



**Incomes, remittances and implications  
for the welfare of migrant-sending  
households in Zimbabwe**

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## **Abstract**

Zimbabwe has witnessed an increase in both internal and international migration over the years. However, the economic and non-economic costs and benefits of migration have not been ascertained. The purpose of this paper is to assess the experiences of migrants, risks associated with migration, the methods of remitting money and the welfare of sending households. The study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data was collected in 2015 and 2018. Qualitative data was collected in 2019, to explain emerging trends and patterns in quantitative data. Results show that there is an increase in internal migration over the years. Worsening economic hardships are forcing more people to take risks of migrating to unfamiliar destinations and without prior contacts. The majority of the migrants are not gainfully employed, with less than 10% of them employed in technical professions. There has been an increase in the amount of remittances over time, as migrants seek to cushion their households from economic crisis. Migrants face huge transaction costs when sending money home. Over 50% of the migrants sending households which were interviewed think that their household's welfare has improved as a result of sending a migrant away. Results also show that some households' welfare remained stagnant or even worsened after sending a member away. The paper concludes that migration has a huge potential for improving the welfare of migrant sending households. In order to reduce the risks associated with migration, we propose that governments must formally recognise migration and provide them with support, such as soft loans. To increase the chances of migrants being employed in skilled jobs, we propose that government should promote vocational training in secondary schools, and particularly for districts along border lying areas, to increase migrants' prospects of getting better jobs. In order to improve the efficient transfer of remittances, we propose that governments should liaise with other countries to reduce or subsidise taxes charged for sending remittances, so as to increase the frequency of remitting.

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction and Background**

In Zimbabwe, there is on-going migration. People are moving from the country to RSA, Botswana, and also to Europe and the Americas. Questions have been asked on the transformative and economic value of this mobility, with some scholars indicating that remittance flows have a significant impact on GDP. Others have argued that the impact on households do not match the macro level (Tevera, Crush and Chikanda 2010). Studies in this latter tradition have not indicated the nature of intervention that migration must take in order to tilt its value to the household.

Like many others, this study was conducted to understand the situation with regards to migration and sending households. The idea was to ultimately test whether migration is moving households out of poverty and, if not, the challenges preventing this. This working paper presents a summary of the study and pulls out issues for policy consideration.

### **Methodology**

The study was a longitudinal study based on 3 sites, Chivi, Hurungwe and Gwanda. These are significantly high migrant sending areas, to both local and international destinations. The districts are shown on the map below. The surveys were done in 2015 and 2018, and involved 1200 households. Peculiar to the study was also the employment of validating workshops, designed to elicit comments on the data and its interpretation.

### **Emerging key issues from the study**

#### **a. Changes in migration patterns**

The change in migration patterns from 2015 to 2018 show that there is an increase in internal migration. Chivi and Hurungwe districts experienced a drop in households with international migrants and an increase in internal migrants. These changes followed dollarization of the economy in Zimbabwe, xenophobia outbreaks in South Africa and bottlenecks in securing travel documentations. On the other hand, Gwanda district experienced an increase in households with no migrants and an increase in households with international migration. Gwanda's proximity to the border, and shared culture with South Africa and Botswana, encourages this migration, which in many cases is undocumented.

#### **b. Changes in migration patterns by gender of migrant**

The study shows there are a higher proportion of internal male migrants than female migrants in 2018. Conversely, there is a higher proportion of female than male migrants that migrated to other African countries. Female migrants are mostly single mothers and school drops outs that see their future beyond borders. Results from the study show that a greater proportion of female than male migrants take the risk of migrating without connections, or even a job fixed for them, prior to moving. More migrants were risk takers in 2018 than in

2015. Worsening economic hardships forced people to take risks, even migrating to unfamiliar destinations.

**c. Socio demographic and economic characteristics of migrants**

Between 2015 and 2018, the economic situation in Zimbabwe started to decline, with growing unemployment, inflation and droughts within the participating districts. Under these circumstances, households started sending women (including married women). Compared to 2015, where primary school dropouts dominated migration, in 2018, there is a slight increase in the proportion of migrants with post primary education. In our sample, there were no migrants with vocational training. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the majority of the migrants were not gainfully employed before migrating for both the 2015 and 2018 survey. Very few migrants were employed in technical professions.

**d. Remittances and methods used to send and receive money**

Our results show that there is an increase in the amount of remittances sent by migrants from 2015 to the 2018 household survey. This has been confirmed in all three districts. They attributed the increase in the amount of remittances to the increasing hardships back home, which require more money in order to cushion the migrant sending households from the economic crisis. It means, therefore, that remittances are a very important safety net for otherwise very vulnerable households.

The results show that in 2015 the most popular methods for sending money used by both male and female migrants were Western Union, personal delivery, drivers and Malaitshas (transporters of cargo from South Africa for a fee). There is a slight shift towards using formal money transfer systems (particularly for male migrants), such as banks and mobile money systems between 2015 and 2018. Formal channels, especially Mukuru and Ecocash, are attractive. They are considered less risky. Despite having the advantage of being more formal channels for remitting money, however, there are travel expenses to secure the money. There are no banks in the rural areas and travel to a town is required to collect remitted money. Compared to 2015, in 2018 nearly every household has a mobile phone that they can use to receive money. One of the concerns, however, is the increasing transaction costs of using mobile money transfers. The liquidity crisis that plagued the country from the year 2016 has seen remittances being affected by exorbitant transaction costs by service providers upon cash withdrawal. Compounding this are also excessive interest rates by shop owners.

**e. Remittances and Gender**

Our results show that women migrants are more concerned with the most basic needs of the family and family emergencies than men and hence they send money more frequently to address the multiple needs. In some cases, female migrants who have left their children

with grandparents at home send goods and groceries. When sending goods using Malaitshas, women are asked to pay more than half the value of the goods in cash. The argument has always been that part of the money goes towards the payment of duty at the border, although goods are rarely declared.

**f. Household welfare**

Results show that 54% of household in 2015, and 56% in 2018, think that the welfare of a household with a migrant is generally better than non-migrant households. Otherwise, 46% in 2015 and 44% in 2018 of households think that the welfare of households with migrants has not improved, or has actually worsened. Some migrant sending households are building better houses. Feedback meetings confirmed that there are some households whose welfare remained stagnant, or even worsened, after sending a member away. This is especially the case where migrants start their own families in the diaspora, which introduces competition for remittances.

We then asked migrant sending households how their daily lives compare between now and before they send a member away. About 35% and 38% of migrant sending households with an internal migrant interviewed in 2015 and 2018, respectively, think that their daily lives improved compared to before a member migrated. Otherwise, a majority of migrant sending households reported that their daily lives have not changed or even worsened. Feedback meeting confirmed that these households face huge non-economic costs, such as stress that comes from living separate lives.

**Policy recommendations**

There are many issues that arise from this survey. Here we deal with 3 key ones, which were flagged by people and which we also believe can eventually make migration take people out of poverty.

**1. Facilitating regularised migration**

Results from the study show that a greater proportion of female than male migrants take the risk of migrating without connections or even a job fixed for them prior to moving. Such a form of migration is dangerous and exposes migrants to risks. To reduce this risk, we propose that the government and possibly NGOs facilitate the creation of migrant associations that facilitate the migration processes. It may also be helpful if governments and NGOs formally recognize migrants, providing them with support such as soft loans or a cushion to help ease settlement at their destinations.

