

‘Forced to stay’: Migration and satisfaction among urban slum migrants in Nairobi

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Using qualitative data collected from a sample of rural-urban migrants over the age of 15 in two Nairobi slums interviewed in 2008, this paper seeks to discuss the level of satisfaction of migrants with their decision to migrate. This will be done by exploring reasons why people stay in the slum area, whether they would actively advise would be migrants to come and leave in the slum area and whether they are considering relocating elsewhere and what the barriers are. By so doing the paper will highlight why in spite of the high levels of poverty and misery in slum areas, people continue to stay in slum. Research has indicated the growing concentration of poverty in third world cities and demographic indicators have sometimes shown better life outcomes for rural dwellers than for urban dwellers who are increasingly residing in slum areas with worse health and infant mortality. By exploring the levels of satisfaction, the paper seeks to investigate the various levels of success that men and women meet with when they migrate and the impact of these on their wellbeing. The data used are largely based on narratives derived from interviews with respondents, centering on their recollections of why they had migrated to Nairobi and whether their migration-related expectations had been met.