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Migration and its effect on extreme poor households' trajectories

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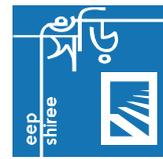
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Abstract

In the development discourse, migration is seen a contested concept because it can produce both desirable and undesirable outcomes. This paper focuses on analysing migration as a livelihood option for extreme poor households drawing upon Stimulating Household Improvements Resulting in Economic Empowerment (SHIREE²) programme data. In the qualitative longitudinal household tracking tool of SHIREE programme, we found different kinds of migration contexts, notably: rural to urban migration, seasonal migration, border crossing migration, and natural disaster related migrations. Our study found that low incomes, loss of earning opportunities, evictions, health shocks, lack of specialized skills, bonded labour and fraud were factors underpinning unsuccessful migration. On the other hand, migrations that developed social networks, had support from NGOs, resulted in reduced dependency ratios, and chose the right destination tended to be positive experiences that helped improve migrants' wellbeing.

Keywords: Livelihood strategy; extreme poverty; migration; Bangladesh.

1 Introduction

Although migration is both a common livelihood strategy for poor people around the world and one that is reportedly increasing, its outcome is often uncertain (Kothari, 2002). This is because regardless of the type of migration, it generally exposes migrants to health problems, instability, crime, and unravelling social fabric and support systems (de Haan, 1999, 2000; Kothari, 2002). Categorising the different nature and forms of migration by international organisations helps capture the diversity of the phenomenon.

International migrants constitute about 3% of the world's population (about 214 million people) and the total number of internal migrants is even larger (IOM, 2013). International migration reduces poverty significantly as found in the research of Adams and Page (2005) using data of 71 developing countries. However, the effect of internal migration on poverty is uncertain (Adams and Page, 2005; Campbell, 2011). Global statistics of internal migrants is not available due to lack of cross-national measures to determine the number of internal migrants (Kothari, 2002; IOM, 2013; UNFPA, 2013).

With increased urbanisation, increased movement of its population and natural population growth, it is expected that half of the population of Bangladesh will be living in urban areas in the next two decades. Internal migration often takes place because of different structural reasons which lie beyond households' control. These include social and economic factors, variation in the quality of different services and level of access to these services (education, healthcare and other services), environmental factors and so on. Rural-urban migration in Bangladesh is a major challenge for policy-makers and

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² The Economic Empowerment of the Poorest programme started in 2008. Often known as EEP/SHIREE, it aims to help 1 million people lift themselves out of extreme poverty

yet we have little reliable information on the impacts of migration at the household, community and national levels. Migration research mostly focuses on the role of migrants in the place of destination, and little information exists on migrants' family members who remain in the place of origin.

This paper analyses the implications of migration for the extreme poor's livelihoods and well-being in Bangladesh. It analyses the role of migrants both at the place of destination and at the area of origin; notably the impact on left-behind spouses, children and the elderly. It draws from the EEP-SHIREE programme qualitative longitudinal database (see www.shiree.org) and a review of secondary literature on migration in developing countries. The qualitative data gives us insight into extreme poor households' migration processes when one (or more) member temporarily or permanently migrates to Dhaka and other large cities as well as to India for social, economic or environmental factors.

Section 2 presents approaches to migration in different studies, a typology of migration, an examination of migration trends and regional variations in Bangladesh. We describe the data utilized for the paper in the methodology section. In section 4, we explore the types of migration the extreme poor have experienced in their life. We discuss the impact on migration in section 5. In the final section, we provide some concluding remarks and possible policy implications.

2 Literature Review

In this section, attempts are made to capture the different approaches of migration in different studies and find a typology of migration from the available scholarly articles. Migration trends in Bangladesh are then explored capturing also regional variations in migration migration's relationship with poverty.

2.1 Approaches to migration

Within the current literature, there are a number of analytical frameworks on migration such as Lee, 1966; Todaro, 1969; Harris and Todaro, 1970; and Stark, 1991. Todaro's model of rural-urban migration is arguably the most frequently cited migration model. In the Todaro model, a prospective migrant weighs up the difference between the expected earnings in the village, and expected earnings from formal sector urban employment, allowing for his or her assessment of the probability of an initial period of unemployment and/or of informal sector employment (de Haan, 1999). Stark (1991) uses an extended version of the Todaro model that conceptualises beyond individuals to focus on the household as unit of analysis, recognizing imperfections in rural capital markets, transaction costs, and remittance potential as determinants of migration.

