



The function of civil society in Morocco's rural development Soufiane RAYADI

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Abstract

Local associations are participating in an increasing number of rural development projects. The roles taken on might be anything from a simple one as a go-between for the community and the outside world to a genuine one as an actor supporting the community. These businesses must face fresh challenges to their expansion as well as adapt to a changing environment. This paper attempts to illustrate the dynamics of these interactions and the hazards that come with them in rural development.

Introduction

Civil society is essential to resolving the different issues that rural communities confront. They are vital in supporting sustainable development methods and fighting for the interests and rights of rural communities. These organizations collaborate closely with local communities to determine their top priorities and provide tailored solutions to meet their unique requirements.

Rural society becomes a political concern because of its demographic, social, and economic relevance. It encompasses 90% of the surface area of the Kingdom and comprises 40% of the national population. Out of 1503 municipalities, it unites 1282 rural municipalities, or 85% of the total. There are over 33,000 “douars” and rural centers, and 13% of rural municipalities have an urban center (Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental: 2017, P. 14).

In Morocco, civil society organizations play a significant role in enhancing rural communities' access to infrastructure, healthcare, and education by pooling



resources and skills, which is the new development model. Additionally, they give locals chances for skill development and training so they can actively engage in decisions that have an impact on their lives, empowering them.

The contribution of chances for skill development and training to the empowerment of rural Moroccan communities: investigating the effects on rural communities of active involvement in decision-making processes and how cooperation and information sharing among stakeholders foster unity in rural communities Emphasizing the role that civil society organizations play in promoting inclusive development in rural Morocco and evaluating the importance of programs to strengthen resilience for Morocco's sustainable rural development.

Furthermore, civil society groups help various stakeholders collaborate and share knowledge, which eventually strengthens rural communities' sense of solidarity and group action and aids in the development of rural nations. One argument in opposition would be that giving locals in rural Morocco more authority could result in a lack of control and accountability, which could lead to resource mismanagement or corruption. A counterargument that may be made is that actively participating in decision-making processes could require a lot of time and money, taking them away from more urgent needs in rural areas.

Definition of civil society

Civil society refers to the collective of individuals and organizations that operate independently from the government and engage in various activities to promote the common good and advocate for social change. (Civil Society Brief: India: 2020, P. 2) it encompasses a wide range of groups, including non-profit organizations, community groups, trade unions, and grassroots movements. Civil society plays a crucial role in democracy by providing a platform for citizens to express their opinions, participate in decision-making processes, and hold governments accountable. (Civil Society Brief: India: 2020, P. 2) It is an essential pillar of a healthy and functioning society, as it fosters active citizenship and contributes to the overall well-being of communities.



Civil society is one of the most ambiguous concepts in the current political debate. For some, civil society is defined by opposition to the state. For others, it would not be a simple relationship with the state but rather (Azeddine, Akesbi : 2011, P,17) “the place where the private and the public interfere”. According to this author, the expression “civil society” appears in the French language in the 17th century, at the same time as its opposite “the state of nature”. The conceptual pair state of nature–civil society is succeeded by the continuing opposition between civil society and the state (Azeddine, Akesbi : 2011, P,17).

The civil society at Locke has a dimension of political society responsible for ensuring the security of citizens; it is also an economic order guarantor of private property and a legal order guaranteeing the protection of individual rights. For Hegel, civil society is conceived as a lack of universality and unity in relation to the state (Azeddine, Akesbi : 2011, P,18). In civil society, the bourgeoisie manages to organize and access relative universality. In the market society, civil society institutions (associations, corporations, etc.) manage to combine individual interests and are able, through their legal action, to manage certain conflicts of interest (Azeddine, Akesbi : 2011, P,18).

Marx, for his part, linked and articulated civil society with social relations. For him, civil society means the material conditions of the existence of individuals. It recognizes the existence of a separation between civil society and the state. But it is an illusion that tends to separate them. Thus, civil society represents the real and material foundation of the state while being its opposite (Azeddine, Akesbi : 2011, P,18). After having experienced a long evolution of form and meaning, the word civil society seemed to disappear in the 20th century and reappear today in contemporary discourses, often presented as the opposite of the state, a positive and valued notion (Azeddine, Akesbi : 2011, P,18).

