



ETUDES ET DOCUMENTS DU GRAESE

**Impact of migration on agricultural production in a
Vietnamese village**

Thi Minh Khue NGUYEN

Impact of migration on agricultural production in a Vietnamese village

Thi Minh Khue NGUYEN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESENTATION OF THE AUTHOR.....	- 1 -
ABSTRACT/TOM TẮT.....	- 2 -
1. INTRODUCTION.....	- 5 -
2. METHODOLOGY	- 11 -
3. RESEARCH FINDINGS	- 14 -
3.1 MAIN FEATURES OF CORRESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS	- 14 -
3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS.....	- 16 -
3.3 IMPACT OF MIGRATION OVER LAND USE PURPOSE FOR AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES	- 20 -
3.4 LABOUR MANAGEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES	- 27 -
3.5 THE PARTICIPATION OF RURAL YOUTH IN SMALLHOLDER FARMING IN RED RIVER DELTA, VIETNAM....	- 31 -
4. CONCLUSION	- 35 -
REFERENCES	- 38 -

PRESENTATION OF THE AUTHOR

Dr. Thi Minh Khue NGUYEN works as a Sociology Lecturer at Vietnam National University of Agriculture (VNUA), Vietnam. Currently, she holds the post of Deputy Head of Sociology Department at Faculty of Political and Social Science (VNUA) where she carries out research and teaching activities.

She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and communication as well as a master of Arts from Institute of Social Science (ISS). In 2019, she completed a doctoral fellowship in the field of agriculture at the Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, University of Liege, Belgium. Her thesis “Impacts of migration on agricultural development in Red River Delta, Vietnam” explores the impacts of rural migration on agricultural production in the context of 30 years after the Đổi Mới (renovation) reform based on a systematic survey of a Vietnamese village, key informant interviews and participatory observation.

Her research interests are the following fields: Rural development, agriculture, youth, migration.

ABSTRACT/ TOM TẮT

This research explores the impact of rural migration on agricultural production under the context of 20 years after *Doimoi* based on a systematic survey of a Vietnamese village, key informant interviews, and participatory observation. All data is collected in Maith on Village in the Bacninh Province, typically for Red River Delta's village and takes into account the comparative perspective, comparing the situations of household groups participated in different types of migration and non-migrant households in their agricultural production. The paper showed that the increasing rural out-migration flows becomes more circular with the development of infrastructure. Remittance plays a central role for the household income and shows a positive case of remittance investment in farming. The groups involve in diversified migration types are spent more remittance to overcome farming constraints than other groups. The remittance used for agricultural production is four times higher than for non-farm. Majority of migrant households keeps their paddy field and manage to keep agricultural production on their land under the context of labour loss for migration by multiple ways including partially abandon, partially leasing, partially lending, and partially producing. Agricultural land and farm work keep its position as a stable resource, a guarantee of subsistence or a safety net for rural people which would boosting their own autonomy. In term of agricultural scheme, majority of Mai Thon households keep rice production as the fundamental agricultural activities, while in opposite, cash-crop cultivation and livestock raising are vastly reduced. The research also explored the expansion of multifunction households and multi-spacial households to maintain agriculture under the influence of migration. Moreover, migration permits agricultural production priority to home consumption which encourage Maithon households keep farming in small-scale, local variety or breeds with higher nutrition, better local resource usage and more environmentally friendly for their own family and friends. This reaction shows the interesting resistance of peasant under the context of global food crisis, not only in term of food security but also food safety and food sovereign. This implies that although migration would be considered as the supplement strategy for agriculture production to increase household security and

autonomy. Decentralized rural industries provide rural people nearby extra-job opportunities beyond farming could favor people to continue farming. Moreover, despite agriculture's low returns, many rural youths still engage in agriculture and believe it as the way of life.

Luận án này nghiên cứu những tác động của di cư nông thôn đến sản xuất nông nghiệp trong bối cảnh 30 năm sau công cuộc Đổi mới (đổi mới) dựa trên khảo sát hệ thống về một làng quê Việt Nam. Tất cả dữ liệu được thu thập tại Làng Mai Thôn, tỉnh Bắc Ninh, một ngôi làng điển hình của đồng bằng sông Hồng. Nghiên cứu đưa ra góc nhìn so sánh, so sánh tình hình của các nhóm hộ tham gia vào các loại hình di cư và hộ không di cư và tác động của chúng đối với sản xuất nông nghiệp của họ. Kết hợp giữa phương pháp định tính và định lượng, đề tài đã chỉ ra tính chất tuần hoàn ngày càng trở nên quan trọng di cư từ nông thôn ra thành thị. Tính chất tuần hoàn trong di cư đã đặt người nông dân vào vị trí trọng tâm trong quá trình hồi tiếp nông thôn đô thị và biến di cư trở thành một yếu tố chính thúc đẩy biến đổi xã hội nông thôn và phát triển nông nghiệp. Tiền gửi về từ di cư trở thành thu nhập chính của các hộ gia đình nông thôn, và được sử dụng chủ yếu cho tiêu dùng. Tuy nhiên tiền gửi về ở Mai Thôn cũng cho thấy xu hướng tích cực trong việc đầu tư vào nông nghiệp. Tiền đầu tư vào nông nghiệp cao gấp 4 lần so với phi nông. Nông nghiệp và di cư bổ trợ lẫn nhau trong chiến lược hộ gia đình nông thôn. Phần lớn các hộ gia đình giữ đất nông nghiệp và duy trì sản xuất lúa nông nghiệp bằng nhiều cách thức đa dạng: một mặt họ chỉ sản xuất ở mức thấp (bỏ vụ rau, chỉ sản xuất một vụ lúa), một mặt họ cho thuê, mượn đất. Đất đai và sản xuất nông nghiệp luôn là một nguồn lực ổn định, vừa đảm bảo cho cuộc sống tự cung tự cấp, vừa duy trì tính tự chủ của các hộ gia đình nông thôn.

Đề tài cũng chỉ ra tính đa chức năng và xu hướng kết nối không gian qua di cư của các hộ gia đình để duy trì sản xuất nông nghiệp dưới ảnh hưởng của di cư. Di cư còn ảnh hưởng tới xu hướng tiêu dùng các sản phẩm nông nghiệp của hộ. Thay vì bán lấy tiền phục vụ các nhu cầu sinh hoạt khác của gia đình, các sản phẩm nông nghiệp hiện được ưu tiên cho tiêu dùng trong hộ gia đình, cũng như làm quà biếu để duy trì quan hệ xã hội đối với hàng xóm và người thân, đặc biệt những người không có đất và điều kiện trực tiếp làm nông

nghiệp. Xu hướng này thúc đẩy các hộ đình ở Mai thôn lựa chọn các giống lúa và con giống có chất lượng cao, thân thiện với môi trường và các nguồn lực tại địa phương. Điều này cho thấy những tương tác chủ động của hộ gia đình ở nông thôn trong bối cảnh khủng hoảng lương thực toàn cầu, không phải chỉ ở khía cạnh an ninh lương thực mà còn dưới góc độ an toàn thực phẩm và chủ quyền lương thực. Kết quả là, các hộ gia đình nông thôn trở thành các hộ cư trú tại nhiều địa điểm với nhiều nguồn sinh kế đa dạng và phong phú. Nghiên cứu chỉ ra mặc dù di cư sẽ được coi là một chiến lược bổ sung cho sản xuất nông nghiệp nhằm tăng cường an ninh và quyền tự chủ của hộ gia đình, nhưng đến lượt nó, di cư và các cơ hội việc làm thêm ngoài việc làm nông nghiệp cũng cung cấp thêm điều kiện để người nông dân, đặc biệt là thanh niên – được làm nông nghiệp và phát triển nông nghiệp theo cách mà họ mong đợi.

1. INTRODUCTION

More than 30 years after the introduction of the *Đổi Mới* (renovation policy) reforms in 1986, Vietnam's economy has seen fundamental changes in social and economic relationships that have led to unprecedented economic development and agrarian change. This reform program has boosted Vietnam's annual economic growth rate from 6% to 8% since the early 1990s. In rural areas, the return to household-based agricultural production initially prompted a rapid growth in agricultural production, transforming Vietnam from a rice-importing country into one of the world's top rice exporters (Gironde, 2009, p. 230; Tran, 2004, p. 114). However, after that initial spurt of growth, the expansion of agricultural production has slowed and shifted to industrial and service sectors. In terms of output value, the share of agriculture has declined from 42% in 1989 to 26% in 1999 and 21% in 2011 while the industry sector has more than doubled from 23% in 1990 to 47% in 2011 (GSO, 2011). Despite this shift, Vietnam's economy still depends on agriculture which accounts for more than one-quarter of the GDP, provides 85% of exports and employs about 60% of the work force. A large part of the Vietnamese population (68%) resides in rural areas which makes farming continue to be an important part of the lives and livelihoods of many Vietnamese, especially the most vulnerable people.