Push-pull models of migration are a rational extension of the Todaro-type of analysis. Many researchers however (McGee 1982, Standing 1985, Protero and Chapman 1985, Breman 1985, and Rubenstein 1992) challenged individualistic focus of Todaro inspired analyses. For these authors, labour migration is inevitable and occurs once people are alienated from land and housing. In this perspective, migration is the only survival option available to poor people. This view is also emerging in studies from Bangladesh: poor people being forced to migrate from disaster prone rural areas to urban areas after large-scale disaster events such as the floods of 1988 and 1998³, Cyclone Sidr and Aila (Haider and Kabir, 2010; Rayhan and Grote, 2007; Siddiqui, 2012; Hossain, 2001; Marshall and Rahman, 2013; Ahmed, 2010; Black, Kniveton and Schmidt-Verkerk, 2013). Families whether they are in distress or not, use migration as a form of portfolio diversification. They share both the costs of and rewards of migration. Understanding both migrants' situation at destination and the impact on left-behind family members offers a more complex picture of the consequences of migration. Through this paper our aim is to analyse migration using the household as the central unit of analysis.

³ The floods of 1988 and 1998 in Bangladesh left 45 million and 30 million homeless respectively, and an estimated combined death toll of 3,000–7,600 (Rayhan and Grote, 2007)

2.2 Typologies of Migration

Researchers often strive to develop a typology of migration using key characteristics such as distance, time and purpose (Kothari, 2002). Parnwell (1993) creates a typology based on distance, direction and patterns. There are also different types of migration: permanent, step, circular, cyclical, return, refugee, evacuees and resettlement (Parnwell, 2002). Kothari (2002) identifies particular types of migration that are closely associated with chronic poverty.

Table 1: Types of Migration and Chronic Poverty

Time-span	Type of Movement	Characteristics
Season	Seasonal labour circulation	Agricultural labour
Yearly	Contract Labour migration	Rural to urban labour migration e.g. domestic service, mining
Working life	Temporary circulation	Rural to urban migration, international migration
Lifetime	Permanent migration	Emigration, resettlement, refugees
Temporary	Distress migration: war, natural disasters	Refugees, internal displacement, emergency

Source: Kothari (2002)

The migration typology developed by Kothari (2002) is the one that aligns well with the patterns of migration of the extreme poor in Bangladesh. Apart from economic reasons, poor people migrate from rural areas to urban areas after large-scale disasters⁴. For those who experience climate related impacts, migration plays a crucial role as they make livelihood adjustments (Kothari, 2014). Given Bangladesh's ecological pre-disposition and exposure to climate-induced events and hazards, this type of migration is particularly significant⁵. Moreover, as the livelihoods of rural communities of Bangladesh often rely on access to and exploitation of natural resources, climate induced shocks and hazards often cause major disruptions to their livelihoods (EJF, 2012; Black, Kniveton and Schmidt-Verkerk, 2013). This increases displacements and forces the migration of the affected communities. As cities have more job opportunities and are perceived as economic hubs, people tend to move to urban areas. Black et al. (2013) depict the main migration flows within and from Bangladesh with predictions of additional migrations likely to take place. The migration flows mentioned by Black et al. were useful for us when we tried to identify migration events that occurred in the lives of extreme poor. We expected to observe localized displacements, seasonal moves, rural-urban migration and cross-border migration in the lives of extreme poor households. As such, we also expected that extreme poor households would only seldom resort to international migration as a livelihood strategy as the cost of migration from Bangladesh is very high.

Table 2: Main migration flows in and from Bangladesh and their exposure to climatic events and hazards

Type of Migration	Area of Origin	Destination	Main factors	Sensitivity to climate change
Localized Displacement	All affected regions	Cities (Dhaka)	Flood risk, monsoon	High—but depends largely on other factors, e.g., food aid
Localized	River	Often inside own or	River erosion	High—but in some

⁴ After Cyclone Aila, around 123,000 people moved to nearby cities and villages (Mehedi, Nag and Farhana, 2010)

⁵ Future sea level rise predictions following climate change impact indicate that 3 percent of the coastal land of Bangladesh will be lost by 2030 and 6 percent by 2050 (Tanner et al., 2007; Pender, 2010)

Type of Migration	Area of Origin	Destination	Main factors	Sensitivity to climate change
Displacement	Communities	in neighbouring communities, sometimes urban areas		cases people move back to land after event
Seasonal moves to Urban areas	Rural Areas	Nearby cities, Divisional Headquarters	Need to diversify livelihoods, often main source of income	Medium—decline of productivity possible, risk of saturation of cities
Long-term Rural-Urban	Rural Areas	Mainly Dhaka and Chittagong	Difference in labour demand, security of employment	Low-as climate-related effect outweighed by other factors
Cross-border migrations	All country, also rural areas	India	Economic differences, political security, social and cultural ties (East–West Bengal)	Medium - consequence of saturation of cities in Bangladesh
International	Better off households	Gulf and regional centres in SE Asia	Difference in labour demand, recruitment, political security	Medium - consequence of saturation of cities in Bangladesh
International	Better off households	Europe (Mainly UK) and US	Difference in labour demand, networks, marriage, political security	Medium - consequence of saturation of cities in Bangladesh

Source: Black et al. (2013)

