

Maternal and child migration in post-apartheid South Africa

An exploration of spatial mobility and changing household form.

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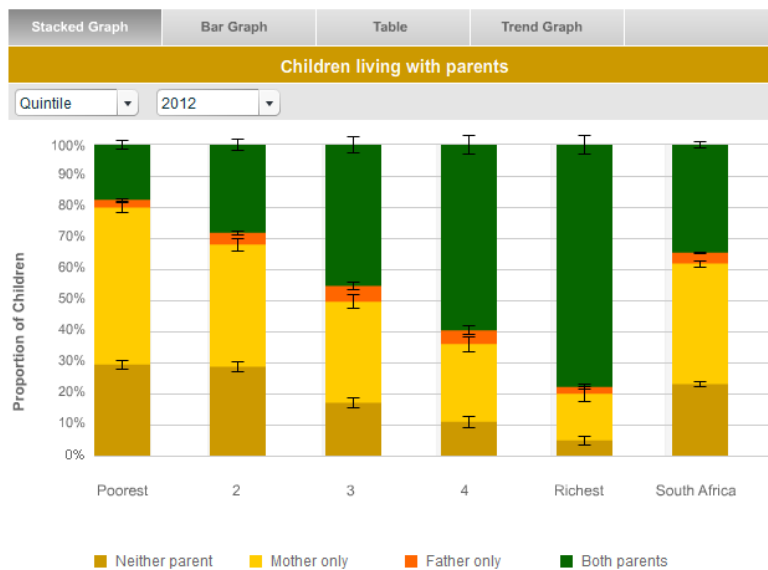
Historic context...

- Group areas and influx control
- Under- provisioning of urban housing; accommodation (male) labour force
- “Bantustans” – independent homelands, with large populations of women, children, old people, unemployed
- Circular migration of labour migrants
- Complex reciprocal relationships of dependence, exploited by industry (labour income flows to support rural households; rural households enable migrant labour)

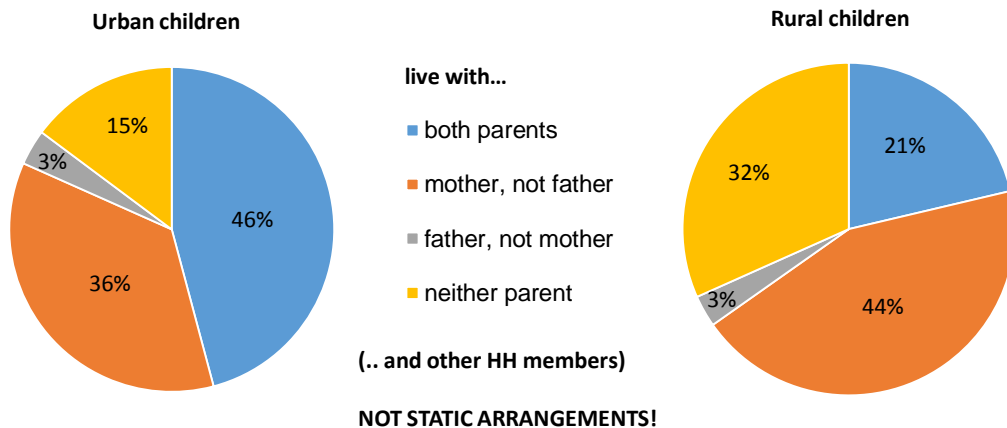
Changing contexts...

