards (main source of global inequality)

Confirm positive selection on education RU
negative selection on education UR

SEE HANDOUT P: 22

(Interesting exception: Iran)

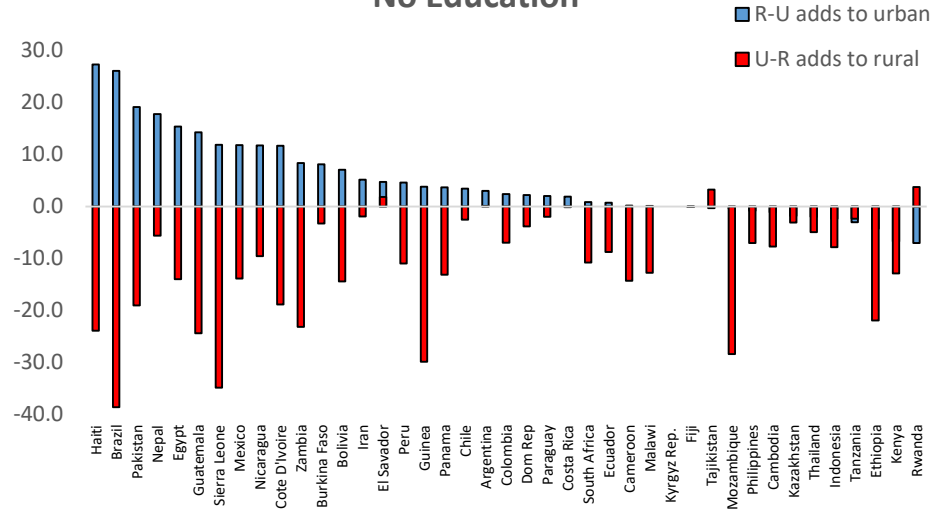
Also significance of steps in logit equations mentioned earlier
Multinomial logit (e.g. Stay rural, RR, RU)

More education = more likely RR
but even more likely RU

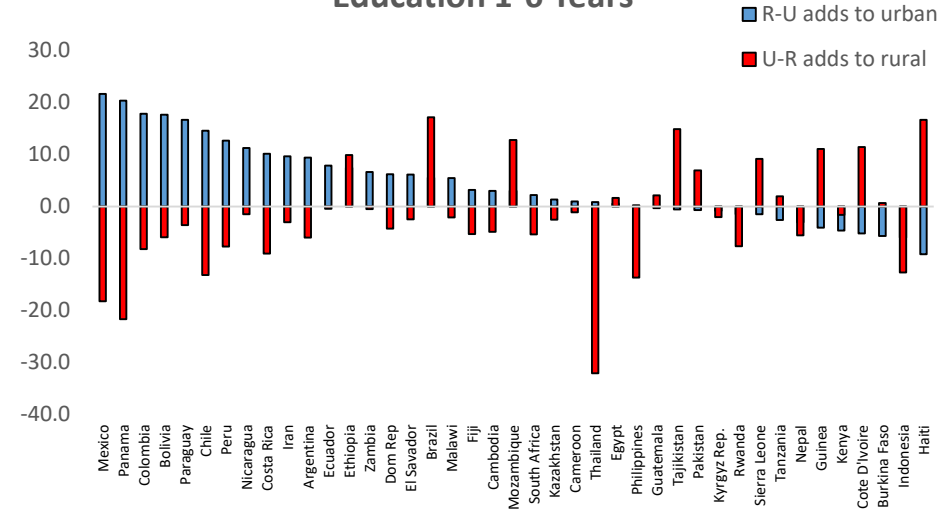
more likely move UU
but less likely move UR

But sorting?

