Rural Revitalization: a Global Perspective

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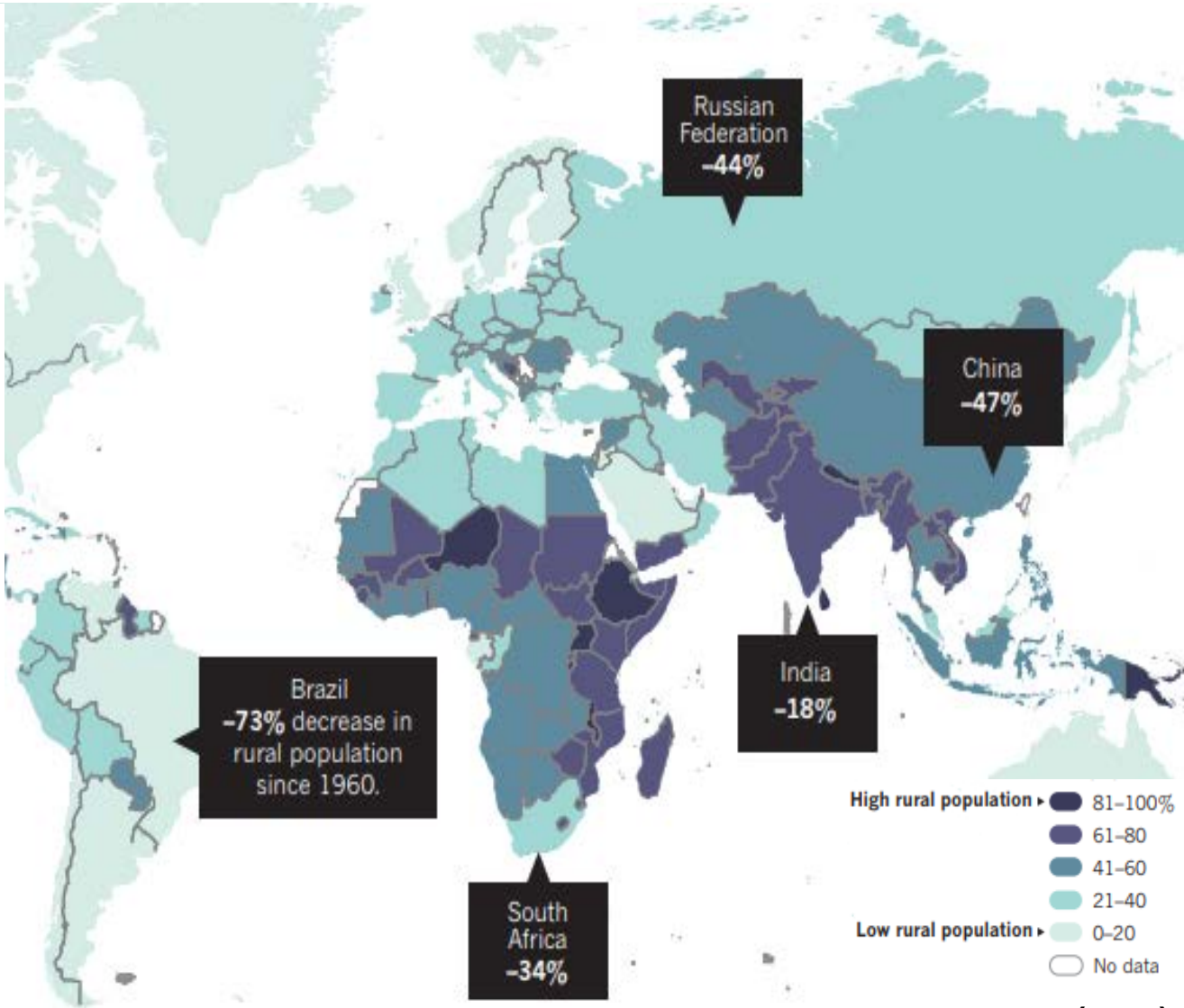
Slowdown in Global Economic Growth

- **Trade protectionism arises along with weakening global governance and the world's economic growth remains slow in the first half of 2019, with a growth rate of 2.6% (World Bank, 2019).**
- **Urbanization is the path for most countries to stimulate economic growth and improve people's livelihoods. Rural areas and their population are largely overlooked in many policy landscapes and more vulnerable to shocks (Liu & Li 2017).**
- **Rural revitalization can serve as a common engine of both rural and urban economic growth and is increasingly becoming a critical global issue.**



Trend of Global Rural Population（2015）

Source: Liu & Li, 2017. Revitalize the world's countryside. *Nature*, 548(7667): 275-277.