However, the gap in income earning opportunities between rural and urban areas continues to grow in absolute terms. It has been a major driver of migration within Vietnam. This domestic migration has been multi-directional, and more than two-thirds of internal migrants have moved from rural areas to cities. Results of the 2009 census show that 7.7% of the population (6.6 million people) aged over 5 migrated, up from 6.5% in the 1999 census. Moreover, many types of migration, such as short-term, temporary and circular movements, are not included in these figures because the main sources of data, including VHLSS, do not collect information on households that are not registered in the location where the householders actually reside. Meanwhile, an enormous proportion of recent arrivals to the cities are unregistered, referred to as the "*floating population*". In fact, the number of unregistered people in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City is even larger than the

number who reported living elsewhere five years previously. In the 2009 census, approximately 350,000 people in Hanoi and 1 million in Ho Chi Minh City reported living in a different province five years previously (Coxhead, Nguyen, & Linh, 2015). Increasing migration reflects not only economic growth but also important regional socio-economic disparities, particularly between the cities and the countryside, and the growing labour market in large cities and the expanding industrial zones. For example, the net migration rates are highest for Ho Chi Minh City (116%) and Hanoi (50%), the two largest cities, and Binh Duong (341.7%), Da Nang (77.9%) and Dong Nai (68.4%), which are the most industrialised provinces. In 2009, 29.6% of the population live in urban areas, compared to 23.7% in the 1999 census (GSO, 2010) .

Rural out-migration is, on the one hand, purported to have been an integral component of the sustainable urbanisation and national economic transition. On the other hand, migrating labourers have become an important source of labour in urban areas and industrial zones during this process. Various research studies in Vietnam conclude that migration is one of the key household and individual strategies in response to both economic difficulties and livelihood opportunities. However, the impacts of out-migration have had a complex and multi-dimensional impact on agriculture and the rural areas. Vietnam's agricultural sector is characterised by small household producers with 70% of households having less than 0.5 ha in 2011 and the share of the largest category of holdings – above 2 ha – constitutes only close to 6%. Therefore, Vietnamese agriculture faced significant constraints on production, which is exactly the setting in which migration is expected to impact on agricultural production. Rural migration has affected agricultural production in two ways: out-migration of labour and remittance flows. The first aspect refers to the process of withdrawing labour from agriculture and rural areas and moving it to other sectors in urban areas. The second aspect concerns facilitation of on-farm investment and relief of credit constraints that prevented farmers from purchasing key inputs. These two facets interact and determine the impact of migration on agricultural production (agricultural land use, kind of crops, use of inputs, productivity). This poses major questions regarding the relationship between migration and agricultural production and the impacts of migration on livelihoods, identities and social relations. Data are gathered about what is happening to the farmers and farmer families

when they have to deal with spreading their work and personal life across the spaces. A matter of societal significance is also the contribution of this research to the food security debate. Most of the existing research assumes that migration leads to a regression of agricultural production and implies that it would have a negative impact on Vietnam's food security and food sovereignty. This research examines this issue starting from the peasant's own experiences and farming practices, with an overall purpose is to understand the complex interactions of migration on agricultural development. This aim will be achieved through the following sub-objectives:

- Explore the migrant's characteristics, remittance patterns and the investment behaviour of remittance recipients.
- Analyse the sustainable impacts of migration on agricultural production through four main dimensions: 1) Remittance as a source of farming investment; 2) land use and land holdings under cultivation; 3) agricultural scheme; and 4) labour division in agriculture.
- Exploring the social impacts of migration including social differentiation, intra-household gender and generational relations related to agricultural activities and revising the peasant concept.

The relationship between migration and development in rural areas is complex, context-based and barely studied. There are a variety of factors that influence the extent to which migration has negative or positive effects on rural households and sending areas. The impact of migration is dependent on, for instance, the type and the duration of the migration, the local context and the number of remittances (Adger, Kelly, Winkels, Huy, & Locke, 2002; Cohen, 2011; Sasin & McKenzie, 2007). There is not always a clear-cut relationship amongst the consequences of different types of migration in the same area. Different forms of migration are likely to have significantly different effects, and internal migration usually has more positive impacts on rural areas (Akram-Lodhi, Borras, & Kay, 2007; T. D. Nguyen, Lebailly, & Vu, 2014) in comparison with international migration. Similarly, regarding (H. de Haas, 2005; Dean & Choi, 2007; Portes, 2010) dsuggest that it can help to reduce inequality, but it is also very dependent on the context. Research in Laos (Jonathan Rigg, 2007) and Indonesia (Yamauchia, Budy P. Resosudarmoa, & Effendib, 2009) revealed that international migration created more inequality

than internal migration. Besides, in some cases like Vietnam, while migration could widen income disparities within villages, it may reduce those between provinces (D. L. Nguyen & Grote, 2012). At a more macro level, Phan and Coxhead (2010) explore the determinants of inter-provincial migration and the effects of migration on inter-provincial inequality. Using a gravity model, the authors showed that migrants move from low-income to high-income provinces and the results show that the impact of migration on inequality can be either negative or positive. Therefore, migration and remittances have the potential to contribute to development, but it will depend on the specific political, economic and social circumstances in both the place of origin and that of destination. Moreover, temporary or seasonal migration can enhance the allocation of labour, because migrant workers are flexible and able to return when their households or communities need them. In other words, the labour circle does not show a negative impact on their family's economic activities. However, migration can have a major impact on labour divisions and the workload within sending households. The remaining family members have to take over the tasks performed by the migrating members, such as performing domestic work, caring for children and the elderly or handling agricultural activities. The departure especially of a young, able-bodied man often results in a heavier workload for the women staying back with the household. Besides household duties and caring for children, they have to work in agriculture and to handle the household problems that arise (Hein De Haas, 2010). This issue also raised the concern about the gender and generation as the crosscut over the migration and agriculture studies.

The following model demonstrate the fundamental complexity of agricultural transformation currently taking place in developing countries, and the equally complex associations between these transformations on one the hand and rural out-migration on the other. The potential impact of migration on agrarian change is high, but this impact is mediated by various other contextual variables. The framework on the impact of migration and agrarian change with a focus on the social dimension, as described below in Figure 1, suggests a possible approach to this challenge. Migration should be seen as a livelihood, investment, and resilience strategy rather than the significant disruption of agricultural production.

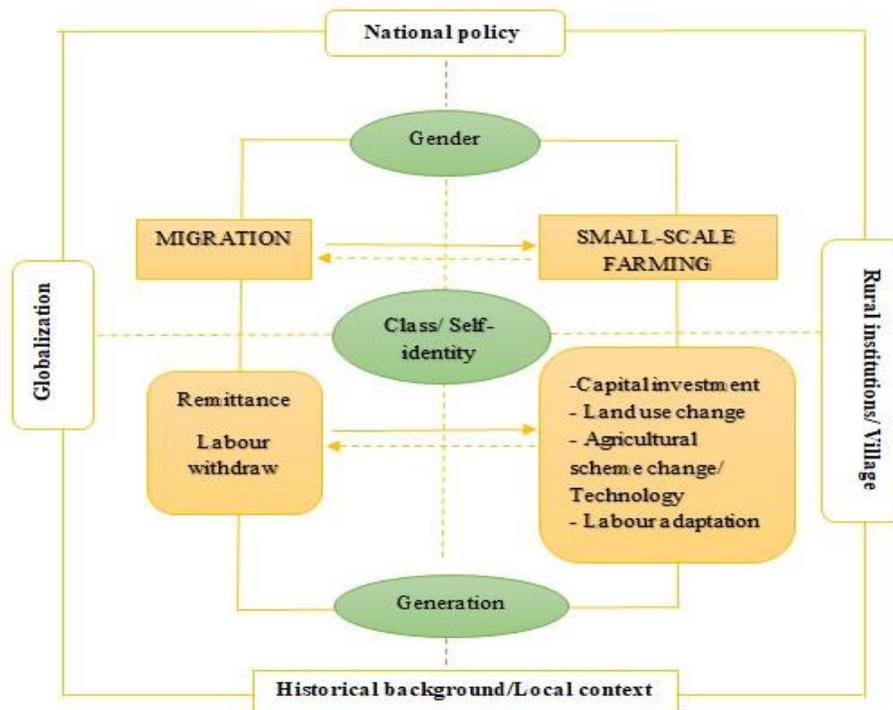


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the impacts of migration on agrarian change

The impacts of migration on agrarian change are immensely variable; therefore, the pole of migration in this frame suggests considering three aspects which heavily affect agricultural production: the migration patterns, characteristics of migrants and remittance behaviours. As the consequence of the migration process, farming needs to adapt to the new source of capital investment from remittances, the change in land use and agricultural schemes combined with technology development and labour adaptation. This interaction needs to take the local context into account, including the globalisation process, the national macro policy, local historical context and household options reflecting often unique combinations of complex and even conflicting processes.

The centre of the framework focuses on the social dimensions highlighting the class or social differentiation impacted by peasant mobilisation which emphasis more on the way people think they are. The social aspects also highlight the gender and generational dimensions of the social reproduction of rural communities. Each rural household has different livelihood strategies, and these differ according to age, gender and educational background. At the

same time, members of families are not homogenous, i.e. different members of the households have their own interests, aspirations and perception. Moreover, this paper emphasises the need to include the gender, generation and perspectives of the migrant peasants in further research, not only as a subject, but also as an object of migration because they are proactively involving themselves in the agrarian change process as analysed above. The gender relation intertwined with generation shows that migration enhances the resilience of both females and youth in traditionally agrarian societies which are typically patriarchal in both the gender and generational relations within these societies. Migration is supposed to be an effective strategy for females and youth to take advantage of additional earning opportunities whilst keeping their link with agricultural work. Rural out-migration, in most cases, is associated with agrarian change in rural areas, but it is not normally a dramatic transformation.

