

## Acquired and perspectives of the agricultural development policy in Algeria.

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### SUMMARY:

Algeria is currently one of the largest importers of foodstuff and agricultural products. For the Algerian government, solving the problem of food insecurity has been a main component of development policy. Indeed, the object was to make sure a sufficient amount of food for a growing population and ensure affordable prices to the greatest number of the population. The National Agricultural and Rural Development Plan PNDAR aimed at attaining various purposes mainly: - Increasing production and yields -Protecting ecosystems and continuing the development of agricultural land. We aim to question the results achieved through the development policy and its impact on economic growth, mainly on employment and the rate of contribution of agriculture to gross domestic production (GDP).

We aim to question in this article the results achieved through the agricultural development policy and its impact on economic growth, mainly on employment and the rate of contribution of agriculture to gross domestic production (GDP).

**Keywords:** Agriculture, agricultural policies, agricultural development, National Plan for Agricultural and Rural Development (NARDP), rural renewal policy.

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### 1. Introduction:

The start of the currently developed countries received its first impulse as a result of an increase in agricultural supply. They brought about increased demand for industrial goods. The outbreak of progress in developing countries relies on the improvement of agriculture and food industry (IAA). However, it would have been futile to expect any improvement of the fate of human societies without satisfying basic food needs. At the same time, the agricultural surplus allowed the development of other economic activities of an intellectual and artistic order. Our view is that improving agriculture is a keystone that could pave the way for the development of the Third World.

The current economic problems of developing countries have actually arisen in the past in countries that are now advanced economies. Indeed, a constructive historical experience can be provided with the "Industrial Revolution" that began in England in the eighteenth century and continental Europe from the early nineteenth century, and the "agricultural revolution"(HAYAMI & RUTTAN, 1998, p. 34) . In fact, very little reference was made to the latter even though it actually preceded and accompanied the former. From past lessons a fact becomes clear: progress in industry has always been preceded by a strong development of agriculture, and industry appears not to be the prerequisite for development. According to W. Arthur Lewis(LEWIS, 1981, p. 12) "The industrial revolution involves a prior or concurrent agricultural transformation". Certainly, the development of a country includes industrialization, but it would be a mistake to believe that by giving it priority, a country takes the surest and shortest path to development. The example of Algeria, on this point, is very relevant. W. Arthur Lewis wrote; "What characterizes the industrial revolution that took place in the late eighteenth century, is that it t began in Britain, that is to say in the country that leads the ranking for agricultural productivity"(LEWIS, 1981, p. 14) W. Arthur Lewis develops a theory that makes agricultural and industrial revolution alike an

indispensable condition for growth. The industrial revolution expanded rapidly in Western Europe and North America, especially in countries where the same agricultural mutation was already underway. However, it grew rather slowly such as in Central Europe, Latin America or China, which, with low agricultural productivity had a relatively small industry. To make a large rural population an important and major customer for industry, it is necessary to give it the opportunity to earn a living. Yet to make a living, the most appropriate way is to grow food for domestic consumption or for export. Only a general increase in real income from agriculture, proceeding from an increase in productivity, can provide an important stimulus to the creation of agricultural industries, chiefly agricultural equipment manufacturing industries. Industrialization must be based on agricultural wealth in the first place. It is also necessary that the conditions of their implementation are realized by a steady supply of raw materials, the expansion of consumer channels and the development of vocational education and scientific research.

Isolated industry without connection with agricultural production looks like a dead body. Such a conception of development does not seem feasible if the majority of the population does not feel concerned. The main principle is that one should not expect anything from others. The population must realize its own development, if necessary with the help of wealthier countries. It should be noted that in developed countries, agricultural progress happened prior to industrial implantation, i.e., agriculture was the key factor to the development of these countries. This requires the organization of an agriculture released from traditionalism and keen to begin the necessary efforts towards appropriate levels.

Our approach is that the role of agriculture at its initial phase of development is crucial. Wanting developing countries to cross the current gap separating them from the developed countries through industrialization like that of the West is an illusory project which is doomed to failure, and therefore, dangerous for food security, as demonstrated by several examples.