In Morocco, civil society has developed greatly in recent decades, with the number of associations estimated to be between 30,000 and 50,000. This denotes the existence of major gaps in the knowledge of civil society, even reduced to its hard core (CIVICUS: 2008, P,17). The significant development of civil society would be partly linked to the loss of public confidence in traditional representative



structures, the disengagement of the state from public services, the increase in population needs, and the need to resort to civil society to fill the void left by the state (CIVICUS: 2008, P,18). The study on development associations also notes a significant development of the associative movement, corresponding to emancipation from traditional social structures, which reflects a new vision of citizen participation. This major development observed in the mid-1990s is seen as a turning point in which civil society benefited from the openness and development of public freedoms during the 1980s and 1990s. With the arrival of the “alternance” government in 1998, a more positive attitude and behavior towards civil society were observed (CIVICUS: 2008, P, 19).

In addition to its role in democracy, civil society plays a significant role in driving social change. Through their advocacy and activism, civil society organizations and groups work towards addressing social injustices, promoting equality, and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities. These groups often mobilize and organize campaigns, protests, and initiatives that aim to raise awareness, challenge existing power structures, and bring about positive transformations in society. By amplifying the voices of those who are often unheard, civil society acts as a catalyst for change and helps to shape a more inclusive and equitable world.

Furthermore, civil society groups help various stakeholders collaborate and share knowledge, which eventually strengthens rural communities' sense of solidarity and group action and aids in the development of rural nations. One argument in opposition would be that giving locals in rural Morocco more authority could result in a lack of control and accountability, which could lead to resource mismanagement or corruption. A counterargument that may be made is that actively participating in decision-making processes could require a lot of time and money, taking them away from more urgent needs in rural areas.

A brief overview of rural development in Morocco

The government of Morocco has prioritized rural development, launching a number of programs to enhance the standard of living and economic prospects in rural areas. To improve access to essential services, the government has made



investments in infrastructure development, including building roads, schools, and healthcare facilities (Jihad, Ouddida. Lala Latifa, Alaoui: 2021, P, 200). In addition, initiatives have been undertaken to assist the growth of agriculture by giving farmers access to loans, training opportunities, and subsidies. In many rural parts of Morocco, these programs have improved rural lives and decreased poverty rates (Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental: 2017, P, 15).

As well as, the government has made a point of encouraging small company development and entrepreneurship in rural areas. This has been accomplished by setting up business incubators and giving prospective business owners funds and technical support (Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental:2017, P, 15). These programs have broadened the local economy in addition to generating new job opportunities. Because more people are able to establish stable lives in their hometowns, there has been a decline in the number of rural-to-urban migrations. All things considered, Morocco's rural areas have grown and developed more generally as a result of these extensive efforts (Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental: 2017, P, 15).

Furthermore, the citizens of rural areas now feel more proud and united as a result of these initiatives. Successful enterprises that meet the individual requirements and preferences of their community members have been established by local entrepreneurs (ZEROUALI, Adnane: 2020, P, 124). This has not only improved the local economy but also strengthened the rural communities' support systems, fostering more cooperation and creativity. Morocco's rural areas are now regarded as thriving centers of opportunity and enterprise rather than as being economically disadvantaged.

Civil society is one of the most striking features of our time, to such an extent that it has now become an indispensable player in international relations. Although it remains difficult to grasp this new reality, as a problem of definition and delimitation arises, no one disputes that it occupies a prominent place in the functioning of contemporary societies (Paola, Gandolfi : 2003, P,7).

In Morocco, the involvement of civil society in rural development is essential to attaining inclusive and sustainable growth. In Morocco, civil society



organizations are essential to rural development because they speak up for the interests and rights of rural populations. They give people living in rural areas a forum to express their issues and take part in decision-making ZEROUALI, Adnane: 2020, P, 124). Furthermore, civil society organizations frequently carry out a range of development initiatives and programs targeted at enhancing rural communities' quality of life, including infrastructure, healthcare, and educational opportunities (ZEROUALI, Adnane: 2020, P, 124). In general, their active participation is necessary to establish sustainable and fair development in Morocco's rural areas.

These groups are also very important in promoting the preservation of rural areas' environment and natural resources. They contribute to ensuring the preservation of the rich biodiversity and ecosystems that are essential for rural livelihoods by boosting conservation initiatives and increasing public knowledge of sustainable practices (Raphaël Billé, Renaud Lapeyre and Romain Pirard: 2012, P, 4). In addition, civil society groups in Morocco's rural areas frequently work with foreign organizations and governmental bodies to get funds and resources for community development initiatives. This collaboration amplifies the effect of their work and promotes prosperity and sustainable growth in rural areas (Paola, Gandolfi: 2003, P, 4).

