Sustainable Rural Development in Algeria, Reality and Challenges

Hergoun Tefaha

hergountefaha@gmail.com

ORCID: https://orcid.org/ 0009-0003-3092-6945

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to define the reality of sustainable rural development in Algeria due to its urgent necessity, especially in light of the current challenges and changes on the international scene. These changes compel nations to adopt policies that enable them to confront economic shifts and avoid pressures that developed countries may exert against them due to their inability to achieve economic stability, especially since dependency on foreign sources threatens nations, including Algeria. Algeria has noted the presence of numerous obstacles and challenges that prevent the success of sustainable rural development programs in achieving their goals. The study concluded that achieving rural development requires improving traditional rural development approaches, which must be integrated and comprehensive across all economic, social, and environmental aspects. Additionally, sustainable rural development approaches must focus on finding solutions to the problems of rural communities through integrated and effective programs and plans.

Keywords : Sustainable Rural Development, Rural Area, Poverty, Food Security, Rural Migration

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Introduction:

Today, sustainable development issues are among the most common issues among various countries around the world. This is due to their different dimensions that extend beyond the present to the future and exceed the limits of economic gains to ethical and social gains. Perhaps the most important area of sustainable development, which developing countries, including Algeria, must focus on intensely due to its pivotal position in the course of their developmental history, is sustainable rural development.

For developing countries in general and Algeria in particular, there are many obstacles and challenges that prevent sustainable rural development programs from successfully achieving their goals. These include high poverty rates, the lack of equitable distribution of developmental resources and services, weak infrastructure in rural areas, weak mechanisms and programs for integrating women into productive activities, and a lack of financial and technical support for rural development programs. Therefore, it was necessary to search for effective solutions that would put sustainable rural development strategies and programs on the right track to achieve the strategic goals that sustainable rural development entails.

Research Problem:

What is the reality of sustainable rural development in Algeria? What are the difficulties facing the achievement of its goals?

To address this topic, we should ask a set of questions that require special attention, as follows:

- What do we mean by sustainable rural development? What are its dimensions? And what are its goals?
- What are the challenges and obstacles facing sustainable rural development in Algeria?
- **Importance of the Study:**
- This study gains its importance from the fact that the **rural sector is considered fundamental** to achieving sustainable development, as it forms a central axis for the economy and society in countries.
- Rural development is a **topic of interest and debate** due to the environmental and economic challenges facing the world. Shedding light on this field can contribute to understanding rural transformations and finding sustainable solutions to contemporary challenges.
- Highlighting sustainable rural development is essential for understanding the **challenges and opportunities available** to achieve sustainable rural development.

Goal of the Study:

- To provide a theoretical framework that aims to **clarify and define the concept of sustainable rural development**, including its dimensions and characteristics, which provides a theoretical basis for understanding the depth of challenges and opportunities in this field.

Methodology Used in the Study:

Any scientific research cannot reach the desired results without following a **clear methodology** through which a phenomenon is studied. In this study, the **descriptive-analytical approach** will be used. This methodology allows for the documentation of concepts related to sustainable rural development, which contributes to a comprehensive understanding and analysis of the rural situation. This approach will also allow for the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data related to the reality of rural development in Algeria.

Within this framework, this study will address the following topics:

First axis: The theoretical framework of sustainable rural development.

Second axis: The reality of sustainable rural development in Algeria.

Third axix: Challenges of sustainable rural development in Algeria.

Here is the English translation of the provided text.

First axis: The theoretical framework of sustainable rural development.

1- Definition of Sustainable Rural Development

In 1975, the World Bank defined integrated rural development as:

An integrated process or comprehensive strategy that aims to improve the economic and social lives of the rural poor by increasing agricultural production, establishing rural industries that create new job opportunities, and improving health, educational, economic, and housing services (Mohammed Abdel Fattah , 2006, p. 102).

Sustainable agricultural and rural development is defined as the process through which (Mohammed , 2008, p. 216):

- The **basic food requirements of current and future generations** are ensured, along with the production and provision of other agricultural products.
- **Continuous job opportunities and sufficient income** are provided, ensuring a dignified work environment and life for all those involved in agricultural production.
- The **productive capacities of the natural resource base** are preserved, maintained, and developed without disrupting ecological balance.
- The **vulnerability of the agricultural sector to adverse natural and economic factors** and other risks is reduced, thereby minimizing negative impacts and promoting self-reliance.