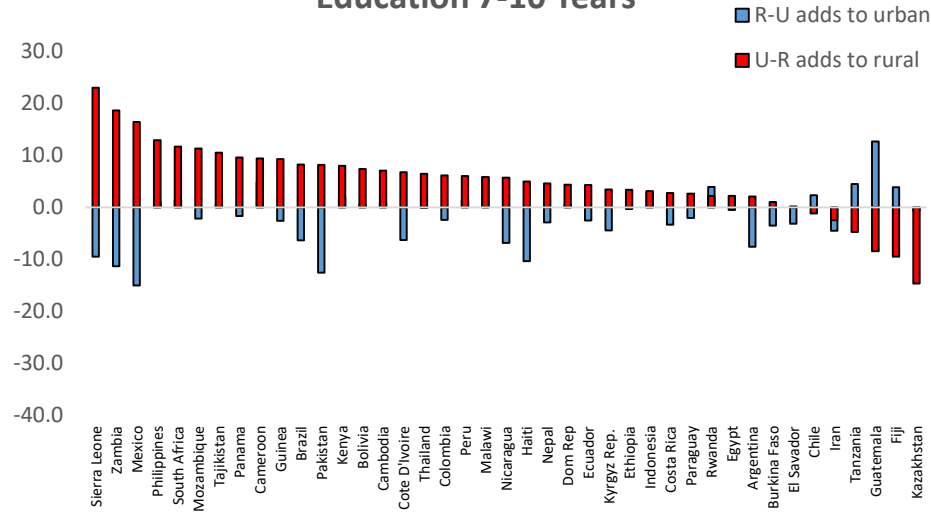
No Education



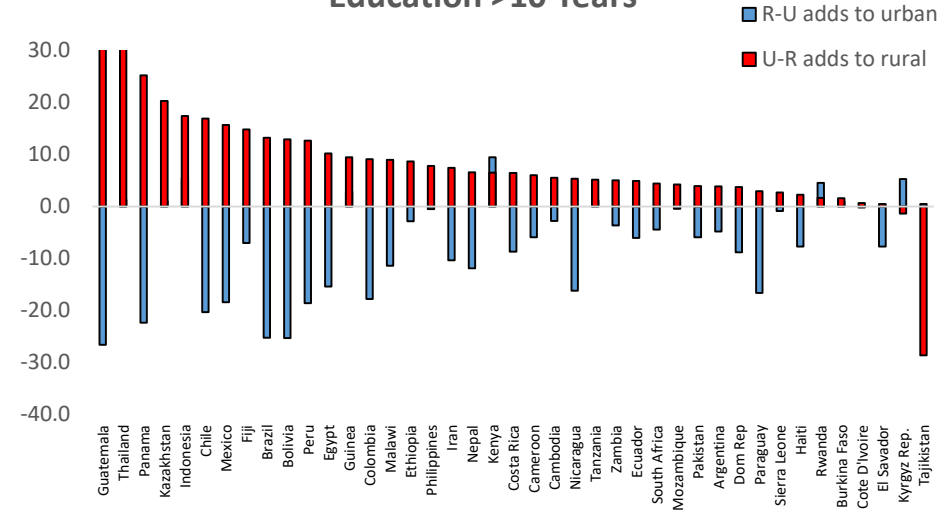
Education 1-6 Years



Education 7-10 Years



Education >10 Years



Given poor educational opportunities and outcomes in rural areas

Even though a higher fraction of well-educated rural-born move to town
They are in small numbers

A smaller fraction of the less well-educated rural-born move to town
But they represent large numbers

RU migration dilutes the education base in town

UR migration enhances the education base in rural areas

Selection but not sorting on education

Un-observables? TBD

Migration and Conjugal Separation

Why of concern?

Effects upon:

- Fertility
- Impoverishment of de facto female-headed households
- Marital stability
- Transmission of sexual diseases
- Upbringing of children

THREE ASPECTS OF DATA ANALYZED

Cohabitation of married couples

Among migrants, who moved first and by how long

Separation by temporary/seasonal migration

Cohabitation of Married Couples

Reported marital status:

