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By

**Name of the Author:** Esther W. Dungumaro

[edungumaro@udsm.ac.tz](mailto:edungumaro@udsm.ac.tz)

Institute of Development Studies and Demographic Training Unit,

University of Dar es Salaam

Tanzania.

### **Abstract**

Migration is a phenomenon which has been there through human history. Rural-urban migration is the most important spatial pattern of population flow in Tanzania. People have been moving from one place to another for a great variety of reasons. The motive behind people's decision to move and consequences of migration are among the important areas in the study of migration. In this context poverty reduction and improvement of lives of the people, migration is one of the many steps taken by people in order to increase opportunities of earning for a living. Although rural-urban migration is regarded as a promising and rational move to improving living standards, such a decision has its own costs. Various costs of migration are incurred by both individual migrants and their families. Usually migrants and families do a cost benefit analysis and only upon realization that migration will be beneficial to them a decision to migrate is made. This analysis makes migration a viable option to walk out of poverty. However not all migrants achieve their goals. Consequences of migration are experienced by migrants in areas of destination and their families in areas of origin.

This paper presents empirical evidence of the consequences of female migration for their families in rural areas of Tanzania. Data collection for the present study was done in the areas of destination (Dar es Salaam) and area of origin (Iringa) to capture views of

individual migrants and their families. The paper challenges the perception that decision by a family member to migrate contributes to households increased income and improvement in the living standards. Consequences on the migrants' families include, caring for the HIV positive returning migrants and their children born in town. Conclusion made is that migration does not necessarily result into increased income and improved living standards. Furthermore, families in rural areas suffer from lack of assistance in the farms and household.

*Keywords: Families, Female, Migration, Tanzania.*

## **1. Introduction**

Migration is defined as any permanent change in residence. It involves the “detachment from the organization of activities at one place and the movement of the total round of activities to another” (Goldscheider, 1971:64). Migration is a phenomenon which has been there through human history. Internal migration which takes the form of rural-urban migration in many developing countries, Tanzania inclusive, is the most spatial pattern of population flow. Gurmu *et al*, (2000) quoted in (Mberu, 2005) noted that the increase and rate of urban growth associated with economic growth in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America have made migration a salient feature of life in developing countries. This argument is inline with that of Chant and Radcliffe (1992) in that migration is an important feature of contemporary developing economies. People have been moving from one place to another for a great variety of reasons. The motive behind people’s migration and consequences of migration are important areas in the study of migration. In the context of economic development and poverty reduction migration is regarded as one of the many steps taken by people in order to increase opportunities of earning for a living. Although rural-urban migration is regarded as a promising and rational move to improving living standards, such decision has its own costs and consequences.

People in the rural areas get information through different channels and become aware of perceived opportunities and benefits in urban areas. Flow of information either through formal channels such newspapers or radio or through informal channels such returning migrants who share their experiences with friends and relatives, can influence decision to migrate. It is therefore fair to argue that people do not migrate to cities without positive information (Caldwell, 1969). However, not all migrants from rural areas make decisions based on the right information and it is unlikely that all migrants make an accurate cost benefit analysis before migrating (Mortuza, 1992). Depending on the reality of the information received, migrants encounter different experiences and consequences.

Our knowledge on consequences of migration is mostly on economic based hypothesis (Brockhoff, 1993). This calls for more investigation on consequences of migration because not all consequences can be represented by variance of incomes. Such basis has

lead to conclusion such as “unsuccessful migrant has nothing to lose as is always free to return to the area of origin” (Byerlee, 1974). This argument was valid by then (1974) but in light various changes and challenges of our time, a returning migrants can have a lot to lose and so is her family in the areas of origin. In this premise, studies on consequences of migration are important.

Knowledge on the consequences of migration is also important in light of an increasing number of educated women in labour market in the urban areas. Tanzania is expanding an increasing number of women’s employment following the government’s strategy for women’s empowerment (Kashaija-Kiaga, 2007). This resulted into an increasing number of women taken up paid work in urban areas. As this happens, working women need others to replace them in taking responsibilities of household chores. Domestic work provides jobs for women from rural areas with limited or no formal education and skills (Peberdy and Dinat, 2005). This type of female migration is on the increase in both internal and international migration. In this context migration promotes the distribution and allocation of labour over different geographical regions (Byerlee, 1974). However, such type of migration has implications to both individual migrants and their families in rural areas. For international migration, it is reported that a migrant worker from Philippines earns 15 times more in Hong Kong as a domestic worker than the amount she could make as a teacher in her country of origin (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2003). However, the situation is not the same for internal female migrant in Tanzania. Migrant’s incomes and their way of living have impacts to them and their families. Understanding these variables can help inform the policy process in far as female migrants as domestic workers is concerned.