Others believe it is the **effort made to assist the rural poor** as well as a large number of agricultural workers. Still, others see the concept of rural development as going beyond the advancement of the agricultural sector to include other economic sectors directly related to agriculture. Another group views it as the **development of all natural and human**

resources simultaneously. And others see its scope as broad enough to include all activities that would contribute to **improving the overall quality of life** for rural residents.

Sustainable rural development as a newly established developmental concept has faced several criticisms, the most important of which is the **difficulty of applying the concept of integrated rural development in reality**. However, it is, in fact, a fundamental addition to the record of contemporary research, as it attempts to bring about social change and achieve a better level of prosperity by adopting the idea of the **balanced integration of developmental efforts and activities**. Despite its modest theoretical model, many scholars have dedicated themselves to studying it in an attempt to develop its theoretical frameworks, so that it becomes a more applicable concept and model.

2- Components of Sustainable Rural Development

Researchers in the Rural Development Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have pointed out that there are **five main components** involved in achieving sustainable rural development (FAO, 2005, pp. 5-6):

2-1- Human Resources: This includes rural residents—men, women, children, youth, the elderly, small-scale producers, workers, the wealthy, the poor, and even the destitute. The people in rural communities are the ones who determine the values and priorities in sustainable rural development. They must be involved in the development process, especially the poor and the marginalized, by listening to their problems and considering the solutions they offer. There will be no viable sustainable rural development unless rural residents have a say in designing the policies and institutions that govern them.

2-2- Natural Resources: These include land, water, forests, seas, minerals, oil, and biodiversity. The **maintenance of natural resources and environmental protection** are two essential factors for achieving the goals of sustainable rural development in eradicating rural poverty and hunger. The sound management and improvement of natural resources increase the potential for generating income and employment for rural residents. This requires the concerted efforts of governments, international organizations, and other development actors to adopt effective methods and policies in this field.

2-3- Production of Goods and Services: Economic activities in rural areas include **agricultural and non-agricultural activities**. This diversity is crucial for increasing production and productivity, increasing capital, reducing risks, and strengthening economic ties with cities. The relationship between rural and urban areas can lead to sustainable production, new job creation, increased income, and increased investment in rural areas.

2-4- Markets for Inputs and Final Products: This includes the market structures for final products, inputs, land, and capital, and how they function, such as setting prices for agricultural and food products, risk management, import and export, and other commercial transactions. To be able to enter these markets, the knowledge and competencies of rural producers in marketing and promotion must be improved through training, and by developing their equipment and technologies to meet market standards.

2-5- Finance and Investment: Finance and investment determine how resources are mobilized from taxes, the central government, the private sector, foreign direct investment, external development assistance, international financial institutions, and remittances from abroad. Both finance and investment influence the achievement of sustainable rural development. The availability and easy accessibility of financial services in rural areas contribute to the economic and social development of rural residents and the improvement of their livelihoods. Investing in rural areas also helps create job opportunities and increase income, which leads to reduced unemployment and migration and a decrease in poverty and hunger.

3- Dimensions of Sustainable Rural Development

There is a global consensus that the ultimate goal of integrated rural development is to improve the **quality of life for rural residents**. This requires going beyond income-related factors like prices and production to include a range of quality-of-life factors that affect the comprehensiveness of sustainable integrated rural development. This development has several fundamental dimensions that must be integrated to achieve sustainability (ESCWA, pp. 1-2):

Economic Dimension: This dimension is linked to efforts aimed at achieving advanced and sustainable economic growth rates. Agricultural development forms the foundation of this dimension, with other rural economic, social, and cultural activities connected to it.

Social Dimension: This aims to achieve **social justice and reduce poverty** by establishing and activating policies that expand productive employment opportunities, narrow economic disparities among social groups in rural areas, promote gender equality, provide social safety nets for vulnerable groups, reduce developmental disparities between rural and urban areas, and focus on improving the standard of living and incomes of the poorest groups.

Human Development Dimension: This focuses on providing health services and expanding educational opportunities, training programs, capacity building, and empowering vulnerable groups to participate actively in project planning, decision-making, management, and implementation.