The United States: Keeping Rural-Urban Connected

- **Background: Rural economic sectors increasingly capital-intensive, leading to fewer jobs and skills mismatch**
- **Adopt an integrated urban-rural development strategy to promote small towns' development and maintain rural-urban connections**
- **In 2017, the U.S. government established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to promote rural development in five areas: e-connectivity, economic development, innovation & technology, workforce, quality of life. E-connectivity is fundamental for the other four areas.**
- **Attach a great importance of integrating education, research and extension.**

Source: IFPRI, 2019; Chen et al., 2019.

EU: Providing Rural Development Support

EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) : Transforming agricultural subsidies into support for rural development

- **Evolved from product / price support to income support and direct payments to farmers (CAP's first pillar)**
- **Committed special fund to support rural development (CAP's second pillar)**
- **Developed new targeted and inclusive rural development plans**

Based on common agricultural policies, each member state has transformed simple agricultural support into comprehensive support for rural development. Each member promoted endogenous rural development through top-down approaches combined with bottom-up approaches that empower rural communities.

Source: IFPRI, 2019；Kevin.Chen et al，2019.

France: Balanced Development Goals

- **Background**
  - Gap between big cities such as Paris and others has widened with a large number of rural youth outflow
  - Poor infrastructure, smallholder and land fragmentation have hindered rural development
- **Balanced development goals: urban-rural balance, industrial balance, and balance between human and nature**
- **Agricultural Guidance Act and Complementary Acts:**
  - Central government leadership: encourage people to start businesses, broaden existing industries, develop multifunctional agriculture, and encourage farm mergers while protecting family farms
  - Public services strengthened by law: Ensuring attractiveness of rural economy, quality of life and inclusiveness
  - Environment protection: protecting specific or vulnerable areas through special plans (e.g. Natura 2000) and expansion of land use planning systems
  - Rural governance: The power of local public sector to manage rural development has been defined by laws. At the same time, more attention has been paid to greater autonomy in rural areas to promote endogenous rural development

Source: IFPRI, 2019; Kevin.Chen et al, 2019.

German: Urban and Rural Equity Goals

- **Background**
  - **Since the 1960s, "reverse urbanization" has put forward higher requirements for rural infrastructure and public services**
  - **Since the 1990s, rural areas have faced long-term challenges in terms of population mobility, changes in population structure, international migration, and imbalanced regional development**
- **Urban-rural connections: setting goals to promote urban-rural equity**
- **Living environment: land consolidation and village renewal to improve rural living conditions**
- **Develop multi-functional agriculture and rural areas and create stable employment in non-agricultural activities**
- **Rural governance: "bottom-up" rural development planning**
  - **LEADERS Project: Stakeholders from different departments and institutions jointly formed local action groups (LAGs) and established government and social capital cooperation platforms**

Source: IFPRI, 2019; Kevin.Chen et al, 2019.

Japan: Livelihood Improvement

- **Background: urban-rural income gap, rapid population shift from agricultural sector, impact of agricultural imports, and environment deterioration.**
- **Government-led interventions**
  - **Infrastructure projects and direct subsidy**
  - **Rural governance: cooperative organizations, NGOs, and agricultural associations**
  - **Industrial development：build multi-functional villages, promote industrial integration and rural-urban integration through One Village One Product program and “six” industrialization**
  - **Environment protection: environmental-friendly agriculture, sustainable agriculture supported by R&D, and diversity and recycling of traditional agricultural techniques**
  - **Social safety net: adopting compulsive long-term care insurance, providing targeted services based on the elderly’s physical and mental status in rural areas**

来源: IFPRI, 2019；陈志钢等，2019.

