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Geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration: A comparative study across urban and rural regions

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Abstract

Labour migration significantly affects the socio-economic landscapes of both origin and destination regions. This research explores the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration, comparing urban and rural contexts. Using data from various countries, especially India, the study examines migration patterns, economic contributions, demographic changes, and social transformations. Findings reveal distinct differences in the causes, consequences, and policy implications of labour migration between urban and rural areas, highlighting the need for tailored approaches in migration management. The study utilizes a comparative approach to understand the factors influencing migration patterns and the consequences of such movements on the economies and societies of these regions.

Keywords: Development, employment, migration, social factors, urban planning

1. Introduction

Labour migration has significant implications for both urban and rural regions, influencing geospatial dynamics and socio-economic factors. Understanding the patterns and impacts of labour migration can provide valuable insights for policy-making and urban planning. In this research paper, we aim to conduct a comparative study across urban and rural regions to analyse the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration. (Christiaensen *et al.*, 2019) ^[4]. By examining these dynamics, we hope to contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between migration and regional development. Opportunities and migration decisions. For example, Clark *et al.* analysed the optimal distance for migration and found that households are compensated for quality-of-life factors, and improvements positively affect how far they move. In a similar vein, Costa and Kahn explored the locational choice of college-educated individuals and found that employment opportunities play a crucial role in their decision-making process (Gould, 2007) ^[7]. Other studies have focused on the role of amenities and quality of life in migration decisions. Deller *et al.* investigated the role of amenities and quality-of-life factors in rural economic growth, while Gabriel *et al.*

Explored compensating differentials and the evolution of quality of life among U.S. states. Moreover, the presence of social networks and ties to rural hometowns can also influence migration decisions. For example, individuals may be more likely to migrate to urban areas if they have friends or family members already residing there who can provide support and facilitate their integration into the new location. Furthermore, it is important to consider the specific dynamics and patterns of migration within urban and rural regions (Bell *et al.*, 2014). In the case of urban regions, labour migration can result in population growth and increased economic activity. On the other hand, in rural regions, labour migration can lead to depopulation and a decline in economic opportunities.

In urban regions, labour migration is often driven by the availability of job opportunities and access to amenities. Cities are economic centres that attract people seeking better job prospects, higher salaries, and a range of amenities such as cultural institutions, entertainment venues, and recreational facilities (Malhotra & Sidhu, 2007) ^[13]. Rural regions, on the other hand, face a different set of dynamics.

The limited job prospects and economic opportunities in rural areas often result in outmigration. In order to attract and retain knowledge human resources, particularly graduate students, in rural regions for economic development, governments need to understand the patterns of young graduates moving from universities to the labour market (Marré, 2014) ^[14]. They also need to understand why some individuals choose to return to their rural hometowns to begin their careers. Research has shown that factors such as family ties, familiarity with the rural environment, and a desire for a slower pace of life can influence individuals to return to their rural hometowns. Additionally, the presence of rural amenities and quality-of-life factors, such as natural landscapes, close-knit communities, and lower cost of living, may

2. Review of Literature

The literature on labour migration extensively covers its economic, social, and demographic impacts, yet it often lacks a comparative analysis of urban and rural contexts. The Push-Pull Model remains a foundational theory, explaining migration through factors that push individuals from origin areas and pull them to destinations. Neoclassical economics emphasizes wage differentials as primary motivators, while the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) considers household strategies, including risk diversification and access to capital.

Urban migration studies highlight the economic benefits of increased labour supply, innovation, and productivity but also point to challenges such as infrastructure strain and social integration issues (Skeldon, 2018) ^[20]. Rural migration literature focuses on the economic decline due to labour outflow but recognizes the positive impact of remittances on local economies (De Haas, 2010) ^[21].

Comparative studies, however, are sparse. Existing research often isolates urban or rural migration impacts, overlooking the nuanced differences and interactions between the two. There is also a gap in longitudinal studies tracking long-term effects and in exploring the social dimensions of migration, such as changes in family structures and community cohesion.

