



## The Political Economy of Rural-Urban Interfaces around Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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### Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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### ABSTRACT

The study aims to assess the political economy of rural-urban interfaces in the pace of rapid urbanization of Addis Ababa City, the capital of Ethiopia. It seeks to understand the rural-urban interfaces employing the political economy lens of dependency theory. Primary data were collected through qualitative techniques, such as KIIs and observation methods. 20 randomly selected rural and urban dwellers were interviewed to capture their views, experiences and reflections regarding the prevailing rural-urban interfaces such as people, environment and culture. Also, quantitative data were gathered from secondary sources. The data collections and analyses were carried out between February 2013 and February, 2014. It was observed that despite there are major shifts in development policies and strategies in poverty reduction in Ethiopia, the majority of the endeavours are urban centred but rhetorically rural focused. The rural-urban interfaces in Ethiopia, as explained and underpinned by dependency view, the urban-the metropolis extracted and exploited the rural-satellite for self-development and flourishing which left the latter at the heart of underdevelopment economically, socially, politically, and contaminated the rural landscapes and environments. The find concurred with the fact that urban are dependent on rural for economic growth, environmental services and sink of waste, political instruments, and aesthetic values. As dependency perspective dictates, against the Growth Pole theory, the bias to urban metropolis is evident that caused the underdevelopment of rural satellite or periphery and flourishing urban. Thus, there is a premium

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need to examine the pro-rural policies of Ethiopia as it seems pseudo-concern and paternalistic promulgation but systematic, structural and technical biased towards urban in practices.

*Keywords: Rural-urban; interface; dependency theory; Ethiopia; satellite; metropolis; Addis Ababa.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Majority of the poor in developing countries are living in rural areas below poverty level. According to the Rural Poverty Report 2011 of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) [1], globally, there are about 1.4 billion people living on less than US \$1.25 a day, and close to 1 billion people suffering from hunger. At least 70 per cent of the world's very poor people are rural. Neither of these facts is likely to change in the immediate future, despite widespread urbanization and population increases in developing countries. The underdevelopment and poverty in rural areas may persist due to structural restraints placed on rural by the urban centres in the process of urbanization. This urbanization is the process in which originally rural societies are transformed to urban way of life. [2], revealed that the major reasons for underdevelopment of rural areas in developing countries are centrality, uneven distribution of services and infrastructures, and poor linkage during the process of urbanization. The policy bias was also contributed to the exploitation of the rural people by the urban people [3]. He claimed that urban are developing and rural are underdeveloped as urban are extracting resources from rural for food, construction materials, industrial raw materials, skilled and semiskilled labours, and sipping surplus capital in the form of taxes without sufficiently reinvesting in the rural infrastructures.

[4], defined the term urbanization as "an increase in the proportion of a population living in the area that is defined urban". All settlements above 2,000 or 2,500 inhabitants are considered urban, but in some countries settlements with only a few hundred inhabitants are sufficient to qualify as urban [5]. In Switzerland, for example, communes of over 10,000 inhabitants are categorized as urban while in Norway and Iceland more than 200 inhabitants are considered as urban [6]. Moreover, major economic activities also matters. In rural areas, the share of agricultural activities is relatively high whereas in urban areas diverse labour forces are organized around non-agricultural production. The social character (behavioural,

values, and mode of communication) also distinguishes urban from rural areas [7].

Broadly, both rural and urban are social systems in their own with tremendous interfaces and several social, economic, political, and environmental linkages in the systems' interface-where the whole is greater than its parts. [8], defined social interface as the critical points of interaction or linkage between different social system or levels of social interactions whereas [9], defined as the force-field between any two institutions that exist in the rural-urban society. The notion of interfaces can be used as a methodological approach to study how small interactional entities are linked into larger scale systems. Thus, it is reasonable to talk of interfaces between the large rural-urban system and the links of other small entities within rural-urban systems. Yet, the meaning of interfaces and links is often confusing, as it exists not only between rural and urban but also among social, cultural, political, economic and environmental arenas. For example, there could be an interface between the urban metropolitan and the rural peasantry, but there is a link between livestock and crop subsystems or industry and service subsystems. Therefore, the question of using either links or interfaces is perceptive and no general rule.

Furthermore, peri-urban areas which depict both rural and urban physiognomies exhibit an interface than detached [10], and considered to be more than being an area surrounding cities. As a result, it is called Peri-Urban Interface (PUI). For example, [11] defined peri-urban "as an area where urban and rural development processes meet, mix and interact on edge of cities. It not as discrete but rather [as] a diffuse territory identified of features and phenomena, generated largely by activities within the urban zone proper". On the other side, [12] define PUI as "a place characterized by continuous but un-even process of urbanization, where agriculture, urban and natural resource systems are in constant interaction." Thus, rural and urban areas are interdependent. Sooner or later peri-urban areas tends to be transformed to urban than rural as urban economy drives and engulf them. It also serves as 'semi-metropolis' that facilitate the

resource extraction and exploitation of urban areas and a buffer zone of enslavement. The rural-urban interface is therefore political economy realm not just a mere relationships.

