



YERAME

Youth Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas in Mediterranean countries

Deliverable 2.2: Mapping of good practices

Work Package	Youth Rural Entrepreneurship Guide
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Status	Final
Date	25/8/2023
Version	1

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Introduction to YERAME: Mapping of good practices

Within the breadth of rural entrepreneurship lies a treasure trove of innovative ideas, successful strategies and reform programmes. As YERAME's project partners, we sought entrepreneurs to support and demonstrate the very best practices for prosperity and sustainable development in the countries where we work: Tunisia, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Italy, and Spain.

In this edition of the Guide, we proudly present "Mapping Good Practices" - the culmination of our dedicated research and unwavering commitment to empowering rural communities. Guided by a shared vision, we embarked on an epic journey through various research channels, drawing on the collective wisdom of successful rural entrepreneurs, and consulting valuable resources and literature.

Our team members ventured into the heart of the countryside, conducting in-depth interviews with pioneers who turned their dreams into reality. Their invaluable insights, experiences and successes serve as guiding lights, lighting the path of aspiring rural entrepreneurs.

Our researchers with the talents of local entrepreneurs are involved in the wealth of knowledge found in academic research, government reports and expert reviews. We carefully collected data, identified trends and looked for examples that were in line with sustainable development principles.

This map is not just a collection of best practices; It is a testament to its collaborative and multicultural learning. It connects borders and unites us under one goal: achieving economic growth, fostering social inclusion, preserving our environment and managing our cultural heritage.

As you explore the information and case studies in this map, we invite you to be inspired and engaged by the strength, creativity and impact of rural businesses in our partner countries. Together, we celebrate successes and empower each other to make lasting changes in rural areas.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of our researchers, the indomitable spirit of rural entrepreneurs and the collective dedication of YERAME, we present "Mapping Good Practices" - a beacon of hope and a path to our brighter, more sustainable rural areas growing.

Our approach to mapping best practices for the YERAME project is based on detailed research on rural employment in our partner countries. By actively answering the following questions¹ We aim to uncover successful businesses and entrepreneurs in their communities, identify the challenges they face, and reveal the policies and support systems that have helped make them possible. And we highly mention that the Italian partner in the research process of the YERAME project has taken a comprehensive approach, which includes conducting interviews with farmers and relevant experts in the field.

Our approach to creating the mapping of good practices for the YERAME project is grounded in a comprehensive exploration of rural entrepreneurship in our partner countries. By diligently answering the questions, we aim to unveil successful businesses and entrepreneurs in our respective rural areas, identify the challenges they face, and uncover the policies and support systems that have contributed to their achievements.

Through the collaborative efforts of our research groups, we seek to identify common models and successful strategies that can be shared across different countries and contexts. This valuable resource will be a framework for supporting and promoting entrepreneurship in rural areas, encouraging knowledge sharing and fostering networking among various stakeholders.

Our research methodology includes engagement with successful entrepreneurs through interviews, case studies and in-depth analysis of their practices. We will also examine the impact of these projects on local communities and economies in recognition of their contribution to overall rural development.

In addition, we recognize the importance of addressing the unique challenges faced by women, youth and other marginalised groups in rural employment. By understanding and highlighting their experiences, we aim to advocate for greater advocacy and support for underrepresented entrepreneurs.

We will examine local policies and initiatives that have successfully supported entrepreneurship in rural areas, and examine their impact on local economies and communities. We will critically examine the challenges and limitations of these programs to identify potential areas for improvement and enhancement.

In addition, we recognize the important role of local institutions such as universities, research centres and community organisations in supporting rural businesses. By demonstrating successful collaboration between the administration and these organisations, we hope to encourage stronger networks and stronger support systems.

Innovation and creativity are important components of rural entrepreneurship, and we will explore new emerging strategies in rural areas. We will highlight the benefits and unique opportunities of working in these areas with the aim of facilitating the replication of successful models in other rural communities.

We will also explore the social and cultural aspects of working in rural areas, recognizing the importance of preserving local traditions and values and promoting innovation and modernity.

¹ Appendix n°1

Addressing the role of education and training, we seek to recognize its contribution to the success of rural employment and advocate the importance of skills development and knowledge sharing.

Particular consideration will be given to environmental responsibility and sustainability, with an emphasis on the role of rural businesses in protecting the environment and promoting economic growth.

When mapping out our best practices, we will explore the advantages and disadvantages of operating in rural areas compared to urban areas, identifying the unique conditions in which rural businesses operate.

Our research will shed light on the strategies used by rural operators to attract and retain customers, improve profitability and have a positive social impact. We will explore the critical elements that contribute to the creation of supportive ecosystems for rural entrepreneurship, including advice, networking and finance.

In addition, we will explore how to incorporate local culture and traditions into projects, highlighting the benefits and challenges of this approach. We will advocate for technology and digital tools as a key to the future of rural employment, and for improved connectivity and growth.

Finally, our map will look at the desired impact of these projects on local communities and the environment, highlighting the responsibility of all rural entrepreneurs to contribute to the overall well-being of their region.

Through this collaborative endeavour we aspire to construct an all encompassing compendium of exemplary practices that will stand as a beacon of guidance for aspiring rural entrepreneurs governments institutions and investors who share a vested interest in fostering sustainable development and prosperity in rural regions it is important to emphasise that we are presenting the responses from each partner for every question mentioned thereby providing a diverse and comprehensive perspective that enriches the insights offered.

Local Success Stories :

1.1. Do you know of any successful businesses or entrepreneurs in your rural area?

Italy :

Answer 1: Consorzio delle galline felici - (in the lands near Catania, Siracusa, Ragusa - Sicily) - they market citrus fruits and a few other products. They work well because it is a consortium and is managed at the horizontal level. The members are involved at the decision-making and commercial level. They are very successful and have pre-purchasing programmes. In fact they are planting orchards that are financed by consumers. They promote ecologically sustainable and socially ethical farming practices and have a direct relationship with customers. As the production base is organised so is the purchasing base. The purchasing system goes from producer to consumer.

Val di Bella (Camporeale territory - Palermo - Sicily)- has partners all over Sicily. The interesting thing about Val di Bella is that it does a lot of processing and now wants to work on fresh

produce, vegetables and fruit. The practice of transformation is rare among those who produce in our territories. Their difficulty is to establish themselves on the local market, because they usually mainly export and sell little on the local market. This is not because of a price problem. The problem is that the consumer base is not organised in purchasing groups and direct shops. Purchasing groups are underdeveloped in Sicily.

Outside the market - (Italy)- There are those who make tomato sauce and those who grow oranges, those who make chocolate and those who make coffee. There are about 20 realities scattered from Lombardy to Sicily, from Puglia to Tuscany. They are in an alternative distribution network. They have been working in the reception of migrants and slowly they are getting them involved and employed with a focus on those migrants coming out of the Illegal hiring.

