

Draft

A Better Life? Migration, Reproduction and Wellbeing in Transition

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Introduction

Demographic interest in migration has tended to focus on its impact on fertility because of the consequences for population growth and associated concerns such as environmental sustainability and urban development. However, migration studies are increasingly influenced by growing interest in gender relations, household livelihood strategies, rights and wellbeing and this has opened up new kinds of concerns around migration and reproduction. Simultaneously the emergence of new forms of migration alongside processes of transition and globalisation, and the emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, have thrown up analytical and policy challenges that have clear links with reproductive health concerns. The paper reviews approaches to linking reproduction and migration to show how migration is generally perceived as being ‘about the economic’. It has been increasingly recognised that gender may structure who migrates and that migration has reproductive and gender consequences but these analyses often do not link with each other. In this paper, we argue that migration studies should incorporate a broader concern with reproductive behaviour, including sexual relations and reproductive management, and the overlapping issues of social reproduction and gender relations.

Transition in China and Vietnam has been associated with new kinds of migration outside of household registration systems that have rapidly gained in momentum as the tight control over population mobility has been relaxed. At the same time both states have attempted to reduce and keep a firm lid on fertility, to withdraw the state's role in social provisioning, such as health and education, and faced the serious challenge of a rapidly spreading HIV/AIDS epidemic. Popular and official discourses have often depicted migrants as evading fertility regulations¹, as carrying infectious diseases, or as swelling the numbers of sex workers (cf. Tan 2005). Alternative perspectives argue that migrants do not want to waste their economic advantage in child-bearing, that they are particularly vulnerable to and 'at risk' of sexually transmitted infections, and that their disadvantages within urban labour markets and denial of access to basic social rights makes them particularly vulnerable to exploitation, including sexual abuse and sex work. Early policy responses to both migration, fertility and reproductive and sexual health, however, exhibit some continuities with the former set of presumptions and suggest that migrants and their reproductive behaviours are in some senses trespassing outside of official sanctions. We argue that 'filling in' the picture by examining the specific ways in which reproductive strategies and capabilities are articulated with migratory processes in China and Vietnam may have important implications for social policy, particularly with regards to sexual and reproductive health.

Migrant Livelihoods and Reproductive Consequences

It is taken-for-granted that "[r]ural populations migrate *to seek a better life*" (Dang, Goldstein et al. 1997:322 emphasis ours) and for the most part this has been

interpreted as primarily about productive livelihood. For instance, the dichotomy widely drawn between migration for survival or for accumulation (cf. Waddington 2003) betrays the underlying concern with material and economic wellbeing. Migration for economic purposes has understandably held a prominent position in research about development and migration. For example, Saith's (1999) review of migration processes and policies in Asia focuses on "migration which is more immediately related to economic factors and motivations" whilst at the same time recognising that there are other forms of migration that are immensely significant in Asia, including marriage-related migration, political migration and the illegal trafficking of women.

These forms of migration are commonly bracketed off as being *about* something different (customary kinship arrangements, war and conflict, illegality and globalisation). For example, marriage and marriage migration are downplayed in the migration literature, because of "the general lack of attention on gender, the assumption that marriage is no more than a life event that triggers migration, and the notion that marriage is an end to migration rather than a means to an end" (Fan and Li 2002:619). Marriage-related migration is generally dealt with in separate analytical spheres from discussions about migration and strategies for economic wellbeing. Similarly, the UNDP comments that: "Although trafficking is often linked with women and girls being sold into prostitution, it is now recognised that this is only one part of a much larger picture that includes trafficking for forced marriage, adoption and labour exploitation, including begging, sweatshop and domestic labour, as well as other forms of illegal employment." (UNDP 2002). Again the demarcation of trafficking underplays its linkages with sex work and marriage markets on the one

hand and globalisation and labour migration on the other. The complex links and intersections between trafficking on the one hand, and sexuality and reproduction on the other are also shown in the large numbers of ‘surplus men’ in China (Tucker, et al., 2005). This emerging phenomenon is the consequence of a serious unbalanced sex ratio at birth for at least the past couple of decades associated with the stringent birth control policy and the practice of sex selection in birth as a result of reproductive attitude and practice of son preference.

Whilst migration studies tends to bracket off migration that is immediately concerned with sex or reproduction from economic/labour migration, the large body of demographic work that deals with migration focuses on fertility. This work has shown that the fertility of rural-urban migrants is generally lower than that of non-migrants at place of origin but higher than that of urban residents (Goldstein and Goldstein 1981, 1984; Lee and Farber 1984, 1985). This is interpreted as a process of ‘adaptation’ whereby over different time spans and to varying extents migration can change fertility behaviour both of permanent migrants who reorient their behaviour to the fertility norms of urban areas but also of sending areas where return migration and migration linkages can diffuse urban fertility norms. In addition, migration can have a ‘disruptive’ effect on fertility due to spousal separation or delayed marriage. Migration, as such, produces a lag in fertility that is often overcome by accelerated fertility once migrants are established (Goldstein and Goldstein 1984; Ribe and Schultz 1980). For temporary migrants, the theoretical relations between migration and fertility may be considerably attenuated. However, disruption may have a particularly strong effect on the timing of childbearing if temporary migration involves separation of the spouses, as is often the case among persons going from

rural to urban areas for construction work, market activities or service provision. On the other hand adaptation may play a lesser role because it is assumed that many of the migrants intend to remain in their destinations for only a limited time (Goldstein et al. 1997).

The interest of this demographic work is on fertility and is motivated mainly by concerns about population growth and demographic transition, and the environmental sustainability of urban areas. Lately, but to a much lesser degree, the impact of these changes on gender relations has also commanded some interest. This demographic literature focuses on what Bledsoe describes as the “cumbersome biological acts of fertility” (1990b:98 cited Greenhalgh, 1995:15) and tends to obscure broader reproductive strategies and interests. It does not consider how reproductive aspirations may shape migration processes nor pay much attention to how migrants actively negotiate marriage, marital relations, the timing of childbearing and the implications of spousal separation. In doing so it neglects “people’s active efforts to achieve demographic outcomes by restructuring household compositions and influencing children’s obligations, ... [and] tinker[ing] with family structures” (ibid). Even those studies concerned with impact on gender relations often attempt to ‘read off’ from the fertility of migrants the impact on gender relations rather than directly exploring these linkages. As a result, relatively little empirical attention has been paid to the reproductive dimensions of migration, with important exceptions that include Caroline Hoy’s (1999) work on female migrants, their reproductive preferences, practices and childcare arrangements in China and Kate Hampshire’s (2001) work on seasonal male migration in Northern Burkina Faso.

However, the analysis of the gender-selectivity of migration has highlighted the importance of the linkages to sexuality and reproduction, in terms of the sexual and reproductive consequences for migrants, their immediate families, the selectivity of who migrates, and the implications for sexual and reproductive health and well-being. As migrants both men and women are often excluded from reproductive health services, at the same time they are seen as adopting non-traditional behaviours that are more risky (cf. Iredale, et al., 2005; Qian, et al., 2005; Yang, et al., 2005). Male migration has long been associated with the growth of the commercial sex industry, and the emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has focused policy attention on migrant sexual behaviours and risks (cf. International Organisation for Migration and UNAIDS, 2005). While men migrate leaving behind wives and families, they may bring infection back home with them and unprecedented levels of unmarried female migration have raised concerns about the sexual exploitation and abuse of women, particularly young girls driven into the sex industry by poverty, social exclusion and marginalisation in urban settings, including the urban labour market (cf. Skeldon, 2000).