**2. Improving the market value of migrants**

The study shows that migrants, especially women, are of poor educational background and experience. As a result, they are exploited as cheap labour and employed in less



remunerating jobs as construction workers, paid non-farm employment and in the service sector (e.g. hair dressing) in country or place of migration. The proposed solution is to advance policies promoting education and vocational training in secondary schools and particularly for districts along border lying areas to increase migrants prospects of getting better jobs.

### 3. Facilitating affordable money transfer.

There is also an observed challenge of high transaction costs, interest rates and charges associated with the sending of remittances. These apply to both formal and informal channels. The proposed solution for this is that the government should liaise with other countries to reduce or subsidise taxes charged for remittance sending, so as to increase the frequency of remitting. We propose that in order to reduce the transaction costs of remittance recipients using mobile money transfers, the government should take measures to reduce bank charges and prevent unlawful interest charges by service providers. Formal cash withdrawal facilities should be made available in the migrant sending areas to reduce the costs of travelling to towns for banking services.

## **Introduction**

At a macro level, remittance flows are a very important source of external revenue. According to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, remittances as a proportion of GDP steadily increased from 3.6% in 2009 to 5.8% of 2015 (Tevera, Crush and Chikanda 2010). Although available data shows that remittance flows have a significant impact on GDP, Tevera, Crush and Chikanda (2010) argue that this might not be the case for poor, migrant-sending households in marginalised rural areas. The purpose of this working paper is to provide a descriptive analysis of the risks associated with migrating, the proportion of households receiving remittances, the methods used to send remittances, and also the welfare of households with migrants. Studies have shown that migration is one of the avenues out of poverty. In this paper, we use data generated from Chibi, Gwanda and Hurungwe to discuss the risks associated with migration, the challenges faced by migrants in sending money home, and the welfare of the sending households.

## **Background**

Migration is not a new phenomenon in Zimbabwe. Before independence, families were sending their members to work on farms, mines and in search of jobs in urban centres. Internal migration was dominated by rural to urban migration. Educated youth migrated from rural areas, where the level of development was very low compared to urban areas, in search of employment and income generating projects. The phenomenon gained momentum during the liberation struggle in the late 1960s, where young people were forced to move out of rural areas as they were a target for forced recruitment into the Rhodesian army.

International labour migration started in the 1890s with the discovery of minerals in South Africa (Mlambo, 2010). At independence, the government supported young Zimbabweans to go to the United Kingdom and South Africa for study, to acquire the knowledge necessary to drive the economy of the country. Government policies in the early 1990s such as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme, which required the government to reduce the number of workers in public service, forced people to migrate to neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana. In 2000, a wave of migration linked to the launch of the fast track land reform programme, and the subsequent displacement of farm workers, was also witnessed (Serumaga-Zake, 2017). Events such as Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order) in 2005 destroyed the informal sector nationwide, forcing many people to migrate into neighbouring countries (Serumaga-Zake, 2017). Later, the non-performance of the economy as a result of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe led to inflation, shortage of basic commodities and unemployment rose to 94%. The difficult conditions caused a surge in poverty levels, which forced households to adopt migration as a survival strategy (Dumba and Chirisa, 2010). According to Chereni and Bongo (2015), five top destinations outside the

country include South Africa, United Kingdom, Malawi, Australia and Botswana. Prior to independence, South Africa was the major destination for Zimbabwean migrants.

### **Migration and development nexus**

While remittances have been cited as having a positive impact on the economies of sending countries, their impact on poor sending households is not established. In most cases, a household sends some of its members as a survival strategy and as an opportunity seeking measure (Christiansen et al. 2006; Awumbila et al. 2014; Litchfield et al. 2015). Their focus is on searching for basic necessities of life, such as food, and improving their quality of life. Under these circumstances, migration becomes a way of overcoming limitations imposed upon the household by local economic and physical conditions. Where this is the case, Chereni and Bongo (2015), say that the bulk of the economic gains of migration flow through the informal system and, therefore, have very limited impact on national economic growth.

The relationship between migration and the development of sending household economies is not very clear. Moorhouse and Cunningham (2012) argue that migration has enabled female single parents to play a motherly role from abroad. Migration enables them to send fees, money and clothes for their children. Similarly, other scholars have established a positive correlation between remittances and household consumption patterns, poverty alleviation, human capital formation and risk reduction (Chereni and Bongo, 2015). Although migration has some economic benefits to the migrant sending households, there are also some non-economic costs associated with migration. These include stress associated with living apart.

The majority of migrants work in the formal sector and use informal systems to send remittances to sending households. According to Bracking and Sachikonye (2010), these remittances can play a crucial role in taking the edge off people's suffering and providing them with a basic livelihood in the midst of economic collapse. In some cases, these remittances are sent as goods such as groceries, clothes and electronic gadgets. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to assess the experiences of migrants, the risks that are associated with migration, the methods of remitting money and the welfare of the migrant sending households.

### **Research Methodology**

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative research methods. A sequential explanatory design was used where qualitative data was collected to provide an explanation for descriptive statistics. At least 25 households were selected from each of the participating districts. Preliminary results were presented and participants were asked to provide more in-depth qualitative explanation of emerging trends.

## Quantitative Research

Evidence presented in this report is based on a household survey collected in April/May 2015 and 2018. The data about the migrants was obtained from the original household of the migrants, as opposed to interviewing migrants themselves. Also interviewed were a group of households without any current migrants, which may be considered as a control group for our research. We define a migrant as a former member of the household who, within the last 10 years, has moved away from the village for at least three months for either work or study and is currently away. We had two categories of migrants. First we had internal migration that included people who migrated from the ward to, either, elsewhere within the same province or another province within the country. Second, we had international migration, which was divided into migration to other African countries and migrants to countries outside Africa.

## Study Sites

This study was undertaken in three districts in Zimbabwe: Chivi in Masvingo province in the southeast of the country, Gwanda in Matebeleland province in the southwest, and Hurungwe in Mashonaland West province in the north.



Map 1: Map of Zimbabwe showing study districts

## Sampling Techniques

The multistage sampling strategy was used to select wards, villages and households. In each district, two wards were selected, one close to the district's main town and the other some distance away. From each of the selected wards, two villages (in practice, Village Development Committees or VIDCOs) were randomly selected. In each of the selected villages, a list of households was obtained from the village development chairperson. Using a number of key informants in each village, each household was categorised in terms of whether it had

migrants or not. For the purpose of this household list, migrants were defined as any member who was currently living outside the VIDCO for a continuous period of 3 months or more, irrespective of when the household member migrated as we did not expect key informants to have precise information on the date of migration.

While we used purposive sampling to select households with and without migrants, the breakdown between internal and international migrants within the group of households with migrants was not specified. In 2018, the team made a follow up to the same households that were interviewed in 2015. Table 1 shows the number of sampled households that were lost by district.

District	Households interviewed in 2015	Number of households re-interviewed in 2018	Attrition rate
Chivi	400	298	25.5%
Hurungwe	399	158	50.40%
Gwanda	394	272	30.96%
Total	1193	728	38.98%

Table 1: Attrition rate by districts

Hurungwe had the highest attrition rate of just over 50%. Reasons for attrition are provided below.