Answer 2 : Simenza - producer of ancient Sicilian grains (in Raddusa, Province of Catania - Sicily, <https://www.facebook.com/Simenza.bio/>) is an association of producers. Simenza brings together a number of excellent elements, namely, overcoming the crisis in grain growing (due to lack of European funds, imports of toxic wheat from abroad, the widespread presence of glyphosates and other non-natural substances) and the solution of resuming the tradition that has disappeared in Sicily, the cultivation of native Sicilian grains. The producers of Simenza harvest typical Sicilian grains that have excellent organoleptic characteristics and are of a much higher quality than imported grains. That this is a good practice is borne out by the market; in fact, ancient grains have established themselves in the grain processing market not only for flour but also for derived products (i.e. baked goods, pasta, etc.). Simenza brings together the recovery of traditions, the solution to the crisis of Sicilian graniculture and the solution to the problem of Sicilian producers' income. Their innovation consists in recovering the ancient. Simenza also provides training for grain processing and conveys a food culture.

Orange Fiber - (in Catania - Sicily - <https://orangefiber.it/>). Orange Fiber uses orange waste and produces the fibre, the fabric. The innovation of Orange Fiber is mainly represented by the recovery of waste. This practice eliminates the problem of waste disposal and recovers the value of the product. Orange Fiber creates sustainable, innovative fashion materials from citrus juice by-products, using an innovative, patented process and collaborating with industry leaders. OF is committed to bringing sustainable practices to the textile and fashion industry, helping to shape a new concept of luxury based on an ethical and sustainable lifestyle.

Spain :

In Spain it is currently possible to find an open network called the National Rural Network (RRN) which is transformed into the CAP Network, becoming an open network without membership to bring together under the same umbrella both the agricultural policies of the 1st pillar and the rural development policies of the 2nd pillar.

The National Rural Network (RRN) is a platform made up of administrations (state, regional and local), social and economic agents, representatives of civil society and research organisations linked to the rural environment. Its main objective is to promote rural development, which makes it possible to find in one place an important group of entrepreneurs, including young people, linked to the rural world. Among them, the following stand out:

Answer 1. **Byota:** Forest nursery of agroforestry crops centred on a species of fungus similar to the truffle (*Terfezia*) with a high market value, with native plants to offer crops adapted to the Mediterranean environment, to conditions tending towards desertification and rising temperatures. As a complementary service, they offer a sales channel to the owners who have planted their plants, so that they can obtain a good price for their product.

The company seeks to move towards a more attractive model of rural life through the production and sale of micro-fertilised plants. They are looking for sales channels that can be interesting for farmers and the hotel world, so they have developed three products: black truffle, summer truffle and desert truffle to be able to have them all year round and provide the hotel world and farmers with an accessible price.

The key to cultivation is the poor soils because the fact that they are not very fertile allows mycorrhization to take place.

The Byota Network is a positive interaction between innovative farmers and nature-conscious consumers. They are committed to a model that differentiates them because it maximises profitability with exclusivity, cooperates with transparency and regenerates biodiversity out of conscience.

Website: <https://byotagroup.com/>

2. **Los Caserinos:** Organic production farm - located in the so-called Comarca de la Sidra, 4 kilometres from Villaviciosa, in the small village of Maoux, is the family farm Los Caserinos, which produces high quality, handmade dairy products, ours being an organic production farm. You can visit and appreciate the process of making cheese, rice pudding and organic yoghurt.

Website: <https://loscaserinos.com/>

3. **Remote Villages:** an initiative that promotes connection experiences between remote workers and local actors (entrepreneurs, business people, artisans, etc.) to generate socio-economic impact in the rural environment. The experiences they generate consist of attracting a group of remote workers to a rural municipality, where they can connect with local actors through activities and challenges.

Website: <https://www.pueblosremotos.com/>

4. **Green Asparagus:** It is located on a finca that has belonged to the Camañes family for more than two centuries. Red clays and gypsum predominate. It is this mineral nature of the soil that gives the typicality to the products that are reared and produced on this land. They are dedicated to the breeding of asparagus and olives with which they produce Extra Virgin Olive Juice.

Website: <https://www.greenasparagus.es/>

Among the aspects that are considered fundamental for the success of the projects is that these projects emerge and develop from the grassroots, i.e. from the people who know their territory better than anyone else. Many of the actors involved in these good practices agree that there is no need for more exhaustively elaborated studies and plans in urban offices, but rather for practical and participatory actions that offer concrete solutions to specific problems.

Palestine :

There are several successful businesses and entrepreneurs in rural Palestine who make significant contributions to the community. Here are some examples:

1. **Olive Oil Production:** Olive oil is an important agricultural product in Palestine, and many rural areas are known for producing high-quality olive oil. Successful entrepreneurs in this sector specialise in organic and extra virgin olive oils, which have gained recognition in the international market. Factors that have contributed to their success include traditional farming methods, sustainable practices, quality control measures, efficient production processes, and effective marketing to reach consumers worldwide.
2. **Handicrafts and Crafts:** Traditional handicrafts and crafts abound in the rural areas of Palestine. Entrepreneurs have successfully started businesses producing handmade pottery, embroidery, woven textiles, traditional jewellery and woodwork. They combine traditional techniques with modern designs to create unique and marketable products. The industry's

success is often attributed to preserving cultural heritage, maintaining high standards of craftsmanship, establishing market links and promoting fair trade practices.

3. **Agrotourism:** Some rural areas of Palestine are using agritourism as a way to diversify their local economies. Entrepreneurs have developed boarding houses, farm stays and experiential tours that offer visitors the chance to engage in hands-on farming, sample local cuisine and experience country life. The success of these companies lies in creating authentic and immersive experiences, promoting sustainable tourism practices, partnering with local communities and effectively marketing their products.
4. **Organic and Permaculture:** Facing the growing global demand for organic and sustainable products, several entrepreneurs have established successful organic farms in rural Palestine. They use permaculture principles and sustainable farming practices to grow a variety of organic fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices. These entrepreneurs value environmental protection, soil health, and ethical production practices. Their success is based on market demand for organic products, the certification process, direct sales channels (e.g. farmers markets, community supported agriculture), and consumer education on the benefits of organic farming.
5. **Community-Based Cooperatives:** Community-based cooperatives have developed in rural Palestine, bringing together local farmers and artisans to market and sell their produce. These cooperatives enable small producers to access wider markets, negotiate better prices, and pool resources for shared infrastructure and equipment. The success of this model is achieved through collective decision-making, fair distribution of profits, collaboration among members, and targeted marketing efforts.

Overall, the success of Palestinian rural businesses and entrepreneurs is often attributed to a variety of factors such as: B. Harnessing local resources, preserving cultural heritage, adopting sustainable practices, building strong networks and collaborations, accessing market opportunities and creating Value-added products to meet consumer needs.