Never married

Currently married or in consensual union

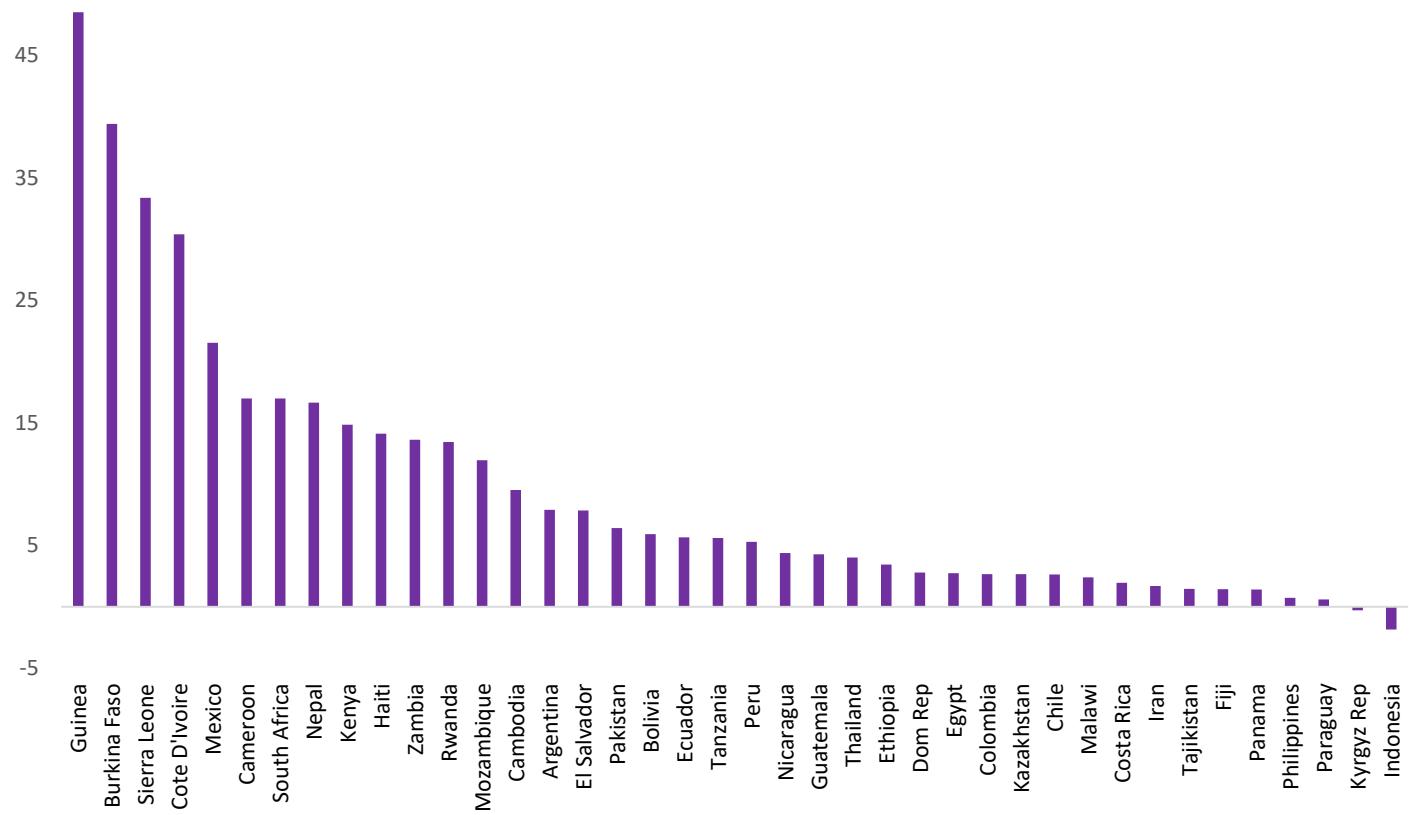
Separated or divorced

Widowed

How many currently married women/men not living with partner?