In 1960s and 1970s, the Growth Pole Theory has informed government planning and investment in urban as a key to propel economic growth, which was ultimately to flow to rural areas. The growth pole approach was a theoretical arena towards diffusion of innovation which was considered as an ideal for economic growth through economic and technological injections. In this regard, the smaller towns are regarded as spatial nodes for this diffusion of economic growth [10]. This two-sector growth model was critiqued by rural “developmentalists” as being parasitic. It was advanced that the tackling of inequality to resources access was more important for the poor than waiting for growth effects that the rural ways of life were being eroded and turned into place of neglect [13]. The dependency school thought has elaborated the critic [14,15,16,17,18]. They argued that the growth of urban centres was based on the exploitation of rural areas, which prevented them from taking advantage of their own development potential. This would eventually lead to underdevelopment rather than growth.

The ‘urban bias’ in terms of tariff, trade, taxation and sector investment policies pursued by most governments had deprived rural areas’ resources and infrastructures. [3], identified for first time such systematic bias against rural residents as the single most important source of deprivation for majority of the poor across the world. Moreover, [19] provides extensive accounts of various tax instruments such as government-owned marketing boards with monopsony power to buy export products from peasants at administratively set low prices. Food and raw materials are bought at cheaper price from rural areas and sold at urban centres. Originally conceived in interpretation of the national-bourgeois or national developmentalist of Brazil and Latin America, dependency view helps to illustrate the inequality in terms of the economic development due to external influences such as political, economic, and cultural spheres. The notion of dependency was first centered on “asymmetrical relationships and ties among nations, small groups and classes within the Third World and between the ones in Third World and the ones in Western World” [20]. It emphasizes the exploitation of classes far more than the exploitation of nations. [14], clearly

insisted the analysis of social classes in dependent capitalism. He was interested in the ‘movement’, in class struggles, in redefining interests, in the alliances that sustain structures and, at the same time, create perspectives of change.

Dependency can exist at national or sub-national levels that the local businessmen, the state bureaucracy, elite and intellectuals in urban areas experience a process of exploiting rural resources with the formation of the national state and the temptation to ally themselves with central countries [16]. This was also the phenomena in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe and the United States when the national, standing against socialist cosmopolitanism [21]. The proponents of the dependency or core-periphery or metropolis-satellite approach regarded economic development and underdevelopment to be opposite sides of the same coin. In core-periphery approaches, infrastructural development allow for capitalist penetration into the hinterlands to outstrip local production that neglects local development dynamics [16]. Thus, rural-urban interfaces can be described the structural restraints as unequal exchange and focuses that the dependency theory is still relevant today as it serves to highlight the effect of power abuse in many developing countries, such as Ethiopia where destiny are politically determined and rural life is neglected. [3], further argued that it as systematic distortion of development policies in global South in favour of the interests of urban area against that of majority rural population. It seems that the developing countries’ governments being under influence of powerful urban classes tend to allocate development project for the benefits of city dwellers and vocal rural elites. The implication of this is that the resources flow from the poor to the less poor urbanites in developing countries in general and Ethiopia in particular.

In Ethiopian, urban areas are all administrative capitals of regions, zones, and Woredas, as well as localities with at least 1,000 people who are primarily engaged in non-agricultural activities, and/or areas where the administrative official declares the locality to be urban. However, [22] proposed an alternative agglomeration index that a population density greater than 150 people per km<sup>2</sup>; and are located within 1-hour travel time from a city of at least 50,000 people. Thus, estimating Ethiopia’s urban growth using the agglomeration index are much higher (between 8 and 9 per cent) than urbanization growth rates

calculated by the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is the least urbanized country in sub Saharan Africa, perhaps in the world, with 84% of its population living in the rural area in 2010 compared to 41% of SSA [23]. With the recent fast economic growth, though urbanization is still slow, rural-urban interactions are an evident. The urban areas are growing; rural people are displaced in some cases, migrate, and become part of peri-urban and urban areas. In nutshell, it appears that the country's development policies are overwhelmingly a 'rural bias', which is rhetorically reflected in development policies. Researchers and policy analysts has largely shied away from political economy of rural-urban in Ethiopia and ignored in public debates. Nevertheless, the formulation of national poverty reduction strategies, particularly in countries experiencing rapid urbanization or escalating rural-urban disparities such as Ethiopia, require a clear and a better understanding of the rural-urban interface from the political economy lens.