Egypt :

There are many areas in Egypt whose residents work in handicrafts, especially women, as women work in rural areas in the manufacture of traditional and handicrafts, using the wicker of palm trees and converting it into sustainable and environmentally friendly products, such as chairs, tables, gift boxes, bags and also carpets. Nile's roses are also used by women, especially in Fayoum governorate, to decorate dishes, bags, and clothes. Annually, heritage exhibitions are held all over Egypt in order to display these products.

Environmentally friendly building materials: One of the most successful businesses in rural areas that entrepreneurs have begun to work on is "environmentally friendly building materials" because they save huge amounts of water and gypsum; they do not need shellfish, and are easy to clean.

Also, the use of solar energy to preserve agricultural products from wastage: some entrepreneurs in rural areas in southern Egypt are now working on manufacturing solar panels in agricultural fields to repel birds at the time of migration to preserve the wheat crop and poultry fodder.

And what makes them successful is that the general trend now in rural areas is to revive the Egyptian cultural heritage, use environmentally friendly materials that are inexpensive and also find solutions to the challenges facing farmers in rural areas.

Greece :

In Greek rural areas, there are successful businesses that combine entrepreneurship, innovation and tradition. From wineries and artisanal food companies to skincare and specialty product companies, these businesses have carved out a niche in their respective sectors. With a focus on quality, sustainability and collaboration with local communities, these businesses have achieved recognition and success. They are shining examples of how rural areas can be fertile ground for economic development and cultural preservation. By capitalising on the unique resources and traditions of their regions, these businesses offer authentic experiences and help promote rural entrepreneurship. Some of these are as follows:

Manousakis Winery, nestled in the rural region of Crete, is a renowned winery celebrated for its production of award-winning wines. With a focus on unique grape varieties, the winery combines the rich winemaking heritage of Crete with modern innovations to craft exceptional wines. Their commitment to quality is evident in every bottle, as they employ traditional winemaking techniques alongside contemporary practices. From the vineyard to the cellar, Manousakis Winery carefully nurtures their grapes and utilises sustainable practices. The result is a portfolio of high-quality wines that captivate the senses and reflect the rich flavours and distinct character of the region².

Located in the rural area of Amyndeon in northern Greece, the **Karypidis Vineyard** is a renowned winery that has won recognition for its excellent wines. Taking advantage of the unique terroir and cool climate of the region, the vineyard cultivates a variety of native and international grape varieties. This careful selection allows the Karipidis vineyard to combine the distinct characteristics of the region with the global influences of winemaking. With a commitment to quality and respect for the environment, the winery applies sustainable practices throughout the vineyard, cultivating the grapes to reach their full potential³.

Vasiliki Naturals is a family-owned business nestled in the rural region of Kozani, Greece. The company specialises in crafting products that harness the power of local herbs, plants, and organic ingredients. Drawing inspiration from traditional Greek remedies, Vasiliki Naturals combines tradition with modern expertise to create a range of skincare offerings that nourish and rejuvenate the skin. By promoting sustainable beauty practices, Vasiliki Naturals not only prioritises the well-being of their customers but also demonstrates a deep respect for the environment⁴.

Kalios is a distinguished handmade food company based in rural Laconia, Greece. The company specialises in the production of Greek olive oil and other Mediterranean foods. Kalios works directly with local farmers and artisans to source the best ingredients. The company also places a strong emphasis on promoting sustainable agricultural practices, further enhancing the quality and integrity of its products⁵.

In rural areas of Greece, a number of successful businesses combine tradition and innovation. What sets these businesses apart is their commitment to their roots. Additionally, their dedication to the environment and the preservation of traditions resonates with conscious consumers seeking authentic experiences and flavours. Not only have these businesses embraced the spirit of entrepreneurship, but they have also become custodians of cultural heritage. Their success also fuels economic growth, and strengthens rural Greece.

² <https://www.manousakiswinery.com/>

³ <http://www.karipidi.gr/en/>

⁴ <https://votanopoleio.gr/en/cat/natural-cosmetics/>

⁵ <https://mykalios.com/en/>

Tunisia :

In the rural areas of Tunisia, there are several successful businesses and entrepreneurs that have made significant contributions to the local economy. Here are a few examples:

Olive Oil Producers: Tunisia is renowned for its olive oil production, and many successful businesses in rural areas focus on olive oil production. These entrepreneurs have established modern olive oil mills equipped with advanced technology for processing and packaging. Their success can be attributed to the exceptional quality of their olive oil, adherence to organic farming practices, and compliance with international standards, which has enabled them to penetrate both local and international markets.

Agro-Processing Ventures: Entrepreneurs in rural areas have successfully established agro-processing businesses, such as fruit and vegetable processing, dairy products, and traditional food products. These ventures have incorporated modern processing techniques while maintaining the authenticity and traditional flavours of Tunisian cuisine. Their success stems from sourcing high-quality raw materials from local farmers, ensuring food safety and hygiene standards, and meeting the growing demand for locally produced, value-added food products.

Handicraft Cooperatives: Handicraft production is a prominent sector in Tunisia's rural areas. Many artisans have formed cooperatives to preserve traditional crafts like carpet weaving, pottery, ceramics, and textile production. The success of these cooperatives lies in their ability to create unique, handcrafted products that showcase Tunisian cultural heritage, incorporating modern design elements to attract a broader market. They have achieved success through community collaboration, skill preservation, and strategic marketing efforts.

Eco-Tourism Initiatives: Rural areas in Tunisia boast natural landscapes, historical sites, and cultural traditions that attract tourists seeking authentic experiences. Successful entrepreneurs have capitalised on this by establishing ecotourism ventures, such as guesthouses, hiking tours, and cultural immersion programs. Their success can be attributed to offering sustainable and responsible tourism experiences, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the region, and actively engaging with local communities to promote inclusive economic development.

These successful businesses in Tunisia's rural areas have thrived due to a combination of factors, including a focus on quality, preservation of traditional practices, adaptation to market trends, value-added processing, sustainable practices, effective branding and marketing strategies, and community engagement. By leveraging local resources, cultural heritage, and market demand, these entrepreneurs have achieved both financial success and positive impacts on the local community.

Conclusion :

In the end the insights shared by means of our esteemed companions from Italy, Spain, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and Tunisia together remove darkness from a tapestry of successful rural entrepreneurship practices. Across these numerous areas, a common thread emerges - the power of ingenuity, innovation, and community collaboration in using economic growth and sustainable development in rural areas.

From Italy's consortium-based totally success tales to Spain's grassroots-pushed tasks, from Palestine's upkeep of cultural background to Egypt's embrace of environmentally friendly practices,

from Greece's fusion of tradition and innovation to Tunisia's strategic alignment with marketplace trends, every associate's narrative underscores the colossal capability within rural landscapes.

These examples reaffirm that a hit rural entrepreneurship is not just about enterprise however also about cultural maintenance, environmental stewardship, and network empowerment. It's approximately weaving the beyond and the prevailing right into a colourful fabric that enriches nearby economies and nurtures the social cloth.