Together, civil society groups, governmental organizations, and foreign organizations may solve the different issues Moroccan rural communities face. They can carry out programs aimed at enhancing infrastructure, healthcare, and education—all essential for these communities' growth and well-being (Ouard, Abdelmalek: 2011, P, 6). This cooperative strategy not only gives rural communities more influence, but it also contributes to the development of a more equal and inclusive Moroccan society.

Civil society organizations, governmental organizations, and foreign organizations can collaborate to establish comprehensive plans to address the problems of poverty, unemployment, (Juliana, Rwelamira: 2015, P, 2) and agricultural production that are prominent in rural communities in Morocco. By working together, they can build microfinance programs to encourage



entrepreneurship and economic growth, teach and support farmers, and promote sustainable farming methods. This multifaceted strategy makes sure that rural communities have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, which will eventually result in a more wealthy and peaceful Moroccan society (ZEROUALI, Adnane: 2020, P, 125).

Importance of Civil Society in Rural Development

Because civil society gives local populations a voice in decision-making and empowers them, it plays a critical role in rural development. Through their grassroots efforts, civil society organizations can address the unique requirements and difficulties of rural areas, such as infrastructure development, access to basic services, and chances for sustainable livelihood (OFFICE DES NATIONS UNIES CONTRE LA DROGUE ET LE CRIME:2020, P, 21). In addition, civil society serves as a conduit between the rural populace and the government, promoting cooperation and guaranteeing that development initiatives are in line with the goals and objectives of the surrounding communities. In general, inclusive and sustainable growth in these areas depends on the active involvement of civil society in rural development (ZEROUALI, Adnane: 2020, P, 126).

Civil society organizations can gain a better understanding of the unique needs and challenges faced by each community by actively engaging with rural people. This makes it possible to deploy customized solutions and conduct focused interventions that specifically address the special needs of rural communities. Additionally, civil society is essential to protecting the rights and interests of rural communities by making sure that their voices are heard and that politicians take their concerns into consideration.

Through their work, civil society organizations support the general development and empowerment of rural communities, which eventually improves the well-being and standard of living for the locals. For instance, a customized approach can entail setting up mobile health clinics that deliver professionals and resources right to rural communities with poor access to healthcare services (Jihad, Ouddida. Lala Latifa, Alaoui: 2021, P, 206). The funding and execution of such programs can be greatly aided by civil society organizations, which will guarantee



that rural communities' healthcare requirements are satisfied and that their opinions are heard while policy is being discussed. This cooperative strategy improves access to services, improves healthcare outcomes, and eventually raises the standard of living in rural areas (Jihad, Ouddida. Lala Latifa, Alaoui: 2021, P, 206).

Mobile health clinics can also address particular health issues that rural populations confront by collaborating with local communities and utilizing their knowledge and experience (Samhsa: 2016, P,1). For instance, they could concentrate on offering preventive treatment and instruction on topics like infectious diseases, chronic illnesses that are common in these areas and maternity and child health (Samhsa: 2016, P,2). Furthermore, mobile clinics can provide early detection programs and screenings, allowing for prompt treatments and lessening the strain on already overworked healthcare facilities. In the end, the existence of mobile health clinics benefits rural towns' general growth and prosperity, in addition to their citizens' physical health.

Enhancing citizen participation and empowerment

Using technology is one technique to improve public empowerment and involvement. Through the use of mobile applications and internet platforms, citizens may participate in decision-making processes, share their thoughts, and obtain information with ease (United Nations: 2023, P,2). Giving individual's access to training and educational opportunities can also help them become more empowered to participate in their communities and make wise decisions (United Nations: 2023, P,2).

Technology can also make it easier to gather and analyze data, which enables people to actively participate in the development of evidence-based policy. Governments may provide more effective and responsive public services by using data to better understand the needs and preferences of their constituents (Sarah, Giest:2017, P, 369). Furthermore, technology can facilitate online forums and virtual town hall meetings, removing geographical restrictions and guaranteeing that every person has an equal chance to engage in conversations and decision-making. All things considered, utilizing technology can greatly increase citizen



empowerment and involvement, promoting a more diverse and democratic society (Sarah, Giest: 2017, P, 369).

Moreover, technology makes government activities more transparent. Citizens can easily access information on government policies, budgets, and projects by using online platforms and databases (Eric W. Welch: 2012, P, 93). Since voters can now hold their representatives accountable for their acts, there is a greater sense of trust between the people and the government (Eric W. Welch: 2012, P, 95). Technology can also reduce bureaucracy and facilitate citizen–agency interactions by streamlining administrative procedures. This increases the general effectiveness of public services while also saving time and money.