2.3 Migration Trends in Bangladesh

The context for migration in Bangladesh has been in constant flux since 1947 and in response to major historical events. With the fall of the British Empire in the Indian subcontinent, two separate states emerged for Hindus and Muslims, i.e. India and Pakistan. First, East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) experienced rapid growth in its urban population with the large-scale migration of Muslims from India in 1947. Most of these migrants settled in urban areas. Then, following the War of Independence in 1971, rural populations who had become landless began to migrate to urban areas (Islam, 2012). International migrations from Bangladesh also increase after Independence. We know from official records that 6,078 workers went to the Arab states of the Persian Gulf (Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) countries in 1976. During the mid 1970s, these countries started to extract commercial oil and required both skilled and unskilled labour. At present, about 1 million Bangladeshis are working in different countries of the world. However, the costs involved in arranging international migration have always been high and beyond the reach of extreme poor households.

From 1979 to 1982, General Zia launched settlement programmes to fill the Chittagong Hill Tracts areas with Bengali landless peasants from the coastal areas of Chittagong, Noakhali, Patuakhali, Barisal and the offshore islands of Sandwip, Hatiya and Bhola (Rizvi, 1988; Islam, 1992). After General Ershad gained power in 1982, liberal economic policies were introduced to pave the way for foreign direct investment in Bangladesh. Along with these policies and the Multi-Fibre Agreement, Bangladesh experienced a large expansion in Ready-Made Garment Industry (RMGI) (Ahamed, 2013). This expansion of RMGI attracted a large segment of the rural population (mostly women) to

urban areas. Industrial and other kinds of employment in the urban areas and the inability of the agricultural sector to provide adequate and sustainable employment encouraged people to migrate to urban areas (Zaman, Alam and Islam, 2010; Islam, 2012; Rahman, 2013).

2.4 Who are the extreme poor migrants?

In this section, we test whether there is a link between poverty and migration, and whether the districts of origin of extreme poor migrants condition their destination. De Haan (2000) argues that migrants do not always originate from the poorest districts of the country. To know the origin districts of extreme poor migrants of Bangladesh, two important slum studies were reviewed as the extreme poor often come to cities live in slums or on pavements. Unfortunately, studies on pavement and street dwellers are very rare.

The results of the studies on slums confirm that the poorest districts are not always the origin districts of extreme poor in Bangladesh. The Centre for Urban Studies (2006) carried out a survey among slum dwellers and found that most slum dwellers came from Barisal (19.4%), Comilla (11.0%), Faridpur (6.6%), Noakhali (6.2%) and Mymensingh (5.5%). According to poverty maps developed by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), World Bank and United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), only Barisal and Mymensingh are considered to have a higher than average percentage of extreme poor residents. These maps were prepared based on Household Income and Expenditure survey (HIES) 2010 and showed that Dhaka division has the highest share of the country's poor population followed by Chittagong. In Bangladesh, Dhaka and Chittagong divisions have the highest concentration of economic activities and people from other areas migrate to these two divisions in search of employment.

Table 3: Major Districts of Origin of the Slum Dwellers by City (percentage of total slum dwellers of respective city)

Dhaka (%)	Chittagong (%)	Khulna (%)	Rajshahi (%)	Sylhet (%)	Barisal (%)	All Cities (%)
Barisal, 22.7	Chittagong, 19.6	Barisal, 35.9	Rajshahi, 70.3	<u>Mymensingh, 15.6</u>	Barisal 65.3	Barisal, 19.4
Faridpur, 9.2	Comilla, 19.0	Bagerhat, 17.9		Sunamganj, 13.8		Comilla, 11.0
<u>Comilla 9.1</u>	Noakhali, 14.9	<u>Faridpur, 16.9%</u>		<u>Comilla, 10.7</u>		Faridpur, 6.6
Mymensingh, 7.3				<i>Rangpur, 9.5</i>		Noakhali, 6.2
<i>Rangpur, 4.6</i>				Hobiganj, 9.5		Mymensingh, 5.5
						Chittagong, 5.3

Key: Underlined refers to 'Out of Division' migrants; **Bold** refers to Coastal belt migrants; *Italics* refers to northern environmentally challenged areas (Beel and Monga). Source: (CUS, 2006; Marshall and Rahman, 2013)

Urban Health Survey (UHS)⁶ 2013, is one of the most recent survey on slums and other areas of different city corporations of Bangladesh. In UHS 2013, about a quarter of male and female slum dwellers in Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) area (Male 22.3% and Female 24.6%) were born in slums and the remaining slum dwellers were migrants. UHS 2013 shows an increase (from the survey of UHS 2006) in slum dwellers originating from the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) area and other urban areas of Dhaka Division and a decrease from rural areas of Dhaka division. About one third of

⁶ For details see (National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT), International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b), MEASURE Evaluation, 2015; National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT), MEASURE Evaluation, International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), and Associates for Community and Population Research (ACPR), 2008)

the current female and male slum dwellers in DCC area were born in Barisal (Female 19.6% and Male 19.5%) and Chittagong (Female 10.2% and Male 10.1%) division.

