



## The rural society in Algeria, between the policy of renewal and the participative approach

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*Le débat sur la société rurale a toujours pris place dans les théories et discussions dans les lieux scientifiques, en plus des interventions des institutions internationales sur les dangers et menaces qui pèsent sur ces régions, à l'instar de la pauvreté rurale, le chômage, la précarité, la famine et les conditions défavorables de vie des ménages ruraux, etc. Il est largement connu, du moins dans les écrits scientifiques et les rapports, que toute discussion sur le monde rural est directement liée aux activités du secteur agricole, une manière de relier l'évolution de ce monde à tout mouvement de l'agriculture (rendements, productivités, bénéfices, profits, etc.), ce qui n'est pas toujours le cas. Certes, le secteur agricole est prédominant mais l'analyse et l'étude des zones rurales est une affaire qui concerne plus le comportement des ruraux dans le processus de développement de leurs espaces et territoires. Cet article examine la réaction des ruraux en Algérie face à la décision de l'État de mettre en place une nouvelle stratégie de développement rural tenant compte du fait que ces espaces ont longtemps souffert de la marginalisation et l'exclusion et ne semblent pas croire vraiment au sérieux des décideurs.*

*Mots-clés : ruralité; État; participation; décentralisation; renouveau; savoir local.*

*The debate on the rural society has always taken some place in some literature and discussing papers, for the fact that some international institutions and organisms have, already, warned about the disastrous situations of the rural spaces, mainly the question of rural poverty, unemployment, precarity, famines, social exclusion, poor social conditions of life and living, and principally, the lack of opportunities to undertake a serious launch of economic development projects, in order to boost the growth and the evolution of such areas to better places and more profitable conditions. It is known that the handling of any subject concerning rural areas is mainly linked to the behavior of the agricultural sector, but also, other professional activities. Our concern is to study how the rural population and actors are dealing with the governmental decision to undertake a wide program to develop the rural regions, called the revival of the rural development, knowing the fact that such population has suffered, for a long time, from the marginalization and exclusion, and voluntary lack of serious projects which has resulted to deteriorating economic and social conditions of life.*

*Keywords: rurality; state; Algeria; participative; decentralization; renewal; local knowledge.*

*El debate sobre la sociedad rural tiene lugar en los textos y escritos científicos además delo que hacen instituciones y organismos internacionales a través sus intervenciones. Estos estudian la situación, el desastre de los espacios rurales que se resumen en el desempleo, precaridad, hambre, exclusión social, pobreza en las condiciones de vida y principalmente, la carencia de oportunidades para la obtención de serios arranques en los proyectos de desarrollo económico. El todo se hace en orden a reforzar la evolución de estas áreas, por mejor sitio y condiciones confortables. Lo que sabemos, a través lecturas de escritos y otras trabajadores o investigaciones científicos, es que el mundo rural tiene directamente relación con las actividades del sector de agricultura y así como una manera de los estudios y análisis que no se limite a una evolución del mundo rural simplemente con los productos.*

*Palabras clave: ruralidad; estado; Argelia; participativo; descentralización; renovación; el saber local.*

### **The question of rurality in Algeria**

It is important to stress that the concept of the rural development is the fruit of the evolution of the rural company, and the natural capital (grounds, air, trees, food, environmental rivers, spaces...) constitutes a basic element in the debate on this question.

It is always important to mention the implication and contribution of the various theoretical approaches specialized in the analysis and the comprehension of the concept of the rural development, precisely at the moment when the interest of growth and economic development within a framework (and condition) of agricultural and rural revival.

Regarded as fundamental element and central pillar, the agricultural sector enjoys, always, a considerable place, rightly, in the questions of the rural world, but that doesn't mean that it can solve the thorny problems of the rural development, so much as this last appears by geographical delimitations and is combined sometimes, just, with an operation of territorial installation.

Thus, the rural development is not focused solely on the factors which explain a productivity of the systems of production, but includes, in fact, a dynamism and renewed interest for the other activities (Para-agricultural breeding, pastoralist activities, commercial activities, craft industry, pasture...).

It should be noted that the installation of a project of rural development, in a concern of improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of these spaces, requires a total and widened reconfiguration practices and methods in the past employed, through:

1. Introduction of a debate on the historical context with general consensus.
2. Implication of the concerned actors.
3. Installation of a strategy to integrate the rural societies in the various topics related to the national matter.

It is necessary to note the multiple warnings of the specialists in the question of rurality and its specificities, about the fact that it is necessary to tackle this subject and this file under a strictly individual and particular angle, because each area, space, zone, has its own ingredients for a development and is different from the others, because rurality is synonymous with nature and the environment.

