

Lesson 9 Migration and Urbanization in Ethiopia

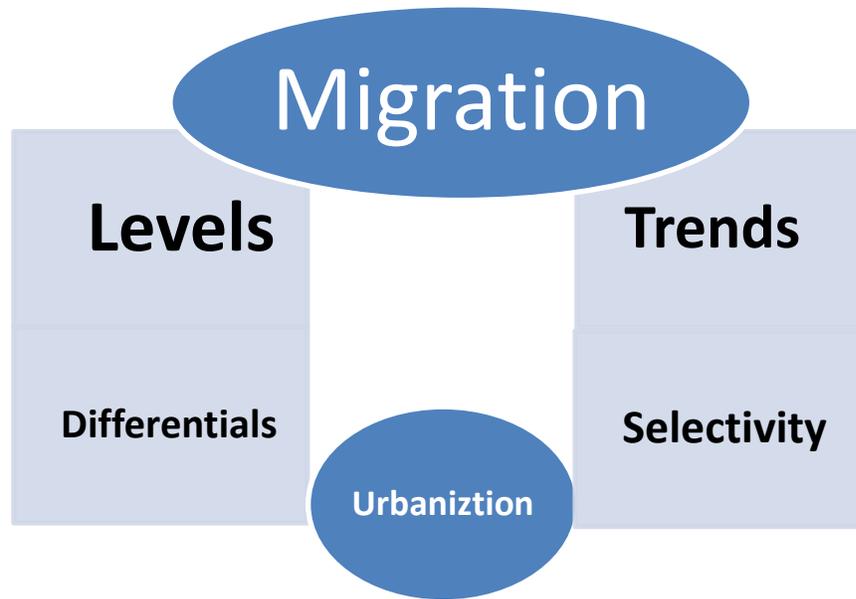
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Lesson 9 Migration and Urbanization



Migration and Urbanization

Introduction

Migration is the third component of population dynamics. The other two – fertility and mortality – have been discussed in the last four chapters. No national or sub-national population projections can successfully account for all possible future changes without the inclusion of in- and out-migration rates for sub local areas and immigration and emigration for national level projections.

Definition [1]:

“Migration is a form of geographic or spatial mobility involving a change of usual residence between clearly defined geographic units. Some changes of residence, however, are temporary or short term, and do not involve changes in usual residence; these are usually excluded from the statistics on migration. They include brief excursions for visiting, vacation, or business, even across national boundaries.”[1]

For analytical purposes, migratory moves are often classified as:

Internal (in-migrant/ out-migrant) vs. international (emigrant/immigrant)

Forced vs. voluntary

Refugees

Individual vs. group

Legal vs. illegal

Migration stream vs. counter-stream

Gross vs. net migration

Return migration vs. lifetime migration

Two related terms often used in explaining migration are **push** forces/factors, and **pull** forces.

Push factors are events in an individual's life compelling him/her to leave the usual place of residence, while pull factors relate to the draw from or attractiveness of planned destination(s).

Migration Rates

The key to obtaining objective rates of any demographic event including migration, fertility, and mortality, is determining the **base population**. In fertility and mortality studies the appropriate base is the total population of a study area, and females in reproductive ages respectively.

“In calculating rates of migration, though, the choice is less obvious. Most studies addressing this question focus on whether the initial, terminal, or midpoint population (i.e. the origin or destination population, or some average of the two) should be used to calculate migration rates and what adjustments for births, deaths, and migration during the time period should be made to estimate the total number of person-years lived.” [1]

$$m = (M/P) \times k$$

where:

m = the migration rate

M = the number of movers

P = the population at risk

k = a constant, such as 100 or 1000

Hence:

In-migration rate (m_i)

$$m_i = (I/P) \times k$$

Out-migration rate (m_o)

$$M_o = (O/P) \times k$$

Gross migration rate (m_g)

$$M_g = (O + I) \times k$$

Net migration rate (m_n)

$$M_n = (I - O) \times k$$

Where I and O are the number of in-migrants and out-migrants

Intercensal method for the calculation of net migration

$$M_n = (P^1 - P^0) - (B - D)$$

Where:

| | |
|-------|--|
| P^1 | Represents the population at the end of the intercensal period |
| P^0 | The population at the beginning of the period |
| B | The number of births |
| D | The number of deaths |

Sources of data

Sample surveys and censuses are the main source of data on migration with the latter as the most common source in less developed countries (LDCs). Ideally, the data will include information on:

- Origins and destinations
- Classification of migrants by single-age groups and sex
- Data on base population sizes and geographic sub-divisions for the calculation of migration rates

This is rarely achieved in census and sample surveys, however, and migration statistics in most countries are highly deficient.

An ideal solution, but beyond the reach of countries such as Ethiopia is vital registration of population movements. In this system (pioneered by Nordic countries) “a continuous population register requires every person to transfer his or her record from one local registry office to another when moving” [1]

The main sources of migration data in Ethiopia are the 1964 Household Survey (the first round of several national sample surveys) covering rural Ethiopia only, the 1967 Sample Survey of urban centers, the 1984 and 94 censuses, and the 1999 Labor Force Survey (LFS). [2]

Table 9.1 Types of Data Collected in Ethiopian Surveys and Censuses

| 1984 Census | 1994 Census | 1999 Survey |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Place of Birth | Duration of continuous residence | Duration of continuous residence |
| Place of enumeration | Place of previous residence | Place of previous residence |
| Duration of continuous residence | | |

Source: [2]

Studies show gradual improvements in Ethiopia in the quality of migration-specific questions and classifications used. This is leading to better comparability of results across regions and over time.

“Unlike the 1994 census, the 1999 LFS included weredas, zones and regions in addition to rural and urban areas. This has improved the analysis of migration data significantly. The availability of information on migration at wereda, zonal and regional level has enabled the calculation of in-migration, out-migration and net migration rates. This has paved the way for inter-regional comparisons.” [2]

However, “...the birthplace question was substituted [in 1994] by the “place of previous residence”.... as a result of this inconsistency in information gathering, data on out-migrants was not available in the 1994 census. Because of this gap in data availability, it was not possible to calculate net-migration rates and identify losing or gaining regions”. [2]

Migration in Ethiopia

Historically, three types of migration, all of them internal, have been taking place in Ethiopia.

- I. Movements related to the invasion and settlement of new lands
- II. Individual migrations; rural-rural, rural-urban, and urban-urban.
- III. More recently, famine-induced out-migrations, and government-sponsored resettlement.

