

## Investigation of Major Challenges of Rural Development in Iran Utilizing Delphi Technique

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### ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the factors causing the rural underdevelopment in Iran. To fulfill this objective, Delphi technique, as a method of refining group opinions and substituting computed consensus for an agreed-upon majority opinion, was used. The study used a series of three steps questionnaires. Findings indicated that lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development, unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions, lack of coordinated programs in rural development, weak management of governmental structures and lack of diversification in non-agricultural activities such as tourism are the most important challenges which can create an inappropriate condition for the development of Iranian rural communities.

**Keywords:** Capacity building, Entrepreneurship, Migration, National opportunity, Rural community.

### INTRODUCTION

In the early years of the 21st century, while many people around the world are living in abundance of goods and capitals, too many others in rural areas suffer from lack of basic goods and services. Large numbers of the poor and other marginalized populations in many developing countries are already affected by the global economic crisis through slow economic growth and insufficient opportunities for improving and promoting their livelihood (Chibba, 2011). In most developing countries, because of weak essential infrastructure, large numbers of peasants are deprived of opportunities to growth and development (Karbasioun *et al.*, 2008). To reach the millennium development goals, these challenges must be overcome particularly by adopting comprehensive strategies that empower rural poor (United Nations Millennium Declaration, 2000).

The main characteristic of the perceived development approach in the 1960's and early 1970's was intense industrialization. Later, during the 70's, based on equity considerations, the focus and definition of rural development turned to the provision of social services to the rural poor and promotion of standards of living (CIRDAP, 2006). In the USA, Since 1990s, local and states governmental authorities have followed comprehensive programs, such as land use, transportation, and environmental issues to access more sustainable planning and development (Grodach, 2011). Rural development program in Europe during 2000–2006, beside economic theme included the social theme to improve participation of marginalized and under-represented groups in organizations, activities and events, and to promote community development to weak community infrastructure regions (Shortall, 2008).

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In the early 1990s, the term rural development became synonymous with agricultural development. During this period, the development community explicitly accepted poverty reduction as the major objective of development programs and the related literature demonstrated the links between agriculture and poverty reduction (Salami *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, rural development is a comprehensive and multidimensional concept, which involves agricultural development and other rural related industries (Zamani Poor, 2001).

Rural development is a multilevel, multi-actor, and multifaceted process that is affected by different elements including developmental model, the relationship between agriculture, industry and society, social and economic aspects and rural economic activities individual farm and local policies and institutions (Long *et al.*, 2011). Obviously, economic development is an urgent priority for the world to meet the millenniums development goals (United Nation Declaration, 2000). Since various factors such as privatization, uncertain economical status, world trade, etc., have affected regional economy, tourism industry could be an appropriate strategy for economic growth and prosperity in infrastructure and other sectors (Sharply, 2002).

Rural development involves economic emphasis on various non-farm activities, ecotourism, handicrafts, off farm activities, and extended social and physical infrastructures (Rivera and Qamar, 2003). The level of economic activities contained within local economies is an important consideration in the theme of rural economic development. Indeed, the ability and strength of local economic interactions are pre-requisite for sustainable economic development (Courtney *et al.*, 2006).

Moreover, development process consists of fundamental changes in social institutions, administrative structure, cultural systems, and reorganization of social and international economic systems (Iheriohanma and Oguoma, 2005). However,

development definitions have varied because of changes in the goals of development. A reasonable definition of rural development would be: "development that benefits rural populations; where development is understood as the sustained improvement of the population's standards of living or welfare" (Anríquez, and Stamoulis, 2007). Overall, definition of sustainable development introduces three inclusive themes consisting of economics, environment, and social aspects. Sustainability indicator systems and composite indicators intend to consider ecological, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of development in order to be considered a comprehensive scale towards sustainable development (Krank and Wallbaum, 2011).

Agriculture is the largest economic sector in developing countries and the most important sector in creating economic opportunities. Dependence on agriculture is the main feature in most developing countries. Nonetheless, public policies and investments in developing countries have favored industrial, urban, and service sectors versus rural development (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007).