In order to understand and underpin the political economy of rural-urban interface around Addis Ababa city, the capital of Ethiopia, a dependency theory was adopted to understand the rural-urban social, political, economic, and environmental milieus in Ethiopia in the face of rapid urbanization within the realm of political economy. The basic argument in this paper is that Ethiopian development policies are historically urban biased. The imperial policy put agriculture, the base of the livelihood of rural people, at servant of industry where urban people earn their living. The rural people have to pay taxes to urban-based feudal property owners; have to supply cheap food for urban consumers. In case there is surplus, it has to be extracted and must be invested in urban-growth poles at the expense of rural people. It accorded a primacy to urban people at expense of the majority of rural counterparts. In the same token, though the socialist government has responded to the question of land for rural people and overwhelmingly nationalized properties, it has put little emphasis for improvement of rural livelihood. Instead, rural people were forced to sell their produces at a set low price to Grain Marketing Board to feed the urban people who were favoured in all aspects and supply for state owned industries [24].

In recent regime, the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) policy framework,

Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development for Ending Poverty (PASDEP) and Growth and Transformation Plans (GTPs) have devised as mechanisms to overcome impoverished rural people. Though the extent of poverty has tremendously reduced from 47.5% in 1995/96 [25] to 26% in 2012/13 [26], in reality all policy frameworks perpetuated the trend and the rural economy either dismantled or moved to semi-satellite that serves the metropolis for exploitation of human, natural, social, economic and physical resources.

In general, the rural people doomed to systematically collapsing. Little is invested on the majority; huge is extracted for none. The scholars and policy makers in Ethiopia failed to observe the technical, institutional and systematic underdevelopment of the satellite. Indeed, there are several attempts to study the rural-urban relationships in Ethiopia [27,28,29,30], the insight of the authors are not beyond mutuality and symbiosis or balanced growth and resource utilization. However, some have documented the effect of urbanization in terms of forest and soil degradation, water pollution, and overall decline in agricultural production, agricultural community displacement, and squatter settlement. Still, there are tremendous knowledge gaps on dynamism of the rural-urban interfaces in terms of economic, social/cultural, political, and environmental aspects. This is also the main driver to adopt the dependency perspective not because the view is good in critics but due to its comprehensiveness to underpin the relationships in this regard. The objective of this paper is to understand and examine the interfaces between urban and rural areas in Ethiopia. The paper attempts to answer: what are the rural-urban economic and political interfaces in Ethiopia? What are the policy implications of the rural-urban interfaces for rural development planning?

The rest of paper contents are structured as follow. The second section outlines a general methodology and context employed. The third section presents results and discussions and the final section draws conclusions and forwards some policy implications and future research directions.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study used the Addis Ababa City as a case study. The city is located at the coordinate of 901'48"N38044'24"E. The altitude of the city

varies from 2100 to 2700 metre above sea level (masl). The city covers an area of about 530 kilometres square with a population of more than 3,000,000 inhabitants. It has 10 sub cities and 116 districts. The city is the capital of Ethiopia and the set of several international organizations including African Union. Addis Ababa lies in the centre of the country on the western escarpment of the main Ethiopian rift surrounded by Oromia Regional State. The geographical boundary of the sub-cities in the Addis Ababa is shown in Fig. 1.

The data for this paper was collected from Addis Ababa City and adjacent rural dwellers to obtain first hand information. Accordingly, about twenty Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with randomly selected ten rural and ten urban dwellers to capture their views, experiences, and reflections regarding the prevailing rural-urban interfaces such as people, environment, and culture. In order to manage the KIIs, semi-structured checklist was developed. The interviews were conducted with different Sub-city dwellers; Their views were summarized and in some cases quoted as they are direct observations of suburban and urban fringes of Bole, Kolfe Keranio, Akaki Kaliti, and Nifas Silk Lafot Sub-cities of Addis Ababa Cities were made. Photographs were taken during observations to supplement the qualitative information obtained from the KIIs. The data was gathered between February, 2013 and February, 2014 that can serve as qualitative empirical

evidence. In addition, secondary sources were gathered from previous researches and policy documents.

The illustrations in this paper are grounded in dependency theory of development to explain the rural-urban relationships and reconstructed on the premises that rural-urban relationships are not a mere mechanical linkage but systemic interfaces of various dimensions viz. social, economic, political and environmental aspects. It is beyond a material conceptions and a built in environment. It is argue that the relationship is not on equal foot level. While the rural, as dependency view calls, periphery/ satellite area and subjected to exploitation by the urban counterpart- the core/growth pole/metropolis that extracted rural resources for entire purposes and dumps wastes and distorted culture for the rural in return. It is also a great conscious that there are peri-urban areas, also called newly urbanizing/ semi-metropolis/ intermediate however it is not an entity of great concern in this analysis as communalities are tremendous than polarities. Of course, most often considered as rural part not urban due to fiscal and political reasons. To be clear, this paper used 'satellite' to refer to the 'rural'; 'metropolis' to refer to 'urban' and the 'semi-metropolis' to donate 'peri-urban'. The satellite and metropolis are extreme cases where the dependency perspective havocs to explain the relationship though the semi-metropolis that shares the feature of both edges that often prevail.



