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Rural Moroccan Youths Complain About Marginalisation

By Siham Ali in Rabat for Magharebia – 10/07/2013

- 1 Life is hard for young Moroccans living in the countryside. Options for jobs and leisure are more limited than those their urban age-mates are provided. The government has marginalized them economically and culturally, young people from those areas complain. "I have a lot of ambitions, but there's no support," Said Chentoui, a 24-year-old unemployed graduate from Moulay Bouselham, told Magharebia. "We need appropriate guidance to start specific projects in rural areas, which will enable us to stay at home and develop the countryside. A lot of my friends have had to move to the cities to find work and self-satisfaction," he said. "It is time," he added, "for government officials to pay more attention to the well-being of rural youth." He chose to stay in his home village. Since he hasn't had the good luck to find a job in his field of study, he is now thinking of starting his own business.


Young Moroccans play in the countryside near Tangier. Officials are confronting a shortage of recreational facilities in rural areas.
- 2 According to official figures, the agricultural sector employs 72.1 per cent of the working population in rural areas. Still, about 30 per cent of rural males aged 15 to 29 were unemployed, a 2012 World Bank study found. The situation is even worse for young women. Nine out of 10 were out of work or out of school, the report said. There is also little for these young people to do. "The only way young people in rural areas can have fun is to go to cities or villages to take part in cultural activities," sociologist Safae Moucharraf told Magharebia. "So the government ought to form partnerships with local officials if they want to create cultural and sports facilities for young people, because of the positive effects these have on the quality of life," she added.
- 3 "They are victims of marginalisation and suffer a lot from poverty. The government must focus on them by providing sports centres, among other things," some politicians said. "Partnerships with local authorities can help the government to put the desired infrastructure in place. Young people need to be trained and given guidance to start their own projects. Awareness-raising and communication are also vital," they added.
- 4 Ouzzine agreed that much needed to be done for youths in both rural and urban areas. "There is a big gap, which we're trying to bridge to achieve a kind of equal opportunities between regions. It is important to get young people involved in local politics," the minister said. "All the ministries need to cooperate and focus more on rural youths," Ouzzine stressed. "Even the self-employment scheme will increasingly target young people in rural areas," he said, referring to Morocco's Moukawalati entrepreneurship initiative.

I COMPREHENSION (15 POINTS)

{BASE ALL YOUR ANSWER ON THE TEXT}

A Are these sentences TRUE or FALSE? Justify your answer. (3 pts)

1 All youths in rural areas want to move to the city in order to find work.

.....
.....

2 Women in rural areas suffer more than males.

.....
.....

3 Young people can depend on themselves to set up their own enterprises.

.....
.....

B Answer these questions with information from the text. (3 pts)

1 Why do some youths want to stay in the countryside?

.....
.....

2 How do young people in rural areas try to entertain themselves?

.....
.....

3 Which strategy does Ouzzine suggest to solve the problems of those youths?

.....
.....

C Find in the text words and expressions that mean the same as the following. (3 pts)

1 entertainment (para 1):

.....

2 concentrate (para 3)

.....

3 plan (para 4)

.....

D What do the underlined words refer to? (3 pts)

1 them (para 1)

.....

2 she (para 2)

.....

3 They (para 3)

.....

E Complete these sentences with information from the text. (3 pts)

1 He hasn't had the good luck to find a job in his field of study. So,

.....

2 The government ought to form partnerships with local officials so as

.....

3 We're trying to bridge the gap between rural and urban areas because

.....

II LANGUAGE (15 POINTS)

A Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the words between brackets. (3 pts)

- 1 They claim that some computer games (courage) violent behaviour in young children.
- 2 I can't believe he had the (audacious) to ask me for more money!
- 3 She was even less (enthusiasm) about going to Spain.

B Put the verbs between brackets into the correct form. (3 pts)

- 1 I like him because he makes me (laugh)
- 2 Don't allow your problems (dominate) your life.
- 3 They have all contributed to (write) this book.

C Fill in each blank with the right word. (3 pts)

passion	outstanding	careless	obstinate	vigour	timidity
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- 1 The question of who is in charge is of importance.
- 2 He can be very when he wants to be! He refuses to change his mind.
- 3 Music is a with him.

D Rewrite the following sentences using the connectors between brackets. (3 pts)

- 1 This is a cheap and simple process. There are dangers. (*however*)
.....
- 2 If you want to get a complete picture, you need further information. (*in order to*)
.....
- 3 It was a nice day. We decided to go to the beach. (*since*)
.....

E Match each sentence with the function it expresses. (3 pts)

Sentence		Function
1	The cost of materials rose sharply last year. Accordingly, we were forced to increase our prices.	a Opinion
2	I felt that I had to apologize.	b Agreement
3	I don't go along with her views on private medicine.	c Effect
		d Disagreement

1 2 3

III WRITING (10 POINTS)

Young people living in the city have a better life than those in the countryside. But on the other hand, they face a lot of problems. Write an essay in which you list the benefits and drawbacks of city life. Then, try to suggest some solutions that can help overcome those problems.