The gender selectivity of migration has been changing fast in many settings as ‘new’ kinds of migration gather momentum. Traditionally, unmarried and younger married men were the classic rural-urban migrants. Migration for these men is often seen as distancing them from domestic work while women have been portrayed as being left behind. The picture of passive women stranded in stagnant rural economies is one that has been altered by work on female headship of households and poverty, which has pointed to women’s greater autonomy in terms of intra-household management and resource allocation in the absence of their husbands and the value of remittances in

maintaining rural homes. This suggests that women with migrating husbands may enjoy a dividend in terms of gender bargaining and women's agency. This debate, though significantly contributing to our understanding of the gender selectivity of migration and its varied implications for gender relations, has paid little attention to migration's reproductive consequences. Since the 1980s, women, particularly younger women, have also been migrating to urban areas in significant and growing numbers as parts of 'new' forms of population mobility, stimulated partly by accelerating market liberalisation and globalisation in many parts of the developing world where the relocation of transnational corporations and inflows of global capital have started employing large number of female workers, particularly in the Special Economic Zones, as a source of cheap and 'obedient' labour. Feminist critiques on globalisation and its impact on gender point out that global capital, while ruthlessly pursuing even cheaper labour to maximise profits, has sought unmarried women, frequently violating women's rights, by adopting sexually discriminative practices. For example, young women risk being fired if they become pregnant, and there is substantial evidence that compulsory pregnancy testing is imposed on women prior to and during employment. Migrant women lack equal entitlements, as their urban counterparts do, to welfare benefits, including paid maternity leave, and are also are vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation by their male employers. Despite the new interests in migration and gender within a broader globalisation debate, the central string of these analyses has been around whether these new *productive* opportunities empower women or not rather than the linkages and intersections between migration and sexuality and reproduction.

Similarly, livelihoods research on migration has provided valuable insights, including much broader understandings of migrant's lives, exploration of household strategies that impact on who migrates, and what migration means for them and their family members; as well as drawing attention to the generational dimension of wellbeing improvements for migrants, as for example, remittances used for children's education reap rewards. These suggest important subtleties in understanding the motivations, processes and outcomes of migration: the need for a longitudinal perspective and for an analytical approach that recognises intra-household as well as wider family, community and other social relationships. In the main, however, livelihoods approaches have been insufficiently gendered and largely remain concerned with productive aspects and have, again paid little attention to *reproductive* dynamics associated with migration. For example (Kabeer and Thi Van Anh 2002) note that studies on household livelihoods in the development context of Vietnam tend to overlook gender, and that where gender issues are taken into account, the emphasis tends to be placed on the institutional constraints for women, including, for example, cultural norms, gendered roles and division of labour, and intra- and extra-household allocation of resources, such as women's disadvantages in access to education, land and capital. This literature has at times included concern about the impact on children left behind, and the associated potential problems with respect to their physical and intellectual development, and emotional and psychological health (cf. Liang, 2004). Although livelihoods research has opened up many new insights, reproduction is conceptualised largely as one of a number of constraints that disadvantage women and this emphasis sits well with that found in the literature on gendered selectivity of migration.

In short, growing interest in gender relations, household livelihood strategies, rights and wellbeing has enabled conceptualisation of new kinds of concerns around migration and reproduction. These include changing reproductive behaviours, vulnerability to sexual and reproductive health hazards and risks, and concerns around managing social reproduction more broadly. But despite a number of strands of interest in migration from demographers/reproductive health researchers and some feminist scholars, the linkages between migration and reproduction have so far been rather narrowly conceived. We have drawn attention to the normal demarcation of migration related to reproduction as somehow a different sphere from economic migration, to the overwhelmingly *productive* interpretation of migration as a livelihood strategy, to the focus in migration studies on reproductive consequences, and to the treatment of reproduction within livelihood approaches as mainly a constraint. Against this backdrop, we now turn to examine the largely overlooked intersections between migration and reproduction, and argue for the value of looking in a more interactive way at linkages between the two.

Reproductive Relations and the Search for a Better Life

Broader understandings of livelihoods such as that offered by Whitehead (2002:577 cited Waddington 2003:5) as “the diverse ways in which people make a living and build their worlds”, lend themselves to situating productive activities as key elements, but not the only elements, in a larger strategy of living a life or ‘building a world’. It is well documented that for women, in particular, making a life is not merely about making a productive living but involves, amongst other things, the creation and maintenance of meaningful familial and social relationships that bring a sense of

belonging, achievement and emotional satisfaction. Amongst these relationships childhood, wifehood and motherhood are central. In addition it is also well documented that access to a productive living (or the fruits of it) is at many points across the life cycle for women via their performance of reproductive roles.

Feminist scholarship has long recognised the problems of dividing spheres of production and reproduction for women. For instance, Murphy (2002), in her study of the impact of large-scale rural-urban migration on rural economy and society in China's south-eastern Anhui Province, demonstrates that young women in Anhui villages often attempt to secure a better-off life in the future through marrying well and Whitehead shows how some accumulative strategies for livelihoods in Ghana are "dependent on marrying well" (Waddington 2003:15). Moreover, "...it is important to note, especially as far as women are concerned, that migration for, or within the context of marriage, is an important factor, notwithstanding that migration *for* marriage is often associated with economic and social mobility" (Chant 1992). Ali (2000: 120) notes how the "association of reproduction and fertility with femaleness effectively perpetuates the domestic/public dichotomy and splits social analysis into female/male spheres" in ways that are problematic. It is necessary to go beyond the view that motherhood and related caring roles of women can be dealt with analytically as a 'reproductive tax' (Kabeer and Thi Van Anh 2002). A growing literature on the social relations of reproduction draws heavily on anthropology, sociology, politics and gender studies. It engages closely with the way reproductive strategies are embedded in wider social relations and processes, exploring both the ambiguity of lived experiences and the iterative ways that reproductive outcomes are

shaped and given meaning as women and men attempt to ‘manage’ reproductive live. (Bledsoe 1994, Greenhalgh 1995, Tremayne 2001).