- Main population growth in urban areas
- Adult urbanisation and possible increase in permanent migration
- Declining marriage rates
- Declining remittances & paternal maintenance
- Increasing female labour migration
- But persistent urban housing backlogs and high unemployment

Low levels of parental co-residence

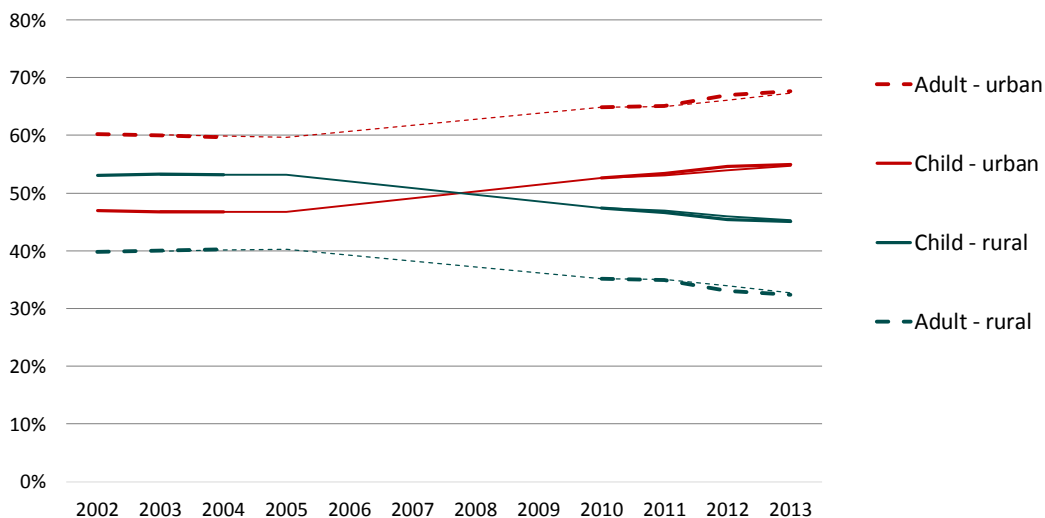


Low levels of parental co-residence



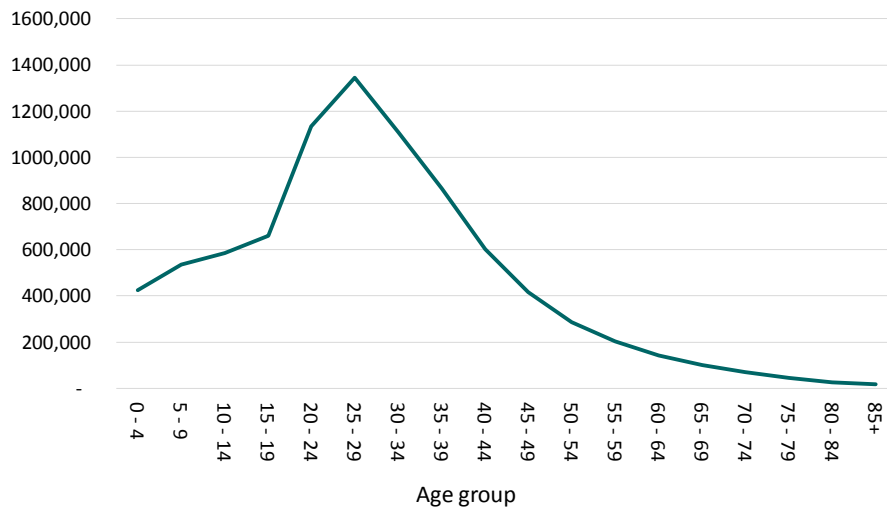
Source: General Household Survey 2013 (own calculations; person weights used)

Urban-rural transitions



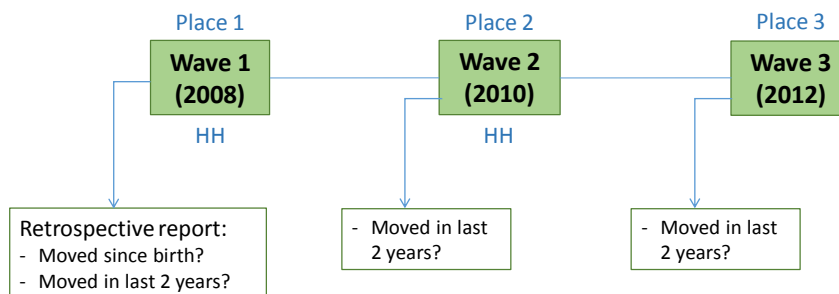
GHS 2002 – 2013

Census: Cross-municipality migration 2001-2011



Source: Census 2011, 10% sample (own calculations; person weights used)

