

Cecilia Tacoli (ed). *The Earthscan Reader in Rural-Urban Linkages*. London / Sterling, VA: Earthscan. 329 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 995.00.

The linkages between 'rural' and 'urban' locations, people, and activities contribute significantly to livelihoods and act as engines of economic, social, and cultural transformation. There is an increased interest among officials and policy-makers to better understand the opportunities and constraints that these linkages offer. Divided into five parts, the fifteen chapters, of this book bring special attention to the impact of rural-urban linkages on different aspects of sustainable development. Chapter 1 presents an analysis of recent census data, with special attention to small urban centres. David Satterthwaite argues that the rural and urban divide misses the extent to which rural households rely on urban incomes, while many urban households in low-income nations rely on rural resources and a reciprocal relationship with rural households. There is a need to forget this divide and see all settlements as being within a continuum with regard to both their population size and the extent of their non-agricultural economic base.

Focusing on Tanzania, in Chapter 2, Jonathan Baker highlights aspects of the rural-urban interaction between the district headquarters town of Biharamulo and four surrounding villages in the Kagera Region. The role of agriculture is important in the district economy. However, the author shows that for many village households non-farm and off-farm economic activities, in addition to agricultural land, are central components of household security and accumulation strategies. Moreover, for urban dwellers, access to agricultural land, in addition to urban employment, is an important element in household diversification strategies. In Chapter 3, Bah, *et al.*, consider the nature and scope of the rural-urban linkages and how they are affected by the variations in socio-economic, political, cultural, historical, and geographical context. The chapter draws on case studies in central and northern Mali, South-Eastern Nigeria, and Southern and Northern Tanzania. In the 'virtuous circle' model of regional development, it is usually assumed that urban centres, through the provision of markets and services, can impart the impetus for agricultural growth in their surrounding regions. This will then translate into the expansion of non-farm employment and increased demand for both agricultural and manufactured goods and services. However, the findings of Bah, *et al.*, show a more complex picture. Only two urban centres seem to play a role in the economic development of their region. Both are regional market nodes and are integrated in the national and international trade networks. In the more 'rural' settlements, agricultural production is constrained by limited physical access to markets and processing.

Jonathan Rigg has examined in Chapter 4 the evolving rural-urban relations and livelihood in South East Asia, which has helped the transition from land abundance to land scarcity. Increases in agricultural output in the region are being generated more through strategies of intensification than through extensification. Other elements relate to mobility, accessibility, and transport. There has been a 'transport revolution' in Southeast Asia. Education, contact with metropolitan lifestyles, and urban mores have encouraged people to expect 'more' from life. The entry of rural people into non-farm work would not be possible without the availability of non-farm working opportunities. This ties in with the process of industrialisation and sectoral shifts in the economies of the region. These changes in rural areas of Southeast Asia have had profound implications for rural development policy and practice.

Chapter 5 uses a few generally agreed principles of economic growth to construct a non-mathematical model that reflects historical experience. The model, by Mary Tiffen, shows that economies are fundamentally different at different points in time, partially in the relationship of their agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. There is a need to understand this relationship at different points in time as population grows and redistributes itself between the urban and the rural sectors. For example, the recent drop in livestock turnover in northern Nigeria due to falling urban incomes affects not merely farmers' incomes, but also their ability to insure and to maintain soil fertility. Farmers have responded to increased demand by a multitude of small investments linked to changes in technologies and in products, but they have been hindered by state control of markets or rapidly changing policies, exchange rates, and inflation. Those farmers who cannot invest are being forced out of farming. The rural poorest need a vibrant non-farm sector.

In Chapter 6, Mike Donglass provides an outline of a regional planning framework that incorporates rural-urban linkages and can adjust to a variety of local situations. Drawing on some case studies of Indonesia and comparing the three villages around Yogyakarta and those on Lombok and Sumbawa, the chapter reveals that specialisation in markets occurs at the village level, even in poor villages, and even among villages in the same locale; rural-urban interaction can be very low even with villages located close to very large cities. This low interaction is the result of poor transportation linkages as well as specific socio-economic conditions of a given village. In general, there is a clear sense that rural-urban interaction, particularly that related to road development and television, has experienced substantial increase every-where in the past two decades. While these have been instrumental in raising welfare levels, these linkages have not necessarily narrowed either the rural-urban or the regional disparities of income.