2. METHODOLOGY

The fieldwork was conducted in 2015 in Maithon Village in Chi Lăng Commune, Que Vo District, Bacninh Province in Vietnam. “*Làng*” (village) was one of the most typical institutions of ancient Vietnamese society (Bui, 2010; Gourou, 1945). Mus (1952, p. 240) stated that “Vietnam is a network of villages” and he emphasized “it was villages that produced Vietnam and it was in them that one learned to apprehend it, at decisive times, in its national spirit” (Mus, 1952, p. 21). Every village had its own lands, agricultural practices, its own property and its own justice, with distinct traditions, cultures, politics and economics (Khoang, 1966). Therefore, a village has been viewed as the most appropriate entry point for research into rural conditions and change in rural Asian and particularly in Vietnam studies. In this research, I choose Maithon as one typical Vietnamese village of Bac Ninh province in Red River Delta of Vietnam to do research. Bac Ninh is located in Red River Delta, about 30km far north from the capital Ha Noi, along the recently upgraded National Highway 1A. Sharing the same characteristic with other villages in Red River Delta, Maithon was chosen because firstly this village has experienced dramatically change due to modernization process of Doimoi, in which the high level of migration is one of fundamental characteristics (J. Rigg & Vandergeest 2012). Secondly, Maithon socio-economic conditions are characterized by monoculture in rice production and before its first high wave of temporary migration in 2005, the village population was mainly leaned on farming as the only source of income. Until now, it is considered as the lowest on economy status due to having no industrial zone, no traditional handicraft as other villages, and very limited dynamic non-farm business diversification and at far distance from capital of province (30km). Thanks to its mono-source of earnings in rice production, the Maithon household income in 2005 could be recalled based on their agricultural land areas which had statistics record. Besides, monoculture gives me a chance to isolate the impact of circular migration with the rural areas from other factors.

In this paper, I use both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data come from two sources. The first source is published and unpublished data of the agricultural land, the village, and the commune. The second source is

observations, interviews and conversations during fieldwork. The quantitative data come from the survey which were carried out in 2015. In addition, I also use population statistics and socio-economic data provided by the commune, particularly those related to land use and labour. Overall, Mai Thon village has 158 households (up to July/2015) which include 699 villagers. I did interview with 128 households, equivalent with 81% of the whole village household number. There are still 30 households that I could not make interviews. These cases are households who are long-term migrating, or they are only too small children who cannot be interviewed. However, I still collect the general information of these household from *Hokhau* book (which is updated to 9/2014). The systematic survey divided 128 households in the village into four groups, detailed as below:

Group 1: includes the households whose family member(s) participated out of village and short-distance migration which permit them commuting daily during the last 12 months. There were 42 households in this group.

Group 2: Migration households: family member(s) only migrate for work out of province, and normally is long-distance during the last 12 months. This type of migration is much diversified, including both national and international migration, seasonal and long-term migration. There were 23 households in this groups. In fact, 30 inaccessible households were belonged to this groups however I could not conduct the information from them.

Group 3: Mixed migration households: family members participated in both types of short-distance and long-distance migration during the last 12 months. There were 42 households in this group

Group 4: Non-migration households: none of family member participated in any types of migration during the last 12 months. At the time 2015, there were 21 households which all of their members stayed in the village and conducted no migrating activities. However, among these 21 households, there were 6 households which fell into the sick and/or the alone elder cases, in other words, they were considered as incapable of working, living under the poverty line, and totally leaning on the social allowance. Thus, I abstracted these number of households out of these categories and the total households in this group was only 15 left.

The systematic questionnaire investigation and participatory observation were to provide a broader picture, while the in-depth interviews and biographies were specifically directed to provoke a profound illustration of the peasant's daily life, their perceptions related to farming labour management. Even though the industrialisation process has been underway in Bac Ninh province since 2001 with the enormous agricultural land acquisition to build up the industrial zones, Mai Thon village totally stands out from this movement. However, associated with the rise of industrial zones nearby, the village's agricultural labourers have an increased opportunity to find non-farm jobs.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 Main features of correspondent households

Even though the industrialization process started in Bac Ninh province since 2001 with the enormous agricultural land acquisition to build up the industrial zones, Mai Thon village totally stood out of this movement. However, associated with the rise of industrialized zones nearby, the village's agricultural labors have opened the chances to find an extra non-farm jobs. This dramatically effected on the changes in labor structure of farm households. Table 1 described the main characteristics of surveyed households in which demographic features of households are focused, includes household/family size, labour size, migration labour size. Household size indicates how big a family is - it is a unit of measurement used to show the number of members living in a family, consisting of parents, children and others. Household size depends on couples' birth rate and model of different generations living together in a family. In traditional Vietnam agricultural society, a big number of offspring is a symbol of a prosperous family and satisfied a big amount of manual labor was needed, which resulted in a high birth rate and big household size. Also, many Vietnamese generations lived under the same roof. Whereas in the process of industrialization in recent years Vietnam, the birth rate is low and grown up children do not live with their parents, so the household size is smaller (Bergstedt, 2012). The household size of Vietnam decreased from 5.22 persons per household in 1979 to 4.48 persons per household in 1989, 4.61 persons per household in 1999 and this number was 3.8 in 2009, declining by 0.81 person compared with 1999.

Table 1 shows that the average family size of Maithon household is 4.6 people who is higher than the average family size of Red River Delta (3.79); rural areas region (3.9) and the national (3.8) according to the 2009 Vietnam population and housing census conducted on April 1st 2009. It goes with the claim that Bacninh is the highest density population city in Red River Delta and in Vietnam. This mainly due to the families in Maithon keep living three or more generations under the same roof rather than the high birth rate. Among four

groups, the smallest household's size is the non-migrant (4.3) while the largest one is the family who pursuit migration for long distance (5.1). While the labour size of the three migration household groups is relatively equal (2.7; 2.8 and 2.8), the migration size of the research groups is quite different, in which the migration labour of the group 3 is highest 2.3 person per household.

Table 1: The socio-economic characteristics of survey households

Indicators	Group 1 (n=42)	Group 2 (n=23)	Group 3 (n=42)	Group 4 (n=15)	Total (n=122)
Household labour					
Family size (<i>mean, pers.</i>)	4.8	5.1	4.6	4.3	4.6
Labour size ¹ (<i>mean, pers.</i>)	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.5
Male labour (<i>mean, pers.</i>)	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.3
Female labour (<i>mean, pers.</i>)	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.2
Migration labour					
Mean, <i>pers.</i>	1.8	1.9	2.3	0	1.5
Number of migrants (<i>pers.</i>)	76	43	98	0	219
Male migration labor ² (<i>mean, pers.</i>)	0.9	1.0	1.1	0	0.8
Female migration labour (<i>mean, pers.</i>)	0.8	0.9	1.2	0	0.7
Agricultural land					
Agricultural land (1993, <i>mean, m²</i>)	1706.4	1931.3	1632.5	2169.0	1859.1
Agricultural land (2014, <i>mean, m²</i>)	1724.6	1763.8	1543.6	2350.0	1808.8

Source: Household survey 2015

In term of land holdings, there were only very small exchanges among villagers and land conversion for commune purposes since the agricultural land market is not well developed in Vietnam in general and in Bac Ninh in particular. Overall, the farm households cannot sustain their livelihoods with small land areas therefore they had to find an off-farm job and outside the village. However, the overall trend was observed that most of the group maintain their own agricultural land, except for the slight decrease of group 2 and increase of group 4 in landholdings in comparison between the year 1993 – the moment of land redistribution in Vietnam and in 2015. Without migrating members, this group of non-migration households were likely to rent more

¹ Included migration labour

² Migration labour at the research time 2014-2015

land of the migration households in the village or commune to expand agricultural production. However, it should be notice that they rarely expand their agricultural production into large scale farm. Wet rice production in Vietnam requires considerable labour input, especially during transplanting and harvesting. Therefore, literature reported that the movement of people from farm to non-farm employment and from rural to urban areas typically causes agricultural labour shortages, and forces farmers to adapt their farming techniques. In the Southern of Vietnam (Mekong River Delta), farmers have mechanized rice production (Hoang, Truong, Luu, Dinh, & Dinh, 2013). However, in the Red River Delta, the household division of labour and production process will easily adapt to the out-migration of one or two members, and to the subsequent relative labour shortage and decreased flexibility in production sphere.