This study aims to bridge these gaps by providing a comprehensive comparative analysis, utilizing geospatial tools and focusing on both the immediate and long-term socio-economic impacts of labour migration

3. Research Gap

In the subsequent sections of this paper, we will explore the methodologies employed to gather and analyse geospatial data, including mapping tools and statistical techniques. Additionally, we will delve into the empirical findings from our comparative study, shedding light on the varying impacts of labour migration on urban and rural areas. This will enable us to draw insightful conclusions that can inform policy-making and urban planning initiatives aimed at addressing the multifaceted implications of labour migration (Akram *et al.*, 2017) ^[1].

- Despite extensive research on labour migration, significant gaps remain in understanding the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts across urban and rural regions. Current studies often treat urban and rural migration separately, lacking a comparative approach that highlights their distinct challenges and opportunities. There is a need for detailed, region-

specific analyses that account for differing economic structures, employment opportunities, and social infrastructures.

- Longitudinal studies tracking the long-term effects of labour migration are scarce, and the social dimensions, such as integration and community cohesion, are underexplored. Additionally, the environmental impacts of migration-induced urbanization and changes in rural land use remain inadequately studied.
- Policy recommendations frequently fail to differentiate between the infrastructural, economic, and social needs of urban and rural areas, highlighting a gap in tailored, evidence-based strategies. Furthermore, the specific experiences of women, children, and vulnerable populations in the migration context are often overlooked.
- Advancements in geospatial analysis and big data analytics present new opportunities for more precise and dynamic insights into migration patterns, yet their potential is underutilized in current research. Addressing these gaps is crucial for developing comprehensive, effective policies and interventions for managing labour migration's diverse impacts.

4. Significance of the Study

The study on "Geospatial Dynamics and Socio-economic Impacts of Labour Migration: A Comparative Study Across Urban and Rural Regions" is significant for several reasons. First, it addresses the critical need to understand the differential impacts of labour migration on urban and rural areas, which is essential for crafting effective and targeted policy interventions. By comparing these contexts, the research provides a nuanced perspective that can inform regional development strategies, ensuring that both urban and rural areas benefit from migration.

Second, the study employs advanced geospatial analysis tools, offering precise insights into migration patterns and their effects. This methodological innovation enhances the accuracy and relevance of findings, making them valuable for policymakers, urban planners, and social scientists.

Third, the research highlights the socio-economic transformations induced by migration, including economic contributions, demographic shifts, and social changes. Understanding these impacts is crucial for fostering inclusive growth, reducing inequalities, and promoting social cohesion in both urban and rural settings.

Finally, the study fills existing research gaps by focusing on the long-term and comparative aspects of migration, providing a comprehensive understanding of its dynamics. This holistic approach is vital for designing sustainable migration management practices and ensuring that the benefits of migration are equitably distributed.

5. Objectives

1. To analyse migration patterns between urban and rural regions.
2. To assess the economic impacts of labour migration on urban and rural areas.
3. To evaluate the demographic changes resulting from labour migration.
4. To understand the social transformations influenced by labour migration.
5. To suggest policy recommendations for managing labour migration in diverse contexts.

6. Hypothesis

The research paper titled "Geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration: A comparative study across urban and rural regions" aims to investigate the distinct effects of labour migration on urban and rural areas. The hypotheses for this study are as follows:

1. **Urban Migration Hypothesis:** Labour migration to urban areas leads to significant economic growth, characterized by increased employment opportunities, higher wages, and greater innovation. However, it also results in considerable strain on urban infrastructure, housing, and public services, potentially leading to social integration challenges and the growth of informal settlements.
2. **Rural Migration Hypothesis:** Labour out-migration from rural areas results in economic decline due to labour shortages, which negatively affect agricultural productivity and local economies. Conversely, remittances sent back to rural households significantly enhance the local economy by providing financial stability, improving living standards, and supporting small-scale investments in education and healthcare.
3. **Demographic Impact Hypothesis:** Migration patterns cause distinct demographic shifts in urban and rural regions. Urban areas experience a youthful and diverse population influx, fostering dynamic cultural exchanges but also posing social cohesion challenges. In contrast, rural areas face aging populations and gender imbalances due to the out-migration of young adults, leading to long-term demographic challenges.
4. **Policy Implication Hypothesis:** Tailored policy interventions that address the specific needs of urban and rural areas are more effective in managing the impacts of labour migration. Urban policies should focus on infrastructure development, social integration programs, and inclusive economic policies, while rural policies should emphasize economic diversification, community support systems, and education and training programs.

These hypotheses guide the research in exploring the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration, providing a comprehensive understanding of how migration affects urban and rural regions differently.

7. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration, comparing urban and rural regions. The research design integrates both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of migration patterns and their effects.

8. Results and Discussion

8.1 Geospatial Dynamics of Labour Migration

Geospatial dynamics play a crucial role in understanding the patterns and movements of labour migration across urban and rural regions. Geospatial data, such as satellite imagery, GPS tracking, and spatial analysis tools, provide valuable insights into the spatial distribution of labour migration. These data sources enable researchers to identify migration hotspots, determine migration flows between urban and rural areas, and analyse the spatial patterns of labour migration. By analysing geospatial data, researchers can

gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing labour migration decisions. For example, geospatial analysis can help identify the proximity of job opportunities to residential areas, transportation infrastructures that facilitate labour mobility, and the availability of amenities and services in both urban and rural regions (Christiaensen *et al.*, 2019) ^[4]. Furthermore, geospatial analysis can also highlight spatial disparities in access to employment, amenities, and services between urban and rural areas. Socio-economic Impacts of Labour Migration Labour migration can have significant socio-economic impacts on both urban and rural regions. In urban areas, labour migration can contribute to population growth, economic development, and cultural diversity. It can bring in a skilled workforce, stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, and drive urban infrastructure development. On the other hand, labour migration can also lead to challenges such as increased competition for jobs, housing shortages, strain on public resources and services, and rising inequality. In rural areas, labour migration can have both positive and negative effects. On one hand, labour migration can alleviate unemployment and poverty in rural areas by providing individuals with better job prospects and higher wages. On the other hand, labour migration can result in the loss of valuable human capital in rural regions, leading to a decline in productivity and economic stagnation (Akram *et al.*, 2017) ^[1]. Moreover, labour migration can have social and cultural impacts on both urban and rural communities. For instance, labour migration can lead to changes in social structures, family dynamics, and community cohesion. Geospatial Dynamics of Labour Migration The geospatial dynamics of labour migration refer to the spatial patterns, flows, and interactions between urban and rural areas in the context of labour migration. Through geospatial analysis, researchers can identify the spatial distribution of labour migration hotspots and determine the magnitude and direction of migration flows between urban and rural areas. They can also examine the factors that influence the decision to migrate, such as access to employment opportunities, availability of amenities and services, transportation infrastructure, and socio-economic conditions. Additionally, geospatial analysis can reveal the spatial disparities in labour migration patterns and identify areas with high demand for labour and areas experiencing labour outflows. Comparative Study across Urban and Rural Regions A comparative study across urban and rural regions is important to understand the variations in geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration (Lagakos, 2020) ^[12]. This allows researchers to uncover the specific factors that drive labour migration in different contexts and how these factors shape the outcomes of migration. By comparing urban and rural regions, researchers can analyse the unique challenges and opportunities that labour migration presents in each setting. Furthermore, a comparative study can help uncover the differential impacts of labour migration on urban and rural communities. For example, in urban areas, labour migration can contribute to population growth, economic development, and cultural diversity. However, it may also result in overcrowding, increased competition for resources and services, and social tensions. In rural areas, labour migration may lead to a decline in the working-age population, loss of agricultural labour, and a decrease in economic productivity.

