

DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

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UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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NATIONAL REPORT

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ON THE MORROW  
OF INDEPENDENCE

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In 1962 the situation as regards human settlements was markedly characterized by the state of economic and social under development of Algéria following a long period of colonial occupation. That period witnessed the seizure by the French settlers of almost all the rich lands of the North of the country. As a result of that seizure, a large part of the Algérian peasants were driven back to the steppe and marginal areas. Those who remained in the north were compelled to live in the periphery of the big colonial farms where they constituted an immense reserve of cheap labour force. The economy was directed towards the satisfaction of the needs of the colonial minority and the interests of the métropole. The policy of human settlements affected only the areas with a high rate of European population which enjoyed the major part of the economic and socio cultural investments. The health and educational system, social legislation, town planning and all kinds of collective facilities were mainly concentrated around the cities of the north. Those facilities located elsewhere out of the zones of European population were due to security purposes rather than to any strategy of social development of the overwhelming majority of Algerians who were kept away from any economic, cultural and social promotion.

In the field of employment of the natives, less than a quarter of the Algerian active male population had a more or less permanent job. Labour remuneration was very low and unequal, not only between the native and the colonial workers, but also within the territory which was divided into 3 areas from north to the south with a decreasing hour salary. Social législation was in the sole benefit of the European minority and lower allowances were granted to the Algérian "privileged" who had a permanent non agricultural job.

As for éducation, the results of a colonial policy more concerned with the interests of the privileged minority than with those of the Algerian population, can be noticed through the wery low school attendance rate and the high rate of illitéracy inherited in 1962 (85 % of the adult population).

Health facilities were dramatically insufficient in the areas with a high density of Algérian population. In the field of nutrition, agriculture was oriented towards exports while malnutrition and déficiency diseases were the lot of the Algerian rural population. The situation was alarming as regards all social infrastructures especially housing.

In 1954, the first year of the national liberation struggle one third of the Algerian urban population of our major cities were living in shanty towns ; except for the infinitesimal minority who lived in a European type house, the rest of the population lived in small decayed and ill equipped houses. In general, such houses were used but as night shelters. However, that condition of the townsmen was relatively favourable compared to that of the peasants who represented about 80 % of the population. During the liberation struggle from 1954 to 1962, the war repercussions aggravated the problem of urban and rural honsing as a whole, the former through the forced migration of the rural peoples to the towns and the latter through the systematic destruction of houses by the occupation army in its retaliatory operations.

The colonial repression during the liberation struggle had aggravated the unbalance between the people and the natural resources. The war was to kill more than one and a half million nationals, the massive gatherings organized by the colonial army were to affect more than three million inhabitants uprooted from their homes and their villages while nearly five hundred thousand people went to exile. Moreover, about eight thousand hamlets were destroyed during the liberation war which lasted nearly eight years.

The environment suffered a considerable degradation through the abandonment of vast lands, the firing of forests by the colonial army and through the damaging of infrastructures by 'extremist organizations which, in the last years of the war, adopted an unrestrained "scorched land" policy which led - inter alia - to the burning of school and university premises and the bombing of administrative and social facilities..

thus the alarming situation in the field of human settlements due to the multiform colonial domination was aggravated by social problems resulting, from the war and affecting the condition of the survival of a large part of the population.

The contribution of the whole people to the national liberation struggle was to strengthen the determination to build up an economy which will secure that welfare which will meet the deep aspirations of the whole population through the participation of the masses in the creation of their own history.

I - THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, A FRAMEWORK FOR THE  
MATERIALISATION OF THE POLICY OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS.

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A) The strategy of economic and social development.

The development strategy adopted in 1966 by the revolutionary authorities aims at bringing about through successive stages but as soon as possible, the fundamental changes in the economy and the society so as to bring a maximum response to the basic needs of the population and to secure économic and cultural promotion for all Algerians.

The strategy of development which, in its major orientations is basically aimed at promoting a judicious policy of human settlements, was adopted while taking into account the basic situation marked by: the legacy of the past,- the majority of the population being deprived from the basic living conditions - and the ineluctable demographic growth of the forthcoming decades.

The target of the development strategy was selected in accordance with the satisfaction of the primary element of a genuine policy of human settlements via employment. Indeed, the opportunity for each Algerian to get a permanent job when he arrives in the employment market, the involved income and the consequent increase in production is the fundamental basis of a policy of human settlements tending to the steady increase of the living standards of the populations and to the growing satisfaction of the social needs. According to the projections made in terms of an urgent response to the basic aspirations, 1980 was identified as the year when the struggle against the

structural causes of unemployment and under employment can and should be won, as the moment when the non agricultural economy once restructured and consolidated can secure a durable job for all the applicants - so far under employed - and whose number is increasing every year in view of the demographic growth and rural migration.

To this objective of equalisation of economic and social opportunities were also added both the necessity of the suppression of all forms of socio-territorial inequalities and the improvement of the standard of living of all nationals: (elimination of malnutrition, education for all school age children (6 to 14), better health facilities in rural areas, reduction of overcrowding in the cities and active rural housing policy).

The strategy of development has defined the priorities in the response to the basic needs-(in the medium and long run)- and determined the implications of a more strengthened and comprehensive policy. This, it appeared very clearly that a radical transformation of the economy was necessary so as to serve as a basis for the expected social progress and, such a transformation implies the setting up of all the physical and organizational conditions for a rapid and self sustained growth.

Thus, in order to secure better living conditions for the whole population, a special emphasis was put on the development of the forces of national production and on the maximum valorization of all the physical and human resources of the country. Being the decisive means of a long term policy of human settlements, the transformation of a weak, dependent and non integrated economy into an economy with a rapid, self centered and self sustained development is the only way towards an

intensive social progress, in favour of a rapidly increasing population. Among the priorities set forth by the strategy there is first the optimum valorization of the benighted human potential, and the mobilization of the physical resources of the country which have been so far exploited in the benefit of the colonizing power and foreign interests. There is also a just policy of income re-distribution together with a struggle against territorial disparities in order to secure equal opportunities for all Algerians in the share of the boons and the tasks of development.

The overall development strategy has determined some fundamental options and priorities such as the choice of "an authentic industrialization capable of fully playing its role as a source of employment and as the supplier of the major industrial commodities of an economy in progress", it has defined the major stages of the edification of an economy capable to meet by 1980 the basic needs (employment, education, health, nutrition) and to achieve the intermediate objectives in relation with the strategic objective. This strategy made it possible to draw the guide lines for the determination of the economic and social policies adopted during the 3 successive plans and in so doing to put an end to the partial and short term approaches consisting in the determination of priorities for each sector of activity without taking into account neither the option of the economy as a whole nor the long term option.

The ultimate objective of Algerian planning, namely the radical transformation of the living conditions of all Algerians can be achieved only with the achievement of intermediate objectives provided for in the two stages of the economic edification between 1967 and 1980 : the first stage was intended to enable the economy, once re-structured on the basis of the necessities of economic independence and the development of

the production forces, to determine its orientation within a genuine development. The second stage (1974-1980), which relies upon better possibilities provided by a decolonized economy characterized by greater progress in its growth pace, will lay the basis for a lasting and continuous social progress within an economy more directly centered on human needs as the finality of socialist development.