3.2 Demographic characteristics of migrants

The important aspects of the relationship between migration and agricultural production relate to the quality of labour and the decision-making process. The study shows that the majority of migrants are young, married and well-educated. While most migrants are currently married (82.6%), the proportion of men and women participating in the survey sample was relatively balanced (50.2% and 49.8% respectively). The same trend is also observed in three groups of migration households. The number of female migrants has risen over time in keeping with the trend of the national movement (Kim Anh, Hoang Vu, Bonfoh, & Schelling, 2012). Women now represent 52.4% of all Vietnamese migrants (GSO, 2016). However, some women migrate to cities to work as men do, but female migrants are not as stable as male. They usually stop their migration work when the family, especially the children, need them. In-depth interviews show that 65% of women have migrant work experience, in particular women 45 years old and younger, but now they are at home. They stopped being migrant workers after marriage, after the birth of the children or when the family, especially the children, needed their support. In terms of age, the majority of migrating family members are under 30, with 37.4% of the entire sample aged 16-30. The age group 30-40 accounts for 33.3% of sample, while the age group 40-50 and over 50 years of age accounts

for only 22.4% and 6.8% respectively. The average age of migrants is 35 which is remarkably older than the national median age of 27.8 (GSO, 2016). Group 1 tends to move at a younger age while 51.3% of group 1 migrants are under the age of 30, only 20% of group 2 and 34.7% of group 3 belong to this category. The main reason is because the industrial zones around Mai Thon village prefer youth labour, which allows the young people to commute daily. The majority of group 2 falls in the age range from 30 to 40 – the period that people are still in their productive period, however being excluded from the IZs.

The majority of the migrants (45.2%) are industrial workers, far more in comparison with other occupations. Notably, 75% of those in group 1 belongs to this niche, which means most of the day commuters work in an industrial zone around Mai Thon village. Group 2 and group 3, in contrast, have more diversified types of jobs. Most of the group 1 members are living in the village (96.1%) while 86.7% of group 2 live and work away from the village, mostly in Hanoi, and 4.6% of the permanent migrants work in the south. Group 1 mainly work as day commuters to Que Vo and Yen Phong Industrial Zones, working in factories such as Rang Dong, Temma and Canon. Mr An, a migrating worker, is typical of the Mai Thon villagers who prefer wage labour, especially in the young people group. The average wage is much dependent on qualifications, skills and seniority, fluctuating between 4 million to 6 million VND per month as net income. If they are skilled, their net wage could be between 7 and 8 million VND a month. Compared with agriculture, this wage is considered much higher and more stable, therefore many youths prefer wage labour. Choosing wage labour opportunities nearby permits migrants to live at home and thus considerably reduce their cost of living. It is noteworthy that the recently vastly improved information and communication technologies and local road networks in the province have contributed remarkably to daily commuting. For example, the motorcycle plays a big role in promoting this.

In terms of gender, it is noteworthy that twice as many female migrants as males engaged in industrial work. This can be explained by the following factors: the female migrants surveyed prefer the stability of these jobs rather than high-earning jobs; and their actual frequency of movement as well as their need to return home due to family obligations is higher than that of the

male respondents. Male migrants tend to seek a higher income over employment stability. Therefore, the number of female migrants who chose to work in an industrial zone around their hometown is much higher than that of their male counterparts. Actually, this reflects the continuity of the traditional gender-based division of rural household labour. *“Women inside and men outside”* is the traditional cultural norm in Vietnam.

Overall, research shows the positive picture of Mai Thon migrants’ work and income. Therefore, even though the amount of money depends on numerous factors, most migrants (94.5%) report that they send half of their income back home. There is no significant difference in the remittance sending decision among three groups of households. Moreover, one of the remarkable features of remittances on the research site is its stability and frequency, which is the result of numerous interactive factors. Firstly, family member movement is usually a decision of the whole family instead of an individual member. Households expect to have a higher income due to the remittances, so they send their members for migration. Thus, after finding jobs and getting an income, migrants are expected to send remittances to contribute to the household income and savings. Besides, for some households, migration is costly, and they have to borrow to pay for migration. Remittances are used to pay off this debt. Secondly, many Mai Thon migrants send remittances simply because of altruism. According to altruism theories, the value of a person depends not only on her own consumption but also on the consumption of her/his family, and as a result sending remittances to family can increase the value of migrants (De Haan & Rogaly, 2015; Hein De Haas & Van Rooij, 2010). The remittances are expected to increase not only the income but also the consumption of households. Long-term migration from Mai Thon to the south supported this idea. One elderly woman in a group 2 household whose son migrated to Ho Chi Minh City shared that her second son keeps sending her pocket money every month and she can do whatever she wants with it. She is now living with her first son and all of her expenses are covered.

In Mai Thon, migrants can send remittances so that the recipients will take care of their assets or family or invest in activities with higher capital return than in destination areas. Thus, remittances can lead to a change not only in consumption but also in the labour output and productivity of the home

households. Sharing the same intuitions, migrants in Mai Thon village may send remittances home for altruistic motives, a sense of social responsibility, as a risk-sharing mechanism to buffer consumption in the face of external shocks or as a combination of these reasons. The frequency of receiving money, however, was found to depend upon on the distance and the social networks which permit them to visit or send money home. For most migrants who are located nearby and find it convenient to remit, 73.4% of households report that they received remittances monthly, in line with their monthly wage payment. It is important to note that financial services for money transfer have been developed well in this locality and that the local people are now familiar with those services. Most migrants and their family members have a bank account. However, most migrants prefer combining the monthly remittance with a visit home. In this niche, group 1 accounts for 81.6% which is highest among the groups.

Remittances play a central role for the families of all respondents. shows that the mean remittance in Mai Thon village (2.37) is similar to the mean national remittance amount of US\$1,200 (General Statistics Office, 2016), equivalent to 2.40 million VND per month. Group 1 and group 3 tend to send a little higher remittance back home than group 1, and the remittance of group 2 only accounts for one-third of their earnings while the remittance of group 1 and 3 accounted for half of the migrant’s income. However, there is no significant correlation between the migrants’ earnings and remittances with the different groups of households.

Table 2: Mean remittance among migration household groups

	Group households			
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Total
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Monthly earnings (million VND) (r=0.86, sig= 0.217)	4.89	6.06	6.20	5.71
Remittance (million VND) (r= -0.004, sig = 0.957)	2.45	2.14	2.43	2.37

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Household survey 2015

Overall, table 2 shows the values affected positively on the remittance amount sent to their home households, including marital status, recent living place of migrants, their earnings and their sending decision. When migrants are married and their earnings higher, they are more likely to send money back home. Oppositely, the nearer migrants live, the larger remittance they send home and the less their sending frequency is, the bigger amount they send home. Remittances are spent mostly on consumptive expenses. When they are invested in capital goods or in a household enterprise, it usually involves traditional economic activities in the locality. The main benefit of remittances lies in increased purchasing power and sustaining a robust demand that creates opportunities that, in turn, fuel private sector development. Those that see the opportunities and act upon them, whether receivers or not, take advantage of the inflows of remittances as the bloodline that sustains the local economy. Given these opportunities, the economic potential of internal remittances needs to be recognised by policymakers and service providers to maximise the development of internal migrants, their families, agricultural and rural improvement. The coming section shows the way rural households spend the remittances they receive. It is important to note that there is a gap between their intended use and the actual use of remittances. Another crucial point is that these statistics only reveal the number of people when indicating the remittance purpose, it does not reveal the level of importance of each purpose. For example, if the household has sick or elderly members, they will devote the remittance to health care first and foremost. In the sample, 48.4% of respondents reported using remittances for that purpose.

3.3 Impact of migration over land use purpose for agricultural activities

During 20 years of Doi moi, land tenure Maithon have witnessed remarkable change. Even though being the smallest province of the Delta. BacNinh province has been considered as prominent in term of industrial development in Vietnam. This encouraged many rural households to sell their agricultural land use right. The average level of compensation for one *sào* of agricultural land in 2000 was 30 million VNĐ, it doubles in 2007, including four items of compensation and assistance. This rapid increase in land price compensation

had changed some farmers become millionaires overnight. However, in sharp contrast to the land boom in BacNinh itself, this did not occur in Mai Thon. Located in Que Vo district which has the largest industrial zones within the province with 1,204 ha already converted for industrial zones, Mai Thon villagers in contrast with other villages in the same district, have no conversion of land for other purpose than another agricultural activity. 84.4% of the respondent households keep their land for agricultural production. Among migrating groups, the households only participated in commuting devoted their land for farming activities at the highest proportion (90.5%) which is coherent with the analysis about migration types. It is also interesting when we notice that majority of daily-shift migrants are female who turn out still the main people taking care of their family farming. When female labors migrate, they tend to find the job not too far from their villages so that they can manage to do the agricultural works, especially during the peak time. Besides, the Vietnamese gender norms consider housework is the female task and the bread earner is the men. Therefore, in the Vietnamese feudalism when agriculture is the main earning source, the main participation of male in farming could be observed. However, recently even when agriculture is no longer the main source of household income, farming gradually becomes the female's extended housework responsibilities. It results that when women migrate and the men as the left behind members, women also need support the men and work together with the men. Table 3 showed that while no households in the village absolutely leave their farming land fallowed, there were 6.3 households partially abandoned their land. However, this usage of agricultural land in Mai Thon is more potent than other village in Chi Lang commune, for example Que O has already abandoned a few acres (Chi Lang Commune reported, 2014).