**Fig. 1. Map of Addis Ababa city administration**

Source: [31]

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are widespread systematic, structural and technical exploitations of the rural people by the urban metropolis and trapped the former in poverty and underdevelopment. This section presents facts and figures from Ethiopia using secondary sources and firsthand information from personal observation and Key Informant Interviews.

#### 3.1 The Disparities of Rural-Urban in Ethiopia

The incidence of poverty (percentage of people living on <US\$2/day) is 77.5% in Ethiopia while the incidence of extreme poverty (percentage of people living on <US\$1.25/day) is 55.6% in 2008 [1]. The trend in rural population growth is high and rural population is 5 times as high as the urban population. Table 1 illustrates discrepancies between rural and urban in terms of poverty severity. The rural are the most impoverished than the urban counterpart due to historical primacy accorded to urban at expense of rural.

Disregarding the disparities and uneven development in metropolis and satellites, in Addis Ababa City, an increasing proportion of the population lives in peri-urban areas still officially designated as rural as new housing developments spill over the official urban boundary for fear of fiscal implications it has on

metropolitan (see Fig. 2). Intensive land development in Addis Ababa City, sub-division and informal sale may take place although with little building construction as many urban residents make speculative purchases in anticipation of increases in land value linked to urban expansion. The extent of such rural developments is much influenced by the way each city's boundary has been defined - and where city or metropolitan boundaries encompass city regions, most such developments may still be within the urban boundary. In ambiguously defined boundaries city like Addis Ababa, this episode is not unusual. This is consistent with the observation of [33] that put land markets and land uses in many rural areas around cities also become increasingly influenced by real-estate developments.

As a resident rural part of Akaki Beseka, male, 39, explained;

*'Nowadays farmers are camouflaged by the urban horizontal expansions and fear of government appropriations for investment as we all saw; in such case farmers are decided to sell it like any other commodities. The brokers are very obsessive to facilitate the transaction and very easy to sell particularly since 2005. Many farmers already stopped agricultural activities as they lost their farm and out migrated. I feel, still, the poor tend to survive on selling parts of their land to meet basic needs until when they have nothing more to sell'.*

**Table 1. Trends of national and rural/urban poverty and Gini coefficient**

	Poverty indices over time				Change (%)	
	1995/96	1999/00	2004/05	2010/11	2004/05 over 1999/00	2010/11 over 2004/05
<b>National</b>						
Head count index	0.455	0.442	0.387	0.296	-12.4	-23.5
Poverty gap index	0.129	0.119	0.083	0.078	-30	-5.5
Poverty severity index	0.051	0.045	0.027	0.031	-39.8	14.4
<b>Rural</b>						
Head count index	0.475	0.454	0.393	0.304	-13.4	-22.7
Poverty gap index	0.134	0.122	0.085	0.080	-30.8	-5.5
Poverty severity index	0.053	0.046	0.027	0.032	-40.6	17.0
<b>Urban</b>						
Head count index	0.332	0.369	0.351	0.257	-4.7	-26.9
Poverty gap index	0.099	0.101	0.077	0.069	-23.6	-10.1
Poverty severity index	0.041	0.039	0.026	0.027	-33.5	5.10
<b>Gini coefficient</b>						
National	0.29	0.28	0.30	0.298	-0.01	0.002
Rural	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.274	0.01	-0.014
Urban	0.34	0.38	0.44	0.371	-0.1	0.069

Source: [26,32];

Note:  $P_0$  denotes % of population below the poverty line;  $P_1$  measures the average depth of poverty;  $P_2$  is a measure of the severity of poverty





**Fig. 2. Addis Ababa City, Akaki Kaliti Sub-city Housing Project the appropriate several rural people (8°52'36.07" N 38°46'04.61" E)**

Source: [31] [Right picture (2002) Left (2014)]

It is also evident that some farmers who sold their land became a part of the current rapid out-migration to peri-urban areas to look for bread especially in the booming construction industries. From outset, this seems to exacerbate an imbalance between people and resources, and possibly leading to stiff competition for resources where the poor and vulnerable are also caught in a scramble for the same. In places where the poor have been unable to efficiently utilise scarce resources in their possession or switch to new livelihood strategies their future remains bleak. Thus, despite proximity to urban, small farmers may be easily squeezed out, especially as the value of land in peri-urban areas increases with the expansion of the built-up centre.