As we embody those tales, we find a guiding mild for aspiring rural marketers, governments, establishments, and investors. This comprehensive map of first-class practices showcases the myriad ways wherein tradition and innovation can coexist harmoniously. It encourages the adoption of sustainable practices that create cost, ensure economic viability, and make contributions to the nicely-being of communities.

Through this collective attempt, we pave a course towards a destiny in which rural areas thrive as facilities of innovation, lifestyle, and financial dynamism. The journey ahead is illuminated through the success testimonies we have explored, reminding us that with vision, collaboration, and a commitment to sustainable practices, the rural landscape holds untapped ability for a prosperous and inclusive tomorrow.

Strategies for Success :

1.2.What strategies or practices have they used to overcome challenges unique to rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino: Cooperativism

Diego Gandolfo : Simenza - the strategy is multifaceted: from a marketing perspective, the rediscovery of the ancient is a strategic choice that also allows for a reformulation of the grain production narrative. From a marketing perspective, the strategy is to highlight the properties of ancient grains in a world dominated by eating disorders by emphasising the far superior nutritional capacities of local ancient grains. From a production perspective, the strategy is to network. Simenza brings together productions and provides training.

Orange fibre - the winning practice and strategy for OF has been investment in technology and networking. OF is part of a network of investors, accelerators, leaders, industry partners, accelerator programme mentors and alumni who support their growth and encourage continuous improvement. OF is part of an international network of innovators who support creating value in terms of sustainability and impact.

Spain :

The projects presented exemplify the ability of people living in rural areas to adapt to their environment, solve challenges and foster community. These projects reveal the vitality of a territory inhabited by individuals with innovative ideas, initiative and the capacity to carry them out as long as there are minimum favourable conditions that allow them to do so.

In Spain, the National Rural Network (RRN) compiles examples of good practices in the Spanish rural environment in order to serve as inspiration for others. Among the aspects that are considered key

to the development of a good practice, and therefore a successful enterprise, is the planning of a strategy, programme, project, procedure or management and implementation practice that meets the following characteristics:

- It has been tested and validated and has been implemented with positive results.
- It is successful and innovative.
- It can be developed and adapted to other contexts, i.e. it is transferable.
- It contributes to the improvement of your performance.

In order to consider an action or initiative as a good practice, the following assessment criteria have been taken into account:

Innovation: Defined as a novel intervention that responds to the needs or objectives proposed. Thus, the experience constitutes an innovative response when it is a new initiative, or when the experience has been carried out in a creative way within the field of youth in the rural world.

Improvement of the quality of life of young people: This refers to the effectiveness in the fulfilment of the objectives of improving the quality of life, rights and opportunities of young people living in rural areas.

Active participation of the agents involved: The project contemplates the participation of young people in the design, development and evaluation of the project.

Transferability: The transferability of the initiative to other geographical areas or other rural contexts is taken into account.

Planning of the process, including design, implementation and evaluation: The experience is carried out following a planning process and through identifiable phases that contemplate both the design of the initiative, its development and implementation and its subsequent evaluation.

Efficiency in the use of resources: The experience is implemented by taking advantage of the resources available in the rural environment to carry out the project.

Positive impacts as a consequence of the implementation: It is always considered that it is a demonstrable positive impact and that it emerges from its corresponding evaluation and measurement of the results on the improvement of the quality of life of young people in rural areas.

Durability of the application: The transforming actions are considered to be long term and not only as isolated actions, but sustainable at a social, cultural, economic and environmental level.

For the selection of these good practices, in addition to the above criteria, it has been taken into account that the different projects included a wide range of thematic areas of intervention.

Palestine :

Successful businesses and entrepreneurs in rural Palestine have employed various strategies and practices to overcome the challenges unique to their context. Here are some strategies they have utilised:

Community Engagement: They actively involve the local community in their businesses, seeking their input, support, and participation. This helps build trust, ensures buy-in from community members, and fosters a sense of ownership and pride.

Collaboration and Networking: They form partnerships and networks with other businesses, organisations, and government agencies. Collaborative efforts enable them to share resources, knowledge, and expertise, and collectively address common challenges such as access to markets, financing, and infrastructure.

Market Diversification: They explore and tap into multiple markets to reduce dependence on a single market. This includes targeting local consumers, establishing connections with regional markets, and exploring export opportunities. Diversifying their customer base helps mitigate risks and enhances business sustainability.

Value-Added Products and Branding: They focus on adding value to their agricultural products through processing, packaging, and branding. This enables them to differentiate their products in the market and command higher prices. By offering unique and high-quality products, they attract consumers and create a competitive advantage.

Capacity Building and Training: They invest in training programs and capacity-building initiatives to enhance their skills, knowledge, and business acumen. This includes acquiring technical expertise in areas such as agricultural practices, product development, marketing, and financial management. Building their capacity equips them to tackle challenges effectively and seize opportunities.

Access to Finance: They explore various financing options to overcome the challenges of limited access to capital in rural areas. This includes seeking microfinance loans, crowdfunding, grants from development organisations, and partnerships with investors who are interested in supporting rural entrepreneurship.

Technology Adoption: They leverage technology to improve efficiency, enhance productivity, and expand their market reach. This includes utilising online platforms for marketing and sales, adopting digital payment systems, and incorporating agricultural technologies for irrigation, crop management, and post-harvest processes.

Government Support and Policies: They engage with relevant government agencies and advocate for supportive policies that address the specific challenges faced by rural businesses. This includes lobbying for infrastructure development, access to markets, and streamlined regulatory processes.

Sustainable Practices: They prioritise environmentally sustainable practices, such as organic farming, water conservation, and waste management. By adopting sustainable practices, they not only contribute to environmental preservation but also align with consumer preferences for eco-friendly products.

Continuous Learning and Adaptation: They remain open to learning, adapting, and evolving their businesses based on market dynamics and changing circumstances. They stay updated on industry trends, consumer preferences, and emerging opportunities, allowing them to adjust their strategies and stay competitive.

These strategies and practices demonstrate the resilience, resourcefulness, and entrepreneurial spirit of businesses in rural Palestine. By addressing the unique challenges of their context, they create successful and sustainable enterprises that contribute to the development and prosperity of their communities.

