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ngth Research Paper

national remittances and well-being in Sub-saharan Africa

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paper examines the impact of international remittances on well-being in sub-Saharan Africa, using of cross-country data drawn from 38 countries and a multiple regression analysis. The result ned from the analysis indicates that international remittances have to some extent contributed to mprovement of well-being in sub-Saharan Africa. However, for international remittances to nue to be relevant to the well-being of the people of sub-Saharan Africa, measures such as sound oeconomic policy, flexible financial sector infrastructure and low transaction cost of fund fers, conducive investment climate with stable political environment, adequate checks on the ence of money laundering, greater transparency in the transfer of fund between the sender, the rsing agent and the receiver, adequate protection of the customers, financial security and risk gement practices were suggested.

vords: Remittances, well-being, Africa.

JCTION

nal remittances are financial assistance from living in other countries that are hardly noticed ussed as important components for poverty re- nd economic development, especially in less de- countries. For instance, in 2006 alone the total nal remittances to less developed countries was 5.9 billion which accounted for about 3.6% of the omestic Product (GDP) of these countries and st sources of domestic finances after direct for- stment (Ratha, 2005; id21 Insight 2006; World 08a; World Bank, 2008b). In sub-Saharan Africa, amount of international remittances was $10.8 2007 which was 1.6% of the GDP (World Bank,

ct, international remittances are known to have t the recipient country's income and consump- increase the county's foreign exchange reserve, positively on saving and investment, lift people verty and had an equalizing effect on the distri-bution of income among socio-economic groups (Chimhowu et al., 2005; Ratha, 2005; Sander and Maimbo, 2005). However, this significant importance of international remittances could not be authenticated in Sub-saharan Africa, especially when linked to the well-being of the people without testing the validity of the claim. As an effort in doing this, a number of questions that are critical to the understanding of the impact of international remittances on well-being in particular and economic development in general were raised. One of such question is: Do international remittances have any significant impact on well-being in sub-Saharan Africa? This question is what this paper sought answer for, using a set of cross-country data drawn from 38 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and a multiple regression analysis.

Conceptual Clarification: International Remittances and Well-being

International Remittances

This section reviews the various conceptual issues that are relevant to the paper. Existing literature on international remittances and well-being are centered on the de-

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consequences and the trend of internaces and the indicators of well-being. Drawn the literature, international remittances are red to as portions of the earning an immirelatives back home, often referred to as ountry (id21 Insight, 2006; Biller, 2007; Wi- They are also said to be stable and least of foreign exchange earning for developespecially when compared to capital flows during favorable economic cycles and fall

remittances are usually determined by the s in the recipient countries;

nomic policies with flexible foreign ex-
ancial sector infrastructure and low tranfund transfers.
rnational labour mobility.
f debt relative to GDP.
investment climate with stable political enrom corruption.
ness
of inequality.
rant workers are forced to return to their Chami et al., 2003; Gupta, 2005; Ratha, nd Maimbo, 2005; Karpowicz, 2006; Nery-res, 2006; Roache and Gradzka, 2007; n, 2008; Lopez et al., 2008).

have also shown that international remitnt the recipients' income and increase foreign exchange resources. If internatioare invested, they contribute to output are consumed, they generated positive s. International remittances are also bea positive impact on saving and investthe other hand provide the hard currency ortant scare inputs that are not available

nittances may also serve as insurance risk associated with new production actialso known to have reduced income inepeople out of poverty. For instance, for exico received from migrants working s National Product (GNP) increased by .69 and US$ 3.17. Household survey in dicated that in the late 1980s and early inal propensity to save was higher for inational remittances than for domestic urittances. Moreover, in Mexico internatiohave led to an equalizing effect on the ncome among social economic groups uiz-Arranz, 2005; Ratha, 2005; Browne 2007; Calderon et al., 2008; Fajnzylber Acosta et al., 2008a; Peria et al., 2008).
aimbo (2005) saw the consequences of ittances from three prospective; macroeconomics, microeconomics and communal. From macroeconomic angle, international remittances constitute a major source of foreign exchange, influence the national balance of payment, and represent a substantial share of the gross domestic product in many countries. From microeconomic angle, international remittances are income transfer from relatively richer to relatively poor individual and constitute a family welfare system that smoothening consumption, alleviates liquidity constraint and provides a form of mutual insurance. International remittances are mostly used primarily for consumption and investment in human capital (education, health and better nutrition). Investment in land, livestock and housing is also relatively common but secondary to satisfying daily needs and meeting expenses related to human capital. At the communal level, it is understood that some migrants do participate in diasporas, community or religious group in the host country and send collective remittances to the home communities. Often, these international remittances are collected through fund raising events and are applied to a range of investment, including building or renovating schools or health centors (Neawland and Partrick, 2004; Adams, 2006; Abdih et al., 2008; Acosta et al., 2008b; Acosta et al., 2008c).

