Migration, Circulation, and Socioeconomic Change in South Africa

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Overview

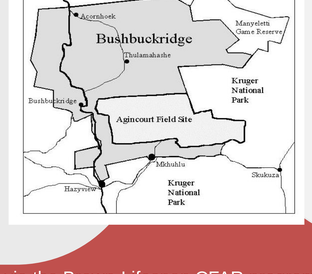
We analyze circular/ temporary migration and its crucial but complex role in the well-being of rural households. Our results indicate **1)** better-off HHs are more likely to send a temporary migrant; **2)** position in household is strongly related to migration propensity; **3)** HH benefit from circulation varies by migrant gender

Why we care

Theory: Migration & Development
1. Migration-Development Paradox
2. HH structure and circular migration (NELM)
3. Rural-Urban migration and rural development

Data: Migration & Demographic Surveillance
- Longitudinal information w/ origin population
- Key opportunities in low-resource populations
- INDEPTH network: 45 sites in Africa & Asia

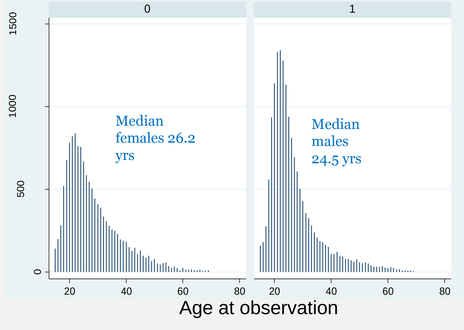
Study area



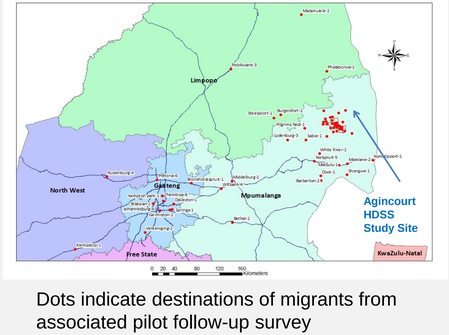
The approach

Agincourt Health and Demographic Surveillance System: 2001-2011 (N ≈ 110,000)
- Classifying temporary (circular, seasonal) migrants
  - remain connected to origin HH
  - absent **6** months or more per year
- Description: Who moves, where?
- Regression models (w/ various controls)
  - predict temporary migration
  - estimate HH benefit from temporary migration

Who moves?



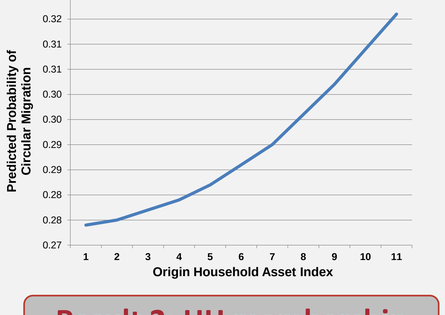
Where do they go?



Dots indicate destinations of migrants from associated pilot follow-up survey

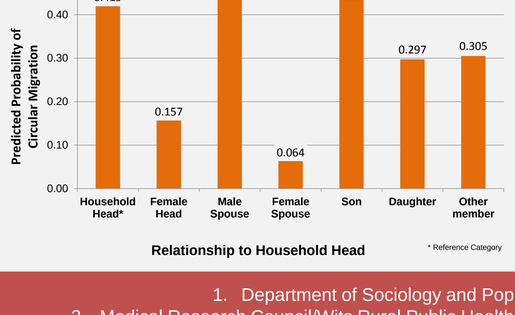
Result 1: HH assets

Migration propensity **rises** w/ (prior, lagged) asset level of origin HH



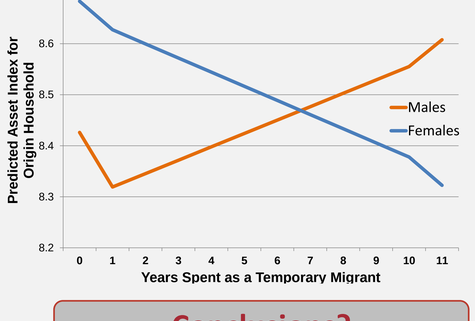
Result 2: HH membership

Migration **varies sharply** by position in the household



Result 3: Gendered returns

Migration **increases** (M) / **decreases** (F) HH assets over time



Conclusions?

1. Poorest of poor less likely to move
2. Sharp migration differences by HH relationship
3. Gendered differences in returns to migration

Our research also indicates (NOT presented here)
- ❑ Success employing cellphone technology in following and interviewing migrants
- ❑ Preliminary results from pilot survey implicate health transition

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to ask questions!

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