On this subject, we can rely on some authors like M. Cote, B. Kayser (1990), M. Jollivet (1997), P. Campagne (2000), M. Mahdi (2004), O. Bessaoud (2005)... which contributed in this topic, in particular the historical identity, and the social and economic transformations which occurred.

In some writings, one could raised an interesting idea on the fact that the rural development and the reality of the rural world is just a sociological and anthropological question, and it is necessary to exploit this track for better adapting the context and the problems of becoming rural societies in the context of globalisation.

Also, one could seize another assertion that the rural societies must overcome the complex of modernity, mainly mentioned in favour of the urban world and industrialization, and that they must impose, themselves, a recognition, reconsideration and why not a rehabilitation, by taking account of its social context, its dynamism and its link between production and governance.

In a document of the World Bank (2000)<sup>1</sup>, it is quoted that “most of world poverty is in the rural zones” and the means of attenuating this rate and reducing this plague lie in:

- I. Development of the most suitable and adapted techniques to improve and increase the agricultural outputs.
- II. Resolution of the endemic question of unemployment and the under-employment in the rural activities.
- III. Installation of dialogue based on mutual and reciprocal comprehension between the multiple actors and partners.
- IV. Insistence on the integration of new concepts on rural questions, precisely the Durable and Bearable Rural development.

Still, we must stress the fact that the rural development, in this paper, is analyzed and studied differently from an area to another, because if in the areas of North (which are connected and identified more with the developed countries), it is known that the rural live better situations on the level of an assumption of responsibility and charge of the authorities, the implication of associations and other regroupings of the rural world, and other more advantageous parameters, the situation is different for those of the South, which are less considered, constant and supported by the other partners.

To resume, if the agricultural development is identified more like one purely lucrative and economic strategy (production, output, price, incomes, profits, added value, etc.), the rural development is characterized more by cultural, social and identity aspects, which reflects a society which relates to the wellbeing of all, namely the households, spaces, zones, partners, etc.

In the same direction, and through some remarks, it is not advised or even recommended to establish an automatic link and causality between an agricultural growth and performances with a rural development, because this last, is more federator and mobilizing of all the existing potentialities, and implies, by rebound, dimensional, structural and historical approaches.

As consequence, the debate on the rural development is not summarized just on questions of diversification and multiplication of the available funds, nor about the manners of implication and of attraction of the various partners, including external ones, or what kind of researches and policies which could be more adapted and suitable, but searching real policy about the mechanisms to include and participate, initially, the concerned themselves, with through their associations, elected officials, and those who are carrying the real concerns of the rural populations.

Essentially, the idea is to emerge the rural civil society and to engage the local actors in steps and proposals which combine, on one side, the availabilities of the authorities, and another, the real concerns of rural, in order to lead to recognition of the legitimacy of these zones for the so much desired development.

For this, the perception and understanding of rural society are intimately linked to the definition of agriculture and its different aspects, for many people, given that, historically, the two are very complementary and associated on several fronts, even if the roles and functions require a separation between the two. That said, the definition of rural society leads us to more reference to the question of territoriality, the mentality and practices in rural areas (farming, crafts, etc.).

Rural society, in this country, lived a very bouncy history and upsetting for the time, passing through the era of colonialism and even after independence, and suffered the effects and the

benefits of multiple transformations with decision-makers at the sector level. Note that, since the colonial period to the last decades, a succession of agricultural policies is reflected in the rural life and accompanied notably by a dismemberment of the main agrarian structures. The concentration of activities, based rather rural and pastoral (livestock, cereal crops, fodder, etc.), translated and confirmed a sustainability of tasks previously undertaken during colonialism, and also the period of the ownership of agricultural farms.

In this case, the rural space in Algeria is best perceived through:

- A) The period of restructurings and transformations.
- B) The period of modes and operating techniques.
- C) The functions of the State (State committed and responsible).

However, the rural area, in this country, is trying to conserve its main components in order to face some facts and challenges, mainly, in this moment and period, more characterized by instability and dysfunctioning of the world market, especially through the recent financial crisis and the recurrent monetary and financial problems of some European countries, mainly Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, and more worse, France and Germany, which could result to some problems to the rural regions in this country for the reason related to the strong commercial and financial relations between Algeria and the European Market (more than 70% of Algerian foreign trade and commerce is made with European Market), and the perspective of trading some territorial products with this market and also the eventual rise of some financial problems to some European countries in order to finance some of their trading operations with this country, which could create a probable and eventual lack of revenues and financial resources which are necessary in order to undertake and cover the heavy expenses of the rural projects and programs of development (about 200 milliards DA each year in order to cover and to take in charge the financing of more than 26.000 projects in the rural areas around the territories), and the need to create more projects, a way to reconsider the importance of the rural regions to the economic development of the nation.