3 Methodology

This paper analyses the implications of migration for the extreme poor's livelihoods and well-being. To capture a more comprehensive picture of the consequences of migration, it analyses the role of migrants both at the place of destination and at the area of origin, specifically on the impact upon left-behind family members. Our aim is to analyse migration using the household as the central unit of analysis. We analyse successful and unsuccessful cases of extreme poor migration in order to understand the impact of migration on wellbeing.

This research is based primarily on a the qualitative longitudinal household tracking tool which constitute one aspect of SHIREE's five-part monitoring system (termed as CMS 5), which documents the lives of 72 extreme poor households. Life histories help determine the dynamics in extreme poor households' livelihoods and the causes behind their descent and ascent in and out of extreme poverty. Their movements are tracked and classified according to 6 wellbeing categories (destitute, working extreme poor, moderate poor, lower earning non-poor, middle elite, and wealthy elite) that are determined using employment, diet and asset based indicators. Besides information on migration, the life histories capture in-depth information on livelihood and food security, changes in intra-household dynamics, social networks, interactions with markets and access to different services.

This paper focuses mostly on migration events closely linked with Dhaka and Khulna. These two cities have different characteristics. As Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh it attracts a broad range of migrants Khulna, being a coastal city, tends to attract rural migrants forced to leave their villages usually following some environmental shock or hazard. Life histories and Reflections on the Interventions (ROIs) (the two core components of CMS5) are available for Dhaka and Khulna city. In addition, the SHIREE programme supported projects in both cities and we could collect additional data through these projects. An additional rapid survey exercise was conducted in both cities in November 2014 to understand the migration dynamics. A rapid survey exercise was also conducted in rural areas of Khulna and Bagerhat with households that are SHIREE beneficiaries as well as with non-beneficiaries. Non-beneficiaries were interviewed to assess other possible factors underpinning migration other than poverty. KIIs were conducted with SHIREE project staff, project staff from other programmes, managers of brick kilns, and landlords of agricultural land.

In SHIREE, data was sometimes collected on migrants at the places of origin in the absence of the migrants themselves. In such cases the source of information were the family members of migrants. This information was not always complete, as family members could not always comment on different aspects of migrants' lives at the destinations. Another shortcoming we faced was that there were not many recent studies on slums available at the time this paper was prepared. Only UHS 2013 were available which was published in 2015 after the 12th International Urban Health Conference. We also faced difficulty when comparing UHS 2006 and UHS 2013, because different types of analyses were conducted in these two surveys.

The typology of migration included in the CMS5 72 household sample allows us to have an in-depth understanding of the dynamics and factors that influence migrations patterns. Within the 72 households, there were only 9 households that were in urban areas when the life histories were collected. Most of the rural households included in the sample were from coastal regions (25 households). There were 19 households from the northwestern districts, 12 from the CHT and 6 from the Haor area of the northeast. We found three main types of migration patterns within these households: rural to urban migration, seasonal migration, and in the border areas with India, temporary cross border migration.

3.1 Typologies of migration

3.1.1 Seasonal

Rural life of Bangladesh follows the rhythm of the harvest seasons of rice. The harvest seasons are based on three categories of rice: *aus* (which is cultivated from April to August), *aman* (which is cultivated from July/August to November/December), and *boro* (which is cultivated December/January to April) (Shonchoy and Kurosaki, 2013). For the extreme poor involved in agriculture as daily labourers and other means, important shortfalls in employment take place between late September and early November, and from late March to early May. Due to the increased cultivation of *boro*, the shortfall from late March to early May has declined (Shonchoy and Kurosaki, 2013). However, inhabitants of rural areas of Bangladesh are still affected by the lean season of September to November (Khandker and Mahmud, 2012; Khandker, Khalily and Samad, 2012; Shonchoy and Kurosaki, 2013).

During the lean period, substantial numbers of able-bodied men migrate to cities looking for work. Large portions of these able-bodied men become rickshaw pullers in different cities of Bangladesh. Able-bodied men of extreme poor households included in our study often migrated to Dhaka to pull rickshaws if they could not find employment in their villages. It was also observed that creating alternative income opportunities in the rural area during lean periods could reduce migration.

There are some other households who were able to improve their economic situation but continued to migrate using good networks. To illustrate we briefly look at the case of Goni Mondol from Gaibandha. Goni migrates to different places seasonally and has a good network to find jobs outside his community. He has a long history of going to different places to work, including Dhaka and Manikganj where he goes after planting crops. Goni's wife is adept at looking after the crop when Goni is away. Through his past experience and good connections, Goni is able to explore different migration options that help maximise his income. The fact that his wife looks after their crops means that the household benefits even more from migration.