Egypte :

Rural areas in Egypt often face unique challenges that can make it difficult for businesses and entrepreneurs to succeed. However, there are several strategies and practices that have been used to overcome these challenges and thrive in rural areas. Here are some examples:

- 1- **Access to financing:** This is the biggest challenge facing entrepreneurs in rural areas, therefore, some entrepreneurs turn to micro-loans, and apply for entrepreneurship competitions to obtain financing, or the funding granted by international institutions to entrepreneurs.
- 2- **Digital tools:** Although rural areas in Egypt have limited access to technology, entrepreneurs in rural areas benefit from digital tools in selling their products and expanding their network of relationships in the markets. They create websites and use social media platforms to market their products.
- 3- **Building strong community connections:** Rural areas are often characterised by close-knit communities, which can be leveraged to build strong business networks. By building relationships with other local businesses, entrepreneurs can create partnerships and collaborations that benefit everyone involved. They can also tap into local knowledge and resources to address challenges and find new opportunities.
- 4- **Embracing technology:** While rural areas may have limited access to certain resources and services, technology can help bridge these gaps. For example, e-commerce platforms can allow rural businesses to reach customers beyond their immediate area, while teleconferencing tools can facilitate communication with customers, suppliers, and partners in other parts of the world.
- 5- **Leveraging local resources:** Rural areas often have unique resources and assets that can be leveraged for business purposes. For example, a farm in a rural area might use its land to host events or offer Agritourism activities. Similarly, a rural community might have a strong tradition of artisanal crafts that can be turned into a thriving business.
- 6- **Focusing on niche markets:** Rural businesses may have a smaller customer base than urban businesses, but they can often find success by focusing on niche markets. For example, a small-scale manufacturer might specialise in producing artisanal products that appeal to a specific demographic, such as eco-conscious consumers or those interested in handmade goods.
- 7- **Investing in education and training:** Rural areas may have limited access to education and training resources, but investing in these areas can pay off in the long run. By providing training and education opportunities for local residents, businesses can build a skilled workforce that can help them grow and expand.
- 8- **Diversifying revenue streams:** Rural businesses often face seasonal fluctuations in demand, which can be challenging to manage. One way to mitigate this risk is to diversify revenue streams by offering multiple products or services. For example, a farm might offer both produce and agritourism activities or a small business might offer both retail sales and online sales.
- 9- **Adapting to changing customer needs and providing excellent customer service:** In rural areas, word-of-mouth advertising can be especially important for businesses.
- 10- **Collaborating with educational institutions:** Rural areas often have limited access to educational and training resources, but collaborating with educational institutions can help fill this gap. For example, a business might partner with a local community college to offer training programs for employees or to access research and development resources.

11- Participating in economic development initiatives: Rural areas often have economic development initiatives designed to attract and support businesses.

Greece :

All these businesses have overcome a myriad of challenges by implementing a range of strategic approaches. Firstly, collaboration and community engagement have been key drivers of their success. By forging strong partnerships with local farmers and community members, these businesses create a network of support, sourcing high-quality ingredients and products while fostering a sense of collective strength and loyalty.

Sustainability also plays a pivotal role in their operations. These businesses prioritise eco-friendly practices, such as organic farming, responsible resource management, and biodiversity preservation. By minimising their environmental footprint, they not only contribute to a healthier ecosystem but also resonate with environmentally conscious consumers who value sustainable practices.

Additionally, one of their primary strategies for standing out in competitive markets is through differentiation and value-added products. These businesses leverage unique flavours, traditional craftsmanship, and niche offerings to carve out a distinct market position. Whether it's the exceptional wines of Manousakis Winery, the premium olive oil of Kalios, or the natural skincare products of Vasiliki Naturals, their commitment to quality and authenticity sets them apart. Furthermore, they embrace technological advancements, modern production techniques, and agile marketing strategies to reach wider audiences and respond to evolving customer demands. They leverage digital platforms, e-commerce, and social media to connect with consumers beyond their local regions, expanding their customer base and market reach.

Diversification is also an effective risk mitigation strategy. Successful rural businesses explore new product lines, expand distribution channels, and tap into related areas such as tourism or experiential offerings. This diversification helps them adapt to changing market conditions, mitigate the risks associated with fluctuating demand, and maximise their revenue streams. Additionally, investment in training and skill development is crucial for the long-term success of these businesses. By enhancing the capabilities of their employees, they create a skilled workforce that is better equipped to meet the challenges of their industries.

Tunisia :

Successful businesses in rural areas of Tunisia have employed various strategies and practices to overcome challenges specific to their context. Here are some strategies they have utilised:

Collaborative Networks: Entrepreneurs in rural areas have formed collaborative networks and partnerships with other local businesses, farmers, and artisans. By sharing resources, knowledge, and marketing efforts, they have overcome challenges such as limited access to markets, transportation, and infrastructure.

Value-Added Processing: To address the limited market size and transportation challenges, businesses have focused on value-added processing. They have diversified their product range, transformed raw materials into processed goods, and developed unique offerings that cater to niche markets, both locally and internationally.

Market Diversification: Successful businesses in rural areas have expanded their market reach beyond their immediate surroundings. They have embraced e-commerce platforms, established online presence, and actively engaged in digital marketing to access broader markets domestically and internationally.

Access to Finance: Entrepreneurs in rural areas have sought alternative funding sources to overcome limited access to traditional financing options. They have applied for government grants and subsidies specifically targeted at rural development. Some have also explored microfinance institutions or crowdfunding platforms to secure funding for their ventures.

Skills Development and Training: Entrepreneurs have recognized the importance of skills development and have actively participated in training programs, workshops, and business development initiatives. This has enhanced their business acumen, marketing skills, and ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

Community Engagement: Successful entrepreneurs have established strong relationships with the local community. They have engaged community members in decision-making processes, sought their input, and involved them in the business activities. This has created a sense of ownership, loyalty, and support from the community.

Leveraging Technology: Entrepreneurs in rural areas have embraced technology to overcome geographical barriers. They have utilised digital tools for marketing, online sales, and connecting with customers and suppliers. This has allowed them to overcome limitations and expand their reach beyond their immediate location.

By implementing these strategies and practices, entrepreneurs in rural areas of Tunisia have overcome unique challenges, leveraged local resources, and found innovative ways to succeed in their businesses. These approaches have not only enabled business growth but have also contributed to the socio-economic development of the local communities.

Conclusion :

In precise, the techniques and practices employed through these rural entrepreneurs across Italy, Spain, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and Tunisia underscore the dynamic and adaptive nature of rural groups. A shared commitment to network engagement, sustainability, innovation, and collaboration has been pivotal in overcoming the one-of-a-kind challenges that rise up in rural settings.

The spirit of cooperativism in Italy has fostered resilience and collective decision-making, at the same time as innovation and networking have fueled the achievement of organisations like Simenza and Orange Fiber. In Spain, the adaptability of rural groups is evident via the National Rural Network's diverse examples of good practices, emphasising innovation, network participation, and the transferability of successful fashions.

Palestine's rural companies thrive via network engagement, collaboration, and by including value to standard merchandise. In Egypt, creative techniques along with leveraging local sources,

embracing technology, and investing in education have empowered entrepreneurs to surmount demanding situations and contribute to sustainable improvement.

Greece's rural entrepreneurs have skillfully blended tradition with innovation, focusing on first-class, sustainability, and partnerships. Tunisia's a hit corporations excel through collaborative networks, fee-introduced processing, and market diversification, even as retaining close ties with their local groups.

These strategies collectively reflect the resilience and flexibility of rural entrepreneurs inside the face of specific challenges. They highlight the significance of creativity, resourcefulness, and a deep expertise of nearby contexts. The stories of those marketers serve as a testament to the potential for growth, prosperity, and tremendous network impact that may be harnessed via rural entrepreneurship.