### Replacing of Households

Destinations	Households with internal migrants		Households with international migrants		Households with both internal and international migrants		Households with no migrants		Total	
	"lost" HHs 2015	Replaced HHs 2018	"lost" HHs 2015	Replaced HHs 2018	"lost" HHs 2015	Replaced HHs 2018	"lost" HHs 2015	Replaced HHs 2018	"lost" HHs in 2015	Replaced HHs 2018
Chivi	30	30	45	44	3	3	24	24	102	101
Hurungwe	122	121	20	19	11	11	27	24	180	175
Gwanda	25	25	68	65	10	10	19	19	122	119
Total	177	176	133	128	24	24	70	67	404	395

Table 2: Household sample lost and replaced by region and migrant status for 2015 and 2018

Table 2 shows the distribution of households lost and replaced by region. Hurungwe district had the largest number of lost households. The following were challenges of tracing the original households interviewed in 2015.

- In 2015, most of the households were using totems and real surnames. According to the District Administrator of Hurungwe, it common for people to give their totems as surnames, especially when there is no immediate benefit from the survey. It is also possible that households were more nervous talking to enumerators in 2018 and used the confusion over totems to avoid being surveyed. Tracing them in 2018 using totems became very difficult because several households share similar totems. This was the main reason for not being able to locate households in the 2018 re-survey.
- Some of the households relocated to other areas and these could not be re-interviewed.
- In some cases, households were identified but refused to take the interview because the questionnaire was too long.

Once an enumerator failed to locate a household or find an eligible person to interview, he/she was supposed to inform the supervisor. The supervisor working with the local village leadership was supposed to identify a similar household. Similarities in identifying a replacement household that had a migrant were in terms of the location of the migrant, the gender of the migrant and size of the household. When replacing a household without a migrant, care was taken to select households where the head of the household had similar demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, to the household being replaced.

### Changes in migration patterns

Efforts were made to establish if there were general changes in the destinations of migrants between 2015 and 2018. Table 3 shows the changes in migration patterns between 2015 and 2018.

	Households with internal migrants		Households with international migrants		Households with both internal and international migrants		Households with no migrants		Total	
	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018	2015	2018
Chivi	85	104	190	152	27	30	98	99	400	385
Hurungwe	202	221	74	49	24	20	99	110	399	400
Gwanda	52	66	151	166	53	51	138	78	394	361
Total	339	391	415	367	104	101	335	287	1193	1146

Table 3: Changes in patterns of migration by district and destination

The results show that all three districts experienced an increase in internal migration. Chivi and Hurungwe districts experienced a drop in households with international migrants and

an increase in internal migrants. In explaining the reasons for such an increase, one respondent said:

*“The dollarisation of the economy is one issue that caused working within Zimbabwe more favourable. The money had value and some of the migrants acquired skills such as building and came back to work in this country which would lessen the number of those abroad.”*

The economy was more favourable for domestic investment, which encouraged some of the international migrants to come back home to start their own small businesses. It is therefore unsurprising that Chivi and Hurungwe districts experienced a drop in households with international migrants.

During the feedback meeting, participants also cited challenges of getting proper documentation, such as passports and work permits, as another push factor that forced international migrants to come back home. The problems were also accentuated by low employment prospects in the destination country. Furthermore, the xenophobic attacks that occurred between 2015 and 2018 in South Africa (a major migration hotspot for most Zimbabweans) became a disincentive for living and/or working in the country. Some participants during the feedback meeting said that migration is not as beneficial as they thought. Sharing his thoughts on this, one of the respondents in Chivi said:

*“Migration is not doing us any good, it is rather useless, so we decided our son should come back home where he can be more helpful”*

On the other hand, Gwanda district experienced an increase in households with no migrants and an increase in international migration. Participants in the feedback meeting confirmed that there is an increase in international migrants in Gwanda. This has seen the area with very few households without a member living and/or working in South Africa. In support of this, a respondent in the area indicated that:

*“We have Suthu ancestry and share the same culture with the South Africans and Tswana in Botswana. A person across the border speaks the same language as the person here. That is why most cross the border to SA or Botswana.”*

In this case, it can be said that both the proximity of Gwanda to the border, and the similarities in culture between people of Gwanda, South Africa and Botswana, give impetus to more international migration in Gwanda. According to one respondent:

*“Migrating into the neighbouring country is viewed as a rite of passage into manhood”.*

## Changes in migration patterns between 2015 and 2018

Migrant status of household 2015	Migrant status of household 2018				
	1. Internal	2. International	3. Both internal and International	4. No Migrants	Total
Internal	450	288	94	404	1236
%	36.41	23.3	7.61	32.69	100
International	389	674	111	396	1570
%	24.78	42.93	7.07	25.22	100
Both	596	1134	206	1398	3334
%	17.88	34.01	6.18	41.93	100
No migrant	993	580	210	548	2331
%	42.6	24.88	9.01	23.51	100
Total	2428	2676	621	2746	8471
	28.66	31.59	7.33	32.42	100

Table 4: Changes in destinations between 2015 and 2018

Table 4 shows changes in migration patterns between 2015 and 2018. Results show that 25% households with an international migrant in 2015 had no migrant in 2018. About 42% of households with no migrant in 2015 had an internal migrant in 2018. Results also show that 42% of households with both internal and international migrants in 2018 had no migrant in 2018.



Year	2015						Migrants before 2015						Migrants after 2015					
Destinations	Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Internal: Within the same province in Zimbabwe	18	267	17	188	19	79	10	39	9	26	13	13	25	291	26	204	23.8	87
Internal: Another province in Zimbabwe	26	391	27	296	23	95	16	60	15	44	16	16	28	324	30	233	25	91
International: Other African country	54	822	53	581	57	241	73	281	75.7	215	67	66	46	521	43	335	51	186
International: English speaking outside Africa (e.g. UK, USA)	3	43	3	36	2	7	1	5	0.3	1	4	4	1	10	1	9	0.2	1
International: Other international destination	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	1524	100	1102	100	422	100	385	100	286	100	99	100	1146	100	781	100	365

Table 5: Distribution of migrants by destinations of migrants

### Changes in migration patterns by gender of migrant

Results in Table 5 shows that 54% and 46% of migrants surveyed in 2015 and 2018 respectively went to other African countries. There is a higher proportion of internal male migrants than female migrants in 2018. However, there is a higher proportion of female than male migrants that migrated to other African countries. Participants of the feedback meeting in Gwanda confirmed that female migrants are mostly single mothers and school drop outs who fail to secure a job locally and then migrate to South Africa. In most cases, women and young girls are less educated than men, which means they have limited opportunities for employment with the country.

## Research Results

### Socio Demographic and Economic Characteristics of Migrants

Tables 6 and 7 show the changes in the demographic characteristics of migrants that moved before 2015 and those that moved after 2015. Between 2015 and 2018, the economic situation in Zimbabwe started to decline, with ever growing unemployment, skyrocketing inflation and increased frequency of droughts, especially within the participating districts. Under these circumstances, one would assume that households would also start to send women (including married women) and graduates hopeful of getting a job within Zimbabwe, but whose hopes were fading.