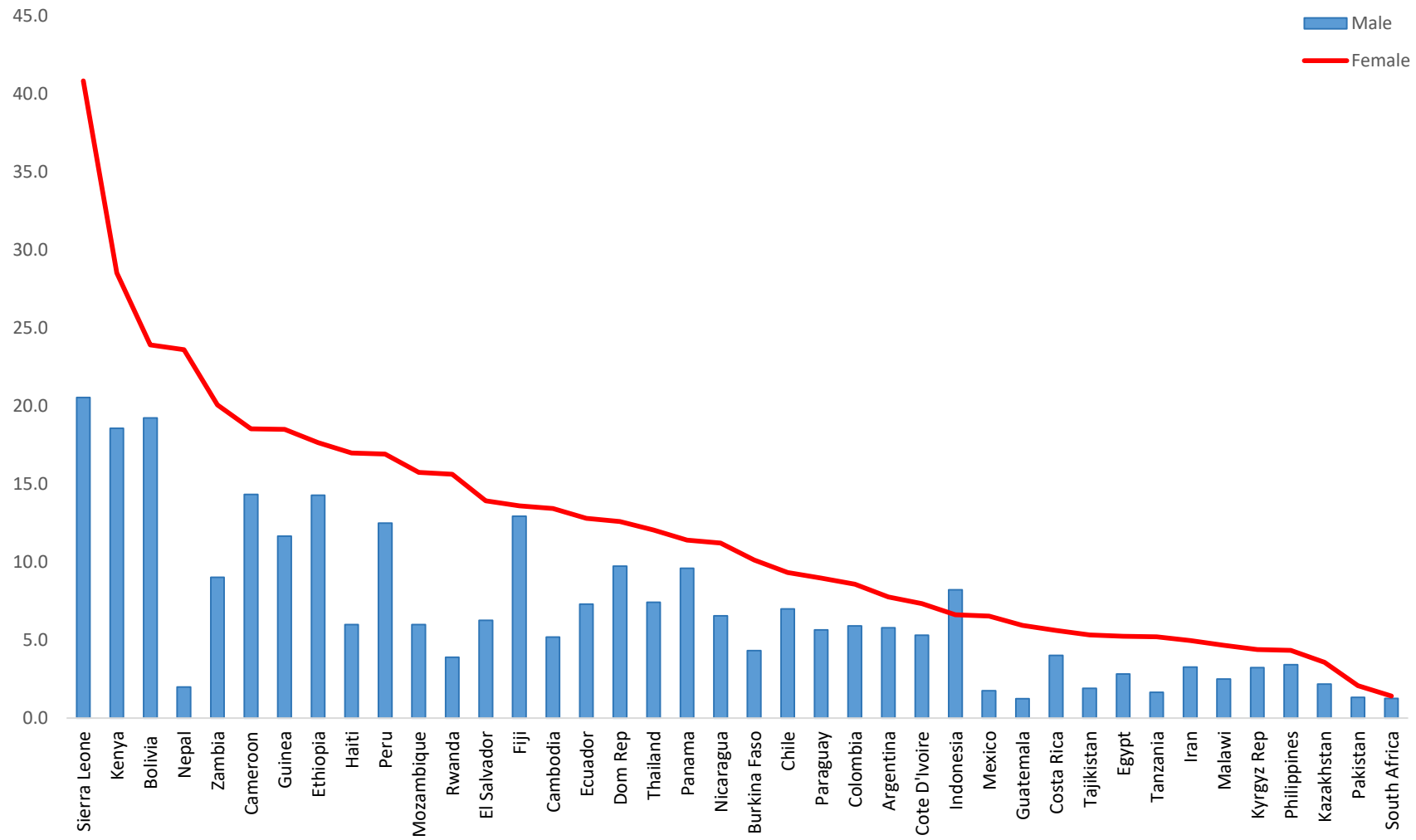
But problem ...

Percent by Which Married Females Exceed Married Males



- Emigration of married men
- Polygamy
- Attitude to commitment!

Percent of Married Males and Females Not Cohabiting with Their Partner



Temporary Separation

Three aspects:

Who moves first?

How long is the separation?

Seasonal migration as separation

Who moves first?

SEE HANDOUT PP: 23-24.