According to Berque (1), "the employee of the agricultural populations is, in fact, one of the most significant features of the evolution of Algerian society rural during the colonial period." On the other hand, the legacy of colonialism (either Turkish, French, etc.) have strongly influenced the evolution of these regions and have contributed considerably in the cultural, social and economic rural space configuration (Bessaoud, 1997).

In this sense, M. Cote (2) identifies rural societies in Algeria as "an assembly of uncoordinated campaigns which occupy some rudimentary soil without significant developments", understanding by that the effect of natural factors on these campaigns and the difficulties of Algerian rural areas to stand as one of the main regions for any economic development.

This shows that the discussion on the State in the rural areas and the observation of these spaces must consider, necessarily, the historic burden supported, and also the need of many distinguish between a bygone and exclusively assigned to the agricultural and non-agricultural tasks area, and another transformed radically in space separated between agriculture and a sedentary world.

Notwithstanding this historical fact concerning Algerian rural societies, it is also important to note that plotted and planned for agricultural recovery scenarios take into account the fact that the agricultural sector on which based hopes of economic growth, and that remains the main sector

of activity and the labour recruiter, cannot alone ensure and guarantee the development of rural societies.

Thus, rural areas are characterized by a disturbing degradation of some factors and other phenomenas such as:

- An increasing rate of poverty.
- A concentration on subsistence economy
- Difficulties of access to basic social needs (water, health, education, transport...).
- A worrying unemployment rate
- A return of the phenomenon of rural exodus
- Damaging and deteriorating natural factors such as lands, ecology, forests, and natural spaces.
- Lack of participation and involvement of some organisations, mainly from women, youth, local elite, and the main actors that are concerned with the development of rural areas.
- A widen gap between the decisions of the authority and the real needs and concerns of the rural population, which has lead to some resignation and unwillingness of rural deciders, taking the fact that nothing has really changed, and the economic and social situation has remained the same, without any real improvement and successful results on both the rural life and the standard of living of the population, resulting to the idea to escape and to join others in the cities, at least, with some jobs and better life.

Thus, it was able to identify the following data on this world:

1. People living at the level of the rural settlements represent 50%.
2. People living at the farm level are 15.4% of these spaces.
3. People living in marginalized or isolated areas represent 34.6% of the total rural population

Also, we should know that rural illiteracy is quite impressive with a rate of more than 31%, and the most worrying rate of rural poverty, verging on 70%. It is essential, in this paper, to follow the pace of the rural population, through the following table:

Using some indices such as the I.D.R (Index for Rural Development), the I.D.H (Human Development Index) and the I.D.R.S (index of Rural Sustainable Development), the observation that can be identified in Algeria rural revolves around the following indications:

	2000	2010	2030
TOTAL	30.290.000	35.600.000	45.500.000
RURAL	12.900.000	13.300.000	13.500.000
URBAN	17.390.000	22.300.000	32.000.000
Gap Rural/Urban	+4.000.000	+9.000.000	+18.500.000

SOURCE: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2004.

Table 1: The rural population in Algeria

- a) The part of the rural population has declined significantly, from 78% in 1950 to 43% in 2000.
- b) The size of the household between 7-8 persons is quite significant (25%).

- c) Near 52% of the economic activity consists of the agricultural sector (agriculture and livestock).

To better summarize the panorama of the rural environment in this country, some observations and remarks can also, be quoted such as:

- 1) A strong trend of pluriactivity of households.
- 2) A dominant of small farms.
- 3) A fairly irregular production.
- 4) A finding of malnutrition higher than urban areas (near 8% of rural).

All this leads us to a conclusion that rural crosses a situation similar to an economy which still seeks ways to succeed his passage to a more liberal and more demanding mechanism, in terms of competition, performance, profit and in particular adaptation to the vagaries of the markets.

Also, it is important to note the legacy of different state interventions (despite the willingness to do better for these spaces) which ultimately proved insufficient and especially poorly targeted towards those who had the most need, with an ignorant participatory approaches and governance, as it was noticed previously.

