

ISSUES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract

The article examines the socio-economic aspects of the development of rural areas. Analyzed the state of rural areas. The reasons for the lag in the development of rural areas are revealed. Recommendations for the sustainable development of rural areas have been developed.

Keywords: rural areas, rural economy, sustainable growth, poverty level, socio-economic development

Introduction

Rural areas ensure the performance of such important economic functions as: the production of food, agricultural raw materials, other non-agricultural goods and services, as well as public goods, the provision of recreational services, the preservation of the rural lifestyle and rural culture, the preservation of landscapes, the expanded reproduction of the population, the growth of the level and improving the quality of his life; maintaining ecological balance. If the rural economy is degrading, then the rural area is not developed. Stable the growth of the rural economy contributes to the development all areas of the country. Therefore, the solution of issues of socio-economic development of rural areas are fundamental in the stable and sustainable development of the country.

Data and Methods

In the process of research, theoretical methods of induction, deduction, generalization and comparison were used. The necessary materials are investigated on the basis of the methods of typological analysis, the synthesis of statistical data.

Main Results

According to UN experts, about 70% of the world's rural population lives in low-income countries. In low- income countries, 67% of the population lives in rural areas compared to 18.4% in high-income countries. Similarly, the income gap between rural areas (where jobs mainly exist in the agricultural sector) and urban areas (where industry and services dominate) remains quite high in many countries. In 2020, lower-middle-income countries had agricultural incomes that were 6.1 times less than GDP per capita, and 14.5 times less than GDP per capita in upper-middle-income countries. Accordingly, the poverty rate is also higher in rural areas than in urban areas. In developing countries, 80% of the poor

live in rural areas. Another fact is that about 18% of the rural population lives in extreme poverty compared to 5.3% of urban residents.

The rural population of Uzbekistan in 2022 amounted to 17,308,463 people, 49.6 % of the total population, compared to the previous year, growth 1.97% [2].

Mirziyoyev noted in his message to the Parliament, “most of the inhabitants of the regions, especially villages, do not have sufficient sources of income. As in all countries, we also have low-income segments of the population. According to various estimates, this figure is 12-15 percent. We are talking about 4-5 million inhabitants of our country” [3].

Poverty rate - the proportion of the population in the total surveyed population living in households with per capita consumption below the national poverty line. The proportion of the poor is defined as the ratio of the number of household members consuming less than 2,100 kilocalories per day to the total number of surveyed household members, as a percentage (according to the World Bank recommendations).

Table 1. The level of poverty in Uzbekistan, in 2005-2020, by region and place of residence: urban-rural [4]

Indicators	2005	2010	2015	2020
level (by region and place of residence: urban-rural)				
a) total	25.8	17.7	12.8	11.5
b) city	18.3	13.4	9.5	9.0
c) village	30.0	20.1	15.9	13.9

In 2020, the share of the poor in rural areas of the republic was 13.9 % compared to 9 % of urban residents.

By 2030, the share of poor men, women and children of all ages, in all its manifestations, should be halved.

The problem of overcoming poverty cannot be solved only by paying benefits and material assistance or by increasing their amounts. Reducing poverty requires the implementation of a comprehensive economic and social policy - from stimulating entrepreneurial activity to mobilizing the abilities and potential of the population, creating new jobs.

The optimal way may be as follows: creating the most favorable conditions for the development of the real sector of the economy. In rural areas, the core of the real sector is agriculture, which is also the main employer in rural areas. Its sustainable development creates prerequisites for the development of other sectors, agriculture is involved in ensuring the country's food security in the present and future. In the value of the products of the industry, as a rule, there is a natural rent, which belongs to all citizens of the country.

In Uzbekistan, both cities and rural areas also make a significant contribution to the consistent implementation of the Development Strategy of the Republic and the effective promotion of important areas of socio-economic development of our country. Such areas as the rational use of the potential of rural regions, in particular, the involvement of the rural population in entrepreneurship, the formation

of modern infrastructure in remote areas and, ultimately, improving the quality of life of the population, are among the priority tasks.

In 2017-2021, 17 laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 29 decrees, 143 decrees of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and 183 government decrees on the development of agriculture and rural areas were adopted. In 2019, the "Strategy for the Development of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030" was adopted [8].

The Laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On seed production", "On amendments and additions to some legislative acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan in order to increase the efficiency of the use of agricultural land and the forest fund", "On dekhkan farming", "On subsidiary plots" and others were adopted. It is allowed to provide agricultural land for secondary lease to legal entities and individuals, as well as the right to free sale of agricultural products grown in subsidiary farms is guaranteed. Special resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (No. PP-4633 and No. PP-4634 dated March 6, 2020) abolished the practice of producing raw cotton, cereals on the basis of the state order and setting the state purchase prices for them.

A system of gradual specialization of districts in the cultivation of the most productive types of agricultural products for their conditions has been introduced. In 2019, 55 districts were fully specialized in growing fruits and vegetables. A total of 422.3 thousand hectares of land in the regions will be specialized: in particular, 133.9 thousand hectares for horticulture, 113 thousand hectares for viticulture, 49.9 thousand hectares for vegetable growing, 24.5 thousand ha - on melons, 15.8 thousand hectares - in potato growing, 56.1 thousand hectares - in legumes and medicinal plants, 6.1 thousand hectares - in greenhouse farms and 22.9 thousand hectares - in the cultivation of fodder and oilseeds. Fruit and vegetable products have been exported to 24 new, highly solvent countries, such as Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Cyprus, Great Britain, Luxembourg, Australia, Kuwait, Aman, etc. In particular, despite the pandemic conditions in 2020, 1.5 billion tons (187%) of agricultural products worth more than 1 billion dollars (2 times more than in 2016).

Further implementation of a number of unprecedented comprehensive reforms aimed at their deep modernization was designated as priority tasks in the field of development of the country's regions. As the President emphasized, both employment and income growth of many citizens depend on how the rural areas of numerous regions of our country will develop. Therefore, special attention is paid to this issue in our republic. In particular, the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026 includes the intensive development of agriculture and rural areas [9].

Speaking of this, we should note the efforts that are currently focused on the modernization and diversification of the economy, including agriculture, food production, financial support for farms, clusters and cooperatives. This is precisely what 5 laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan and 12 decrees, more than 30 resolutions of the President and government adopted this year, were aimed at. Thus, in Uzbekistan, serious attention is paid to the full transition to the cluster model and the cooperative system, which will cover the entire chain of agribusiness - from growing to selling products. At present, the cluster method has already been widely implemented. There are 97 specialized cotton-textile clusters, 149 fruit and vegetable, 65 grain-growing, 35 rice-growing and 7 medicinal plants growing clusters, 11 cotton -textile cooperatives in the republic.

Particular attention is paid to the effective use of personal plots by the population. Their owners use subsidies and soft loans to drill artesian wells and build mini-greenhouses.

The country is implementing the program "Each young farmer - allotment of land", within the framework of which 266 thousand low-income families and unemployed youth are allocated 84 thousand hectares of land freed from spike crops, they are assigned to farms and enterprises providing services to household plots. Thanks to the implementation of this program, more than 1 million tons of products have been grown. Moreover, on the basis of regional specialization, land plots from 10 acres to 1 hectare are allocated to dekhkan families. 91 thousand hectares of land have been reclaimed. Water-saving technologies have been introduced on 133,000 hectares, which is twice as much as last year. As a result of the reforms and structural changes, about 1.5 million tons of fruits and vegetables worth \$1 billion were exported this year to more than 70 countries.

Thus, a deeply thought-out strategy for the development of agriculture is being consistently implemented in Uzbekistan today. Its goal is to reduce poverty and increase the incomes of rural residents, a radical increase in the productivity and efficiency of agriculture.

Huge work has been done in the republic within the framework of the state program "Obod Qishloq" ("Prosperous Village") and "Obod mahalla " ("Prosperous mahalla ") to improve the living conditions of rural residents, contributed to the modernization of infrastructure and improvement of villages.

Based on the results of the inventory conducted in the republic, 1,071 villages and mahallas were identified with a large number of socio-economic problems. In recent years, within the framework of these programs , work has been carried out to build and improve road transport infrastructure, engineering and communication networks and social facilities in more than 1,500 villages and mahallas , service provision points have been created, and large-scale measures have been taken to improve conditions life of their population of about 5 million people.

At the same time, in order to widely attract the population to entrepreneurial activities on the ground, the targeted territorial programs "Youth is our future" and "Every family is an entrepreneur" are being implemented. At the same time, the expansion of mortgage lending over the past three years has allowed the commissioning of more than 82,000 housing units, as a result of which about 400,000 people in all regions of the country have been able to improve their living conditions. At the same time, the scope of work to provide housing for low-income families will expand. 2.4 trillion soums will be used to make a down payment and subsidize interest payments on mortgage loans for 27,000 families, which is 2.5 times more families than this year.