The following provides an example migration types in the first category (above):

“About 1529 a Muslim Afar-Somali army overran the highlands, and during the 1530s nearly succeeded in destroying the Amhara-Tigray state and Christianity. At almost the same time, the Oromo were in the midst of a decades-long migration from their homeland in the far southern lowlands. The Oromo moved north through the southern highlands, bypassing the Sidama on the west, and into the central highlands, where they settled in the center and west on land, some of which had formerly belonged to the Amhara”. [3]

Blessing Uchenna Mberu (2005) contends that, to this day, “...population movement in Ethiopia is substantial” despite its low level of socio-economic development [4]. Given many authors’ and researchers’ argument that migration is the prime catalyst driving development [5], could Ethiopia’s under-development be I at least in part the result of insufficient interan migrations?

Evidence suggests that internal migration can play an important role in *poverty reduction* and economic development; internal migration should therefore not be controlled or actively discouraged. Policy should instead concern itself with ways of maximising the potential benefits of migration to the individual concerned and society at large. While there have seen few formal efforts to estimate the economic contribution of migrant labour, it is evident that many developing countries would probably not have had the roads, buildings, manufacturing and trade centres that they have today had it not been for migration. By not acknowledging the vast role played by migrant labour in driving agricultural and industrial growth, governments escape the responsibility of providing basic services to millions of poor people who are currently bearing the costs of moving labour to locations where it is needed most. [5]

It is being reported that Ethiopia’s current land policy is hampering migration. This is said to be the result of tenure insecurity in which lack of guarantees that a returning peasant will have unaltered use rights over land left behind is forcing farmers to stay where they are [6]. Desalegn Rahmeto (quoted in [6]) has put forth a strong argument that in Ethiopia:

“The land system has discouraged peasant mobility and trapped the population in the rural areas.... Improvements in livelihoods are impossible unless a considerable portion of this population is released from the land and moves out of the rural areas. ... The greater mobility of peasants out of agriculture will stimulate the greater mobility of land. Land will be able to move “freely” from those who cannot use it efficiently to those who can. ...The destination of a mobile peasantry will be the urban areas.”

The authors of a recent article on international migration agree with Desalgn. They view migration as “... an important livelihood strategy for poor groups across the world and not just a response to shocks”. [7] They also report that “...despite overwhelming evidence that internal migration can lead to the accumulation of household wealth as well as positive changes in both sending and receiving areas, it continues to be viewed as an economically, socially and politically destabilizing process by policy makers, bureaucrats, academics and even NGOs”. In their view, “...one reason is that migration is an administrative and legislative nightmare: it crosses physical and departmental boundaries confusing rigid institutions that are not used to cooperating with each other”. [7] Tesfaye Teklu’s synthesis of existing migration data is broad and comprehensive has shown, among other things, that “distant migration as a way to maximize income across seasons and cope with food shortage has a long history” in Ethiopia.

Pankhurst and Tadele [8] identify four recent migratory phases in Ethiopia, most of them in the twentieth century and stretching into the current decade:

I. From Menelik 1887- Italian Occupation 1941

Included in this category are: a) southward expansion of the territorial limits of the country and formation of outposts and garrison towns which acted as magnets drawing peasants from the surrounding countryside, b) the founding of Addis Ababa in 1888 and the attendant influx of rural-urban migrants and construction laborers, c) Italian occupation (1935 – 41) which accelerated rural to urban migrations, and d), the building of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway line across the Rift Valley to central Ethiopia which led to the proliferation of new towns located linearly astride the railway line. These became new destinations for rural migrants seeking to start a new life in a non-rural setting.

II. Post Liberation (1941 – 74)

In this phase, further acceleration in rural to urban migration (predominantly long-term migrations) took place in response to the reach further into the interior, of new highways, urban zoning efforts delimiting commercial and industrial sections, commercial agriculture run by hired labor, increased mobility of civil servants, and a further influx of domestic and sex workers into urban centers.

III. The Socialist, Derg Period (1974-91)

The socialist system under the military rule of Mengistu Hailameriam was noted by Pankurst and Tadele for its destabilizing impacts on society. Some of its policies forced people out of their usual places of residence through land confiscation, exodus of young people who feared persecution and death to neighboring countries etc. - while others placed serious impediments on movement – check-points, pass permits, etc. However, most important from the point of view of mass dislocations and migrations were its villagization schemes which involved millions of peasants, as well as the botched resettlement of draught/famine victims from the North to the South and West.

IV. The current EPRDF- period (1991-to present).

The government now in power has adapted a federal system with ethnic-based regions. The combination of lack of tenure security and frequent redistribution of land by the Federal system may have curtailed movement across regional boundaries and into cities and towns despite continued rise in rural landlessness, environmental push factors, and increased attraction of urban destinations. However, Alula and Tadele argue that rural to urban migration as well as seasonal and long-term migrations increased during this period despite the impediments.

A unique migration-gender-health specific survey was conducted recently in five regions of Ethiopia as a team effort. The team members were the Demographic Training and Research Center (DTRC), Institute of Development Research (IDR) and the Population Studies and Training Center, at Brown University (USA). Five regions were selected - Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, SNNP, and Addis Ababa – and “data on migrant status, living conditions in the household and the demographic characteristics of respondents were collected using the household questionnaire” [4]. Blessing Mberu’s [4] multivariate analysis of the data revealed, among other things, the high levels of internal migration and return migrations. Substantial return migration was reported for destinations all over the country “despite the push factors associated with environmental degradation, famine, and war...” [4]. Return migration has also been linked to change of government in 1991 and the reconstitution of the country along ethnic lines which involved “.... the political restructuring of the country into new regional federal states according to ethnic and linguistic composition. The new policy which was aimed at achieving ethnic equality resulted in substantial return migrations during the 1991-1993period.

Assessment of the post-1991 period sheds some light into government policies that may have had significant bearings on the migration process [4]:

- There were significant living condition improvements for both long- and short-term migrants as opposed to non migrants
- The improvements were driven primarily by the differential educational advantage of migrants compared to natives, and access to non-agricultural sources of income especially for long-term migrants
- Stable urban residence with access to non-agricultural employment
- Government reliance on resettlement in which complete dependence on agriculture in one location is transferred to another location with the same level of dependence on agriculture will not have the desired outcome of bettering the living conditions of peasants. Rather it will aggravate their suffering.