### **The strategy of Rural Development in Algeria**

Algeria has engaged, these last years, a vast program and project of recasting and reorganization which concerns, from now on, all the economic sectors, including those of the State and the State itself as economic agent, with an aim of better adapting its economy to the rules and principles of the liberal economy.

This process of change required the installation of the economic policies more appropriated and adapted the mobilization of the appreciable resources, institutional and legal instruments, in order to meet the best conditions for such a processes.

In this matter, the rural world suffered, in full whip, the consequences of such a change, despite the fact that this society is facing, already, strong constraints as regards to development and an increasing urbanization which relegated it more in one delicate position for the population.

Also, it is important to underline fears of a rural world exceeded by the waves of growth and evolution, mainly the effects and impacts of the economic opening of this country, which wants to be more widened, taking into mind, the brittleness and fragility of this part of the society, added to the fact of an unfavourable climatic conditions (more especially in the South), the deplorable situations of life and extreme cases of poverty.

#### **Inventory of fixtures:**

- a) With more than 12 million inhabitants, the rural world in Algeria represents approximately 40% of the total population, and the share of the households, made up between 7 and 8 persons, accounts for 25%.
- b) On the 948 rural communes, it was noted that about 250 communes post up a rather acceptable level of development, and 373 communes have a level of development just average, and only 27 communes can be praised of a remarkable level of development.

- c) The agricultural activities account for 52% of the activities in these communes and constitute the essential and fundamental rural activities, which show the prevalence of this activity in this specific world.
- d) The rate of average unemployment, estimated (according to the last data) at 27%, touches, in great majority, the young people of section 20-29 years, and constitutes a source of permanent concern of the political and economic decision makers.

One of the fundamental characteristics of this world resides, in particular, in the situation of precariousness and social marginalisation, more seriously the question of poverty, where on the 8 million people listed on the national scale, half lives in rural zones, and this constitutes another serious concern to the authorities, notably in the worse moments of lack of financial funding or an aggravated situation in the poorer area in the rural world.

Globally speaking, the rural world in Algeria is marked by an economic and social state conform to an underdevelopment and economic situation, practically in all the fields, and continues to suffer from devitalisation of the territories and an underdevelopment of the resources and cultural and natural inheritances, in spite of the proven and confirmed existence human and economic potentialities.

Also, it was noted an obvious imbalance between economic dimensions and social dimensions in the multiple interventions of the authorities, which reinforces more the idea of an urgency of the recasting and development of these zones, in sight of their integration in the vast one and ambitious economic program of the State.

#### **Start of a policy of Rural Development, Durable and Bearable.**

The economic policy, followed by the Algerian State, within the framework of the change towards the market economy, started serious modifications (through the installation of an agricultural support policy and the rural world) to concretize and build a less expensive and constraining transition.

Two important instruments have been launched:

- I. National Plan of Agricultural Development (P.N.D.A) set up in June 2002 to lead to the revitalization of the rural areas.
- II. National Plan of Agricultural and Rural Development (P.N.D.A.R), which is a natural prolongation of the P.N.D.A and must ensure a synergy and coordination between the various partners of the agricultural and rural world.

The principal and essential axes and ideas of this policy can be gathered according to following points:

- a) This policy will have to support and accompany the rural actors to conceive and develop coherent and convincing prospects for their territories.
- b) This policy falls under perfect and comprehensible logic of assistance for these actors, to become aware of the true stakes of the rural development.
- c) This policy constitutes a decisive and innovating stage in the field of democratization, by integrating elements which adapt to that like dialogue, negotiation, decentralization, delegation, etc.

d) Lastly, this policy constitutes a space of dialogue and exchange of ideas which allow a flexibility of the actors and the partners, and a need for opening to the dialogue and the debate on the questions of rurality, in order to create and build a new partnership between the rural populations and the State, on the basis of mutual interests and profits, and in the sake to launch a new program of development aimed to increase and ameliorate the economic and social conditions of life in these vulnerable spaces and regions.

According to arguments' of the Ministry concerned, the new policy of the rural development is founded on two main principles:

- 1) A policy of development which is, at the same time, harmonious, coherent, modern and durable.
- 2) A policy of development which must be equipped with the adapted and adequate devices.

In accordance with this subject, B.HERVIEUX (3) thinks that the policies are not issued: they are prepared, built and improved thanks to the co-operation, the exchange and the division of information.

In the same register, A.M.JOUVE and O.BESSAOUD (4) think that the new strategies of agricultural and rural development support also the emergence of new social actors and the development of new social needs in accordance with the rural areas.