In recent decades, because of some transformation like technological developments, demographic changes, urbanization, globalization, and improved communication facilities, the framework conditions for rural development have changed fundamentally (Schild, 2010). Also, uncoordinated urban-rural development has created problems with agricultural production, low farm incomes and the need for broader rural development (Long *et al.*, 2011). These facts have created serious challenges for rural development projects in developing countries.

In different studies, some factors such as deficiency in education, inappropriate technology, and social and cultural exclusion inhibit economic growth (Figueroa, 1999). This fact confirms the statement by Barichello who said: "for most developing countries, the bulk of their

poverty is found in rural areas, which raises questions about the structure of these economies, specifically the relative size and importance of the agricultural sector” (Barichello, 2004).

Despite the importance of rural areas in agricultural sector in Iran, unfortunately, little attention has been paid by policy makers to this matter (Ashly and Maxwell, 2001). Karami and Rezaee Moghadam declared that socio-economic and environmental conditions of the farm production system have led to the relative poverty of Iranian farmers (Karami, and Rezaei-Moghaddam, 1998). Despite the fact that education is an essential prerequisite for poverty reduction and also for improving the living conditions of rural people, the quality of education in rural areas is still lower than in urban areas (Gautier, 2003).

Over the past 25 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has reduced inequalities between cities and villages through making considerable investments in rural regions; however, presently, the necessity of focusing on development in rural areas is more evident than ever (CIRDAP, 2006).

The development of a rural area must be planned within the framework of the general national strategy (Oddershede *et al.*, 2007). In order to establish a sustainable and efficient rural development in Iran, almost every village needs special monetary supports, infrastructural improvement, marketing facilities, rural cooperatives, efficient water supply networks, education and diverse economic activities, which demand active and sustainable involvement of local communities and institutions (Kalantari, *et al.*, 2008).

Rural development structure in Iran has experienced numerous evolutions during recent decades. Over the past two decades, the merging of the two ministries of Construction Jihad and Agriculture, to form the ministry of Agricultural Jihad, lowered the organizational position of decision making about rural regions to, first, a “division” and, later, to a “department”. Finally, this department was downsized in

2010, and, presently, it has the least importance in administrative structure since its initial formation (Roknodine Eftekhari and Sajasi Gheidari, 2011).

Today, several governmental organizations are responsible for rural development in Iran, but the most influential institution in rural development is the Ministry of Jihad-e Agriculture. Other ministries are involved in the process of rural development based on their areas of responsibilities. Hence, rural problems are tackled by various government institutions which require appropriate co-ordination and cooperation among them. Unfortunately, lack of such cooperation in rural development is a fundamental challenge affecting sustainable rural development in Iran (Kalantari *et al.*, 2008; Karbasioun *et al.*, 2008).

Generating employment in the rural areas requires measures such as technical and financial assistance, coordination among various organizations, motivating the rural community for investment on various aspects of rural economy, and taking measure to reverse villagers’ migration to cities (CIRDAP, 2006).

The most important problems related to rural and agricultural development in Iran cited by researchers are: limitations of macro-economic policies in the agricultural sector, the small size of agricultural lands and production scales, and insufficient investment in infrastructure (Kalantari, 1995). Kalantari *et al.* (2008) declared economic management and planning challenges. Lack of investment in tourism, lack of basic infrastructure, and limited access to agricultural production markets, are other main challenges of sustainable economic development of rural areas in Iran. Several national and international surveys conducted on different aspects of rural development in Iran have emphasized the fact that the situational assessment and priority determination of rural development issues are considered essential factors in any development approach. Thus, in this study, in order to determine the underdevelopment



factors in Iran's rural regions, this study was conducted using Delphi method to generate consensus among rural experts.

#### Purpose

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the factors causing rural underdevelopment in Iran. The secondary purpose of this study was to categorize and present the rural development priorities into a working model.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This qualitative study used Delphi technique to identify effective factors in rural development in Iran. Helmer (1966) described the Delphi technique as a method of refining group opinions and substituting computed consensus for an agreed-upon majority opinion. Delphi technique is a major method used in program planning, need assessment, development of curriculum political decisions and resource utilization (Ludwig, B. 1994; Hus and Sandford, 2007). According to the literature, the Delphi technique has several advantageous features including (1) anonymity, (2) writing responses, (3) controlled feedback (Delbecq *et al.*, 1975).