For men too, livelihoods are not just about material aspects of life and that as a result their motivations may too be misrepresented although there is as yet a much smaller and indeed more ambiguous evidence base from which to question this. A great deal of ethnographic and demographic work has shown the social importance of paternity for men, especially of sons, in many settings but far less has really explored how this ‘cultural imperative’ is linked to the everyday reality of reproductive relations or that has viewed men as having ‘reproductive agency’ (Unnithan 2001). An important contribution to this evidence base is Bledsoe et al’s (2000) volume which notes that if men appear at all in discussions about fertility they do so “as shadows: as partners by implication of those engaged in childbearing” (2000:1) and includes many contributions that rethink the conceptualisation of men in demography. For instance, Ali’s work on Egyptian men contrasts the construction of men as ‘irresponsible adolescents’ in family planning policy with ethnographic evidence of the “caring and affection that these men felt for their wives and children” (2000:130) which was “intrinsically linked... ..to her reproductive and childbearing capacities” (ibid) and involved “desire to retain control and power” (ibid: 132) over them. The deeply ambivalent nature of many of the findings about male power over reproduction on one hand and those concerned about the “massive male disengagement from parental responsibilities” (Bledsoe et al 2000:3) on the other suggests that far from segregating or stereotyping men in discussions of reproduction there may be much to be gained by a holistic look at the changing ways men negotiate their reproductive and productive lives.

Development discourses can risk dehumanising the lives of women and men. Material livelihood is obviously of the most fundamental importance but reproductive concerns may also be integral to ‘making a life’ in a number of ways. They may be the end for which a material livelihood is wanted, the means to accessing a material livelihood, and may be put at risk by work for material livelihood. Motherhood and wifehood can not be satisfactorily conceptualised *only* as a constraint getting in the way of earning a living. For men too engaging successfully in productive work may be centrally about as well as in tension with being a reliable husband and a good father. For instance, Rogaly evidences men’s anxiety about children’s and wife’s nutrition whilst away for work in West Bengal (2003). Whilst affirming that the division of household labour is unequal and that the devaluation of reproductive work is problematic, there remains a need for more serious attention to reproduction in livelihoods research and for the conceptualisation of women and men as having ‘reproductive agency’. From this perspective, migration for a ‘better life’ may be intrinsically about reproductive relations as well as involving distinct reproductive strategies. Certainly, reproductive aspirations and dilemmas and the way these are shaped through mobility are integral to migration and these pervade and mediate experiences of migration.

This perspective draws support from a range of findings in the developing world. These include evidence that migration can be used as a means of escaping rural controls over gender relations especially relating to sexuality, marriage and reproduction. For instance in Southern Nigeria young migrants women’s contraceptive choices appear to reflect aspirations to escape a rural life (ref) and in Jarkhand, India, pregnancies conceived whilst migrating to work in brick factories are

a pre-emptive strike in wresting control over marriage choices in the home area (Shah 2003). Other literature demonstrates the intimate relation between reproduction and migration. For example, Hampshire shows how successful reproduction is “absolutely crucial to successful seasonal migration” (2001:116) but is being directly jeopardised by increased sterility as a result of sexually transmitted diseases brought back by migrant husbands (2001:125-6). In Bangladesh and Thailand, migration may have profound reproductive consequences as “women who go to the cities may find it difficult to return to rural areas because their families may consider them ‘spoiled’” (Billson and Fluehr-Lobban 2005:376). Challenging research on commercial sex work, shows how motherhood can be a route out of prostitution for young Thai women (Montgomery 2001) and shows that young women migrant’s entry to commercial sex work may be connected to family roles, community and household choices (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000 for southern Europe , also Billson et al for Thailand). Evidence from Thailand suggest that young Burmese women migrating for sex work may not be the poorest female migrants who opt for factory work (Pearson, pers.com., 2006). Below, we attempt to draw out in Vietnam and China the importance of linking reproduction and migration for better understanding ‘strategic life choices’ (Santillan et al 2004).

Vietnam and China in Transition

Both Vietnam and China have experienced a substantial growth of ‘new’ kinds of migration associated with their processes of economic transition. Both nations regard the scale of this mobility and its implications for population growth as a matter of concern and both have a history of attempting to control mobility and fertility creating quite specific pressures on migration and reproduction. This makes Vietnam and

China useful and important case studies for exploring further linkages between migration and reproduction. Managing migration and reproduction is complex and changing rapidly for both states and for the men and women who are on the move. The downfalls of not appreciating fully the links between migration and reproduction may potentially be severe for social policy. It is essential to note that there are important differences between these nations, for instance in the timing of their transitions, in their historical legacies and contemporary gender and power relations and, as well as within them, in the modes of migration such as between specific flows of migration to export processing zones or to urban domestic service and we intend to acknowledge these in our account. Below we first outline very briefly key similarities and differences in the context of transition, migration and reproduction between the two states. Then, we attempt to probe the linkages between migration and reproduction from the available empirical evidence on Vietnam and China. We intend to focus on rural-urban migrants engaged in a variety of migratory processes often cyclical, or seasonal, that may 'end' in return to the village, further migration, or marriage/occupational success leading to settlement in the city. Our attempt is limited with respect to male reproductive experiences and motivations largely because of the lack of data. That said, we feel that trying to link female experiences of migration and reproduction has intrinsic value and can pave the way for future research that incorporates or compares with men's experiences.

In both states transition has been initiated through economic reforms, which has been far reaching, with limited formal political change. Vietnam's Doi Moi was largely modelled on the Chinese experience of reforms (from the late 1970s), but began a decade later (in 1986). Both economies have achieved high growth rates and there

was initially a positive response to new incentives from their large agricultural sectors (Summerfield 1997:204). Whilst Vietnam has substantially rolled back state employment, China, while attempting to reform state-owned enterprises by separating their production and welfare functions, has faced huge challenges of tackling unemployment, new forms of poverty, and maintaining social and political stability. As Summerfield argues: "[t]he social safety net in Vietnam, in contrast to China, is separate from state owned industry reducing the welfare loss of cutting state jobs, but in both countries, funding for human security has been problematic since the reforms." (1997:204). Indeed, although there is evidence from China and Vietnam that absolute poverty has been reduced, there is also clear evidence that inequality, relative poverty and social stratification have significantly increased (Khan and Riskin 2001; Wang and Hu 1999; Zhang 2004; GSO 2002). Growing differentials between richer and poorer regions, between different economic sectors, between and within rural and urban areas (Wang 2004; GSO 2002) are creating spatial inequalities in incomes and opportunities at the same time as state control over movement is declining, leading to rapidly increasing numbers of people moving, especially from rural to urban areas (Guest 1998; Summerfield 1997).

Transitional economies are experiencing drastic changes that are reshaping the patterns and trends of mobility in the context of peculiar institutional control mechanisms (Fan and Li 2002: 619). For Vietnam, the decollectivisation of land, abolition of subsidy system and the removal of restrictions of private trade and transport were key factors loosening the movement of people (Dang et al 1997). In China, the shift from collective farming to household responsibility for agricultural production made apparent that 40% of the rural labour force were surplus to

requirements (Woon 1993 in Shaokang et al 2002:47) whilst economic liberalisation created new opportunities and demand for an increasingly mobile rural population. During economic transition in China and Vietnam, it has been generally understood that “employment strategies to improve the family’s wellbeing have resulted in increased rural-urban migration by men and young women, while middle-aged, married women remain in the countryside taking care of the farms and children.” (Summerfield 1997). In Vietnam, although the level of migration is relatively modest compared to surrounding countries, it is large compared to pre-1986 and migration to urban areas has accelerated further during the 1990s. China has experienced the large scale population movement from rural to urban areas since the early 1980s. This has become known popularly as the ‘floating population’ or (liudong renjou) or the tide of migrant labourers (mingongchao) (Zhang 1999:5) and there are now estimated to be around 120 million migrant workers (State Council 2006).