Technology also makes it possible for citizens to participate in decision–making to a greater extent. Governments can solicit public opinion on a range of subjects through online platforms and social media, allowing citizens to have a say in policymaking. This inclusive strategy encourages public participation and ownership, which results in more responsive and efficient governance (Anne M. Hornak and Regina L. Garza Mitchell: 2016, P,125). Furthermore, technology can improve the provision of public services like healthcare and education, especially in isolated or underprivileged areas. Technology ensures equal access for all residents by bridging the gap between citizens and key services through telemedicine and online learning platforms (Eric W. Welch: 2012, P, 96).

Building a just and inclusive society where everyone has equal opportunities and access to resources requires promoting social justice and equity. It entails confronting and eliminating structural obstacles and prejudice on the basis of racial, gender, socioeconomic, and other distinctions (Mary, Breunig:2019, P,8). We can build a more equitable society where everyone's rights and dignity are upheld by fighting for social justice and equality.

Furthermore, fostering fairness and social justice is essential to building a peaceful and cohesive community. It dispels stereotypes and fosters a feeling of community by encouraging empathy and understanding among people (Jesse, Rodenbiker: 2022, P, 185). We can build a society that values and celebrates diversity by addressing inequality and guaranteeing equitable access to healthcare,



education, and work opportunities. This will ultimately result in a more successful and resilient country.

Social justice and equity must be attained by addressing the systematic prejudice and barriers that marginalized groups must overcome. This can be achieved by putting into practice laws that support diversity and representation in all spheres of society and by aggressively combating damaging prejudices and stereotypes (Jesse, Rodenbiker: 2022, P, 190). By doing this, we can create a society in which each person has the chance to prosper and enhance the well-being of the whole. In the end, advancing social justice and equality is essential to creating a just and fair society for all people, in addition to being morally required.

Fostering local ownership and community development is crucial for sustainable and empowering growth. By involving community members in decision-making processes and actively engaging them in development initiatives, local ownership is fostered (Mohammed, B. E. Saaida: 2023, P, 6). This not only ensures that projects are tailored to the specific needs and priorities of the community but also promotes a sense of ownership and responsibility among its members (Mohammed, B. E. Saaida: 2023, P, 6). Furthermore, community development goes beyond just economic growth by also focusing on social and environmental aspects, creating a holistic approach to improve the overall well-being of the community.

The community's opinions are appreciated, and their voices are heard when they are included in decision-making processes. This results in a more democratic and inclusive approaches to development, where all people are involved in making decisions that have an impact on their daily lives (Elizabeth, W. Morrison: 2014, P, 177). Community development efforts can also address challenges like poverty, inequality, and climate change by taking into account the social and environmental components of development, resulting in a more sustainable future for everybody. In the end, community development is about giving people and communities the tools they need to take control of their own growth and effect constructive change from within.



This strategy acknowledges that external interventions or top-down methods alone cannot create sustainable development. Rather, it necessitates the active involvement and cooperation of all parties involved, such as local government representatives and agencies (Maarit, MÄKINEN: 2006, P, 384). Community development efforts can effectively utilize the pooled wisdom, resources, and talents of the community by promoting inclusivity and developing partnerships. This approach can result in more durable and effective solutions to complicated situations (Maarit, MÄKINEN: 2006, P, 384). Communities may become resilient, powerful, and capable of directing their own destinies by using this bottom-up strategy.

Civil society organizations and their contributions

In order to advance democracy, defend human rights, and deal with social and environmental challenges, civil society organizations (CSOs) are essential. Their contributions are numerous and significant; they range from offering vital services to underserved regions to doing research and analysis to enlisting the public in favor of significant issues (Padmini, Sharma: 2018, P, 42). Strong social responsibility and a dedication to bringing about constructive social change are the driving forces behind these organizations (Padmini, Sharma: 2018, P, 42). Governments and institutions sometimes overlook the needs and concerns of marginalized groups, and CSOs frequently serve as a voice for the voiceless.

By advancing social justice, equality, and inclusivity, they strengthen people as individuals and as communities. CSOs create links between citizens and governments, facilitating communication and influencing policy decisions by participating in grassroots movements and community organizing (Assaf, Shlomo Bondy : 2020, P, 4). A great deal of social, economic, and environmental problems would remain unrecognized and unaddressed in the absence of these organizations' ceaseless efforts. CSOs are essential in tackling the systemic problems that support inequality and injustice (Padmini, Sharma: 2018, P, 43).