Following the land division round, most of households has approximately one third of their paddy field in high quality which could be used to grow two seasons of rice and one winter season of vegetable and/or other cash crops. However, in 2015, 90% of Maithon households recently abandon this vegetable winter seasons. In term of rice production, there are some households who grows only one season in order to keep their land, because the 2013 Land Law claimed if the peasant does not cultivate in their land for continuous two seasons, they would be withdrawal the land to the public. This

is considered as the main reason forced the peasant household manage to keep agricultural production on their land by multiple ways including: partially abandon, partially leasing, partially lending, and partially producing while they are pursuing other non-farm business or migrating. The case of Mr Huong illustrated for their diversified pathways in maintaining agricultural land assure people a job, a livelihood and somehow it is like a backup strategy.

Mr Huong household has 5 members, including his mother, his wife and two children which were all born before 1993 – the land distribution time. The agricultural land that his family was distributed 5.2 sao combined with 2.6 sao he was inherited from his parents, so their total farming land area was 7.8 sao. He has been a construction worker for ten years, therefore he normally spent twenty days per months commuting around village for work. When their children were small, his wife took care of their children, and they were farming together with high capacity. They grew two rice seasons and one vegetable season in winter in one sao of high-quality land. In 2018, his wife followed her sister migrating to Hanoi to be house cleaner, his agricultural land witnessed a dramatically change. Firstly his family totally dropped growing vegetable. And then, he lended one third of their land (3 sao) for his brother-in-law to grow rice. Recently he rented 2 sao to Mr Phuc to grow potatoes. Therefore, his family now are only really taking care of 2.8 sao and they only grow high quality rice for their family consumption. The year before he had a work accident therefore now Mr Huong mostly stay at home and responsibility for farming daily care His wife will come back home for transparenting and harvesting. His first son, Mr Hoang is 31 years old, and he has opened one hairdresser shop with his wife in Pho Moi town-near Bacninh city for 3 years after few years working in the Que Vo Industrialized zones. Mr Huong's son and his wife lives in their clothes shop but their 3-year-old-child is now living in Maithon village with Mr Huong. They normally come back home with their child at the weekend. Mr Hoang intended to let his wife take care of the shop herself and he will come back home takes charge of farming and his sick farther. He stated if he did that, he would take back all their paddy field.

Mr Huong case shows that agricultural land assure people a job, a livelihood and somehow it is like a backup strategy. Whatever they do outside, if they fail they can always go back to their own land. Li (1996) pointed out that

Vietnamese migrants maintain their agricultural land use right as an insurance for their life because of the fear of unstable jobs in the cities as well. The agricultural land is not only the livelihood for themselves but also for their children in any circumstances. Therefore, Mr Huong lend the land for his brother-in-law for free. He even need to support his brother-in-law pay the agricultural service for the Chi Lang commune (which would be around 200 000 vnd per year) so that the agricultural land makes sure belong to his family. Keeping the agricultural is always the priority of Maithon peasants. Devoting the agricultural land for the agriculture would ensure food security (both in quantity and quality) for their families. The quality of home food becomes very important recently when food safety is warning in Vietnam. Home produced food is also considered as everyday practices of rural household to ensure their food quality (T. M. K. Nguyen, Nguyen, & Lebailly, 2016).

Moreover, although households with migrant members usually keep practicing agriculture at very limited level, in most cases, agricultural land on one hand can ensure the food subsistence of the family remained in the village. Besides, the priority in holding land also implies their villager waiting for some extraordinary value if there would be land conversion. The case of Mr Huong also illustrates how villagers engage in land exchange transactions in order to make up for the imbalances between labour and land within and between households, which have become even more pronounced as a result of labour migration. It is to this point that we now turn. It's noteworthy that first even though agricultural land market is strictly forbidden in the Red River Delta, the underground exchange is happening. In the peasants' everyday language continue to talk of "selling lands" or "purchasing lands" instead of "transferring land-use right" as legally and officially specified. However, most of the transition happened in the rental and the most important reasons leading to the practice of land rental are changes in the size and nature of the household labour force.

Table 3: Migration and agricultural land use

Agricultural land use (Unit: hhs)	Group 1 (n=42)		Group 2 (n=23)		Group 3 (n=42)		Group 4 (n=15)		Total (N=122)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agricultural production	38	90.5	17	73.9	35	83.3	14	93.3	103	84.4
Land converted	1	2.4	0	0	1	2.4	1	4.7	3	2.4
Land partial abundant	1	2.4	2	8.7	5	11.9	0	0	8	6.3

Source: Household survey 2015

As noted above, in 1992 and 1993, each household in Maithon was allocated an area of agricultural land for a period of 20 years depending on the number of people living in the household. Under the new Land Law, which came into effect as of July 2013, this period will be extended to 50 years. During the reallocation in 2009, the division of plots changed, but not the size of land allocated to each household. However, between the original land allocation in 1992 and the reallocation in 2009, the number of people living in each household had changed, sometimes quite dramatically, and this altered the use of land and the organisation of agricultural production in the village. In some households, there were more people of working age because household members had married and their spouses were living with the household, or children had simply become adults in the intervening years. In other households, the number of household members had increased because of the birth of new household members. Conversely, ageing and death had reduced the number of working age adults, or migration had taken them out of the household labour force even if they were still regarded as household members. These demographic perturbations led to an unsettling of the balance between land and available labour, which in turn has driven the land rental market.

Table 4: Land exchange transaction in Mai Thon village

Land use pattern	Group 1 (n=42)		Group 2 (n=23)		Group 3 (n=42)		Group 4 (n=15)		Total (N=122)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Rent- out	3	7.1	3	13.0	7	16.7	0	0	13	10.7
Ren-in	3	7.1	3	13.0	3	7.1	2	13.3	11	9.0
Lend-out	2	4.7	5	21.7	15	35.7	0	0	22	18.0
Lend-in	3	7.1	4	17.4	2	4.7	7	46.7	16	13.1
Sell	1	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.8
Buy	0	0	1	4.3	0	0	0	0	1	0.8

Source: Household survey, 2015

Table 4 reveals the land exchange activities in Maithon village, in which renting, and lending are far more popular than land sale. Villagers are unlikely to sell their land (0.8%), but rather leasing (10.7%) and lending (18%) or even leaving it fallow for certain crop as discussed before. It could be observed that most land rental agreements were based on fixed-rent tenancy, although the rental fee fluctuated from year to year. The unit used to calculate the price was the number of kilograms of rice per sào per year. In many cases, in order to make the payment, the tenants brought the rice to the lenders' houses after each harvest. In some cases, however, the tenants paid in cash. The rental fee varied in general from 30 kg to 80 kg of paddy per sào per year, depending on the quality of the land, the weather conditions and the relationship between the owner and the tenant. It is remarkably blur between renting and lending due to the rice production revenue is so low that the renting fee is sometimes omitting. Besides, the utmost purpose of both renting and lending agricultural land in Maithon is to keep land, therefore, the renting fee is not the priority. Table 4 also pointed out that the group 4 of non-migration households has the highest proportion in lending in field land for expanding farming (46.7%), meanwhile they didnot rent-out or lent-out any piece of land. On the other hand, migrating household groups also kept their own land and the maintenance of land rights is always their priority therefore, most of households lease out their paddy field for their brothers, cousins. Among migration households, the group 3 experienced the highest proportion both of lent-out (35.7%) and rent-out (16.7%) while the group 1 was the lowest category in lend-out (4.7%) and rent-out (7.1%). It is interesting to witness the change in land transaction only over the five years of my reach

here. In 2016 when I come back for data updated and gathering more information on youth opinion in agriculture, it is such a amazing that case study of Mr Phuc has consolated 10ha of paddy field under the support of Chi Lang Government officers. These officer state it followed the New Land Law 2013 application permits rural households change their rice fields into cash crop production and the promotion of the Large Field Program. Even though the contract is only year by year, but it shows an important remark in land consolidation. In opposite with this mainstream, there is special case of Ms Trac who refuses lending out her land and continues grows vegetable for sale frequently.

Ms Trac was a Mao villager, married to Maithon village since 1983, therefore she was divided agricultural land as Maithon people. Her household has 3 people, her husband is sick and mostly stays at home. Her son worked for the Canon firms in Que Vo IZs, however, he was fired due to gambling and now he is unemployed and vagabond. She therefore became the breadwinner of her family. She cultivated 8 sao for rice production and 2 sao for growing vegetable. Rice is grown for 2 seasons per year while vegetable is grown around the year including: corn, cucumber, tomatoes, chilies...depending on weather and market. The first interesting point is she was the only villager who keeps growing vegetable in small-scale for sale. The second point to notice that her plot of land for vegetable growing was located in the middle of the large farm Nguyen Van Phuc. Mrs Trac had rented this land piece for Mr Phuc in two year (2015 and 2016). However, in 2017, she drew her land back to cultivate on her own, even though she is persuaded by many people to rent it out. She explained that she was cleaner in the companies in the industrialize zones however, the job is unstable and low income, therefore she needs the back-up from farming. Besides, she prefers self-cultivation on her land rather than renting it out because it permits her to be independent in daily consuming and sale. She would be busier, but Mrs Trac also works for Mr Phuc if he needed labour in the peak time. She is the case of daily-shift migrant who struggled with the informal work, therefore agricultural land and agricultural activities becomes the best gridlock.