We discuss the seasonal migration scenario of the south-western part of Bangladesh separately as we found a different pattern here. The agriculture base of the south-western part of Bangladesh has changed because of the withdrawal of water by neighbouring India from trans-boundary rivers, sedimentation, increase of salinity and wide scale commercial shrimp farming. Extreme poor households find it difficult to cope with these changes in the agro-ecological landscape. The lack of employment in their villages forces them to consider migration to urban areas of other districts. Able-bodied men from extreme poor household migrate from one to six months to different urban and rural destinations in the region. In Khulna and Bagerhat, we found that agricultural male day labourers migrate during the harvesting season to nearby districts and migrate to work in brick kilns during dry seasons. This type of seasonal migration has increased over time because of improvements in physical infrastructure and telecommunication. Our analysis shows that seasonal migration creates obstacles for children's education when entire households migrate to brick kilns before the end of the scholastic year. Here, we find some value in Todaro's model because we observe families weighing up differences between the expected earnings in the village, and the expected earnings from employment in other destinations. In the end, extreme poor families 'vote with their feet'.

Farzana, a resident of Chanmari Slum who migrated to Khulna City after cyclone Aila stated that rice is not cultivated in her village anymore and that the expansion of shrimp farming has reduced the demand for labour. People from her village now seasonally migrate to different districts to work in the brick kilns. With the money they earn in six months at the brick kiln, they can survive the remaining six months of the year. Often these seasonal migrants do not have enough land that can be used for shrimp farming. Before coming to Khulna City, her husband also used to work in brick kilns. In Farzana's village, most of the male members go alone to the brickfields, but a few households move together. Farzana could not go to brick kiln with her husband because she had to look after her

mother-in-law. In general, people believe that the migration of entire households is beneficial since with more labours, they can produce more bricks and therefore increase their incomes. According to the manager of a brick kiln in Khulna, these labour-intensive brick kilns will be converted to mechanized ones soon. In the coming years, labour demand in these brick kilns will decline and extreme poor households might need to look for alternative forms of employment.

3.1.2 Cross-border

Bangladesh shares a long border with India and people living in the border districts of Bangladesh often try to find employment in Indian cities. Some researchers (Samaddar, 2003; Siddiqui, 2012) have identified the reasons that facilitate international migration including social capital, support networks in certain destinations, proximity as well as well-established colonial links. These people migrate illegally as migration between Bangladesh and India has restrictions. Most of the extreme poor households we observed went to India for more than one year. They want to earn money and come back to Bangladesh to buy land or other productive assets that can give them sustained income. In Bagerhat, it is observed that Indian employers involved in the scavenging business have some influence in trafficking Bangladeshis to India. They pay in advance to middlemen who can then manage the movement of potential workers. It seems these scavenging yards in India need cheap labour that they arrange from Bangladesh. As Marxism and structuralist theories of migration argue, the employers use migrant labourer to reduce the bargaining power of local labourers (de Haan, 1999). Families of migrants often state that the migrants can not earn enough money to send back to Bangladesh.

In Bagerhat district, we found cases of extreme poor women whose sons, daughters and daughters-in-law had migrated to India. Halima (52) lives in Morrelganj Upazila of Bagerhat district, two of her sons migrated to India for work and her daughter-in-law and daughter migrated with them. Her income dropped after her sons and daughter migrated since her sons were sending her little to no remittances. When we visited her, she claimed that her family was in a sorry and desperate state. Her daughter and daughter-in-law came back to Bangladesh as they could not enrol their children at school in India. Now they are staying in a Khulna city slum. One of her sons, who was staying in India, returned to Bangladesh for vacation. While going back to India, he was caught by border guards and is now in jail. One of Halima's younger sons also went to India recently. However, he does not want to stay there as he has to work as rag picker in very poor conditions: the work is physically demanding, and he has to stay all day under the scorching sun and scavenging in a filthy environment. This makes him so sick he no longer wants to eat. He wants to come back to Bangladesh within a couple of months. He told his mother over the phone that he does not mind eating less in Bangladesh. This was preferable to working in horrible conditions. So we can conclude that illegal cross border migration can be dangerous in many ways. Moreover, migrants do not always have enough income to send back home.

3.1.3 Rural-urban

We found that rural to urban migration occurs at different stages of extreme poor household's lives in CMS 5. The main drivers to migrate to cities include the search for work, the loss of business in rural areas and escaping domestic abuse. Sometimes a series of events forces the household to migrate such as climate induced damage to property, evictions from land and so forth. According to the push-pull model, migration is driven by a set of push and pull factors. We find that most of these extreme poor households are pushed by poverty, unemployment, landlessness to migrate to urban areas.

Extreme poor migrants usually turn to relatives and friends when they migrate to cities. Relatives and friends offer a range of support including help finding accommodation or jobs and simply starting a business. They also offer support in times of crisis. In some cases, employers were also found to help migrants. In Khulna slums, most of the extreme poor received help from their relatives while migrating. In most cases, they borrowed money from relatives or friends to bear the costs of

migration. Non-beneficiaries mostly migrated to their relatives' house or stayed for a few days initially in their relatives' house. In some cases, business relationships and friendships played a role in migration.