Along with the modernization of the infrastructure of our villages, special attention in the republic is paid to the maximum realization of the economic potential of each village, each region of the republic. Such an initiative of the President as the creation of Centers for Knowledge and Innovation in Agriculture on the principle of a "single window" creates the necessary incentives for growth and development.

An important success factor in this direction will be the attraction of foreign experience and modern agricultural technologies, digitalization, and increasing land fertility. More than 600 million dollars have been allocated for the implementation of these goals. A large-scale work was carried out on the construction and repair of water pipes, electrical networks, gas pipes and sewerage systems.

The implementation of these state programs is already showing efficiency in the improvement and improvement of the living standards of people, both in their territories and in the cities of Uzbekistan. This is carried out by research of international organizations. According to the World Bank study

“Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan” (“Listening to the Citizens of Uzbekistan” (L2CU)) over the past four years, the volume of water has increased significantly.

However, in 179 villages and mahallas, general education schools (school branches) built of adobe material and raw brick operate, in 5,568 villages and mahallas, 29,000 km of dirt roads do not have a hard surface (sand-gravel, asphalt), 1,540 villages and mahallas are not provided with centralized drinking water, public transport does not function in 49 villages and mahallas, waste collection services are not established in 781 villages and mahallas.

Experts note that globally, rural workers are twice as likely to be employed in the informal sector (80%) than urban workers (44%). More than 147 million agricultural workers, about 1/5 of the world's agricultural labor force, worked in developing countries that did not experience sufficient growth in agricultural productivity due to the high level of the informal sector, which justifies a significant lag in labor productivity. in agriculture of developed countries [10].

Technological innovations are generating new forms of inequality. Access to information and communication technologies can make an important contribution to poverty reduction by providing rural people with the skills, knowledge and information they need to develop their livelihoods. The digital divide between rural and urban areas is still huge, with far more of the 3.8 billion people without Internet access living in rural areas. Globally, rural residents were 40% less likely to use mobile internet than urban residents. The access of the rural population to healthcare services is 2.5 times less than that of the urban population [11].

In this regard, the priority tasks for the future are the implementation of comprehensive programs for the development of agriculture, a further increase in the range of products and the volume of their exports through the use of modern technologies. At the same time, an important task is to preserve soil fertility, provide the sector with the necessary equipment and improve the quality of agricultural services, improve the training of specialists with advanced knowledge and skills. One of the most important issues will remain the introduction of scientific achievements and modern technologies into the sphere. It will also be necessary to provide measures for the use of advanced digital technologies when creating a database on water and land management, crop yields and climate indicators, it is necessary to develop a methodology for assessing labor productivity in sectors of the economy based on the best practices of foreign countries. Currently, there is no clear program for the development of labor productivity, which also provides for the transfer of labor resources from industries with a low level of labor productivity to industries with a high level of labor productivity.

Conclusion

In rural areas, public services remain underdeveloped, as well as the level of transport and information and communication connectivity. The development of comprehensive strategies and programs based on a detailed assessment of regional needs and competitive advantages is required. The vast majority of state support measures implemented in the agricultural sector are directed directly to farmers and other agricultural producers. An analysis of data from foreign countries shows that success is possible when the economic development of rural areas is directly linked to the development of agriculture, and there is also an ineffectiveness of reforms based on the provision of subsidies to solve local important socio-economic problems. Existing rural development programs, as a rule, are aimed mainly at eliminating regional economic disparities in favor of large urban centers, sectoral support is provided

only to a small part of the rural population - farmers and other entrepreneurs involved in agricultural production, but the countryside remains on the sidelines.

The main objective of the strategic priority is to ensure the sustainable development of rural areas. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to: conduct a detailed assessment of the real needs for rural development; improving the legal framework to provide state support, ensure the protection of interests, as well as decentralize decision-making to rural communities; development and implementation, as an experiment, of transparent mechanisms for grant support and attraction of investments for the creation and development of non-agricultural enterprises, mobilization of opportunities for local gatherings of citizens and development of public-private partnerships between local citizens, agribusiness, civil society institutions and government bodies; development of a national program for the integrated development of rural areas.

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