The most telling sign of underdevelopment is an agriculture that is insufficient to feed the population, thus causing massive food imports (DELAS, 2001, p. 16). Furthermore, the deterioration of the food trade balance of Third World countries is remarkable since 1975. Consequently, some of these countries seek to give priority to the efficiency of agriculture (BIALES, R, & J-L, 2002, p. 32). As a result, real development strategies were elaborated, three of which appear important: the valuation of agricultural potential, land reform, and finally the green revolution.

Often lacking insufficient land development, developing countries can transform traditional agriculture by establishing extensive or intensive development actions. The central question of this work is that of the development path of developing countries through the two key sectors: agriculture and industry. Can the development model of Western Europe be the universal model of development? What does Economic Theory believe? Can the reading of the progress of economic facts provide insights to the question? How about the real responses brought by the development experiences of developing countries? Can Algeria, which has almost failed in its process of industrialization, reconsider a development process supported by the two sectors? In what sense and how? We will try to provide some answers on both theoretical and practical levels to these questions which must appeal to research on development.

### **1. ECONOMIC THEORY OF AGRICULTURE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT:**

In 1967, A. BARAN raised a central issue concerning the economic development of a country, "the volume and mode of use of the economic surplus" (A. BARAN, 1967, p. 93).

The generation and use of surplus are essential conditions for growth. This surplus is defined by the author as the difference between the actual current production of the society and its actual consumption. This can be assimilated to savings for investment.(A.BARAN, 1967, p. 71)

The problem of generation and appropriation of the surplus was well analyzed by the authors of the classical English school including Adam SMITH and David RICARDO who observed the industrialization phase of Great Britain. Agriculture was at the centre of this issue. According to Adam SMITH, the surplus of industry was hampered by an internal demanding market where the agricultural surplus was smaller, thus leading to an appeal to foreign trade in order to sell the surplus of the industry. For David RICARDO, the question was no longer that of the agricultural surplus. The domestic agricultural market has a minor role as an outlet for industrial products. Therefore, the fundamental issue is that of the growth product and therefore profit. Yet, the latter can only increase if wages fall. The condition of this decline can be found in the lowering prices of food. Agriculture is no longer involved as an outlet for surplus but as an essential condition for its generation. The law of diminishing returns led to the increase in wages. Therefore, it was necessary to release more factors of production (capital and labor) of agriculture to allocate to industry. The role of foreign trade seems to have been the determining factor in the objective of reducing wages by providing subsistence goods necessary for workers more cheaply by the abundance of import.

## 2. ECONOMIC FACTS:

Agrarian transformations in Britain that evolved from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century and where more than half of the population lived directly on agriculture, (70% of the land were rural areas), was a prerequisite for the industrial revolution. The growing agricultural surplus fuelled new industrial workers and urban cities which were constantly expanding.

The key index to industrialization lay in increasing yields- especially the increase of production and agricultural productivity. i. e. work release factor. It is stated that "the development of agriculture has other positive effects for the industry. It provides products and raw materials to be processed by factories (breweries, mills, textile mills, skins etc ...). Also, it provides growing markets for manufactured goods (iron tools, fencing, machine, consumer goods), especially if farm incomes rise, which was the case in England in the eighteenth century; they provide savings that will be ploughed back into the industry; and finally it can provide gold/ or foreign currencies through exports, which make it possible to import raw materials for industry, cotton for instance, or capital goods (for follower countries only because England at the beginning of the industrialization process could not import them!)."(BRASSEUL, 1997, p. 189)

It remains, however, that the growth of foreign trade was the main cause of both economic development and growth. Paul Bairoch, in a study of the relationship between trade and economic development of the nineteenth century of Europe, noted that the unprecedented expansion of international trade, from 1830 to 1916, 16 times in value and 19 times in volume (because of lower agricultural prices mentioned, above, as a result of the increase in production). (BAIROCH, 1976, pp. 26-27)

Thus, the transformation of agriculture was a necessity in the flood of disruptions caused by the conditions of industrial production in Northwest- Europe (the industrial revolution is not only dated but also geographically located).

