**Title:** Patterns of educational migration and their effects on forest and land use in North Kalimantan, Indonesia

Following improvements in transportation and communication systems, communities living in remote forested areas are gaining new opportunities for rural-urban migration. Yet it remains poorly understood how changes in mobility patterns influence household livelihood strategies in relation to forests. Since Indonesia embarked on a policy of decentralisation in 2001, aspirations and opportunities for accessing education have grown in Malinau, North Kalimantan. Mixed-gender migration to cities for higher education has consequently taken the place of male labour migration to Malaysian logging concessions as the dominant form of mobility. One implication is that migration has switched from being an income-generating activity to being a financial burden on rural households, as those left behind pay for the migrants’ tuition fees and living expenses. Our research unpacks these emergent mobility patterns and their implications through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, based on a survey of 360 households in 8 villages, 141 additional semi-structured interviews in 4 of those villages, and 20 focus group discussions. We show the diverse ways in which migrant-sending households bear the extra costs of educational migration, such as increased reliance on forests, increased output and sale of agricultural products, taking up casual labour, savings, loans and support networks. The extent to which households increase extraction of forest products relates to the availability of alternatives, which has to do with access to the market, infrastructures and various forms of support. Thus there is potential for policies that improve these factors to limit an increase in forest extraction. We also find aspirations among the youth to return to the village upon completion of their education and combine agriculture and forest-based activities with part-time paid positions. These findings reflect the continued importance of agriculture and forestry for subsistence purposes and as a safety net, and question a common assumption in contemporary discourses on rural development that youth are exiting agriculture/forestry sectors. In these unexpected ways, state-led development is forging new connections between forests and cities at the same time as it dissolves distinctions between rural and urban households.