However, if the intermediate objectives especially those of a material nature may be given priority before 1980, as the means for the materialization of the ultimate objective of Algerian planning <sup>that is</sup> man's promotion, the latter remains the constant concern at each stage and, in each plan an intensive action is undertaken in order to eliminate the objective, economic and social constraints facing the country in the materialization of its social policy.

Moreover, various and evolutive priorities in the satisfaction of the basic needs are determined at each stage of the planning. So it was that education for all children and the preparation of the human potential to the tasks of economic and social development - which were devoted 11 % of the G.N.P. every year in view of the inherited historical backwardness - have been given absolute priority during the first stage of the edification of the economy. A significant improvement of the living conditions especially in the fields of health, housing and collective facilities was noticed only at the beginning of the second stage with the second four years' plan. However, at elaboration of social development programmes, priority was given as regards the improvement of living conditions, to the necessity to fill the socio cultural gap of the population in rural areas through special programmes in favour of deprived areas, a flow of collective investments and a policy of income redistribution.



B) The stages of the materialization of the economic and social development strategy.

Some intermediate stages were necessary for the edification of an economy which could meet the necessities of a genuine policy of human settlements : the purpose of the seven years prospects (1967-1973) materialized by 2 successive plans (a three years plan and a four years plan), was to define the first great stage through the adoption of fundamental objectives corresponding to the necessity to remove some major constraints hampering a rapid growth and the setting up of solid bases for the edification of the economy during the second stage (1974-1980). The first actions, such as those already undertaken have been materialized in conformity with the socialist development orientations illustrated by the agrarian, the industrial and the cultural revolution.

The technical economic approach and the political approach underlying the approach of development planning will be successively analysed.

1) The technical economic approach

It was achieved within two phases, that of the seven years prospects 1967-1973, materialized by 2 plans (a three years plan 1967-1969 and a four years plan 1970-1973), and that which started with the second four years plan, the beginning of the second stage of the edification of the economy.

a) The 1967-1973 period

It was characterized by 3 major objectives : The preparation of development, the initiation of the first actions and the transformation of the structures in conformity with the options of economic and social organization as regards economic and social approaches, the action undertaken follows four guidelines considered as necessary conditions for the acceleration of development and the materialization of the social content of our policy.

- The beginning of the integration of the various sectors of the economy.

The Algerian economy has for a long time been characterized not by a mutual integration of its sectors but by an integration of these sectors to the economy of the colonizing power. The objective of the policy adopted during the first stage was the setting up of all the industrial sectors designed as a coherent ensemble with mutual exchanges, this starting the process of economic and social integration. All the efforts already made were aimed at putting an end to the export of raw materials through the creation of steel, metallurgic, mechanical and petro-chemical sectors which will process these products on the spot. In the case of agriculture, the creation of a food industry sector was aimed at integrating the agricultural sector in the Algerian economy. Such an integration is important for three reasons : first, the surplus and therefore the distributed income are created by the products processing and not merely by the extraction and the production of raw materials ; Then, the investments of a given sector and the increase of its production will be repercutated not on foreign economies through a greater demand of foreign intermediate products (imports), but on the national economy through a greater demand of national products and there will be a chain like economic and social

impact ; finally, in foreign exchanges, the balance of payments will be all the more sound as imports will be limited to the capital goods necessary for the creation of supplementary branches in the Algerian economy, a condition for the improvement of employment, income and social justice.

- The increase of accumulation capacities

The creation of such new branches of economy is subjected to the production or import of capital goods, that is to say through the formation of a national industrial capital. Now, the major part of such capital goods necessarily implies a policy of exports in order to obtain important means of foreign payments. This is why a special emphasis has been laid during this period on the increase of the production capacities of hydrocarbons (petroleum, gas) and their valorization which would provide possibilities of a rapid increase of the accumulation capacities of the economy as a whole.

- The setting up of a new training system adapted to the economic needs.

As a privileged element of the policy of human settlements at this stage of development, the growth of the education system has been carried out in conformity with two necessities : a genuine democratization of education and a generalization of training whose content and methods should be adapted to the requirements of a modern economy. Two kinds of measures have been adopted : "transitory" vocational training in order to meet the most urgent needs within the requirements of the Plan, re-modelling of the "training system" in order to prepare a large number of men and women to face the tasks of economy.

- A new income re-distribution

This objective will be achieved in the unemployment and under employment, namely through the creation of new jobs. In the short and medium run, a strong policy of income redistribution has been implemented through various means : taxation, subsidies, scholarships, basic products prices, social allowances policy, policy of the decentralization of social and production facilities. The special programmes in favour of the deprived wilayate has been part of this income policy. Moreover, the building, of one thousand agricultural villages of the Agrarian Revolution started in 1973 will, by the end of the decade, give an important section of the population now living in deficient and scattered houses, the opportunity to have a free house and to enjoy all the socio-cultural facilities of the production community, (Water, electricity, gas, school, health centers, markets...).

b) The second four years Plan (1974-1977)

The major objectives of the first two plans being achieved, the second four years plan is intended to continue the achievement of all the great long term objectives which constitute the essential part of the political concerns. The increase of financial means due to fairer oil prices, together with the progress of economy have led to an increase of the major investments (agriculture, industry, education) and to a much greater consideration to some sectors which were relatively neglected during the previous stage (economic infrastructures, social investments).

The investments amount is three times higher than that of the previous plan and represents 40 % of the G.N.P. an accumulation rate which was reached as early as 1973. An important part of the investments is still devoted to the continuation and the development of industrialization efforts, for a greater integration of industrial activities, for the transformation of the production conditions in agriculture, for a greater impulse of the right to education and for the intensification of the exceptional effort in technical training.

A greater importance was given to the modification of social conditions as a whole, through the intensification of the income policy on the one hand and, through the implementation of a stronger policy of living conditions (housing, health, social protection). The investissements in housing for instance are 5 times higher in the second four years plan than in the first one.

The credit dedicated to the social sector (housing non included) are four times higher in the second four years plan. Within the framework of the strengthening of social protection, free medical cares and the re-orientation of medicine in its structures and content should enable the right to health to become a concrete reality for all the population.

In the field of employment, a greater attention is devoted to the selection of manpower using technologies. The enlargement of the range of the income re-distribution policy in favour of the most deprived social strata, is also a characteristic of the four years period as regards the living conditions of the population. Financial means are to be doubled for social transfers as a whole during the plan period. The subsidies directly financed by the state budget, scholarships and pensions, free meals, free medical cares etc...) will amount in 1973 constant prices, to nearly 8 billion DA (Algerian Dinars) of

cumulated expenses for the period . Social allowances are increasing in proportion with the rapid employment expansion and the greater number of recipients. Such allowances is to increase from 800 Million DA in 1973 up to nearly 1,5 billion DA in 1977. The income re-distribution programme in favour of the families now having an annual consumption level per capita of less than 500 DA requires a cumulated expense of 4 billion DA during the four years of the Plan.

A greater diffusion of development towards rural areas is appearing through a more accurate through the setting up of communal plans as the instruments for the valorization of all local, physical and human potentialities.