There is a considerable potential role for small and intermediate urban centres in regional and rural economic development, and this role has been explored by David Satterthwaite and Cecilia Tacoli in Chapter 7. They show that the capacity of these centres to trigger equitable regional development is much influenced by the region's internal characteristics, land ownership patterns, and economic, social, and cultural transformations at the local, national, and international levels. The scale of China's contemporary transition from an essentially subsistence agriculture to an urban economy is unprecedented in the history of industrial evolution. Richard Kirby, *et al.*, show in Chapter 8 that the myriad small towns played an important role in China as centres of both administration and economic exchange.

In Chapter 9, Haydea Izazola, *et al.*, take a preliminary look at what is ultimately a very complex notion—'environmental perceptions'. The study, based on Mexico city, compares two groups, namely middle-class households that have outmigrated from the city and low-income households that continue to live in the urban periphery. The authors argue that consideration of the impact of Mexico city's physical environmental deterioration on its population has mainly focused on passive responses such as changes in health and morbidity in relation to air and water pollution. It is more recently that active responses such as outmigration have begun to be explored. The authors conclude that the notion of 'environmental perceptions' captures multiple processes which take place at that point where objective reality, individual personality, and household, community, and societal-level forces collide.

Deshinghar reviews in Chapter 5 the available evidence on migration pattern in watershed development (WSD) areas in India, and how policy should address continuing migration. The goal of most watershed projects is to increase agriculture productivity through soil and water conservation and rainwater harvesting at the micro-watershed scale. The study shows that increases in productivity that are brought about by WSD alone may not be sufficient to stem the tide of migration, which will continue and this does not represent the failure of WSD programmes. Temporary migrants represent much untapped potential in India too, and the time is ripe to start thinking about ways of mainstreaming migrant support programmes, and migrant incomes into rural development programmes such as watershed development.

In view of the persistence of strong mental links of migrants to the countryside for many years, the rural value system must have been brought to the city and kept there despite the pressure of modern urban lifestyles. In Chapter 11, Fred Krüger argues that rural-urban migrants are displaced because they live in two worlds. The transition from rural to urban life expresses itself in many forms and, generally, includes maintaining rural coping strategies in order to survive in the city. The fact that linkages are kept up over decades, that there are regular movement cycles between town and country, and that rural assets are valued both in monetary and in social terms all stress the point that any disruption of these rural-urban interactions may easily become a severe threat to many urban households.

The final part of the book includes four chapters under the broad topic of “Beyond the City Boundaries: Peri-urban Areas and Environmental Issues”. In Chapter 12 of this part, H. Losada, *et al.*, discuss the transformation of agriculture in Mexico City from a conventional rural form to a new urbanised model, as a reaction to urban development and the availability of waste products from the city as well as a response to the demands of recreation and tourism. In Chapter 13, Philip F. Kelly examines some of the development priorities and political processes involved in land conversion in the Philippines, and the region around Manila in particular. It is in the agricultural provinces of Manila’s extended metropolitan region that some of the country’s most productive farmlands also form the core region of an industrialising and globalising national economy. The result has been a process of regionalised urbanisation in which urban-rural relations are primarily constituted in the encroachment of urban land uses and employment into rural settings. The relationship between urban and rural sectors must be seen as existing in tension as different development priorities are played out. William E. Rees uses the concepts of human carrying capacity and natural capital, in Chapter 14, to argue that prevailing economic assumptions regarding urbanisation and the sustainability of cities must be revised in the light of global ecological change. While we are used to thinking of cities as geographically discrete places, most of the land ‘occupied’ by their residents lies far beyond their borders. The total area of land required to sustain an urban region is typically at least an order of magnitude greater than that contained within municipal boundaries or the associated built-up area. The final Chapter of the book, by Gordon McGranahan, presents an overview of urban environmental burdens at three scales: intra-urban, urban-regional, and global. The chapter shows that there is a long history of environmentalists presenting urban settlements in purely negative terms. This article follows a more recent tradition that recognises urban settlements as unsustainable

in and of themselves, yet, they may provide the key to moving towards a more environmentally sustainable world.

This book is a valuable addition to the literature on rural-urban linkages. It will be very useful to both policy-makers and academics interested in migration, redistribution of population, and rural development. It is worth noting, however, that the rural-urban divide recently ended in some developing countries including Pakistan. The question is whether it has contributed to livelihoods and local economies, or has had any positive effects on the economic, social, and cultural transformation taking place. More examples would have enhanced the utility of ideas presented in this book.

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