The expert panel consisted of three group from Tehran University and Tarbiat Modares University faculty members ( $n=12$ ), PhD students ( $n=14$ ) who were teaching or studying agricultural economics, agricultural extension and education, rural development, social science and rural planning, and rural development experts and executive staff in the Ministry of Jihad-e Agriculture in Iran ( $n=12$ ). In total, this panel consisted of 38 professionals and experts of rural development in Iran ( $N=38$ ).

Faculty members and Ph D students and professional staff in the Ministry of Jihad-e Agriculture were selected based upon their positional expertise. The researchers used a series of three step questionnaires. The first round asked an open-ended question: What are the most import factors of rural

underdevelopment in Iran? This question was used to generate an array of response categories that were used to produce items for a second round questionnaire. Responses were categorized into a list of 33 characteristics. In the second round, panel members were asked to rate each of the 33 characteristics identified in the first round using a five point Likert-type scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Uncertain, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree).

From the results of the second round and comments listed by respondents, a third round was developed that separated and expanded the list of 33 factors. The third round sought to arrive at consensus. During this round panel members were presented individual and group results from the second round and asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with each of the 33 statements. The researchers set the agreement level a priori at 70%. All items which did not receive agreement from 70% of the panel respondents were removed from the list of factors. Literature indicates that consensus in Delphi method can be reached in three rounds and, most commonly, three rounds proved sufficient to attain stability in the responses (Caldwell, 2005). Consensus was achieved on 30 of the factors at this level, therefore, no further rounds were deemed necessary. To produce more usable results, the 30 factors were divided into categories. The latter method was used in this study by placing each item into a category with similar characteristics.

## RESULTS

The first objective of this study sought to identify the factors affecting rural underdevelopment in Iran. The first round asked an open-ended question, i.e. what are the most import factors of rural underdevelopment in Iran? With a response rate of 95%, thirty three factors were identified from the 38 respondents (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Round one: Challenges of rural development (n= 38).

Rank	Factors	Responses
1	Unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions (ways, banks, schools, etc).	23
2	Lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development.	21
3	Unequal distribution of income, welfare and national facilities and opportunities among industry and agriculture sectors.	18
4	Central system in rural development planning and decision making.	18
5	Cultural and traditional obstacles governing the rural regions.	17
6	Lack of accurate and actual recognition of rural communities, their needs and indigenous knowledge.	15
7	Low education level of rural communities	15
8	Structural defect in operational system in majority of rural areas such as small farmers	14
9	Lack of attention to rural development challenges by responsible departments.	14
10	Institutional and social capacity building in rural societies has not emphasized.	14
11	Weak management of governmental structures and varied programs.	13
12	Rural poverty	12
13	Natural disasters such as flood, drought and nipping result lack of production.	12
14	Limit access to knowledge and up-to-date science in rural region	12
15	Lack of an autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development	12
16	Lack of informal education system	11
17	Increasing rate of migration of rural population to urban regions	11
18	Ineffective co operations and micro economic in rural areas	11
19	Absence of participation and team working among peasants	11
20	Insufficient government investment in rural sectors and lack of financial supports	10
21	politicize of rural development issue and lake of accountability	10
22	Lack of diversification in non-agricultural activities such as tourism	10
23	Low productivity in agricultural operations	9
24	Limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing	9
25	Lack of coordinated programs in rural development (programming, operation and assessment)	9
26	Limited access to appropriate technology in rural areas	8
27	Shortage of job opportunities and unemployment of rural people	8
28	Lack of entrepreneurship and creativeness among rural people	6
29	Theoretical weakness and lack of an appropriate operational model for rural development	5
30	weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities	4
31	High population rate in rural areas	3
32	Uncoordinated rural development plans and policies with international economic issues	2
33	Low attention to land utilization programs in rural areas.	1

In the second round, panel members were asked to rate each of the 33 characteristics identified in the first round using a five point Likert-type scale. Thirty of the 38 panel members responded in round two for a response rate of 79%. Results of round two are displayed in Table 2.

