

Identifying the Disadvantaged Settlements for Providing A Sustainable Development Model at Local Level A Case Study of Pishva-Varamin in Tehran

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Abstract

Many rural settlements, in spite of enjoying large capacities and potentialities, are still regarded as deprived or under – developed areas.

A major challenge to catch up with sustainable development in these areas is to address their constraints and potential capacities so as to find proper solutions to the problem and for utilization of the capacities.

A basic measure to realize this objective is to identify and categorize the deprivation level in terms of benefiting from development indicators that may well result in providing a model for poverty alleviation in the deprived areas.

This study, conducted in Pishva – Varamin Area in Iran, is thus an attempt to provide an appropriate model in this regard. The major findings and results are as follows:

- Providing a model for analyzing the deprivation level in terms of benefiting from development indicators;
- Identifying potentialities of the Area; and
- Providing a policy and a model for sustainable development at local level.
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Keywords

poverty; natural capacities; sustainable development at local level.

1 Introduction

Socio-economic justice is undoubtedly a major objective in every society. This holds true to the extent that many efforts are made to reduce social inequalities through conducting development and outreach programs in underprivileged settlements. The aim is to direct specific public investments towards employment-generating and poverty-alleviating activities that may well result in local sustainable development. To do this, it is thus imperative to provide an appropriate model in this regards.

2 Problem Formulation

A number of areas are presently characterized by underdevelopment and deprivation. In spite of its large capacities and potentials for depoverity or generating employment opportunities, the selected area for this study is still regarded an underdeveloped and deprived area. It is thus important to examine, on an analytical basis, the level of deprivation and the available capacities or potentials in the area. The supportive reasons for this may fall into two major following categories:

- a. Giving a purposeful direction to different types of services delivered to the deprived and vulnerable settlements, and
- b. Assessing the potentials and capacities to provide appropriate models for sustainable development at local level.

3 Theoretical Foundations

Poverty-alleviation programs are mainly of two types:

1. Programs that promote and encourage production methods and income-generating activities / processes at local levels.
2. Programs that direct income generation and consumption processes through instruments like foodstuff coupons or Job guaranty.

In order to conduct the both types, various approaches or strategies have been naturally developed: land tenure ship, land reformation or reallocation, increase-in-productivity, Green Revolution, industrialization, basic needs, social insurances etc.

Studies well reveal that the approaches resulted from both production programs and income-generating ones have proven to be efficient. Grameen Bank in Bangladesh is, for instance, a well-known example in this respect. Malaysia, China and South Korea are among few Asian countries that have made quite considerable progress in their depoverity programs. It should be, however, mentioned that growth increase policies have been followed concurrently in these programs.

4. Research Findings

Planning for poverty alleviation and employment generation calls for a number of elements that need to be taken into consideration in environmental, social, economic and physical terms. However, the priority should be given to environmental capabilities. It is thus imperative to identify carrying capacities and potentialities for depoverity and job-generating at local levels prior to and planning.

4.1. Local level capabilities for generating jobs and alleviating poverty the selected area for these study-Varamin-has 4 districts, 8 counties and 151 villages. The diversified environmental capabilities of the area have created different economic circumstances. Linkages between man and the environment for playing basic livelihood roles, influenced by the man's creativity, not only have revolutionized the natural environmental landscapes, but have actualized the potentials in the area as well. As a result, a new environmental landscape has emerged that can play a basic role in the mentioned programs through its economic yields. Accordingly, the potentials and capacities available in the area for generating employment opportunities and for alleviating, may fall into following categories:

4.1.1. Agricultural Capacities

The study area is climatically located in a semi-arid zone of the continental shelf with an average annual precipitation of 160 mm. Total farmland area is approximately 80,000 ha. Cultivated area for irrigated farmland and horticultural land in the selected region is about 43,000 ha. Wheat, barley, cotton, maize, alfalfa and summer crops are also the major crop products planted along with many horticultural products. Soil resources in the study area are classified as follows:

- High quality (quite suitable) lands:28%
- Medium quality (suitable) lands (partly saline lands with low irrigated yield that can be amended): 19.3%
- Low quality (partly suitable) lands (lands with low water permeability that need to be amended in terms of sand removal, leveling, salt washing, etc.): 10.8%

Other soil resources in the region need some amendment measures.

Studies have revealed that regarding some climatic concerns, including the amount of precipitation or channelizing (through wells and canals) water resources from Jajrood and surface water in Tehran to Varamin irrigation system, agricultural activities can be maintained all year round, provided that during the two coldest months of the winter, normal green houses are used. However, for some specific crops, it is necessary to use green houses with heating facilities.

Currently, some 6000 households in the region are directly involved in agriculture sector as major beneficiaries. Also, a large number practice agricultural activities as workers or tenants. 45 percent of the population involved in the region s agriculture sector comes from urban areas and the remaining 55 percent live in rural areas. The land area owned by every household is about 7 ha on an average basis.