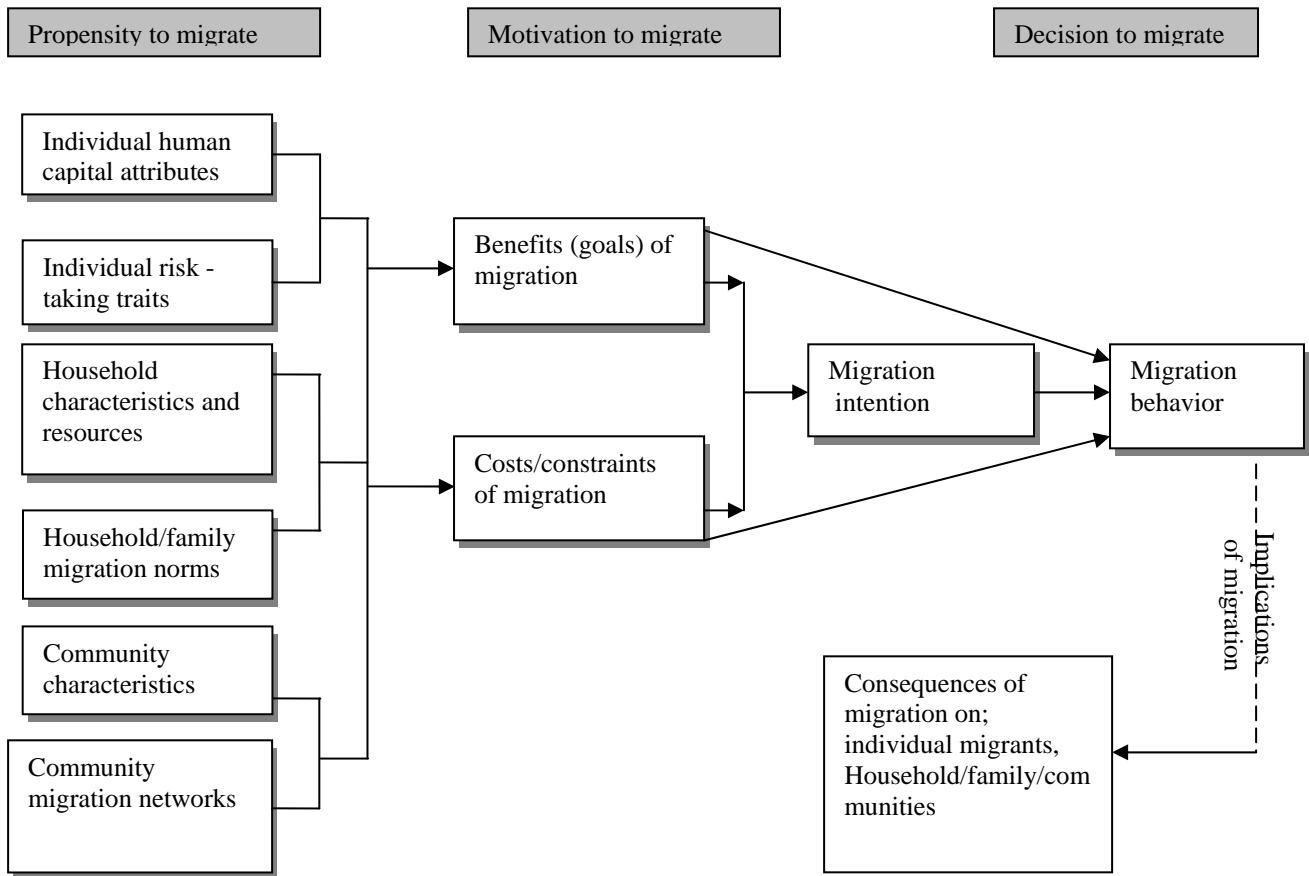
This paper which is part of the OSSREA funded project titled “Poverty and Female Migration, A Case of Iringa Region, Tanzania” aimed at presenting consequences of migration to their families in rural areas. Data used was collected during the field work February and August, 2008.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Conceptual framework**