The National Income Dynamics Study



Balanced child panel: 4,895 African children under 10 years in wave 1 and under 15 in wave 3

Characteristics of migrant (v non-migrant) children - NIDS

- 7% of African children under 15 migrated in the 4-5 period (2008-2012)
- Households of migrant children are smaller and slightly less poor, both before and after migration.
- Migrant children are younger (more than half are under 6 years) – similar findings in analyses from demographic surveillance sites.
- The mothers of migrant children are slightly younger and better educated.
- Mothers of child migrants are more likely to be unemployed and actively looking for work before the child migrates.
- Migrant children are more likely to experience a change in the co-residence status of their parents: mother/father is present in wave 1 and absent in wave 3; or absent in wave 1 and present in wave 3.

Towards a child & maternal migration typology

“Ordering”: multiple scenarios / migration events

- Mother moved, child remained behind
- Child “sent home” from mother’s household
- Mother and child migrated together
- Child migrated independently / followed mother
- *+ combinations of children / siblings / other adults*

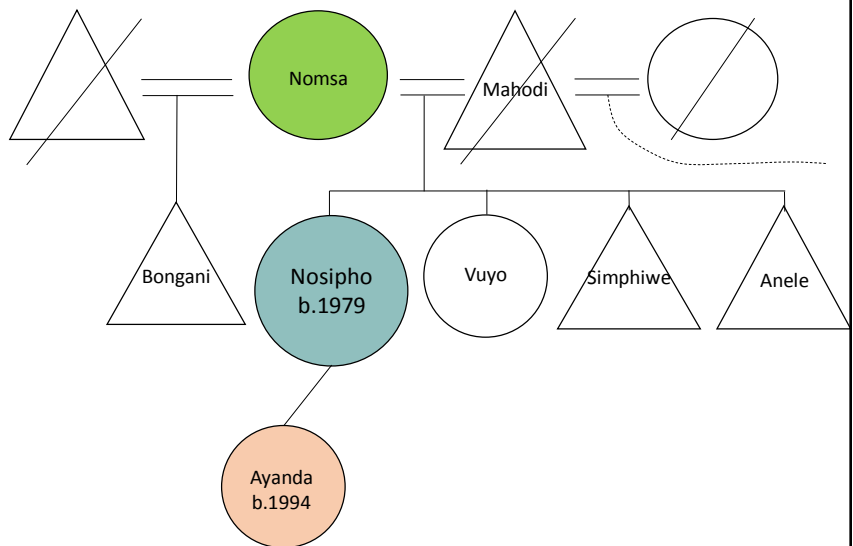
Child & maternal migration typology by destination area type