Environmental Dimension: Programs related to this dimension aim to achieve sustainable rural development based on the principle of **protecting the environment and available natural resources** from degradation, including water, land, and living organisms (plants and animals). It also involves the proper utilization and good management of these natural resources in a way that ensures their sustainability for the benefit of humanity and rationalizes interactions with their various components.

Political Dimension (Salam Anwar , p. 85)**:** This aims to improve the opportunities for the poor and low-income individuals in rural areas, including women and ethnic minorities, to participate effectively and on an equal footing in political processes at the village level and beyond.

4- Characteristics of Rural Development

The most important characteristics of rural development can be summarized as follows (Mustafa Al-Abdullah , 2005, p. 410):

- Rural development programs primarily target **rural residents**.
- It acknowledges the importance of **local initiatives** and the maximization of available resources.
- It seeks to achieve rural **economic and social prosperity** based on the principle of guidance and direction for all.
- Studies and development processes must be led in coordination with **beneficiaries and stakeholders** and should lead to a critical evaluation and a change of direction when necessary.
- Rural development is **comprehensive** and relies on a decentralized decision-making approach, meaning that decisions are made locally with the participation of all members of the rural community concerned with the programs.
- Rural development is the concern of all stakeholders: **farmers, elected officials, political decision-makers, and local residents**.
- In addition to the aforementioned elements, the element of **developmental construction** can be included, which starts from the bottom up based on the principle of self-reliance.

5- Goals of Sustainable Rural Development

1. **Increase agricultural production and productivity** to improve the living standards of rural residents and optimize the use of rural natural and human resources.
2. **Involve rural residents** in identifying their needs and problems and finding appropriate solutions.
3. **Provide and create new job opportunities** by intensifying economic investments.
4. **Direct educational and media curricula** in rural areas, as well as providing necessary training programs to raise the productive efficiency of rural residents.
5. **Equitable distribution of wealth and power**: The countryside and its people are part of the nation and its citizens; they have rights to the nation's wealth and blessings just like any other citizen.
6. **Combat rural migration**: Achieving development in rural areas that ensures employment opportunities and services like housing, education, health, water, energy, and transportation will deter anyone who thinks of changing their geographical location.
7. **Achieve integration among all economic sectors**: Rural development is a fundamental element of the development of other economic sectors due to the close give-and-take relationship between the agricultural sector and other sectors.
8. **Enhance national political goals**: Rural development has a political significance in creating a bond between people and the land, i.e., the homeland. It is worth noting that the goals of rural development differ based on the circumstances and problems

of rural communities, as well as the circumstances and material and non-material capabilities of society as a whole.

Second axis: The reality of sustainable rural development in Algeria.

Algeria, the largest country in the Maghreb region, has an economy heavily reliant on oil and gas, which account for most of its export revenues and one-fifth of its GDP. After transitioning from an upper-middle-income country to a lower-middle-income country in 2020, Algeria has taken steps to diversify its economy, including in tourism, manufacturing, and construction. It is also working to improve its infrastructure and attract foreign investment to boost economic growth (www.ifad.org/fr).

Algeria's population is over 44 million, with rural residents making up about 25% of the total population. Agriculture is the main activity in rural areas, providing direct or indirect job opportunities for about 52% of Algerians living there. Agriculture is also important to the Algerian economy, accounting for about 12% of GDP and employing 25% of the active workforce. Its products mainly include cereals, fruits, vegetables, and livestock (data.worldbank.org).

1. Characteristics of Sustainable Rural Development in Algeria

1-1 Rural Population of Algeria

Table 1: Evolution of the Rural Population in Algeria during the Period 2000-2022

	2022	2010	2000
Rural Population	11,328,186	11,638,969	12,334,776
Urban Population	33,575,039	24,217,375	18,439,845
Total Population	44,903,225	35,856,344	30,774,621

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on World Bank statistics

The following is an English translation of the provided text.

The Rural Population and Urbanization

Algeria's rural population is **continuously declining** in comparison to its urban population. The percentage of rural residents in the total population fell from 40% in 2000 to 32.46% in 2010, and this relative decline continued until the end of 2022, when it represented only 25.23% of the total national population. This is attributed to the fact that the urban population has grown at a relatively faster rate of about 4% annually, a clear trend toward **urbanization**.