The process of modernizing production techniques was characterized by "the first agricultural revolution" in the eighteenth century in England, and then in other countries of northwestern Europe. The disappearance of community practices and the end of the three-year rotation period will free up farmland for industrial and forage crops enriching the soil and allowing the intensive rearing of cattle. Besides, the introduction of capitalism in agriculture, through the passage of small property to large farms organized around mechanization and fertilizer use, has terminated consumption and all forms of agricultural crops thereby increasing labor productivity and freeing the human factor found to be employed in industry and services.

### 3. THE THIRD WORLD?

The concept of the Third World, in fact, includes very different situations. Since the late 50s, while some countries have developed, others have begun to emerge in the political map. Poverty has been, unfortunately, the lot of many countries.

Actually, the process of development lies only on the capitalist central model because no noticeable substitution, or replacement, occurred within the system, as Fernand Braudel explained "Maybe the best reason to be convinced is the fact that evidently, nowadays, some developing countries that are trying to test the validity of success model the success miss their industrial revolution"(BRAUDEL, 1985, p. 71)

As a matter of fact, agricultural reforms which focused on exploiting the most efficient farms have already failed. For instance, amending land reform in Chile after the coup d'état in 1973, and the failure of the status of land in 1964, in which it was stated to distribute 480 million hectares in fifteen years and install 7 million farmers in Brazil. In Mexico, agrarian reform was the priority of public policy until 1980's; however, the Mexican society became increasingly urban and only 20% of the population were still rural in 2000. Very little of the land distributed in the 80's was arable, and beneficiaries who had been interested in owning their land in 1992 either rented or sold it. In China, agricultural reform has also been implemented through the de- collectivization of land since 1979. Although the land was still owned by the villages, it was distributed among peasant families. Thus, 200 million micro farms were created and the Socialist model economy was revived in the form of 2000 state farms. With the growth of the industry, farmers were hit hard by falling prices of agricultural products and sought complementary activities, especially farms that are too small and fragmented to support a family. Rural-urban migration affected 120 million rural people by 2000, exacerbating social and regional imbalance.. Thus we notice that the agrarian and agricultural reforms implemented in several developing countries have not had the effect of those conducted in the countries of NorthWest Europe. In this context, Brudel believed that, in fact, there is no break between past and present time, and the Industrial Revolution was announced long before the eighteenth century. So, "Capitalism is in the long perspective of history, the host, or visitor, of the evening. It happens when everything is already in place"(BRAUDEL, 1985, p. 78)

Therefore, the recovery of the developmental model of capitalism became an illusion; models that emerged in many third world countries were purely pragmatic, even when the announcement related to a particular theory, for example the industrializing process of

industry in Algeria. In fact, developing countries suffered, compared to industrialized countries, from low capital and a labour force without the required skills.

The scarcity of factors of production, including land in relation to population explosion, will result in a low level of per capita income, and at the same time preventing these countries from developing large-scale economies.

Thus, they would engage since the 60s in very similar policies to each other based on import substituting industrialization which was not effective either in Latin America, or Asia, or elsewhere in the world. A new orientation policy would emerge in Asia: promotion of export that would be more positive. The latter would spread to Latin America.

Factors in favor of the development can be identified as follows:

- The call for foreign capital investment and net financial transfers. i .e. bank loans, FDI, portfolio investment in the private sector and public development aid. The main host countries will be Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina in Latin America; South and South East Asia, including China.

- Corporate privatization: In Mexico, for example, the public sector has been reduced from 1155 to 239 companies in the 80's.

- The adoption of free trade which consists of the dismantling of customs barriers.

- Call the relocation of production units.

Thus, Brazil, India, China, South Korea emerged according to those policies. Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia also experienced an exceptional industrial development.

#### **4. ALGERIA, THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:**

"Public opinion, but also those who support the agricultural sector share the idea that Algeria is favorably endowed with natural resources." In fact, Algerian agriculture is facing such handicaps which, according to the author, are as follows:

- Climatic and geographical features that restrict land and agricultural production.

- Social and historical factors related to past and present conditions among the Algerian peasantry that prevented the training of farmers who still owned the property so that they mastered agricultural skills.

- Technical factors which refer to the lack of proper technical models regarding crops and livestock, taking into account the continuity of soil, topography, and climate.