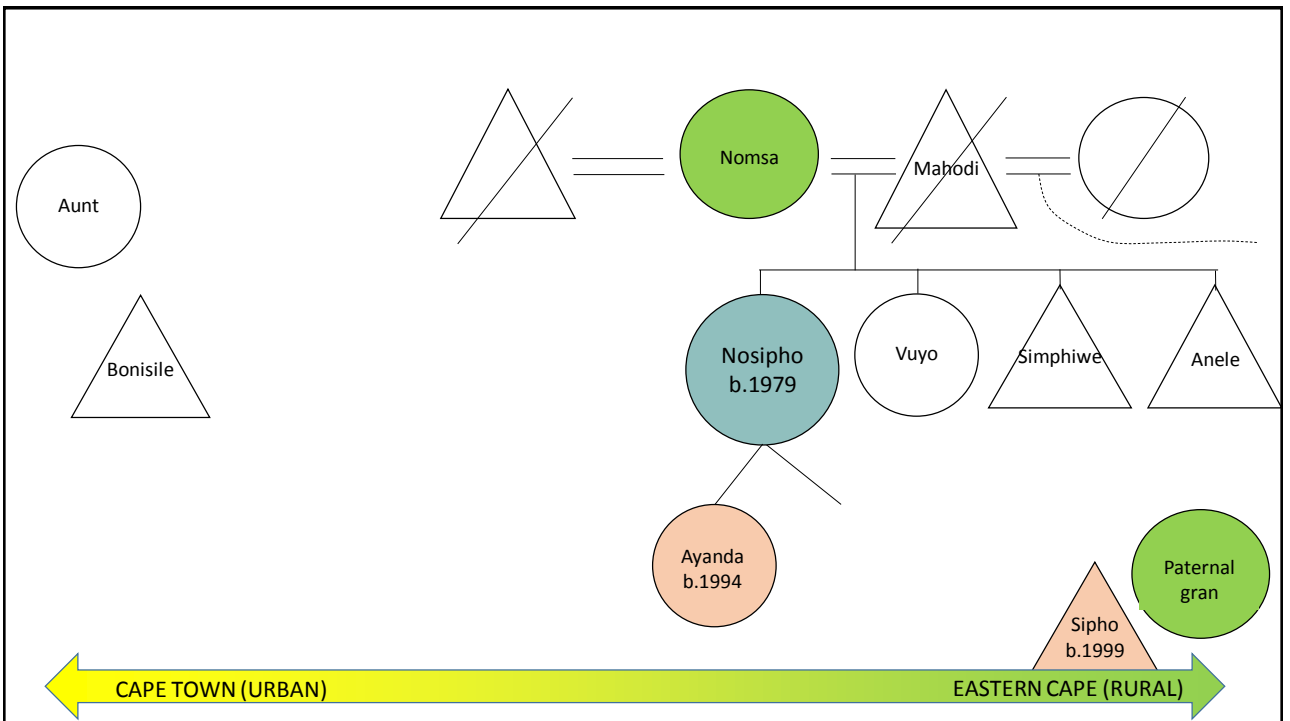
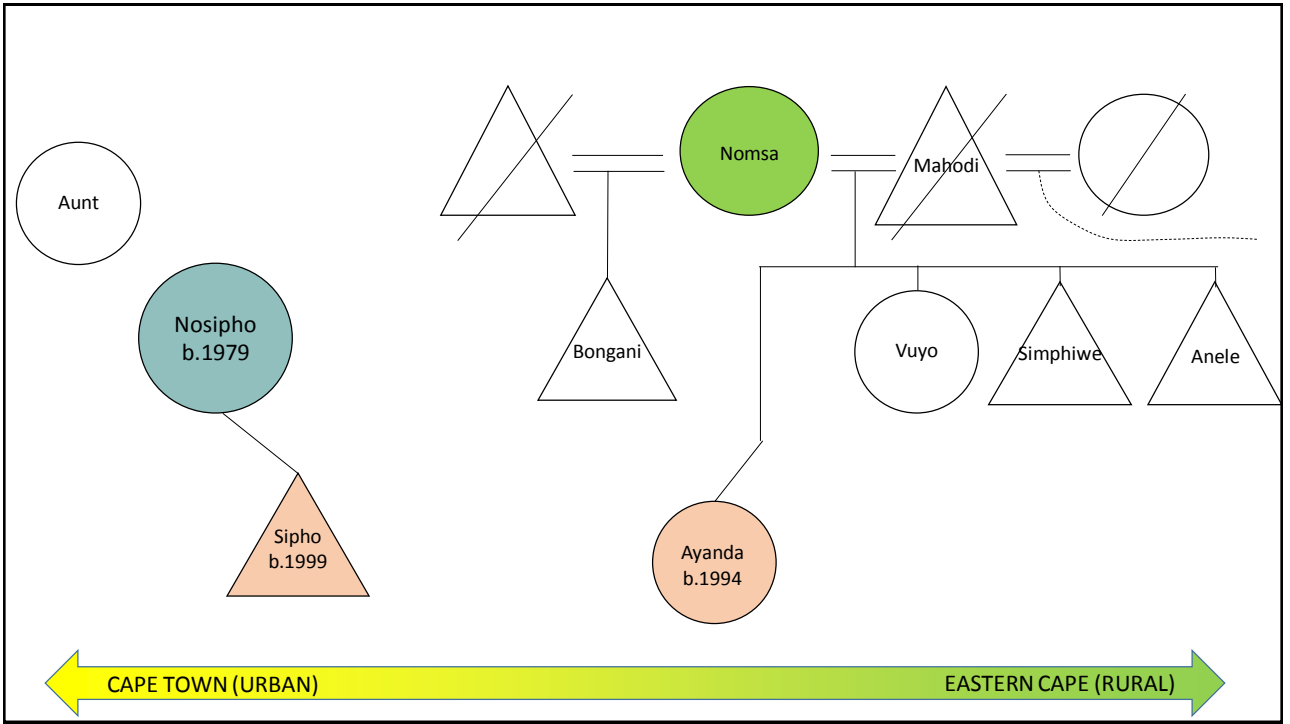
Migration event (wave 1 → wave 3)	Child's destination area (w.3)		
	Urban	Rural	Std Error
child & mother migrated together	51%	49%	0.073
child migrated away from mother	40%	60%	0.123
mother migrated away from child	19%	81%	0.053
child migrated independently (mother dead)	54%	46%	0.139
child migrated independently (mother elsewhere)	42%	58%	0.090
child migrated to join mother	81%	19%	0.051
mother migrated to join child	36%	64%	0.064
no migration events: child & mother co-resident	48%	52%	0.032
no migration events: child & mother not co-resident	28%	72%	0.046