The aggregate flows of ‘new’ migrants mask changing patterns in the character of migration, gender differences in migrant flows and considerable micro-level diversity. In Vietnam, migration in the late 1990s, in contrast with earlier flows, was highly differentiated, including people with little education coming for low paid work as well as those with more education coming for private sector work and those who continue to come for work in the state sector (Guest 1998). Although males decisively outnumbered females in inter-provincial migration in 1989 (Dang et al 1997), by 1998 slightly more women than men were migrating to Ho Chi Minh City with the reverse in Hanoi (Guest 1998), and by 2004 women dominated flows of migrants to both cities, the Northern Economic Zone, the Southern Industrial Zone and the rural Central Highlands (GSO 2004). In China around a third to 41% of migrants are

women (Davin 1996:25; Zhang 1999) and “[i]n many cases, male and female migrants go to different places, and find different types of work. Some flows are dominated by one sex or the other: for example, most migrants from Anhui to Beijing are women who go to do domestic work; migration flows from some counties in Sichuan are dominated by young women who go to work in the new export processing industries of south-east China (Wan Shanping 1993). In other areas, many men leave the rural areas to do construction work, transport work or trading, leaving behind their wives in the villages to look after the young, the elderly and the farm (Davin 1996:25).

In both cases migration and its linkages for reproduction are stratified by qualifications for residency and related social entitlements: whereas state-sanctioned ‘permanent’ migrants transfer their household registration to urban areas, ‘temporary’ migrants with work or business permits obtained from their home authorities are eligible for residence permits at destination. Whilst in Vietnam it is estimated that over 80% of migrants have a form of temporary registration, less than 5% have household registration where they work because they don’t meet the conditions required by the local administration for registration (GSO 2002:4) and there have been “ongoing concerns that the registration system restricts migrants from accessing services in their places of destination” (GSO 2004:10). In China the overwhelming majority of migrants are ‘unregistered’ and have no social welfare rights in the city. They have largely been denied rights to urban social security schemes on the grounds that their security is provided by their right to land in their home villages and although temporary residence permits give some protection, they need frequent renewal at police stations and involve financial costs (Davin 1996, Li 2004). Attempting to

secure a residence permit involves administrative difficulty, frustration, time and substantial costs (Shaokang et al 2002, Li 2002,2004) and “only the most successful migrants could consider purchasing a permanent residence permit” (Davin 1996:27).

In both Vietnam and China, the social rights of migrants, and particularly female migrants, have been neglected by the state as well as by academic research until very recently. Migrants’ employment is often short-lived, contracts are short term and they are easily fired, most live in shanty accommodation and they are vulnerable to exploitation and bullying by urban employers, and to harassment by the local police and the authorities. In China, migrants complain of detention, arbitrary fining or even repatriation to their rural origin, in the name of ‘maintaining urban order’ (Li 2004) and similar treatment was proposed in Vietnam (Davin 1996, Guest 1998). At the early stage of reforms, both official and popular perceptions of rural migrants were predominantly negative partly owing to the legacy of tight control over population mobility but also as a result of deep-rooted urban bias (Croll 1997, Goldstein, White et al 1997, Guest 1998, Skeldon and Hugo 1999, GoV 2001): However, a subsequent shift towards a more positive public discourse on rural-urban migration, supported by development agencies and by policy-relevant research by influential scholars (cf. Xiang and Tan 2005), has led to more ambivalence towards rural migrants in urban settings. Since late 2002 there has been in China official acknowledgement of the importance of migrants for economic development and some rhetorical moves towards improving their working conditions (Biao 2005:3) and in Vietnam the government has committed resources to investigating the situation of migrants (GSO 2004) and articulated a commitment to ensuring that there is no discrimination between the urban poor and the migrant poor (GSO 2002).

The media/public perception of the sexual and reproductive behaviour of rural migrants, both men and women, is mixed and changing with time. For example, they have been variously depicted as possessing traditional values and norms of preferring more children, particularly sons, in comparison with urban dwellers; as using migration as a strategy to evade the official family planning regulations at home; and more recently young female migrants have been linked to prostitution in red light districts of urban areas. In Vietnam, the government is concerned about the number of migrants as well as their “perceived lack of control of the migration process and a feeling that this has contributed to social problems such as increased crime and other social evils” (Guest 1998). Official responses to these perceived problems have been to tightening up the provision of residence permits but also through proposals to forcibly remove people from urban areas (Guest 1998). Kabeer and Thi Van Anh (2002:110) note that central policy responses also include encouraging the rural population to “leave the rice fields, but not the countryside” and that urban congestion, “and associated problems of drugs, prostitution, and other social evils are a major concern for policy-makers” (Allen et al 1996 cited Kabeer and Thi Van Anh 2002:110). Whilst in 2001 the GoV felt that the positive effects of migration were “outweighed” by negative ones associated with “unhibited migration”, including the “escalation of social evils” (GoV 2001 VPS: 17) by 2002 the government announced its intention by 2005 to review labour migration policy and the household registration system with a view to ease migrants search for better employment and its intention to create access to urban social services including for unregistered migrants (GoV 2002 CPRSG: 137). In China officials announced in 2001 their intention to abolish the

household registration system but commentators feel that there might be a further relaxation of regulations and that outright removal will take much longer (Shaokang et al 2002:48).

These generalised negative perceptions are played out in official policy and popular perceptions relating specifically to the reproductive behaviour of migrants. Population policy in Vietnam seeks to limit childbearing but has never been as strict as China, with a two rather than a one child policy (Summerfield 1997:203). In China “migrants in the urban areas are perceived [by officials and the media] as having too many children, because they are ‘difficult to control’ and ‘no-one is responsible for them’” (Davin 1996:28) and regulations have been upgraded on fertility in the context of rapid economic transition (Fan and Li 2002). In China increasing incomes meant that more peasants were willing to pay the penalties for having more than one child and the government fought back by tying production perquisites to compliance with reproductive regulations (Goldstein et al 1997:481). In China, “[p]olicymakers... reasoned that many of these migrants came to the cities to avoid family planning control and to have more than the permitted one child” (Goldstein et al 1997: 481) and so in 1991 the government established ‘Measures for the management of family planning in the floating population’ which made it a national requirement to carry family planning certificates listing marital status, fertility history and contraceptive status. These should theoretically be shown before a residence, business or work permit can be issued, thus enabling government personnel in destination areas to police migrant’s fertility behaviour (Hoy 1999: 135). In Vietnam, although the two child policy on family planning has been more loosely implemented with wide variations in adherence, there have been abuses (Bannister 1993; Johansson 1998) and

from 1988 families who did not observe the two child limit were officially prohibited from moving into urban centres and industrial zones (Bannister 1993:82). However, fears that Vietnam might follow China's harder line on population, have been dispelled by the strengthening of the official line that all family planning decisions are voluntary (GSO 2002, UNFPA 2004). Nevertheless, the state reserves the right to 'adjust the fertility level' and 'distribute the population appropriately' through various mechanisms including the use of incentives and privileges and the requirement that state organisations, businesses and services all develop and report on population plans (GSO Population Ordinance 2002: Articles 14.1, 16.1).