Thailand: Local Empowerment

- **Nutrition-sensitive agriculture**
  - **Incorporate nutrition into the national agricultural development strategy, promote school lunch and milk programs, and promote village-level nutrition improvement**
- **One Tambon One Product (OTOP)**
  - **Support local products to provide diverse income sources for poor households**
- **Rural governance**
  - **Establish the Community Worker Accreditation Scheme for capacity building of local governments and social organizations, which is different from the “top-down” and the “bottom-up” modes.**
- **Social service**
  - **Support rural community and vulnerable population through programs such as “village health care volunteers”**

Source: IFPRI, 2019; Kevin Chen et al., 2019

China: a National Rural Revitalization Strategy

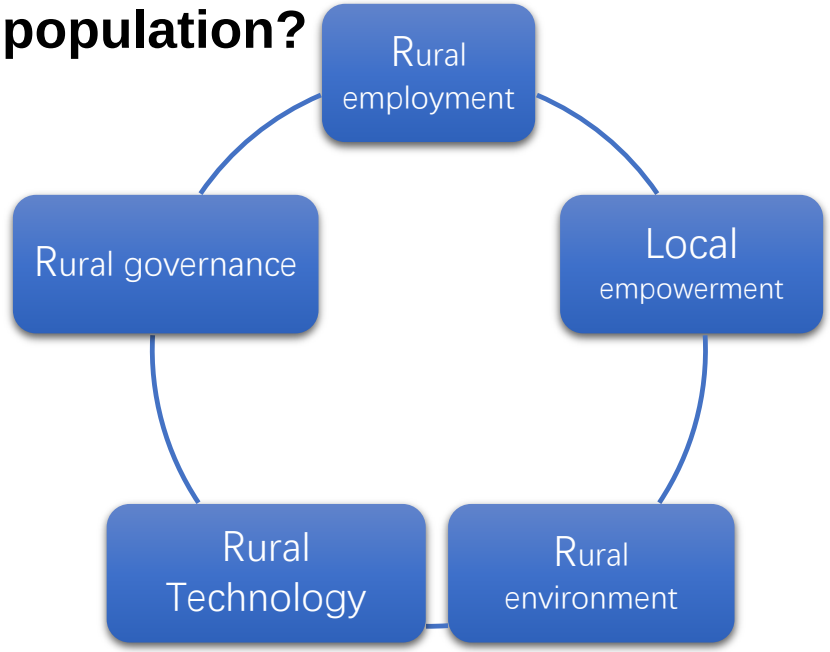
- Slowing economic growth with a growing social inequality
- Urban-rural dual structure results i increased inequality and rural decline
- Middle income trap
  - Underinvestment in nutrition, healt and education for low income citizens
  - Consequently, much of the labor force is unprepared for increasing skill jobs

- Rural revitalization as a national strategy
  - The strategy calls for industry booming, ecological livability, rural civilization, effective governance and affluent life
  - The Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Affairs (MARA) was formed to lead an implementation of the strategy
- Implementing the strategy at local levels
  - Roles of market as well as central and local governments
- By summarizing lessons in its rural revitalization movements, China can support other countries to meet the challenges of rural development as well

Source: IFPRI, 2019; Kevin Chen et al., 2019

Rurbanomic Approach (IFPRI, 2019)

- **An urgent need to change the current policy orientation that focuses on cities, and adopt a development model that builds the rural economy as an equal partner in the urban economy, that is, Rurbanomics!**
- **A key issue: How to achieve inclusive and sustainable development of rural areas and the overall economy by empowering villages and its population?**
- **To transform the urban-rural dual structure, establish an integrated urban-rural economy, and promote overall economic and social development, coordination at all levels of government is required. The different levels of government, market, and civil society must participate together, taking into account sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, education, and nutrition and health.**



Source: IFPRI, 2019; Chen Zhigang et al., 2019.

Implications for China's Rural Revitalization

- **The most fundamental way to achieve rural revitalization is to phase out a dual political and social-economic structure of urban and rural areas and build rural economy as an equal development partner for the urban economy**
- **In the long-term development of rural revitalization, a global perspective needs to be emphasized:**
  - **Better understanding and grasp of global trends that affecting rural development in China**
  - **Actively participate in the formulation of relevant international standards for agricultural and rural development**
  - **Summarizing global and Chinese experiences in rural revitalization and better participation in global governance**
- **Four specific practices are critical:**
  - **Pay more attention to and reflect the needs of the countryside and its residents**
  - **Develop local industries, promote the integration of local industries into the country's diversified industrial system, and strengthen the sustainability**
  - **Proactively seek and expand opportunities for local development**
  - **Empower local communities to promote rural revitalization**

来源: 陈志钢等，2019.