Furthermore, given the overwhelming revenue generated from agricultural activities (54 per cent) in Ethiopia and policymakers have focused primarily on ADLI, urban growth is by far faster than the rural development. Urban centres continuously growing of up to 6 per cent per year. This requires a better understanding of the dynamic geographic and economic transformations occurring throughout the country. Agriculture burdens a huge responsibility to support other sectors with little investment on it. The shank shackles of agriculture may continue as a trend of extraction and servant for others through natural resource exploitation and impoverishment of already poor rural people. It is assumed that between 2009 and 2015, the total land cultivated increases by 2.6% per year,

growth varies across region (1.2% per year in rainfall sufficient areas, 3.2% per year in drought-prone areas, and 3.7% per year in pastoralist areas); crop yield increases account for one-third of the crop production growth. Overall, agricultural GDP growth is 4.0% per year while population growth rate is 3.0% per year. The livelihood base of urban people where central government investment is high, non-agricultural output growth in manufacturing is 6.5% per year and service is 6.7% per year [34].

The long term scenario growth and poverty outcome shows between 2005 and 2025, GDP growth is 5.4% per annum; agriculture is 3.3%; industry is 6.5%; and services is 7.0%. This clearly depicts, despite the policy gossips of pro-rural policy, growth favours major cities and urban areas. The rural migrants to cities and urban people engaged in non-farm activities showed larger welfare improvements [22] Moreover, rural areas are the most disadvantaged in terms of clean water and sanitation. The scarce resources are invested to meet the demand of metropolitans that the satellites are travelling long distance to fetch unsafe and unclean water for household consumption. The state of sanitation is totally impaired. For example, in 1990, the coverage of safe drinking water was non-existing while that of urban was nearly 80%. Table 2 vividly shows the drinking water sanitation coverage between 1990 and 2012.

**Table 2. Trends of drinking water supply and improved sanitation in Ethiopia**

Source of water	Drinking water coverage estimates					
	Urban (%)		Rural (%)		Total (%)	
	1990	2012	1990	2012	1990	2012
Piped onto premises	10	51	0	1	1	10
Other improved source	71	46	3	41	12	42
Other unimproved	10	3	42	38	38	31
Surface water	9	0	55	20	49	17
Types of facilities	Sanitation coverage estimates					
	Urban (%)		Rural (%)		Total (%)	
	1990	2012	1990	2012	1990	2012
Improved facilities	19	27	0	23	2	24
Shared facilities	29	42	0	7	4	13
Other unimproved	12	23	0	27	2	26
Open defecation	40	8	100	43	92	37

Source: [35]

Similarly, the main road network of Ethiopia is also mainly stretched to link the urban centres/metropolis, as they are considered economically and politically important than the rural/satellites. Some KIIs contended that the asphalt road that crosses a rural village is not meant for development of villagers and/or to support the rural economic transformation. Instead, it paves the way for rural resource extraction and pollution of rural environment. The main purposes are, as colonizing countries were doing, to connect Addis Ababa with others for political and military purposes; to exploit the rich agricultural hinterland; and the desire to reach areas of mineral exploitation [36]. They extract forests, bulk minerals, cheap foods and industrial raw materials. This suggests the inherent urban biased policy in terms of infrastructures, which actually demand huge capital to erect or stretch. The state is committed for urban areas in this regard purporting rural emphasis policies merely rhetoric.

One of the real government commitments apart from policy statements is in terms of budget allocation and public investment. The rural investment scenarios regarding reallocating public investments are extremely low compared to urban. The Table 3 vividly depicted the scenario over next 20 years.

As shows above, the urban biased investment which could result in regional economic growth disparities. The key but predisposed assumption of the government and policy makers is rural-focused investment slows national economic growth, while urban investment accelerates it. Raising urban investment favours industry and

services, but neglects agriculture. Conversely, increasing agricultural productivity reduces non-agricultural growth (due to resource competition e.g. capital). It is, thus, plausible to speculate that as far as the government, policy makers, and the private sectors do not shift in thinking and investing overwhelmingly in urban areas, the rural development remain underdeveloped and disempowered rural people both economically and politically.

### 3.2 Rural-Urban Dependencies

This sub-section outlines the disparities as well as systemic, technical and structural biases of urban against the rural. It is worth to note that the largest proportions of Ethiopian population are still rural and government aspiration is to transform rural to urban. Such structural transformation, already underway, requires institutional transformation and serious investment on rural area as pro-rural policies are a *sine quo non*. However, historic bias and current trend showed the dependency of urban on rural for all aspects of its development. The subsequent discussion categorizes and outlines the urban dependencies on rural areas from four angles viz. dependency in economy, politics, social, and environmental arenas.

#### 3.2.1 Dependency in Terms of Economy

Just as cities cannot be sustained without dependable supplies of food, natural resources, and industrial crops, rural economic expansion depends on urban markets, central place services, and urban networks connecting rural production to more distant national and international markets and information.



**Table 3. Ethiopian public investment scenarios over the next 20 years**

Scenario	Rural areas (%)	Towns (%)	Cities (%)	Ethiopia (%)
Baseline	9.0	9.6	81.4	100.0
City scenario	19.0	8.5	72.5	100.0
Town scenario	8.0	19.6	72.4	100.0
Rural scenario	4.2	4.4	91.4	100.0

Source: [34]

Nevertheless, there are high levels of polarisation of economic growth in the urban regions. These often account for more than half of national GDP with many rural regions lagging far behind metropolitan areas. This possibly creates spatial inequalities in income, distress out-migration, social unrest, and worsening environmental as resources flow in one direction.