Table 1: Distribution of migrants (in million) of each sex by migration stream, India 1991-2011

Migration Stream	2011		
	Persons	Male	Female
Total Migrants	449.9	143.5	306.4
Rural to Rural	213.8	36.8	177.0
Rural to Urban	78.2	35.4	42.8
Urban to Urban	26.9	10.1	16.8
Urban to Rural	78.1	35.2	42.9
Migration Stream	2001		
Total Migrants	309.4	90.7	218.7
Rural to Rural	171.7	26.1	145.6
Rural to Urban	51.7	24.5	27.2
Urban to Urban	13	4.5	8.5
Urban to Rural	36.6	16.5	20.1
Migration Stream	1991		
Total Migrants	225.9	61.1	164.8
Rural to Rural	145.0	26.5	118.6
Rural to Urban	39.9	18.2	21.7
Urban to Urban	13.5	4.5	8.9
Urban to Rural	26.4	11.5	14.9

Source: Census of India 1991, 2001, 2011.

Geospatial dynamics refer to the spatial patterns and movements of labour migration (Truong *et al.*, 2020). Understanding the geospatial dynamics of labour migration is crucial for analysing the patterns and trends of migration across urban and rural regions. Table 1 shows the distribution of migrants in India by gender and migration stream from 1991 to 2011. In 2011, of the country's 449.9 million internal migrants, 213.8 million (47.5%) migrated to rural regions. Approximately 78.2 million people (17.4% of total migrants) relocated from rural to urban regions. 78.1 million Migrants relocated from one place to another, accounting for approximately 17.4% of all migrants. Rural-to-rural migration is the primary driver of population redistribution throughout all census years. The agricultural economy of the nation is represented in this stream. Rural-to-rural migration in the country is on the decline. In 1991 it was 64.2% and reached to 47.5% in 2011. Rural to urban growth in migration is the second highest stream for both male and female from 1991-2011 (Census of India 1991-2011). Geospatial analysis can help identify the origin and destination of migrant workers, as well as the routes they take during their migration journey. Geospatial analysis can also help identify the factors that influence the decision-making process of labour migrants, such as job opportunities, housing availability, and access to amenities and infrastructure. Furthermore, geospatial analysis can also reveal spatial inequalities in labour migration, such as the concentration of migrant workers in certain regions or neighbourhoods (Dorn & Zweimüller, 2021) ^[6].