## 2) The political approach

The adoption of this economic and social strategy and its materialization stage by stage, were derived from the ideals of the Algerian revolution aimed at the edification of a new society marked by the socio cultural promotion of all inhabitants, in conformity with the aspirations of the population and with its full participation. It is because only the non capitalist development path can put an end to the multifold form of inequalities and exploitation, that Algeria has chosen a socialist organization illustrated by the three guidelines of its economic social and cultural policy ; the industrial, the agrarian and the cultural revolutions.

It is through the industrial Revolution considered as the largest and the most intensive development of industrial activity and as the promotion of those men capable of mastering technology, that this objective should essentially be materialized thus ensuring through industrialization, a permanent development of the physical bases of the economy.

Such a development requires a systematic mobilization -in the national interest - of all our natural resources whose control by the socialist state constitutes, in view of their function of accumulation, a pre-requisite for development and one of the strategic elements of economic independence.

This necessary mobilization of the physical resources also affect the whole of the agricultural and hydraulic patrimony whose potential should be safeguarded and actively valorized according to the prominent concern about rural population, to the necessity to increase their income and to the increasing needs of the country for food products.

All these physical transformations pursued and required by development cannot be achieved without significant and diversified efforts in order to prepare both the people and the structures to assume them. Beyond the satisfaction of the social need for education, it is on the diffusion of the scientific and technical spirit among the masses that depends the capacity of the latter to be the principal actors and especially the recipients of the development effort as a whole.

In the field of institutions, the Agrarian Revolution, the socialist management of the firms and decentralization now constitute the necessary structures designed to ensure the effective association of all producers and workers to the task of national development and to the mobilization of energies and skills, while ensuring that the fruits of development will above all be enjoyed by those who created that development.

Finally, the transformation of the material bases of economy as well as the preparation of the people and the structures for their mastering and their management, represent the illustration of a development determination based on the edification of socialism which implies above all a reliance upon our own physical and human forces. (1)

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(1). From the preamble of the second four years Plan.



## II - THE ALGERIAN PLANNING, AN INSTRUMENT OF AND A FRAMEWORK FOR THE POLICY OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS.

The strategy which gives priority to the people and their needs implies - in order to be successful - the adoption and the implementation of a decisive instrument for the organization of an overall development of economy that is planning. The latter, which was adopted as early as 1966 as a method for the guidance of the economy and for the radical transformation of the Algerian society, is due both to the socialist path adopted by the country and to the requirements of the organization of an economy designed to meet the basic needs of a growing population through the increase of income and its fair distribution.

### General orientations of Algerian planning

The national plan includes orientations, objectives and programmes which are part of an overall strategy which implements the main guidelines of the policy of the development and transformation of the society, aimed at the materialization of the agrarian, the industrial and the cultural revolutions. Therefore it constitutes a fundamental law governing the whole of the economic and social activity of the country during the planning period. For this reason, it has an imperative nature regarding the economic agents illustrated by a series of technical and administrative measures linked to the achievement of the investment programmes and to the adaptation of the economic and social system to the organization and the planned direction of the economy.

The selection of planning techniques, that of the instruments for the implementation of the plans and, more generally that of the instruments for the regulation of the operation of economy should be adapted to the characteristics of the economy, such as the diversity of the development levels of the various sectors, the open nature of the economy or the lack of qualified cadres, which cannot be modified but in the future. It is by virtue of these elements that our planning system rejects the use of those processes leading to a centralized and heavy administrative machinery.

Moreover, they must be adapted to the great objectives and the fundamental options of the country which are focused on a judicious policy of human settlements implying a strong policy of reduction of socio-territorial disparities and the continuous improvement of the living conditions and, above all those of the most deprived in the economic and social fields in order to correct the inequalities inherited and those which may be generated by a non mastered growth. The evolution of planned development has attempted to find the best solution response regarding the ways and means for the continuation of this policy of economic and social promotion.

In its early days, the Algerian planning was designed through its content, its forms and its methods to become progressively more imperative, more scientific and more decentralized in accordance with the evolution of the socio-economic structures and the institutions of the country.

The continuous increase of the number of participants in the preparation and execution of the Plan.

Decentralization and democratization have been the decisive basic principles of the modes of economic and social organization. Therefore the progressive process of planning

enlargement has been oriented both towards the local levels of the state power and socialist firms. It has first affected local collectivities (communes, wilayate) which has been entrusted with important responsibilities in the economic, social and cultural fields and whose role has been strengthened during the elaboration of the objectives of the plan and their achievement.

The necessary progressiveness in the intensification of planning, stated as a basic principle as early as the first Plan has also affected the firms.

As the public production sector was stronger and as a better utilization of the means was guaranteed through the valorization and centralization of resources, this progressiveness has led to an increasing decentralization of economic and social responsibilities.

The decentralization of the economic responsibilities began in agriculture with the strengthening of self management and the setting up of a cooperative system ; it has been extended to the other sectors through the participation of the workers to the management of the firms; as producers-managers within the framework of the implementation of the socialist firms charter ; the firms have thus become important economic decision making centers and the main executive agents of the Plan. The attributions of the workers in the social field make them, as the producers, responsible for the improvement of the working and living conditions of the community.

It is useless to insist on the importance of such an approach of planning which, in the preparation and execution of the policy of human settlements, gives responsibilities to all the agents of the economic and social development promotion who are most directly concerned at the various levels of the decision making process and the materialization of that promotion. The decentralization of the planning process allows for a more accurate determination of the needs by those who are concerned (assemblies elected by the population of local collectivities or by the workers) ; the latter, when they have to achieve the projects are interested in the shortening of the time and the selection of economical means so as to improve as rapidly as possible the collective living conditions. The profit sharing system in the production units is to link the increase of productivity to the improvement of the working and living socio-cultural conditions of the producers and their families.

At the present stage of its evolution, the Algerian planning system relies on 5 institutions.

The Secretariat of state for planning which, as the central planning institution is responsible, as regards planning techniques, for the definition of long term objectives, the preparation of plans and the elaboration of the major techniques for their implementation.

The ministries, as the sectorial planning bodies, whose task is to contribute to the overall elaboration of the plan in relation with the Secretariat of state for Planning and to animate and control planning in their sector.

- The socialist production units, as the basic elements of the elaboration and execution of plans in view of their importance and the role they play within the planning system.

- The Wilayate which as territorial institutions with their own bodies, decision power and important economic responsibilities, play a major role between the commune and the central authority and bring a regional contribution to national planning.

- The communes, as the basic territorial, administrative, economic social and cultural collectivities, whose plans constitute an appropriate framework for the actions aimed at the materialization of the policy of human settlements.

Finally, the two most appropriate planning frameworks for the transformation of the living conditions and notably the satisfaction of the socio cultural needs are :

- Planning, at the regional level (wilaya) and the commune.
- The role of workers assemblies in planning within the firms.