They offer a forum for underrepresented groups to speak up and promote laws that put their needs first. Additionally, by providing essential resources and support services to people and communities, these organizations work to empower and uplift those who have historically been marginalized (Assaf, Shlomo Bondy : 2020,



P, 5). CSOs play a crucial role as allies in the struggle for a more just and equitable society in a world where structural change is frequently sluggish and challenging to accomplish.

Organizations in civil society are essential to advancing democracy and guaranteeing the defense of human rights. They speak up for underrepresented communities and promote equality and social justice (Assaf, Shlomo Bondy : 2020, P, 5). Through their diverse campaigns and efforts, these groups strive to establish a society that is both sustainable and inclusive (Assaf, Shlomo Bondy : 2020, P, 6). Additionally, they bridge the gaps that governments can miss by offering crucial services and assistance to underprivileged areas. In general, civil society organizations play a critical role in encouraging constructive change and keeping governments responsible for their deeds.

To make sure that no one is left behind, they are essential to keeping an eye on government policies and responding to violations of human rights. These groups also encourage public involvement and provide people with the tools they need to actively participate in decision-making (Padmini, Sharma: 2018, P, 45). Civil society groups aid in the creation and application of successful policies that benefit all societal members by bringing people together and encouraging collaboration. They contribute significantly to creating a world that is more fair and just for all people in this way.

Significant hurdles frequently beset non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that offer essential services and support to vulnerable groups. Securing long-term funding to maintain their work is one of the most urgent problems. NGOs may find it difficult to address the needs of the people they serve without a consistent and reliable source of income, which would limit their capacity to have a long-lasting effect (Faiz, Kermani. Sbita, Tia Anna Reandi:2023, P,101). In order to maintain their operations and carry out their missions, these groups must actively participate in fundraising campaigns, looking for funding from private individuals, corporate sponsorships, and grant opportunities (Faiz, Kermani. Sbita, Tia Anna Reandi:2023, P,101).



In addition to finding financing, navigating intricate legal and regulatory systems is a difficult for NGOs. The operations of NGOs are governed by particular laws and regulations in many countries, and breaking these rules can have dire repercussions (Council of Europe:2003, P, 20). This implies that in order to make sure they are functioning within the constraints imposed by the government; NGOs must devote time and resources to comprehending and abiding by these regulations (Council of Europe:2003, P, 20).. NGOs that operate abroad may find this more difficult because they have to deal with the legal systems of several different nations.

For foreign NGOs, navigating various legal frameworks can be a difficult and time-consuming task. It necessitates a thorough comprehension of the laws of every nation as well as the capacity to adjust to various legal contexts. NGOs also need to make sure they have the resources needed to fulfill these obligations and stay informed about any changes to laws or regulations that may have an impact on how they conduct business (Assaf, Shlomo Bondy : 2020, P, 3). Notwithstanding the difficulties, NGOs understand how critical it is to function within the law in order to preserve their reputation, safeguard the people they assist, and carry on having a constructive influence on communities everywhere.

In order to address the needs and problems of their communities, community-based organizations (CBOs)¹ play a critical role in mobilizing local resources and knowledge. These organizations frequently have a long history in the community and are well aware of its strengths and problems (Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1312). CBOs are able to create focused and efficient solutions that directly meet the particular needs of the people in their community by utilizing the strength of local resources and skills (Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1312). CBOs are at the forefront of bringing about constructive change at the local level, whether it is by advancing social justice, advancing education, or granting access to healthcare facilities (Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1312).

CBOs assist in fostering a sense of cohesion and solidarity within the community by encouraging cooperation and collaboration (Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1313). They give people a place to congregate, exchange ideas, and collaborate to find solutions that will benefit all parties. Additionally, CBOs are



essential in the battle against oppression and prejudice for social justice and equality (Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1313). Their ceaseless efforts result in a more equal and inclusive society where everyone is given the chance to prosper and their voices are respected. In order to promote community involvement and their empowerment, CBOs are essential.

Their intimate ties to the community's businesses and citizens enable them to organize people and foster group initiatives aimed at shared objectives. In addition, CBOs serve as a conduit between locals and bigger organizations, giving voice to their issues and making sure they are taken seriously. In the end, CBOs' work advances the community's general growth and well-being, making them invaluable resources in the fight for social progress(Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1314).

Women's groups and associations empowering rural women and promoting gender equality have become increasingly important in recent years. These groups provide a platform for women to come together, share their experiences, and support each other in their pursuit of empowerment (Olutayo ODUNOLA: 2018, P, 1314). By organizing workshops, training sessions, and awareness campaigns, these associations aim to break down societal barriers and challenge traditional gender roles.