8.2 Socio-economic Impacts of Labour Migration

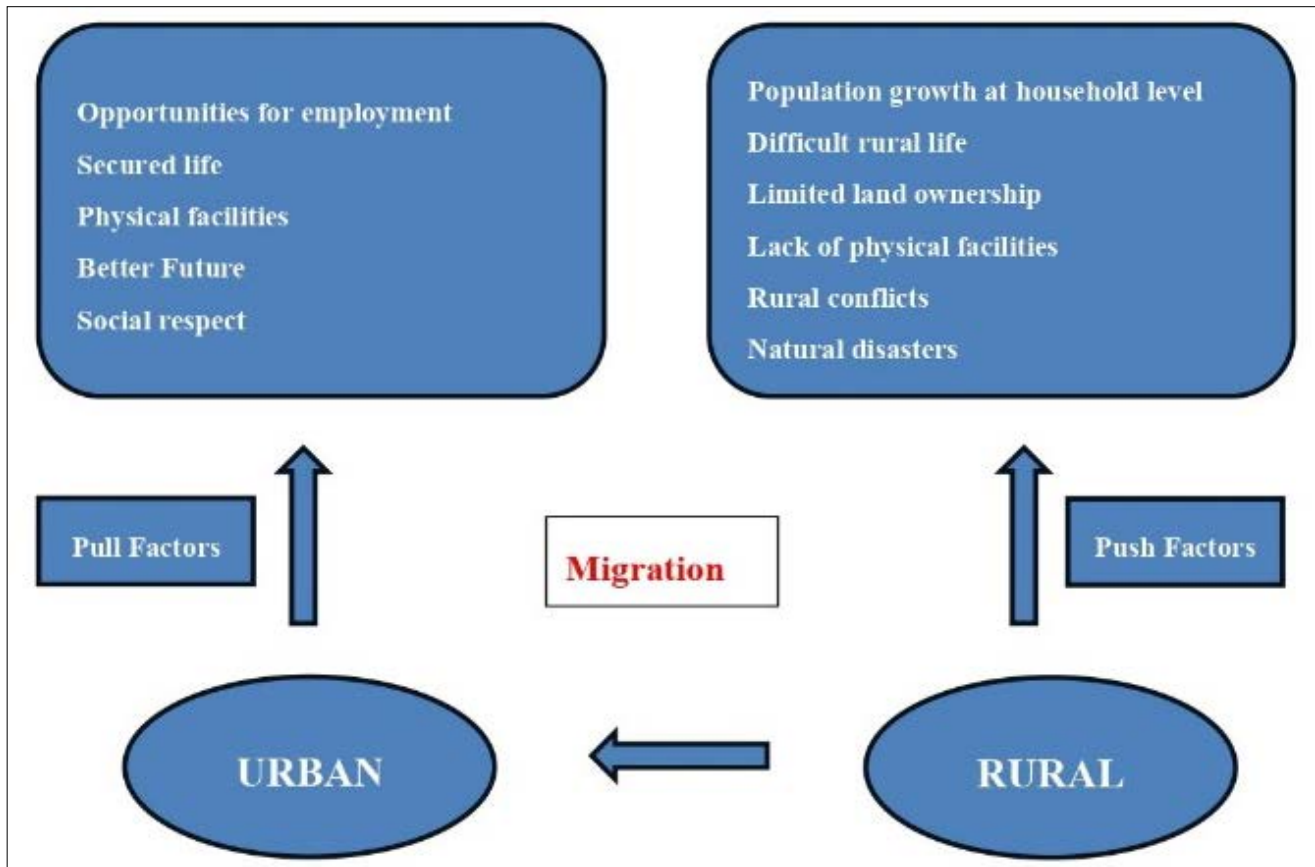
In urban areas, labour migration can contribute to economic growth and development. The influx of skilled and unskilled workers can meet the demand for labour in various sectors, such as construction, manufacturing, and services. This can lead to increased employment opportunities and income levels, as well as the expansion of businesses and industries. Additionally, labour migration can also contribute to

urbanization, as migrants settle in cities and contribute to the growth of urban infrastructure and services. In rural areas, labour migration can have both positive and negative socio-economic impacts. On one hand, labour migration can alleviate unemployment and poverty in rural communities. On the other hand, it can also result in the loss of productive labour and a decrease in agricultural productivity, leading to a decline in rural economies (Devlin, 2014) ^[5]. This loss of labour can exacerbate the existing economic disparities between urban and rural regions, as well as the rural-urban divide. The socio-economic impacts of labour migration can vary significantly between urban and rural regions. In urban regions, labour migration can contribute to economic growth and development. Migration of labour from rural to urban areas can result in a larger workforce in urban industries, which can lead to increased production and economic output. Additionally, labour migration can also contribute to urbanization and the development of cities, as migrants often require housing, services, and infrastructure in their new urban environments. In rural regions, labour migration can have both positive and negative impacts. On one hand, labour migration can help alleviate unemployment and poverty in rural areas by providing employment opportunities for rural residents. On the other hand, labour migration can also lead to a depletion of human capital in rural regions, as young and skilled workers leave in search of better opportunities in urban areas (Module 6: Migration, 2023) ^[15]. These impacts can result in a decline in economic activity and services in rural areas, which can further exacerbate existing inequalities between urban and rural regions.