### Local planning

It is through this decentralized planning system that the policy of human settlements based on a basic principle, the policy of regional balance, is wholly or partly elaborated. This policy was first implemented through special programmes as the instruments for the correction of inequalities (mainly socio cultural ones) and for the dynamisation of economies in the poor regions. It has also been implemented through a policy of town and rural planning whose major characteristic is the appropriate investments distribution. Local planning has been carried out at the level<sup>of</sup> two territorial collectivities, the first political, economic and social stages of the institutional organization of the country ; the commune and the wilaya.

The wilaya has first been the framework for the elaboration and execution of special programmes as from the beginning of the policy of the correction of socio-territorial inequalities. Those responsibilities of the decentralized collectivities were illustrated in the launching of the ten special programmes in favour of the most deprived areas of the country. This special programmes policy relies on the necessity to correct the existing regional distortions through an exceptional investment programme in conformity with the backwardness of such or such area. Thanks to the decentralization of the planning system, the wilaya has become the instrument for the elaboration and execution of the national plan and, as such, it makes an **accurate** diagnosis of the economic and social situation and contribute to the determination of an investment policy which would be most adapted to the prevailing problems. The contribution to the planning process is all the more precious that the reform of territorial districts (31 instead of 15) has enabled the creation of more homogenous economic zones.

Thus the decentralized collectivities, through the experience gained in the implementation of regional plans, have played a key role in the preparation of the 2nd Plan, not only through the provision of information about the regions but especially through action proposals which made it possible for the central authorities to elaborate a national Plan which would meet the aspirations of all the population.

The administrative decentralization and deconcentration measures adopted in favour of that intermediate collectivity between the state and the commune have made the authorities of the wilaya responsible for the achievement of the plan in their district. The wilaya is also responsible for the animation and coordination of the basic local collectivities : the communes. The latter are provided with two kinds of instruments for the transformation of the standard of living of their communities : the communal development plans and the urban modernization plans.

Set up during the 1974-1977 four years plan, the communal plan, as a privileged instrument for space planning and town and rural development, constitutes the major framework for the materialization of the human settlements policy on the local scale.

As such, it represents the major framework for the policy of employment and development regionalization through the promotion of the small or medium size industrial activities on the one hand, and the promotion of socio cultural investments on the other. The implementation of communal plans in particular in the poorest communes of the country is indeed to ensure a better distribution of the actions and benefits of development in rural areas.

The Communal Development Plans being designed to secure the basic living conditions in order to keep a maximum number of people in the rural areas and small cities through the dynamization of local economic actions and the transformation of the living conditions so as to eliminate or to reduce the attraction of the urban way of life. The action programmes affect the collective facilities such as, in particular water supply or the improvement of sanitation, the infrastructure such as the building of post offices or markets, and productive investments mainly agricultural ones. Finally, as regard the poorest communes (300 out of 676), special plans are provided for within the second four years plan (1974-1977) so as the most deprived human settlements enjoy additional credits in the sense of a fairer income policy and a reduction of territorial disparities through collective investments and economic activities throughout the country.

Thus the communal plans serve as a basis for the national policy of income re-distribution and of the full utilization of all human and natural potentialities which cannot be identified but locally by the communities directly concerned.

It is through the communal plans that both the urban and rural communes will feel effectively concerned by the planning of economic and social development to the elaboration and execution of which they have contributed.



It is also worth noting, that there is a full decentralization in the execution of the projects ; it has already marked the materialization of the various stages of the Agrarian Revolution and the exercise of the growing responsibilities of the People's Communal Assemblies in the social, educative and cultural fields.

A second type of communal plan, the Urban Modernization Plan affects about forty urban agglomeration, in general the chief towns of the wilayate with a very rapid population growth rate and tremendous needs for facilities ; such a Plan constitutes an instrument for the mastery over the urban development process and the tackling of all the necessary development problems.

The urban Modernisation Plans allow for a restructuration of the agglomeration through a rationalization of the industrial and socio-cultural achievements and through a coherent setting up of the facilities necessary for the building up of towns ; these facilities should be achieved while taking into account first the emergency and then the development capacities of the town within the national policy of town and rural planning. This policy defines the orientations of urban development of the major towns in accordance with national necessities such as the necessary growth of secondary towns especially those of the hinterland located in poor areas so as avoid a migration flow towards the north of the country.

After an analysis of the national and regional planning data and of the condition of the town within the region concerned and after a survey of the problems and constraints especially the physical ones, the elaboration of a short medium and long term programme in the field of socio cultural infrastructures and facilities is carried out by the communal authorities in relation with the concerned administrative authorities of the wilaya and the country.

The participation to the planning process within the firms.

As the first measure of planning decentralization, implemented as from the beginning of the first four years plan (1970-1973), the creation of a planning service within the socialist firms has enabled these firms to participate on the basis of the orientations and guidelines decided upon at the national level to the elaboration of the plans draft projects.

A second and more radical measure, the charter and the law on the socialist management of the firms issued in 1971, have set forth some principles designed to enable the firms to "operate both on the basis of the centralized management of the economy and the freedom of action jointly and harmoniously exerted by the workers assembly and the managing staff, an autonomy exerted within the framework of the planning objectives". The workers being those who are living the realities of their firms and who know its potentialities give advices and make recommendations on the draft development plan of the unit or the firm within the setting up of the national Plan.

A special attention is paid to the improvement of the environment of the workers who spend a large part of their lives in the firm and who should therefore find all the conditions necessary for the development of their personalities. This is why a financing system for social activities managed by the elected bodies of the workers has been set up within the framework of the strengthening of collective stimulation which is a prerequisite for the development of productivity and social progress. This system is the fund of complementary income of the workers whose objective is to create a system for the participation of the workers to the achievement of the objectives of the plan. A part of the collective income is devoted to the improvement of the working and living conditions of the workers and their families : kindergartens, meals, sports investments, literacy and training activities, building of houses, etc...

- THE NATIONAL POLICY OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS -

- The approach adopted by the Algerian policy of development considers that there could not be any policy or valuable action as regards human settlements without the existence of some necessary conditions.
  
- The first one which constitutes a sort of a pre requisite supposes that any action in the field of human settlements is vowed to failure if it is not possible to secure as soon as possible a minimum income for each family ; in other words if it is not possible to rapidly and correctly satisfy the need for work together with a genuine income redistribution. All this confirms that any policy of human settlements should above all rely on a strategy and a system capable of achieving a rapid economic growth based on an equitable distribution of the first results of such a growth.
  
- The Algerian approach also considers that the efforts made in the field of human settlements cannot be conceived but through general actions affecting the country as a whole and integrated within a development leading to a rational occupation of the territory by both people and their activities ; in other words there could not be any policy of human settlements which is not integrated within a development which takes into account the town and rural planning.

- It is within this double approach that we intend to develop a selective and progressive policy for the satisfaction of the needs of the people in proportion of the possibilities provided by the economic growth ; such a policy should first meet the most urgent needs while bearing constantly in mind the necessity to fight all forms of disparities between urban and rural areas, between towns of different size and between social categories.

Such a policy can be implemented through :

1) In rural areas :

The implementation of the Agrarian Revolution and the adoption of the communal development plans.

2) In urban areas :

The industrialization effort and the urban modernization plans.

3) In rural and urban areas :

An active social policy aimed, inter alia, at the democratization of education, the income re-distribution, social and sanitary protection of the population and social facilities.