Having briefly reviewed the context of transition, migration and reproduction in China and Vietnam, we now attempt to probe more specifically the linkages between migration and reproduction in relation to the more theoretical concerns raised in the previous section.

Linking Migration and Reproduction

Whilst it is obvious that there is a powerful economic content to the 'new' migration in Vietnam and China, to see migration purely in terms of seeking a more secure or lucrative productive livelihood would be a mistake. In both countries, taking advantage of the new economic opportunities of transition is not just about "crossing the poverty line" and people "seek not only survival but improved wellbeing and fuller participation in society: strategies that focus on employment, education and the social safety net that assures human security are crucial" (Summerfield 1997:205).

For Tanjin in China, Zhang concluded that the 'push' for migration for young women

was far from purely economic, but that “their longing for change in their material, cultural and social lives acted as a driving force behind their leaving the land to compete in the urban labour market.” (1999:26). The reproductive dimensions of ‘making a life’ are often alluded to in accounts but rarely seen as integral elements of strategising about migration. In Vietnam and China, accounts of migration suggest that in general young women migrate before marriage and childbearing, when they are free of reproductive constraints, and then after marriage and childbearing are ‘tied to the bamboo grove’ (Kabeer and Thi Van Anh 2002:?) by their reproductive roles and responsibility for rural farm. Whilst some female rural-urban migrants are “also no doubt marriage migrants” (Davin 1996:25) the general understanding is that the majority move in search of work and that this represents a different sort of migration. Similarly older women who do migrate are seen as ‘naturally’ following partners: For example of men being more likely than women to migrate over longer distances in the 1990’s in Vietnam, it is said that “[m]ost likely, they migrated ahead of females and children” (Dang et al 1997:333). Little is specifically known about which women return to the village to marry and which follow their husbands or their motivations or the reasons behind the timing of their joining husbands. Selected and admittedly piecemeal evidence that seems to suggest that motivations and strategies that can be broadly described as reproductive may be significant.

There is broad evidence for young women at least that suggests that migration at a more fundamental level is about opening up space for different life options, crucially including escaping the life of a rural farm wife, through strategies that include increasing obligations in natal home to make a good marriage for them, searching for a desirable marriage partner themselves, and shoring up their personal financial

security making them less reliant on either father or husband. The incomes they are able to command in urban areas are not incidental to these strategies. Davin reports Wan Shanping's (1993) evidence that some young women in China bring back capital to their villages in order to set up shops or even small manufacturing enterprises (Davin 1996: 29). Zhang's study in Tanjin also found that 30% of her informants kept their own wages and even when money was remitted to rural areas, some said that their parents opened accounts in their names, and several say they would like to save enough to start their own businesses (1999:35,37). As one of Zhang's informants told her "I'm not worried about finding a satisfactory partner. Compared with other rural girls, I've got greater economic strength with years of work in the city" (1999:37). Even in the cases where Zhang's informants said that their remittances were used for household needs and production, they believed that "in return, their parents would provide a decent dowry (Jiazhuang) and wedding for them in the future" (1999:37).

The opportunities that 'new' migration offer for accruing economic income for these women is integrally tied for them to enhancing their reproductive options and strategies for the future. Zhang points out that "unlike the older generation of their grandmothers and mothers, who customarily got married as teenagers, most of the female migrants intended to delay their marriages in an attempt to work for longer periods or even settle in the city" and notable amongst the advantages that young women perceived in rural-urban migration was "freedom from parental supervision" (Zhang 1999:31). Importantly "they were more likely to view their urban jobs as means than goals, and as an opportunity to obtain upward mobility geographically and socially; some of them hoped to find urban boyfriends and eventually settle in the city.... One informant says "I hope I can marry and settle in the city if possible, and

have a happy, stable marriage. I want to achieve something meaningful in my life" (Zhang 1999:35). Indeed Zhang comments that for these young women "the greatest gains from working in the city were the significant differences they had made in their own lives and destiny" (1999:38).

However, there is also evidence that some young women migrants are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. These may include those who lack personal networks with relatives or other migrants from their home areas, those who took jobs in informal sectors, and those who work in export processing factories (Zhang 1999). Evidence from garment factory workers in Cambodia shows that some unmarried migrant women "engage in multi-partnered sex through direct or discretionary commercial sex occupations" (Nishigaya 2002:28) and there is anecdotal evidence in China that the same may be true for vulnerable migrant women there. In the Cambodia study "women workers cite their low monthly wages from the factories as the main reason for their entry into sex work, although some report their abandonment by sweethearts who provided them with cash regularly" (Nishigaya 2002:33). The tendency to overlook young never-married women migrants who are not readily identifiable as commercial sex workers but may be drawn into transactional sex has serious implications for AIDS policy².

Whilst there have been concerns about the rise of 'social evils' associated with transition and the processes of urbanisation and migration, there is no compelling evidence that adolescents in Vietnam are adopting increasingly risky reproductive and sexual health behaviour and rates of premarital sex, abortion and HIV infection that are relatively low nationally compared to comparable countries in the region (Mensch

et al 2003). However rates of reported pre-marital sex amongst 15-19 men in Ho Chi Minh City (11%) are approaching those in comparable countries and rates of reported premarital sex with future husband nationally range from 20% for women aged 18 years to 50% for women aged 22 years (Mensch et al 2003: 254). Although premarital sexual activity may be increasing, the 'risky' nature of these sexual contacts derives in large part from the exclusion of unmarried women and men from family planning efforts and the over-association of condoms with HIV/AIDS (Belanger and Hong 1999). Migrants appear to have lower risk behaviour than urban residents with respect to the use of alcohol and tobacco (GSO 2004).

With respect to middle-aged women, there are two commonly voiced popular concerns in Vietnam and China, that of women 'left behind' in the rural areas and that of the reproductive behaviour of women in cities. Whilst the pattern of spreading household across city and rural is a common 'household strategy' in the developing world (Biao 2005), it is sharply in focus in China and Vietnam where the systems of registration mean that many migrants must keep their contracts in rural origins (Fan and Li 2002). The narrative of women being 'left behind' by men migrating for work sees reproduction as an inevitable sex-specific constraint but puts the real interest on the reorganisation of productive activities (see UNDP 2002:44). There has as a result been almost no probing of how migration histories articulate with marriage, child-bearing and child-rearing for individual women and men. In villages in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam with high male migration, Kabeer and Thi Van Anh found important differences between long term male migration, which left women with unclear entitlements with respect to the use or transfer of land, and annual migration during the slack season (2002). Also reproductive responsibilities were found to have

intergenerational consequences including increasing girl's drop out rates from school to substitute their labour so that mother's can earn (Kabeer and Thi Van Anh 2002). In areas of highly gendered migration flows in China, the breakdown of the sexual division of labour can also involve men in taking on household work: "in Anhui it has been reported that men cook, clean, and even sew when the female members of their family have gone to work in the cities (Wan Shanping 1993)." (Davin 1996:25). Also in China, Biao argues powerfully that being 'left behind' by male migration does not in itself lead to particular disadvantage but that growing rural-urban inequalities are leaving many rural communities as a whole behind in economic and social progress (2005).

