

Rural-Urban Transformation (RUT): Economic Dynamics, Mobility and Governance of Emerging Urban Centers for Poverty Reduction

Responsible institutions

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BACKGROUND

Tanzania is urbanizing and experiencing urban growth in different types of urban centers, covering the span from larger metropolitan cities such as Dar es Salaam to small and Emerging Urban Centers (EUCs), which in many cases are not yet formally registered as urban centers. RUT research project focus on Emerging Urban Centers (EUC). EUCs are characterized by diverse livelihood opportunities and social-cultural factors resulting from migration and mobility.

Urbanization in this case is associated with the process through which an increasing proportion of rural population moves to and lives in EUCs. Population that engage in farm and non-farm livelihood activities. Growth of EUC in terms of population and economic activity lead to major governance challenges. RUT research project is designed to provide an understanding of governance in EUCs beyond the government administrative structures.

Overall objective

The overall objective of the project is to provide a comprehensive understanding of development dynamics of EUCs in Tanzania and explore how these impacts on the physical and socio-economic transformation of EUCs into urban townships. Central to the research is to understand governance practices and challenges of these fast growing urban areas characterized by complex in-and out migration and rapid changing economic processes.

Immediate objectives

- To analyse how the forms and roles of institutions (formal and informal) have developed in support of the transformation
- To identify how governance practices (public and private) in relation to land, water and waste management have developed in support of the transformation.
- To identify how the rural-urban connectivity influence markets, business networks and employment creation in the EUC.
- To identify livelihoods and the role of mobility practices in the EUC
- To develop human resource capacity to research on development dynamics of EUCs



Key research areas:

The RUT research project will focus on the relationship between people and institutions, through the exploration of governance practices, access to services, business and business network along with mobility and livelihood practices.

Governance practices:

As EUC's grow in spatial coverage along with increased population density, new governance structures arise as sub-villages, villages and wards are submerged into township structures, changing their legal status. These new townships are faced with a number of governance challenges. The RUT project explores how challenges in relation to land, water and waste management are handled both within the formal governance systems and through more informal governance structures. RUT research project is addressing questions such as:

- How are changing land use governed and managed as agricultural land are being reclassified as urban land?
- How are the townships planning for future township developments?
- What challenges are they facing in relation land acquisitions and allocations?
- How are service provision of water and electricity mediated?
- How are waste management handled and planned for?



Business and business networks:

Economic growth and increased trading in both agricultural and non-agricultural commodities stimulate the development of EUC's. As EUC's become economic hubs for the surrounding villages, entrepreneurs and financial investors are attracted as the business environment becomes more lucrative. With an increase in trade and business the need for organisation of these players becomes more important, along with policies and initiatives to support a continuous economic growth. The RUT research project explores how rural-urban linkages are shaping the economic market of EUC's, and how business networks are organised. This is examined through questions such as:

- How are economic players in EUCs connected in business networks?
- What types of entry barriers are there to these networks?
- How do rural-urban linkages and business networks impact job creation?
- What is the role of informal institutions in providing support for growth of business and business networks?

Livelihood and mobility:

EUCs are characterised by a high rate of in- migration, from both neighbouring villages and far-away districts of Tanzania. These different migration patterns create a social fabric uniquely different from rural villages, with an ever mixing of local cultures and practices. The RUT project explores how these migration patterns intersect with livelihood practices, along with understanding the role of mobility in the everyday life of people. It will do so through addressing questions such as:

- What attracts migrants to EUC's?
- How do migration trajectories influence livelihood choices and activities?
- What role does mobility play for livelihood activities?
- How do livelihood and mobility practices differ between gender and generations?



The exploration of these components combined provides the RUT project with crucial insights into how rural-urban transformations are changing the rural and urban landscape of Tanzania. Furthermore, the RUT project, through a combined analysis of governance practices, business networks and livelihoods offers important knowledge on these dynamic relationships and how they contribute to rural- urban transformation and poverty reduction.

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