The dependency of the urban centres in terms of economy in Ethiopia is manifested as flow of goods, labour and services. One of the greatest flows of goods from rural to urban areas are the heavy, bulky, low-value building materials such as stone, clay, aggregate and landfill, drawn from the city's immediate surrounds, similar to the observation [37]. Urban enterprises are selling their products to rural areas and the rural are effective demand for urban. As a woman came to Akaki market, age 26, said, "all urban men and women seem to sell something. If the rural people do not buy them, they could not survive. We grow cereals; nothing else." Leisure activities, many of urban middle and upper-income groups (for example country clubs, sports grounds, services for tourists) may also become an important part of economic activities and employment patterns within certain peri-urban areas still classified as rural. This immense and often growing influence of urban on economic activities and labour markets in the rural areas around them obviously has significant influences on agricultural production and on the livelihoods of those who live in these areas. Fig. 3 portrays the stone mining in urban fringes of Addis Ababa at expense of nearby farmers.

The neo-classical driven model views markets as perfect competitive realms of impersonal economic exchange. In contrast, market is failed in Ethiopia where infrastructures and market information do not exist and rural economy is not commercialized. Market itself has created its inclusion and exclusion systems similar to the case of Senegal where profits from charcoal production from forest areas are derived from direct control over forest access as well as through access to urban markets, labour opportunities, capital, and state agents and

officials. Charcoal merchants are the primary beneficiaries of this system, which excludes villagers in production areas, with important implications for the management of local natural resources [38]. Likewise, agricultural markets in Ethiopia tend to be controlled by government agents, urban traders or local mercantile through oligopolies that set prices and add values to the products. In most cases, the farm gate prices are by far lower than consumer prices. In other words, rural resources are often deliberately under-priced to pass onto the larger cities at cheaper price for consumption and/or supply raw materials for value-adding and exporting.

**Fig. 3. Cobble stone mining area in the Urban Fringes of Addis Ababa**

Thus, urban areas are composed of economic capitalism that tends to control rural economic resources at lower prices, often create market dysfunctions. The rural people buy processed products at higher prices for villagers and buy agricultural products at lower prices. The agricultural commodities would be added value. This either sold to the rural/urban or exported at exorbitant higher prices. This is becoming the source of wealth for urban and tax valve for government; for such sources of economic engine the metropolis rely on satellite. This is what is called economic dependency.

### **3.2.2 Dependency in terms of culture**

Most metropolises have no distinct own cultures, values and norms. If they do, it is diluted and/or

impure. Urbanity involves mixed cultural and societal identities in contrast to the rural that are more or less homogenous values, norms, mores, and beliefs. These show rural originally rooted in rural prototype. The rural are spiritual, non-material, and material heritage reserves when the urban needs it for their purposes. The process of globalization has distorted the culture of urban and it is serving as an outlet of dissemination of western cultures which might deteriorate the rural cultures as well. The American culture of 'freedom' and 'democracy' has diffused all over the world to the extent that non-adopters of such values are antagonistic to the West. These values are advocated and inculcated by Western origin academics, international NGOs, financial organizations and institutions, donor agencies, and even philanthropic core principle.

Likewise, the social change in urban area affects the rural social relations. Urbanization transforms societal organizations, the role of the family, demographic structures, the nature of work, and the way we choose to live and with whom. It also modifies domestic roles and relations within the family, and redefines concepts of individual and social responsibilities. For example, urbanization triggers evil values like street people and with its misleading and superficial attractions is also a contributing factor of prostitution, drug and organized crimes. The dissemination of such exotic and unethical cultural values contaminates the indigenous values and norms. Thus, urban areas are threatening rural values and norms. Consistent with this, a woman, 67, living in Akaki sub-city of Addis Ababa said:

When I come from Wollo during Hailesilassie regime, I came up with all cultures- taboos, values and norms. As change [urbanization] went underway, everything changed. You can rarely see women wearing skirts and/or full clothes. Both man and woman wear the same. Identity is nothing than loss of the way you wear. The current generation does not care about their identity; their identity is what they see from others than preserving theirs. It is also difficult to regain it back.

### **3.2.3 Dependency in terms of environment**

Urban centres, especially medium sized and large ones, have a significant environmental impact outside the built-up areas and often outside urban and metropolitan boundaries. Cities' ecological footprints [39], usually comprise areas defined or considered as rural. Most urban wastes end up in the region surrounding the city,

for example, solid wastes disposed on peri-urban land sites (either official or illegal) and liquid wastes either piped or finding their way through run-offs into rivers, lakes or other water bodies close by. Rural and peri-urban areas may also be affected by urban induced air pollution. For example, discussion with a rural resident, male, 47, who came to Akaki urban market has identified severe problems ranging from water and air pollution, loss and degradation of agricultural land through urban expansion, soil erosion as run off comes from urban, threats to forest for constructions and fuel wood and charcoal, quarrying of stone, sand, and gravel, and the uncontrolled disposal of toxic wastes. A Key Informant Interview with urban resident, Akaki Sub-city, confirmed similar narrations.