Chimhowu et al. (2005) reiterates that at household level, international remittances have contributed to increase in income, consumption smoothing, saving and asset accumulation (liquid and non-liquid assets), collateral for loans, liquidity in terms of crisis, improved access to health care services and better nutrition that is potential for improved productivities, create easy access to better education and reduced child labor, increased social capital and ability to participate in social groups and activities, saving clubs and money rounds, and improved access to information. At the community level, international remittances have improved local physical infrastructure, growth of local commodity markets, development of local capital markets, availability of new services (e.g. housing, retails trade, travel and construction), development of new development institutions, changes to cultural practices, especially attitude towards girl education, generation of local employment opportunities, reduction of inequality between households, particularly poor households. At the national level, international remittances has reduced inequality among countries as it exceed official aid transfers in some regions (Bouhga-Hagbe, 2004; Gupta et al., 2007; Acosta et al., 2008a; Acosta et al., 2008b; Acosto et al., 2008c; Bracking and Sachikonye, 2008).

On the contrary, dependence on international remittances will leave households vulnerable to changes in migration cycles, spent on unproductive investment and short-term consumption gains, adopt innovation not suitable for the local environment, increase inequality between households with access to international remittances and those without, transit negative cultural practices that reduce local quality of life, reduce GDP when there are fluctuations in exchange rates, increase the growth of the reign exchange markets and money laundering u et al., 2005).

the trend of international remittances in Sub-frica are hard to come by because official inter-emittances data for the region do not show a ra-oportional rise in international remittances. The s probably reflected in growth of unrecorded ial remittances–composed of un-captured for- and flows through informal transfer channels nd Maimbo, 2005).

of these difficulties, a number of studies had rt in providing the trend of international remit- sub-saharan Africa. As indicated in Table 1 ike Malawi and Sao Tome and Principe had the ow of international remittances in 2007 (about This rate could be said to be in consonance ite of emigrants recorded that year in the coun- country with the highest inflow of international s in 2007 was Nigeria with about $3329 million, y Sudan with $1157. At the sub-regional levels, an Africa received a relatively small share of ial remittances ($ 10.8 billion) from migrants liv- e the region. Reasons that might have account- s include; relative high level of domestic and nal migration to international migration, the of the regions' economy that have made for- f sound economic policies difficult, poor state ions' financial sector infrastructure, high tran- st-of fund transfer, high rate of corruption and stability (Sander and Maimbo, 2005).

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is synonymous with good quality of life which aterial well-being often expressed as having odily well-being which includes being strong, e right frame of mind and looking good; social which includes caring for and settling children; f-respect, peace, and good relations in the fa- he community; having security, which include , a safe and secure environment, personal and ecurity, and confidence in the future; and hav- m of choice and action, which include being lp other people in the community (Narayan et 2000b).

the key indicators of wellbeing are: rate of po- expectancy at birth (years); adult illiteracy; ac- ealth care services; access to safe water; ac- nitation; infant mortality rate; maternal mortality alence of malnutrition, population estimates; ional Product (GNP) per capita (ADB, 2007a, rld Bank, 2008b).

Poverty; Apart from the use of GNP per capita determining the rate of poverty in a particular e percentage of people living on less than $1 a day (PPP) at 1995 international (purchasing power parity) prices is also used. That is, a person is said to be poor if he or she lives in a household whose total income or consumption per capita is less than $1 (US dollar) that is, he/she lives below poverty line.

ii) Life expectancy at birth (years): This is the number of years a newborn infant would live if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of its birth were to be the same throughout his life.

iii) Adult illiteracy: This is the proportion of adults age 15 and above who cannot read and write a short simple statement on their everyday life.

iv) Access to health care services: This is measured by the share of the population for whom treatment of common diseases and injuries including essential drugs on the national list is available within one-hour walk or travel.

v) Access to safe water: This shows the percentage of the population with reasonable access to adequate amounts of safe water (including treated surface waters or untreated but uncontaminated water from sources such as springs, sanitary wells, protected bore-holes and taps. In urban and rural areas a source must not be more than 200 meters away and members of the household do not have to spend a disproportionate part of the day fetching water.

vi) Infant mortality rate: This is the number of deaths of infant under 1 year of age per thousand live births in a given year.

vii) Maternal mortality rate. This is the number of female deaths that occur in pregnancy and immediately after childbirth per 100,000 live births.

viii) Gross National Product (GNP) Per Capita: It is the ratio of the country's total population to the total national income, converted to US dollar using the World Bank's Atlas method.

DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY

A cross-country data drawn from 38 countries in Sub-saharan Africa for the period 2007 were used. The variables considered for the study were well-being proxied by life expectancy at birth (years), international remittances, rate of migration and the rate of inequality. The data were obtained from the African Development Bank Selected Statistics on African Countries for 2007, African Development Bank Gender, Poverty and Environmental Indicators on African Countries also for 2007, Population Reference Bureau World Population Data Sheet for 2007, World Bank World Migration and Remittances Fact Book 2008 and World Bank Development Indicators for the year 2008.

In the course of determining the impact of international remittances on well-being in Sub saharan Africa, a linear regression analysis of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) was used.

The first step in the use of OLS method is to specify the model. Following Adams and Page (2005) method of estimating the impact of migration and remittances on poverty, with some modification, the model for this study was stated as follows:

$$WB_i = f\,(IREM_i, MIG_i, INEQ_i) \qquad (1)$$

When transformed into a linear equation, the model thus becomes:

$$\ln WB_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IREM_i + \beta_2 MIG_i + \beta_3 INEQ_i + U \qquad (2)$$

Table 1. International Remittances in Sub-Saharan Africa and other Regions 2007.

Country/Sub-Region	Population (Million)	GNI ($ (Million)	GNI Per Capita ($)	Remittances ($ Million)	Emigrants ('000)
Angola	16	39	1980	-	522864
Benin	8.7	4.7	540	173	506640
Botswana	1.8	9.7	5900	118	37840
Burkina Faso	14	6.2	460	50	1121758
Burundi	7.8	785	100	-	315477
Cameroon	17	18	1080	103	231169
Cape Verde	.518	1.1	2130	143	181193
Central African Republic	4.1	1.5	360	-	146557
Chad	10	5.2	480	-	181442
Comoros	.614	401	660	12	38433
Congo Democratic Republic	59	8.1	130	-	571625
Congo	4.1	4.5	950	11	194079
Cote d'Ivoire	18	16	870	176	1517625
Djibouti	806	838	1060	26	13031
Equatorial Guinea	.515	5.3	8250	-	92893
Eritrea	4.5	1.1	200	-	848815
Ethiopia	73	13	180	169	445925
Gabon	1.4	7.5	5000	-	27330
Gambia	1.6	499	310	64	56762
Ghana	23	13	520	105	906698
Guinea	9.2	3.3	410	42	520835
Guinea Bissau	1.6	295	190	29	116124
Kenya	35	21	580	570	427324
Lesotho	1.8	1.8	1030	371	256589
Liberia	3.4	494	140	-	89075
Madagascar	19	5.4	280	11	151364
Malawi	13	2.2	170	1	93223
Mali	14	6.1	440	192	1213042
Mauritania	3.2	2.8	740	2	105315
Mauritius	1.3	6.5	5450	215	119424
Mozambique	20	6.9	340	80	803261
Namibia	2.1	6.3	3230	17	15101
Niger	14	3.6	260	67	437844
Nigeria	145	103	640	3329	836832
Rwanda	9.2	2.5	250	21	196104
Sao Tome & Principe	0.160	120	780	1	21264
Senegal	1.2	8.9	750	874	463403
Seychelles	0.86	711	8650	15	11841
Sierra Leone	5.6	1.4	240	38	78516
Somalia	8.5	-	-	-	441417
South Africa	47	250	5390	735	713104
Sudan	37	34	810	1157	587120
Swaziland	1.1	2.7	2430	98	95608
Tanzania	39	13	350	14	188789
Togo	6.3	2.2	350	192	222008
Uganda	30	9.2	300	856	154747
Zambia	12	10	630	58	150281
Zimbabwe	13	3.2	340	-	761220
Sub- Saharan Africa	770	668	842	10.8	15.9
East Asia and Pacific	1900	3647	1863	58.0	19.3

Table 1. Cont

European and Central Asia	460	2421	4796	38.6	47.6
Latin American and Caribbean	556	286.0	4767	59.9	26.3
Middle East and North Africa	311	811	2481	28.5	12.9
South Asia	1493	1138	766	43.8	22.1

Source: World Bank 2008a.