There has been little attention to marriage and migration, especially in transitional economies (Fan and Li 2002). Although it is conceded that in Vietnam that "in terms of permanent migration, women are more likely to leave home when they marry and thus are traditionally more mobile than men" (UNDP 2002: 44), marriage is generally separated off from discussion about new kinds of migration. For instance Dang et al adopt the usual convention of excluding inter-provincial migration in their study because it "consists mainly of marriage migration rather than responses to socio-economic development" (1997: 322). However, Fan and Li's evidence from China suggests that changing patterns of marriage mobility may indeed be integral to responses to socio-economic development and that new marriage strategies are developing around rural-urban migration and the need/desire to retain the family farm. Fan and Li (2002) found that spatial hypergamy (marrying up) across long distances supports the notion that "marriage is a means for peasant women to move to more favourable locations" and that economic transition, by extending the possibilities for

labour migration has “enlarged peasants’ marriage market and at the same time promoted division of labour within marriage” (2002:619). They found that traditional marriage migration over short distances to better off villages was accompanied by a new trend of marriage migration over much longer distance that facilitated chain migration. Their field study of two villages in western Guangdong showed that the problems of finding a marriage partner were exacerbated in places with high female rural-urban migration. Men who had difficulty finding marriage partners were more likely to have an in-marrying wife from an inferior situation. These marriages were characterised by greater social differences between husbands and wives, suggestive of retrogressive intra-household relations, and in-marrying wives were left at home to manage the farm and the children, making their husband’s continued migration possible. In other words, women from poorer areas were migrating into rural areas with high male migration and whilst in-marrying women had specific interests in men’s migration the nature of their marriage also implied a specific character to their conjugal contracts.

At the same time as aspects of reform and cultural change are reducing control over marriage and cultural and state deterrents to conjugal intimacy, migration is putting new pressures on marriage (Fan and Li 2002:634; Davin 1996; Summerfield 1997). Family separation for labour migration involves dilemmas and hardships (Biao 2005:?). In China and Vietnam, Summerfield reports that “While many of the [migrant] family members send money home and maintain their ties with the rural areas, growing numbers of men either divorce or illegally start a second family in the city. Migration, which was previously highly controlled by the state, is now contributing to a small but growing trend for families to break up; even as part of a

working strategy to improve family wealth, migration creates *de facto* female-headed households of the women remaining in the countryside and introduces new strains on all family members.” (1997:206). She further notes that “[m]any women prefer to tolerate affairs and abuse to the social ostracism faced by a divorced woman” and the chances of remarriage are low (1997:206). Ha Vu’s study of sexual behaviour amongst married women in two northern rural areas in Vietnam found that “mobility... is linked with the increased risk that men will have extra marital affairs and increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS (Population Council 1997)” (2002:73). Although she argues that suspicions of extra-marital sexual relations are tolerated because divorce and remarriage are unpalatable options as both involve stigma for the woman and her children and remarriage also compromises the welfare of her children from her first marriage, she shows how women’s silence may conceal hidden agency over sexual behaviours (ibid:74). Despite this, the implications for sexual and reproductive health are obvious and worryingly, 63% of men who know they are HIV positive report not using a condom for intercourse with their wife in Vietnam (UNDP 2000:31). Although generalisations point to married women being ‘left behind’ by male migrants, the range of family strategies is in practice more varied. For example, Fan and Li’s Guangdong study found some evidence of a new kind of ‘dagong’ marriage between migrating women and men that was formed on the basis of affection. Revealingly, in 4 of the 5 ‘dagong’ marriages they studied men stayed back to work after marriage (2002: 632-4).

In the same way that the reproductive dimensions of being ‘left behind’ have been neglected, the strategising of marriage, child-bearing and child rearing by female and male migrants has also been little explored. The generalised narrative that the wives

of migrants are to be found raising children in rural areas is in tension with official and popular perceptions that migrants, particular unregistered one, come to urban areas to escape restrictions on fertility. Indeed available information about the proportion of married migrants³ as well as studies on the fertility and maternal health of migrants⁴ information on migrant children and anecdotal evidence all point to a significant number of married women in migrant populations who are bearing and raising children in the cities.

In Vietnam, migration to the (rural) Central Highlands is labelled as ‘family migration’, however, recent data estimates that 54% of male and 59% of female migrants to Hanoi in 2004 were currently married, as were 46% of men and women migrating to Ho Chi Minh City (see table x, appendix x) (GSO 2005). Whilst rates of contraceptive use amongst older married women migrants are similar to those of non-migrants, younger married women are less likely to contracept, possibly reflecting a desire to ‘catch up’ after delayed marriage (ibid). Furthermore it is estimated that in 2004 at least 37% of migrants to Hanoi were accompanied by school age children as were at least 20% of men and 16% of women migrating to Ho Chi Minh City⁵ (ibid). Whilst 6% of migrants to Hanoi and less than 1% of migrants to Ho Chi Minh City have permanently changed their household registration to the destination area, nearly half of migrants to Hanoi and nearly 30% of migrants to Ho Chi Minh City intend to stay permanently and with large proportions of migrants undecided in each case⁶ suggesting that substantial proportions of migrants may be prospective urban settlers (ibid).

Roberts (2002:492) using survey data from Shanghai found significant differences between married and unmarried women labour migrants and suggests that the later “are probably accompanying and working with their migrant husbands” and that as many as a third of rural labour migrants may be migrating as couples. He suggest that rather than a ‘floating population’ these may be the “the vanguard” of potential settlers. Hoy’s study in Beijing in 1994 reports on 403 ever married women of reproductive age who were registered as temporary migrants⁷. 306 (80%) had children and of these, the majority migrated after the birth of their first child (61%)⁸. The evidence questions the inevitability that married wives of migrants stay in rural areas. Hoy’s findings for registered temporary migrants (ref) concur with Goldstein et al’s findings for unregistered migrants in 1988 in Hubei Province that unregistered migrants “seldom... [moved] ...to circumvent the nations’ family planning policies” (1997:488) and that “temporary migrant women do not have more children than their non-migrant counterparts” (ibid:490).

In fact, the evidence suggests that managing reproductive life is particularly hard for migrant women and men. In the context of Vietnam and China, transition means that rapid economic change and related changes in labour markets and social policy entitlements are restructuring the linkages between reproduction and productive livelihood. The use of registration documents to mediate access to social security measures creates real problems. In China, access to schooling depends on hukuo status of the mother and ability to pay. Fan and Li’s study of two villages in western Guangdong (2002) found that permanent migrants, who have the necessary residential requirements to access urban social security, are able to lease their land at home and to keep the domestic unit together. But as Davin points out, for most without

permanent residence, “these restrictions induce many migrants to send their children back to their home areas when they reach school age, even if they have not done so earlier. Even migrant women who marry urban residents may face this problem, as the children’s household registration follows that of their mother” (1996:26). Fan and Li’s evidence that 19/20 of their households where husband’s had migrated contained children under 10 years of age (2002:634) suggests that for some at least being ‘left’ is a way of resolving these contradictions at a particular stage, which may be resolved later either by return of husband or onward migration of the family⁹. In Vietnam, recent data confirms that lack of registration creates problems with access to housing, credit, employment and the registering of motor cycles but is more ambivalent about access to social services for migrants as opposed to non-migrants and needs further analysis (GSO 2005:4).