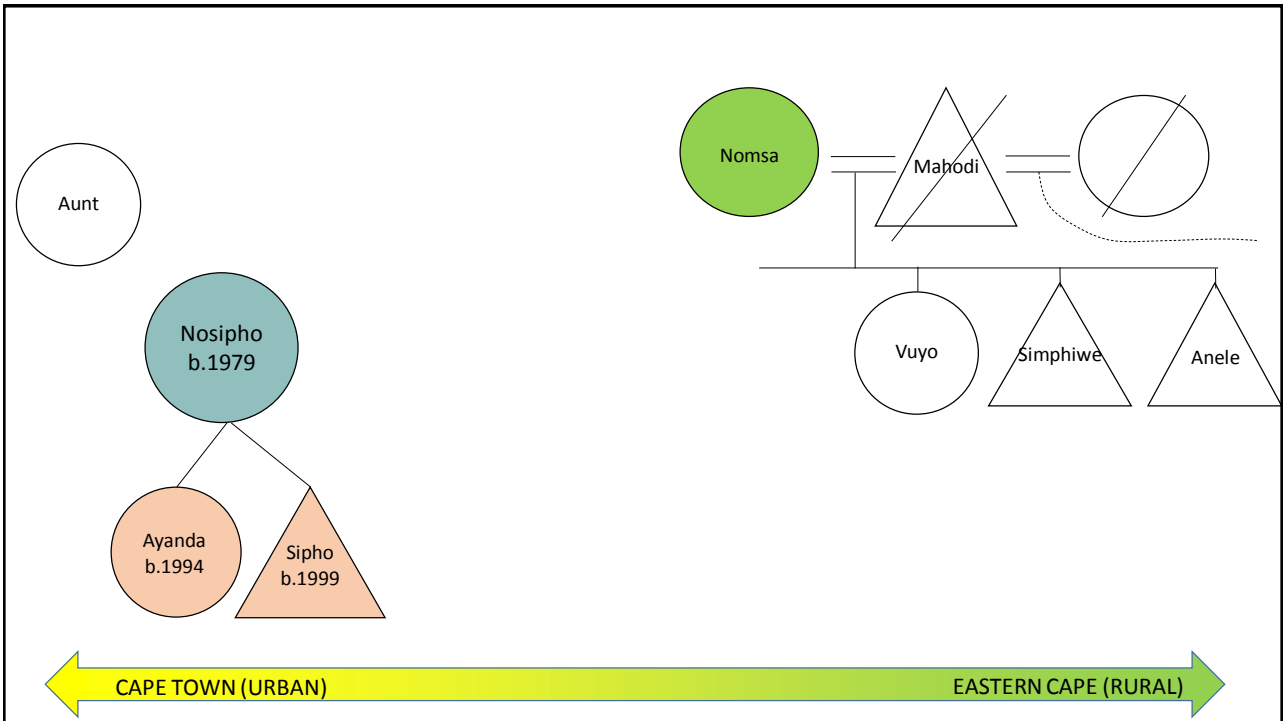
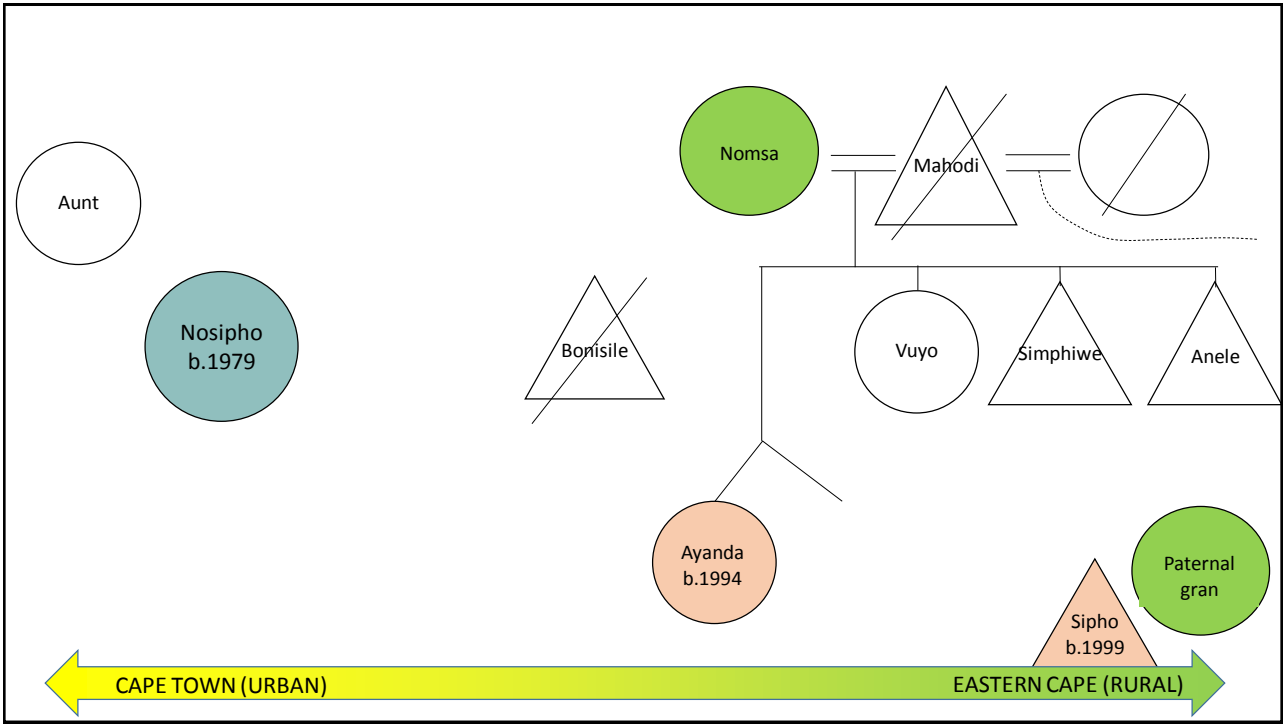
Source: NIDS Waves 1-3 (own calculations; panel weights used)