This urbanization is not limited to the **migration from the countryside to coastal areas** and large urban centers that are major industrial and commercial hubs. It also includes the urbanization of the rural areas themselves. Many villages, especially former agricultural villages that were part of the socialist system, have been transformed into secondary settlements or medium-sized towns. The urban structure of these villages has undergone

significant change, with the inclusion of various public facilities and services such as schools, clinics, and post offices, as part of different governmental and local programs.

Agriculture

The agricultural sector in Algeria is a vital part of the national economy, with its vast areas extending across more than 90% of the country's 1,541 municipalities. The sector is a **major source of direct and indirect job opportunities** for over 13 million Algerians living in rural areas, contributing to an improvement in their living conditions. It is estimated that one job in this sector leads to the creation of at least three more jobs in fields such as transport, trade, and marketing.

Small-scale family farming is the dominant form of agriculture in rural Algeria, with more than 70% of farmers operating under this family and household model. Family farming is characterized by a strong link between the economic activity, the family structure, and the geographical location. Family members constitute most of the workforce, who do not receive a salary but depend on this sector as their primary source of income. This type of agriculture also plays a **vital role in ensuring local food security** for rural populations, who often rely on agricultural activity but produce only limited quantities (www.fao.org).

Rural Poverty

In Algeria, 5.5% of the population lived below the national poverty line in 2011 (the most recent year for which data is available). A very small percentage of the total population (0.62%) suffers from extreme poverty, while 24% suffer from poverty. The **severity of poverty**, meaning the degree of deprivation, is relatively high, at about 42% at both poverty and extreme poverty levels. This indicates that the poor suffer from a relatively high level of deprivation in various areas. Additionally, 35.7% of Algerians are **vulnerable to falling into poverty**, and 4.2% are vulnerable to extreme poverty (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia , 2017, pp. 3-5).

These figures point to significant challenges in combating poverty in Algeria. A large percentage of the population is at risk of poverty, whether at an extreme or general level. The increase in the percentage of Algerians vulnerable to extreme poverty shows an urgent need to implement policies that stimulate the provision of job opportunities, education, and basic services for everyone. Poverty management also requires **comprehensive strategies** aimed at improving infrastructure, strengthening the local economy, and providing support to the most affected communities.

Poverty rates are higher in rural areas, especially in the northern mountainous regions and the southern Algerian desert. **32.9% of the rural population faces poverty**, and 1.2% suffers from extreme poverty (www.ifad.org/fr).

Table 2: Dimensions of Extreme Poverty and Poverty by Rural and Urban Areas in Algeria (%)

	Poverty Rate (%)	**Poverty Dimensions (%)**	**Extreme Poverty Rate (%)**	**Extreme Poverty Dimensions (%)**
	Education	Health	Living Standards	Education
Rural	32.9	65	5.7	29.3
Urban	18.9	71.5	6.0	22.5

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the ESCWA report, "Country Background Paper Multidimensional Poverty in Algeria."

Based on the contribution of dimensions by rural and urban areas, we observe that the contribution of education to poverty is higher in urban areas. This is due to the specific challenges they face in providing job opportunities, high living costs, and disparities in the quality of and access to education.

On the other hand, the contribution of living standards to increased poverty rates is greater in rural areas, where infrastructure may be underdeveloped and economic opportunities limited, making it difficult for individuals to achieve adequate living standards.

4- Climate Change:

As is the case in many African countries, Algeria has not been spared from the repercussions of climate change. The country is known for its arid and semi-arid climate, making it highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The areas that receive more than 400 mm of rain annually are limited to a strip extending up to 150 kilometers from the coast. The desert part covers more than 80% of Algeria's area, which is equivalent to about 2 million square kilometers.

Changes in climatic standards over the last 50 years show that the effects of climate change have become evident in Algeria, whether through rising temperatures or decreasing rainfall with an increase in extreme or deficient precipitation events and heat or cold waves that occur in all seasons. Additionally, a greater and more severe increase in the occurrence of extreme weather phenomena such as drought, floods, and heat waves has been observed, and these trends are likely to continue according to future climate projections (Ministry Of The Environment And Renewable Energy, 2023, p. 57).

