



Original Research Article

doi: <https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcrbp.2017.403.010>

## Overview of Agricultural Policies for Access to Agricultural Land Modes in the Region of Ghardaia (Algeria)

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### Abstract

The various development programs of agricultural land have allowed an increase of agricultural land at the Ghardaia region like other Saharan regions. The goal was to reduce the unemployment rate by assigning young farmers in the Saharan regions, rather marginalized. This article provides an overview of the situation of agricultural land, with an analysis of agricultural land management and its effects on agricultural intensification led to the development programs.

### Article Info

Accepted: 02 March 2017

Available Online: 06 March 2017

### Keywords

Agricultural enhancement  
Agricultural land  
Development programs  
Region of Ghardaia

### Introduction

For more than three decades, southern Algeria received, as part of development programs on the Accession to Agricultural Land (A.A.L.), several projects (Bensaha, 2009). The mobilization of natural resources has led to the significant investment effects to meet the needs of irrigation water by farmers, agricultural land and basic infrastructure, and this in view of increasing production by extending new irrigated areas (Lakhdar et al., 2015).

MADR (2015), notes that the earth was the main issue, both during the colonization and during the post-independence period, when it was the center of political choices and even ideological. In the Sahara, as

agriculture remains dependent on natural stress and climatic hazards (natural soil fertility, rain, frost), the organization of this sector will depend largely randomly on uncontrollable variables, which limit the possibilities of realization of the objectives of the agricultural policy (Boukerrou, 2005). To deal with this worrying situation, the successive political powers, impregnated comments made by firms active in the south, moved towards the Sahara, rich in ground water and potential land to develop a new agriculture based on setting agricultural development (Othmane and Kouzmine, 2013). Like the other Saharan regions, the region of Ghardaia was gradually involved in the deployment of a technology supported and agricultural capitalist system to competitiveness and rationalization.

The land issue has also been the focus of this study which also discusses the state of devices since Independence "to find a solution to the complex issue of agricultural land in Ghardaia in Algeria, and that, through all reforms of self-management in the concession of private land to the state."

We limited our study to the scale of the Wilaya (province) of Ghardaia (Algerian Sahara) and to studying the part of land ownership holder of agricultural land and from the point of view of its effects on agricultural practices and by analysis of its impacts and the adaptations it has generated in the region. The originality of the methodology adopted is to cross data from field surveys, others from organizations in charge of agriculture such as MARD and the DSA.

### **Materials and methods**

The study focused on the analysis of agricultural land in the region of Ghardaia through aspects, positive and negative development programs. Our approach is based on interviews conducted with farmers, agricultural institutions and local authorities.

### **Presentation of the study area**

The study area is represented by a Northern Algerian Sahara region; namely Mzab Valley, which lies north of the Grand Erg Oriental. It includes, in the north, a rocky area torn apart by a series of wadis (rivers exceptional speed) highly branched. We find an oasis or more oases on each of the major wadis in the area, including the M'Zab Valley, which includes in itself a group of five oases in its part of the area includes El Golea.

The region of Ghardaia, like other arid areas of the Algerian Sahara, benefits of water resources of a huge fossil water tank, the Albian (DSA, 2015). Given the very difficult environmental conditions, human settlement is spatially very small.

### **Results and discussion**

The historical process in which the land was the main issue, both during colonization during the post-independence period, when it was the center of political choices and even ideological (Bensaha, 2009).

The classical economists were concerned primarily to study the legitimacy of land ownership through the

theory of value. But today the situation is different: rather economic theory takes the problem of managing agricultural land for rational use of this natural resource for sustainable economic development. We must remember that the land issue is complex. The agricultural land is primarily a historical product. It is related to the mechanisms of the market, it undergoes the state intervention, it is related to the professionalization and to the right and the type of tenure. While, this was made subject of adjustments, it is still subject to protection.