Migrant Characteristics	2015						Migrants before 2015 and re- interviewed in 2018						Migrants after 2015					
	All migrants		Male		Female		All Migrants		Male		Female		All Migrants		Male		Female	
	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
Age	31.7	1393	32.5	1002	29.8	391	35.58	385	35.3	286	32.4	99	34.4	1146	35.8	781	31.5	365
<b>Education</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>
% with none	1	10	1	8	0	2	1.6	6	2	5	1	1	0.4	5	0.3	3	0.5	2
% with primary	24	359	24	256	25	103	30.4	117	30	86	31	31	20	233	19	149	23	84
% with middle	64	953	63	680	66	273	55	112	56	161	52	51	65	744	65	510	64	234
% with high	9	139	10	112	7	27	13	49	12	34	15	15	14	159	14.9	116	12	43
% with other	2	33	2	23	2	10	0	1	0	0	1	1	0.4	5	0.3	3	0.5	2

Table 6: Age and education attainment of migrants by gender

Table 6 shows that the average age of a migrant was 31.7 in 2015 and 34.4 in 2018 for the new migrants. There is a slight increase in the average age of the new migrants. With the worsening of the economic situation, older people who used to send children also started migrating.

In 2015, only 9% of the migrants had higher education compared to 14% of new migrants. There is a slight increase in the percentage of migrants with higher education among the new migrants. According to participants of the feedback meeting, there is no hope for secondary level graduates to get a job in Zimbabwe. Most of them are now trying their luck in South Africa.

Migrant Characteristics	2015						Migrants before 2015						Migrants after 2015					
	All migrants		Male		Female		All migrants		Male		Female		All migrants		Male		Female	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
% single	24.09	558	35	379	44	179	38.	148	37	107	41	41	35	398	28	219	49	179
% married	32.90	762	59	624	34	138	52	200	57	164	36	36	57	654	68	532	33	122
% separated/divorced	5.31	123	5	50	17	73	8	28	5	13	16	16	6	68	3	21	13	47
% widower	1.47	34	1	7	5	21	2	9	1	3	6	6	2	26	1	9	5	17
% with of migrants with children	37.69	873	55	595	66	278	54	206	148	52	59	58	60	683	470	60	58	213
Total	100	2316																

Table 7: Marriage status of the migrants

Results in Table 7 show that 52% in 2015 and 57% of new migrants are married. Results from two surveys consistently show that there are more married male migrants than female counterparts. However, there is a slight increase in the proportion of married male migrants. There are several reasons why we tend to have more married male migrants than female married migrants. According to a 2014 from CARE, this is not surprising in Zimbabwe, where it is the responsibility of men to take risk responsibilities while women take care of children and the elderly. During the feedback meetings, we established that, culturally, men are more outgoing than their married female counterparts, who stuck to the notion that *'A woman's heart is in the home'*.

The three districts were similar regarding the cultural reasons for low migration of married women. There was also consensus that women are seen as more vulnerable, and thus very few men would want to expose their wives to risks associated with migration, such as prostitution, violence and sexual abuse. A male respondent in Chivi indicated that:

*“As men and heads of households, we are particularly concerned about the security of our women. And so we ask ourselves, is the security out there adequate for a woman when far removed from the comfort of her home”*

Both male and female respondents shared sentiments that there is a fear of the disruption and/or break up of families. There are reports of women who got married to other men when they migrated to South Africa. As such, men often prevent their wives from migrating. Women are also, of their own freewill, making the decision to stay for the preservation of both their homes and marriages. A man who was part of the feedback meeting in Gwanda said

*Traditionally, we are family people and we build homes so the women are expected to stay at home, raise children and look after household assets. ‘A woman’s heart is in the home’*

The other problem is that men fear that when women go out to work, their financial independence can lead them to leave their husbands, whereas men perceive themselves as not leaving their wives as a consequence of added income.

Relationship to the household head	2015						Migrants before 2015				Migrants after 2015			
	All migrants		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
% head	8	119	10	115	1	4	1	4	2	2	9	68	22	9
% spouse/partner	5	71	5	60	3	11	3	9	0	0	6	49	3	12
% Son/Daughter	66	1005	64	701	71	304	75	214	74	73	67	520	73	266
% Others	23	350	21	230	25	107	21	59	24	24	18	144	22	78

Table 8: Migrants' relationship to the head

Results in Table 8 show that most migrants are sons and daughters of the head of the household. About 66% and 69% of migrants in 2015 and new migrants after 2015 were respectively sons/daughters of the sending households. There is an increase in households sending their sons and daughters. Participants of the feedback meetings in Chibi, Hurungwe and Gwanda districts said that they send their sons and daughters who are more educated because they have higher prospects of getting a job. For this reason, households are more confident that their sons and daughters would fare better in the various destinations. Families end up selling livestock and borrow money to facilitate the migration process. One participant in Chivi said:

*We sent our child to school and he could not find a job. There is nothing as hard as looking at a child with qualifications stressed from being jobless. So we ended up selling four goats to make sure he can at least go and look for a job and help us with money to get by.*

During the feedback meeting, one participant from Gwanda said that it is normal for young people to go out to look for jobs outside the ward. There is a growing tendency for sons and daughters to just make their own decision to migrate, without the knowledge and permission of their parents or immediate relatives.

A sub sample of people older than 16 years was used to avoid including babies in computing this table when calculating age. The age of 7 was used when calculating the education level of migrants and non-migrants.

Year	2015				2018			
	Non-Migrant		Migrants		Non-Migrant		Migrants	
Group	Mean	n	Mean	N	Mean	n	Mean	n
Age	29.15	6005	31.7	1393	26.8	5812	34.5	1528
Household size	5.99	6016	5.15	1530	5.04	1131	5.99	1528
Age of household head	55.38	5786	58.10	1477	53.9	1146	31.33	838
<b>Education of non-migrants</b>	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n
% with none	13	751	1	10	13	771	1	11
% with primary	49	2860	24	359	49	2861	13	349
% with middle	30	1759	64	953	32	1863	83	1108
% with high	3	149	9	139	2	115	2	54
% with other	6	365	2	33	4	244	0	6
% female household head	33	1935	39	573	53.21	2396	55	821
<b>Education of household head</b>	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N
% with none	10	579	11	158	13	150	1	11
% with primary	48	2715	52	758	5	559	23	350
% with middle	35	1991	31	451	32	358	68	1046

% with high	3	189	2	31	1	13	8	118
% with other	4	224	4	60	3	42	0	6

Table 9: Characteristics of Migrants and Non-migrant characteristics

The results in Table 9 show that the average age of migrants (31.7 in 2015 and 34.5 in 2018) is higher than that of non-migrants (26.15 in 2015 and 26.8 in 2018). The non-migrant sample includes a lot of children, whereas there were very few under 15 year olds in the migrant sub sample. This shows that heads of migrant households are older than those of non-migrant households. In terms of education, most migrants have post primary education. According to participants during the feedback meetings in Gwanda, once a child fails 'O' level he/she is left with one option of migrating to neighbouring countries. What is worrying is that 52% of migrants in 2015, and 23% in 2018, had only attained primary education. One participant had this to say:

*Who do you think will employ an 'O' level drop out and give them a good salary?*

According to the Gwanda District Administrator, young boys and girls do not value school, as there are no other options available after writing their 'O' level. The district does not have institutions of higher learning and there are no vocational training colleges.

### The Economic Activities of Migrants before Moving

The purpose of this section is to establish the occupation of migrants before they moved out of the ward. We seek to establish the extent to which migration is being used as a strategy to overcome limitations imposed on the households by local economic conditions (unemployment and under employment) and physical conditions (poor yields due to climate change).