I - HABITAT

Once the country's stability was secured, the national policy as regards habitat has first been centered since 1965 on the completion of all the building abandoned on the morrow of independence in 1962.

It is with the launching of the first four years Plan (1970-1973) and especially with the second four years Plan (1974-1977) that the habitat policy has been given a new impetus thanks to, a diversified method of action and, growing achievement capacities.

Nevertheless, during the first four years Plan the investment effort made by the state remained relatively insufficient for various reasons : on the one hand the available national resources have essentially been devoted to the development tasks which, according to our strategy and the policy of human settlements appeared to us as deserving prominent attention ; it is particularly the case for the education and industrialization effort ; on the other hand, the available physical and human capacities of the country as regards materials, building companies and survey capacities could not, without serious tensions, allow for a so sustained effort in the field of habitat as that of other fields considered as essential at this stage of development.

So it was for these very reasons that, private building has not been really encouraged. However, it was during the first four years Plan, that the forms of the state intervention in the rural world have been defined : on the one hand through the growing importance of the self-building system and on the other hand through the existence of the framework of action represented by the Agricultural villages as an important contribution to the achievement of the Agrarian Revolution in rural areas. Considerable efforts were made during that period for the creation of national surveys and architecture agencies as well as public building firms while the first industrial units in the field of building materials, glass, sanitary ceramics etc... were launched.

All these actions were aimed at the preparation of the conditions for a strengthening of the action in favour of habitat during the second four years Plan (1974-1977), a period marked by an intensification of state investments both in urban and rural areas and by the definition of a legal framework for the organization and stimulation of private building efforts through such means as savings.

" To secure for each Algerian citizen a decent house in conformity with the urban and rural living conditions". This is the long term objective of the action in the field of habitat.

This objective should be considered in relation with the inherited situation, the ever increasing needs and in relation with the special position of rural areas and therefore rural habitat within the strategy of economic and social development.

In fact, as a result of the uprooting of 3 million people during the 7 years <sup>of</sup> Liberation struggle, combined with the multifold effects of the colonial policy aimed at the satisfaction of the colonizers needs (who represented first 1/10 of the total population) while ignoring those of the Algerian majority in rapid growth, and an infrastructure limited to the big centers and facilities located along the coast, 9/10 of the territory and the population were, at the time of independence, confined in a so called "traditional" economy of subsistence and deprived of any form of economic and social progress.

Algeria has decided to progressively satisfy these tremendous needs according to well defined priorities and within a planned framework.

### RURAL HABITAT

The very serious lack in the field of habitat in the country was even more sharp in the rural world.

Consequently, the rural areas which have most suffered from the 130 years of colonization and which were the birth place and the leaven of our revolution has, as from the beginning, been given a special attention materialized by the creation of a powerful collective sector through the agricultural self management and since the first four years plan, through the implementation of a genuine Agrarian Revolution whose objective is to re model the face of the rural world through multiform integrated programmes. Therefore it is through a system of land appropriation guaranteeing to the agricultural worker the mastery over his labour and his means of production that the policy of human settlements in rural areas is conceived and implemented.

Thus, this policy has secured a maximum number of conditions for its success since it uses an overall approach which does not isolate the elements of a same problem but on the contrary, directly tackle the housing problems, those of employment and consequently the income problems, those of education, health, communications, cultural and social animation. This policy started in 1972 with the beginning of the Agrarian Revolution of which it is part and parcel, at the achievement by 1980 of about one thousand socialist villages, 300 of which during the second Four years Plan (1974-1977). These villages ranging from 100 to 400 houses enjoy all the facilities necessary for the daily life of the workers and their families: schools, health centers, clubs for young people, post offices, trade centers, administrative offices, handicraft workshops



The scheduled programme which covers the whole of the territory has been already achieved since several dozens villages are currently inhabited and nearly 200 are about to be achieved. Their inhabitants to be are directly associated to all the stages from the design of the houses and the facilities of all the villages up to the building operation. All these stages are as many occasions for the university students, secondary schools pupils, town workers and those of the agricultural self managed sector, architects, and other technicians of the building industry to assume voluntary tasks either during the holidays, the week ends or through free work in the case of architects.

A special attention is paid to the location of the villages ; the sites are selected with the acting participation of the beneficiaries so as to meet the necessities of agricultural production as well as the technical necessities and to ensure a harmonious integration in the environment.

In conformity with the priorities set forth in the national development plan, which are aimed above all at providing the state assistance to the most deprived social categories, only the landless peasants and the small peasants beneficiaries of the Agrarian Revolution can currently enjoy these houses entirely financed by the state budget. If in most cases the agricultural villages have been built for the beneficiaries of the Agrarian Revolution, they are nevertheless open for all those who are in relation with agricultural production. Moreover, there is a plan for the promotion in these new communities of supplementary production and services activities so as not to transform these villages into mere "shelters" but to make

of them an ensemble of living cells thus accelerating the renewal and the modernization of the rural world and constituting an efficient instrument for the struggle against the lethargic effects of a secular traditionalism which was maintained by the paternalism of the colonial authorities. Obviously this is an important objective. However it is in conformity with the ambitions of the Agrarian Revolution and the hopes and capacities of our rural masses.

Such a prospect have led us to eliminate all forms of limited "pilot experiences" and to resolutely embark, despite the hazards, into an overall action for the mobilization of the means and energies. Therefore, in addition to the 1.000 villages programme whose first achievements are in favour of the beneficiaries of the Agrarian Revolution, the efforts started as from the liberation for the improvement of rural habitat as a whole through the "self building" programmes. As regards the quantity, an effort representing more than 50.000 houses is scheduled in the 2nd Four Years Plan (1974-1977) within the framework of these programmes whose major purpose is to grant the state assistance to the small peasants and the landless peasants not affected by the Agrarian Revolution or who have not been given a house in a socialist village. The space impact is naturally greater since the whole of the rural communes of the country are affected by this type of action for the improvement of habitat which consists in granting those beneficiaries whose income is under a well defined limit, the necessary materials and technical assistance for the achievement of their houses.

A third aspect of the national habitat policy provided for in the 3rd Four Years Plan aims at providing the 2000 self managed agricultural production units with housing and living centers which would gather the workers near their working places and reinforce the social cohesion of the workers collectivity.

Finally, a fourth aspect of the rural habitat policy is represented by the actions undertaken in the existing villages which will enjoy less important building programmes with only 20.000 houses to be built during the 2nd Four Years Plan; These programmes will be combined with the other efforts for the improvement of the living conditions undertaken within the communal development plans.

These 4 aspects of the rural habitat policy, the socialist villages, the individual self building, the housing centers of the self managed sector and the extension of the existing rural villages are adapted to the present characteristics of the agricultural workers categories to whom they are designed, However they are part of a unique approach and have common purposes. Their progressive, strict and simultaneous materialization cannot be carried out without a number of problems facing those who achieve it in view of the considerable human, financial and physical means implied as well as the planning and organization capacities needed. In the future such a materialization combined with the other development efforts will be illustrated by the elimination of the heavy historical backwardness and the emergence of the rural population towards a future made of progress just like their brothers of the urban areas.

