

Rural transformation for sustainability in the global south

Call for Papers for an International Forum of Future Rural Studies

8:30-12:30 BST or 15:30-19:30 BJT, 22 October 2022, Hybrid

Paradigm shift for rural development studies in the global south

The cascading and interlinked global crises and conflicts in recent years might have changed the discourse of rural development in the global south where three billion people live in rural areas and there is an increase of population suffering from poverty, food shortage, climate change, broken supply chains or loss of nonfarm job for their livelihood security. Such destructive impacts call for critique, radical thinking, and paradigm shift in rural studies to understand both challenges and opportunities there. Against the backdrop, five themes require careful investigation:

- 1) **Paradigm shift for rural development studies in the global south:** Why do we need new approach to understand challenges and opportunities in the global south? What are limitations or constraints from conventional paradigm? What can be learnt from comparison studies about poverty reduction, green revolution, rural transformation in different regions and countries, or case studies linked to the SDGs, BRI projects, South to South cooperation?
- 2) **Rural governance and partnership for sustainable livelihoods:** By what strategies can external resources and stakeholders be effectively organised for poverty alleviation, food security, green/digital agriculture and rural revitalisation? What are good practices in sustainable (or alternative) livelihoods in the context of urbanisation, shocks and uncertainties, biodiversity protection, public goods (e.g. infrastructure)? What roles can government agencies play in mobilising and coordinating multiple stakeholders for poverty alleviation, industrial revitalisation and sustainable livelihoods?
- 3) **Global-local knowledge system and social innovation:** By what mechanisms can local practices be upgraded into regional and global development theories and policies? How have global development norms and goals been adopted and developed local communities for sustainable rural development? Where are interfaces between local (or indigenous) knowledge and global (or scientific) knowledge systems for rural transformation in developing countries? How can an innovation platform be created for researchers, multiple stakeholders and rural communities to address local challenges with sustainable solutions?
- 4) **Higher education and entrepreneurship for rural transformation:** What roles can higher education institutions play in cultivating sustainability competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values) among staff and students for rural sustainability in the global south? By what pedagogical/curriculum reform could help students to develop their competences in

challenge-oriented, interdisciplinary and stakeholder engaged research collaboration? How can an entrepreneurial ecosystem be built-up for entrepreneurship education and training to address local challenges and opportunities there?

- 5) **Lower carbon living and implications for rural transformation:** The four interlocking crises (climate crisis, biodiversity loss, inequality and the non-communicable diseases of affluence) request a lower carbon lifestyle against modern material consumption worldwide. It calls for new understandings and share of good practices in terms of mutual learning, adaption and cooperation between rural and urban communities to promote public awareness and urban participation in ecological/circular agriculture, biodiversity and cultural diversity protection, community-supported agriculture (CSA).

Journals and Conference

The above questions will be addressed through an International Forum of Future Rural Studies (IFFRS) with aims to:

- initiate research collaboration for paradigm shift in rural studies
- share research findings and methodological innovation to understand challenges and good practices in the global south
- collect and select academic papers submitted to special issue (SI) of *Journal of Rural Studies* (JRS) and *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* (IJAS).

The theme of IFFRS is **rural transformation for sustainability**, referring to interconnection, mutual learning and partnership building between local communities and external stakeholders for sustainable (or alternative) livelihoods, intrinsic dynamics and innovation diffusion at various levels from local, national, to regional and globe. The event will be delivered through: 1) keynote speeches by international renown scholars for new trends of rural studies; 2) case studies in selected countries (China, India, Africa); 3) short presentations of selected papers; 4) roundtable discussion for publications and research collaboration.

This is a half day event held on **22 or 23 October 2022** by hybrid (online and offline in Beijing). We welcome all of interests attend online (Date, registration and venue will be confirmed later).

Preparation of papers and timelines

We welcome submission of full papers in English to address key issues listed in Session 1. Please visit and follow guide/introduction for authors at targeted journal website (i.e. JRS or IJAS) when you prepare manuscript. A review panel will be established in advance to screen all of submitted papers and following criteria will be adopted for the selection and recommendation of papers to the conference and SIs:

- Clear description about local challenges and knowledge gaps related to the global south
- Significance of research approach and questions contributing to relevant debates
- Rigorousness of methodology and empirical evidence to support argument
- Geographic location of empirical studies and fitness to IFFRS theme.

Key dates for submission:

30 September 2022 - Submission of full papers to huanghyxlin@cau.edu.cn

10 October 2022 - Feedback of results and invitation to authors

22 October 2022 - Presentation of selected papers at IFFRS

30 December 2022 - Submission of recommended papers to JRS and IJRS

Organisation of Conference

The IFFRS is co-hosted by Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) of the University of Nottingham and College of International Development and Global Agriculture (CIDGA) of China Agricultural University, with support by University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC), University of Nottingham Malaysia (UNM), FAO China Office, Alliance of Poverty Reduction and Development (APRD), International Conference on Agricultural and Rural Development in China (ICARDC).

The event is based on successful cooperation between NUBS, CIDGA, UNNC in the delivery of two pilot projects: [cooperative ecosystem to empower small farmers](#) and [systemic innovation for rural sustainability](#). Consequently, a Consortium of Future Rural Studies ([CFRS](#)) has been established to foster paradigm shift and methodological innovation for better understanding on local challenges and good practices in sustainable agriculture and rural transformation in the global south.

We welcome interested institutions, organisations and industrial companies to involve CFRS and contribute to IFFRS event as co-organisers by contacting Dr Bin Wu (bin.wu@nottingham.ac.uk) Chair of IFFRS Organisation Committee.