Mr Trac case on one hand shows the instability of rent land contract among villagers. The land arrangements between migrant and non-migrant are

informal and temporary in nature. By renting out land, migrant households do not give up their land use rights. They keep their connections with the land and the village and, in many cases, by receiving a share of the harvest, continue to eat rice cultivated on their land. Land remains an important source of security to hold onto in case of return regardless of preference or forcing. The time contract, which is year by year, from the Government perspective, it is considered as the constraints for land consolidations, large-scale farm and rural development. However, from the peasant view, short time contract is a security for themselves. Whenever they face with the difficulties in migration process, they would come back with their own land and their original livelihood. In other words, it protects their resilience and to some extent strengthen their own autonomy.

Overall, migrating household groups also kept their own land and the maintenance of land rights is always their priority therefore, most of households lease out their paddy field for their brothers, cousins. Among migration households, the group households have multiple type of migration experienced the highest proportion both of lend-out and rent-out while the group of daily-shift migration was the lowest category in lend-out and rent-out. There is also a dramatically change in land consolidation with an example case of 10ha farm for growing potatoes and carrot. However, it is noteworthy that, against the mainstream of land consolidation, the year by year contract in land transaction is security for Maithon villager whenever they had constraints in migration. Agricultural land and farm work are always a stable resource, a guarantee of subsistence or a safety net for rural people which would boosting their own autonomy.

3.4 Labour management in agricultural activities

In Maithon, the consequence of the loss of a household member was found generally unproblematic to agricultural production, here mostly is rice production. A large majority of respondents (91.5 percent) indicated that their households did not suffer a negative impact due to the loss of labour. This can be explained in part by the large population which resulted in a huge labour surplus and limited land. Only few households expressed that because of migration to international, or moving around the Southern part of Vietnam,

the migrants cannot easily come back during the peak period of the harvest, some labour shortage occurred, but its effects have not been drastic. Table 2 shows 74.8% Maithon households rearrange their internal labour for rice cultivation. As already discussed in the previous section, rice production is considered as the fundamental agricultural activities in this village because on one hand, it does not take as much time and labour care as other agricultural activities; on the other hand, unlike other agricultural activities, rice production has high demand labour at only some periods of season; therefore, households could concentrate their labour members elsewhere. Table 2 shows rice production witnessed more potent exchanging and renting external labour than other farming activities. Among the migration households, group 3 witnessed the highest proportion of households participated in labour exchange (50%); while the group 2 showed the lowest percentage (21.4%). The main reason was reported that majority of group 3 migrated in the North of Vietnam, therefore they can manage to come back and help in the peak time. However, their free time is limited, thus they need more supported from their network. In order to organize this labour input, Vietnamese farmers mutually depend on each other for a certain level or cooperation (Bergstedt 2012: 151). Mutual help still plays an important role for the farmer to adapt with labour shortage in the season time. Mutual help or non-commercial labor exchange is expressed in Vietnamese as “đổi công”, which was a common form of mutual aid from old times in Vietnamese traditional villages as well as in many other Southeast Asian countries. This normally occurred on a small scale among 5-7 relatives or neighbor families, to meet the needs of seasonal agricultural tasks that had to be completed in a few days, such as preparation of rice fields, seedling transplantation, irrigation and harvesting (Bui Minh, 2012; Mus, 1952). Beyond its economic functions, this exchange labour strategy seems to create a social connection which offers family groups a portion of the means necessary for them to evolve and reproduce and, by extension, the development and reproduction of the local society as a whole. At the same time, it maintains family units in a local network of interdependence and in certain situations, it can be used as a tool of exclusion. Although this kind of mutual help is often thought to be deteriorated with migration, mechanization, and monetization of agricultural production, our survey results show 34.3% reported that members of their

households exchanged labour (either help other households and/or received help from their neighbours and their relative households) in the year prior to the survey. It is interesting that wage labour and mutual help both play an important role. Even though mutual help is decreasing over the years while paid labour is increasing, only 18.2 percent of households claimed they rented external labour.

Table 5: Labour management in agricultural production activities

(Unit: hhs)		Group 1 (n=42)		Group 2 (n=23)		Group 3 (n=42)		Group 4 (n=15)		Total (N=122)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Rice production	<i>No practice</i>	3	7.1	9	39.1	8	19	3	20	23	18.9
	Family labour	32	82.1	7	50.0	23	67.6	12	100	74	74.8
	Exchange labour	12	30.8	3	21.4	17	50.0	2	16.7	34	34.3
	Rent labour	6	15.4	7	50.0	4	11.8	1	8.3	18	18.2
Cash crop production	<i>No practice</i>	39	92.9	23	100	42	100	14	93.3	118	96.7
	Family labour	3	100	0	0	0	0	1	100	4	100
	Exchange labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rent labour	1	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.8
Pig production	<i>No practice</i>	41	97.6	22	95.7	41	97.6	9	60	113	92.6
	Family labour	1	100	1	100	1	100	6	100	9	100
	Exchange labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rent labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poultry production	<i>No practice</i>	32	76.2	20	87	34	81	4	26.7	90	73.8
	Family labour	10	100	3	100	8	100	11	100	32	100
	Exchange labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rent labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Castle production	<i>No practice</i>	39	92.9	22	95.7	41	97.6	13	86.7	115	94.3
	Family labour	3	100	1	100	1	100	2	100	7	100
	Exchange labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rent labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aqua- culture	<i>No practice</i>	40	95.2	22	95.7	42	100	12	80	116	95.1
	Family labour	2	100	1	100	0	0	3	100	6	100
	Exchange labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Rent labour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Household survey 2015

In a context of out-migration and the rental of additional land, the practice of exchanging labour remains relevant for many households who lack the labour to work their land. Labour exchanges between households are flexible and can

be deployed for a range of agricultural and, sometimes, non-agricultural activities. Besides exchanging equal days for equal types of work (transplanting or harvesting, for instance), labour exchange may, as the example of Ms Hang household illustrates, also involve exchanging one kind of work or service (ploughing, bricklaying) for a day of harvesting. This exchange of farm labour perceived through the lens of the government's economic and developmental aspirations would be considered as "backward" and inefficient (B. T. Hoang, 1998; Taylor, Rozelle, & De Brauw, 2003). It did not contribute to a more industrialized, professionalized, and efficient agricultural sector. However, from the perspective of family and household maintenance, these labour exchange provided a network of support and mutual assistance. At the same time, these labour arrangements enhanced the preservation of a sense of village sentiments. It also facilitated villager's opportunities to involve in money-generating activities outside the household. Besides, it preserves the solidarity between kin and neighbours, somewhat reduced the contradictions between the commercial and the communal values of farm work. Labour exchange in rice cultivation often involves relatives or neighbouring households working on each other's land. Monetary contributions were, of course, important for the households, but it was not sufficient to hold a community together. And to some extent, transactions of money served to undermine the feeling of solidarity as the short-term and unequal aspects of these arrangements set the villagers apart for each other.

In summary, there is no remarkable agricultural labour deficit created due to internal migration in the meso level of a village. However, it is also clear that rural households had difficulties in labour management, specially in peak time of rice season. The way that Maithon household adapted with this new context including: 1) Keep rice production at the limited level while abandon other labour-cost farming activities. 2) Maximize the family labour arrangement. 3) Hire external labour and using mutual help, here we can emphasize the female migrant role. 4) Develop agricultural service rather than investment in technology change. It is interesting that in Maithon, when the migration decision was made, all family members also reached an agreement on how agricultural tasks and housework should be shared amongst all family members not only those who stay behind. The burden put

on the ones who left behind are popular discourse which usually reported in migration researches (Bélanger & Xu Li, 2009; Bergstedt, 2012; Kazushi & Oztuka, 2009). The household's responses collected through the survey during this research indicated that they gave their consent for the migration of their family member due to monetary reasons; as their spouses can bring in stable cash income for the family. Even though the burden of work, primarily agriculture work, has increased, along with it incomes have also risen which has permitted them to manage by renting machine or labour during times of labour shortages. Moreover, the expansion of multifunction households and multi-spacial households. Maithon shows the same picture with other rural household in Red River Delta that majority of them cannot be referred to as "farming households" but instead as "rural households which continue to farm" as (Nguyen Thi Dien, Lebailly, & Vu, 2014; Nguyen Thi Dien, Nguyen Thi Minh Khue, Le Thi Minh Chau, & Lebailly, 2015). These case studies challenge the traditional concept of household when defined them as "members living under the same roof". The strong commitments and obligations between family members show that this household model is well-functioning with mutual support divided across space.

3.5 The Participation of Rural Youth in Smallholder Farming in Red River Delta, Vietnam

Smallholder farming which is the important source of employment as well as food security, has become a priority on the development agenda, focusing attention on the next generation of farmers. However, emerging researches show that even though youth have potential qualities to promote agriculture, most of them appear reluctant to enter farming. The study aimed at finding out the determinants which influence rural youth participation in agriculture, and identified conditions under which capable youth being interested in agriculture. It could be seen that despite the central role of agriculture in the rural social systems, little progress has so far been achieved towards raising the income and living standards of youths engaged in its practice. Other challenges being faced by youths engaged in farming include lack of finance, poor access to farm inputs, good market channels and other services. Table 6 of Vietnam, the study revealed that that age, sex, marital status, education

level, family background has interlinked with the youth's participation in agriculture. The main obstacle for the youngsters to entry into farming is the assessment of credit facilities. There are various incentive programs through interest rate subsidies to support agricultural development. The problem is the programs have not specifically been focused on the young people. Therefore, Vietnam Government could provide specific concession for the youth and beginner farmers as much higher incentives are offered. A priority should be also given on accessing agricultural land for the youth, which directly reduce the constraint of young people and access to land. Some authors suggested the possibilities to take land out of private property markets and to allocate it in use-right form to young people and also to reduce speculative investment in land (Sumberg et al., 2014; White, 2012). To overcome the constraints of agricultural production market, agricultural institutions must be built from upstream and downstream, not only providing production facilities, post-harvest management, but also develop business and market training.