The effects of climate change on agricultural production, for both crops and livestock products, include a combined effect of changes in temperature and rainfall on crop yields and the area of agricultural land, in addition to the effects of extreme weather phenomena. The agricultural sector accounts for more than 60% of Algeria's total water use, and there are plans to increase the irrigated areas to more than 2 million hectares by the 2025-2030 period. Despite the significant variation and uncertainty about the extent of the impacts, changes in temperature and rainfall in the region could cause significant losses in crop

production as a result of a decline in yields and arable land. Crops such as grains, roots, and tubers, including potatoes and legumes, are expected to experience a significant decrease in yields, in addition to a decrease in livestock productivity, which will affect employment and income levels for rural residents who depend on agriculture for their livelihood (Ministry Of The Environment And Renewable Energy, 2023, p. 38).

Although not explicitly mentioned in the context of climate change, the sectoral and cross-cutting measures that were implemented between 2020 and 2024 aim to preserve natural resources such as water and soil. These measures include restoring forests and pastures, expanding irrigated areas, and promoting renewable energy and water-saving systems. These measures also include combating desertification, a agricultural program to plant 43 million trees, reactivating the green belt with plant diversification, enacting legislation for organic agriculture that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, reactivating the gene bank, promoting geographical area products using low-carbon family farming, and other steps (Ministry Of The Environment And Renewable Energy, 2023, p. 20).

Climate change can have a significant impact on Algeria's rural population. This is because many rural residents depend on agriculture and natural resources as their main source of livelihood and income. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns can lead to reduced agricultural productivity and the degradation of agricultural lands, which exposes residents to a decline in income, an increase in poverty, an increase in migration to cities, and a lack of access to food, which affects food security.

5- Illiteracy:

Thanks to the policies, measures, and the national illiteracy eradication strategy (2007) it adopted, and according to the Director of the National Office for Literacy and Adult Education, Algeria has achieved great progress in the field of literacy, as it has witnessed a significant decrease in the illiteracy rate since 1962, when it was 85%, to a low level of 7.4% in 2022. However, the illiteracy rate remains high in rural areas (2018 data), reaching 65% among landowners, 85% of whom are women. Also, only 29% of the rural population has a primary and secondary education level (ONS, 2018, p. 18).

The great progress that Algeria has achieved in the field of literacy reflects the serious efforts made by the government in improving education and promoting awareness of the importance of education in society. The significant decrease in the illiteracy rate since the country's independence in 1962 to the low rate it reached in 2022 reflects the large investments in education and the provision of educational opportunities for all.

However, there are still major challenges in rural areas where illiteracy rates appear to be significantly higher than in urban areas. Statistics reveal an educational gap between the sexes, where the illiteracy rate is higher among women, especially in rural areas, which indicates the need to intensify efforts to achieve gender equality in education.

6- Unemployment:

According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the youth unemployment rate in Algeria reached an average of 29% in 2022, with specific challenges facing the most vulnerable groups, namely rural youth and young women, among whom the unemployment rate rose to 45.5% (www.ifad.org/fr).

Table No. (03) Distribution of workers and unemployed in rural areas in Algeria by gender - September 2017 (Unit: thousand people)

	Men	**Women**	**Total**
Number of employed	3,250	479	3,729
Number of unemployed	266	120	386

Source: Office National des Statistiques ONS, L'Algérie en quelques chiffres, ONS, Alger, 2017

Based on the latest available statistics from the National Office of Statistics (2017), the unemployment rate in rural Algeria is a concern, with 26.9% of the rural population being unemployed, and 31% of them being women. These figures highlight the economic and social challenges facing the population in rural areas, which requires targeted efforts to stimulate economic growth and provide employment opportunities in these regions.

Improving job opportunities in the countryside depends on several factors, including developing rural infrastructure, promoting agriculture and rural industries, providing vocational and technical training for youth and women, in addition to supporting entrepreneurship and encouraging investment in rural sectors.

Furthermore, achieving a balance in employment opportunities between urban and rural areas is vital for achieving sustainable and comprehensive development in Algeria, and this requires continuous efforts and effective cooperation between the government, the private sector, and civil society.

7- Food Security:

Algeria is considered one of the most stable countries in the world in terms of food security, holding a leading position among African countries in this regard. The prevalence of undernourishment index in Algeria reached levels below 2.5% of the total population in 2020, confirming that the country is the only one in Africa that has not exceeded this rate. In contrast, this percentage for the entire African continent exceeded 19% (Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, 2021, p. 29).

