Open Call for Proposals  
Studies on Rural-Urban Linkages  
A Paper on environmental perspective  

September 2015

1. INTRODUCTION
The South African Cities Network (SACN) is an established network of South Africa’s largest cities and partners that encourages the exchange of information, experience and best practices on urban development and city management. The SACN’s Strategic Framework 2011 - 2016 aims to support cities to become effective drivers of local and national urban development. Included on the mechanics of this broader objective is the need to foster a better understanding of rural-urban linkages, and their implication for policy and strategy frameworks.

It is in this regard, and in continuing with its ongoing efforts to contribute to the rural-urban discourse, that the SACN is releasing this open call for proposals for research under the theme Rural-Urban Linkages.

2. CONTEXT
There is an increasing recognition of the role that rural-urban linkages can play in national and regional development as well as the importance of nurturing these for national and regional development. However, the strict division of spaces into rural and urban areas continues to create difficulties in the development of strategic interventions that can benefit the whole space continuum. Consequently, our improved understanding of the interface between rural and urban areas is critically important especially in the formulation of national and provincial poverty reduction
strategies. From this outlook, the emphasis is on the importance of viewing rural and urban economies as a united whole and the need to leverage development interventions designed in one form of a space in ways that enhance positive development outcomes in another context. As a result, development planners and policy makers need to increasingly think of the impact of their development interventions in ways that integrate rural and urban spaces.

Within the conception of rural-urban inter-dependencies, urban centres play a significant role in providing services, not only to their populations, but for the surrounding rural hinterland populations as well as markets for rural producers. Additionally urban centres host migrants from rural areas attracted to the perceived socio-economic opportunities in cities. By contrast, rural areas are a consumer market for the urban manufacturing and service sectors. They are also centres of production especially the agricultural produce that is consumed in urban areas as well as natural resources such as water which remains an essential ingredient of urban growth. Given that rural-urban linkages are embedded in their contexts, a deeper understanding of their nature and drivers can improve the development of appropriate policy interventions especially at sub-national level.

More specifically, rural-urban linkages allude to the various forms of social, political, economic and physical environmental interactions between rural and urban areas. They also include activities and land uses that occur within the rural-urban space continuum that bring along environmental impacts such as:

- **Changes in land use** – commercial developments vs low-income groups such as small and marginal farmers or residents of informal settlements

- **Changing farming systems and patterns of labour force participation** - because peri-urban agriculture can be highly profitable, it becomes small farmers against larger farmers

- **Changing demands for infrastructure and pressure on natural resource systems**, with many rural dwellers’ access to resources having to compete with urban demand (for example, for water, fuel-wood and land for non-agricultural uses) or affected by urban-generated wastes.
The literature on rural-urban linkages is still evolving. Consequently, the knowledge of the multi-faceted and interrelated nature of rural and urban spaces in the developing world, particularly in South Africa remains scant. The SACN has since produced a series of papers under this theme which are intended to be consolidated into a book. The papers look at 1) governance challenges for cities with vast rural geographies; 2) a perspective on tourism; 3) agro-food value chains; 4) social value chains. This open call for proposals is for a fifth paper that will bring an environmental perspective.

The book will address both the theoretical and empirical realities as well as provide a set of policy recommendations for the strategic development of rural-urban interactions that can foster sustainable social, economic and governance relations between rural and urban areas.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The main objective of the paper is to provide an environmental angle into the rural-urban linkages knowledge-base. Specific objectives are -

1) contribute greater evidence and insight into the rural-urban dynamics and their policy / planning implications which are recognised as important, but also complex and inadequately understood; and

2) provide recommendations to city leadership and stakeholders regarding the planning, governance interventions and strategies needed to effectively manage and understand the rural - urban linkages.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

This call for proposals takes an open approach where service providers are encouraged to submit their ideas. The parameters to guide the proposals are that:

- The argument must be developed through an environmental and/or natural resources angle within the context of rural-urban linkages
- The natural resource dissection could take a value chain analysis e.g a case of water supply
- The idea is to use this paper to explicitly analyse the environmental perspective, seek generalised learning about how the rural and urban interact
and how this might relate to policy, planning and governance in ways we may not have considered.

The proposals must be clear on the conceptual framework of the chosen environmental angle. All received proposals will be evaluated against the relevance of the idea as well as the points listed above. As indicated earlier, this paper alongside the other four will form part of the material that will be condensed into the book on rural-urban linkages intended to be published during 2015/16.

5. DELIVERABLES

The following is defined as deliverables per successful proposal:

i. Agreement with the project manager on delivery timeframes, and intermediate milestones within 1 week of confirmation of contract;

ii. The descriptive paper should be written in English language with the following specification -

   a. Word count should be between 5000 and 7000.

   b. Submitted as a Word document with supporting figures and imagery supplied in high-resolution. Data for figures and tables if any, should also be provided in excel format.

iii. A final paper with an executive summary should be submitted at the end of the project period.

6. TIMELINE

The project is envisaged to be two and a half months starting in November. A final draft is expected by the 15 December 2015. Comments will be provided on the second week of January for finalisation 1 week thereof. The paper must be concluded by 25 January 2016.
7. EXPERTISE REQUIRED
The successful bidder/s should display relevant experience, technical expertise or capabilities with respect to the following:
- Knowledge and understanding of urban development, spatial planning, sustainability and land-use development
- Knowledge of rural and urban interdependencies will be an added advantage
- Experience with public policy and planning
- A track-record of good, accessible communication and writing
- Ability to work on tight timeframes and specified outputs
- Capacity to work interactively and consultatively

8. RESOURCES AND COSTING
The cost for the paper is set at R50 000 inclusive of VAT. The author may use any proven methodology to develop the paper which will be approved as part of awarding the contract.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA
The selection of the successful proposal will be based on its contribution towards the rural-urban linkages knowledge and will be assessed according to whether or not it responds to the scope of work. Contributors should be mindful that while contributions should be academically and theoretically rigorous, they should also have practical relevance and appeal to influence government policy.

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of value for money; qualification and track record of service provider as described in 7 above; as well as technical understanding of the scope of work.

10. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS
Completed proposals must be forwarded to Sadhna Bhana on Sadhna@sacities.net on or before 16 October 2015. Queries on this Call for Proposals can be done telephonically to +27 11 407 6206 or by email during office hours.