

Innovative Approach to the Rural Development in Georgia

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The pressing challenge is to extract the agricultural sector from a crisis and identify the ways for its development. Studies of a variety of sources and different countries' experience revealed that entrepreneurial activation of human resources is best achieved by developing cooperative movements in rural areas. However, this process is possible with the active intervention and explicit role of the State. In the context of rural development, the paper considers the possibilities of establishing new forms of economic management based on the social solidarity, the need to develop a policy on rural development through a systemic approach. The need for increasing the role and rights of rural community in terms of its economic recovery and pulling it out of the doldrums is shown in the paper. The authors identify the main goals and objectives of Georgia's agricultural sector in two areas: first, the preservation and development of the village as a territorial unit (including protection of cultural and wildlife landscapes), and the second, the establishment of the agricultural structure ensuring food security. A principally new agricultural policy and a targeted strategy for agro-food sector development must necessarily include vision, system, structure, strategies, tactics, staff training and retraining. It should address all problems that are ultimately linked to improving socio-economic conditions in rural areas and increasing motivation of the agricultural work. © 2020 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

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The appropriate level of real employment generation and socio-economic development in rural areas can be achieved only through real systemic changes. The most important is the increase of entrepreneurial activity by human resources. 41.3% of the population of Georgia resides in the rural areas. In recent years, there has been a downward trend in the dynamics of the share of agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing in GDP: if in 2015 it was 9.1%, in 2018 it was further declined and reached 7.7% [1:17].

As a rule, the functions which are not provided with self-regulatory market-based instruments must be exercised through State regulation. International practice confirms that agricultural production being a permanent concern of the State and funded from the targeted programs, creates conditions for sustainable development of farm holdings and their cooperative associations. The world experience demonstrates that a higher entrepreneurial activity of human resources is best achieved by cooperative development in the rural

areas. This process was conducted everywhere with active coordinating, organizing and supporting role and assistance of the State [2:99].

The introduction of new business patterns based on the principles of social solidarity is automatically followed by mass employment of the rural population, sharp increase in their incomes, raising the profile of the agricultural work, and the comprehensive and accelerated rural development. This is the real meaning of the concept of “the healthy middle class“.

Although the economic pillar of the rural community will always be a peasant, the creation of a full-fledged living area and different types of infrastructure for him continues to be a major challenge.

Agricultural policy, along with all the other tasks (the timeless relationship with the land, food security, etc.) is also the policy on care of the rural population and stimulation of the work on the provision meals to society [3:13]. This is the case in healthy countries, ranging from the less developed countries to countries with the best democracy. They know that each country which has the wrong agricultural and rural development policies is bound to fail. Therefore, in addition to a common agricultural policy, it is also necessary to develop and enact the rural development policies.

The rural development is a broader notion than the agricultural development. Its purpose is to reduce social and cultural differences between urban and rural areas, which is crucial for retaining the population in rural areas and increasing agricultural production.

The primary goal of Georgia in the agricultural sphere can have two directions: the first one is the preservation and development of the village as a territorial unit (this also includes the protection of cultural and wild landscapes) and the second one is the development of the agricultural structure providing food security.

An innovative agricultural policy and a determined strategy for agri-food sector

development, which includes vision, system, structure, strategies, tactics, human resources, staff training will solve all the problems ultimately associated with the improvement of socio-economic conditions and greater labor incentives in rural area.

At present, much of the rural areas are deeply depressed and are in danger of complete desolation, virtually inevitable now. The decrease of rural population (from 2 424.7 thousand in 1990 to 1 591.9 thousand in 2016, that is by 34.7 percent) is accompanied by a substantial deterioration of its economic and demographic qualitative status. The 2014 population census in Georgia identified 223 deserted villages; this is 61 villages more in comparison with the number of deserted villages identified by the 2002 population census [4:34]. Most of the economically active people living in rural area leave their homes in droves for the aforementioned reasons and move to the city to find better living conditions or go abroad to work for very low-paid jobs.

Key Objectives of Agricultural Development Policy

It is of crucial importance that new systems approach to the territories in rural areas should be developed in Georgia. It should be based on the conceptual, program or legal provisions for ensuring implementation of the relevant policy [5,6:55].

The primary task to save the village at the current stage is to restore the rural community as a full-fledged legal entity. According to the Organic Law of Georgia on „The Local Self-Government“, adopted in 2005, the local self-government in rural area was abolished, and by the 2013 „Self-Government Code“, it even has no longer its own administrative body. Thus, the village has been formally preserved as a municipal administrative unit, but without its own local self-government, and what is even worse, without its own administrative body [6:55].

A good example may come Lithuania, where the local self-government has similarly been consolidated ensuring the managerial effectiveness. However, the rural community there ("Solntsestvo") is a clearly organized participative level of municipal self-government, and the village administration is accountable not only to municipal self-government but also directly to the local community.