Economic data indicates that Algeria relies heavily on food imports, as it is one of the largest grain buyers in the world. In 2017, the value of grain imports to Algeria reached $1.7 billion to purchase 8.4 million tons of grain (Oxford Business Group, 2019, p. 65).

For this reason, Algeria has moved towards increasing its reliance on national capabilities in food production, especially in the agricultural and fisheries sectors, with the aim of strengthening its ability to absorb and mitigate the impact of shocks. As a result of these efforts, agricultural production in Algeria today covers 74% of the national food needs, a number that is constantly changing based on agricultural and economic challenges and conditions.

In the context of achieving food security, efforts in Algeria are focused on providing a strategic stock of food items, especially wheat. Significant financial support has been provided to the National Interprofessional Office for Cereals, exceeding 900 billion Algerian dinars in 2021 and 2022. These efforts reflect the government's commitment to providing food security and ensuring the availability of basic food for citizens.

In addition, the national strategy for enhancing food security in Algeria includes developing strategic products such as grains, legumes, and milk. It also includes strengthening capacities in oilseed and fodder crops, and upgrading the production base by facilitating access to agricultural real estate and using irrigation water more efficiently, and developing modern technologies and using fertilizers effectively. The strategy also focuses on encouraging structured investment in desert and rural areas to enhance productivity and achieve sustainable development in these regions.

From the above, we can see that the diligent efforts made by Algeria in the field of agriculture and rural development, in addition to social policies aimed at ensuring food availability for all and improving nutritional quality, have achieved positive results in the field of food security. Thanks to the development of productive capacities and the provision of a strategic stock of food materials, the dependence of rural areas on food imports is reduced, and self-sufficiency is increased.

8- Rural Migration

Rural migration in Algeria is an old social phenomenon that extends to the dawn of history, but it is considered modern in its new and distinctive character in terms of size, direction, and results. The decline in population density in rural areas is explained by an increase in the volume of rural migration in recent years, as many residents move from rural areas to urban areas or even to other countries in search of better job opportunities and a better life.

In 2019, among rural youth aged 18 to 29, the percentage of those wishing to migrate to cities reached 55%. This reflects their desire to search for better job opportunities, education, health services, and a social and cultural life in the cities. Cities may be a source of diverse opportunities, cultural diversity, and an active social life that young people aspire to.

While for rural residents over the age of thirty, the percentage of those wishing to migrate to cities decreases to 22%. This may be a result of greater stability for these individuals in their rural environment, and they may have found stable living or economic opportunities in these areas (ICMPD, 2022, p. 39).

These statistics reflect the strong trend of rural youth in Algeria towards migration to cities, which is an expected matter in light of the economic and social factors that influence migration decisions.

Previously, rural migration in Algeria was mainly directed towards urban areas within the country in search of better job opportunities and a better life. However, recently, we have noticed an increase in international migration to other countries, in addition to migration to desert areas that are witnessing development in extractive industries such as the oil and gas industry. The development of extractive industries promotes economic development and provides new job opportunities. This attracts labor from rural areas and encourages them to migrate to those areas in search of better job opportunities and a stable income (Khaled SENATOR & Imadeddine LACHEB, pp. 248-249).

Third axix: Challenges of sustainable rural development in Algeria.

in Algeria Sustainable rural development in Algeria, as in many other African countries, faces complex challenges and problems. The most prominent of these challenges are:

- **Infrastructure and Basic Services:** Rural areas in Algeria often suffer from a lack of infrastructure such as roads, schools, health care centers, and access to drinking water. Enhancing this infrastructure is essential to promoting economic and social development in the Algerian countryside.
- **Agriculture and Food Security:** Agriculture in Algerian rural areas faces major challenges that affect food security, such as: low productivity, due to the use of traditional techniques and a lack of technical training and knowledge; land degradation, as environmental degradation, sandy soil, and desertification of land negatively affect the productivity of agricultural land; insufficient water management, as farmers face a lack of water needed for agricultural irrigation due to low rainfall and/or poor water resource management; and the effects of climate change, which causes an increase in climatic fluctuations and a decrease in the efficiency of agricultural production, making agriculture in rural areas more complex and vulnerable (Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, 2021, pp. 10-30).
- **Rural Exodus:** This phenomenon represents a major challenge in Algeria, as youth in rural areas migrate to cities in search of better economic opportunities and conditions, which leads to a decline in the rural population. This, in turn, affects the size of the local market and reduces economic and development opportunities. It also leads to a decline in economic activity in rural areas, as the community loses its productive and innovative skills and capabilities.
- **Access to Financial Services:** Farmers and small businesses face difficulties in accessing loans and insurance, which restricts them from investing and developing their

projects. In rural areas, there may be a lack of bank branches, making it difficult for farmers and small business owners to access traditional financial services. Also, implicit requirements such as collateral and personal guarantees constitute an obstacle for farmers and small business owners, especially if they lack the necessary resources (www.ifad.org/fr).