Table 6: Perceived constraints for rural youth participation in agriculture

No	Constraints	Frequency	Ranking
1.	Limited entertainment and social activities in rural areas	14	15 th
2.	Lack of initial capital	17	12 th
3.	Low returns to investment	39	2 nd
4.	Availability of employment alternatives	35	4 th
5.	Family does not support	25	8 th
6.	Low status of agriculture and farmer	22	9 th
7.	Drudgery/ Heavy and dirty work	39	2 nd
8.	Lack of access to land	30	5 th
9.	Rural infrastructure problems (<i>communication technology, transportation...</i>)	13	16 th
10.	Inadequate credit facility	40	1 st
11.	Basic farming knowledge	20	9 th
12.	Storage facilities & other farm inputs	12	17 th
13.	Market availability	29	6 th
14.	No future in agriculture	14	14 th
15.	No agricultural insurance and social security	19	11 th
16.	Government incentives for farmers	15	13 th
17.	Independent decision on farming	29	6 th

Source: Field research 2018

Table 7 shows majority of non-farmer youth has intention to come back farming, in which 56.8% was determined in doing agriculture in combination

with 20.5% respondent who have unclear target for their farming future. Only 22.7% of non-farmer youth claimed that they do not want to do agriculture. However, in the farming-targeted group, majority identified their plans in long-term period, which mostly fall from 10 to 20 years coming (63.6%) while the near future of less than 5 years only attracted 9.0% of the respondents. Some studies show that the village is now empty, the rural population is floating, and the agriculture is abundant. However, it seems happen in the opposite way. At the age of their 30s, there seem a large wave of rural youth come back to rural areas and take care of agriculture.

Table 7: Youth intention of being farmer

		N	%
Intend to do farming	Yes	25	56.8%
	No	10	22.7%
	Probably	9	20.5%
If yes, in how long?	<5 years	4	9.0%
	5<=10 years	9	20.5%
	10-<15 years	13	29.5%
	15<=20 years	15	34.1%
	>20 years	2	4.5%

Source: Field research 2018

The interesting point is the earnings from agriculture becomes equal with the other non-farm jobs' income. Moreover, the beginning investment for start-up a small agricultural farm is quite small (20 million vnd), but could bring as much earning as their salary (5-6 million vnd per month). Moreover, the youth are more appreciated the potential opportunity that would bring from farming while they are more active in their own schedule and their work. However, it should notice on the diversification of livelihoods that the youth pursuit recently. The youth keeps working outside, and participate to help their family doing agriculture for example cutting vegetable from 3.5 am to 6am they will come back and go to work as normal. Most of youth reported that they helps their family' farm work in the weekends and whenever they have free time. The increased number of the youth who take the daily-shift form of migration permits them to join more in their family farming. They indicated that most of the companies in the industrialized zones have their buses to pick their workers up, which is considered as the important reason

to attract labour in the areas and helps them to save plentiful time. In one hand, the youth still accumulated the incomes from non-farm work, and reduced the living costs. On the other hand, they could help their family to do agriculture and support other family works. However, because non-farm job is still considered as their main occupation, therefore, labour shortage is the difficulty in agricultural production. Renting labour in farming increase the production costs remarkably. However, available and cheap agricultural service becomes important factors to encourage the youth participated partly or full-time with their households.

4. CONCLUSION

Although this study is a limited generalisation of findings due to the research site, it provides a new point of view on circular migration and agricultural development in rural areas of Vietnam. Sharing the same characteristics with other villages in the Red River Delta in northern Vietnam, the results from the survey of Mai Thon village show a typical picture of a village transformation impacted by the *Đổi Mới* renovation process which resulted in high level of rural out-migration. Migration appears to be a development strategy, a means for improvement, in other words, a mechanism for upward mobility, rather than a “coping” or “survival” strategy in the face of declining income or livelihood collapse. The study shows that circular migration has a positive relationship with agricultural production and development in the village. Migrants’ movements between the origin and destination and among places of work, both underscore the notion that it is circulation, not moving for the purpose of staying, that defines rural–urban labor migration in Vietnam. These circulatory movements will continue to increase when the experienced migrants have already mastered the art of circularity and their children are following their footsteps and joining the flows. This presents tremendous challenge to conventional approaches of studying migration, which rely on definitions of migration and return migration that assume a high degree of permanency and that are not designed to address frequent movements and multiple locations.

On the one hand, even though the amount of remittances tends to be small, it remains a crucial financial resource for improving household living standards. It is also reliable and frequent, providing a steady income. On the other hand, it was seen that there has been no remarkable labour deficit as a result of migration. Better management of household labour allocation enables rural households to release family members to migrate to urban areas to earn a cash income and at the same time extend agricultural production in rural areas. Migrant households managed to accumulate and invest, thereby also diversifying and strengthening their economic base. Moreover, remittances were found to be used for education purposes, playing a significant role in reinforcing human capital, which in the long-term will

possibly contribute to the improvement of rural society. Therefore, migration has been adopted as a way to sustain and improve rural households and their status. Moreover, it has become a means for rural households to integrate the urban economy. This allows peasants on the one hand to keep their foothold on their own land and village and, on the other hand, to gain access to a cash income in urban areas. Investigating circular migration, from the rural perspective, has therefore provided insights and evidence to reconfirm the important role that it plays in development.

Therefore, if the labour policy not only supports its economic purpose, but also the livelihoods of rural households, it should not be restrictive. Alleviating barriers to migration could considerably improve household welfare in the sending areas. Recognition of the important role that internal migration and remittances can play in rural household livelihoods is imperative to the development of pro-migration policies. Future research on the impact of internal remittances should acknowledge the predicament of migrant workers. For example, including a subset of the migrant population linked with their household of origin could provide important insight into the challenges that migrants face during the migration process and in sending remittances. Where pro-migration policies are considered, it is imperative that protection strategies for migrant workers also be implemented and enforced to limit the exploitation of this highly vulnerable workforce.

In line with agricultural production, this research remarked that migration becomes a supplement to small-holder farming. Small-holder farming is an important source of employment as well as food security and has become a priority on the development agenda, focusing attention on the next generation of farmers. However, emerging research shows that even though young people have the potential to promote agriculture, most of them appear reluctant to enter farming. This study aimed at finding out the determinants which influence the participation of rural youth in agriculture and identified conditions under which capable young people can be interested in agriculture. Despite the central role of agriculture in rural social systems, little progress has so far been achieved towards raising the income and living standards of youths engaged in its practice. Other challenges faced by youths engaged in farming include lack of finance, poor access to farm inputs, good market

channels and other services. Based on the empirical findings in the Red River Delta of Vietnam, the study revealed that that age, sex, marital status, education level and family background are interlinked with the youth's participation in agriculture. A practical support related to English-language instruction and internet training could be considered to open new gates for youth on the global and digital markets for traditional agricultural production or organic products. Here, we found a need to improve the status of traditional agriculture, for example through farming internships, peer training, experience sharing and local farm networking. This could also reduce the perception of agriculture as being heavy work, backward and not prestigious, which has made farming unattractive for many. Doing this will restore the dignity of farming, influence the decisions of youth regarding farming choices and stymie the trend of young rural migration.

Moreover, the implication of this research is that migration can potentially be promoted as a development strategy especially in regions which are limited in non-farm business practices. Although migration has certainly contributed to agrarian change, it is also clear that its potential has not yet been fully realised, which would be a promising venue for future research. Additional research on the impact of internal migration and remittances on rural households and agriculture is required to understand this relationship further. Rural out-migration can serve to complement sustainable agriculture and rural development. The development of a standard method of analysis would facilitate comparison of findings across studies. Presently, the varied approaches to data analysis restrict the comparability or generalizability of findings.

