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SA5 - Urbanization

*Increasing Employment Opportunities
in Rural Regions to Mitigate the
Effects of Migration to Overpopulated
Regions*

MELIS AKAR



RESEARCH
REPORT



Forum: Urbanization (SA5)

Issue: Increasing employment opportunities in rural regions to mitigate the effects of migration to overpopulated regions.

Student Officer: Melis Akar - Deputy Chair

Introduction

There has been a forty percent increase in international migration since 2000, the requisition for employment inclined. Each year the rate of refugees settling in urban areas increases and the refugees preferring rural regions decrease. But with the increase in incoming people, the urban city becomes more overpopulated. The main cause of this regional preference is the lack of job opportunities in rural regions. The United Nations (UN) has been attempting to resolve the issue of refugee migration but with 82.4 million refugees and 281 million migrants, the issue must be considered as urgent and not yet resolved.

Definition of Key Terms

Rural Region: Places related to the countryside and rather than to any towns

Migration: Moving from one place or a country to another for economic, educational, social and security related reasons

Immigrant: Someone who permanently comes to live in a foreign country.

Nomad: Someone who does not permanently stay in a place, constantly travels.

Refugee: A person who has been forced to leave a country mainly because of a war

Slum: Informal settlements in cities with very poor habitable conditions; usually are very crowded

Internally Displaced Person (IDP): People who have been obligated or forced to leave their habitats because of violence situations and human rights violations.

Assimilation: Minority groups assuming the values and life of the majority they are living in.

Asylum: Protection offered by the governments for political refugees.

General Overview

Humans have been nomads until permanently establishing sedentary communities. After that people have started seeking other places different from their habitats. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), migration is mainly caused by conflicts, violence, natural disasters, and socio-economic problems. Between 2000 and 2020 the Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) urban migration increased by 70 percent, which shows the rapid increase in urban settlement. There has

been a significant decrease in rural migration. Mostly after the 1900s people have been seeking solutions for the increase in refugees. There have been several meetings and treaties regarding the problem however the problem is not yet fully resolved and the refugees keep increasing mostly in urbanized areas.

In International Organization for Migration's (IOM) 2015 world migration report it is presented that the motivations behind immigrants settling in urbanized cities are mainly; search for better job opportunities, women working to support their families or rejoining with their husbands, people searching for asylums, students, environmental disasters, and national conflicts. Urban cities also provide the migrants healthcare systems, educational opportunities, and security. These are particularly important for immigrants because after leaving their countries because of social or economic problems, they seek for places with better governmental services. However since most rural regions do not have such extensive privileges in communal services, immigrants choose to travel to more populated regions.

As stated before, employment has been an important issue for migrants for several years. In a research by the London School of Commerce, it is proven that employers are generally more reluctant towards migrant workers. Sometimes because of the academic backgrounds of candidates. Most migrant workers, who do have a job earn the minimum wage of the country by sometimes conducting physically demanding work. Especially with the Covid-19 pandemic, the employment of migrant workers significantly dropped. Particularly of the ones who worked in low-waged sectors according to the report of International Labor Organization (ILO).

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data, 68 percent of all the refugees originate from only five countries. These nations are Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar from the highest number of immigrants to the least. On the other hand, five countries host 39 percent of all the refugees in the world which are: Turkey, Colombia, Uganda, Pakistan and Germany in order. Most of the migrants who are forced to travel because of external socio-economic factors tend to locate in the five countries above because they have appealing safety, economic conditions and easy asylum procedures. All in all, the easier residentials of the countries that host most refugees in the world are more attractive to the immigrants mostly from the countries with poor living conditions stated above.

To summarize, most migration is caused by negative external factors within countries. Since 2000, there has been a significant increase in the number of migrants from LEDCs to urban settlements. Immigrants choose settling in places with easier asylums and more job opportunities to gain a wage for survival. That's why migrants tend to prefer urban regions rather than rural ones. One of the major problems that migrants face is employment especially during the pandemic conditions. Also a great number of migrants worldwide come from just five developing countries. In order to maintain a population within urban areas governments tend to increase employment in rural areas to mitigate the immigrants to those regions.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): FAO was established by the UN in 1945 to lead efforts on defeating international security of food and hunger. Regarding these duties, FAO has been working to research the impacts of migration to rural areas and promoting policies for rural mobility by working closely with governments and organizations.

