

# Formulation of Development Strategies in Rural Management of Iran Using Strategic Planning Approach

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## Extended Abstract

### Introduction

Nowadays the issue of management is deeply important because of limited facilities and unlimited humans needs. In other word, having a developed society involves application of a systematic and powerful management system. Management is a practice of utilizing all available resources to obtain the defined goals. Rural development management can be defined as the activity and process of managing the development process in the rural areas. Most of the problems in context of development in Iran are resulted from the rural areas, actually. Having more than 65000 villages and concentrating of more than 85 percent of natural resources in the areas made rural as the key element for taking step toward development. Besides, achieving to the national and urban development goals is depended on development of rural areas. Therefore, from the past until nowadays, there have been different

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forms of rural systems in Iran. But this management system has failed to lead to development in the areas.

Rural management system in Iran from the past to the present was faced with numerous structural and functional challenges. It seems we need to establish coordination between internal and external forces and factors affecting rural development by applying systemic approach to conductive rural management system and conduct it in a positive direction. This study seeks to survey the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Iranian villages by surveying experts and researchers and then by using of strategic planning framework formulating the appropriate strategies for development of rural management system in Iran.

### **Methodology**

Methodology in this study regarding the nature of the research is descriptive-analytic. Based on the nature of management studies, the needed data and documents are collected by both library and survey methods. The main techniques in this article are strategic planning.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) is the first step of planning and it helps planners to focus on key subjects. SWOT method is a key tool used in businesses to formulate strategic plans. SWOT matrix comprises four strategic groups:

1. How strengths are used to take advantage of opportunities.
2. How weaknesses are reduced by taking advantage of opportunities.
3. How strengths are used to reduce the impact of threats.
4. How weaknesses that will make these threats a reality are addressed.

Singh (2010) conducted SWOT analysis in identifying strategies for community development. Based on this exercise, the following five categories were identified and prioritized by villagers for developing of rural management systems:

1. Identifying internal factors including strengths and weaknesses.

2. Identifying external factors including opportunities and threats,
3. Identifying the key strategic issues,
4. Evaluations of options and selection of strategies,
5. Implementation and management of the chosen strategies.

## Results

This research analysis the internal and external factors and the indices affecting the rural environment and rural management development. The results of this research show that the main challenges in the rural management in Iran include such a following options:

1. Having no experiences in rural in the context of newly management systems (rural councils and dehyariha).
2. Continuously changing structure of rural management development in the past few decades,
3. Having no favorite management in rural systems,
4. Multiplicity of agencies and organizations involved in rural affairs,
5. Up to down planning and management systems,
6. The lock of devolution of necessary powers from central government to rural councils.

The following capacities and opportunities exist in the rural areas:

1. Having immense experience in the contexts of traditional rural management models,
2. Having enough background on the context of culture of public participation and assignment of a wide range of tasks to the local management such a rural councils,
3. signing protocols between the various government organizations and rural councils and Dehyariha to create common ground for solving facing problems and challenges.

Totally, developing the management systems of rural areas in Iran can be traced

back from social, cultural, economic, and administrative factors. Hence, the following strategies are proposed:

The first strategy is empowerment and capacity building of village leaders and local institutions. The second strategy is re-organization and recreation of structural-institutional dimension of rural management systems.

The third strategy is development of participatory management and assignment of authority, control and management of rural development to the local managers, officials and local institutes (including Islamic rural councils, Dehyariha and other NGOs). The fourth strategy is developing and financing of infrastructure, services, and required equipment for local and other agencies.

The fifth strategy is development of network management systems and increasing rural managers and community skills by providing educational processes and transforming of new technologies and methods and finally by teaching new models and techniques of rural management and experiences to the managers.

**Keywords:** Management, Planning, rural, Strategic, Village.

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