Rural-urban migrants did not have any special skills that helped them secure good jobs in urban areas. Normally they only had their labour to trade, and in some cases even this was not possible especially if migrants had health problems. Sometimes migrants end up in the same job as their relatives. Rural-urban migrants often faced difficulties in paying high living costs and house rent (in the rural areas they normally do not pay rent). In most cases, households were found to be dependent on the meagre income of one earning member.

Other difficulties faced by these migrants include illness or physical injury of the main earning member, and the loss of business capital to local *mastaans*. It was observed in the CMS 5 data that some migrants had been plunged into extreme poverty due to a series of events such as loss of business capital due to fraud and the closing of their workplace.

3.2 Reasons for not migrating and returning home

Some of the extreme poor decide to stay back in the village as they had more experience and skills in agriculture. In urban areas, migrants have to take unskilled work and the income is not enough to provide for their family as living costs in urban centres is high. Besides, most of the extreme poor feel an emotional attachment to their homes. In Morrelganj of Bagerhat district, people did not migrate to cities after Cyclone Sidr because they had their homestead land and received relief and rehabilitation facilities. They believed that they could cultivate paddy and *kalai dal* (split black lentils) on leased land. School stipends also helped keep children at home and prevented migration of household-heads to urban areas. In the Khulna slums, we observed that some who migrated after Cyclone Sidr and Aila regretted their decision because they felt that those who stayed back in the disaster-hit area were doing better. The migrants did not get the humanitarian support from different agencies as they had already migrated while those that did receive help, were able to eventually resume their life.

We found several cases in our CMS 5 dataset where migrants returned to their villages. Extreme poor people who went to Dhaka in search of jobs faced numerous challenges. After getting a job, their situation started to improve. However, we observed that after some time they faced different shocks and hazards that led to a deterioration in their wellbeing status. In these circumstances, some migrants decided to return to their homes. Zahidul (from northern part of Bangladesh) came to Dhaka with the support from one of his rich relatives and started working in a battery factory. During that time, he received three meals a day, lodging and 4,000 taka as salary. After two years, he had to borrow 9,000 taka from a money lender when his wife was giving birth to their child. In 1998, the devastating flood, which inundated 60% of Bangladesh, also affected the place Zahidul was residing. Around the same time, the factory he worked at closed due to low profits and Zahidul was unable to pay back the loan he took from money lender. Zahidul had to return to his village and started to work in agriculture. We found some migrants who cannot return to their ancestral home because of the destruction of traditional rural livelihoods. One such migrant is Sharifa from Khulna city, a Cyclone Aila victim. She told us that her father and husband had nothing left in their village, and that both had to stay on others' land.

In a study on Burkina Faso, researchers found that people with less land migrated more and therefore concluded that land ownership had an inverse relationship with migration (de Haan, 1999; Singh and Aneyetei, 1996). We also found landless extreme poor tend to migrate more than those who have land.

4 Impact of migration: on migrants and their families

4.1 Livelihood and Living condition of extreme poor migrants in Destinations

Extreme poor households end up in slums in urban areas where they face different problems including water and electricity shortage, health challenges and crime. With the impact of climate change, the existing vulnerabilities of the poor urban dwellers may increase. Migrants from rural areas come to cities such as Khulna mainly looking for work. Roy et al. (2013) in a comparative study between public and private slums of Khulna city found that residents of both public and private slums were concerned about the lack of available employment, seasonal unemployment and low wages. The study found that employment opportunities in private slums were virtually absent and very constrained in public slums. According to different scholarly articles (Roy, Hulme and Jahan, 2013, 2012; EJF, 2012), private slums of Khulna city accommodated migrants who were affected by environmental disasters. In the slums on public land, there is hardly any free space to incorporate new migrants. In our fieldwork, we also found the same phenomena in Khulna city slums. However, we also found that slums on public land received more support from the NGOs than the slums on private land. When studying the migrants coming after cyclones (Aila, Sidr), Roy et al. (2013) found that their landlord helped them by allowing them to stay rent free with their relatives or with people from the same village. Some landlords also offered food grains, clothes and utensils as relief, and built new rental units rapidly.

Migrant labourers typically receive lower wages than experienced local labourers. As stated earlier according to Marxist and structuralist theories of migration, employers use migrant labourer to reduce the bargaining power of local labourers (de Haan, 1999). In our fieldwork, we found that middlemen recruit labourers for different kinds of work around Bangladesh. These middlemen go to different villages and recruit labourers for some months and provide transportation as well as money in advance. During the fieldwork in Khulna slums, all of the participants mentioned that they are in a better situation now after migrating to Khulna and they are not thinking about migrating to any other city.

