

# Changing frontiers

*The Peri-Urban Interface  
Hubli-Dharwad, India*

*Edited by*

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# Foreword

Changing frontiers of town and country! Here are facts and figures, analyses and conclusions, and even educated guesses about an event that has long been taking place around us that we have taken for granted.

India is a vast land area where rural livelihoods variously are based on arable farming, livestock production, and use of forest and water resources into which cities and towns have steadily expanded their activities of production and daily human existence. From seven years of study of the twin city region of Hubli-Dharwad in Karnataka State we learn that it is a mistake to overlook the special nature of this meeting of urban and rural activities that can be called the peri-urban interface. It sometimes opens both urban and rural lives to new opportunities and satisfactions. More often than not, it is a continuing clash that destroys livelihoods, maintained for generations, leaving people who are already poor even more vulnerable and changing forever their physical surroundings. Unable to adjust fast enough, institutions of the state and society cannot deal with the result. There are wastes and blunders where there could be support and progress.

Understanding this meeting of rural and urban activities – never-ending as it reaches out to new people and new places – is of major importance to government policy planning in India where every day nearly 4,000 large and small urban areas are profoundly altering peoples lives and the lands and other natural resources that they know. Furthermore, it is a significant consideration for the abilities of NGOs to help people make the most of the change that is happening to their livelihood circumstances. This applies whether the NGO is national in scope like the Bharatiya Agro-Industries Foundation (BAIF) or local, as in the case of the India Development Service (IDS) and the Best Practices Foundation (BPF), all of whom have taken part in the pioneering research reported here. The University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad and the School of Agricultural and Forest Sciences, University of Wales, Bangor, UK,

who are partners in the research with the NGOs, have learned that teaching institutions need this knowledge to open the eyes of students. Graduates must be able to recognise the peri-urban interface and understand its intertwined systems of technology, natural processes, and human and institutional relationships, if lives depending upon natural resource based production are to successfully adjust to the impacts of urbanisation.

The Natural Resource Systems Programme (NRSP) is one of ten natural resources research programmes funded by the British Government Department for International Development (DFID). NRSP has supported the investigations of the Hubli-Dharwad peri-urban interface in order that there can be new knowledge with which to change the management of natural resources. Not just any change will do, but specifically change that can benefit those who are poor. It has been important to see how changes occur in the use of natural resources because of urban growth, and, in turn, how the ways that households support themselves can change for better or worse. The latter concern has led this research not only to implement new livelihood strategies through pilot projects and derive learning on this, but also to explore ways by which villagers, living at the peri-urban interface, can formulate such strategies for themselves.

This book presents the effects of Hubli-Dharwad's peri-urban interface, through accounts of the agricultural systems, use of land, environmental conditions, water resources, livelihoods, poverty, health and markets. The Best Practices Foundation assembled this text, drawing upon several years of involvement as a partner in this research. In so doing BPF has produced an account that is detailed and authoritative as well as readable.

Through DFID funding, NRSP is very pleased to have supported the preparation of this book. We hope that it will contribute to widening people's awareness of the peri-urban interface and ways by which the livelihoods of the poor, at this interface, can be improved through the development of better strategies for natural resources management.

Dr FM Quin

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