Economic activities	2015				2018			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Paid employee	61	2.17	32	1.05	30	1.58	18	2.32
Self-employed/working on own land	491	17.47	773	25.45	620	32.73	196	25.26
Casual employee	104	3.70	75	2.47	36	1.90	23	2.96
Doing unpaid work in the household	445	15.84	573	18.87	282	14.89	140	18.04
Doing unpaid work outside the household	7	0.25	5	0.16	5	0.26	1	0.13
In school/education	1129	40.18	1000	32.93	609	32.15	273	35.18
Unemployed and looking for job	49	1.74	46	1.51	34	1.80	15	1.93
Unemployed and not looking for job	116	4.13	179	5.89	30	1.58	25	3.22
Retired	28	1.00	18	0.58	16	0.84	11	1.42
others	2	0.07	0	0.00	29	1.53	67	8.63

Table 10: Economic activity before Migration

Table 10 shows the economic activity which the migrant was doing prior to migrating. The results show that the majority of migrants were not gainfully employed before migrating for both the 2015 and 2018 survey. The most common occupations before migrating were ‘unemployed and looking for jobs’ or ‘doing unpaid work in households.’ In 2018, there is an increase in the proportion of migrants who were self-employed or working on their own land.

During the report back meetings, participants reported that it is common for self-employed youths to migrate to other countries to look for employment and raise money to buy capital goods, such as water pumps, which they would bring back and use to engage in horticulture. Some youth migrated to acquire some skills. In support of this notion, one of the participants had this to say:

*Some migrants came back with building skills and tools that they are now using. Now they are doing very well because they have better building skills than their counterparts who did not migrate.*

### Risk Taken by Migrants

According to Chereni and Bongo (2015), migration can be risky. Especially when a migrant moves to other regions or countries, where they do not have connections or even a job fixed for them prior to moving. Results in Tables 10 and 11 show the percentages of migrants who moved to other regions outside their ward, or to other countries with connections or a job fixed prior to moving.

Year	2015				2018			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
District	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Chivi	81	75	175	52.65	192	48.29	239	55.45
Hurungwe	68	74.73	225	63.56	310	49.79	313	50.24
Gwanda	187	70.57	246	64.74	30	47.33	335	52.67

Table 11: Distribution of migrants who had contacts prior to moving

Table 11 shows the distribution of respondents by sex concerning whether or not they had contact prior to migrating. Across the three study sites, the results show that, generally, more males had contacts and connections prior to movement than their female counterparts. Female migrants, particularly single mothers, are left with very few options of looking after their children. They tend to risk their lives and move out of their ward in search of employment, even without contacts at their intended destination.

In 2018, a smaller proportion of both female and male migrants (with the exception of Chivi female migrants) had contacts before moving when compared to those that migrated in 2015. It appears that more migrants were risk takers in 2018 than in 2015. According to the participants of the feedback meetings in all three district, the current economic situation is

forcing people to take risks and even migrate to destinations where they do not have contacts. Therefore, rather than looking for contacts in the intended destinations, sending households are opting to sponsor the migration of their members. This explains the decrease in international migration in 2018. Households are now opting for internal migration which is less costly and less risky, even without a contact. Some participants highlighted that increased economic hardship has also led to a decrease in the number of people who are willing to host a migrant (while they are looking for a job), as they would become an extra burden.

Year	2015				2018			
	Male		Female		male		Female	
District	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Chivi	43	39.81	104	31.23	124	37.12	137	35.01
Hurungwe	33	36.26	108	30.51	138	30.53	134	27.6
Gwanda	27	10.19	49	12.89	52	11.63	48	9.23

Table 12: Distribution of respondents by the availability of fixed job prior to moving

Table 12 presents the distribution of respondents by whether or not they had a job fixed for them prior to migrating. Results show that there has been a significant drop in the percent of male migrants who had a job fixed prior to migrating between 2015 and 2018. This may reflect greater risk taking among male migrants.

In Gwanda, the proportion of migrants moving with a fixed job is low for both male and female migrants. During the feedback meeting, we established that migrants from Gwanda share the same language with people in most parts of South Africa and Botswana, and migration costs are very low. If the processes become too hard for them, it is easier for them to get back home than it would be for migrants from other districts.



## Migrant reasons for leaving

Reasons for leaving	2015				2018			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Job transfer	49	4.51	9	2.12	29	1.51	8	1.02
Seek work/better job/new job	866	79.74	251	59.19	1140	59.31	458	58.42
Study/training	26	2.39	22	5.19	26	1.35	23	2.93
To get married/follow spouse	5	0.46	51	12.03	4	0.21	55	7.02
Declining yield	0	0.00	1	0.24	1	0.05	0	0.00
Family dispute/other disputes	3	0.28	2	0.47	10	0.52	4	0.51
To accompany family	9	0.83	15	3.54	33	1.72	27	3.44
Marriage breakdown	0	0.00	2	0.47	2	0.10	0	0.00
To join friends	1	0.09	2	0.47	3	0.16	0	0.00
For medical treatment	1	0.09	1	0.24	6	0.31	1	0.13
To experience a different life style	14	1.29	7	1.65	13	0.68	21	2.68
For political reasons	2	0.18	0	0.00	1	0.05	0	0.00
Return to previous job	95	8.75	53	12.50	357	18.57	67	8.55
To visit	1	0.09	3	0.17	12	0.62	20	2.55
Others	0	0	0	0	33	1.72	6	0.77
Total					1922	100	784	100

Table 13: Distribution of migrants by reasons for leaving and gender

Table 13 shows the migrants' reasons for migrating. The major reason for both males and females for leaving in both years was to seek better employment. Results from both 2015 and 2018 surveys show that there was a higher proportion of both male and female migrants who moved in search of new jobs and returned to the previous job. In 2018, there is higher percentage of male migrants who were returning to their previous jobs. Those returning to previous jobs included migrants who ran away from xenophobic attacks that happened in South Africa in 2015.

## Occupation of Migrants

As discussed earlier, migrants from poor sending households tend to lack the necessary experience to engage in high paying jobs. The results and the discussion below seek to establish the extent to which this assertion is true using Chibi, Hurungwe and Gwanda as case studies.

Occupation	2015				2018			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Technical/professional (e.g. medical doctor and managers)	36	14.40	12	14.46	88	11.91	29	9.57
Admin Staff	6	2.40	2	2.41	10	1.36	3	0.99
Sales worker (e.g. sales/waiter/ress)	8	3.20	15	18.07	28	3.79	29	9.57
Service worker (e.g. office cleaner/security guard)	21	8.40	4	4.82	91	12.33	32	10.56
Own farm	29	11.60	4	4.82	9	1.22	5	1.65
Paid labourer in agriculture	30	12.00	10	12.05	36	4.88	21	6.93
Transport operator	11	4.40	1	1.20	40	5.42	4	1.32
Skilled construction worker	20	8.00	1	1.20	77	10.43	18	5.94
Paid labourer (non -farm)	34	13.60	10	12.05	49	6.64	4	1.32
Production staff (textiles, electronics/	8	3.20	6	7.23	22	2.98	6	1.98
Own business (non-farm)	24	9.60	3	3.61	45	6.1	14	4.62
Domestic work	17	6.80	10	12.05	39	5.28	40	13.2
In school/education	2	2.2	2	2.2	7	0.95	8	2.64
Unemployed and looking for job	7	7.6	4	4.3	37	5.01	18	5.94
Unemployed and not looking /retired	1	1.1	1	1.1	8	1.08	3	0.99
Housewife	3	3.3	1	1	9	1.22	17	5.61
Others	1	0.40	0	0.00	143	19.38	52	17.16

Table 14: Distribution of migrants by occupation and gender

Table 14 shows the distribution of occupation of migrants by gender. Results show that the majority of the migrants are employed as skilled construction workers, paid non-farm employment and in the service sector for migrants surveyed in 2015 and 2018. Only 14% of male and female migrants in 2015, and 12% of male and 10% of female migrants in 2018, were employed in technical professions. In most cases, migrants from poor sending households do not have the required educational background or experience to be employed in high paying jobs.