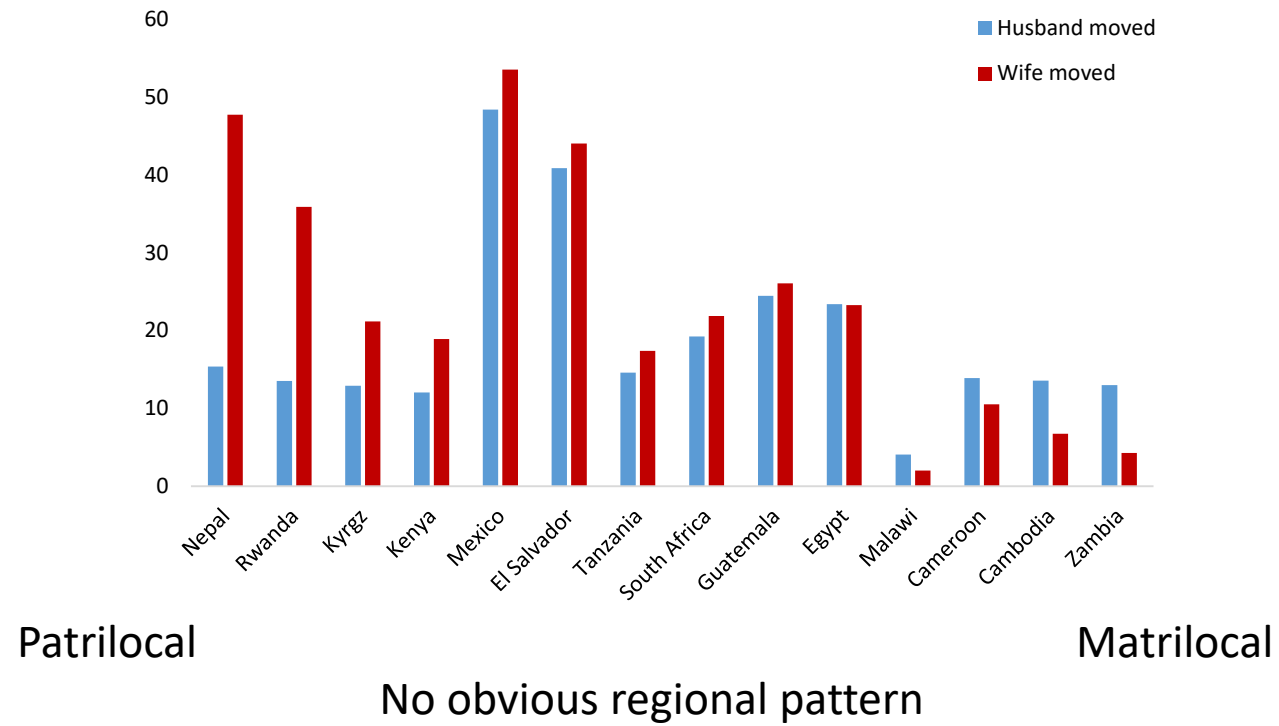
Samples: Married, now living with spouse
Male and female
UR and RU migrants

Categories:

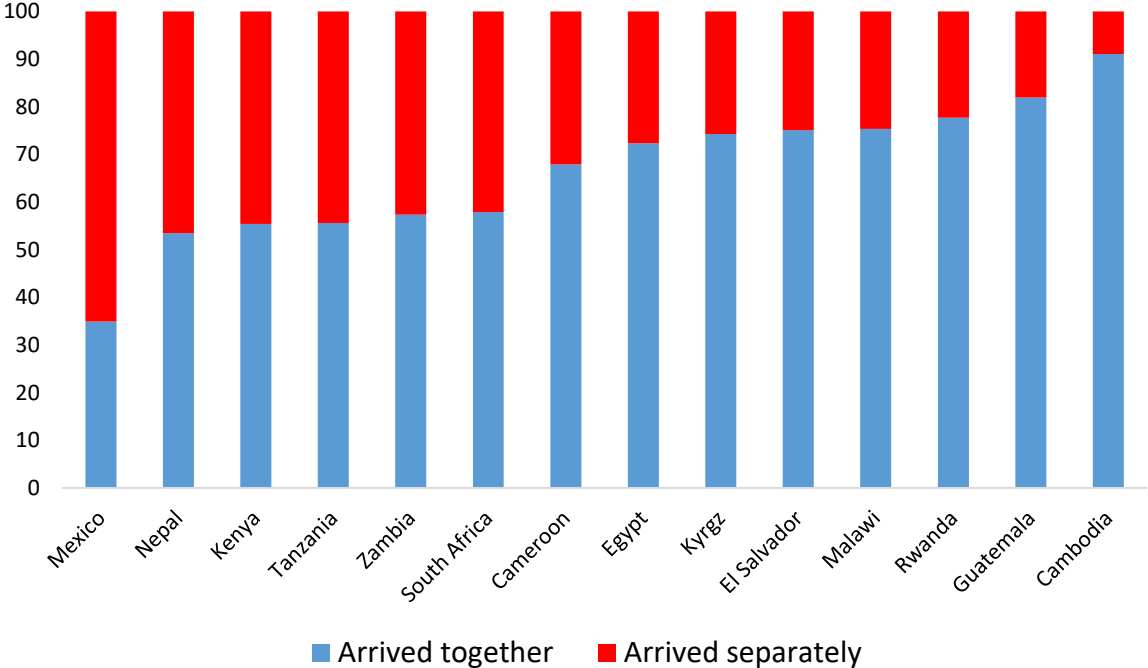
Migrant followed spouse who had migrated earlier
Both spouses migrated here in same year
Migrant preceded spouse who migrated later
Migrant joined spouse who was born here