Through their work, they are promoting a more equal and inclusive society in addition to giving rural women more authority. These organizations that support women's empowerment are essential in the fight for equal rights and opportunity (Françoise Gaspard: 2007, P, 148). They provide a secure forum for women to talk about topics that are important to them, like discrimination at work, domestic abuse, and barriers to healthcare and education. These associations are speaking out against the status quo and attempting to remove structural obstacles that impede gender equality (Françoise Gaspard: 2007, P, 148). These women's empowerment organizations are working together to change laws and policies in addition to bringing attention to gender-based concerns.

They are holding campaigns, demonstrations, and rallies to hold institutions and governments accountable for addressing the issues and demands of women. These organizations also give women access to helpful information and networks of



support to help them overcome a variety of obstacles and become change agents in their communities (OECD FINDINGS: 2016, P, 6). All things considered, their unwavering support and commitment help to build a more just and equal society for all people, regardless of gender. In the end, their work contributes to the development of a more just and equal society in which women can prosper and have equal chances of success (OECD FINDINGS: 2016, P, 6).

Civil society organizations may guarantee that the needs and goals of rural communities are met comprehensively and inclusively by working with local governments and other stakeholders. Additionally, they can aid in bridging the divide by promoting communication and building trust between the populace and the administration (OECD FINDINGS: 2016, P, 6). All things considered, the work that civil society organizations do in rural development is crucial to bringing about long-lasting change and lowering social inequality.

These groups are essential in enabling rural communities because they give people access to the tools, information, and training they need to enhance their standard of living. They frequently carry out initiatives that directly assist the people living in rural areas, such as those pertaining to infrastructure development, healthcare, education, and agriculture. In addition, civil society organizations represent the rights and interests of rural communities, making sure that their opinions are heard and that policy-making processes take their concerns into consideration. In the end, their efforts help to create resilient and sustainable rural economies, which improve people's opportunities and quality of life.

Examples of Civil Society Initiatives in Rural Development

Examples of civil society initiatives in rural development include the establishment of community-led cooperatives for agriculture, where farmers come together to collectively purchase seeds, equipment, and other resources. Another example is the formation of women's self-help groups, which empower women in rural areas by providing them with vocational training, access to credit, and a platform to voice their concerns (Maia, Green: 2012, P, 311). Additionally, civil society organizations often play a crucial role in advocating for policies and programs that benefit rural communities, such as improved infrastructure,



education, and healthcare services (Maia, Green: 2012, P, 311). These initiatives demonstrate the power of civil society to drive sustainable development and improve the lives of rural populations.

Capacity-building programs for farmers and rural entrepreneurs provide valuable training and resources to help them improve their skills and productivity. These programs often focus on topics such as sustainable farming practices, financial management, and marketing strategies. By equipping farmers and rural entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge and tools, capacity-building programs can help them overcome challenges and create successful and sustainable businesses (Kasi, Eswarappa: 2011, P, 215). Additionally, these programs can also foster collaboration and networking opportunities, allowing participants to learn from each other and build a strong support system within their communities.

The ability of farmers to share ideas and experiences about methods like crop rotation and organic farming helps promote the adoption of sustainable farming practices. In order to guarantee the long-term survival of their companies, financial management workshops can also instruct participants on how to efficiently manage their resources and optimize revenues (Coulibaly, T.P., Du, J., and Diakité, D: 2021, P, 166).

Program members can also exchange and debate marketing tactics, which helps them, reach new markets and grow their clientele. All things considered, capacity-building initiatives are crucial in enabling farmers and other rural business owners to prosper in a constantly shifting agricultural environment (Coulibaly, T.P., Du, J., and Diakité, D: 2021, P, 166). These courses give them the skills and information they need to adjust to changing consumer needs and market trends.

Additionally, networking opportunities are made possible by capacity-building initiatives, giving farmers and rural businesses a chance to meet potential partners and industry professionals (Lisa, Dreier: 2016, P, 6). These initiatives support the development of a resilient and sustainable agriculture sector that may support rural communities' food security and economic prosperity by encouraging cooperation and innovation. In marginalized areas, advocacy campaigns for basic



services and land rights are crucial for advancing social and economic equality (Lisa, Dreier: 2016, P, 6).

Communities may ensure their long-term survival and way of life by securing ownership and control over their property through the advocacy of land rights. Additionally, enhancing living conditions and enabling people to thrive depend on having access to essential services like clean water, healthcare, and education.