Local Impact Assessment :

1.3.What impact have they had on the local community and economy?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino: These realities are able to latch on to the local community. They empowered producers to spend themselves in agriculture and consumers to use local goods. It is the idea of bringing the territory to life through rural productive work.

Diego Gandolfo: SIMENZA and Orange Fiber employ Sicilian workers. The local community is in fact the only one who really stands to gain. These companies do not use pesticides and therefore respect their own territory and adopt sustainable production methods. Income is distributed among the community actors. The recovery of tradition, in the case of Simenza, is Sicilian and in the case of Orange Fiber the main product of extraction is linked to local agriculture, namely citrus fruits.

Spain :

The rural environment has become an important niche of opportunities for entrepreneurship and project development. A combination that is attracting young people who see the villages as a good option to work in the area of activity in which they have been trained without having to leave their home town or to start up new businesses to fill 'gaps' in the market, at the same time as they grow personally and as a family.

Palestine

businesses and entrepreneurs in rural Palestine have had a significant impact on the local community and economy. These businesses have created employment opportunities, reducing unemployment rates and improving livelihoods for local residents. Through their growth and success, they stimulate economic activity, generating income and increasing purchasing power within the community. Moreover, these businesses collaborate with farmers and suppliers, contributing to the development of the value chain and supporting the agricultural sector. By sharing their expertise and knowledge, they empower individuals through capacity-building programs, fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. Additionally, successful businesses invest in community development projects, such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, and social services, enhancing the overall well-being and quality of life in rural areas. Some businesses also focus on promoting

tourism and preserving local culture, attracting visitors and showcasing the unique heritage of the region. Overall, these businesses play a vital role in driving economic growth, creating a positive ripple effect, and contributing to the sustainable development of rural Palestine.

Egypt:

Actually, they have had a great impact on the local community and economy in a number of ways:

- 1- Job creation: entrepreneurs in rural areas have created new jobs in the local community, which helped to reduce unemployment and boost the local economy. This is especially important in rural areas, where job opportunities are limited. And they stimulated economic activity in the local community by creating new products or services and attracting customers.
- 2- The most important role and impact they have had is preserving local culture and heritage by promoting traditional crafts and products or by creating new products that are inspired by local traditions and practices. That helped to keep local traditions and skills alive and have contributed to a sense of pride and identity in the community in Egypt.

Greece :

Firstly, by creating job opportunities, they not only reduce unemployment rates but also foster local economic growth. Their operations generate increased local spending, stimulate consumer demand, and contribute to overall economic activity in the area. This, in turn, leads to the growth of auxiliary businesses and services that cater to the needs of the community, resulting in a thriving local economy.

Moreover, successful rural businesses play a vital role in supporting local suppliers and producers. By sourcing ingredients, materials, and products from nearby sources, they provide a steady market and help sustain the agricultural and artisanal sectors. Furthermore, these businesses invest in community development initiatives, recognizing the importance of giving back to the community that supports them. They contribute to the improvement of local infrastructure, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and cultural organisations.

Cultural preservation is another significant impact of successful rural businesses. Many of these enterprises actively promote and preserve local traditions, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage. By utilising traditional techniques, incorporating local ingredients, and sharing the stories and traditions behind their products, they help maintain a distinct cultural identity.

Tunisia :

Successful businesses in rural areas of Tunisia have had significant impacts on the local community and economy. Here are some of the positive effects they have had:

Job Creation: These successful businesses have generated employment opportunities, reducing unemployment rates and providing income sources for individuals within the local community. They have created jobs in various sectors, such as agriculture, agro-processing, handicrafts, and eco-tourism, thereby improving livelihoods and enhancing economic stability.

Economic Growth: By operating thriving businesses, entrepreneurs in rural areas have contributed to local economic growth. Their businesses generate revenue, pay taxes, and contribute to the circulation of money within the community. This stimulates economic activity, supports other local businesses, and fosters a multiplier effect, benefiting the overall rural economy.

Value Chain Development: Successful businesses in rural areas have created demand for local suppliers and producers. They source raw materials, agricultural products, or handicraft materials from local farmers and artisans, thereby supporting the growth of the local supply chain and fostering collaborations within the community.

Skill Enhancement and Capacity Building: These businesses have played a vital role in enhancing the skills and capacities of individuals within the community. Through training programs, workshops, and employment opportunities, they have provided hands-on experience, technical knowledge, and business skills to local workers, empowering them with valuable expertise and contributing to human capital development.

Community Development: Successful businesses often engage in community development initiatives. They invest in local infrastructure, support education and healthcare facilities, contribute to environmental conservation efforts, and participate in social welfare programs. These activities improve the overall quality of life, social cohesion, and well-being within the community.

Cultural Preservation and Promotion: Many successful businesses in rural areas have embraced their cultural heritage and incorporated it into their operations. By preserving traditional practices, promoting local crafts, and showcasing authentic cultural experiences, they contribute to the preservation of Tunisia's rich cultural heritage and promote cultural tourism, which benefits the community and reinforces a sense of pride and identity.

Tourism and Regional Development: Businesses involved in ecotourism initiatives have attracted visitors to rural areas, creating a positive impact on local tourism, accommodation, and hospitality sectors. This leads to increased income generation, improved infrastructure, and regional development, benefiting the local community and contributing to a more diversified economy.

These impacts highlight how successful businesses in Tunisia's rural areas contribute to economic growth, employment opportunities, skill development, community well-being, and cultural preservation. They serve as catalysts for sustainable development, empowering local communities and enhancing the overall socio-economic fabric of rural regions.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, the fulfilment stories of rural agencies across one of a kind regions illustrate the transformative energy of entrepreneurship in addressing the precise challenges confronted by rural groups. These entrepreneurs have tested resilience, innovation, and a deep dedication to their local environments. Through techniques inclusive of collaboration, price-introduced products, network engagement, and generation adoption, they have not simply conquered obstacles but additionally created nice ripples for the duration of their groups and economies.

The effect of these groups extends past monetary metrics. They have generated employment opportunities, greater livelihoods, and preserved cultural history. By revitalising conventional practices and incorporating sustainable methods, these marketers have acted as stewards of their environment and tradition. Moreover, their emphasis on capacity-constructing and training has empowered individuals, developing a cycle of information-sharing and talent enhancement.

These success memories underscore the importance of recognizing and supporting rural entrepreneurship. Governments, companies, and society at big can play a crucial function by way of

imparting entry financing, schooling, and infrastructure. By fostering an enabling environment, we will liberate the capability of rural regions, driving financial increase, cultural preservation, and network development.

In an interconnected global, the impact of a hit rural organisations transcends their instant environment. They make a contribution to a story of rural revitalization and show that with determination and strategic wonder, even the toughest environments can deliver upward push to thriving enterprises. As we move forward, these tales serve as a testament to the strength of human ingenuity and its capacity to create meaningful trade inside the heart of rural landscapes.