- The political liability resulting from the failure of land programs that resulted in the separation of ownership of land operating modes:

- The experiment of self- management (1962- 1978) was subject to the authority of public institutions; such as, the National Office of Agrarian Reform which defines the functions of production, marketing, finance and the prices.

- The land reform distributed the land to non-owner farmers and changed the conditions of production which had negative results.

- The process of releasing the agricultural sector, in the 80's, whose purpose was the emergence of "private agricultural enterprises", especially in the south and from the restructuring of self areas transformed into "socialist agricultural estates". However, in July 1987, the private land of the state (2.8 million hectares) would suddenly be allocated to employees in perpetuity in the form of collective farms.

- The agricultural public domain was effectively privatized. Employees became owners of EAC teamed with capital providers. The average area per holding was valued in 2001 at 5 ha.

- In 2000, the NADP, which will be examined in greater detail below, was the conversion of land and development sectors (cereal, milk, potatoes ...).

- The device of the grants, bank loans, or technical support remained inaccessible to the majority of small farmers without land ownership.

Accordingly, Algerian Agriculture cannot achieve a surplus.

The last food crisis, which occurred in 2007- 2008, revealed food shortages in Algeria and the Maghreb countries, whereas agriculture is a heavyweight in the Algerian economy (48% for hydrocarbons and 12.5% agriculture in the GDP). Agricultural exports represent only 0.5% of total exports, while imports of agricultural and food products represent 20% of our imports in lieu of an expected surplus in the agricultural sector. It is, thus, dependent on imports of large consumer products: Sugar 100%, dried vegetables 85%, vegetable oils 95%, grain 70%, white meat 90%, and milk 57 %.

## 5. CURRENT POLICIES:

The National Agricultural Development Plan (NADP) of 2003 became the Agricultural and Rural Development Plan (PNDAR). It aims to rebuild the agricultural territory of Algeria: improving agricultural competitiveness, increasing production and yields, protecting ecosystems, and promoting the development of agricultural land. The PNDAR is also an approach to ensure co-operation between farms and basic economic units, but also with entities with significant social and environmental functions, governments and investors and other economic actors, while respecting the specific vocations, ecosystems and rural areas. It is implemented in the framework of diverse programs mainly concerned with:

- Improving the conditions for the exercise of agricultural and pastoral activities;
- supporting and encouraging the promotion of multiple activities as a factor in improving rural household income or income generation (rehabilitation of rural businesses, creating new economic activities ...);
- Improving the conditions of access to public services, housing, and programs;
- Breaking with the stagnation that characterized the rural areas with low potential by providing alternatives for the development of their economies and their activities through the conversion and adaptation of production systems, useful and economic reforestation, developments in mountain areas and steppe rangelands;
- Accelerating the sector modernization process by encouraging productive and technological investments in farms, especially those of small and medium size in which the upgrade is not completed, and which need, for a transitional period, help and technical support from the state. Constraints have also been identified, and these are cited below:
  - The constraints of exploiting the conditions of natural resources, mainly agricultural land. The lack of an exploitation system that is able to secure the persons concerned is noteworthy in this regard;
  - The problem of land plots and issuing building permits in rural areas. It needs particular treatment to avoid penalizing people. In this regard, practical solutions can be recommended to address these constraints; such as, granting land to those who operate in the context of specific procedures that can be implemented quickly, flexible construction material device rural housing, etc. ....
  - Constraints inherent in the marketing of agricultural and rural craft products;
  - The issue of school mapping and the existence of public health infrastructure and public facilities.

- The issue of promoting local financing arrangements adapted to the conditions, constraints of rural activities, and the demand expressed by people in the field.
- The issue of adapting the food sector of business concerned with the agricultural and rural development strategy;

Ultimately, these assessments and evaluations have been the starting point for a wider reflection which confirmed the need for a rural renewal strategy to support the issue of revitalization of rural areas and improve living conditions of rural populations. (Souidi & Bessaoud, 2019)

The need for a more generally comprehensive response to the complexity of the problems. So, if the emergence of the issue of agricultural and rural development is strongly linked to the development of the Algerian national context as a whole, it will be associated with more specific projections for the rural population and the deterioration of living conditions that cannot continue without compromising the overall balance of society. Under these conditions, agricultural and rural development is seen as the approach which allows public authorities to implement development actions that stabilize populations, increase economic potentials, and ensure a necessary equilibrium between urban and rural areas.