Accordingly, practicing some measures such as improving soils 9 making changes in irrigation methods to apply sprinkling or drip methods, and making use of green house systems during winter, can increase two or three times the area under cultivation and the yield of agricultural produce. These will, clearly, result in job opportunities and in comes to increase at the same rates.

4.1.2. Capacities of industrial, mineral and natural resources.

In spite of its constraints as a semi-arid area, the southern part of which is desert, the study area enjoys a variety of God-given resources that need to be taken into consideration in planning for generating jobs and incomes. Some of these resources or capacities are as follows:

- Sustainable solar energy:
- Wind energy:
- Sands and gravels:
- Salts and clays:
- Minerals (including sodium sulfate, lead, limestone, gypsum, etc.),

The studies of the researcher well show that in addition to high capacities available for mineral and industrial activities, the area is quite susceptible to a number of industries related to natural resources as well. These may include, for instance, apiculture products, packaging of farming and horticultural products, animal-husbandry and dairy-based industries, mechanical industries like oil processing, cardboard-making, cotton ginning, ceramic-making, brick-making, canned foods and handicrafts such as pottery and weaving carpets, rugs and kilims.

Evidently, such capacities may well provide the way for local sustainable development through generating job opportunities and increasing local incomes.

4.1.3. Tourism capacities

According to sustainable development approach, tourism is a major activity that can improve living standards at local level as a central indicator of community development. Based on the findings of the researcher, tourism attractions in the study area may fall into following categories):

a. Natural attractions

Kavir National Park, as one of the largest national parks of the world, is located in this area. With its specific arid and desert ecosystems and with its quite unique flora and fauna, this park provides viewers with one of the most picturesque

landscapes, one can ever see in a tourist are: Some of the many natural attractions or appeals of the area for development of tourism are:

- Desert specific landmarks, including salt domes, sand dunes, salty basins and other landscapes resulted by wind erosion , etc. ,
- Scarce vegetation coverage (including tamarisk and manna-tree) quite specific to desert areas:
- Desert-specific wildlife, including deer, panther, ram, wild ewe, and scarce birds like golden eagle or reptiles quite specific to desert areas,

b. Cultural and historical attractions

Apart from many archeological human settlements, there are also a number of cultural monuments in the study area that provide both inside and outside investigators or tourists and visitors with attractive sceneries. Some of these are as follows:

- Tappeh shoqal (Jackal Hill), which dates back to 6000 B. C.,
- Military fortresses, constructed 2000 years ago,
- Caravanseras and Shah Abbas Palace,
- Borje-Alaeddin Inscription: constructed & centuries ago,
- Many picturesque Islamic architectural monuments, including Masjid-e-Jame (Cathedral Mosque), and other dozens cultural and historical tourist attractions.

5. Conclusion and recommendations:

Planning for poverty alleviation and employment generation to achieve local sustainable development, calls for different aspects of environmental, economic, social and physical factors to be taken into consideration. The environmental capacities or capabilities are, however, the most important ones. As a result, the programs that

encourage and promote production and income-generating process need to be given priority in this regard.

Linkages between and the environment for playing basic roles for livelihoods, influenced by the man's creativity,

May largely change the perspective of natural environment and at the same time, actualize the available potentials. As a result, a new environmental perspective or landscape with economic load would emerge that forms the economic environment, and has thus a central role in programs designed for depoverity and generating employment opportunities. This study, accordingly, has introduced the capacities and capabilities of agriculture, natural resources, minerals, industries and tourism in the area so as to prove that making appropriate use of these capacities can increase up to three-fold incomes and Jobs in the area.

Applying sustainable development and environmental management systems to take advantage of the mentioned capacities at local scale can, thus, result in generating more job opportunities, increasing incomes, stabilizing livelihoods and subsistence, and finally improving sustainable habitation.

In order to provide an appropriate planning management model at local level, to streamline service delivery systems, and to use the potentialities of the settlements at regional and local levels, it is suggested that the selected area for this study be divided physically according to the following pattern:

The suggested pattern for physical division of the selected area for a better use of the capacities of the settlements.

Table 1:

	Aggregates	Center of the aggregate	Sub-aggregates	Districts
Selected area	Javadiyeh	Javadiyeh center	3	6
	Pishva	Pishva center	3	9
	Gharchak	Gharchak center	3	3
	Varamin	Varamin center	3	4

Other recommendations for realizing local sustainable development in the selected area are as follows:

1. Constructing new buildings and gentrifying or restoring the worn out habitations and communication network.
2. Developing extension-educational services, identifying available capacities and recognizing how these capacities can be utilized at local levels as shown by the research findings.
3. Irrigating farmlands through sprinkling and drip methods.
4. Installing natural and heater-equipped greenhouses to take advantage of agricultural capacities all year round.
5. Establishing processing industries for agricultural, horticultural and animal products.
6. Utilizing natural and mineral resources as shown by the research findings.
7. Organizing tourism industry through providing tours and visits.
8. Providing facilities for air visits and visiting desert landmarks and landscapes.
9. Training of tourism and touring guides and providing visitors or tourists with the required services.

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