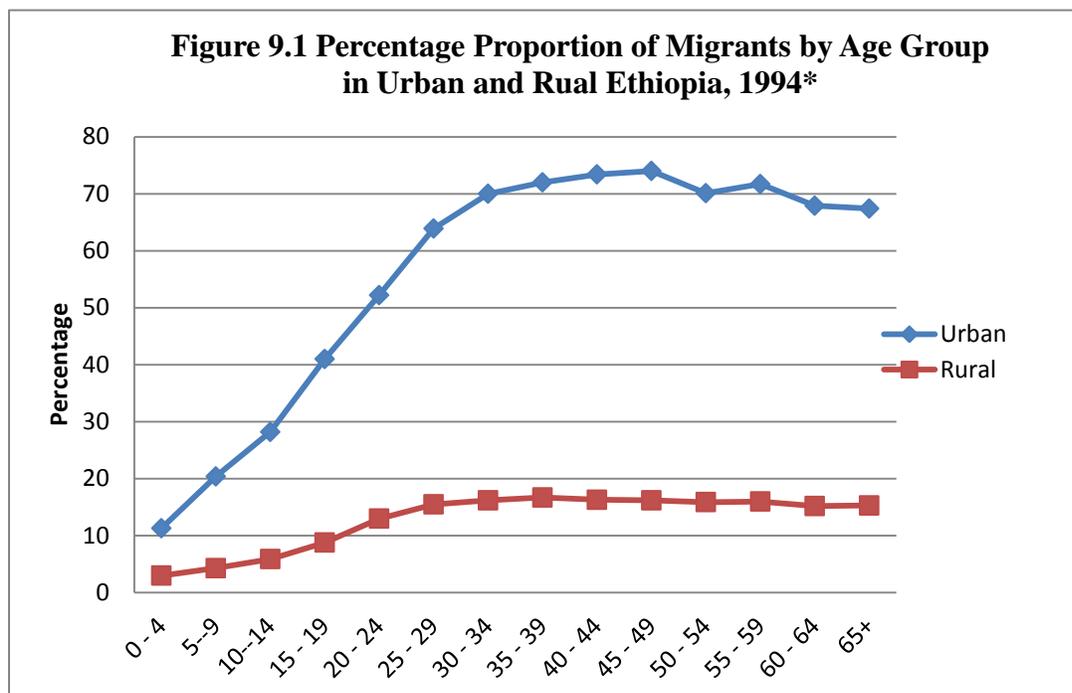
Migrant Selectivity

Migration is not a random event; it is selective of the most able, most informed, most to gain and at times the most desperate members of society. It is also age and sex selective.

Age Selectivity

Figure 9.1 is based on a nation-wide census. The percentage of rural migrants by age group remains very low until about age seventeen and a half (the midway point of the 15 – 19 age group) where it reaches almost double digits. It reaches 13 percent in the 20 – 24 group and plateaus at about 16 percent where it stays through the age groups of 25 – 29, 30 – 34, 35 – 39, 40 – 44, 45 – 49, 50 – 54, 55 – 59 and drops slightly in the 60 – 64 and 65+ age groups. Nationally, 9.6 per cent of the population (6,917,000 people) did not live at their usual place of residence at the time of the 1994 census.

For urban areas that the proportion of migrants by age group increases from about 10 percent in age group 0-4 to 74 percent in the 40-44 age group (see graph below). For rural populations the proportions are very low the 0-19 age group and stays flat at about 17 percent for all groups above age 20.

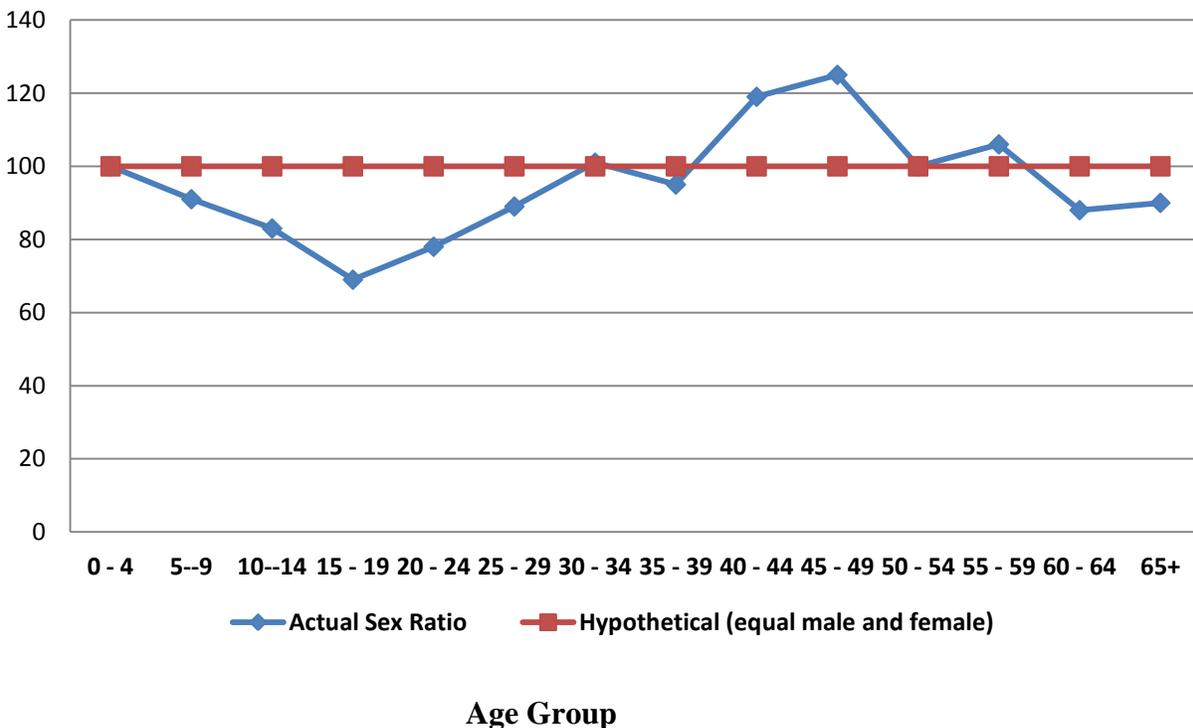


Source: Based on [9] * Excludes Somali and Afar

Sex Selectivity

Fig. 9.2 is based on data for urban migrants only. On a national level there are more female than male migrants in most age groups. Sex ratio of 100 represents an even balance between the sexes (the red line), with ratios below the red line representing a predominantly feminine migrant population which is the case for all groups below age 35 and above age 60. Ratios above 100 show masculinity. The most feminine migrant groups are the young adult ages of 15 – 19 (69 males per 100 females) and the 20 – 24 group (78 males per 100 females). This is a result of differentially high female in-migration into urban areas of young people in their late teens and early twenties. The sex ratios are also impacted by differential *return-migrations* that often vary with age.

