Rural-urban migration in China - An empirically based framework of diaspora’s contributions to rural development

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In China, rural-urban migration of considerable scale takes place.

China’s internal diaspora makes contributions to the development of source communities.

This happens in a context of institutional and social restrictions.
Objectives:

To review scientific evidence on rural-urban migration in China to:

- Construct a conceptual framework of the migration process, its positive impacts, and its interactions with the institutional, administrative and social context.
- Find out about lessons to be learnt from this framework:
  - Enhancement of diaspora’s contributions.
  - International migration.
Impacts of migration at the local level

- **Income**
  - ↑ Investment
  - ↑ Consumption
  - ↑ Labor force

- **Labor demand**
  - ↑ Wages
  - ↑ Land/labor

- **Business creation**
  - Return migration
    - Savings
    - Experience

- **Remittances**

- **Migrant households**
  - Community

- **Non-migrant households**

Source: Own illustration
Migration and local level benefits: The migration process

- Work: Working conditions, Earnings
- Life: Access to public services, Access to housing, Social mobility, Security
- Preparation / Arrival: Job search, Logistics

Source: Own illustration
Migration and local level benefits: The hukou system

Source: Own illustration.
Migration and local level benefits: The land tenure system

Source: Own illustration
Migration and local level benefits: Actors
Migration and local level benefits: Social factors

Source: Own illustration.
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The environment of migration and local level benefits: An analytical framework

The environment of migration and local level benefits: An analytical framework

Source: Own illustration
Conclusions

- The framework reveals a potential policy dilemma:
  - Reducing barriers to migration may increase incomes at origin and reduce inequality.
  - But ties to communities of origin get weaker → less positive development impacts.
  - Question: Is there an optimum?

- The framework can provide a useful tool to
  - Approach similar problems elsewhere.
  - Identify possibilities for policy intervention.
  - Assess the likely impact of these policies.
Thank you very much for your attention!