The combination of poor entitlements for migrants and the impact of reform leave women workers with specific reproductive needs particularly exposed. In Vietnam, the UNDP notes that despite the institutional legacy of the Communist Party that under *doi moi* “women are losing some of these rights... [including]...labour laws, extensive access to maternity benefits and child-care centres, access to education and employment and legalized abortions” (UNDP 2000:9). In China the legislative framework “[d]ating from a time when rural women were not allowed to leave the land,... is especially weak in protecting the large numbers of female migrants who have started working in the city in recent decades.” (Zhang 1999:34). One of Zhang's informants says : "We rural girls don't enjoy such benefits [maternity leave with pay]. Only people like city residents who are often permanent workers, and managerial or professional staff with high qualification such as university or college degrees have

the right to maternity leave" (ibid). Davin notes "the difficulties associated with giving birth to, and bringing up, children in areas where they do not have rights to health and education" (1996: 29). This is confirmed by Shaokang et al's (2002) study in Shanghai which found that migrant mother's are using maternity care significantly less than mother's who are permanent urban residents¹⁰ and that their main maternal health outcomes were poor¹¹. They conclude that migrants face "a 'package' of obstacles" to accessing health care of which lack of insurance coverage and cost were important elements motivating. Anecdotal evidence suggest that around a third of migrant women may return to their villages for delivery and a further quarter to a third may use illegal birth attendants to save money (ibid:49,51). These difficulties continue for child rearing with difficulties accessing child care, education and health. For instance, Ding and Stockman report that few of the 70,000 school age children in the floating population are enrolled in city schools (1999:127) and Shaokang et al found that nearly all migrants had to pay out-of-pocket expenses for health services in comparison to about a quarter of permanent residents (2002). In Vietnam, the stricter adherence to housing and registration requirements in Ho Chi Minh City and the Southern Industrial Zone appears to be creating specific economic problems for schooling children for a fifth of migrants as compared to less than 10% of non-migrants (GSO 2005).

The gendered impact of reform combined with migration has created an urban market for domestic labour to service more highly paid women in which many women migrants find employment. However, many migrant women must make difficult choices and craft complex strategies to manage rearing their own children.

Grandmothers often care for small children and school age children while mother is at

work locally or in the city, however, changing family structures mean that 3 generational households are less common than they used to be and entitlements to grandmothers' care are structured by gendered intergenerational obligations and entitlements. For instance, Davin reports two cases where mother's refuse to take full responsibility for their daughter's children because of the prior claims of son's children. One of the mother's said: "I can do that for my son, and my daughter-in-law because we are all one family and they send money back home. My daughter is married so she belongs to another family" (Davin 1996:26). The risks of leaving children in the care of others for extended periods is well illustrated by the report that babies 'left behind' in Fuyang, a major migrant sending region, experienced serious malnutrition, resulting in 13 deaths, because they relied on an unacceptably poor quality manmade formula (Biao 2005:3-4). Strategies of negotiating reproduction and residence arrangements are also shaped by cultural expectations of new wives. Hoy found a predominance of married women with one male child amongst her migrants and demonstrates that migration itself does not lead to higher sex ratios but that newly wed women are released from their cultural obligations to mother-in-laws by the birth of their first son (1999). Where women can not make suitable arrangements for childcare and schooling they may return themselves with children to rural areas, perhaps working locally during the day. The gendered impact of reform in Vietnam "for the very poor... means an inevitable decline in the quality of upbringing that their children receive and may also lead to the declining health of other family members (Beresford 1997)" (UNDP 2000:19).

There is a danger in focusing on aspirations for 'a better life' of painting an overly optimistic picture of migration as a route to social mobility. For many migration is

motivated by survival needs but for both groups reproductive dimensions are more important than commonly recognised and for both migration may involve trade-offs and compromises that may be unpalatable. This is rather starkly demonstrated in Davin's report of the case of young woman who bought her way out of an unhappy marriage by forfeiting her son and raising the 7000 yuan he demanded for child support through migration for work (1996:28). Davin notes that younger returnees may face problems of adjustment and cites Wan Shanping's (1993) report that they have difficulties accustomising themselves to "hardships which for most of their life they had taken for granted" (Davin 1996:28). One of Biao's migrant informants who herself works away from home, tolerates the infidelity, diminishing remittances and visits from her absent husband and at the same time finds the children she has 'left behind' to be alienated and undisciplined (2005:?). Ding and Stockman (1999:128) refer to the large numbers of middle aged women in the floating population who lack marketable skills, can't find formal jobs and do not want to return home unemployed and work as scavengers. These examples speak of the need for more biographical study of the linkages between migration and reproduction and how they are negotiated over the life course in the context of rapidly changing economic and social institutions.

Conclusions

The evidence from Vietnam and China where the changing character of internal migration in transitional economies includes increased female migration and continuing male migration in the context of dramatic declines in public services, changing social institutions, and the growing impact of HIV/AIDs, suggests that there

are specific and important linkages between migration and reproduction that merit further attention. Many young women migrant's aspire to a different sort of life, including a different sort of reproductive life, and may in the long run contribute to the renegotiation of gender relations in rural areas, including through frustration and conflict, or they may settle in urban areas. Some find themselves vulnerable to exploitation, including sexual exploitation, and may be drawn into or seek sex work where they are at risk of serious harm. Despite the growing momentum of 'new' migration, the structural constraints on movement and fertility that structure social entitlements remain powerful and interact with cultural expectations around marriage, child-bearing, child-rearing and inter-generational relations in ways that are strongly gendered. As Summerfield concludes for both China and Vietnam "the family becomes more important as state welfare subsidies are withdrawn" (1997:213). There is some evidence that marriage practices are responding to migration and the related geographic inequalities between different rural areas and urban areas: women from poorer rural areas are marrying into areas of high male migration to be 'left-behind' wives in Guangdong. However, the ways of negotiating marriage and migration are more diverse than commonly portrayed: 'dagong' couples may both stay behind after marriage, couples may migrate together either leaving children behind, sending them back, returning temporarily, or keeping the family together in the city, husband and wife may separately migrate and marriages may breakdown. Little is known about which wives migrate and who stays behind, but migration may be selective of women who have born their first sons, in other words those who are reproductively successful in cultural terms. Managing reproductive life in the city is complex and has created a domestic labour market for young women but migrants themselves face a 'package' of obstacles in having and caring for their children. The alternatives of the wife and/or

her children staying behind involves dilemmas and hardships that may put the marriage and the health of children and parents at risk. However, piecemeal data suggests that there are varying experiences of managing reproductive life in transition both within countries, such as between Hanoi and HCMC, and between Vietnam and China that reflect in part specific institutional constraints, the particular legacy of gender relations and evolving marriage patterns.