Based upon responses in the second round, panel members were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each of the identified factors. Thirty of the 38 panel members responded in this round for a 79% response rate. As indicated in Table 3, panel members identified 30 factors facing rural

development in Iran. All of the respondents agreed on the followings as being the main challenges: lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development; unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions (roads, banks, schools, etc); ineffective co-operations and micro economic in rural areas; and lack of coordinated programs in rural development (programming, operation, and assessment). Also, all but one respondent agreed that centralized system in rural development planning and decision making as well as weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities;

**Table 2:** Round Two: Level of agreement with challenges of rural underdevelopment (n= 30).

Rank	Challenges	<i>M</i> <sup>a</sup>	<i>SD</i>
1	Lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development.	4.71	0.38
2	Unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions (ways, banks, schools, etc).	4.71	0.55
3	Lack of an autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development	4.68	0.71
4	Ineffective cooperations and micro economic in rural areas	4.57	0.53
5	Lack of coordinated programs in rural development (programming, operation and assessment)	4.57	0.77
6	Limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing	4.50	0.56
7	Absence of participation and team working among peasants	4.48	0.63
8	Weak management of governmental structures and varied programs.	4.42	0.33
9	Low education level of rural communities	4.42	0.92
10	Structural defect in operational system in majority of rural areas such as small farmers	4.37	0.44
11	Centralized system in rural development planning and decision making.	4.37	0.63
12	Limited access to appropriate technology in rural areas	4.37	0.65
13	Lack of diversification in non-agricultural activities such as tourism	4.24	0.56
14	Institutional and social capacity building in rural societies is not emphasized.	4.24	0.63
15	Cultural and traditional obstacles governing the rural regions.	4.19	0.48
16	Uncoordinated rural development plans and policies with international economic issues	4.16	0.66
17	weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities	4.16	0.72
18	Theoretical weakness and lack of an appropriate operational model for rural development	4.12	0.53
19	Lack of informal education system	4.12	0.64
20	Limit access to knowledge and up-to-date science in rural region	4.12	0.69
21	Natural disasters such as flood, drought and nipping result lack of production.	4.12	0.69
22	Unequal distribution of income, welfare and national facilities and opportunities among industry and agriculture sectors.	4.12	0.74
23	High population rate in rural areas	4.10	0.53
24	Increasing rate of migration of rural population to urban regions	4.06	0.48
25	Lack of entrepreneurship and creativeness among rural people	4.06	0.53
26	Rural poverty	4.06	0.61
27	politicize of rural development issue and lake of accountability	4.03	0.72
28	Lack of accurate and actual recognition of rural communities, their needs and indigenous knowledge.	4.03	0.62
29	Insufficient government investment in rural sectors and lack of financial supports	3.96	0.72
30	Shortage of job opportunities and unemployment of rural people	3.96	0.94
31	Lack of attention to rural development challenges by responsible departments.	3.90	0.66
32	Low productivity in agricultural operations	3.85	0.72
33	Low attention to land utilization programs in rural areas.	3.78	0.86

<sup>a</sup> 1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Uncertain; 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree.

*M*: mean. *SD*: standard deviation.

lack of an autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development; and limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing are the secondary challenges in rural development.

The second objective of the study sought to categorize the factors of rural underdevelopment into a working model. In this model, four categories were identified as major factors facing rural development in Iran. As mentioned in Table 4, challenges identified in round three were categorized

into economic; management, regulations, and political; social; and infrastructural and environmental challenges.