But the fact remains that we need to be enlightened on the issue of land management to better understand the issues that trace the contours of a land policy. This is so while bearing in mind that land management issues have been subject to practices and experiments that were offered by new theoretical studies.

Agriculture in the Wilaya of Ghardaia oasis is characterized by a production system:

- Dominant date palms and aging with an area of 3 146 ha, constituting not only the basis of Saharan agriculture but also the essential means of settlement of populations in arid areas.
- The culture of practice and other vegetable carried off and traditionally palm trees, whose products are for home consumption.
- Breeding is conducted in an extensively family-type consisting mainly of local breeds less efficient sheep, goats and camels, where rural women play a very important role in safeguarding this heritage as well as for other operating activities.
- The agricultural area is limited to 3 146 ha by means of mobilization of water potential (date production totals less than 70,000 Qx).

First, we must remember that the agricultural profession represented by the Chamber of Agriculture was initiated by farmers themselves in order to organize and give the farmer a professional status. It thus appears that the promulgation of laws and the creation of specialized organizational structures support a dynamic and socio-professional commitment that already exists and which manifested and criminalizes political force.

Land policy is related to the professional organization of farmers, but also their training to be a social and

professional entity which in turn will yield socioeconomic strength and perhaps a sociopolitical strength. In this situation this OS farmland provides little income to farmers, the subsistence farming has led gradually by a rural exodus of producers including youth who have turned to more profitable sectors such as industry and trade.

Based on this finding and given the natural potentialities the Wilaya of Ghardaia (slick presence of ground water and agricultural land); a series of measures have been taken to develop a modern and harmonious agriculture meet the existing imbalances and deficits in these regions compared to northern regions.

This reflection result is a new agricultural development strategy based on a so-called socialist land organization

namely the agrarian revolution.

The implementation of this policy has allowed the creation of different cooperatives managed by the state and through several phases:

- The nationalization of agricultural land;
- The organization of land CAPRA (agricultural production cooperatives);
- Creation of agricultural service cooperatives (CAPCS, CASAP, Casar and CASEL ... etc.);
- The creation of the development of areas around oases such as the perimeters of: Laamied, Aghzou and Zelfana.

This phase was ended in a slight extension of agricultural land (Table 1).

**Table1.** Distribution of land.

Designations	Areas (ha)	Palm numbers	Number of beneficiaries
Private land (nationalized)	159	18 917	343
Crown land			
- EAC	26	2 600	04 (20 allottees)
- EAI	1 420	21 018	698
Land of Ouakfs or Habous	24	6 400	13
Donors	3	440	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 632</b>	<b>49 375</b>	<b>1 493</b>

A new law was enacted to reorganize the private land of the welfare state almost 2 million hectares divided into collective or individual farms (EAC EAI) with enjoyment status on long period, ever since 1987 when new individual entities with status of concessions, with a 40-year lease transferable to third parties. UAA increased from 3146 ha to 6151 ha in 1984 1988 3319 allottees occupies an area of 9423 ha.

AFPA allowed to use 1008 103 young people grouped in 08 cooperatives. We should point out some events which marked the beginning of a radical change of Agrarian Policy. During this period, the services of agricultural cooperatives increased from state management mode to a self management method (withdrawal of state assets to farmers organized in cooperatives services) under Decree 88/170 organization of cooperatives agricultural, allowing the creation of a cooperative in the following municipalities: Guerrara, Beriane, Metlili Daya, Hassi El Menia and Gara.

The period from 1990 to 2008 was marked by a major change in the agricultural sector namely the liberation of

the sector through regulatory consolidation of the exploitation of farmland federal grant to the beneficiaries EAC and EAI acts of perpetual use (99 years).

Land restitution nationalized to their original owners. To manage these large files MARD created a post of delegate to the agricultural reform, this transaction results in the return of 336 343 farms on nationalized 07 not been returned because their land holdings were paid in the communal land reserves. Land compensation is noted 110 beneficiaries of the agrarian revolution in new areas after the restoration of the old farm to its original owner, and 06 financial compensations. The creation of the Chamber of the Wilaya of Ghardaia: the organization of the profession of farmers association and production chains.