## URBAN HABITAT

The state of urbanization in our country is a result of a history directly linked to the colonial phenomenon which imposed on us those types of urban communities sociologically and technically alien to the national traditions and culture.

This situation which we had to and still have to assume has moreover been aggravated since the liberation by a series of factors with cumulative effects : first the exodus engendered by the consequences of the liberation war which were particularly important in those towns whose hinterland has most suffered mainly from the massive "gatherings" of the populations ; Secondly, the attractive effects of the cities - due to their facilities - on the rural populations deprived of everything and subjected to a serious under employment and, finally with the first results of developments since the years 1968/69.

This last factor is still operating despite the multifiform and more and more intensive action undertaken in favour of rural areas and whose major objective is to check a premature rural migration.

The obvious result is the unbalance and the overcrowding of the cities through the over utilization of habitat and facilities and the development of a precarious and unwholesome habitat in some cities

Finally, the function of the urban communities during the colonial period was a special and limited one to the extent that they merely served as a transit place (port, airport...), a service or a leisure place, for the colonizers minority or a repressive instrument as garrison cities. Therefore, within the development strategy adopted by Algeria the inherited urban agglomerations could not plan any dynamic role.

The Algerian approach aims at promoting through planning, a "structuration" of an urban network which would be the reflection of a rational occupation of the territory, a distribution of economic activities and a hierarchization and a distribution of urban functions with a view to both assuming all urban functions within each region and promoting medium size cities in order to check the trend towards "Megalopolis".

In this connexion, the problem is to control the development of big cities so as to limit their growth; The existence of huge metropolises is incompatible with the principles of inter regional harmony and balance.

This voluntary policy is materialized through the Urban Modernization Plan, the location of the major economic and cultural activities and through the new administrative organization which increased the number of wilayate up to 31.

It is within that prospect that the habitat programmes city by city are elaborated and achieved ; It takes into account both the elimination of the backwardness or deficits, and the new needs resulting from the actions of development in the various urban areas.

As regards the habitat design a continuous attention is paid to the issues of environment, hygiene, quietness, safety and comfort of the cities inhabitants.

Habitat should contribute to a certain quality of life ; the bedroom cities formula will be abandoned in favour of homogeneous ensembles with well balanced activities and life of their own and where everybody would be able to combine his professional and social activities. In this connexion, in the "areas to be urbanized" provided for in the Urban Modernization Plans, the achievement of habitat is coordinated with the health, educational, cultural and social facilities while bearing in mind the necessities of the proximity of the working places.

The urban modernization plan is thus not only a planning instrument for the cities in order to adapt their development to the growth of their population and their activities, but also an instrument for the location and the design of the types of habitat.

As to the programmes, in the early years of independence the state which was facing habitat problems raised by the situation inherited from the colonial era, has centered its efforts on the re-construction of the patrimony destroyed during the liberation war on the one hand and, on the completion of the building operations stopped in 1962 on the other hand.

From 1966 on, this effort has been intensified in view of the new programmes integrated within a planned development policy. So, within the three years plan (1967-1969) and the first four years plan (1970-1973) as well as the various special programmes in favour of the poorest areas, the state intervention was illustrated by the adoption of several programmes representing the achievement of 80.000 houses in urban areas.

As to the current plan, these needs have been calculated on the basis of the urban population growth rate and in accordance with the occupation rate per room to be attained. For the moment a rate of 2 persons per room has been adopted, the long term rate being of 1,6 person per room. For that purpose and within the current Four Years period (1974-1977) a programme of more than 130.000 urban houses has been decided upon.

The search for equality as regards the satisfaction of the needs of the various cities has been consolidated within the habitat planning, by the equalisation of efforts between urban and rural areas.

The total investments made for the achievement of habitat programmes in both urban and rural areas represent more than 10 % of the total investments of the plan.

Habitat should be everybody's concern : this is the guiding idea of the "Habitat law" which reaffirms the right to a house for each Algerian and which organizes the participation of the citizens to the housing effort.

First, the state will pursue and intensify its efforts for the building of houses within national planning : the objective being to achieve from 1960 on about 100.000 urban houses a year, that is to say three times the present effort. Moreover, the decentralization and the rationalization of the structures responsible for the promotion and management of the public habitat operations, has been started with on the one hand the unicity of the structures and the management rules and, on the other hand with the creation of a public office of industrial and commercial nature for the promotion and the management of the real estate in each wilaya. Moreover, and with a view to insuring to everybody the right to a house, a committee responsible for the attribution of houses and presided over by the wali is to be set up in each wilaya. Finally, a small part of the public programmes can be sold to the saving citizens.



The contribution of the private sector to the urban habitat effort will be developed especially within the housing cooperative structures whose animation and coordination will be carried out by the communes.

These cooperatives which will be genuine democratic structures will allow for the mobilization and the contribution of the masses to the collective task of construction while directing private savings towards building investments.

In rural areas, the access to the private ownership of individual houses as a result of the contribution is secured within the self building system through which the communes make all the necessary materials and technical assistance available to the beneficiaries.

In order to insure a maximum participation of the population to the habitat actions, an appropriate financial policy is being implemented. It is however useful to recall that in the field of rural habitat the whole financial effort is assumed by the state in the form of definitive contributions. As for the public programmes of urban habitat, more than three quarters of the costs are financed by the state in the form of long run loans with a very low interest rate (A sort of subsidies), the rest being financed by a specialised public bank.

As for the co-operatives, measures are to be taken in order to develop the savings system and to make it more flexible as well as to reduce the taxation for their benefit.

This set of measures should enable the state to devote its effort to the public programmes generally in favour of the poorest people.

Within the overall policy of town and rural planning in which habitat plays a key role, the actions undertaken are aimed at a better distribution of habitat as the framework for life and the support of economic activities. In this respect, considerable efforts are being made so as the relations habitat labour are as harmonious as possible.

In that spirit, the problems of the location of the agricultural socialist villages are seriously considered not only as regards their physical integration within the environment but also as regards their relationship with the agricultural activities of their inhabitants. Similarly, the actions undertaken in the field of self building are aimed at creating those living conditions compatible with the needs of the isolated peasants.

In urban areas, this is illustrated by a control of the big cities growth and the safeguard of agricultural lands, by the achievement of habitat actions in the poor lands of the middle size cities combined with the location of more and more deconcentrated industrial activities and, on the other hand by the achievement of new zones of urban habitat with all the facilities and activities necessary to the operation of these units while ensuring that the development of agglomerations is conducted in accordance with the present urban network and that the importance of the new facilities takes into account the possible deficits of the existing agglomeration.

The necessary legal instrument for the implementation of that policy has been set up. It stipulates that each commune will be given a plan which would define the general framework for its development and set forth the major actions to be undertaken for that purpose, namely the investments to be decided upon. This plan will be applied for the whole territory of the commune, in rural areas as well as in agglomerations.

These communal development plans will constitute the basis for the geographical planning system which will also include the development plans of the wilayate and inter wilaya plans.

## II - THE EDUCATIVE AND SOCIAL COLLECTIVE FACILITIES

The improvement of the living conditions of the population implies that the habitat achievements should be systematically supplemented by appropriate social policies and facilities capable to meet the most urgent needs both in quality and quantity.