## DISCUSSION

There were two objectives for this study, hence, two conclusions were acquired. The first objective was to identify the major challenges of rural underdevelopment in Iran. Thirty-three challenges were

**Table 3.** Round Three: Level of Agreement with Challenges (n= 30).

Rank	Challenges	Agree (%) <sup>a</sup>
1	Lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development.	100.00
2	Unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions (ways, banks, schools, etc).	100.00
3	Ineffective co operations and micro economic in rural areas	100.00
4	Lack of coordinated programs in rural development (programming, operation and assessment)	100.00
5	Weak management of governmental structures and varied programs.	100.00
6	Centralized system in rural development planning and decision making.	96.67
7	weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities	96.67
8	Lack of an autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development	96.67
9	Limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing	96.67
10	Limited access to appropriate technology in rural areas	93.33
11	Lack of diversification in non-agricultural activities such as tourism	93.33
12	Absence of participation and team working among peasants	93.33
13	Low education level of rural communities	93.33
14	Structural defect in operational system in majority of rural areas such as small farmers	86.67
15	Shortage of job opportunities and unemployment of rural people	86.67
16	Institutional and social capacity building in rural societies is not emphasized.	86.67
17	Cultural and traditional obstacles governing the rural regions.	86.67
18	Insufficient government investment in rural sectors and lack of financial supports	86.67
19	Theoretical weakness and lack of an appropriate operational model for rural development	80.00
20	Lack of informal education system	80.00
21	Uncoordinated rural development plans and policies with international economic issues	80.00
22	Limit access to knowledge and up-to-date science in rural region	80.00
23	Unequal distribution of income, welfare and national facilities and opportunities among industry and agriculture sectors.	76.67
24	Natural disasters such as flood, drought and nipping result lack of production.	76.67
25	High population rate in rural areas	76.67
26	Increasing rate of migration of rural population to urban regions	76.67
27	Lack of entrepreneurship and creativeness among rural people	73.33
28	Rural poverty	73.33
29	Politicize of rural development issue and lake of accountability	73.33
30	Lack of accurate and actual recognition of rural communities, their needs and indigenous knowledge.	73.33

<sup>a</sup> Level of agreement set a priori at 80% to retain challenges.

recognized lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development, unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions, lack of coordinated programs in rural development (programming, operation and assessment), and weak management of governmental structures showed to have the highest agreement among respondents as they indicated the main rural development challenges.

Today, rural development programs in Iran are conducted by governmental organizations through centralized planning and implementation framework. Results from the present study and similar ones (Kalantari *et al.*, 2008) have shown that a kind of decentralized planning in rural

project is required. This kind of management would encourage more participation by public and private sectors, and could promote rural development process. Studies by Fe'li *et al.* (2010) and Epstein and Jezeph (2001) support this finding.

Hence, improvements in economic structure of rural areas is essential for diversification of rural economy including promotion of tourism industry and business activities, promotion of rural markets facilities, encouraging private and governmental investment.

On the other hand, lack of favorable infrastructure and linkages between agriculture and rural areas and urban or industrial sector, lack of informal education

**Table 4:** Categorized challenges of rural underdevelopment in Iran.

Challenges	Category
Economic challenges	Ineffective co operations and micro economic in rural areas Rural poverty weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities Limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing Insufficient government investment in rural sectors and lack of financial supports Uncoordinated rural development plans and policies with international economic issues Lack of diversification in non-agricultural activities such as tourism
Management, regulations and political challenges	Lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development. Weak management of governmental structures and varied programs. Politicize of rural development issue and lake of accountability Theoretical weakness and lack of an appropriate operational model for rural development Lack of an autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development Centralized system in rural development planning and decision making. Lack of coordinated programs in rural development (programming, operation and assessment)
Social challenges	High population rate in rural areas Increasing rate of migration of rural population to urban regions Lack of entrepreneurship and creativeness among rural people Lack of accurate and actual recognition of rural communities, their needs and indigenous knowledge. Institutional and social capacity building in rural societies is not emphasized. Cultural and traditional obstacles governing the rural regions. Shortage of job opportunities and unemployment of rural people Absence of participation and team working among peasants
infrastructural and environmental challenges	Low education level of rural communities Unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions (ways, banks, schools, etc). Structural defect in operational system in majority of rural areas such as small farmers Limited access to appropriate technology in rural areas Limit access to knowledge and up-to-date science in rural region Unequal distribution of income, welfare and national facilities and opportunities among industry and agriculture sectors. Natural disasters such as flood, drought and nipping result lack of production. Lack of informal education system

system, limited access to knowledge and up-to-date science, and unavailability of appropriate technologies are the main obstacles which exacerbate rural underdevelopment in Iran. These results are also confirmed by Kalantari *et al.* (2008), Karbasioun *et al.* (2008), and Fe'li *et al.* (2011).

