

Rural-urban Migration and Livelihoods

Bashir Omar

Rural-urban Migration-the Phenomena

- ▶ The rural-urban migration is a global phenomenon.
- ▶ Its impact on the rural development in less economically developed countries (LEDCs) puts pressure on resources and depleting rural areas of skilled manpower.
- ▶ Sudan is one of the developing countries that experiences the implications and consequences of rural to urban cities particularly the capital.
- ▶ Mechanised agriculture is still far from happening in (LEDCs).

The Gezira Scheme

- ▶ The main goal of the of the Gezira scheme was to grow cotton to feed the Lancashire textile factories during Sudan's occupation under the British Empire, but the focus on the production and growth of cotton as a cash crop has continued even after Sudan gained its independence in 1956 (Barnett and Abdelkarim, 1991).
- ▶ The Gezira scheme covers the cultivation of 2.1 million feddans and makes up a total of 10 percent of the total cultivable land in the whole of Sudan. The scheme is located in central Sudan to the south of the capital city, Khartoum (Laki, 1996).
- ▶ The fixed irrigation system secures the water supplies throughout the year for both agriculture and human needs as opposed to the case in areas of rainfed irrigation which are subject to rain volatility and droughts.
- ▶ The Gezira scheme is described as the world largest scheme of its kind with the most complex irrigation system and administratively managed.

Rural-Urban migration in Sudan-Drivers

- ▶ The negligence of traditional agriculture has served as a large push factor in the migration to urban areas. Lack of research funding and the withdrawal of foreign donors has removed the ability of traditional farmers to continue to use the original methods they were familiar with and develop new, more efficient farming methods.
- ▶ Previous dependency on oil until 1999 has made the switch back to agriculture as the main source of income very difficult. Lack of diversification of agriculture in rural areas has forced migration to urban areas as a result.
- ▶ The informal sector makes up over 60% of the total GDP in Sudan.
- ▶ Families previously dependent on rural agriculture have found street vending, tailoring and tea selling more economically sustainable.

Environmental Degradation and Food Security

- ▶ The impact of rapid population growth and socio-economic activities has fuelled environmental degradation.
- ▶ Land clearance as part of the Gezira scheme for example, has decreased vegetative cover and therefore soil quality.
- ▶ In the last three decades Sudan experienced its largest food crisis in modern history as a result of bad macroeconomic policies, drought, poor management of the agricultural sector, large foreign debt, inadequate infrastructure and civil wars.

Political ecology and Productivity in the Gezira Scheme

- ▶ According to the Gezira Scheme Act of 2005, its main objectives were to provide sustainable resources to aid agriculture and improve the socio-economic aspects of livelihood for the everyday farmer. The 2005 Act emphasises that farmers have the right to freely manage and maintain their own farms including freedom of crop choice (World Bank,2010).
- ▶ Production relations made cotton farming less attractive to tenants due to heavy taxation and the government receiving a large share of the profits.

Human capital and migration

- ▶ Economic development plays an essential role in human capital migration.
- ▶ Urban development occurs at the expense of the agricultural sector.
- ▶ Human resources move to urban cities where the marginal product of labour is higher than it is in the rural sector.
- ▶ This uneven development is seen as a pull factor that drives the migration of skilled human capital of the young and better educated.
- ▶ Human capital depletion in rural areas has to some extent impacted rural development.

Analysis of fieldwork findings

- ▶ Migration to urban cities as a livelihoods strategy
- ▶ Family size and the individual income are important to the migration decision.
- ▶ Agricultural low productivity.
- ▶ Lack of agricultural finance and insurance.
- ▶ Families expansion and landlessness.
- ▶ Civil services (education, healthcare, drinking water and sanitation)
- ▶ Source of informal finance to agriculture (remittances).

Missed opportunities

- ▶ The findings show that a number of opportunities are missing in The Gezira scheme including:
 - switching to economically sustainable cash crops like cotton.
 - Despite Gezira being , home to the second largest area of aquaculture of 10.7ha, it only produces 750 tonnes of commercially sold fish.
 - Transformational industries (TI) are another missed opportunity in Gezira given the human capital and the mass production of raw material that the scheme produces.
 - Forestry and timber
 - Agroforestry
 - R&D
 - Waste management (fertilisers and bio-energy)



This chart shows the price difference between raw and end products (Sudan tv *sanabel programme* ,2018)

I am now open to answering any questions

Thank you