Fig. 9.2 Sex Ratio of All Urban Migrants by Age Group , 1994*

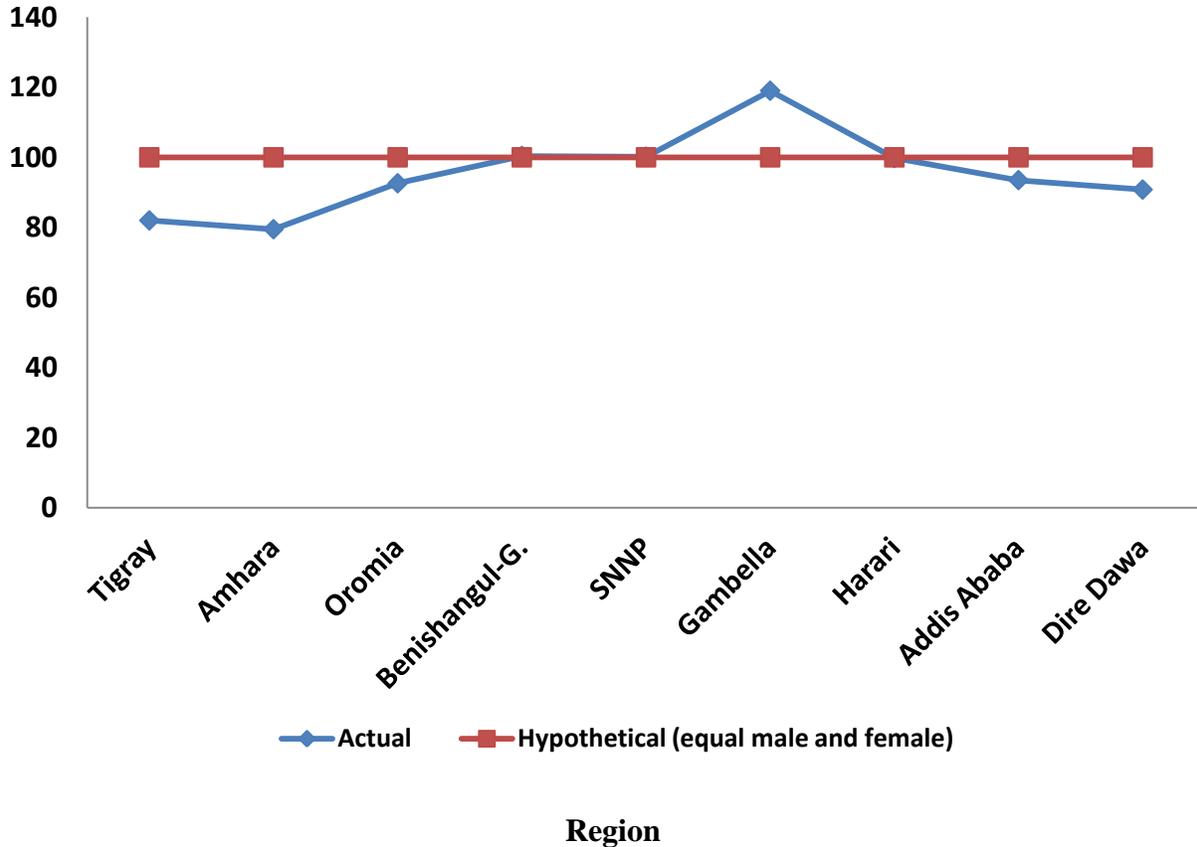


Source: Based on [9] * Excludes Somali and Afar

In Figure 9.3 a different classification is considered in which the sex ratio of migrants in urban destinations of the various regions is considered. Gambella being a frontier Regional State stands out as the most masculine of all regions with a sex ratio of 119 (males per 100 female), while urban Tigray (82) and Amhara (80) come off as the most feminine. These are, of course, averages for the entire urban population of all of the cities within a region, and mask the

variations in sex ratios within the same region from one urban center to another, and from one age group to another.

Fig. 9.3 Sex Ratio of Migrants in Urban Centers by Region. 1994.

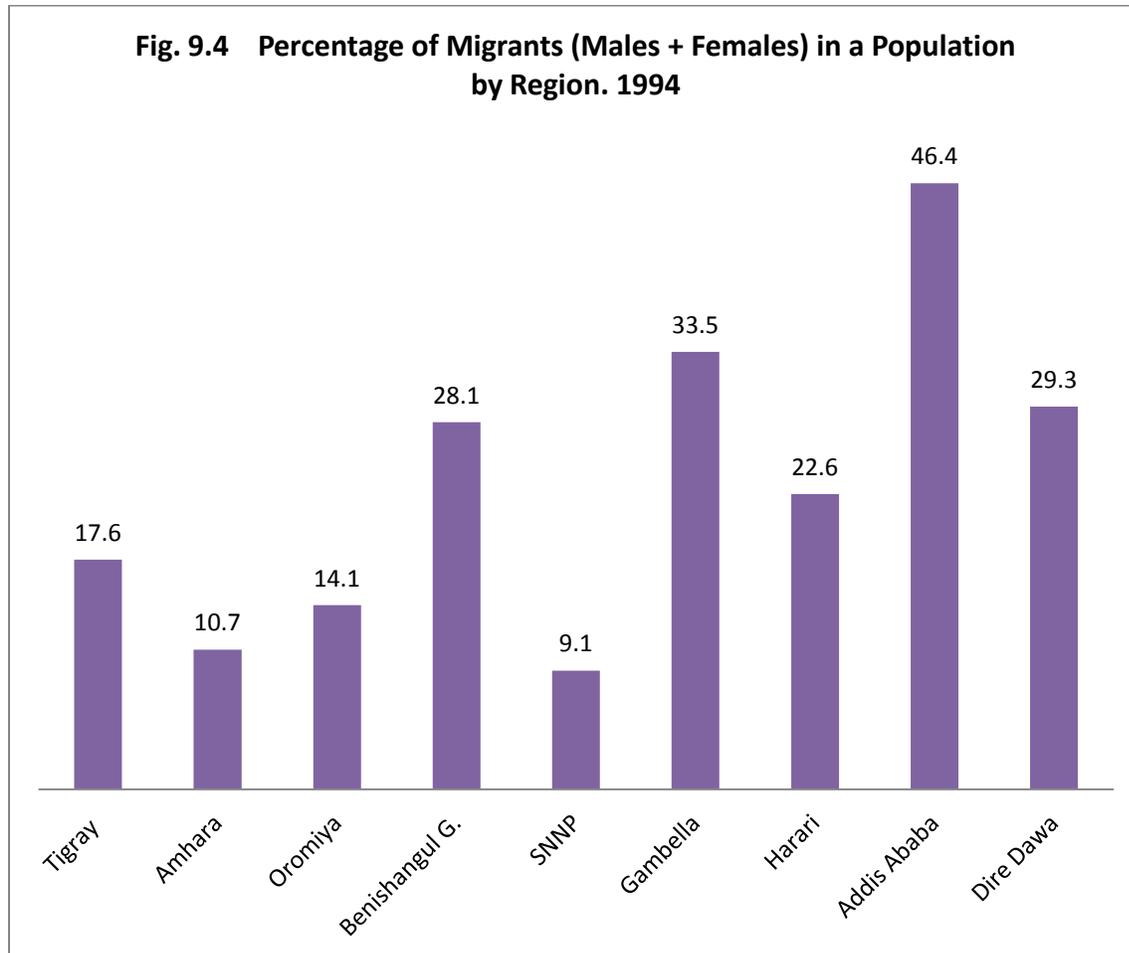


Source: [9]

Proportion of Migrants in Region

Some regions have greater proportion of migrants in their population than others (Fig. 9.4). Is this due to selectivity difference with some regions offering better adaptation potential or provision of essential services upon arrival? Do the regions favored by migrants have greater attractiveness to migrants than others? Are they better known to would be migrants? The data source used to plot Figure 9.4 does not answer any of these questions but if the numerical dominance of migrants relative to natives is the sole determinant of whether or not the answer to all of the questions above should be a “yes”, Addis Ababa would have the highest attractiveness rating followed by Gambella, benishangul-Gumuz, and Dire Dawa. It is not surprising at all that Addis Ababa tops all other regions. It is the national capital. Capital cities are the strongest magnets in all regions of the developing world drawing on a migrant pool of labor from sources near and far.