4.1.1 Situation in Places of Origin

In Bangladesh, the number of people over sixty years of age is increasing. The country now has about 8.5 million people aged 60 years and above (Nilsson, 2005). According to UN projections, the number of elderly will increase by nearly 3 times by the year 2050. These elderly people depend on their children for support during their old age. The elderly among the extreme poor become exceptionally vulnerable when their family members migrate to other places. In this section, we analyse the implications of migration for those who remain at home. We have already referred to the case of Halima from Bagerhat district. Migration and separation from her sons led to her impoverished condition. Halima looks after some geese, hens and chicks for her daughter who is in India. Recently, her daughter came back from India and started to stay in a slum of Khulna city. She did not take the fowls back and Halima stills look after these. Halima's family can eat the eggs from the geese and hens. She is also looking after her daughter's goats. During this time, Halima gets to keep chicks and hens or goslings that will hatch through purchased eggs or from her daughter's hens or geese. Similarly, she will get the kids if the goats give birth. In all of this, she not have to compensate her daughter if any of the animals are stolen or die.

We also came across the case of a widowed woman whose two sons migrated to India and were neither sending any money nor visiting their mother. She now depends on what she can get by begging, and is squatting in an abandoned government building in a village of Lakshmipur district. She has sent numerous messages to her sons through other villagers who travel to India. However her sons always reply that they are in not in a good economic condition in India, and that they cannot send money to their mother. This is a good illustration of how the desire to reduce poverty led to migration but how in the end, migration has plunged some people into even more poverty.

Migrant families often leave behind their children while migrating to other places. To escape from debt and earn a decent living, Moni and his wife migrated to Savar, Dhaka from Morrelganj, Bagerhat. They were unable to take their children with them so they left them with the grandparents. During a recent visit to Moni near Dhaka, we found that both Moni and his wife were unemployed. They used to work in RMGI but their employment was season. Their children are still with the grandparents. Moni was forced to leave Bagerhat and was not able to change his situation.

While talking with the wives of male seasonal migrants, we were told of several difficulties they face when their husbands are away. Sometimes they need to borrow money for urgent needs, and this proves to be more difficult when there are no adult males in the house. They also struggle to perform certain household chores such as chopping firewood. One women reported that after her son was injured, she had difficulty taking him to the doctor. If her husband were around he would have taken care of these things. Women also expressed that they feel insecure especially during the night when their husbands are away. However, some also felt empowered as they were managing money, and were able to take household decisions even if often they had to get the consent of their husbands or father-in-laws before finalising major decisions. The women stated that they had to go to the market more often when their husbands were absent, but the increased mobility allowed them to receive more information about the things happening in their locality. Most of the women were able to save secretly by reducing consumption during the months when their husbands were away.

4.1 Successful and Unsuccessful Migration of Extreme Poor

We have identified several cases of unsuccessful and successful migration at different stages of the lives of households included in the CMS 5 database. We have tried to identify the reasons underpinning unsuccessful and successful migrations. The term unsuccessful migration infers an outcome in which individuals or households are not able to improve their wellbeing status through migration. Conversely, successful migration infers an outcome when wellbeing status is improved.

4.1.1 Factors of unsuccessful migration

The factors we find in CMS 5 that lead to unsuccessful migration are fraud (often carried out by relatives), loss of earning opportunities, eviction from residence, health shocks, lack of specialized skills and bonded labour. In most cases, members of extreme poor households could not secure or suddenly lose the necessary income earning opportunities. In CMS 5, we observed that Mintu came to Dhaka to work in his nephew's small business with the promise of a monthly salary. When he arrived in Dhaka, his nephew told him that he would receive payment in kind (i.e. food and shelter) and not in cash. Mintu's nephew then sent Mintu's wife in the village a meagre amount of money, which was not sufficient to survive. Mintu was middle aged and worked as a day labourer when he was in his village. The situation he faced in Dhaka was such that he was forced to go back to the village and take up day labouring in order to feed himself and his wife. He did not have any children and is now dependent on his labouring capacity. Mintu's migration was not successful as his nephew defrauded him and lured him to Dhaka under false pretences.

The loss of earning opportunities is another cause of failure for extreme poor migrants, and this is illustrated above in the case of Zahidul. He was able to improve his wellbeing to moderate poor until he had to take a loan to pay for costs incurred when his child was born. He lost his job as the factory that employed him, had to close down. He was then forced to return to his village. However he continued to migrate to Dhaka during the lean seasons to pull a rickshaw.

Sometimes eviction combined with other factors force migrants to return to their home areas. Hena and her husband from Barisal were evicted while they were residing in a slum of Manipuri para, Dhaka. After the eviction, her husband went missing. Due to the eviction and abandonment, Hena had to go back to her village. She was 21 years old during the time of eviction and was pregnant. Her brother helped her with money when she gave birth to her only child.