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Environmental degradation, pollution, and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources threaten the livelihoods of the rural population in Algeria. Environmental degradation causes a loss of biodiversity, a decrease in soil quality, and a deterioration of water quality, which negatively affects agriculture and wildlife in rural areas.
- **Technology and Communication:** Limited access to information and communication technology can hinder rural development in Algeria. In many rural areas, the communication and internet infrastructure may be underdeveloped, which reduces access to internet services and hinders the population's ability to benefit from technology. Therefore, improvements in internet communications and access to technology can open up new opportunities.

Conclusion

Despite the efforts made by the Algerian state and the financial resources that have been spent, rural development in Algeria still requires more coordinated and joint efforts to achieve the desired goals, which is to serve the human being first and foremost. This is because the human being is the core and essence of the development process, as an active party who influences and is influenced by it, given their position as a supervisor, implementer, and follower on the one hand, and as an individual or collective beneficiary on the other. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to, value, and integrate them into future development plans.

In the end, it can be said that rural development is a goal that most countries seek to achieve. Therefore, Algeria must strive to adopt the experiences it has gained, move beyond traditional methods and solutions, invest as much as possible in modern means and technology, and launch development at a speed that eliminates gaps of underdevelopment and is consistent with the set and desired goals. Consequently, Algeria must embark on a path of rural development, which is fundamentally based on the participation of all individuals that make up the rural community as a basic principle for bringing about humane and effective change, as well as integration between services by involving local leaders who, in turn, interact with technical and professional leaders in order to direct funds to programs that achieve public benefit development that benefits community members and the economy as a whole, in order to reduce dependency on the outside world, which has become a threat to the entity of states.

Study Results:

- Sustainable rural development requires effective cooperation and coordination between the various concerned parties, including international organizations, local governments, and civil society. This means that individual efforts are not sufficient to achieve sustainable development in rural areas.
- Rural development in Algeria faces many challenges, including a lack of the necessary infrastructure to develop agriculture and provide basic services to rural communities.
- Empowering the rural sector enhances opportunities for sustainable rural development and contributes to improving the livelihoods of the rural population.
- Achieving sustainable rural development is not just about improving the standard of living, but also plays an essential role in reducing poverty and hunger, which enhances the economic and social stability of nations.

Recommendations and Suggestions:

- Pay attention to the human element by increasing their efficiency in achieving sustainable agricultural development through education, training, and professional development.

- The necessity of establishing vocational training centers in rural areas, so that those who were not fortunate enough to study can join training centers to acquire a trade, which will help them escape poverty.
- The necessity of providing rural areas with cultural centers and youth houses for the purpose of educating their residents, which helps them open up to neighboring communities and also unleashes the energies of gifted youth to benefit from them.
- Breaking isolation by opening agricultural and mountain roads, preparing springs, and building dams.
- Supporting traditional activities and valuing cultural heritage in the countryside.
- Work to achieve economic and social justice in the distribution of agricultural productive assets and in the distribution of requirements such as loans and support to expand agricultural investment.
- Increase the administrative competencies of agricultural banks and agricultural support institutions to reduce the complexities of agricultural loan and support conditions.
- The necessity of activating the role of popular participation in decision-making in rural areas.
- The necessity of establishing development programs that take into account the specific characteristics of rural areas.
- The necessity of establishing horizontal communication networks between the various actors in the rural regional community, including citizens, government, and the private sector, which would support the effectiveness of participation in decision-making.
- The necessity of strengthening environmental management and intensifying efforts to protect and manage natural resources sustainably, with a focus on adapting to environmental challenges and climate change.
- The necessity of supporting the development of local economic activities and promoting rural trade to enhance the income of the rural population and achieve economic sustainability.

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