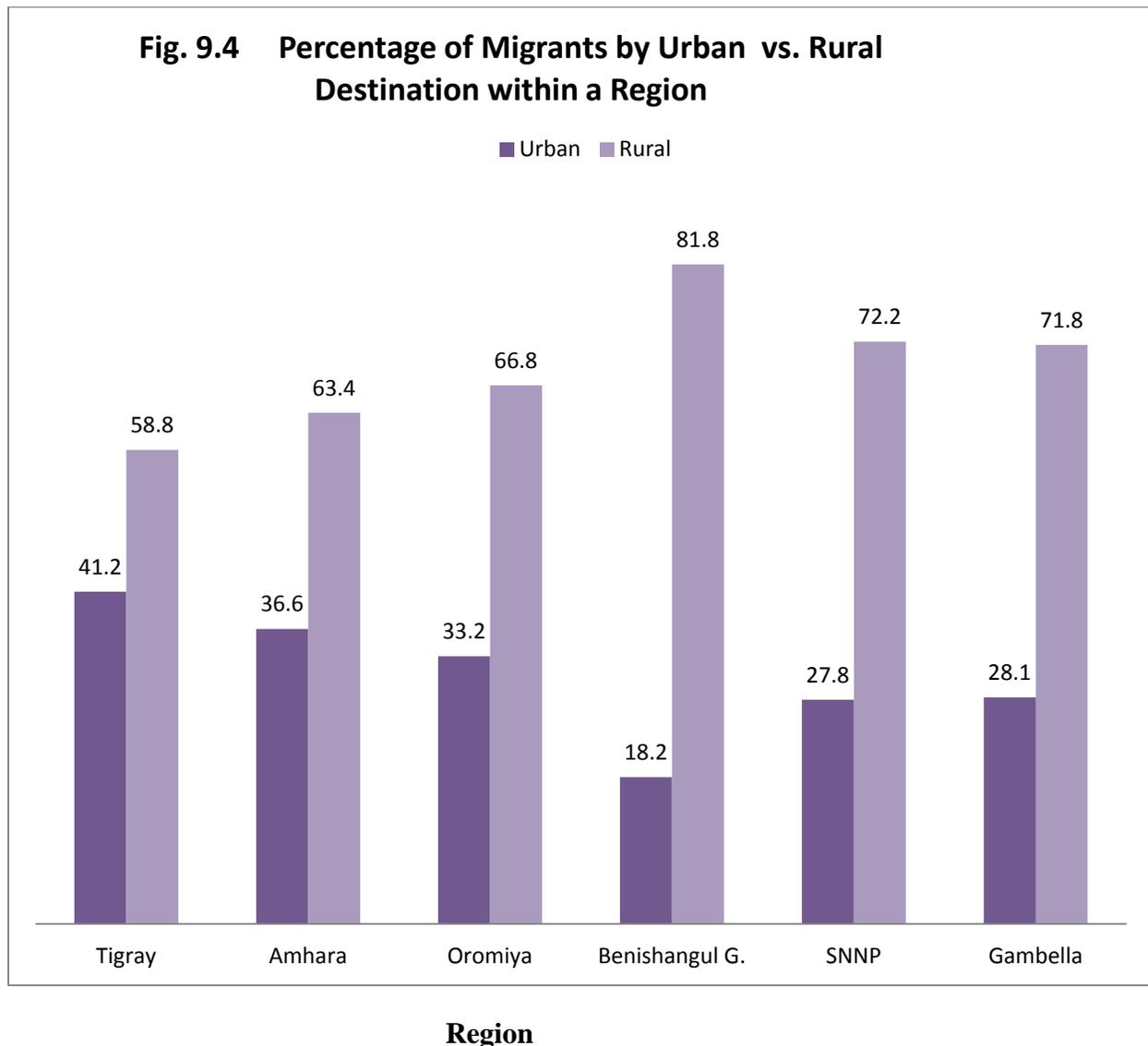
The southern region of SNNP has the lowest percentage of migrants. Percentages are used (rather than actual numbers) because the data is about a decade old. The 2007 census is likely to produce results that are very different in terms of actual numbers of migrants and non-migrants, but somewhat similar proportions as those shown in Fig. 9.4 unless drastic changes have taken place in the causes and directions of out-migration to locations within or outside of a region of birth.



Another question not readily answered in Figures 9.2, 9.3 and 9.4 is this: Where did the migrants come from? The second national census did not ask that question or provide alternative ways of arriving at an answer. It does, however, answer the question of whether they settled in urban or rural destinations within the region chosen as a new home.

The easiest classification of destinations within a region would be urban vs. rural. Reports of the second Ethiopian census results classified migration data based on a migrants' place of residence

at the time of enumeration. The results, shown in Fig. 9.4 reveal that the majority of migrants settle in rural destination (the predominantly urban regions of Addis Ababa, Harari, and Dire Dawa are excluded). The census did not solicit or gather information on migrant origins. However, it is not illogical to assume that the migrants who settled in rural Ethiopia in larger numbers than in urban destinations, also originated in rural Ethiopia.



Source: [9]

The proportion of migrants settling in rural destinations ranged from three-fifths (Tigray) to four-fifths (Benishangul). These migrants, most likely, originated in rural locations and traded an agrarian life in one part of the country or region for a similar profession elsewhere but, surely, not without reason. Most of these migrations are voluntary and the individuals involved are

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driven by a set of rational decisions regarding the benefits (whether perceived or real) of moving to a new location.