The challenges of rural living conditions have been exacerbated by the deteriorating security situation. This, in fact, is noticeably seen in the increase in the rural exodus affecting nearly 5 million people between 1977 and 1998. This is identified as a deep sense of marginalization that prevails in much of the rural population. The Algerian population has increased in recent years, at an average of 1.5% annually causing 400,000 newly born people to feed. This explains the increase in demand. The nutritional calorie intake improved by 52%, compared to one in the 1960's, which resulted in eradication of diseases related to nutritional deficiencies. Coverage rates of consumption by domestic agricultural production is 30% to 45% for the production of vegetable origin and from 65% to 75% for animal products. Thus, food addiction and the difficult conditions of rural life impose a novel rural and agricultural policy.

The issue of sustainable agricultural development is seen as a national strategic priority for economic development, social progress, the fight against poverty, and the overall sustainability of development, and national economic and productive structures. After ten years of launching the NADP, questions arise about the results of that developmental policy and its impact on economic growth of the country, including impacts on both employment and rate of the contribution of agriculture to GDP.

Agriculture is seen as the third sector in terms of contribution to GDP, after oil and gas, and the industrial sector. The contribution of agriculture to GDP has been weakened. It decreased from 12.9% in 1967 to 9.88% in 1987. Then, it rose to 11.15% in 1988, and decreased again to 10.45% in 1999. This decline reflects the slow evolution of technical routes with little impact on productive activity.

Since the implementation of the NADP, added agricultural value has not been consolidated. Its regression is illustrated by the decline in contribution to GDP, which rose from 07.6% in 2000 to 08.4% in 2016. This poor performance is attributable to changes in the share of contribution to GDP hydrocarbons which rose from 39.4 % in 2000 to 45.9% in 2016. This increase is a direct result of the rise in oil prices in the said period. From the results obtained, it is noticed that the NADP has increased in the areas occupied by different cultures from those that existed in 2000. For example, potato occupied an area of 71,800 hectares in 2001, reaching 90,000 hectares at the end of 2016. (Source: Ministry of agriculture).

## 6. IMPACT ON IRRIGATED AREAS:

The following graph shows the change in the potential irrigated land since the advent of the NADP, from 350 000 ha in 2000 to 835,197 ha in 2016. (Source: Ministry of agriculture).

We notice that agricultural production has practically moved in the positive direction for each crop. For example, dates increased in production from 410000 tons in 2001 to 420,000 tons in 2016.(Ministry of agriculture, 2020).

## 7. IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT:

The workforce is estimated at 2 212.619 employees working on 1.110.788 farms. Based on these data, it appears that the rate of contribution of agriculture in employment increased from 21% in 1999 to 23.36% six years after the implementation of the new agricultural and rural policy. Cultivated areas have experienced a slight growth of 2.78% compared to the 2000-2016 average. Harvested areas increased significantly by 5.64% compared to the 2000-2016 average.

Generally speaking, grain production recorded an increase of 17.78% comparing to the 2000-2016 average. The average national yield reached 16.5 q / ha (2018); it is a record.

Areas of vegetable crops are still growing, reaching an increase of 13.39% compared to the 2000-2016 average. Thus the balance sheet during the period 2000-2016 experienced an average growth of 20.82%.(Ministry of agriculture, 2020).

- The export of agricultural products increased from US \$ 150.3 million in 2004 to US \$ 164.56 million in 2016, an increase of 9.5%.

- In the three years (2014, 2015 and 2016), imports of agricultural products experienced a slight increase of 0.5% in 2016 compared to 2014. Since the launching of the Agricultural Development Plan in 2000 up to the present day, the sector has entered a period of growth marked by relative stability despite difficult weather conditions; This can be illustrated by the following:

- Agricultural added value increased from 322 billion dinars to 548 billion dinars during the same period; giving the sector a contribution to 9% GDP each year.

- Agricultural production registered a growth that rose from 359 billion Algerian Dinar (DA) in 2000 to 668 billion Algerian Dinar (DA).

- Job creation reached an average of more than 150,000 / year.