## Remittances Received by Households

If migration is a route for the sending household to move out of poverty, it is important to establish whether the frequency of sending remittances meets the household's daily needs, whether the methods of sending remittances are not risky, and whether the amounts being are enough to meet household basic needs. Tables 15, 16 and 17 seek to address these key questions around method, frequency and amount of remittances.

Methods of receiving remittances by households	2015				2018			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bank, post office transfer	24	4.07	11	5.31	32	6.6	7	4.56
Formal money transfer (Western union, etc)	292	49.58	83	40.10	319	55.53	172	50.08
Mobile banking	24	4.07	4	1.93	16	6.90	22	11.19
Household member comes to collect money in person	10	1.70	1	0.48	7	1.24	0	0
Migrant bring the money home	56	9.51	19	9.18	63	12.72	32	11.90
Friend or other travelling back home	103	17.49	27	13.04	45	6.60	21	7.82
Informal money transfer agencies	15	2.55	12	5.80	15	1.90	9	4.26
Bus driver	36	6.11	22	10.62	46	8.61	22	10.51
Total	589	100	207	100	543	100	280	100

Table 15: Main methods used to send/receive money by gender of migrant

Table 15 shows the distribution of the main methods that households used to receive money from female and male migrants. The results from both 2015 and 2018 surveys show that the most popular method for sending money used by both male and female migrants were formal channels such as Western Union. Other popular methods of sending money include migrants physically bringing money home and the use of a bus driver, popularly know as Malaitsha. There is a slight shift towards using formal money transfer systems such as banks and mobile money systems between 2015 and 2018, particularly for male migrants. The use of friends and others travelling home increasingly became unpopular between 2015 and 2018.

The major reasons for such a shift from more informal channels to formal remittance channels between 2015 and 2018 are the negative experiences that migrants and their households have had with informal channels. Participants said that informal remittance channels such as the use of bus drivers and cross border transporters popularly known as Malaitshas are more expensive and unreliable. The participants reported incidences where

they lost money and goods through accidents and robbery, among other misfortunes. In areas such as Hurungwe, the repulsive nature of informal remittance channels has been compounded by the fact that the remittances are not delivered door to door and one would have to travel distant journeys to secure them. Confirming this, an elderly female respondent in Hurungwe had this to say:

*“The remittances sent through the malaitshas are not delivered door to door and we have had to travel to as far as Harare to collect them. This was too risky, as the malaitshas would take advantage of our illiteracy keeping some of the money for themselves. Worse, in Harare, there are lots of thieves and the risk of losing the remittances was very high.”*

Despite being more advantageous, the formal channels, particularly Western Union and bank transfers have also been observed to be associated with travel expenses to secure the money. This is because there are no banks in the rural areas and, of the three districts, those farther away from the town were more prone to such challenges. In relation to this, one respondent in Gwanda had this to say:

*“To receive money, I need to travel to Gwanda and it is expensive. I need \$20 to go to Gwanda and another \$20 to come back. I also need to eat and that would cost me another \$10. So already \$50 is gone from what has been sent.”*

Clearly, the incurring of expenses to secure remittances is something that formal and informal channels have in common, though to varying extents.

Technological innovations in money transfer channels have also moved most migrants to engage in more formal means of remitting. Needless to say, the formal channels, especially mukuru and ecocash, have been overly attractive for the simple reason that they are less risky. Nevertheless, formal channels are now more preferred for international money transfers. One participant said that recipients get the money in the currency it was sent. If one sends Rands, the recipients will receive their money in Rands. This is particularly important given the instability of the Zimbabwean currency.

For internal migrants, it is much easier to send money using mobile phone transfers. Compared to 2015, in 2018 nearly every household has a mobile phone that they can use to receive money. However, one of the concerns is the increasing transaction costs of using mobile money transfer. The liquidity crisis that has plagued the country since 2016 has seen remittances being affected by exorbitant transaction costs by service providers upon cash withdrawal. Compounding this are also excessive interest rates charged by shop owner. Illustrating this point, a female respondent in Gwanda stated that:

*“I receive my money through ecocash and, because of the cash shortages, I then decided to use it as plastic money. The problem is that the shop owners add huge charges and I end up paying more for the simple reason that I do not have cash.”*

Year	2015						2018					
Sex of migrant	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
Frequency of sending remittances	N	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Weekly	2	1.48	1	2.22	3	1.67	1	0.27	0	0	1	0.19
Fortnight	1	0.74	0	0.00	1	20.56	6	1.6	0	0	6	1.13
Monthly	29	21.48	12	26.67	41	22.78	103	27.47	34	22	137	25.75
Every couple of month	42	31.11	12	26.67	54	30.00	96	25.6	45	29	141	26.5
Every three months	17	12.59	9	20.00	26	14.44	47	12.53	18	11	65	12.22
Every six months	4	2.96	3	6.67	7	3.89	16	4.27	5	3	21	3.95
Every year	10	7.41	2	4.44	12	6.67	38	10.13	26	17	64	12.03
Only on special occasion	9	6.67	1	2.22	10	5.56	18	4.8	5	3	23	4.32
Only if household request	9	6.67	0	0.00	10	5.56	40	10.67	16	10	56	10.53
Don't know	1	0.74	0	0.00	1	0.56	5	1.33	8	5	13	2.44

Table 16: Changes in the frequency of sending money by gender of migrant.

Table 16 shows the changes in the frequency of sending money by gender of migrant. In both years, migrants tend to send money less frequently. Given that most of them earn very little, it makes sense to send a lump sum saved over three or more months, and thereby save on transaction costs. One respondent in Chivi noted that:

*“I really expected my son to send me money more frequently and I have been concerned until such a time when he explained to me that he works part time so it is rather impossible for him to send me money more frequently.”*

Further, respondents in all the districts also noted that migrants, particularly males, tend to be preoccupied with the pleasures of women and beer and neglect their families back home. In the process of having fun, some migrants, especially the youthful marry and then concentrate on fending for the new family and thus forgetting their parents back home. One can note that the male migrants’ engagement with women abroad increases the demand on their income as they assume more responsibilities thus affecting the frequency of remitting.