URBANIZATION IN ETHIOPIA

As is the case in the rest of the developing world, migration has been the main engine driving urban population dynamics in Ethiopia by contributing far greater percentages to the annual growth rates than the balance between births and deaths; also known as natural increase. Migration supplies and replenishes the towns and cities of the country with new waves of able-bodied men and women primarily from rural origins. Ethiopian historical studies suggest that this process has been in play for two millennia. Addis Ababa the capital, just over a century old “... is only the last in a long succession of capital cities dating back to the first century B.C.” [10]

The capital has shifted every few centuries over the past two-thousand years along with the nomadic people of the Amharic and Somali plateaus. The Pre-Christian city of Axum was followed as capital by Lalibela, Gorgora, Gondar and Mekele, all of which are located in northern Ethiopia ... The primary reason for the continuing relocation of capitals was exhaustion of wood resources for fuel and construction. New capitals were prosperous for several decades until the sparse forests around the city became depleted. Each capital went through a stage of decline and was finally abandoned in favor of a new site.

Despite the long history, Ethiopia remains under-urbanized even by African standards. Only 16 percent of its population (13,225,000, in 2008) lived in urban areas. [11]. One shouldn't be misled, however, into thinking that low urbanization here meant fewer problems. The majority of living quarters in most cities and towns of the country have been described as slums. Homeless International's study of slums in Addis Ababa [12] has characterized the city as “...nothing but a gigantic slum interspersed with modern high-rise buildings and a few affluent neighborhoods”. Due to the high population size, 16% urbanization still translated into 13 million urban residents in Ethiopia in 2008. This is a number far beyond the country's capacity to adequately house, educate, employ, feed, and entertain.

In a recent study of sample urban enumeration areas “... 59 percent of enumeration areas are classified as slum settlements, i.e., in 59 percent of the enumeration areas at least 80 percent of the population has some basic needs unmet with respect to their living conditions”. In addition, “a significant difference is found in the prevalence of slum settlements across the urban spectrum: 66 percent of the enumeration areas are classified as slum settlements in small/medium towns, compared to 47 percent in major towns”. These results are consistent with other studies in which “...even cities as large as Addis Ababa display very integrated residential structures where the poor live side-by-side with the non-poor” [13]. The following are among the other findings of the study:

- The proportion of the population living in slum-like conditions reaches 75 per cent when loose criteria are adopted signifying that 75 percent of the population faces some form of nonmonetary deprivation “...while only a small percentage suffers from multiple forms of deprivation”
- Slum settlements, as defined by “spatial concentration of people living in slum-like conditions”, are more widespread in small urban centers than in major towns.
- A 2002 estimate puts the proportion of the urban and rural populations with access to improved water supply at 81 and 11 percent respectively. Overall, greater proportions of the population in major urban centers have a better access to clean water than smaller towns. Moreover, inequality of access persists between the lowest and highest wealth quintiles (25 percent) where access by the latter group is twice as high as in the poorest quintile.
- It is estimated that half of the urban population lacks access to improved sanitary services and there is again a difference by wealth quintiles. “Only 35 percent of the poorest quintiles has access to improved sanitation, against 57 percent of the wealthiest quintile”
- The seven major urban areas with a population of 100,000 account for 35% of the urban population. Addis Ababa alone has 25% of the total urban population, and is 14 times bigger than the second largest urban center – Dire Dawa. The remaining 65% live in small and medium-sized towns.
- “Deepening urban poverty is accompanied by rising urban inequality. The Gini coefficient paints Ethiopia as an equal [but equally poor] society” [13].

Poverty and Urban Unemployment:

Due to the low economic base and a slow rising per-capita income the urban economic environment has yielded little by way of gainful employment and social progress. The 1999 Labor Force Survey estimated the population in the economically active age group at 27 million. It estimated the proportion of the unemployed at 8.2 percent nationally and 25.7 percent in urban areas [14]. Youth unemployment was much higher. “Ethiopia has one of the highest urban unemployment rates worldwide, at about 50 per cent of the youth labor force” [15] The average for Sub-Saharan Africa was 18.4 percent. The reasons cited include [15]:

- Past wars
- Government policy
- Draught and its socio-economic impacts
- Low level of education and lack of skills
- Lack of investment, and
- “The absence of youth in decision making or implementation of policies affecting them”

The factors above are, at once, the causes and consequences of poverty. “Poverty and urbanization are interconnected and multidimensional.” [16] Urban poverty is exacerbated by the accelerated rate of arrivals from the countryside and slow absorption into the labor market.

Addis Ababa, for instance, "... took 90 years to reach a population of 1 million but only 30 years to triple and exceed 3 million. Currently the population of the city is estimated to be 4 million increasing at a rate of nearly 8% per annum [and resided] in 527,800 housing units with an average density of 6 persons per household". It is said to be one of the least developed cities in Africa, and "the accumulated housing backlog needs the construction of 300,000 units while 60,000 units per annum are needed to accommodate the 8% increasing population" [16]

A study conducted to implement the MDG has found that more than 80% of the city's population is living in slums which are characterized by overcrowded neighborhoods with no or little basic infrastructure and municipal services, worn out physical structures, under unhygienic conditions lacking safe drinking water and sewage, sprawling informal settlements in disaster prone areas, illegal land occupation and absence of tenure security, high rate of HIV/AIDS, high rate of unemployment and informal economy being vulnerable to all kinds of risks. [16]

Lack of housing and in-migration of under-age children has created an emergency-level crisis of homeless street-children. There are an estimated 100,000 street children in Addis Ababa alone, one quarter of them girls, and "the ministry of labor and social affairs estimates another 500,000 children to be at risk of ending up on the street" [17].

There are a number of reasons for children living on the streets: family violence, family breakdown, rural to-urban migration, poverty or death of parents from HIV/AIDS. Street children often run away from their homes to reduce the burden on the family or simply because the family cannot cope with another mouth to be fed. [17]

Urban Population Growth

The data in Table 9.2 are based on the results of the 1984 Population and Housing Census, and the projected estimates for 2006 (from the 1994 Population and Housing Census). All urban centers with 10,000+ populations are included with the exception of those lacking data for the base year (1994) or for 2006, or both. These include Asayita, Awubere, Bichena, Degeh Bur, Derwenache, Dolo, Gode, Hartisheik, Kebri Dehar, and Softu.

The very rapid pace of urbanization in the 22 year period (see Table 9.2) is evident in the double-digit annual growth for most urban centers and in the finding of all but two cities (Harer and Negele) with annual growth rates of 5% or greater. Gambella city in Gambella Administrative region registered the fastest urban growth rate by doubling its population twice (and almost doubling a third time) in a span of just over two decades. It grew by an average of 27% per year for twenty years. It had a population of 4,492 during the 1984 census which ballooned to 18,263 by the 1994 census, and was projected to reach 31,300 in 2006. Moyale in Oromiya), Boditi (SNNP), and Zway (Oromiya) all grew by an average of 20+ percentage points per year. In sum, a total of twenty three urban centers had a double digit growth every year. This assessment is, of course, based on the assumption that the data for 1984 are accurate and, most importantly, that the projected numbers for the year 2006 are reliable.