NB Whether married before migration = unknown
Formal marriages not always common

Rural-Urban Migrant Joined Spouse Who Was Born in Town



Percent of Rural-Urban Migrant Couples who Arrived Simultaneously



Where one RU migrant partner arrived before the other, how long was the gap?

SEE HANDOUT PP: 25-28.

Positive years = wife arrived first

Negative years = husband arrived first

- On average husband arrived first in every country (true too for UR moves)
- Most countries peak at husband arriving one year earlier
- But can be much longer
- In 8 of the 15 countries > 10% of men had been in town > 10 years before their wives arrived
- In only 2 countries > 5% of women arrived more than 5 years before their husband.

Temporary separation by seasonal migration

LSMS asks months away during year

Coverage:

Only married persons where partner present

Where couple both away part year, not known if go together

Assume yes, so table shows net months away of longer partner

SEE HANDOUT: PP: 29-30.

Note additional countries included

Logit – away 1+ month more than partner; rural and urban separately

Gender: Women less likely to be absent than men, both from rural and urban homes

Age: Younger more commonly away from home and their partners.

Education: Mixed; no clear evidence of less well educated, such as for seasonal work in agriculture.

Kids at home:

Fathers are more commonly away the larger is their family (perhaps to fulfill greater consumption needs).

Mothers are less likely to be away than are their husbands or partners.

RU & UR migrants are more likely to be away from their new homes.

Children and Migration

Implications for education:

Absent parents vs remittance inflows

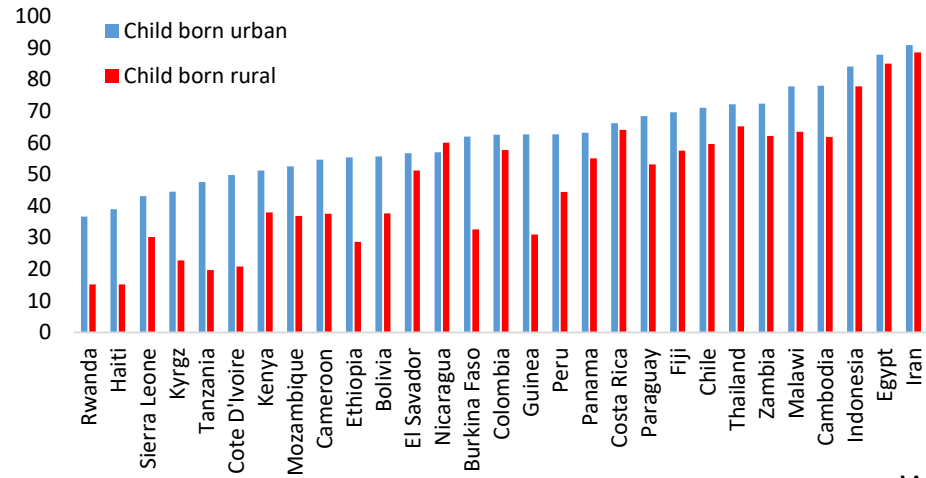
Migrant children (with and without parents)

In progress!