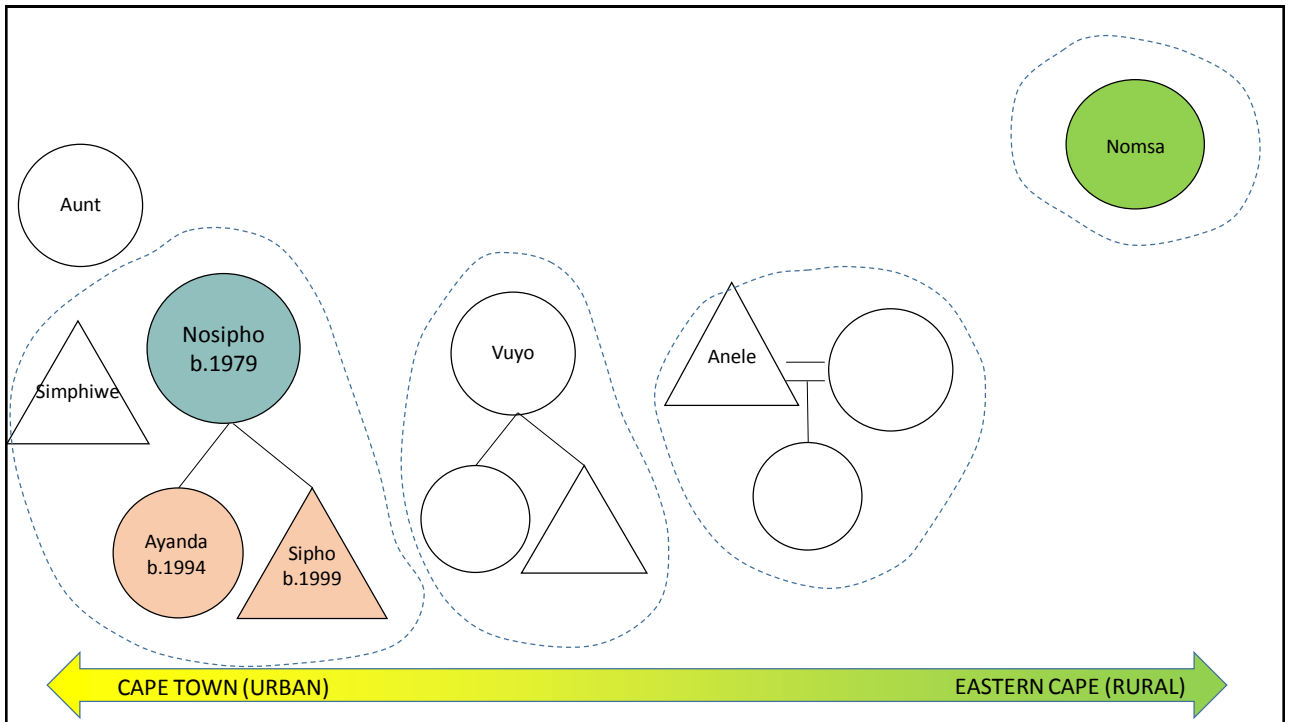
A very different approach:

Migration histories through dynamic kinship diagrams









What the research sets out to do

- Identify patterns of child mobility nationally, and specifically in relation to maternal migration.
- Describe changes in living circumstances associated with migration, from the perspective of children.
- Investigate decision-making about maternal co-residence, child care and mobility.

What the research does not do (but someone should!)

- Investigate children's experience of mobility: what does it mean to change household; to have sequential caregivers; to adapt to a new place; to urbanise?
- Conduct causal analysis of panel data to determine the impact of migration events on child outcomes.

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For indicators on children in South Africa, see

www.childrencount.ci.org.za