

*Commentary*

# Managing rural development through social and environmental strategies

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## DESCRIPTION

Rural development refers to the process of improving the economic, social, and environmental conditions of rural areas. Rural development is an essential component of overall economic growth and development. Rural areas are an integral part of a country's economy, and they contribute significantly to the growth and development of the nation. However, rural areas are often neglected in terms of development due to lack of resources, infrastructure, and investment. This essay will discuss the importance of rural development and the various strategies that can be adopted to achieve it. Rural development is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, rural areas are home to a significant percentage of the population in most countries. Therefore, the development of rural areas is essential for improving the living standards of millions of people. Rural development can help reduce poverty, increase employment opportunities, and improve access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and clean water.

Secondly, rural development can help boost the economy of a country. Agriculture is the primary economic activity in most rural areas. Therefore, investments in agriculture can lead to increased productivity, improved crop yields, and higher incomes for farmers. This, in turn, can lead to increased spending on goods and services, which can stimulate economic growth and development. Thirdly, rural development can help reduce the gap between rural and urban areas. Rural areas are often lagging behind urban areas in terms of development. This can lead to a significant income and opportunity gap between rural and urban populations. Rural development can help bridge this gap by creating employment opportunities, improving infrastructure, and providing access to essential services. There are several strategies that can be adopted to achieve rural development. These strategies can be broadly classified into economic, social, and environmental strategies.

One of the most critical economic strategies for rural development is investment in agriculture. In rural regions, agriculture often represents the main economic sector and investments in agriculture might therefore result in higher productivity, better crop yields, higher incomes for farmers. Spending more money on products and services may therefore contribute to the economy's growth and development. Another important economic strategy for rural development is the promotion of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). MSMEs are critical drivers of economic growth and development in rural areas. They provide employment opportunities, promote entrepreneurship, and contribute to the local economy. Governments can promote MSMEs by providing access to finance, training, and other support services.

### Social strategies

One of the most critical social strategies for rural development is the provision of basic social services such as healthcare, education, and clean water. Rural areas often lack access to these essential services, which can have significant negative impacts on the health and well-being of rural populations. Governments can promote rural development by investing in healthcare facilities, schools, and clean water infrastructure. Another critical social strategy for rural development is the promotion of gender equality. Women are often marginalized in rural areas, which can limit their opportunities for education, employment, and participation in decision-making processes. Governments can promote gender equality by investing in education and training programs for women, promoting women's participation in decision-making processes, and providing access to finance and other support services.

### Environmental strategies

Environmental strategies are critical for sustainable rural development. One of the most critical environmental strategies for rural development is the promotion of sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture practices can help preserve

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natural resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote biodiversity. Governments can promote sustainable agriculture by providing incentives for farmers to adopt sustainable practices, promoting organic farming, and investing in research and development. Another important environmental

strategy for rural development is the promotion of renewable energy. Renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydro power can provide a reliable and sustainable source of energy for rural areas. Governments can promote the use of renewable energy by providing incentives.