In this field, the backwardness of our country on the morrow of independence was particularly significant. Entire regions, in fact the great majority of the country was deprived of educative, health, cultural facilities etc...

The importance of that backwardness, the obstacles and shortcomings left by the colonial era as well as the absolute necessity to devote the maximum of the country's capacities to the edification of a national economy capable of satisfying in the medium term the primary need vis employment, have imposed on us to adopt a selective approach for the satisfaction of the demand in the field of educational, social and collective facilities.

As from the beginning the choices have been clearly made. The decisive criterium for the definition and the achievement of programmes was and still is the necessity to affect the greater number of people and above all the poorest among them. Thus, within the income re-distribution policy, actions for the bridging of the deepest gaps were undertaken through the various special programmes for the wilayate, daïrate or communes.

Almost the whole of the poor population has enjoyed the fruits of these efforts which affected - inter alia - water supply, improvement of the sanitation in agglomerations, rural electrification, habitat in the form of self building, functional literacy programmes for the workers in urban and rural areas, vast programmes for free meals at school designed to affect half of the school population.

Similarly, actions affecting the whole of the country are also designed to progressively and systematically improve the health, educational and cultural facilities of the country.

As shown on the "education map", primary schools, secondary schools and universities are in the point of view of distance, getting nearer and nearer to the population.

In this connexion, it should be noted that education for almost all 6 year old children was secured several years ago thanks to the particularly intensive efforts for the building of schools throughout the country both in urban and rural areas. These efforts are currently pursued beyond the primary education period as a result of the education reform which secures for all Algerian children a 9 year school period through the setting up of a unique 9 year cycle called "fundamental school".

As for health facilities, the following objectives are to be reached by 1980.

- 1) - Communes (population ranging from 5 000 to 15 000 inhabitants).
  - One health center for 3 000 to 5 000 people and a polyclinic including a center for the protection of mothers and children.
- 2) - Dafra (30 000 to 100 000 inhabitants).
  - 1 sector for medical and social action (S.M.S.A) for the management of small units and 1 hospital with 240 beds!
- 3) - Wilaya (300 000 to 800 000 inhabitants).
  - 1 hospital with 600 beds and even more.
  - 1 paramedical training school.
  - 1 hygiene laboratory.
- 4) At the national scale

In addition to the university hospital centers(UHC), the National Public Health Institute is responsible for the research and study activities in the field of health.

In the field of culture and leisure, facilities in conformity with the size of the cities and the needs of their inhabitants are to be achieved. This, all socialist villages have a minimum infrastructure for that purpose, each school is equiped with sport facilities, the chief towns of the dafrate (150) will have a sport park and a youth center etc..., all chief towns of the wilayate (31) will have culture center and an omnisport park including a big stadium, an in door omnisport hall, an in door swimming pool and several grounds.

As regards their conception, the habitat programmes are always designed and achieved together with the whole collective facilities necessary to the life of the inhabitants. This general approach is materialized within the Urban Modernization Plans, the Communal Development Plans and the socialist villages.

Within the 2nd Four years Plan, the 40 Urban Modernization Plans which have been adopted are aimed not only at coordinating all types of investments on the scale of cities, but also to reduce during the Plan period (1974-1977) the deficit in the field of collective facilities (water supply, improvement of sanitary conditions, urban development, socio-cultural, administrative, commercial and other facilities.)

These Urban Modernization Plans, while allowing for a mastery over urban growth for a better adaptation of their development to the evolution of their population and activities within a well balanced urban growth, are aimed at eliminating the deficit in facilities of all our cities.

The following figures show the efforts displayed during the second four years Plan (1974 - 1977).

Within the 1974 - 1977 Four years Plan, 4 billion dinars are devoted to the 40 biggest cities of the country with nearly 55 % for water supply and the improvement of sanitation and 25 % for the planning of new urban areas.

Similarly, the communal development plans have also been devoted, in rural areas and small agglomeration, to collective facilities such as water supply and the improvement of sanitation. 1.2 billion dinars are devoted within the 2nd Four years Plan to these 2 actions. This effort which represents a significant progress will be intensified in the coming stages.

Finally, a set of legal texts organize and regulate the State action, and those of the local collectivities and economic units in the field of social protection and the promotion of the citizens.

Education is free for everybody at all levels including university through a system of scholarships and pre-salaries which effectively illustrates the principle of the democratization of education and equal opportunities.

In addition to the establishment of free medical care in 1974, special legal texts secure social allowances for all the workers in urban and rural areas and a "family law" designed to protect the weakest social categories, is about to be achieved. The economic units whatever their field of action or status are compelled to make the workers contribute to the management of a social fund designed to improve their working and living conditions.

Despite the progress achieved within a relatively short period, much remains to be achieved in all fields! The qualitative and quantitative improvement pace is obviously linked to the human and physical capacities of the country!



It would be indeed illusive to try to approach the problem of the satisfaction of social needs without considering it in relation with the possibilities and the choices of economic and social development.

It is therefore first through the development of the possibilities of action resulting from the development efforts that the clear choices as regards principles will become little by little a reality for the benefit of all the citizens and consequently, the backwardness will be gradually eliminated and the differences between rural and urban areas and between social categories will be reduced.

Considered as a basic need of the citizens and recognized as such both in the development plans and in a specific text, the "habitat law", the housing policy is also conceived as a decisive element for a rational occupation of the territory by the population and economic activities.

In this approach, the essential element consists in struggling against all forms of disorder, waste or disparity resulting from social inequalities or from inherited situations. Therefore the public authorities did not limit themselves to the launching of important and diversified programmes both in urban and rural areas ; three important measures have been taken in order to master the real evolution of this sector.

The first one is the law on "land reserves" (cf. annex I) which creates communal land reserves managed by the popular communal assemblies which are also the only institutions responsible for all land transactions. This measure, which is the counterpart of the agrarian revolution in urban areas, constitutes a privileged instrument of urban planning in the hands of local authorities.

The second measure, which is now materialized, determines a unique and decentralized framework for the elaboration, action and management processes : the commune either through the urban modernization plans for the cities, or through the communal development plans for the rural areas or small agglomerations.

Thus the local collectivities are directly associated to the elaboration of programmes mainly through the planning and the definition of the needs, the achievement of projected operations, the determination of the quality of the houses to be built.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS,  
 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE ALGERIAN POLICY OF  
 HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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Among the fundamental objectives of the national development strategy, there is a particularly important one, that aimed at giving all Algerians equal opportunities for promotion and progress. Through this objective, it is the whole problem of the relations between urban and rural areas which is apprehended in all its complexity and its multifold aspects.

Any action of economic development, a fortiori like ours, which aims at edifying a powerful and structured industrial economy, may provoke or aggravate the existing disparities between the urban and the rural worlds if it does not integrate as from the beginning, the whole rural world and its population within the very development project and in the distribution of its activities and effects :

Aware of the stake and the danger represented by a non controlled urbanization and its consequences on rural migration, the various development plans give an outstanding place to all what is related to rural areas either directly, through the development of agricultural production and the improvement of the living and working conditions of the rural population, or indirectly through the choice and location of industrial projects and all actions of training and cultural and social promotion.