The continued development of agricultural areas by the state through new achievements mechanisms such as concession CDARS program and allowed the realization of 15 areas covering an area of 917 ha creating 252 jobs. To encourage strategic crops, the state creates a base of

support to farmers who join the program of the potato crop, onions etc.

In 1999, FNRDA has expanded to support other agricultural stocks after a PNDAR extension of the program in 2000, this fund has reached the optimum targets. It experienced strategic cultural support the goals of change, upgrade of the farms under the FNDIA and not of FNRPA.

Othmane and Kouzmine (2013) notes that the great

agricultural development has developed in two types of land allocation: collective and individual. The collective award is reserved for cooperatives (peasant self-help groups). This form of organization was adopted to satisfy simultaneously hundreds of applicants and to reduce the state investment farm equipment.

It is more for the local population; and in practice, municipalities, under strong social pressure affected farm to hundreds of farmers and young job seekers (Tables 2 and 3).

**Table 2.** Significant developments Indicators 2008 at the PANDA 2000 programs.

	Number	%
1) – Territory and Population		
Number of towns :	13	100
	Dont Communes Rurales	7
		54
Total population (TP) :	378 937	100
	Dont Population Rurale	34 600
		9
Active Total Population (ATP) :	72 800	19
	Dont Population Active Agricole	24 470
		34
Total area (ha) :	8 656 000	100
	T.A.L	1 370 911
		16
	Forests and oak	0
		0
	U.A.L	26 519
		0.3
	of which are irrigated	26 519
		100
	Parcours	1 344 220
		15.5
2) – Water infrastructure		
	Drillings (U)	238
	Wells (U)	5 937
	Djoubes (U)	57
	Furrow (ml)	48 822
3) – Land structur		
Number Total Operations		13 551
	Private	11 104
	E.A.C	4
	E.A.I	1 099
	Pilot farms	.....
	concessions	1 344
4) - Valued local products		
	Date palm	
	Market gardening	
	Animal production (Milk sector)	

**Table 3.** Evolution of resources period 2000 to 2008.

Designations	2000	2008	Evolution (%)
Useful Agricultural Area (ha)	12 230	26 519	117
Of which are irrigated (ha)	12 230	26 519	117

The development of these lands is expected to increase the area of useful agricultural land (UAL) to 9 million ha by 2020 against 8.5 million ha now. Driven by the emerging "Algerian company of agricultural engineering" (EAGR), this operation would aim to strengthen the skills

of young agricultural concession by appropriate technical training in agricultural training centers.

Young people have been trained in the implementation of structural actions in agricultural areas and securing

agricultural land area. This extension meets the provisions implemented for access to agricultural land by the concession, in the provinces of the South, is part of the actions launched to adapt local development objectives with the expectations of the southern populations.

### Conclusion

Management areas of development are complex for coaching and development actors and for farmers. This is explained by the complexity of the strategies that must develop managers responsible for implementing the decrees on the development and organization of accommodation. The dynamics of the perimeters should be based on consultation between the contractor and the operators to remove all constraints on the improvement of farmers' productions. It is only then that we can enter the government interventions in sustainability.

The Algerian Government has implemented a comprehensive agricultural development program in the Sahara, making it heavy investments. The responsibilities and the creation of new areas were more substantial in the region of Ghardaia. But after three decades, the results do not appear to match the investment; the combined effects of social, economic and ecological hampered the functioning of the farms.

### Conflict of interest statement

Authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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#### How to cite this article:

Bensaha, H., Bensaha, Y., Bensaha, L., Arbouche, L., 2017. Overview of agricultural policies for access to agricultural land modes in the region of Ghardaia (Algeria). *Int. J. Curr. Res. Biosci. Plant Biol.* 4(3), 88-92. doi: <https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcrbp.2017.403.010>