- The creation of 22 000 private status service companies upstream and downstream of agricultural production.

- The creation of nearly 7000 mini companies.

- Irrigated areas have experienced very strong growth.

- The availability of agricultural products, particularly cereals, fruits, vegetables, red meat, has seen a significant improvement.

- As for soil protection, there has been the restoration of nearly 3 million ha.

- The PNDAR funded sustainable crop plantations whose first production is done gradually. Therefore, some time is needed to measure any real effects.

- Improving the income of farmers in particular and rural residents in general, this would obviously help to stabilize these people gradually.

These performances were achieved despite the low budget for the sector which accounts for 3% of the national budget.

## 8. CONCLUSION:

The objective of an agricultural policy consists in the long term interest of the consumer, which is part of food policy. The latter is dominated by the concern to ensure the livelihood of the population and keep prices low enough to protect purchasing power. This policy of lower prices for agricultural products is a common feature of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union and the FAIR act (Federal agricultural improvement and reformed act) of the United States. Food aid programs are particularly important in the United States: Supports expenditures for agriculture are: \$ 5 billion in 1996, \$ 20 billion in 2000, \$ 32 billion in 2001.

The European Union subsidies represent 90% of farmers' income in 2003. In the OECD countries, where the rural population does not exceed 4% of the total population, support for agriculture amounts to 300 billion of \$. In Algeria, the rural population represents 40% of the total population. Yet, authorities have only spent approximately about \$ 570 million / year, or 7% compared with 19% in the United States and 71% in Switzerland. It is true that food imports rose to 0.5% and this increase is due to the increase in prices of products such as sugar, milk and oils in the international market. As an illustration, durum wheat grew from \$ 230 per ton in 2003 to \$ 790 in 2007, and soft wheat from \$ 175 to \$ 362. Milk passed from \$ 1,750 to 5,000 per ton.

On the other hand, and excepting coffee, tea and some exotic products that are impossible to produce locally, four (04) products comprise the essential structure of food imports in Algeria. These are corn, oils, milk and sugar. For oils and sugar Algeria remains totally dependent on imports. Milk and wheat imports, however, have either stagnated or decreased since 2000. This is particularly true for the volume of imports of durum wheat which fell, and soft wheat that has stabilized.

Finally, we must point out that the PNDAR is not merely a support for the farm, but it also covers other important areas namely: - Improving the living standard in the rural world. - Combating desertification, reforesting our mountains, and revitalizing the steppes, - Treatment of watersheds to protect our dams. - The development of irrigation and saving water. The volume of water thus saved, estimated at over 850 million m<sup>3</sup>, equivalent to nearly 5 dams of medium size, corresponding to 106,000 hectares of irrigation requirement.

For the PNDAR to produce more hoped-for results, it is imperative to establish other complementary policies such as agriculture and rural development policy and the strengthening of certain key points namely: • Improving the legislative and regulatory framework of incentives and expansion of agroecological resources (land and water ...) • Strengthening the priority given to agriculture and promotion of rural areas. • Starting a real policy of development of the food industry. • Implementing an efficient system of financing and insurance. • Improving and reinvigorating the Training-Research-Extension system by combining the profession, research institutes and universities. • Modernizing agriculture by exploiting new technology in this area (cooperation with the leading countries in this field). • Improving the incentive system in agriculture to achieve the priority given to targeted productions. • Promoting the progressive rehabilitation of consumption so that it would be oriented towards internal availability such as, pulses, barley, potatoes or tomatoes and reduce the share of grain products. • Making a price policy which must be backed by the development of production chains, which can transfer producer productivity gains to consumers while providing adequate support to farmers' incomes. • Motivating rural population by incentive wages in the agricultural sector. • Limiting imports of food products including products that can be produced locally.

The problem that should be solved is the one concerning the number of farmers, which continues to decline since 2000. Moreover, the majority of farmers are over 50 years old, and the farmers aged 18-35 represent a small part. These facts are alarming. Therefore, it is important to consider and integrate young farmers in the future agricultural policy for the sake of promoting and developing this sector so as to ensure continuity and limit the rural exodus. For this to be achieved, we must bring all the necessary means to promote and establish young farmers in agriculture, train them and finally publicize such a job among the general public.

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