#### **Tools of intervention**

The strategy of rural development, conceived in a form of revival and proximity, also wanted to be like a step based on the integration of the actions, as well as the mobilization and participation of the local actors, through the projects of proximity of rural development (P.P.D.R), then relayed by another type of projects (P.P.D.R.I) in August 2006.

The P.P.D.R, according to declarations' of the minister concerned, is "integrated and multisector projects, carried out on rural territories previously identified, with an aim of allowing stabilization rural communes".

These projects are also elaborate in a concern of improving the living conditions of the rural populations, of ensuring an economic, social and human development and of founding a framework of life which does not have anything to envy urban zones and which falls under a broad national and international step.

In addition, the installation of the projects of proximity (P.P.D.R.I) tries to achieve some strategic axes (also called federator topics) which are concentrated on:

- A. Modernization and/or rehabilitation of the villages and K' sours (improvement of the living conditions).
- B. Diversification of the economic activities and the incomes.
- C. Protection and valorisation of the natural resources.
- D. Protection and valorisation of the rural, material and immaterial inheritance.



Such steps made by the state develop, truly, the idea that the government is looking and searching to reinforce its willing to change the face of the rural areas and to confirm the implementation of real policy of evolving and developing program for the best of the rural population.

As planned, the implementation of these projects and programs, with an aim of re-examining the policy which leads better to this mobility and dynamics of evolution of the rural areas, requires, inevitably, the availability of the following factors:

- The desired and required participation of rural populations.
- A local administration which is aware of expectations and basic needs of the rural ones.
- Application of parameters which correspond to the projects following such as integration, complementarily and coherence.
- A coordination and synergy of multiples and various interventions.
- An engagement of an active partnership.
- Development of a program of planning (mainly regional planning).

In addition to that, the P.P.D.R.I profit from an accompaniment and support on the financial level, with the example of the F.N.R.D.A (National Funds of Regulation and Agricultural Development), the F.D.R.M.V.T.C (Development Funds Rural and Land utilization by the Concession), F.O.N.A.L (National Funds of Improvement of Rural Housing).

So, it is a question of conformity and adaptation of the policy of financing to the only specificities and characteristic of the rural world, by taking account of the strategic axes defined and identified in this new strategy, and also the various activities and the way that rural are going to use these funds according to their needs and their projects, since that the State is, strongly, encouraging the rural households to be able to undertake and conduct their projects, without any external pressure or interference from the governmental administration, as it is included in the chart of the policy of revival and renew of the rural spaces in the Algerian case.

This strategy of rural development, as developed here, rests primarily on approaches which must take place, mainly, in most fragile and vulnerable rural zones rural, which means redoubling efforts to guarantee help mutual local communities, an organization of the common services, a strong and permanent support of the authorities, since that the fundamental stake to guarantee a rural life transits, imperatively, by these engagements.

It is considered, for our part, that the guiding principles for such a strategy, notwithstanding the other quoted points, lie in:

- 1) Coherence in the steps.
- 2) Relevance in the actions
- 3) Application of the iterative procedures
- 4) Application of the iterative procedures

#### **Rural Participative Approach**

According to the overlap of some inherent in the subject, it is clear that the debate on rural renewal insists on the major components thereof as follows:

- 1) Territories, areas, regions, and spaces.
- 2) The rural actors.

- 3) Governance.
- 4) The time factor and the structural changes.
- 5) The nature of public interventions.

Thus, the human factor does not must be negligible or a mere formality to deal with, because the issue of the renewal policy is based, in particular, on this factor, and according to T.ABDELHAKIM (6), "rural territories are not only physical spaces containing material resources, they are spaces inhabited by populations which act on their environments and transform them." meaning that the territory is constructed by actors.

The rural development strategy, as developed in the Algerian case, indicates that rural actors have a great responsibility to conduct projects and programs selected and accepted by their own initiation and approval, following the classic schema for mounting of projects, namely, initiation and preparation, formulation, decision process, launch of the project, implementation of the programmes of action closing projects, projects management, and monitoring and control of them, all this in a framework of organization, clarity, transparency and above all, autonomy in the choice of the moderators and facilitators, which must be, necessarily, respect the choice of the localities and rural households as their legal representative, through free and fair elections.

For additional information, this policy is intended to be as widest as possible with the involvement of a number of persons and administrators, in order to facilitate the accession of rural in the programs, such as administrative managers, facilitators, the associative movement, commissions installed at the level of local administration, and more particularly, the promoters, who is a member of the rural community, both actor within the territory and also member of the project. It "is" its own development in the PPDR project: actions for individual use. He is the beneficiary attached to his individual project funding. He is also recipient of actions for collective use, making it, therefore, a fundamental and essential element in this process of rural renewal, because it is one of the main links in the dynamics of territory.