Year		2015								2018							
Gender		Male			Female			Total		Male			Female				%
Status of migrant		Mean\$/ /media n	N	% of Migrants who remit	Mean\$/ /media n	N	% of Migrants who remit	n	%	Mean\$/ /media n	N	% of Migrants who remit	Mean\$/ /media n	N	% of Migrants who remit	N	%
Internal: Within the same province in Zimbabwe	Mean	425.56	101	78.29	156.89	28	21.71	129	100	404.23	101	47.20	351.17	113	52.80	214	100
	S.D	867.62			140.42					663.02			530.57				
	Median	100.00			100.00					150.00			100.00				
Internal: Other provinces in Zimbabwe	Mean	331.22	183	78.21	401.35	51	21.79	234	100	437.64	135	48.74	353.92	142	51.26	277	100
	S.D	654.90			924.67					1006.75			503.83				
	Median	100			100					120.00			120.00				
International: Other African country	Mean	391.81	286	70.97	202.67	117	29.03	403	100	425.84	189	47.25	431.20	211	29.53	400	100
	S.D	625.73			302.16					680.50			780.19				
	Median	100.00			80					200.00			150.00				
International: English speaking (eg UK, USA)	Mean	578.31	16	84.42	666.67	3	15.58	19	100	531.40	5	38.46	1001.25	8	61.54	13	100
	S.D	1166.73			28.87					448.51			1745.65				
	Median	225.00			650.00					400.00			180.00				

Table 17: Average annual remittances in USD sent by migrants from different destinations by sex of migrants

Table 17 shows that male migrants send more money than female migrants. In the feedback meetings conducted in the three districts, there was a consensus in Chivi and Hurungwe that males send more money. In Gwanda, the strong sentiment was that both males and females remit equally. However, a few in Gwanda agreed with the finding that male migrants send more than female. For the bulk of those who agreed with the finding, they indicated several reasons for such a remittance pattern. One of the major reasons was that women are more loyal and consistent remitters of material goods, while males remit in monetary terms to enable investments. Further, most high paying jobs that are available, especially for international migrants, are suitable for men. Some respondents also indicated that most male migrants are more educated than females, thus they get better paying jobs and are able to send more money.

Participants of the feedback meeting concurred that that while men remit more money, their frequency of remitting is less than that of their female counterparts. They argued that women are more concerned with the most basic needs of the family and family emergencies than men, and hence they send money more frequently to address the multiple needs. Participants said that female migrants are constantly in touch with family members back home, a practice that most of their male counterparts do not do. There was, however, an argument that while some female migrants send a lot of money, they subdivide the money and send both to their in-laws and their own parents. As such, the actual remitted amounts become difficult to quantify.

Table 17 also indicates that there is an increase in remittances from the 2015 to the 2018 household survey. This has been confirmed in all three districts. They attributed the increase in the amount of remittances to the increasing hardships faced back home, which require more money in order to cushion the sending households from the economic crisis. In Chivi, some respondents agreed with the perception that there is a sense of competition that has developed among young migrants which has led to a steady increase in remittances sent for home improvements.

	2015		2018	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Everyday consumption	1097	1230	784	923
Education	798	904	505	559
Health and medical	315	398	263	295
Pay off migration loan	4	9	9	10
Pay off other loans	14	16	3	14
Mortgage-in agriculture	10	8	0	1
Finance other migration	4	3	6	6
Construction/development	118	173	81	77
Farm agricultural procurement	325	306	206	223
Purchase of agriculture equipment	0	0	50	50
Off-farm agricultural	33	57	22	41
Business and trade	13	11	21	25
Special occasions	25	15	13	5
Religious paying	37	45	8	13
Purchase of transport	1	0	1	0
Household goods	1	2	17	34
Electronic goods	1	0	2	1
Taxes and levies	0	0	66	84
Rental	0	0	3	3
Money lending	4	5	2	7
Purchase of transport	0	0	1	1
Enterprise development	1	3	0	0
Savings in banks	4	4	0	0
Purchase homestead land	4	7	0	0
Charity to extended family	2	5	0	0

Table 18: Distribution of household's use of remittances

The Table above was generated from the multiple responses that a household gave. More female headed households than male headed ones tend to use remittances for the purchase of food items for daily consumption, education, and for paying health and medical bills. Results in Table 18 also show that more male headed households than female headed ones spend remittances on purchasing agricultural equipment, construction and development.

Results from feedback meetings confirmed that women are mostly concerned with the welfare of the households. One participant referred to women as 'carers' of the household. As such, they are seen to be more concerned with the physical wellbeing and human development of members of the households than men. On the other hand, male heads of households are particularly concerned with long term investments. As a way of expressing their manly duties and strengthening household income generation capacity, male headed households invest in physical capital. One participant in feedback meetings said:



*“The investments in such modern equipment by men and the construction of houses is a way of expressing prestige. Every man wants to look successful and be respected in the community. The truth is that we all want that and that our women respect us more when we make it”*

## Household Welfare

As discussed earlier, some scholars found a positive relationship between migration and a household’s quality of life, household consumption, poverty alleviation and asset accumulation. The purpose of this section is, therefore, to establish whether there is any difference between households with migrant(s) and ones without. In this section, we use both subjective and objective measures to assess the contribution of migration to household welfare.

### A subjective measure of the impact of migration on household welfare

In order to determine whether the welfare status of households sending migrants has improved, respondents were asked if they think that households in their community with migrants are generally better off than those households without migrants. Table 19 shows the responses for both the 2015 and 2018 survey.

Household type	2015		2018	
	Reported household welfare improved		Reported household welfare improved	
	N	%	n	%
Households with Internal Migrant	221	35.25	246	38.08
Households with both internal and International Migrants	56	8.93	49	7.59
Households with no migrants	172	27.43	174	54
Households with Regional migrants	178	28.30	54	8.38
Households with International Migrants	627	100	646	100
Total				
% of the total sample size		54		56

Table 19: Distribution of households that perceived an improvement in the welfare of their households

Results in Table 19 show that 54% of households in 2015, and 56% in 2018, reported that their welfare had improved. Results show that 27% of households with no migrants in 2015, and 54% in 2018, are of the opinion that a household with a migrant is better off than one without. During the feedback meetings, there was confirmation that households send members so that they have an extra source of income. In this case, most households with no

migrant who attended the feedback meetings across the districts noted that they usually see migrant sending households building better houses, eating better food and having paying their children’s tuition on time. Further, there is a visible tendency of households with migrants to accumulate more assets than those without. Some participants said that most households without migrants are rather keen to send some of their members to the diaspora.

Otherwise, 46% of households in 2015, and 44% in 2018, either did not notice an improvement in their daily welfare or are actually worse off. Worst affected are households with internal migrant(s) and those with an international migrant(s). Feedback meetings confirmed that there are some households whose welfare remained stagnant, or even worsened, after sending a member away. As mentioned earlier, some migrants start new families in the diaspora and pay less attention to their families back home.

We also sought to establish households’ overall thinking about their daily lives before and after a household member moved away. Table 19 above shows the distribution of a subsample that said their living conditions have improved relative to other households in their village. Respondents were asked to introspect themselves by asking if they think their daily lives have changed as a result of sending a member away. Table 20 below shows the distribution of households that said their households daily lives have changed as a result of sending a member away.

Household type	2015		2018	
	Daily lives improved compared to other households in the village		Daily lives improved compared to other households in the village	
	N	%	N	%
Households with Internal Migrant	120	30.84	124	36.26
Households with both internal and International Migrants	29	7.45	35	10.23
Households with no migrants	82	21.07	75	21.93
Households with International Migrants	133	34.14	69	20.18
Households with Regional migrants	43	11.05	39	11.40
Total	389	100	342	100
As a % of sample size		30		29

Table 20: Distribution of households that think their daily lives changed

Table 20 also shows that 30% of households with a migrant in 2015, and 29% in 2018, think that their daily lives have improved relative to other households in the village. The feedback group discussions indicated that the percentage of households that feel there is no improvement are too high compared to the actual situation on the ground. This feeling is

well shared across all the districts, who seemed rather convinced that migrant sending households who are experiencing positive changes from having a migrant abroad are considerably above 50%. There was, however, a confirmation that there are some migrant sending households whose welfare has remained stagnant, or rather decreased, since they had a member migrate. Some reasons for this, that have been confirmed across all the districts, are that some migrants become forgetful of their homes and default remitting after they marry while away from home and turn to the pleasures of their destinations.