These advocacy efforts are essential for tackling structural injustices and building a society that is more inclusive and just. Marginalized communities can escape cycles of poverty and exploitation by fighting for their land rights (United, Nations: 2017, P, 7). They can access resources for economic development and chances for sustainable lives when they have secure ownership and control over their land. Furthermore, obtaining basic services is not only a human right but also a driver of social and economic advancement (United, Nations: 2017, P, 7). We can endeavor to remove the obstacles preventing advancement and build a more just and prosperous society for all by fighting for these rights.

This includes advocating for affordable and quality education, healthcare, and clean water and sanitation facilities. When individuals have access to these basic services, they can improve their overall well-being and productivity, breaking the cycle of poverty. Additionally, empowering marginalized communities through education and skills training programs can create avenues for economic growth and reduce inequalities. By prioritizing these issues and working together, we can build a society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.

Environmental conservation projects and sustainable agriculture initiatives are essential to ensuring the long-term health and well-being of our planet. By conserving our natural resources and protecting biodiversity, we can mitigate the impacts of climate change and preserve ecosystems for future generations (Barbara Pia Oberč and Alberto Arroyo Schnell: 2020, P, 2). Additionally, sustainable agriculture practices promote soil health, reduce water and chemical usage, and support local communities, making them crucial for both environmental and social sustainability.



By ensuring the long-term health of our planet by implementing conservation practices such as protecting natural habitats and reducing pollution, we can preserve biodiversity and safeguard ecosystems. Similarly, sustainable agriculture methods, such as organic farming and crop rotation, promote soil health and minimize the use of harmful chemicals, leading to healthier food production and a more sustainable future for generations to come (Barbara Pia Oberč and Alberto Arroyo Schnell: 2020, P, 2).

In addition to conservation practices and sustainable agriculture, investing in renewable energy sources is crucial for environmental sustainability. Transitioning to clean energy sources like solar and wind power reduces greenhouse gas emissions, decreases reliance on fossil fuels, and mitigates climate change. Furthermore, promoting social sustainability involves addressing issues of inequality and promoting inclusive and equitable societies.

Challenges and possible solutions

Challenges and potential solutions Challenges and potential solutions go hand in hand when it comes to achieving success. One of the major challenges faced by businesses today is the rapidly changing market trends. To overcome this, companies need to invest in extensive market research and analysis to stay ahead of the curve (Martine, M. Smith. Adolescence and AAC: 2014, P, 3). Another challenge is the increasing competition, which can be tackled by developing unique selling propositions and creating strong brand identities. Additionally, the rising cost of production and operation poses a challenge for businesses. Implementing cost-cutting measures and exploring alternative sourcing options can help mitigate this challenge (Martine, M. Smith. Adolescence and AAC: 2014, P, 3).

Finally, the evolving technological landscape creates the need for businesses to constantly adapt and upgrade their systems. Embracing digital transformation and investing in employee training are potential solutions to stay relevant in the digital age. By embracing digital transformation, businesses can streamline their operations and improve efficiency (David Dapice and Vo Tong Xuan: 2012, P, 148). This can include implementing automation tools and software to reduce manual work and increase productivity. Investing in employee training is also crucial to ensuring that



employees have the necessary skills to adapt to new technologies and stay competitive in the digital age (David Dapice and Vo Tong Xuan: 2012, P, 148). Overall, businesses that proactively adapt to technological advancements will have a better chance of staying relevant and thriving in today's rapidly changing business environment.

Limited financial resources and funding opportunities may pose challenges for businesses looking to invest in automation tools and employee training. However, it is important for companies to prioritize and allocate resources wisely in order to keep up with technological advancements (Ben Butt, Rory V. Jones and Alba, Fuertes: 2020, P, 5). Seeking partnerships and collaborations with other businesses or exploring alternative funding options can also help overcome these financial constraints.

Ultimately, the benefits of embracing technology and investing in employee skills development far outweigh the initial costs, as it leads to improved efficiency, cost savings, and a competitive edge in the market. By staying up-to-date with the latest technological advancements, companies can streamline their operations, automate repetitive tasks, and reduce overall expenses (Ben Butt, Rory V. Jones and Alba, Fuertes: 2020, P, 5). Moreover, investing in employee skills development ensures that the workforce is equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to effectively utilize these technological tools. This not only enhances productivity but also fosters innovation and adaptability within the organization, allowing it to stay ahead of competitors in an ever-evolving market.