In regard to the second objective and the experts view about challenges in rural development of Iran, 4 categories were

elicited: economic; management, regulations and political; social; and infrastructural and environmental challenges. As mentioned in findings, the major factors which were adhered closely to management consisted of: regulations and political challenges; lack of coherent strategy for sustainable rural development; lack of coordinated programs in rural development; weak management of governmental structures; centralized system in rural development planning and decision



making; weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities; and lack of autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development.

Findings show that the major factor which affects the rural underdevelopment in Iran was the "management, regulations and political challenges". This major factor is consisted of some sub factors, including: lack of a coherent strategy for sustainable rural development; Ineffective cooperation and micro economic in rural areas; lack of coordinated programs in rural development; weak management of governmental structures and various programs; centralized system in rural development planning and decision making; weakness in private sector participation in rural development activities; lack of an autonomous establishment and supervisor institution in rural development and limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing.

Likewise, result revealed that "unavailability of appropriate infrastructures in rural regions (roads, banks, schools, etc)", as infrastructural and environmental challenges, and "ineffective cooperation and micro economic in rural areas", as economic challenges, were important factors which had high agreement among respondents. In fact, by looking at the rural status of developing countries, this problem becomes evident and needs to be tackled by a responsible organization. Other economic challenges such as "limited access to agricultural production markets and problems in marketing" and "lack of diversification in non-agricultural activities such as tourism" are also considerable, as confirmed by Kalantari *et al.* (2008). Notably, marketing and tourism development are two major elements which create changes that improve the quality of life.

The results of this study might provide a useful guide for organizing seminars, training programs, and workshops for development agencies to help identify and remove challenges facing rural development in Iran.

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## بررسی چالش های اساسی توسعه روستایی ایران، کاربرد روش دلفی

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### چکیده

هدف اصلی این تحقیق بررسی عوامل مؤثر در توسعه نیافتگی روستایی ایران بود و بعد از طریق آن هدف، دسته بندی و ارائه الگویی عملی جهت اولویت های توسعه روستایی ایران بود. جهت دستیابی به این هدف تکنیک دلفی به عنوان روشی برای پالایش ایده های گروهی و دستیابی به اجماع در مورد یک موضوع مورد توافق استفاده شد. همچنین به این دلیل که روش دلفی شیوه ای اساسی در برنامه ریزی طرحها، نیاز سنجی، توسعه دستورالعمل ها و تصمیمات سیاسی و کاربرد منابع می باشد. اعضای هیات علمی، دانشجویان دوره دکتری و کارکنان حرفه ای وزارت جهاد کشاورزی به دلیل موقعیت و تخصصشان برای مطالعه انتخاب شدند. محققان از یک مجموعه پرسشنامه سه مرحله ای استفاده کردند. یافته ها حاکی از آنند که نبود استراتژی جامع در توسعه روستایی پایدار، در دسترس نبودن زیرساخت های مناسب در مناطق روستایی، فقدان برنامه های هماهنگ در توسعه روستایی، مدیریت ضعیف ساختارهای دولتی و برنامه های متنوع به عنوان بالاترین توافقی ها در میان چالش های روستایی مطرح شدند. همچنین کمبود فعالیت های چند کارکردی غیر کشاورزی از جمله توریسم، نقص و ضعف در تعاونی ها و اقتصاد خرد مناطق روستایی، ضعف در مشارکت بخش خصوصی در فعالیت های توسعه روستایی و سرمایه گذاری ناکافی دولت در بخش روستایی مهم ترین عواملی هستند که توجه به آنها می تواند شرایط مناسب تری را در بهبود شاخص های توسعه جوامع روستایی ایران پدید آورد.