Table 9. 2 Urban Centers with Populations Above 10,000 Ranked by Annual Rate of Growth Between 1984 and 2006*

| Rank | City | Growth Rate** | Rank | City | Growth Rate** | Rank | City | Growth Rate** |
|------|----------------------|---------------|------|----------------------|---------------|------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Gambela | 27.14 | 29 | Bahir Dar | 9.32 | 57 | Debre Zeyit | 7.14 |
| 2 | Moyale | 23.59 | 30 | Bedele | 9.32 | 58 | Debre Tabor | 7.09 |
| 3 | Boditi | 20.55 | 31 | Werota | 9.32 | 59 | Dila | 7.05 |
| 4 | Ziway | 20.23 | 32 | Nazret | 9.09 | 60 | Genet (Holata) | 7.05 |
| 5 | Areka | 19.41 | 33 | Dodola | 9.05 | 61 | Shewa Robit | 7 |
| 6 | Jinka (Bako) | 18.27 | 34 | Debark' | 8.86 | 62 | Yirga Chefe | 6.95 |
| 7 | Asosa | 17.55 | 35 | Shashemene | 8.86 | 63 | Dangila | 6.91 |
| 8 | Kembolcha | 15.27 | 36 | Asbe Teferi | 8.82 | 64 | Ginir | 6.86 |
| 9 | Jijiga | 14.68 | 37 | Finote Selam | 8.82 | 65 | Kibre Mengist | 6.86 |
| 10 | Shakiso | 13.73 | 38 | Nekemte | 8.77 | 66 | Sebeta | 6.82 |
| 11 | Adigrat | 13.64 | 39 | Dire Dawa | 8.5 | 67 | Dembi Dolo | 6.73 |
| 12 | Sawla (Felege Neway) | 12.73 | 40 | Bure | 8.41 | 68 | Dese | 6.64 |
| 13 | Hosaina | 12.68 | 41 | Hagere Hiywet (Ambo) | 8.41 | 69 | Shambu | 6.64 |
| 14 | Chagne | 12.14 | 42 | Welenchiti | 8.32 | 70 | Himora | 6.5 |
| 15 | Welkite | 11.5 | 43 | Mojo | 8.27 | 71 | Mot'a {Mota} | 6.5 |
| 16 | Metahara | 11.23 | 44 | Gimbi | 8.18 | 72 | Bati | 6.45 |
| 17 | Awasa | 11.18 | 45 | Metu | 8 | 73 | {Maychew} | 6.45 |
| 18 | Inda Silase | 11.05 | 46 | Mekele | 7.95 | 74 | Gonder | 6.41 |
| 19 | Robe | 10.95 | 47 | Yirga 'Alem | 7.91 | 75 | Asela | 5.91 |
| 20 | Mek'i | 10.36 | 48 | Adis Zemen | 7.82 | 76 | Fiche | 5.55 |
| 21 | Adet | 10.23 | 49 | Weldiya | 7.82 | 77 | Agaro | 5.5 |
| 22 | Alamata | 10.23 | 50 | Butajira | 7.77 | 78 | Goba | 5.5 |
| 23 | Arsi Negele | 10.09 | 51 | Giyon (Waliso) | 7.77 | 79 | Wik'ro {Wikro} | 5.41 |
| 24 | Arba Minch | 9.77 | 52 | Kobo | 7.59 | 80 | Debre Markos | 5.23 |
| 25 | Korem | 9.68 | 53 | Sodo | 7.59 | 81 | Aleta Wendo | 5.05 |
| 26 | Agere Maryam | 9.59 | 54 | Aksum | 7.55 | 82 | Addis Ababa | 5 |
| 27 | Adwa | 9.45 | 55 | Debre Birhan | 7.32 | 83 | Harer | 2.32 |
| 28 | K'olito (Alaba | 9.45 | 56 | Jima | 7.32 | 84 | Negele | 1.27 |

Source: [Based on 18]

*Cities with incomplete data are omitted

** Annual growth rate

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Appendix 9.1 ranks Ethiopian urban centers with a population of 10,000 or more by population size. A total of 214 urban centers were in this category in 2008. Seventeen of these cities are in Tigray, and five in Afar. The population giants of Amhara and Oromia each have 56 and 82 urban centers with a population size of 10000 or more respectively. SNNP has 30 such urban centers while Gambella and Benishangul Gumuz each have one urban center with 10,000+ populations - their respective capitals. Somali has 21 urban centers with a population of 10,000 or greater.

Expectedly, Addis Ababa has the largest population of any city with 3.15 million inhabitants, or 23.8 percent of the total urban population. Dire Dawa and Nazret each have over a quarter of a million inhabitants, and represent the second and third largest cities. Gonder, Dessie, Bahir Dar, Jimma, and Mekele are close behind occupying the number three, four, five, six, and seven rank respectively. Each has a minimum of 16,000 inhabitants. The ten most populous urban centers in Ethiopia have a combined population of 4,907,785 (37.1%).

Appendix 9.1 Ethiopian Urban Centers Ranked by Population Size (2008)