Health shock is another important reason that can lead to unsuccessful migration. Jamil's case illustrates this well. Jamil is from Sitakundu, Chittagong and earned a good income from his job in RMGI and his grocery shop. He worked in a RMG factory where the stairway of the building did not have a banister. One day, he fell from the fifth floor of the building to the ground floor severely fracturing his backbone. He underwent treatment for 17 months and had to sell his grocery shop. During these 17 months, he spent his savings and only managed to continue his treatment with help from others, including the owner of the factory. He could not continue his work in RMGI and had to leave Dhaka to survive. With this health shock, his wellbeing status dropped from lower earning non-poor to extreme poor.

Some other factors for unsuccessful migration found in our CMS 5 dataset were lack of specialized skills and bonded labour. We found evidence of bonded labour in Khulna. Sharifa is a migrant who fled to Khulna to escape Cyclone Aila. A boatman near her house provided her family a ride to Khulna from Paikgacha when the water rose following cyclone Aila. They ended up in a *Chatal*⁷ where the owner allowed the family to stay because he felt sorry for them. Her father started working in a factory outside the *Chatal*. In return for being allowed to live in the compound of the *Chatal*, Sharifa and her mother had to work for a meagre amount of money (10 taka per day) – a form of bonded labour. The owner however was not happy that her father was working outside the *Chatal*. Her family finally managed to free themselves of their obligation to the owner when the *Chatal* was closed. The family went back to stay on the other side of the river Rupsha.

High rentals and high costs of food are other factors that contribute to poor migration outcomes. However, although migrants 'fail' to permanently migrate to their destination, some turn to seasonal migration as a way of coping during the lean season. It is not only the extreme poor who benefit from seasonal migration especially to Dhaka, we also found that some people migrate to Dhaka despite the fact that they have a large amount of agricultural land in their home villages.

4.1.2 Why were some extreme poor migrants successful?

Urban areas offer employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled labourer. We found that several factors helped extreme poor households improve their wellbeing status, such as good social networks, securing productive assets, reducing dependency ratios and choosing appropriate destinations.

Piari Begum migrated to Dhaka in extreme poor conditions and in the space of 6 years, managed to change her wellbeing status from extreme poor to middle elite. Her brother and parents get most of the credit for her success. They provided her with all kinds of support needed to produce and sell her dusters except business capital, which was provided by the SHIREE programme. She now has a substantial amount of savings, which has made her resilient against different kinds of hazards and shocks.

Choosing the right place to migrate is an important factor for successful migration. During our fieldwork, participants of FGDs and IDIs in Khulna stated that they are in a better position now after migrating to Khulna and they are not thinking about migrating to any other city. Many of them were forced to leave their village after facing cyclones and floods. During our field work, we found that slums on public land do not have vacant rooms for rent. Roy et al. (2013) also found that most of the migrants who had experienced environmental distress were residing in private slums. To be able to reside on public land, most residents do not need to pay rent but they have to show support and loyalty to local leaders and elected representatives. Irrespective of the type of slums, we found that most migrants who came to Khulna were satisfied with the work opportunities available to them.

⁷ A traditional rice process mill consists of sun-drying yard for paddy. In this facility, paddy is boiled in certain temperature, dried in the sun and later stage paddy is husked for rice.

To improve the well-being status through migration extreme poor households mostly need external support in the form of good social networks that can facilitate better employment and/or business, and provide business capital and productive assets. Keeping in mind the cost of living and income earning opportunities, extreme poor also need to know the appropriate urban areas to migrate.

5 Conclusion and Policy Implications

Migration was found to be a common livelihood strategy among the extreme poor households. Given the diversity of migration patterns and experiences, it is challenging to summarise our findings. Successful migration, indicated by an improvement in wellbeing status, seems to have many different attributes. Sometimes the migration of the entire household was beneficial to enhance wellbeing, however sometimes the migration of able-bodied men was the best strategy. We found that seasonal migrants tend to keep their family in their home villages as children can continue to access school stipends. On the other hand, the seasonal migration of extreme poor from the southwest creates obstacles for children's education as the entire household migrates to brick kilns before the end of the scholarly year.

Considering the high living costs even in the slums of urban area such as Dhaka, some migrants move seasonally to offset seasonal deprivations. As the migration literature illustrates, migration can be an inevitable decision as extreme poor households seek ways to simply survive. We found migrants in slums who migrated after natural disasters because they no longer had homestead land in their home villages. They were forced to live on other people's land and eventually decided to migrate. However, those who decided not to migrate received emergency relief and slowly recovered from the damage of the disaster. Those who migrated did not recover as quickly as those who decided to remain. We also found cases where health shocks push migrants into extreme poverty and deprivation.

We discussed earlier how slums on public land have more services from NGOs than slums on private land. We also noted that migrants forced to leave their areas of origin and come to urban areas do not have access to slums on public land as there is not enough space. In UHS 2013, it was found that the proportion of slum households on government land has declined to 8 percent from 20 percent in 2006. Therefore, forced migrants will inevitably have to find residence in slums on private land. Finally, following government policy and plans to increase migration, the opportunities for extreme poor households need to be increased so that they can benefit from migration rather than suffer because of it.

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