International Labor Organization (ILO): ILO is a UN organization founded in 1919 who mandates social and economic justice by setting international standards on work forces. The ILO specifically works to forge policies to increase the benefits of labor migration.

International Organization for Migration (IOM): IOM, which was established in 1951, provides services for migrants and refugees under the United Nations. Their mission includes developing resilience for vulnerable people on the move and forging strategies to manage mobility along with governments.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): Started in 1950, the UNHCR works for aiding and protecting refugees, immigrants and displaced communities then helping them resettle in another country.

Syrian Arab Republic: Syria has been the main origin of refugees from 2014 until 2019. There have been 6.6 million Syrian refugees who have been hosted by 126 countries. The number of refugees make up more than half of the country's population.

Venezuela: 4.1 million refugees originated from Venezuela. It is the second country with the most refugees. More than 18 percent of the population have left the country due to hunger, crime, violence etc.

Turkey: Turkey hosts 3.7 million refugees which is the largest number of refugees worldwide. Most of the refugees in Turkey are from LEDCs in the Middle East.

Colombia: Colombia is the second country with the most refugees, hosting 1.7 million migrants. Colombia mostly has Venezuelan, Haitian and Cuban migrants.

Timeline of Events

10 December 1948	<i>the Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>
1 July 1949	<i>Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), established by the ILO</i>
9 December 1978	<i>Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975, came into force</i>
18 December 1990	<i>“the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families” treaty was signed by 39 UN members</i>

10 December 1948	<i>the Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>
1 July 2003	<i>the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families was approved by 33 members of the UN</i>
25 September 2015	<i>“Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals” were adopted in the UN New York Headquarters</i>
19 September 2016	<i>New York Declaration for for Refugees and Migrants was adopted by 193 countries</i>
10-11 December 2018	<i>Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Migration was held in Marrakech, Morocco by the UN General Assembly</i>

Treaties and Events

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers: The convention was to create an international treaty emphasizing the rights of migrant workers. 33 Nations collaborated to the treaty.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: The United Nations declared 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be resolved until 2030. Resolving forced migration is also in this agenda under the 10th goal which is Reducing Inequalities Within and Among Countries.

New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants: 193 members of the UN adopted the resolution regarding the rights of refugees and their safeties.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Some governments believe that focusing only on rural areas’ development would resolve migration to urban areas however this solution is rarely seen as effective. The migrants usually seek refuge in slums located in the urban areas for more job opportunities.

Another commonly attempted solution is the formation of refugee camps. The fundings of refugee camps has been going on since the 1950s in Europe. Even the considerably better camps fail to provide healthy living conditions for the refugees. These refugee camps rarely have electricity or running water. All the camps, including the ones built by the UNHCR were temporarily built but life frequently continues for generations. The refugee camps are deliberately placed far away from urban areas although there is a high unemployment rate. The camps do not succeed in permanently locating refugees mostly because of the poor living standards and lack of employment opportunities.

Possible Solutions

To resolve refugees settling in already overpopulated regions the living conditions and employment opportunities must be increased in rural areas to maintain the balance between the populations of regions. In order to increase job opportunities in rural areas, the governments should spend resources on building facilities, creating agricultural lands. The construction business would be an income for the refugees seeking employment. To increase the employment opportunities in LEDCs, collaboration with member nations and funds should be encouraged. For resolving employment of refugees, a sustainable economy in rural areas should be assured. Additionally, collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are crucial for building refugees a life in rural regions. To mitigate refugees to the countryside it is obligatory to have certain living standards in the areas. Depending on the place, safe houses, hospitals, education facilities, security stations (like police, gendarme etc.) and similar structures must be established.

Last but not least, for securing the migration towards rural regions it is important to focus on equality in the region. Considering the migrants are also minorities in the country, To urge these minority groups to stay, governments may choose to honor their values, by building schools of their education system, establishing their religion's temples or buildings. The better living standards and respectful environment towards refugees is sustained, it would be more likely to maintain and mitigate the refugees in rural regions. Contrastingly, governments might choose to assimilate the minority groups which could be a long term solution to reduce refugees in overpopulated regions depending on their policies. It is rather important to make the refugee settle in the rural area to encourage other refugees to live in that region.

Overall, to resolve the resettlements of immigrants, governments might improve their conditions for living, increase their job opportunities, and maintain equality for the immigrants and citizens.

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