Improved understanding of these dynamics is important if social policy is to contribute to improved wellbeing. Contrary to perceptions, migrants do not have higher fertility and whilst they do appear to be at greater risk of sexual infections and some are involved in sex work, this is as a result of particular vulnerability stemming from the combined circumstances of their lack of social entitlements, declining public financing of social provisioning, and family separation. Migrants are not trespassing outside of official sanctions but have rather been socially excluded in particular ways. It follows that the remedy for this situation is not discouraging migration or greater policing of migrants and their behaviours, but instead strategies to enhance their entitlements and inclusion in urban society. Improving working conditions is of fundamental importance, especially for young migrants, and needs to be alert to concerns around accommodation, social needs, leave allowances, maternity rights, protection from sexual harassment, and sexual health needs. However, strategies also need to go beyond improving working conditions, to build entitlements for migrants and their families, in particular to health, including maternal health, and education for their children. Broader action to counter growing rural-rural and rural-urban inequalities is an important fundamental not to counter migration but to ensure that whole communities are not left behind by transition. This will play a role in

enhancing the resilience of rural-urban migrants and also in reducing the risks and perhaps the distances associated with family separation.

We have argued that the way in which reproductive strategies and capabilities are articulated with migratory processes has important implications for migration studies and social policy. Although it is well recognised that particular flows of migrants often tend to be structured by sex and by stage in life course, especially reproductive and marital life course where women are concerned, there has been little investigation of what this means for managing reproductive life. Rather than seeing reproductive factors as given constraints or triggers that play into who migrates and for how long, or separating out economic migration from migration ‘for’ marriage, we have argued that there is value to exploring how reproductive strategising articulates with migratory processes for women and men who are ‘making a life’. This may be central to understanding the impact of migration on wellbeing as well as to identifying and addressing their specific social needs. The dearth of information about migrant men’s reproductive agency is particularly striking, especially at a time when there is growing concern over their disengagement from the family, but for women too the linkages between reproductive and migratory motivations, strategies and vulnerabilities are poorly understood. Priorities for enhancing understanding must include both macro-level analysis to build a stronger reproductive and demographic picture of migration as well as detailed micro-level work investigating migrant biographies, reproductive histories and wellbeing over longer time periods so that we can begin to understand the many ways in which migration plays a role in ‘building a life’.

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Notes

1. For example, in China the ‘above-quota birth guerrilla’ was a popular comic expression adopted to ridicule rural migrant couples, who were seen as trying to take advantage of an administrative loophole by having ‘above-quota’ children through migration.
2. Evidence from Thailand found that young single women migrants were 4 times more likely to engage in sex than young single women living with their families (Prasartkul et al 1989 cited Ford and Kittisuksathit 1994). In addition research with young factory workers, 90% of whom are rural migrants, in Thailand show that female migrants attach great importance attached to finding a ‘love’ marriage and some fear that migration will delay their marriage. Double-standards in which men pressure girlfriends for sex but desire to marry virgins, create a culture of gender sexuality where women may engage in sexual relations with men they believe to be potential prospective husbands, are unable to express their need for contraception/condoms and are exposed to potentially unwanted pregnancies (most seek abortions if the boyfriend is unwilling to marry) and disease.
3. Guest reports that 49% of the male and female migrants in the UNDP’s HCMC sample were currently or ever married at time of the survey and 30% of their Hanoi sample were married at the time they moved to the city (Guest 1998: 9).
4. Shaokang et al (2002) report on 180 migrant mothers, of which 25 were married to urban residents.
5. These figures are inferred from the preliminary findings of the 2004 Migration Survey of migrants reporting that their children’s education was better, worse

or the same in the destination area. They are minimums since it is not possible to infer whether those who answered 'don't know' had children of school age accompanying them. This information should be available from the secondary analysis due July 2006.

6. Figures taken from table 3.14 of the 2004 Migration Survey.
7. Those who have moved since (and in?)1990.
8. Of the remainder, 10% had migrated before marriage, 6% migrated at the time of marriage with the remainder (14%) having married before migration and 9% migrated in the first birth interval.
9. Although the Migration Survey 2004 says that access to social service was not especially problematic for migrants as opposed to non-migrants, the data is contradictory and as yet not completely analysed. For example, of those with school age children (5-18 years), there was no difference in attendance between migrants and non-migrants in Hanoi and the Northern Economic Zone but in Ho Chi Minh City 19% of migrants (as opposed to 9% of non-migrants) were not sending them to school as were 22% of migrants (as opposed to 7% non-migrants) in the Southern Industrial Zone for mainly economic reasons. Migration is selective of healthy workers and health status changes for mostly static or positive but it is note worthy that 17% men and 20% women migrating to HCMC say their health has worsened. Although differences in health insurance and in utilization of health services between migrant and non-migrant populations seem small, over 75% of migrants made some contribution to the payment of their last health treatment (can't compare with non-migrants) and there is evidence of slightly rates of self-treatment and in HCMC proportionally higher utilisation of private facilities by migrants (GSO 2005).
10. Of the 2,381 migrant mothers who gave birth at three hospitals in Minhang District between 1993-1996, 44% had had no prior ANC visits as compared to only 5% of permanent residents (Shaokang et al 2002:49).
11. For instance, the number of still-births amongst migrants (1.5%) was twice that of the control group (0.8%) (Shaokang et al 2002:49).

Proportion on Currently Married Migrants and Non-Migrants in Five Survey Areas of Vietnam (GSO 2004: 32)

% Currently Married	Hanoi	Ho Chi Minh City	Northern Economic Zone	Southern Industrial Zone	Central Highlands	Total
Male migrants (Female non-migrants)	54 (78)	46 (75)	50 (84)	58 (77)	76 (90)	57 (82)
Female migrants (Female non-migrants)	59 (78)	46 (70)	44 (84)	48 (72)	86 (84)	56 (77)
All migrants (non-migrants)	56 (78)	46 (72)	46 (85)	52 (74)	81 (88)	N = 4988 (N=5009)

	Hanoi Men	Hanoi Women	HCMC Men	HCMC Women	Comments
% joining spouse	2.2	7.6	.9	4.4	Generally very low, but more likely wife who follows where this does happen
% coming with some family [not clear if this excludes spouse]	33.9	35.0	27.4	28.0	Not clear if this excludes spouse and may not be children.
% some family members came after	6.0	2.9	6.7	3.9	Ditto. However men have more followers.
% intending to stay permanently	48.4	48.6	29.6	28.5	Generally high especially Hanoi – related to different implementation of registrations
% who don't know if they will stay permanently	39.4	37.8	49.4	51.2	Very large and largely wipes out diff between cities
% who intend to go home in under 5 years	8.1	8.6	11.7	13.9	Very low generally.
% expecting some family to come	10.5	11.7	12.4	9.1	Again low
% of these expecting the family members to stay permanently	18.2	11.8	19.2	19.0	A fifth whose strategy involves moving family to city
% of these expecting family members to stay temporarily	68.2	86.8	46.2	48.6	Majority however expect a temporary stay in Hanoi and about half in HCMC
% who don't know if other family will follow them	31.5	27.8	38.2	36.1	Significant %