Rural Entrepreneurship Challenges and Solutions :

2.1. What are some specific challenges faced by entrepreneurs in your rural area, and how have people successfully addressed these challenges?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino: Water supply is a major challenge. The lack of adequate infrastructure for transporting goods and the processing stage is lacking. I, for example, cannot consume wheat and pulses because I don't have the industry to harvest them separately. If I want to do regenerative agriculture you need adequate infrastructure.

The solution is mutual aid.

Diego Gandolfo: Certainly deficient infrastructures as well as the antiquity of the water network, which the Sicily Rural Development Plan tries to compensate for. The serious problem, however, is the management of European funds. DG Agri is aware of the critical nature of the funding method. Young people risk abandoning their business ideas because they are not supported by the system. They can all jump at any moment because the bureaucratic and economic support is not enough. The system is an obstacle because, on the one hand, there are the delays of AGEA (Agenzia per l'Erogazione in Agricoltura, which disburses the funds from Europe) but, on the other hand, the computer system that oversees the disbursement is riddled with loopholes. Young farmers have been waiting for years for funds because the system is blocked. The SIAN - Sistema Informativo Agricolo Nazionale (National Agricultural Information System) is a problem. The agricultural assistance centres in Sicily have tens and hundreds of files blocked for various reasons related to the inefficiency of the information system. The agricultural assistance centres are the offices that hold the keys to the system that allows the farmer to access the funds.

And then there is a problem relating to the region of Sicily because some contributions are granted by the region directly, such as the Contributo per hectare (for areas at risk of depopulation), and these are truly derisory funds. To adopt innovative methods, the costs outweigh the benefits. Money is scarce and badly managed. The Region makes badly written calls for tenders and then the funds are disbursed very late. Bureaucratic management times have a devastating impact. So on the one hand there are structural difficulties (collapsing bridges, outdated energy and water infrastructures, lack of digital infrastructure) and on the other there is a problem of system management that instead of helping, discourages or hinders. Good practices all hang by a thread.

Farmers overcome challenges by networking, by helping each other.

Spain :

The main difficulties encountered have been the lack of resources for continuity, as well as the complexity of updating the game. On the other hand, it has required a great effort to motivate young people to participate in new activities.

Other challenges are the exodus of young people over the age of eighteen to the urban environment to continue their studies and start their working life. In this respect, the shortage of young people and their geographical dispersion have mitigated the expected multiplier effect. To this has been added the difficulty of having the economic resources to develop all the youth initiatives proposed.

It is considered that the difficulties being young people are more linked to the lack of training, experience and lack of financial and material resources. The majority of young people who decide to become entrepreneurs do so with great enthusiasm and energy, with a tendency towards the ecological niche, with all the difficulties that this implies.

According to research carried out by a group of professors from the Rey Juan Carlos University. NONNOBIS Social Research Group (2018), the main problems can be summarised as follows:

1) Problems related to the availability of resources in the local area:

- Lack of specialised human resources to implement the project.
- Shortage of young people.
- Lack of specialised IT tools.
- Lack of own resources (economic and social) to give continuity to the project after its completion.

2) Project design problems:

- Possible complexity of the defined actions and activities to be carried out by the youth involved.
- Heterogeneity of interests among young people and difficulty in synthesising them.
- Where appropriate, difficulty of access to geographical resources (land) to carry out the placements.

3) Problems encountered during the implementation of the project:

- Need to extend the working hours of the actors involved.
- Difficulty in achieving the objectives set in the time foreseen.
- Difficulty in motivating young people in different activities.
- Language barriers in the case of young people who did not speak Spanish.
- Abandonment of the activity by the older ones due to leaving the locality in search of employment opportunities or to continue their studies in other areas.

4) Rural youth and development

- Insufficient training of some young people in computer tools, which led to a certain percentage of drop-outs.

- General management problems of the activities.

5) Problems derived from the local environment itself:

- Dispersion of the population.
- Heterogeneity of the rural territory.
- Geographical factors that made it difficult to access and communicate with the young people involved through ordinary means.
- Geographical factors that made it difficult to concentrate activities in a single location, and consequently increased budgetary requirements.

Palestine :

Entrepreneurs in rural Palestine face several specific challenges that impact their ability to succeed. One major challenge is limited access to financial resources and funding options. Due to economic constraints and a lack of supportive financial institutions, entrepreneurs often struggle to secure startup capital or investment for their ventures. To address this, some entrepreneurs have turned to alternative financing methods such as crowdfunding platforms, angel investors, or partnerships with international organisations that support small businesses. They have also sought assistance from local development organisations and NGOs that provide microfinance programs or grants to help entrepreneurs launch their businesses.

Another challenge is the limited market size and access to customers. Rural areas in Palestine have smaller populations, which can restrict the customer base for businesses. Entrepreneurs have addressed this challenge by diversifying their target markets and exploring opportunities beyond their immediate communities. They have utilised digital platforms and e-commerce to reach a broader customer base, both domestically and internationally. Through online marketing, social media presence, and partnerships with delivery services, entrepreneurs have been able to overcome geographical limitations and expand their market reach.

Infrastructure deficiencies pose another challenge for rural entrepreneurs. Limited access to reliable electricity, internet connectivity, and transportation infrastructure can hamper business operations. Entrepreneurs have found innovative solutions to overcome these challenges. For instance, they have collaborated with local authorities and organisations to advocate for improved infrastructure, including lobbying for better road networks, increased availability of internet services, and stable electricity supply. Additionally, entrepreneurs have utilised mobile technologies and portable equipment to adapt to intermittent power supply and limited access to fixed infrastructure.

Lack of entrepreneurial skills and knowledge is yet another challenge. Many rural entrepreneurs may lack formal business education and training. To address this, various organisations, including NGOs, universities, and vocational training centres, have initiated entrepreneurship development programs. These programs offer training, mentorship, and business support services to help entrepreneurs acquire the necessary skills and knowledge. Entrepreneurs have also formed networking groups and joined business associations where they can share experiences, learn from each other, and access resources collectively.

Egypt :

1- One of the most prominent challenges they face is the difficulty of accessing financing in order to sustain their projects, so they resort to obtaining loans from banks, financing from civil

society institutions that support entrepreneurship, or obtaining financing from grants launched by some embassies in Egypt related to entrepreneurship.

2- Entrepreneurs in rural areas, especially in Upper Egypt are facing limited market size and access to customers, as they have diversified their markets and the way they sell their products, and they have used digital tools for marketing, as well as their personal relationships in neighbouring governorates for marketing.

3- The difficulty of convincing the local population in rural areas to work in entrepreneurship projects, and entrepreneurs have found solutions to that, by convincing the local population, especially women, that they will work inside their homes, with the use of the available materials and through which they will have an income to help them meet their social needs.