| Rank | Pop. | City | Rank | Pop. | City | Rank | Pop. | City |
|------|---------|--------------|------|-------|---------------|------|-------|------------------|
| 1 | 3147000 | Addis Ababa | 73 | 27172 | Dodola | 145 | 14401 | Kofele |
| 2 | 306499 | Dire Dawa | 74 | 26638 | Boditi | 146 | 14367 | Shinile |
| 3 | 250817 | Nazret | 75 | 26610 | Bati | 147 | 14245 | Jiga |
| 4 | 213673 | Gonder | 76 | 26341 | Finote Selam | 148 | 14239 | Iteya |
| 5 | 185512 | Dessie | 77 | 25791 | Wenji Gefersa | 149 | 14190 | Habru |
| 6 | 183489 | Bahir Dar | 78 | 25551 | Bure | 150 | 14123 | Fik |
| 7 | 174446 | Jimma | 79 | 24996 | Hageremariam | 151 | 14096 | Durame |
| 8 | 164973 | Mekele | 80 | 24701 | Asayita | 152 | 14014 | Kuyera |
| 9 | 143891 | Debre Zeit | 81 | 24659 | Jinka | 153 | 13942 | Gore |
| 10 | 137485 | Awasa | 82 | 24439 | Areka | 154 | 13873 | Mersa |
| 11 | 131000 | Harar | 83 | 24272 | Hart Sheik | 155 | 13851 | Shinshicho |
| 12 | 107297 | Jijiga | 84 | 23758 | Bichena | 156 | 13653 | Menna |
| 13 | 102199 | Shashemene | 85 | 23681 | Ginir | 157 | 13604 | Alem Ketema |
| 14 | 93902 | Debre Markos | 86 | 23681 | Robe | 158 | 13600 | Ejaji |
| 15 | 92861 | Asela | 87 | 23419 | Metahara | 159 | 13559 | Debre Sina |
| 16 | 92709 | Nekemte | 88 | 23355 | Bedele | 160 | 13285 | Hamasut |
| 17 | 79548 | Arba Minch | 89 | 23167 | Adet | 161 | 13275 | Deder |
| 18 | 75438 | Kombolcha | 90 | 23021 | Welenchiti | 162 | 13205 | Genet |
| 19 | 74741 | Gode | 91 | 23016 | Yirgachefe | 163 | 13145 | Mehal Meda |
| 20 | 73767 | Debre Birhan | 92 | 22504 | Aleta Wendo | 164 | 12979 | Adigudem |
| 21 | 72122 | Sodo | 93 | 22220 | Shambu | 165 | 12936 | Gerbo |
| 22 | 67049 | Dilla | 94 | 21884 | Asosa | 166 | 12814 | Arjo |
| 23 | 63016 | Hosana | 95 | 21818 | Nejo | 167 | 12645 | Chinhahsan |
| 24 | 55566 | Goba | 96 | 21755 | Kuyu | 168 | 12582 | Bore |
| 25 | 54219 | Ambo | 97 | 21573 | Bonga | 169 | 12437 | Sheshedi |
| | | Laelay | | | | | | |
| 26 | 51727 | Mychew | 98 | 21399 | Asasa | 170 | 12350 | Arerti |
| 27 | 49957 | Waliso | 99 | 21304 | Gelemso | 171 | 12214 | Finchaa |
| 28 | 49663 | Alamata | 100 | 21241 | Bedesa | 172 | 12202 | Masha |
| 29 | 48069 | Yirgalem | 101 | 21171 | Mizan | 173 | 12082 | Merto Lemariam |
| 30 | 47128 | Negele | 102 | 21099 | Teppi | 174 | 12043 | Sire |
| 31 | 46855 | Weldiya | 103 | 21071 | Abomsa | 175 | 12019 | Awash Sebat Kilo |
| 32 | 46836 | Degehabur | 104 | 20750 | Ginchi | 176 | 11994 | Gewane |
| 33 | 46136 | Arsi Negele | 105 | 20730 | Kemise | 177 | 11913 | Majete |
| 34 | 45657 | Agaro | 106 | 20505 | Nefas Mewcha | 178 | 11808 | Geladin |
| 35 | 45061 | Endaselasie | 107 | 20451 | Bako | 179 | 11745 | Mersa |
| 36 | 43132 | Mojo | 108 | 20272 | Yabelo | 180 | 11722 | Daye |
| 37 | 42841 | Debre Tabor | 109 | 19990 | Abiyadi | 181 | 11533 | Zelambessa |
| 38 | 41536 | Fiche | 110 | 19770 | Mendi | 182 | 11510 | Waja |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|-------|--------------|-----|-------|--------------|-----|-------|---------------|
| 39 | 40771 | Butajira | 111 | 19677 | Burayu | 183 | 11506 | Chencha |
| 40 | 40645 | Adwa | 112 | 19611 | Adaba | 184 | 11479 | Denan |
| 41 | 40166 | Gimbi | 113 | 18808 | Robe | 184 | 11330 | Mieso |
| 42 | 40150 | Meki | 114 | 18724 | Guder | 186 | 11204 | Gedo |
| 43 | 39654 | Kobo | 115 | 18566 | Huruta | 187 | 11157 | Gobesa |
| 44 | 39588 | KebriDehar | 116 | 18366 | Ebenat | 188 | 11139 | Amanuel |
| 45 | 39553 | Kibremengist | 117 | 18356 | Dera | 189 | 11038 | Were Illu |
| 46 | 39420 | Ziway | 118 | 18354 | Bokoji | 190 | 10991 | Maksegnit |
| 47 | 39357 | Awabere | 119 | 18350 | Hirna | 191 | 10926 | Sagure |
| 48 | 38990 | Derwonaji | 120 | 17580 | Merawi | 192 | 10918 | Sendafa |
| 49 | 38468 | Dambi Dolo | 121 | 17569 | Mekane Yesus | 193 | 10793 | Dubti |
| 50 | 37901 | Metu | 122 | 16985 | Dejen | 194 | 10777 | Melka Rafu |
| 51 | 37551 | Maychew | 123 | 16981 | Fignan Bira | 195 | 10753 | Freweyni |
| 52 | 36665 | Asebe Teferi | 124 | 16796 | Koladiba | 196 | 10591 | Sheno |
| 53 | 34538 | Mota | 125 | 16624 | Dabat | 197 | 10549 | Finchaa Camp |
| 54 | 33941 | Chagni | 126 | 16464 | Dembecha | 198 | 10537 | Lumame |
| 55 | 33878 | Dolo | 127 | 16359 | Shone | 199 | 10472 | Kumbabe |
| 56 | 32920 | Holeta Genet | 128 | 16235 | Gidole | 200 | 10463 | Agew Gimjabet |
| 57 | 32613 | Gambella | 129 | 16092 | Lalibela | 201 | 10462 | Wurgesa |
| 58 | 32072 | Korem | 130 | 15739 | Kucha | 202 | 10456 | Harshin |
| 59 | 31335 | Sawla | 131 | 15708 | Hayik | 203 | 10437 | Melka Sedi |
| 60 | 31245 | Wukro | 132 | 15696 | Tulu Bolo | 204 | 10282 | Asendabo |
| 61 | 31004 | Shakiso | 133 | 15664 | Ayikel | 205 | 10280 | Mega |
| 62 | 30471 | Goro | 134 | 15580 | Kelafo | 206 | 10236 | Robit |
| 63 | 30016 | Alaba Kulito | 135 | 15332 | Daror | 207 | 10191 | Shendi |
| 64 | 29296 | Dangela | 136 | 15257 | Debre Werk | 208 | 10161 | Enewari |
| 65 | 28870 | Wereta | 137 | 15041 | Sire | 209 | 10099 | Rabaso |
| 66 | 27584 | Sebeta | 138 | 15031 | Sekota | 210 | 10065 | Deneba |
| 67 | 27507 | Humera | 139 | 14841 | Alem Tena | 211 | 10061 | Bike |
| 68 | 27469 | Moyale | 140 | 14765 | Durbete | 212 | 10058 | Wenago |
| 69 | 27423 | Debark | 141 | 14727 | Addis Alem | 213 | 10051 | Enfranz |
| 70 | 27412 | Softu | 142 | 14430 | Kebri Beyah | 214 | 10032 | Shiraro |
| 71 | 27300 | Shewa Robit | 143 | 14417 | Gida Ayana | | | |
| 72 | 27261 | Addis Zemen | 144 | 14404 | Asebot | | | |

Source [19]

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