Well-being proxied by life expectancy at birth (years) in each
A.
= International remittances proxied by the ratio of
tional remittances to GDP in each country.
International migration proxied by international labour mobi-
ach country.
= Rate of inequality proxied by the Gini index in each coun-

intercept
3 =The estimation parameters associated with the influence
idependent variables ($IREM_i$ MIG_i, $INEQ_i$) on the dependent
(WB_i).
error term.

nate the model, a multiple regression analysis was used in reflect the explanatory nature of the variables. To verify the of the model, two major evaluation criteria were used:

-priori expectation criteria which is based on the signs and des of the coefficients of the variables under investigation.
stical criteria which is based on statistical theory, which in rds is referred to as the First Order Least Square (OLS), g of R-square (R^2), F–statistic and t–test.

juare (R^2) is concerned with the overall explanatory power gression analysis, the F-statistic is used to test the overall ice of the regression analysis and the t-test is used to test ficant contribution of each of the independent variables on ndent (Oyeniyi, 1997; Greene, 2003).
g from the model, our a priori expectations or the expect- n of behaviour of the independent variables ($IREM_i$, MIG_i, n the dependent variable (WB_i) were $IREM_i > 0$, $MIG_i > 0$, , an indication that the more the flow of international remit- d migration the more the well-being in sub-saharan Africa, more the rate of inequality, the less the well-being in sub- Africa.

TS AND DISCUSSION

ilts of the multiple regression analysis conducted vel of significance are presented in Table 2.
at the model shows that the R^2 is 0.59, which in rds means that variation in the dependent varia- plained by the explanatory variables, while the n take care of the remaining 41% which are va- the study that can not be included in the model of certain qualitative features. At 5% level of sig- the F-statistic show that the model is useful in ng if the explanatory variables have any signifi- ence on the dependent variable as the computer which is 16.7 is greater than the tabulated F- alued at 2.61.

Table 2. Regression results of International Remittances and well-being in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Variable	Co-efficient estimates and t-values
Intercept (I)	59.8 (27.0)
IREM (I)	4.53 (1.71)**
MIG (I)	0.22 (0.62)
INEQ (I)	-0.1(-6.98)*
R^2	0.59
F	16.7
No. of Observations	38

* Significant at 5% level. ** Significant at 10% level.

Holding migration and inequality constant, the co-efficient and the associated t-value of international remittances is directly related to well-being in Sub-Saharan Africa, thus fulfilling our a-priori expectation. Statistically, international remittances are significant at 10% level of significance. The positive signs is an indication that international remittances have relatively contributed to the improvement of well-being in the sub-region, which is in conformity with the studies by Giuliano and Ruiz-Arranz (2005), Ratha (2005), Sander and Maimbo (2005), Kireyev (2006), Nery-Saca and Caceres (2006), Biller (2007), Gupta et al. (2007), and Acosta et al. (2008b).

For instance, the outcome of the study by Sander and Maimbo (2005) indicates that a high proportion of funds in some countries are congruent with the idea of migration and remittances as part of migrants' strategies for reducing poverty and improving the quality of life of the migrants and their families. Consumption supported by remittances contributes to improved standards of living and educational opportunities. In Zimbabwe, it was observed that households with migrants were found to have less cultivated land than households without migrants, but slightly higher education levels. In Burkina Faso, it was estimated that international remittances reduced the headcount of rural households in poverty by about 7% and of urban households in poverty by about 3%.

Using micro and macroeconomic data and techniques, Acosta et al. (2008b) established that international remittances in some countries in Latin America led to large reduction in poverty levels, especially in those countries where migrants come from the lower quintiles of the income distribution. Notable among these countries are Mexico, El-Salvador and the Dominican Republic where extreme poverty was estimated to fall by more than 35%

lerate poverty by an average of 19% in 2007.

ion

ical study on the impact of international remittan-
vell-being in sub-Saharan Africa was carried out
cross–country data and a multiple regression
The result obtained indicates that international
es have a positive impact on well-being in the
n. This outcome notwithstanding, individuals,
ents and policy makers in the sub-region still
take into consideration the following measures
d likely improve the flow and effective utilization
ernational remittances, which in turn would im-
well-being of the people in the Sub-region;

overnments in the countries in sub-Saharan Afri-
guarantee sound macroeconomic policies with
xchange rate regime, low rates of inflation and
planning that would allow for effective develop-
oth national and individual resources used mos-
recipients of international remittances.

overnments and the formal financial institutions,
the banks in the sub-region should make avail-
flexible financial sector infrastructure and low
cost of fund transfers in order to encourage
of international remittances to the Recipients
ually family members of the emigrants.

overnments should also make available condu-
tment climate with stable political environment
of-corruption, conflicts and wars as experienc-
tries like Nigeria, Sudan-Darfur and Somalia.
measures should also be taking in check ma-
idence of money laundering that has become
countries like Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, Congo
Republic and Gabon.

uals and governments should ensure greater
cy in the transfer of fund between the sender,
ing agent and the receiver (who probably do
bank account), ensure adequate protection of
ers, financial security and risk management

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