As a result, the political will to encourage the participation of rural population to the various actions of restoration/management of the environment shows the change in attitude of all the officials and decision-makers to the precise role that population must play. This change in attitude is explained by the failure of large-scale actions conducted in the past in order to fight desertification and rural exodus, trying to send a true message that things have really changed and it is up, now, to rural actors to develop the projects for better life in these spaces.

In the Algerian case, and in this context to adapt the rural world according to the new bases of the liberal economy, the principle of participatory becomes a necessity and urgency, and, according to the experts on this issue, this type of program ensure a participatory management of all actors, specifically in:

- I. Promoting the participation of rural civil society.
- II. Reconstructing the institutional landscape.
- III. Granting more power to rural representative.
- IV. Organizing the agricultural and rural profession.
- V. Introducing the dialogue and negotiation.
- VI. Encompassing all factors and their interaction.
- VII. Managing effectively the resources of concerned rural areas.

It is of course, agreed, that the actors, at the basis level of the rural regions, are more adapted to represent this issue of the participatory approach, because they constitute a permanent interface and interlocutor appreciated between the territory, the cell of animation and the administration, through the prerogatives of the facilitator and the moderator, necessary as real relay between the rural population and the institutions of the State.

In a study by the CENEAP<sup>1</sup>, concerning a sample of 67 communes and 2760 households, the results were the following:

- A) Concerning the participation in the elections: Interviewed on participation in the last elections, members of households have answered "Yes" for 62.98% and "No" for 35.86%. These proportions are relatively similar to the official figures. They show that rural people are significantly more likely to vote than are urban populations. The regions which display the highest rates of participation are the central High Plains, South East and North with respectively 83.09%, 77.37% and 76.35%.
- B) Participation in volunteer activities: Among the interviewees, the most numerous to assert that they participate in volunteer activities live in the High Plains, the West Highlands and Northern respectively at height of 26.48%, 19.70% and 18.76% of the interviewed people in these regions. The figures do not reach 5% in the rest of the rural areas.
- C) Participation in the associative movements: On the 14.329 people, members of the 2.760 households interviewed, only 4.08% of them activate in 0.13% and associative sector in a Community framework. In the associative framework the most numerous are in socio-cultural nature associations, social associations, religious, professional, sports, youth, protection of the environment and women. In this study, more community participative are village committees which dominate before committees of district, the djemaa and the arch.
- D) Participation in citizen groups: According to regions, it is in the North and South West that commitment in the Community is the most important. It is about 10% of persons over 18 years interviewed in the first region and over 7% in the second. In other areas the figures are less important particularly in the North which has extremely low figures (1.36%) and southern (2.50%).

This report shows the gap between the different forms of reaction of the rural population, according to the definitions and lighting design developed in this study, a way to confirm that the reality of the targeted field seems more difficult to achieve and accomplish, given the characteristics of this population, namely the rate of illiteracy, poverty rates, and socio-economic constraints which act in a perception of very remote and offset of the participatory approach, namely, recommended by the economic decision makers, which emphasis that such participation, as defined and developed, must rely on a company civil, more organized and disciplined, based around a more associative mind, and which must fit in a logic of successful mutation and the transition to another form of dialogue, negotiation and debate, in accordance with measures and mechanism of governance.

On the other hand, and as part of a panel of training, awareness of rural population on the basis of rural renewal, concerning the Wilaya of Ain-Temouchent, located in Western Algeria, and distinguished by an interesting agricultural nature, primarily, production of vines, meeting the

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rural society of eight Dairas of this Wilaya, it was found the following comments to better measure this participatory approach in this renewal policy:

- a. The rural population still understand such policy of an angle of another policy, implemented by the State, to attempt relief and recovery of the rural landscape.
- b. It regards this policy as another hierarchical intervention of public authorities, and therefore, of the high bodies of the State.
- c. This renewal policy is more seen as only a funding for rural projects, as decided and desired by the planners and officials of the institutions of the State.
- d. A full demotivation and demobilization of rural and peasants regarding on this policy, despite the many assurances and guarantees on the sincerity and the will of the State in this process.
- e. A serious lack, noted and raised, of associations representing rural women and rural youth.
- f. An idea of the rural population that such policy is a more designed to promote the agricultural profession and the agricultural activities.
- g. A reading, quasi-logique and expected, that the policy of rural renewal is only a question of distribution of funds and investments.
- h. Also, it has been found that the interest of the renewal policy is, for many rural and peasants, only to uptake of a large number of funds for the financing of agricultural activities, alluding thus to previous programs for agricultural development, namely the NADP, and agencies in charge of financing, the NFDA.
- i. Through the eight Dairas, it has been proved that the rural population regards this policy as another initiative of the State, to show his availability and his commitment to agricultural development, without growing and showing any particular interest on their part to participate actively in this program, confirming, therefore, the gap between official rhetoric and the rural.

