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“Agricultural development within the rural-urban continuum”

## Urbanity and Rurality in Forced Migration

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### Abstract

The paper aims to contribute to the identification of better programming approaches for areas affected by forced migration by analysing the role of refugee/IDP (internally displaced persons) camps in their hosting areas from the perspective a rural-urban continuum. This approach makes it possible to harness the knowledge gained on rural-urban relations for developing better targeted programs for such areas. The paper develops an analytical framework, which distinguishes different types of rural-urban relations, depending on the type of camp, and the factors that influence possible livelihood strategies, such as the agro-ecological potential of the region. Empirical case studies from refugee/IDP camps in Kenya, Uganda, Congo, Chad, Pakistan and Nepal are used to apply the framework.

According to the analytical framework, large refugee camps constitute quasi-urban settings by the sheer number of inhabitants and the density of the population. Considering the low housing standards and the absence of services such as electricity, sanitation and higher education, they resemble urban slums. The surroundings of the refugee/IDP camps are typically rural, poor and sparsely populated, since host governments rarely place refugee or IDP camps in densely populated and affluent areas. The rural-urban setting constitutes both an opportunity and a challenge, which adds to the challenges arising from different language, culture, religion, and socio-economic background. The case studies show that the origin of the migrants has an important influence on the livelihood strategies that can be designed for the refugees/IDPs and their host populations. Marginal-urban migrants can make use of their “slum know-how” and engage in activities such as handicrafts and urban gardening as a basis of trade with the host population. However, violence and mafia-like structures may be a challenge in such situations. Rural migrants may have better prospects for engaging in agricultural activities in the surrounding areas of the camps, which requires, however, land use planning and other strategies to avoid conflicts over land and other natural resources. The paper provides examples of how the two groups can have different but complementing roles while at the same time pursuing one common set of livelihood objectives.

**Keywords:** Forced migration, livelihoods, refugees, rural-urban continuum