The legal entity, rural community must necessarily regain its unconditional and inalienable right to its own heirdom; this means, above all, that lands in common (community) use, such as pasture, haylands, community forest, water fund lands, forest fund lands should be legally returned to the community for perpetual and uncompensated ownership and use. Today, the gravity of this situation is such that even the territorial boundaries of the village are completely vague and unclear. The effectiveness of municipal self-governance depends entirely on direct and unimpeded involvement of citizens and local community. Such participative instruments must be created and developed rapidly in all local rural communities throughout Georgia.

In this regard, it is important that the community itself, in various forms of direct democracy, must be able to resolve the rural issues of local importance within the competence of the municipality itself, and, to that end, to use the accountable village administration as a key instrument. Of course, this does not mean that the municipal self-government and the State will be absolved of responsibility for rural development. Their responsibility is to plan rural development properly through subsidies and, most importantly, to create the effective instruments for economic or social activity of the community itself.

The best way to stimulate the economic revival, a way out of the depressed state and rapid development of the agricultural community is to revitalize the economic community, and to boost its economic development and activity. Also, a fundamental revision of social assistance and the so-called social allowances would be of high importance. This policy, especially in rural areas, is now directly aimed at further deepening socio-economic depression and poverty [7:72].

The successful initial experience in creating proper instruments for social activity of the community already exists in Georgia, and this is the establishment and development of "community centers" in the villages. Currently, there are about 50 such centers in operation and their number would have to be increased.

Conclusion

Rural development is a multidimensional, multi-level, highly participative ongoing process, and all this points to its complexity, so there is no clearly defined paradigm in this topic.

Naturally, the socio-cultural and economic state of the rural population will largely depend on the country's economic (including agricultural) and rural development policies, land consolidation, stimulation of the community co-operation, development of industrial and social infrastructure and implementation of other necessary projects (including the establishment of a specialized co-operative agricultural credit system) in rural areas.

Without development, the Georgian village, as a territorial and social unit, faces depopulation or the massive migration of the population. If the current negative trends are sustained, in a short time, we would no longer have not only the agricultural sector, but even the village itself.

ეკონომიკა

სოფლის განვითარების ინოვაციური მიდგომა საქართველოში

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**აკაკი წერეთლის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, ეკონომიკის დეპარტამენტი; ქუთაისის უნივერსიტეტი, ეკონომიკის და ბიზნესის ადმინისტრირების დეპარტამენტი, ქუთაისი, საქართველო

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიის წევრის ვლ. პაპავას მიერ)

აგროსექტორის კრიზისიდან გამოსვლისა და განვითარების გზების დასახვა მეტად აქტუალურია. სხვადასხვა წყაროების და ქვეყნების გამოცდილების შესწავლამ დაადასტურა, რომ შრომითი რესურსების სამეწარმეო გააქტიურება ყველაზე კარგად სოფლად კოოპერაციულ მოძრაობას ხელეწიფება, თუმცა ეს პროცესი სახელწიფოს აქტიური ჩარევის და გამოკვეთილი როლის ფარგლებშია შესაძლებელი. ნაშრომში სოფლის განვითარების კონტექსტში განხილულია სოციალურ სოლიდარობაზე დაფუძნებული მეურნეობრიობის ახალი ფორმების დამკვიდრების და აგრარული შრომის ავტორიტეტის ამაღლების შესაძლებლობები, სოფლის განვითარების პოლიტიკის შემუშავების აუცილებლობა სისტემური მიდგომის ფარგლებში. აგრეთვე ნაშრომში გამოკვეთილია სასოფლო თემის უფლებამოსილებების გაზრდის აუცილებლობა ეკონომიკური გამოცოცხლების, მისი დეპრესიული მდგომარეობიდან გამოყვანის მიზნით. ავტორთა მიერ ძირითადი მიზანი და ამოცანა საქართველოს სოფლის მეურნეობის სფეროში ორი მიმართულებით იკვეთება: პირველი, სოფლის, როგორც ტერიტორიული ერთეულის შენარჩუნება-განვითარება (მათ შორის კულტურული და ველური ლანდშაფტების დაცვა) და მეორე, სასურსათო უშიშროების უზრუნველყოფელი სოფლის მეურნეობის სტრუქტურის ჩამოყალიბება. სტატიაში დასაბუთებულია აზრი იმის შესახებ, რომ პრინციპულად ახალი სასოფლო-სამეურნეო პოლიტიკა და აგროსასურსათო სექტორის განვითარების მიზანმიმართული სტრატეგია აუცილებლად უნდა მოიცავდეს ხედვას, სისტემას, სტრუქტურას, სტრატეგიას, ტაქტიკას, კადრების ნებას და სწავლებას, მომზადებასა და გადამზადებას. მასში უნდა იქნეს გათვალისწინებული ყველა იმ პრობლემის მოგვარება, რომელიც, საბოლოო ანგარიშით, სოფლად სოციალურ-ეკონომიკური პირობების გაუმჯობესებასა და აგრარული შრომის მოტივაციის ამაღლებას უკავშირდება.

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