The paper adopted a conceptual framework from Weeks (2005) (see Figure 1) which has three sub models, namely propensity to migrate, motivation to migrate and decision to migrate. On the first model, propensity to migrate, it shows that different societies have varying cultures which govern or explain migration behavior. Migration process starts with an individual or his/her household members; this sub-model offers a way of analyzing this type of information. Depending on the culture of a particular society, household members decide on who should migrate for the benefit of the family. This is one of the many ways in which households strive to move out of poverty and diversify income strategies. Rationale to migrate leads to decision to take a move. However, the decision on who should migrate is not reached and made from the vacuum. Weeks (2005) argue that there are sociocultural factors which influence the decision. The propensity to migrate sub-model offers a way of analyzing various sociocultural factors which influence decision made by households on who should migrate. The paper considers part of the framework from the decision to migrate sub model. In that sub-model again part of it is considered, the consequences of migration on individual migrants, households, families and communities.

## 2.1 Conceptual framework



**Figure: 1.** Conceptual Model of Migration Decision Making.

Source: Adapted and modified from Weeks, 2005: 284

## 2.2 Data

Data collection was done in the areas of destination (Dar es Salaam) and origin (Iringa) to capture views of individual migrants and their families. Dar es Salaam was selected because it is an industrial and centre of commerce in the country hence draws a lot of migrants from all other regions. According to analysis of the Tanzania 2002 Population and Housing Census, the city has the largest positive net migration of life time migrants in the country. The reason for selecting Iringa as an area of origin stems from the fact that this region is well known as one of the major sending areas in the country. From the 2002 Tanzania Population and Housing Census, Kilimanjaro and Iringa regions were the leading sending areas. We decided to focus on Iringa as opposed to Kilimanjaro because

this area is well known for independent female migrants who come to Dar es Salaam and work as housegirls<sup>1</sup>.

Dar es Salaam city, the area of destination has three districts, namely Ilala, Kinondoni, and Temeke. The city is highly urbanized with a population of 2.4 million of which 93.9 per cent live in the urban area. The study was conducted in Kinondoni district. Iringa, the area of origin has seven districts, Iringa Urban, Iringa Rural, Kilolo, Ludewa, Makete, Mufindi and Njombe. Tagamenda village in Mlolo ward was the area of study. Iringa region remains largely rural. In the National Population and Housing Census the region had a total population of 1.5 million and annual average population growth (1988-2002) of 1.5 percent, with 82.8 per cent population living in rural area. Iringa rural district, where the study was conducted had a population of 245,623 of which 119,487 are male and 126,136 female.

Qualitative data was collected between February and August, 2008. The qualitative approach had been identified as an appropriate method owing to its explanatory nature, which allows for revelation of hidden issues. It is also realized that social and cultural issues are best explained when qualitative approach is employed. In-depth interview was the data collection method used as opposed to other types in qualitative studies. The reason for selecting the used method was that in-depth interviews are mostly suitable for a small sample where random methods are not used which was the case with the study.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1 Motives and risk perception**

The paper is basically focused on consequences of migration, however it was deemed important to firstly present and discuss factors behind decisions to migrate. People migrate because they are pushed from their areas of origin, while others migrate because they are pulled or attracted to some other places (destination). This explanation was

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<sup>1</sup> Domestic workers in Tanzania are commonly known as 'housegirls'. It should be noted that the terminology is not age specific.

firstly put forward by Ravenstien (1989). Weeks (2005) noted that people choose to migrate or not often basing that decision on economic factors. However, a whole range of other reasons also exists as shown in the statements from respondents.

The child decided to move out after completing her standard seven because she was born out of wedlock and she had to go and fend for herself. She escaped because of the abuses she was experiencing from her stepfather.

**(45 years female respondent, Tagandema village).**

The above cited reason was given by a mother whose daughter decided to migrate to Dar es Salaam. However, a few months later the daughter returned home pregnant. As she had no capital to start a small business or rent a room for herself, she had to return to the same house where her mother lived with the step father. This indicates that her decision to migrate multiplied the problems.

My daughter left with her relative who had come to the funeral of her father (that is, my husband). This relative promised to train my daughter some tailoring, although from what I hear my daughter has not been trained, and she has become a housegirl.