Among the grievances registered to understand the behaviour and reaction of the rural population, and the reluctance to participate in the different phases of this mechanism, there were the following:

- The pending question of unemployment.
- The administrative constraints.
- The difficulties of access to social services.
- The constraints of access to credit.
- Complications at the level of the different administrations and public services (water, electricity, transport, housing, education, assistance and social and other protection).
- The issue of land-lockedness.
- The rural “foncier”.
- Lack of sports and cultural infrastructure.
- Lack of transparency.
- Feeling of rejection and exclusion.
- Difficulties of access to information.
- The problem of land degradation.

Finally, we understand that rural population manifests his disapproval and his indifference to this new political constraints and barriers that they meet, regularly, at the level of administrations

and services that represent the State, a way to remind that the State has well committed, earlier, in several promises, identical and similar to those that it defends through this new policy, without any significant change in the lives of the rural, or at least some kind of recognition and dignity for the thousand of rural families and households.

As a result, we must wonder and worry about the relevance and the chances of success of this policy on the renewal, in a context marked by a certain mistrust, casually and reluctance, and also according to multiple studies which have looked at the issue of rural development, confirmed the chronic prevalence of rural poverty, the low rate of human development, the inequality of growth with the urban world, the degradation of the environment and more specifically, a sense that the rural world, Algeria, has not benefited from the opportunities of economic development as it should, given the financial, human and technical means available to this State, judging by gaps identified and observed with urban and industrial sector of this country.

The example of the cited Wilaya and the summaries of the reports in this sense, the perception of participatory by the rural population, confirm that such policy, implemented by the Central hierarchy without any real connection with the expectations and needs of the rural world, may lead, therefore, to a rather pessimistic results, and may take some time to reach the rural, on the basis that rural program is not only an economic process, but more sociological one.

On the other hand, and considering that the approach of the authorities remains, welcoming and encouraging, the actual population express and reinforce the thesis that participation is a process and not a static, meaning and explaining that their participatory impetus is conditioned by possible effects of synergy between the State and the official representatives of rural society, in a cooperative spirit.

#### **The issues of the rural participative approach in the light of renewal**

It is widely understood that the rural development strategy, in this country, tends to take up the great challenges of fighting poverty, under-employment, social inequalities, and the economic and social deterioration of the rural households, mainly those situated in the far regions and completely isolated from the urban areas.

Hence, the Rural Renewal Policy (the RRP) is aiming to bring together local development projects and local development actions, bearing in mind that the rural actors are building the territories, which is the fundamental of this policy and the main challenge of the local deciders in order to boost the rural productivity, and to ensure the real participation and involvement of rural population.

According to O.Bessaoud and M.Petit (7), this policy is trying to achieve the followings targets:

- I. This policy is designated to improve rural households, particularly people living in enclaves.
- II. It is built on large scale programs and projects.
- III. It constitutes a true basis to rise up the potentialities and the strengthens of the rurals, a way to send a message that such population and actors are, also, able to undertake economic and social projects, and to integrate the national economic policy, according to some international organisms and institutions.

Significantly declared in their writings, Bessaoud and Petit focused on the role and place played by the rural organization, saying that “these organizations which arise independently of institutional impetus are the expression of what rural civil society wants and they (rural organizations) reflect a desire to take on the development of their territories, and they represent, without a doubt, a major source of hope for the future of rural development which is much more participatory nowadays than in the past.

In this Algerian case, the participative approach is pending on the way that governmental administration is dealing with such policy in order to explain, clearly and significantly, to the rural, the aims and the contents of such policy, excluding the usual and traditional language used in the past, and taking into account the fact that rural organizations and associations have grown up and are able to understand the message sent by the state.

The decentralization process is still on its starting bloc and needs some time to be implemented and established in the rural administrations, but it remains the fact that the new policy must be, widely, transmitted and covering the main rural regions, trying not to exclude any categories of the population, and insisting on the participation and involvement of rural women and youth in this process, since that a serious willing and feeling by rural women has been shown and expressed in order to have a part in the rural development, and to participate, effectively and truly, in the success of this new policy, for the best of the rural and the economic deciders.