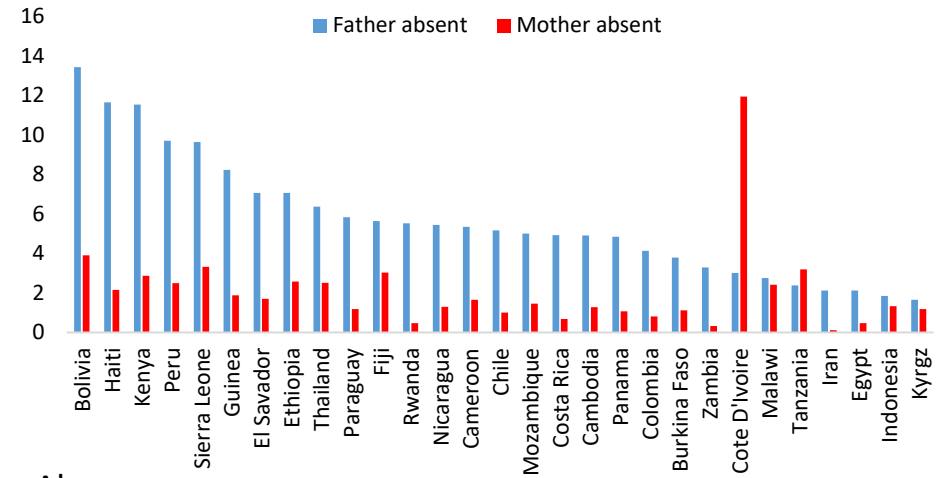
Family presence

Children Ages 11-15 in Urban Areas

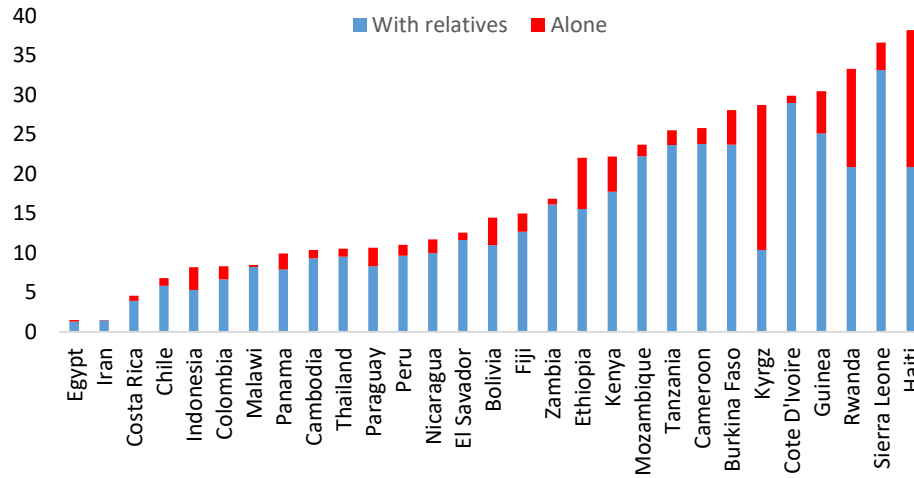
Both Parents Present



One Married, Live Parent Absent



With Relatives or Alone



Ethnicity, Language and Religion

In many countries the migration propensities of various communities differ substantially

SEE HANDOUT PP: 31-35.

In logit estimates of individuals' odds of RU or UR lifetime migration

With controls for gender, age, education and marital status

A vector of dummies for the various groups is strongly significant in almost all cases

Interpretations are not always obvious

Discrimination in job markets

Remoteness of location

Poverty constraints

More testing is needed (and answers are probably country-specific)

Meanwhile: One pattern stands out.

Most groups less likely to leave their home area, the larger their fraction in population at home.
(Tested with interaction terms appended to aforementioned logits).

Results stronger with respect to leaving home rural area
And for minority groups.

Again multiple interpretations possible:

Concentration at home may signify smaller network at destination
Initial explorations suggest not
Preference to be in homogeneous setting more likely (insurance?)

THANK YOU