Moreover, personal observation of Addis Ababa urban area and surrounding rural has proved that there are unintended environmental impacts on the later. Urban-industrial demand for natural resources has had dire environmental consequences on ecological integrity of rural areas. Similarly, chemical run-off from tannery, modern agricultural practices pollutes the water of rural regions, many of the largest of which are polluted and flow into major waterways to rural regions. There is thus a need to anticipate the impacts of developments in one area on the other if the concept of sustainable development has to have meaning. Without informed, context based policy and conscious planning, the disposal of wastes and garbage in rural environment is promoting unsustainable patterns of natural resource use and the transference of environmental problems to distant regions of rural areas [40]. The typical examples can be cited from Asian countries where urban areas flourished at expenses of polluting rural environment. For example in South Korea, Seoul's hyper-development has caused serious environmental costs such as air polluted, about two-thirds of the level of water is polluted, continuing pressure for eviction and redevelopment [41]. In the same token, in Thailand, Bangkok, in addition to severe air and water quality, the release of human waste into community drainage channels, resulting in strong smells and water-borne diseases that lead to diarrhoea, infections and other health problems that are among the leading causes of infant mortality and illness among adults in the surrounding environment [42].

Urbanization of Addis Ababa City between 1980 and 2010 converted 124.68 km<sup>2</sup> forest areas to

built-up areas and other urban amenities [27]. They revealed that built-up areas are expanding at the expense of crop and forestlands. A study of Selti area of Kolfe-Keranyo sub-city of Addis Ababa also showed that informal land transactions for built-up areas as the main reason for agricultural land conversion which created a complete appropriation of agricultural land or farm size reduction and hence either to leave their home land or forced them to shift their livelihood strategies [43].

The other critical environmental dependency of the Addis Ababa is industrial disposal of liquid and solid wastes. In Addis Ababa City, 20% of the waste is disposed off on open sites, drainage channels, rivers, valleys, and on the streets, see also Fig. 4. Even the collected solid waste is dumped in open landfills with no daily cover with soil, leachate containment or treatment, rainwater drain-off, odor or vector control, and fence [27], in the adjacent rural areas and human and livestock health problems are rampant.

For example, observation proved that the *Repi* open landfill of the city is already full and surrounded by residential houses and institutions. Akaki Beseke River, found in Akaki Sub-city of Addis Ababa, has lost water color and black. [44], revealed that the bacteriological and helminthes pollution of the Little Akaki River is grossly very high. The chemical and physical pollution level of the river is in critical stage that cannot be fit for any classified use such as domestic, industrial, commercial and agricultural purposes. Moreover,

liquid waste is important source of pollution in Addis Ababa City flow to the rural environment. Evidence shows that only 7.2% of the liquid waste is disposed in appropriate way and the remaining 92.8% is disposed inappropriately in to rivers and rainwater channels [45]. It is public secret that industrial wastes are important source of river water pollution which is consumed by the rural people along the stream. Rivers and springs are important source of domestic and irrigation water sources to peri-urban and rural communities.

According to [27], about 90% of industries around Addis Ababa lack on-site treatment facilities for some degree, and subsequently discharge any effluents into adjacent streams. Based on the Key Informant Interview made with peri-urban residents in the Akaki area, due to such inappropriate waste disposals, Akaki river waters streams become out of use. Hence, improper solid and liquid waste disposal is polluting rural and peri-urban water, soil, and the air, caused deforestation, and environmental deterioration in rural areas which demand critical policy and strategic decision.

#### **3.2.4 Dependency in terms of politics**

Political democratization is one of the most salient transformations now occurring around the world. In many developing countries, including Ethiopia decentralization of administrative authority is well underway, though local autonomy and local accountability of



**Fig. 4. Waste dump area of Addis Ababa city to periphery fringes (around Akaki River)**

government is less well established. Typically, in the process of decentralizing cities are given higher levels of authority than rural districts, creating situations in which municipal governments are empowered like Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa Cities but separated from rural areas, with the latter having weak political endowments. Given the interdependencies [dependency] of rural and urban development, there is a need to overcome the imbalances and separation of rural and urban development at the local level. In this context, [3] notion of urban bias made an important and provocative contribution to the debate. According to this view, the rural poor are dominated and exploited by powerful urban interest groups. The most important class conflict in the Third World is that between the rural classes and the urban classes, since "...the rural sector contains most of the poverty and most of the low-cost sources of potential advance; but the urban sector contains most of the articulateness, organization and power"[3].