In the case of Algerian rural areas, the withdrawal of the State is translated by the need to implement some new mechanisms that disrupt the already existing structures and support activities that value local resources and involved in the management of natural resources. It is important to note that, under the effect of globalization, rural associations are aware of the fact that the burden will be too heavy and very costly and deserve that one is strives only to the problems which are “manageable” at the local level.

The movement of restructuring, redevelopment and redeployment observed on areas and rural spaces in Algeria, is still at the stage of experimentation and learning, given the rules of globalization relate to all the parties involved in the issue of rural development.

A recent study has shown that rural show a genuine desire to comply with the modernization of agricultural and rural activities, focusing on: training and learning new farming techniques, fertilization, field crops... and it is in this sense that this program (P.P.D.R) shows more as a partner and very dynamic actor.

In the Algerian case, and in this context to adapt the rural world according to the new bases of liberal economics, decentralization principle becomes a necessity and urgency, because according to the experts the F.A.O and other organizations; this type of program will provide a participatory management of all actors, specifically in:

- Promoting the participation of rural civil society.
- Reconstructing the institutional landscape.
- Granting more power of representative rural local decisions.
- Organizing the profession agricultural and rural.
- Introducing the dialogue and negotiation.
- Encompassing all factors and their interaction.
- Effectively managing resources in the concerned rural areas.

Discussing on the subject of participative approach by rural in the Algerian case needs to understand, fully and truly, the kind of regions and spaces that we are taking into account, since that the Algerian rural must be explained through the historical evolution of the nation as a whole, mainly during the colonialism period and the socialist revolution in the beginning of the seventies, which explained the hesitation and fear of rural households about this new step of the government, which, even if it shows real concern and willing to establish a long term development projects, is facing a kind of demobilization and demotivation, and this is considered as the main challenge of the authority in order to get some satisfaction and good results.

Also, we need to know that the project of decentralization for rural development, in the Algerian example, seeks to establish the idea that: “the question of securing rural and agriculture is heavily dependent on the reaction and behavior of the concerned themselves, another way to insist on the effective involvement of rural in all the phases and stages of the designed projects, on the basis that another delay of growth and development will be very harmful to the entire rural regions and areas.

### **Conclusion**

The reading of the policy of rural renewal confirms this enthusiasm and determination of the Algerian Government to implement a true foundation based on an effective participation of the rural population, without any exception or exclusion, in order to properly oversee rural development and improve the living conditions of rural households.

Nevertheless, the strong mobilization of rural actors, both expected and desired by economic policymakers, seems not to occur and be distinguished, of fear and apprehension that it only a repeat and remake of other policies, initiated and developed, through the heavy interventions of State institutions, but which, on the one hand, ignored and marginalized the genuine grievances and expectations of the rural, leaving, hence, the rural regions in a complete state of underdevelopment and social worries and concerns.

Caught in an international context that develops and restructures according to developments in the international economy, and a national context which requires a necessary development of the rural world, the Algerian State is more intransigent on the issue of the participatory approach, and tries to convince the major components and categories of this world to understand that time of centralization and the monopoly of the decisions at the central and hierarchical level is well over to let place to other concepts, such as decentralization, deconcentration, delegation and devolution, brief, local governance.

Opinions converge towards the idea that the participatory approach, in an environment also complicated, binding, and sometimes to the limit of hostility, is another alternative that public authorities can user and build, in order to preserve this momentum of cooperation, dialogue and negotiation, which, if it is well implemented and understood, will send some significant and positive signals to the rural and may be a bit of hope for rural development which is the measurement of makers and rural populations.

Also, we believe that the participatory approach, to the Algerian case, is an another turn, social and economic, in the rural world, because this will make local skills and rehabilitate the

prerogatives of each, taking into account the specificities and characteristics of each region, space, or area identified and targeted, the discrepancies and differences that exist.

Through the participatory approach, the rural world can express themselves and promote the ideas and thoughts on the appropriate and suitable mechanisms, in order to better target interventions of the State, and to combine the efforts between the latter, which is part of a logic of accompaniment and support for this policy of renewal, and rural people who best know the expectations of the population staking into account the mistakes above, by the exclusion of the rural, and projecting to another era, more oriented to a dynamics of coordination, cooperation and synergy, which remain the true and only strengths valid arguments, on the basis of sustainable development and the given wealth of the rural spaces available and potential one.



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