

MOVING OUT AND MOVING IN

Evidence of Short-Term Household Change in South Africa from the National Income Dynamics Study

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This analysis offers insight into short-term household change in South Africa by examining the extent and correlates of residential and compositional change. Data from Waves 1 and 2 of the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) are used to measure the change in physical residence between the waves, categorising individuals as either 'movers' or 'non-movers'. Compositional change is also measured, by sorting individuals into 'changers' or 'non-changers,' based on whether their household membership was the same in Waves 1 and 2.

Some form of household change is common in the data between Wave 1 (2008) and Wave 2 (2010). Table 1 provides a summary of individuals' residential and compositional change between the two waves. It is clear that although short-term residential change is less common than compositional change, it is not negligible. Between 2008 and 2010, 10.5% of individuals changed residence. This suggests that South Africans are mobile, with 1 in 10 moving to a new household in this period. Compositional change is more common, with 61.3% of individuals experiencing some form of household membership change between waves. Household change is more common amongst African and coloured individuals, with the majority experiencing some sort of residential and/or compositional change over the period. Conversely, nearly two-thirds of white individuals experienced no household change in the two-year time-span.

Residential Change

Regression analysis of the correlates of residential change indicates that race, age, geographical location and income all affect the probability of experiencing moving home. Coloured individuals are the least likely of all races to move. Young adults (age 18-25) are the most likely to move house, followed by very young children (age 0-5), while adults aged 60 and above are the least likely to move. This is not surprising given that young adulthood is traditionally the period when many

Table 1: Proportion of individuals experiencing a residential or compositional change: 2009 to 2011

		Compositional Change		
Residential Change	No	36.4	53.1	89.5
	Yes	2.3	8.2	10.5
	Total	38.7	61.3	100.0

Source: NIDS Waves 1 and 2.

individuals transition out of their parental home. Individuals living in urban areas are more likely to move than similar rural individuals. However, this is only true for African and white respondents and the opposite is true for coloured respondents. African and coloured individuals are more likely to move the higher their income, whereas whites are less likely to move. This is likely explained by the vastly different housing realities faced by white and non-whites. Among whites, those with more income may already live in the residence of their choice and are likely to have stable earnings. However, among non-whites, who tend to earn much less on average and are likely to reside in less preferred areas, individuals may move to better homes as their income rises. Gender does not appear to play a role in the probability of moving dwellings in the period.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 examine changes in the education and employment status of movers between waves, enabling a better understanding of the reasons behind residential moves. The transition matrices for movers indicate that for those aged 18 to 25 in Wave 2 (Table 2.1), moves were often accompanied by educational and labour market transitions. The majority of 18 to 25 year old movers who were unemployed in Wave 1 were still unemployed or had left the labour market by Wave 2, and about equal proportions had returned to education or were employed.

Those employed at Wave 1 were somewhat more stable, with the majority (64%) still employed at Wave 2. Those aged 26 to 59 in Wave 2 (Table 2.2) also experienced a fair number of educational and

Table 2.1: Educational and labour market transitions for movers aged 18-25 at Wave 2

		W2 status				
		Studying	Unemp.	Emp.	Other	Total
W1 status	Studying	32.9	26	19.6	21.5	46.7
	Unemp	22	20	20.8	37.2	17.2
	Emp	1.9	17.7	63.5	17	14.6
	Other	11.1	18.7	43.5	26.7	21.5
	Total	21.8	22.2	31.4	24.7	100

Notes: n=404. Data source: NIDS Waves 1 and 2. Weighted using attrition and non-response weights.

Table 2.2: Educational and labour market transitions for movers aged 26-59 at Wave 2

		W2 status				
		Studying	Unemp.	Emp.	Other	Total
W1 status	Studying	25.2	14.9	35.3	24.6	2.6
	Unemp.	0	22.5	42.9	34.5	23.4
	Emp.	0.3	11.2	76.5	12	52.7
	Other	0	22	45.1	32.8	21.3
	Total	0.8	16.3	60.9	22	100

Notes: n=714. Data source: NIDS Waves 1 and 2. Weighted using attrition and non-response weights.

labour market transitions between waves. The majority of those unemployed in Wave 1 had found work in Wave 2 in this age cohort. Those employed in Wave 1 were again the most stable and almost 77% remained employed in Wave 2.

Compositional Change

This discussion limits compositional change to that experienced by individuals who do not move dwellings between waves. Correlates of compositional change are found to be race, age, gender, geographical location and income. Africans are most likely to experience compositional household changes, followed by coloured and then white individuals. Young adults (age 18-25) are the most likely to experience a change in composition, while older adults (age 60+) are the least likely. This higher occurrence of household compositional change for young adults is driven entirely by Africans and the lower occurrence for older adults is driven entirely by non-Africans. Gender differences in likelihood of experiencing a compositional change exist only amongst Africans, with females being more likely than males to experience a compositional change. An urban/rural difference in compositional changes is found amongst African but not white or coloured individuals. A deeper understanding of

compositional changes can be gained by decomposing these changes into four types: the addition of one or more household members due to birth, the addition of one or more household members for reasons other than birth ('other' addition), the loss of one or more household members due to death, and the loss of one or more household members for reasons other than death ('other' loss). A summary of these reasons is given in Table 3, for the full sample and by race. These results suggest that between 2008 and 2010, many Africans experienced multiple types of compositional change, with the most prevalent being the addition of new members not due to birth. Coloured individuals experienced similar compositional changes, but had slightly more members joining due to birth and less due to other reasons. Finally, white individuals were least likely to experience additional members joining due to birth.

Table 3: Types of compositional change

	Addition of 1+: birth	Addition of 1+: other	Loss of 1+: death	Loss of 1+: other
African	30.61	58.60	37.93	22.60
Col.	33.04	51.88	36.65	21.79
White	17.06	43.44	49.16	4.43
All	30.04	56.81	38.20	22.27

Source: NIDS Waves 1 and 2. Weighted using attrition and non-response weights.

In terms of moving, African and white individuals were much more likely than coloureds to relocate to a new residence between 2008 and 2010. However, these moves are likely to be very different in nature by population group. Whites with low income are more likely to while Africans are more likely to move if they have higher incomes or are younger. As for compositional change, white households appear to be much more stable than non-white households and African (and to a lesser extent coloured) households are quite turbulent. Because a move or compositional change could harm or benefit a child's development depending on the situation, more nuanced information about the residential and compositional transitions faced by children is needed in future studies.

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