**(47 years female, Tagamenda village).**

Another respondent indicated that her daughter was misled and at the time of research she still was in Dar es Salaam and had not visited home in one and half years.

She was misled by promises of expensive gifts such as mobile phones, clothes and others.

**(50 years female, Tagamenda village).**

Death of husbands who in rural areas are the main breadwinners can disrupt the life of the family members.

My husband, the father of my children, died. He left me with six children. My daughter who migrated to the city decided on her own to go and start her own life so as to be able



to help me and her siblings. She left on her own without anybody taking her there. This scared me, but since she showed her courage, I decided to let her go.

**(50 years female respondent, Tagamenda village).**

Other reasons include decision to start living ones own life as shown in the statement below.

My daughter left in order to live her own life.

**(45 years male respondent, Tagamenda village).**

Community networks seem to have a role in female migration from Iringa Region to Dar es Salaam as the following two statements indicate.

She was deceived by her peers by one of their friends who had returned from the city. When her friends left, she also left.

**(49 years female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

The potential migrant weighs the push and pull factors and make a decision to move if the benefits of doing so exceeds the costs (Weeks, 2005). Parents demonstrated a better grasp of perception and concern for migrants.

I suggest that children should study more instead of moving out to work as housegirls. It is lack of proper education that makes children migrate to cities to seek employment. They can encounter many problems because they move alone and have no relatives in town.

**(46 year female respondent in Tagamenda village)**

### **3.2 Consequences of migration to their families in areas of origin**

As noted by Weeks (2005:307) although migrants typically move in order to improve lives, it must be recognized that not all realize their expectation. Migration can therefore

have both positive and negative consequences to both an individual migrant and their families in areas of origin. Some of the positive consequences include remittances for families left in rural areas, assets such as radios and mobile phones. Hosegood and Solarsh (2001) defined remittances as money and goods that migrants send to their families in areas of origin. Attainment of the autonomy of female migrants as a result of increased income is another positive consequence of female migration.

### **3.2.1 Social and economic consequences**

The study found that female migration did not result in increasing household income through remittances, as respondents reported that their daughters visited them once a year or once in two years.

My daughter comes home every December. She brings us money and other goods. She says she cannot send money regularly because it is not easy. She has to give the money to someone who comes home. It is not easy to meet with someone in town who comes from our village.

**(49 year female, respondent Tagamenda village)**

Respondents also reported that their children used to assist them to do household chores and farm work. The statement below shows how respondents suffer as a result of their daughters' decision to migrate.

I miss my daughter for farm work because I am now old. If she had enough money there, she would send me some to hire people to help me.

**(50 year old female migrant in Tagamenda village)**

I am overworked, but since this girl was leading a very hard life here, it is better for me to get used to my hardships than for her to come back home and live in this misery. His step father used to beat her everyday.

**(50 year old female respondent Tagamenda village)**

Not everyone with a female migrant to Dar es Salaam had negative story to tell in as far as economic gain is concerned. The following statement indicates that some parents receive economic assistance that make a difference in their lives.

The girl is remitting money that helps me and her younger siblings who are in school. One is in Standard Seven, while the other is in Form One. The money is not much, but it helps, and it is better than nothing. When she sends the money, I am able to pay the school fees and small expenses for her siblings. But I must also add that, this girl returned with a pregnancy from the city. She had to live in the village again as she waited for the delivery of her baby. She then decided to return to the city, leaving behind her baby whom I am looking after. The money she remits helps me take care of her baby too. On the other hand, it is difficult going to the farms with a baby, with my advancing age, and therefore, taking care of a small baby is a bit hard for me.

**(60 year old female respondent in Tagamenda village)**

Other respondents had different views on the money and other goods that their children bring when they return to rural areas. The respondent said she had been selling local brew before her daughter migrated to town, and she still was engaged in the same activity as she was yet to receive significant amount of money from her daughter to free her from that business. She does not view migration as a move that can significantly improve living standards.

You know, I am surprised at why parents rejoice when their daughters go to cities to work. This is the truth: when a girl returns with a pair of *khang* or *kitenge*, in addition to about twenty thousand shillings<sup>2</sup>, some people view that as a major thing. I think that is not a major thing compared to the time the girl stays in the city.