8.3 Comparative study across urban and Rural regions

A comparative study across urban and rural regions can provide valuable insights into the differences and similarities in the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration. By comparing labour migration patterns and their impacts in both urban and rural regions, researchers can identify the factors that drive labour migration in each context, as well as the consequences of migration on urban and rural economies (Akram *et al.*, 2017) ^[1].

This comparative study can help policy-makers and stakeholders understand the specific needs and challenges faced by different regions, and design targeted policies and interventions to address them. For instance, in urban regions, policy interventions may focus on managing the influx of migrants and ensuring the provision of adequate housing, infrastructure, and services. In rural regions, policy interventions may focus on promoting local economic development and job creation to retain and attract skilled labour (Sabchev, 2020) ^[17]. Furthermore, a comparative study can also shed light on the potential interdependencies between urban and rural regions in terms of labour migration. For example, it can reveal whether labour migration from rural to urban areas is driven by the demand for labour in urban industries or by push factors such as limited economic opportunities in rural regions.



Source: Timalisina, 2007 ^[19]

Fig 1: Push and pull factors for migration

8.4 The Role of Policy Interventions

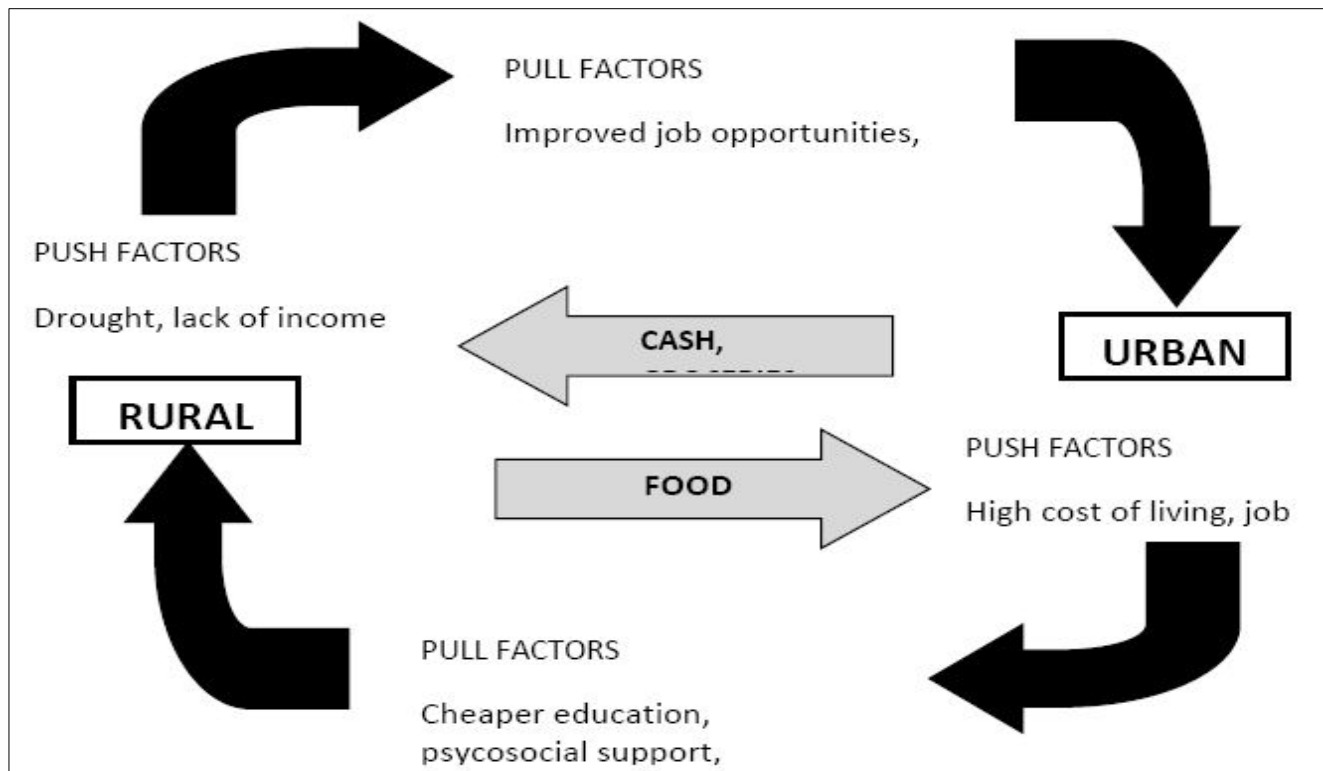
Policy interventions play a crucial role in shaping the impacts of labour migration on both urban and rural regions. In urban areas, policies aimed at managing the influx of migrants and providing essential services and infrastructure can help alleviate the strain on urban resources. For example, affordable housing initiatives, investment in public transportation, and the expansion of healthcare and educational facilities can contribute to the sustainable integration of migrant workers into urban communities (Balbo & Marconi, 2006) ^[2].