Lack of coordination and collaboration among civil society organizations can hinder their ability to effectively advocate for social change. Without coordination, organizations may duplicate efforts or miss opportunities to leverage each other's strengths. Additionally, a lack of collaboration can lead to a fragmented approach, weakening the collective impact of civil society on addressing societal issues (Ben Butt, Rory V. Jones and Alba, Fuertes: 2020, P, 6). Therefore, it is crucial for these organizations to foster greater coordination and collaboration to maximize their collective power and create lasting change. By working together, organizations can pool resources, share knowledge and expertise, and amplify their message to reach



a wider audience. Collaborative efforts enable them to identify common goals and develop strategic plans that encompass a broader scope of issues (Martine, M. Smith. Adolescence and AAC: 2014, P, 5). Moreover, coordination and collaboration foster a sense of unity and solidarity among organizations, creating a stronger and more influential collective voice that cannot be ignored by policymakers and decision-makers. Ultimately, it is through effective coordination and collaboration that civil society can mobilize and bring about the transformative social change it seeks (Ben Butt, Rory V. Jones and Alba, Fuertes: 2020, P, 6). Lack of coordination and collaboration among civil society organizations can hinder their ability to effectively advocate for social change.

Without coordination, organizations may duplicate efforts or miss opportunities to leverage each other's strengths. Additionally, a lack of collaboration can lead to a fragmented approach, weakening the collective impact of civil society on addressing societal issues. Therefore, it is crucial for these organizations to foster greater coordination and collaboration to maximize their collective power and create lasting change (Brian W. Head and John Alford: 2015, P, 715). By working together, organizations can pool resources, share knowledge and expertise, and amplify their message to reach a wider audience. Collaborative efforts enable them to identify common goals and develop strategic plans that encompass a broader scope of issues.

Moreover, coordination and collaboration foster a sense of unity and solidarity among organizations, creating a stronger and more influential collective voice that cannot be ignored by policymakers and decision-makers (Brian W. Head and John Alford: 2015, P, 715). Ultimately, it is through effective coordination and collaboration that civil society can mobilize and bring about the transformative social change it seeks. Government policies and regulations that hinder civil society engagement can have detrimental effects on a country's social and economic development.

By limiting the ability of civil society organizations to operate freely, these policies restrict the potential for grassroots initiatives, advocacy, and community empowerment. Such restrictions can stifle innovation, limit the exchange of ideas,



and hinder the implementation of effective solutions to societal challenges. Ultimately, a thriving civil society is essential for fostering active citizenship, promoting social justice, and ensuring a balanced and inclusive governance system.

Without the active involvement of civil society organizations, marginalized and vulnerable communities may struggle to have their voices heard and their needs addressed. The restrictions placed on these organizations not only hinder their ability to advocate for these communities but also impede their efforts to provide vital services and support (Stephen, Meyers: 2016, P, 3). Without a thriving civil society, the overall well-being and development of society as a whole may be compromised, as the diverse perspectives and expertise that these organizations bring are crucial for creating sustainable and inclusive solutions (Stephen, Meyers: 2016, P, 3).

Recommendations for strengthening the role of civil society in rural development include providing training and capacity-building programs for community leaders and members, encouraging the formation of community-based organizations, and increasing access to resources and funding for grassroots initiatives. Additionally, fostering partnerships between civil society organizations and government agencies can help create a more collaborative and sustainable approach to rural development. Furthermore, promoting the participation of marginalized groups, such as women and Indigenous communities, in decision-making processes will ensure a more inclusive and equitable development agenda.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is vital to implement a multi-faceted approach to rural development that addresses the unique needs and challenges of rural communities. This includes empowering local communities, strengthening the capacity of community-based organizations, and promoting collaboration between civil society organizations and government agencies. By prioritizing the participation of marginalized groups in decision-making processes, we can ensure that rural development is inclusive and equitable, leading to long-term sustainable change. Furthermore, investing in infrastructure and basic services such as healthcare, education, and transportation is crucial for the overall development of rural areas.



Access to quality healthcare and education can improve the well-being and opportunities available to rural residents, while improved transportation networks can promote economic growth and connectivity with urban centers. Additionally, supporting local entrepreneurship and sustainable agriculture practices can create sustainable livelihoods and reduce dependency on external sources.

By implementing these strategies, we can foster a holistic and comprehensive approach to rural development that addresses the specific needs and aspirations of rural communities. This approach will not only enhance the quality of life for rural residents but also contribute to the overall development of the country. Moreover, investing in healthcare and education infrastructure can ensure that rural communities have access to essential services and opportunities for personal growth. By providing equal opportunities and resources, we can bridge the urban-rural divide and create a more inclusive and prosperous society for all.



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NOTES:

¹ **Community-based organizations** are non-profit, non-governmental, or charitable organizations that represent community needs and work to help them. CBOs may be associated with a particular area of concern or segment of the community