**(60 year old female migrant in Tagamenda village)**

Parents also suffer from poor or lack of communication with their daughters. Not knowing how their daughters live in the city is stressful for them. Given the fact that some of the parents are older persons stress is not good for their health. Asked whether

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<sup>2</sup> 20,000 Tanzanian Shillings is equivalent to about USD17

their daughters communicate with families at home, respondents gave the following responses.

We do not have a telephone at home and therefore I do not communicate with her. That is a problem for me since I would like to know how my daughter is doing and how she lives in the city.

**(55 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

Another respondent also indicated how stressful it is for her not to know how her daughter lives in the city.

I do not know whether they are paying her a salary or not, and I am not sure whether they are refusing her permission to come home or she has simply decided on her own not to come back. In short I have no communication with her, and this stresses me a lot. I would be very glad if I got help so that my daughter is back home. If she came back, I would do my best to send her to a vocational training college.

**(50 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

### **3.2.2 Health consequences**

There are various consequences of migration to families in the areas of origin. HIV/AIDS is one of the profound challenges facing migrants' families upon their return to rural areas. Migrants' health problems lead to negative effects to individual migrants also their families in areas of origin. Vulnerable young female migrants from rural areas living in a city such as Dar es Salaam are bound to get infected. Young female migrants from rural areas migrate to Dar es Salaam with dreams of new prosperity, hoping to bring back money and improve lives. But not all realize these dreams with some bringing back HIV and AIDS. When they are pregnant or have been infected with HIV they return to their places of origin for support, care and protection. However, they become a burden to their poor families. This observation is reflected in the statements below:

I first did not know what was wrong with my daughter. I was concerned because she seemed to be sick, quiet and lonely all the time. When we took her to the hospital they

said she had to test for HIV. She agreed and was found positive. Now she is my problem because her father does not care.

**(55 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

When female migrants return pregnant or infected, they are stigmatized by their community. It is also a shame to the young female and her parents.

People laugh at us and point fingers to us because our daughter returned with HIV. They also do not want to interact with us and our daughter is always alone as she has no friend.

**(48 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

Lack of education is one of the important characteristics of migrants especially from rural to urban areas. Majority of the female migrants (78 percent) in the study had attained primary level education while 10 percent had incomplete secondary school, and the rest (12 percent) had no formal education. Lack of education impacts migrants in two ways. Firstly, they cannot get well paying jobs hence become more vulnerable. On the other hand when they get pregnant, chances that they can properly support their children is very small. There is a close link between mother's education and health and welfare of the child.

Strikingly some employers of the female migrant workers do not pay them.

The girl has come back and she is very weak because she led a hard life there where she worked without getting any wages. It is now my responsibility to take care of her until she fully recovers.

**(45 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

Pregnancies are another big problem to both individual migrants and their families.

Many girls return with pregnancies and that is a problem. It appears as if they go to cities to get pregnant and come back. They bring with them fatherless children since their fathers are in cities and we do not know them. We end up working for them since they are now pregnant and fend for their children as fathers are not known.

**(55 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

It is clear that pregnancy bothers the society. When asked their opinion on young female migrating to cities like Dar es Salaam alone, some respondents said they find it fine as long as returning migrants do not come back pregnant.

The community here does not see any problem except where the girl gets pregnant and comes back. But when the girl lives in the city and returns home safely to see us, there is no problem.

**(55 year old female respondent, Tagamenda village)**

Pregnancy and childbearing is not only a negative consequence of female migration to their families but also themselves. Young women, who begin their adult lives, stand multiple risks of childbearing apart from possible complications of delivery. They include obtaining less education, limited job possibilities and living in poverty. We will explain each of these in Tanzania context. Living in poverty is unavoidable as most developing countries, Tanzania inclusive; little is done to legally bind fathers to provide financial support for the mother and the child. In some cases, families of fathers who have acknowledged paternity, provide support to the child. As for the returning female migrants in Iringa region fathers of the children may in most cases have not officially acknowledged paternity and are left in town and their families are not known. These young mothers are also not educated hence it becomes difficult to break the intergenerational poverty.

Many African societies Tanzania inclusive social consequences of child bearing differ across societies. It brings respect and increase social status of not only a young female but also her family. However, this does not seem to be the case with Iringa region as respondents clearly indicated that they do not find it right for unmarried female to have children as is the case with some of the returning migrants. The following statement reveals communities' perception about pregnancy in the study area

People do as they please. Others laugh at us why we send our children to cities only to get pregnant and come back home. Others laugh at us when our children contract diseases and come back. Others burn with jealousy when they see your daughter returning home well dressed and gives us presents. As I have said, a community as a complex entity has no single position, but each individuals reacts differently.