Many authors [19,3,46,47], have accepted the very existence of something called *urban bias* in development policy, basically related to a preference for import substitution industrialisation policies been maintained among African leaders [10,19], argument was extremely compelling in that the main source of the political power of these groups was the factor of "sheer geography". Being urban, most potent interest groups are in direct physical proximity with the government, where they are effectively or potentially, a threat to stability through strikes, riots, demonstrations or other form of urban political protest. At the same time, rural dwellers are seen as spread across vast expanses of land, unorganized and without direct access to government offices [46]. The main argument, echoing the "urban bias" debate, is that small towns contribute to rural impoverishment as they are "vanguards of exploitation" of the rural poor by external forces like multinational enterprises, central national government, local administrators and élites and, in some cases, international donor agencies [47].

It appeals to remind that though the urban people in Ethiopia are meager in number (17%), they are politically powerful. They host the government bureaus, politicians, civil society organizations, political parties, and media. Their voices can easily be heard. They can influence the political landscape and policy arena. Notwithstanding is that the rural people are the majority in Ethiopia (83%). They are voiceless and sometimes

marginalized. They are political tool to cast a ballot box with no political power vested on. Neither influence policy direction towards their needs nor took part in political decision-making. Moreover, in the country like Ethiopia, there is no egalitarian class structure; land is not freely accessed, *inter alia*, constrained by policy issues. Thus, it can be deducted that urbanization and urban political stability in Ethiopia is at the expense of the rural people and resources. The rural resources are extracted by central government to 'silence' the metropolitan who manifest the urban biased policy that heavily demanding mass political back from rural people.

Therefore, this paper argues with the notion that rural-urban interactions are symbiotic relationship rather parasitic liaison. The key argument here is that despite the rural are a source of everything for urban dwellers what does the urban people provide for rural counterpart in return? If there are something offered why rural areas are remain poor even get worse. As [24], early work warned on rural-urban relationships took the form of according a primacy of industrialization than rural areas and recognized that the urban-biased industrialisation policies can have an adverse impact on the development of rural areas. Similarly, the current regime's Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) policy framework and Growth and Transformation Plans are some of the systematic and structural accordance that vividly reveals 'an old wine in new bottle.'

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The paper attempted to understand the rural-urban interfaces in Ethiopia from dependency point of view. The foregoing discussions concurred with the fact that urban areas are dependent on rural for economic growth, environmental services and sink of waste, political instrument, and aesthetic values. As dependency perspective dictates, contrary to the Growth Pole theory, the bias to urban metropolis is evident that caused the underdevelopment of rural satellite or periphery and flourishing urban. It also contradicts the perspective that rural-urban interactions are symbiotic relationship. It was argued that despite the rural area a source of everything for urban dwellers, the urban people provide less for rural counterpart in return that rural areas are remain poor even get worse as noted [3]. This has considerable policy implications. First, the rural-urban interfaces are inevitable phenomenon in development planning

in countries like Ethiopia where economic development is striving to transform from rural dominant agrarian community to urban led industrialization. Yet, the thoughtfulness of policy is essential to minimize rural poverty and vulnerability in the course of actions.

Second, the country's policies are systemically biased and politicians lost real commitments to protect the satellite from exploitation of the metropolitan. In spite of the fact that most policy makers and politicians themselves are originally from rural and rhetorically making speeches about the rural growth and development, they are putting economic all eggs in the metropolitan menu. The resulting effect of putting economic eggs into a few metropolitan baskets is leaving rural with limited and dried income sources to diversify and stabilise/smoothen their economies leading to increasingly misery realm. In addition, as observed by [19], as urban exploitations of rural society continues, urban hegemony space broaden and dualistic societies could be created, with gradual much of the rural population migrate to urban and live in poverty. So as to create a more resilient foundation for national development, mutually beneficial rural-urban linkages need to be promoted across national space - in rural as well as metropolitan regions. Thus, it is real commitments and actions strongly lacking than policy statements. To this end, balancing rural-urban development is uncontested necessity that policy makers should take into account.

Third, a great attention of the politicians and policymakers should be to create relatively equitable distribution of land ownership, investment on small farms producing high value crops, infrastructure and superstructure development, promoting local business, and investment on quality and quantity of social development, among others to bring about a fair and a balanced economic, social, and political development in both rural and urban areas. Again, good policies are not a grantee for a rural development but they must to be accompanied by a fiscal policy which is a manifestation of a real commitment. In such a way, the country's development policies become a people-centred that addressed the felt-needs of the needy and give the priority for those who deserve not those who desire it.

Finally, the rural-urban policies should be informed by evidence-based research to make conversant decision. To this end, further

understanding and study themes in the rural-urban interface and environmental issues; the rural-urban politics; the rural-urban and land use and governance of the peri-urban; economic interfaces of rural-urban; rural-urban migration; drivers of rural-urban transformations and shift in livelihood strategies need thorough and careful studies.

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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