Additionally, some migrants have had their members face many challenges and they have had to support the migrants abroad with finances. The main challenges pointed out are that migrants may have challenges securing accommodation and employment, or may become victims of theft upon reaching the destination. In Gwanda, a ward councillor noted that,:

*“Some migrants do not make it across the Limpopo River, they drown or are killed by crocodiles and here we will be thinking that they made it to South Africa”*

Another respondent in the same district noted that the performance of migration is also dependent on the upbringing of the migrants. She said that:

*“Those who grew up in affluent families and migrate rarely remit anything because they think the people at home are ok. They overlook remitting yet we all need something especially from the child you raised and sent to school.”*

Furthermore, migrant sending households can become worse off due to increased labour demands on a few people who are also without remittance to help them hire additional labour.

## Discussion

The key question is whether migration is a route out of poverty. From the study, migration has improved the welfare of sending households. Migration is beneficial under the following conditions: firstly, if the migrant gets a well-paying job which provides money for his/her upkeep and remains with surplus that can be sent home; secondly, if they remain committed to the welfare of the sending household and do not start a new family in the new location; thirdly if remitting channels are efficient and trustworthy and not expensive.

Migration is also beneficial to some of the migrants who would have been unemployed or underemployed. After migration, migrants were able to acquire new skills, capital goods, technology and ideas that they use to start their own business when they return home. Ideally, migrants who have been abroad return and provide the energy, ideas, and entrepreneurial vigour needed to start or expand businesses at home. Workers employed abroad can return with the skills and discipline needed to raise productivity at home.

Economic challenges such as unemployment, falling wages, rising costs of living forced young people to migrate. Migration offers a career to many unskilled young people. We have noted that, recently, there is an emergency of many migrants that set off blindly in search of better opportunities abroad. They have overlooked hostility/discrimination in the host country. Those that were able to get a job or engage in some income generating activities were able to build better houses, invest in farms or business, improve household diet, pay health bills, and educate children.

Remittances can reduce poverty and improve the lives of recipients. They can also accelerate development that reduces poverty for migrant sending households. Most remittances are used for consumption. Remittances have been able to provide social security for retired elderly parent and educate children. Migrants have demonstrated a willingness to transfer money via official channels, especially if it is easy and cheap to do so, but this usually requires banking outlets in migrant communities at home and abroad, and competition to lower transfer costs. The majority of sending households have to fend for themselves through farming and other income generating projects. Where this is the case, having a migrant would also mean a significant loss of extra labour. Households that are struggling to replace the loss of household labour become even worse off. According to Chereni and Bongo (2015), migration comes with some non-economic costs such as the stress of living apart and associated experiences. Unfortunately, non-economic costs are difficult to quantify and are not included in the broader evaluation of the impact of migration.

## **Conclusion**

Our study shows that migration, particularly from marginalised communities of Zimbabwe, has had a very insignificant impact on the welfare of sending households. This could be in part because the majority of the migrants from these areas do not have the skills to be employed in gainful labour markets. Upon arrival, migrants from poor households earn a living from lower rungs of the economy. Nevertheless, migrant sending households have a higher annual consumption per capita than those without a migrant.

## **Recommendations**

While the above findings raise many issues emerging from the survey, this policy brief only addresses three key issues, which were flagged by participants. It is this policy brief's position that these recommendations can contribute in some way to making migration an effective mechanism of taking households and communities out of poverty by maximising and harnessing its full developmental potential.

### **Facilitating regularised migration**

A greater proportion of female than male migrants take the risk of migrating without connections or even a job fixed for them prior to moving. Such a form of migration is dangerous and exposes migrants to risks. To reduce these risks, as proposed in the National Labour Migration Policy, this policy brief proposes that there be coordinated action between Ministries of Home Affairs and Foreign Affairs. This coordination should improve the accessibility and affordability of identity documents, such as Passports, National IDs and Birth Certificates for Zimbabwean nationals in order to facilitate regularized migration. Regularised migration can also be achieved through bilateral labour agreements or MOU in key low-skilled sectors such as domestic work, construction and hospitality, which Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa tend to occupy. Already, Zimbabwe has signed an MOU with South Africa covering agricultural workers. There remains a need for expansion of these MOUs to cover all migrant workers in different sectors (GOZ, 2019). Working closely with the government, NGOs could facilitate the creation of migrant associations that facilitate the migration proces and the placement of workers within key sectors. These associations, with the right legal recognition, could also provide migrants with support in the form of soft loans or a cushion to help ease settlement at their destinations.

### **Ensuring the portability of social rights**

The study shows that migrants, especially women, have poor educational backgrounds and experience. As a result, they are exploited as cheap labour and employed in less remunerating jobs. In the absence of any documentation, it is highly unlikely that this state of affairs will change soon. Irregular migrants do not have access to any social protection in the event that they return home after experiencing unfair dismissal or xenophobic violence.

There is a need to ensure that these migrants enjoy social welfare protections and benefits through the portability of social rights in both sending and receiving country. In this regard, this policy brief reiterates the need for bilateral and multilateral social security agreements and the establishment of mechanisms through which the social security systems of the different countries can work together to ensure that migrant workers have complete and continuous protection.

### **Facilitating affordable money transfer for remittances**

Remittances have been a key aspect of household and social resilience for Zimbabwe in times of crisis. Challenges related to high transaction costs, interest rates and charges associated with the sending of remittances persist. Migrants resort to using informal channels that present several risks and costs that could be avoided if formal money transfer channels were affordable. In this regard, the policy brief recommends that the government of Zimbabwe should liaise with other countries to reduce or subsidise taxes charged for remittance sending, so as to increase the frequency of remitting. Further, to reduce transaction costs of using mobile money transfers for remitting, the government should take measures to reduce bank charges and prevent unlawful interest rate charges by service providers. Formal cash withdrawal facilities should be made available in the migrant sending areas to reduce the costs of travelling to towns for banking services. Labour receiving countries, like South Africa, should be urged to facilitate migrant workers' access to financial services. This reiterates the needs identified already by the IOM to expand financial institutions so as to raise the volume of remittances, reduce costs, widen the choices for migrant workers to use institutional channels for remitting money, and to widen the financial institutions to rural areas and facilitate access to these institutions.

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## About Migrating out of Poverty

**Migrating out of Poverty** research programme consortium is funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). It focuses on the relationship between migration and poverty – especially migration within countries and regions – across Asia and Africa. The main goal of **Migrating out of Poverty** is to provide robust evidence on the drivers and impacts of migration in order to contribute to improving policies affecting the lives and well-being of impoverished migrants, their communities and their countries through a programme of innovative research, capacity building and policy engagement.

**Migrating out of Poverty** is coordinated by the University of Sussex and led by Research Director Dr Priya Deshingkar and Dr Robert Nurick as Executive Director. Core partners are the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana, and the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia and L'Université Assane Seck Ziguinchor (UASZ) in Senegal. Past partners included the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) in Bangladesh, the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore; and the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC) in Kenya. Please visit the website for more information.

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