



Urban-Rural Agricultural Linkages: Opportunities and Risks for Sustainable Rural Development

Monday, August 23, 2021
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Description

African countries have witnessed a persistent rise in urbanization in recent decades. This has brought opportunities as well as pose challenges to sustainable rural development and poverty reduction, particularly that of small-scale producers. On the one hand, by offering better access to goods and services, employment opportunities, information and increasing demand for agricultural products (as it creates huge markets for farmers), urban areas have the potential to stimulate economic growth and poverty reduction. For instance, the integration of markets in urban areas is likely to facilitate the flow of agricultural goods to cities and industrial goods and services to rural, enhancing productivity of agricultural sector and, hence, improving living standards. On the other hand, urbanization could increase discrimination and economic inequality between urban and rural areas, further increasing social polarization. Ultimately, the economic interdependence between rural producers and urban markets is, thus, expected to lead to changes in social structure.

In this session, researchers from various institutes indicated below will offer insights from their research on the opportunities and risks of urbanization for rural development in African countries through agricultural linkages. In doing so, each of them will bring their priorities to the discussion, following one main presentation of current state of the art: the good, the bad and future directions.

Target audience: the session is aimed at academics who are undertaking research related to urbanization and agricultural development, poverty reduction and rural-urban migration in developing countries as well as practitioners engaged in related policies and programs.

Format: In order to stimulate a lively debate, the session will be organized as a moderated virtual panel discussion to give the researchers an opportunity to challenge each other and be queried by the audience. As it will be held virtually, the panelists will be encouraged to make minimal use of PowerPoint presentations so as to leave adequate time for an interactive and dynamic debate. The focus will be on identifying evidence-based strategies for promoting inclusive development in the phase of rapid urbanization in Africa.

The main presenter: presents key findings of the review of urban-rural agricultural linkages (meta-analysis). Specifically he highlights on whether urban-rural agricultural relations are positive for small-scale producers and what explains both the positive and negative outcomes. Finally, he talks about some emerging views on the role of urbanization (urban centers) and the expected economic impacts therein for small-scale producers in Africa.

First panelist: based on the main presentation, the first panelist discusses the role of secondary towns in supporting more inclusive rural development, and market links between value chain actors and small-scale producers in Africa and elsewhere. He also provides some insights on the implication of urbanization on African food systems focusing on challenges and opportunities; the role of urbanization for middle-class consumers rise in Africa and the changing demand for food quality, convenience and safety and implication on research and development.

Second panelist: argues that inequality in occupational opportunities across rural-urban areas matter for inter-generational mobility. He then shows how such inequality in opportunities such as occupational status transmits across generations and how such inter-generational interdependence are stronger in urban areas than in rural or small towns, and how urbanization offer better employment opportunities for inclusive development. Finally, he highlights the role of small and intermediate urban centers (size or scale of urbanization) in supporting more inclusive rural development and peaceful societies

Third panelist: finds that small business which focus on staple crops in secondary towns could spur economic growth. In doing so, he shows the economic interdependence between urban markets and rural producers and the role of institutions and digitization for effective urban-rural business performance.

Organizer

[Tekalign G. Sakketa](#)

- German Development Institute (DIE)

Chairperson

[Tilman Altenburg](#)

- German Development Institute (DIE)

Panelists

[Getaw Tadesse](#)

- AKADEMIYA2063

[Henry Kankwamba](#)

- Lilongwe University of Agriculture

[Mekdim Dereje](#)

- Leibniz Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops

Discussant

[Assefa Admassie](#) Addis Ababa University