REFERENCES

- Adger, W. N., Kelly, P. M., Winkels, A., Huy, L. Q., & Locke, C. (2002). Migration, remittances, livelihood trajectories, and social resilience. *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment*, 31(4), 358-367.
- Akram-Lodhi, A. H., Borras, S. M., & Kay, C. (2007). *Land, Poverty and Livelihoods in an Era of Globalization: Perspectives from Developing and Transition Countries*. London: Routledge.
- Bélanger, D., & Xu Li. (2009). Agricultural Land, Gender and Kinship in Rural China and Vietnam: A Comparison of Two Villages *Journal of Agrarian Change.*, 9(2), 204–230.
- Bergstedt, C. (2012). *The Lie of the Land – Gender, Farm Work, and Land in a Rural Vietnamese Village*. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden.
- Bui Minh, B. Q. N., Dang Thi Viet Phuong. (2012). Agricultural land, peasant and rural development. *Sociology*, 3(119), 26-33.
- Bui, Q. D. (2010). Làng xã: Dẫn vào một nghiên cứu về các thể chế xã hội (Village: Introduction to a research of social institutions). *Tạp chí Xã hội học (Review of Sociology)*, 1(109), 11-26.
- Cohen, J. H. (2011). Migration, remittances, and household strategies. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 40, 103-114.
- Coxhead, I., Nguyen, V. C., & Linh, H. V. (2015). *Migration in Vietnam: New Evidence from Recent Surveys*. Retrieved from
- De Haan, A., & Rogaly, B. (2015). *Labour mobility and rural society*: Routledge.
- de Haas, H. (2005). International migration, remittances and development: myths and facts. . *Third World Quarterly*, 26(8), 1269-1284.
- De Haas, H. (2010). The internal dynamics of migration processes: A theoretical inquiry. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36(10), 1587-1617.

- De Haas, H., & Van Rooij, A. (2010). Migration as emancipation? The impact of internal and international migration on the position of women left behind in rural Morocco. *Oxford development studies*, 38(1), 43-62.
- Dean, Y., & Choi, H. (2007). Are Remittances Insurance? Evidence from Rainfall Shocks in the Philippines. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 21(2), 219-248.
- Gourou, P. (1945). *Land Utilization in French Indochina*: Institute of Pacific Relations.
- GSO. (2010). *The 2009 Vietnam Population and Housing Census: Major Findings* (G. S. Office Ed.). Hanoi: Statistical Publishing House.
- GSO. (2011). *Migration and Urbanization in Vietnam: Patterns, Trends and Differentials*. Retrieved from Hanoi:
- GSO. (2016). *Population and Employment*. Retrieved from Hanoi:
- Gironde, C. (2009). *La croissance agricole et ses limites*. Retrieved from
- Hoang, X. T., Truong, T. A., Luu, T. Q., Dinh, T. G., & Dinh, T. T. P. (2013). *Food security in the context of Vietnam's rural-urban linkages and climate change*. Retrieved from London, UK:
- Kazushi, T., & Otsuka, K. (2009). The increasing importance of nonfarm income and the changing use of labor and capital in rice farming: the case of Central Luzon, 1979-2003. *Agricultural Economics*, 40(2), 231-242.
- Kim Anh, L. T., Hoang Vu, L., Bonfoh, B., & Schelling, E. (2012). An analysis of interprovincial migration in Vietnam from 1989 to 2009. *Global health action*, 5(1), 9334.
- Khoang, P. (1966). Luoc su che do xa thon o Viet Nam. *A summary history of the village-hamlet system in Vietnam*"), *Su Dia*, 34-51.
- Li, T. M. (1996). *Peasant on the move: Rural - urban migration in the Hanoi region*. (Occasional paper No.91.). Retrieved from Singapore:
- Mus, P. (1952). Vietnam: a nation off balance. *Yale Review*, 41, 124.
- Nguyen, D. L., & Grote, K. R. a. U. (2012). *Rural-Urban Migration in Vietnam: Do Households and Migrants Get Better Off?* Paper presented at the Conference on International Research on Food Security, Natural Resource Management and Rural Development, Göttingen, Germany.

Nguyen, T. D., Lebailly, P., & Vu, D. T. (2014). Agricultural land conversion for industrialization: Livelihood along rural-urban continuum and mechanism of social differentiation in Hung Yen province, Vietnam. In Lebailly Ph., J. P. Peemans, & V. D.T. (Eds.), *Rural development and small farmers in South East Asia: lessons of experiences in Vietnam and Cambodia*: GRAESE: Groupe de Recherches Asie de l'Est et du Sud-Est.

Nguyen, T. M. K., Nguyen, T. D., & Lebailly, P. (2016). Agricultural Production in the context of Industrialization and Food Security in Vietnam. *AGROFOR International Journal*, 1(1), 86-94. doi:10.7251/AGRENG1601086N

Nguyen Thi Dien, Lebailly, P., & Vu, D. T. (2014). Agricultural land conversion for industrialization: Livelihood along rural-urban continuum and mechanism of social differentiation in Hung Yen province, Vietnam. In Lebailly Ph., J. P. Peemans, & V. D.T. (Eds.), *Rural development and small farmers in South East Asia: lessons of experiences in Vietnam and Cambodia*: GRAESE: Groupe de Recherches Asie de l'Est et du Sud-Est.

Nguyen Thi Dien, Nguyen Thi Minh Khue, Le Thi Minh Chau, & Lebailly, P. (2015, 10-11 December 2015). *Duality of migrant lives: Gendered migration and agricultural production in Red River Region, Vietnam*. Paper presented at the 9es Journees de Recherches en Sciences Sociales, Nancy.

Portes, A. (2010). Migration and development: reconciling opposite views. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 32(1), 5-22.

Phan, D., & Coxhead, I. (2010). Inter-provincial migration and inequality during Vietnam's transition. *Journal of Development Economics*, 91(1), 100-112.

Rigg, J. (2007). Moving lives: migration and livelihoods in the Lao PDR. *Population, space and place*, 13(3), 163-178.

Rigg, J., & Vandergeest, P. (2012). The restudy “problem” and agrarian change: revisiting rural places in Southeast Asia. In J. V. Rigg, P. (Ed.), *Revisiting rural places: pathways to poverty and prosperity in southeast Asia* (pp. 1-24). Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.

Sasin, M. J., & McKenzie, D. (2007). *Migration, remittances, poverty, and human capital: conceptual and empirical challenges*: The World Bank.

Sumberg, J., Anyidoho, N. A., Chasukwa, M., Chinsinga, B., Leavy, J., Tadele, G., . . . Yaro, J. (2014). *Young people, agriculture, and employment in rural Africa*: Routledge Employment, Politics London.

Tran, T. T. T. (2004). Vietnam's rural transformation: information, knowledge and diversification. In *Rethinking Vietnam* (pp. 126-140): Routledge.

White, B. (2012). Agriculture and the Generation Problem: Rural Youth, Employment and the Future of Farming. *IDS Bulletin*, 43(6), 9-19.

Yamauchia, C., Budy P. Resosudarmo, & Effendib, T. (2009). *Rural–Urban Migration in Indonesia: Survey Design and Implementation*. Retrieved from

GRAESE : Groupe de Recherches Asie de l'Est et du Sud Est



Le GRAESE (Groupe de Recherches sur l'Asie de l'Est et du Sud Est) regroupe des chercheurs concernés par les problèmes du développement en Asie Orientale et Sud Orientale. A son origine se trouvent des académiques et des chercheurs ayant participé à des projets de recherche, d'enseignement et de coopération dans cette région du monde depuis le milieu des années 1990. En Belgique, ces activités ont associé, dès le début, des chercheurs de l'UCL, des FUSAGX, et de l'ULG qui poursuivent une coopération régulière depuis une quinzaine d'années. En Asie ces activités ont concerné un grand nombre de chercheurs et d'académiques de diverses universités et institutions vietnamiennes, laotiennes, cambodgiennes, thaïlandaises et chinoises. L'Université Agronomique de Hanoi (UAH) est un partenaire privilégié depuis le début. Ces activités ont concerné particulièrement les projets de développement agricole, les composantes socio-économiques du développement rural, les rapports villes-campagnes et les politiques affectant ces différents domaines. En outre plusieurs thèses de doctorat ont été réalisées dans le cadre de ces activités, et sous diverses formes de partenariat entre les universités belges et asiatiques concernées. Le **GRAESE** vise à donner une meilleure visibilité à ces diverses activités, à faciliter la circulation de l'information entre les chercheurs et centres de recherches concernés, et à appuyer et soutenir l'intérêt en Belgique et en Europe pour les problèmes du développement asiatique dans un public plus large.

En pratique le **GRAESE** a pour objectif :

- 1) de stimuler la recherche interdisciplinaire concernant les problèmes et les enjeux du développement en Asie orientale et sud orientale
- 2) de publier sous forme de Working Papers (format papier ou online) des résultats de recherche liés aux projets en cours et aux questions concernant les diverses thématiques du développement appliquées à l'Asie orientale et sud-orientale, avec une attention particulière aux thèmes évoqués ci-dessus.
- 3) de réaliser des publications scientifiques de divers types concernant ces problèmes et réalisées par des chercheurs des différents centres partenaires en Europe et en Asie.
- 4) de fournir un lieu de rencontres entre chercheurs concernés par ces thèmes, particulièrement dans le cadre des doctorats en cours.
- 5) d'organiser des activités d'enseignement et d'information sur les problèmes du développement de l'Asie de l'Est et du Sud Est, notamment à travers l'organisation de conférences et séminaires donnés par des académiques et chercheurs asiatiques de passage en Belgique.

En Belgique les activités du **GRAESE** sont coordonnées par Ph. Lebailly (UEDR-Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech-ULiège) et J.Ph. Peemans (CED-UCLouvain). Le secrétariat du **GRAESE** est assuré par l'UEDR.

Centre d'Etudes du Développement, UCLouvain, Louvain-la-Neuve
Unité d'Economie et Développement rural, Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, ULiège
<https://www.gembloux.ulg.ac.be/economie-et-developpement-rural/graese-2/>