**(55 year old female migrant in Tagamenda village)**

Some respondents indicated that parents contribute to the plight of their children getting pregnant. This observation is inline with that of Raynor *et al.*, (2007) who questioned how well children are equipped with life skills and knowledge including awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Sometimes, we as parents contribute towards the plight of our children getting pregnant and returning home. When a girl comes back with many expensive presents the parent does not ask her whether the salary she gets is proportional to the presents. That parental silence results in pregnancies and dangerous diseases like HIV/AIDS.

**(50 year old female migrant in Tagamenda village)**

Some respondents indicated how pleasing they were with educational opportunities that their daughters have in more recent years. Following a more recent government's strategy to establish ward secondary schools in the country more standard seven leavers have an opportunity to get secondary education.

I am happy to say that today we have many ward secondary schools that enable more of our daughters to get admission, and the number of girls migrating to cities has drastically diminished. For this, I thank our government for helping us reduce the number of our children who go to work in people's homes and end up working without pay.

**(45 year old female migrant in Tagamenda village)**

#### **4. Discussion**

Analysis of the consequences of female migration in Iringa region of Tanzania allows us to understand the situation of both migrants and their families. While offering new alternatives and possibilities for individual migrants (in areas of destination) and their families in areas of origin, a decision to migrate entails profound risks. Migrants reported to live a life in a total stark of what they expected, while families in areas of origin reported to suffer from not only absence of a migrant member but also that burdens such as caring for a sick family member. Results in this paper challenges the perception that migration leads to increased income and improved living standard for both migrants and their families in areas of origin. The paper found that there is an increased burden in various forms as a result of independent female migration. These, as pointed out earlier include caring for HIV positive returning migrants and children whose father are in town and do not take any responsibilities. Families also reported that they do not receive substantial remittances on regular basis. The financial assistance received from a family member in town is only when the migrant returns home for short visits, which does not happen very often. Most families visited reported that their migrant members return to areas of origin once in a year or once in two years. It is only during this time the family gets to receive assistances in different forms, such as clothes, food and money. Family members indicated that the financial assistance received is not enough to support their lives.

The financial situation of the visited families in rural areas did not seem to have been improved as a result of a migrant female member. In fact, some of them were worse off, suffering adverse consequences of migration. Cases in point are the family whose daughter came with HIV infection, another one a female migrant brought a baby she gave birth to in town and left her with her mother (with very minimum support) and lastly a family whose daughter decided to migrate because a step father was beating her mother for letting her stay in the house, but when migrated to town she fell pregnant and went back to the same house. For these mothers apart from the burden that they have to carry, it was obvious that migration entailed loss of support of the young members.



The paper did not find remittances for families left behind as one of the positive consequences of female migration. Parallel to this observation is failure to increase autonomy for female migrants through increased incomes. Results suggest that some female migrants are vulnerable due no payment or low wages. This observation is blamed on both the government for lack of clearly stipulated labour laws and the female migrant workers themselves for hiding problems in most cases. A housegirl identifies herself as a family member of the family she works for. This makes it difficult to assistance to reach her; many people do not pay family members for performing household chores. The legally stipulated minimum wage for a housegirl in Tanzania is 40,000 Tanzanian shillings (equivalent to USD 33). This amount is payable if the housegirl stays in the employer's house. In case the housegirl does not stay in the employers house, she wage should be Tanzanian Shillings, equivalent to USD 50.

The challenge faced by various organization working toward improving wages for housegirls and other domestic workers is that some of the employers argue that they do earn enough to meet the stipulated minimum wage. In fact, most people do not pay the stipulated minimum wage. However, a result of that is the consequence that paper has presented, including failure to break the intergenerational poverty.

##### **5. Overview of policies on migration and poverty alleviation in the country**

Since independence, Tanzania has been implementing policies directed at the development of the people. In the various policies, particular emphasis is placed on development in rural areas where majority of the people reside. Existence of policies is an opportunity towards improvement of the lives of the people, notably the poor in rural areas. These policies include National Population Policy, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, and the Labour Policy. A thorough review with the aim of identifying weakness and strengths in the policies, strategies and progmmes in recommended.

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