On the other hand, in rural regions, policy interventions are essential for promoting economic development and addressing the challenges posed by labour outflows. Initiatives to stimulate local economies, enhance agricultural productivity, and create employment opportunities can help mitigate the negative effects of labour migration on rural communities. Moreover, programs that support the retention of skilled workers in rural areas through incentives and professional development opportunities can contribute to the overall well-being of rural economies.

8.5 Interdependencies between Urban and Rural Labour Migration

A deeper understanding of the interdependencies between urban and rural labour migration is essential for formulating effective policies and strategies that consider the dynamics of labour flows between these two settings. By examining the drivers of migration from rural to urban areas, stakeholders can identify the systemic factors that contribute to the movement of labour across regions. This understanding can inform collaborative efforts between urban and rural authorities to address the root causes of migration, whether they stem from disparities in economic opportunities, limited access to education and healthcare, or other structural challenges (Open Knowledge Repository, 2015) ^[16].

Moreover, an exploration of the interdependencies can uncover opportunities for synergistic development between urban and rural areas. For instance, initiatives that support the establishment of satellite industries in rural regions to complement urban economic activities can create new job prospects closer to home, thus reducing the pressure on urban centres and fostering balanced regional growth.



Source: Action against Hunger, 2012

Fig 2: Interdependencies between Urban and Rural

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, the detailed examination of the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration across urban and rural regions is essential for informed decision-making and the formulation of inclusive policies. By recognizing the distinct challenges and opportunities present in each context, stakeholders can tailor interventions to address the specific needs of urban and rural communities and foster balanced and sustainable development across regions. Moreover, an exploration of the interdependencies between these settings can lay the groundwork for collaborative approaches that harness the strengths of both urban and rural areas to create mutually beneficial outcomes for labour migrants and the wider society. One approach to addressing the challenges of labour migration in rural areas is the retention of skilled workers through incentives and professional development opportunities. This can help to promote local economic growth and reduce the pressure on urban centres. Additionally, investments in education and skill development programs in rural areas can empower individuals with the necessary tools to find employment opportunities locally, reducing the need for migration to urban areas. Furthermore, efforts should be made to improve the quality of life in rural areas by providing access to basic amenities such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Ultimately, a comprehensive understanding of the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts of labour migration in both urban and rural regions is crucial for achieving equitable and sustainable development. By identifying the factors that drive labour migration and understanding the impacts it has on both urban and rural areas, policymakers can design targeted interventions to mitigate negative effects and leverage the potential benefits of labour migration. Overall, the research paper explores the complexities of labour migration across urban and rural regions, examining the geospatial dynamics and socio-economic impacts. It

highlights the importance of considering factors such as local economies, institutions, norms, values, and lifestyles in understanding rural demography. It also emphasizes the need for tailored interventions and collaborative approaches to address the unique challenges and opportunities present in urban and rural contexts.

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