However, in the early years of independence, the gravity of rural under employment, the multiple effects of the liberation war, mainly the massive gatherings which affected more than 3 million people uprooted from their land and villages, the overall under-equipment of the rural world, have provoked large migration movements which are still affecting the big cities of the country.

It is a transitory and inevitable situation as long as the national economy cannot satisfy the basic needs and all employment of the population wherever it lives. The problem is not that of a migration phenomenon but that of the reasons for its existence, namely to great a disparity, in the field of activities and income between the various places and regions. As long as a striking unbalance exists between the employment supply and the effective demand in the rural world, it would be useless or even unfair to try to check through artificial barriers a movement which is after all equivalent to a struggle for survival. The migrants are not motivated by any attraction of the city but they are often obliged to leave their original regions because the latter cannot offer them decent living conditions. Therefore the only valuable response, consists of a judicious distribution of economic activities as well as social and educative infrastructures throughout the national territory in order to progressively reduce the competition between urban and rural areas.

It is this approach that Algeria is endeavouring to materialize in proportion with its physical and human possibilities, while trying to bring permanent solutions to the problems of employment income and living conditions of the whole population in particular that of the rural areas who is the poorest and the most numerous. In fact it represents more than 60 % of the total number i.e more than 9 million people who are

Obligated to try to live on hardly 7 million hectares of useful agricultural lands. These figures clearly show the importance and the complexity of the agrarian problem in Algeria, where agricultural activities as such cannot satisfy the employment needs of the masses.

This is all the more true that until the implementation of an overall agrarian reform 4 years ago, the agricultural lands were unequally distributed. Apart from the modern sector essentially represented by the 2 million hectares of the self managed agricultural sector on which live about 1 million people, out of the rest, the big owners whose number is but 2 % of the total number, possess 25 % of the cultivable lands whereas the peasants who possess less than 5 hectares and constitute the overwhelming majority (more than 50 %) of lands owners, have but 10 % of that surface.

With the implementation of the Agrarian Revolution, things have considerably changed. More than 80,000 small peasants and landless peasants and their families have already been granted some land within a co-operative management system which protects them against any form of exploitation and ensure them a decent income.

But, as for our concern, that is to say the relations between urban and rural areas within a policy of human settlements, the most important thing is the new dynamics introduced by the Agrarian Revolution in rural areas as well as in the whole of the political, administrative and technical structures which are compelled to renew their framework of action and their practices in accordance with the fundamental objectives of the Agrarian Revolution which tends to the progressive but radical transformation of the living and working conditions of the peasants masses as a whole.

It is in that spirit that a series of new structures are being set up which give the rural world a new aspect and save it from the lethargy imposed on it during the colonial period.

Thus, in addition to the new prospects of the valorization of the land and the intensification of the production made possible by more appropriate structures of exploitation, the agricultural workers are the exclusive beneficiaries of the fruits of their labour since all forms of absenteeism are forbidden and consequently the benefits of agricultural labour are no longer like in the past directly transferred towards the urban world.

An ambitious programme for the improvement of the living conditions of the rural population is under implementation with a direct participation of the beneficiaries through their own organs : co-operatives, self managed units, Popular Communal Assemblies. These multiform programmes cover habitat (self building or Socialist villages), health, water supply, communications and affect all the communes of the country.

Despite its importance, this additional programme to the operations of land re-distribution, cannot fulfill the final objective aimed at the reduction of the differences of welfare between urban and rural areas. So, in order to be in conformity with the spirit of the national development strategy, and within a long term town and urban planning policy, hundreds of small and medium industry projects have been launched since the 2nd Four years Plan (1974-1977) all over the wilayate as a strengthening of the industrialization policy and an important element of regional development in addition to the efforts displayed within the Agrarian Revolution.

It is too early to try to draw any conclusion about this series of integrated actions aimed at the dynamization of rural areas, their equipment with social, educative and cultural facilities as well as the diffusion of development throughout the country. However we hope to avoid the creation of relatively prosperous urban islets and we intend to lay the basis for a rational distribution of the population through the gathering wherever possible and feasible of the physical, human and structural elements for the promotion of all the regions of the country.

THE LESSONS DRAWN FROM THE ALGERIAN  
POLICY OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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Finally, the national policy of human settlements is marked by the progressive materialization of the options of the edification of an economic and social order for and by all Algerians.

It is obvious that a new society capable of satisfying the basic aspirations of all the population could not be achieved within a few years under such conditions as those of Algeria (mainly in view of the tragic legacy of the colonial past). Therefore, the major concern of the authorities was to direct all the efforts for social progress in favour of the poorest. The reduction of socio territorial disparities through a policy of economic and social investments designed to eliminate the backwardness in the economic, cultural and social fields at a regional level, was the major element of the development strategy adopted and materialized in the various development plans and the special programmes of the wilayate and the communes. They allowed for the materialization of the fundamental objectives aimed at giving all Algerians equal opportunities for promotion and progress.

As the majority of the poor live in rural areas, the major part of the already achieved objectives and those under achievement both as regards quality (transformation of the production structures and the institutions) and quantity, was in favour of the human settlements of the Algerian rural world.



Beyond the inherited social dualism, another Algeria is coming to life and taking its inspiration from the ideals of the Algerian Revolution whose basis was, as from the early days of its launching 20 years ago, the claim for a social order reflecting the necessities of social justice and dignity for all Algerians.

The edification of a society tending to equality before the boons and the tasks of development cannot be successful and this is another lesson of the Algerian experience - but if it is achieved by those who are concerned. The participation of the collegial bodies elected either by the citizens in the case of local collectivities, or by the workers assemblies in the case of production units, the voluntary work organized for the success of the strategic objectives of the Algerian Revolution namely the Agrarian Revolution, were as many basic elements of a more rapid and economical social transformation adapted to the aspirations of those who are concerned who are more aware of the realities than any central administration, whatever efficient it may be.

However, the self reliant materialization of this internal order cannot be fully successful but if external constraints will not hamper our way towards economic and social progress. After the analyses made in the recent years in the developing countries and by the United Nations Conferances, in particular the VI special session of the General Assembly, it is useless to prove that the present situation of the developing countries is a result of the relations based on domination established from the beginning of modern times. This injustice is persisting despite decolonization ; it is aggravated by the lack of equity in international economic relations which provokes disparities in the standards of living. In many general declarations

and action plans adopted within the United Nations, especially at the World Conference on Population, the responsibilities of the developed countries vis a vis the Third World peoples were emphasized similarly, the waste of the resources of the Planet by one third of Mankind who consume beyond rational needs, 80 to 90 % of raw materials was denounced.

It has been pointed out in each conference that only a transformation of international economic relations and the adoption of a development strategy aimed at a fair distribution of income between nations could create the conditions for development and a greater harmony between the economic and demographic growth pace.

These are the pre-requisites for an efficient demographic policy and for a genuine policy of human settlements in conformity with the needs of the majority of the world population who is subsisting under inhuman conditions of malnutrition, illiteracy and economic and social poverty.