4- The need for permanent training and education. In order to face this, they networked and partnered with civil society institutions, initiatives and associations affiliated with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to train them on entrepreneurship, to produce high-quality products, to market for these products as well, and to provide them with opportunities to participate in exhibitions that are held annually in many governorates of Egypt.

Greece :

Firstly, creating job opportunities, they not only reduce unemployment rates but also foster local economic growth. Their operations generate increased local spending, stimulate consumer demand, and contribute to overall economic activity in the area. This, in turn, leads to the growth of auxiliary businesses and services that cater to the needs of the community, resulting in a thriving local economy.

Moreover, successful rural businesses play a vital role in supporting local suppliers and producers. By sourcing ingredients, materials, and products from nearby sources, they provide a steady market and help sustain the agricultural and artisanal sectors. Furthermore, these businesses invest in community development initiatives, recognizing the importance of giving back to the community that supports them. They contribute to the improvement of local infrastructure, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and cultural organisations.

Cultural preservation is another significant impact of successful rural businesses. Many of these enterprises actively promote and preserve local traditions, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage. By utilising traditional techniques, incorporating local ingredients, and sharing the stories and traditions behind their products, they help maintain a distinct cultural identity.

Tunisia :

In the rural areas of Tunisia, entrepreneurs face specific challenges that require innovative approaches and strategies to overcome. Here are some specific challenges faced by entrepreneurs in Tunisian rural areas and how people have successfully addressed them:

Limited Access to Financing: Entrepreneurs in rural areas often face difficulties in accessing financing for their ventures. To address this challenge, some have sought microfinance institutions that specifically cater to rural businesses. Additionally, entrepreneurs have participated in government programs that provide financial support, grants, or low-interest loans for rural development. Crowdfunding platforms and community-based financing initiatives have also been utilised successfully.

Market Access and Distribution: Rural entrepreneurs may encounter challenges in reaching broader markets due to geographic limitations and infrastructure constraints. To address this, entrepreneurs have developed strategic partnerships with local retailers, cooperatives, or distributors that have established distribution networks. E-commerce platforms have also been utilised to expand market reach and connect directly with customers both domestically and internationally.

Limited Infrastructure: Infrastructure limitations, such as inadequate road networks or unreliable access to utilities, can hinder business operations in rural areas. Entrepreneurs have successfully addressed this by investing in their own infrastructure, such as establishing local production or processing facilities. Collaborative efforts with local authorities or development organisations have been employed to advocate for infrastructure improvements in rural areas.

Skills and Capacity Development: Entrepreneurs in rural areas may face challenges in accessing training and skill development opportunities. Successful entrepreneurs have sought out partnerships with vocational training centres, local universities, or NGOs to provide specialised training programs tailored to the needs of rural entrepreneurs. Additionally, knowledge-sharing initiatives, mentorship programs, and peer-to-peer networking have been established to enhance skill development and knowledge exchange within the rural entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Limited Networking Opportunities: Rural areas may have limited networking events or professional associations compared to urban centres. Entrepreneurs have addressed this challenge by actively participating in regional or national entrepreneurial networks and industry-specific conferences or trade shows. They have also leveraged digital platforms and social media to connect with other entrepreneurs, industry experts, and potential customers.

Sustainability and Environmental Considerations: Rural entrepreneurs are increasingly addressing sustainability challenges by adopting eco-friendly practices and resource-efficient technologies. This includes implementing renewable energy solutions, adopting organic farming methods, and incorporating eco-tourism initiatives that promote environmental conservation and cultural preservation.

These strategies have enabled entrepreneurs in Tunisian rural areas to overcome specific challenges and capitalise on opportunities for growth and success. However, it is important to note that the specific challenges and successful strategies may vary depending on the region and industry. Entrepreneurs often employ a combination of innovative approaches, adaptability, collaboration, and advocacy to address the unique challenges they face.

Conclusion :

In the end, entrepreneurs in various rural areas face a range of precise challenges that stem from restricted resources, inadequate infrastructure, and geographical isolation. Despite these obstacles, their testimonies of fulfilment are a testimony to the strength of resilience, innovation, and network collaboration.

These marketers have successfully addressed demanding situations via using a variety of techniques:

- **Community Collaboration:** Many rural entrepreneurs have recognized the electricity in their nearby communities. By forming networks, sharing assets, and participating with fellow

entrepreneurs, they create a supportive environment that fosters commercial enterprise boom.

- **Innovative Financing:** Limited access to financing has been a common hurdle. Entrepreneurs have overcome this by way of exploring opportunity funding assets including microfinance establishments, crowd investment, and partnerships with development corporations.
- **Market Diversification:** The venture of confined marketplace size has been tackled via marketplace diversification. Entrepreneurs have tapped into nearby and worldwide markets the usage of digital structures and e-commerce, increasing their consumer base beyond neighbourhood obstacles.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Infrastructure deficiencies had been addressed via grassroots efforts and advocacy. Entrepreneurs have invested in their personal infrastructure while also participating with neighbourhood governments and companies to improve roads, strength, and internet connectivity.
- **Skills Enhancement:** Lack of schooling and understanding has been mitigated via training applications, vocational centres, and mentorship initiatives. Entrepreneurs actively are searching for possibilities to beautify their talents and information.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Entrepreneurs have increasingly included green practices, embracing sustainable agriculture, renewable strength answers, and accountable useful resource control.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Many rural entrepreneurs have leveraged their cultural history to create particular merchandise and reviews, fostering a sense of identity and pleasure within their groups.

These strategies not simplest help marketers triumph over challenges but also contribute to the boom and development in their nearby groups and economies. Their memories highlight the significance of adaptability, network engagement, and the pursuit of modern answers inside the face of adversity. As rural areas retain to adapt, those success strategies serve as treasured examples for aspiring entrepreneurs and stakeholders aiming to support rural improvement.

Addressing Unique Challenges Faced by Marginalised Groups :

2.2. Are there any unique challenges faced by women, youth, or other marginalised groups in rural entrepreneurship?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Women are almost absent from the territories. The few women who are in the countryside have to take a lot of courage. There are many farms registered in the name of women entrepreneurs but we don't know who really works in the land. In the countryside, for the type of farming that is done, the means are used by men. In Enna there is a business run by a woman who cultivates cereals and ancient grains, and also raises cattle and produces oil. There are very few young people because access to land is not easy, i.e. you don't have the capital to buy a farm. If you inherit and you are young at the beginning you work shadowing the oldest member of the family and only later in life you do start managing it. In general, the challenges of these groups are the challenges of everyone, in the specific case of our area it is the time it takes to disburse the funds. From the submission of the application it can take five years before the fund is disbursed.

Diego Gandolfo : Social farms are experiences of social resistance that favour the integration of vulnerable people. There are many of them in Italy and also in Sicily. The unique challenge for

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Project number: 101093212

women is the frequent absence of infrastructure and services to facilitate the experience of motherhood.

Spain :

Women are an indispensable pillar for sustainable rural development, to reverse the processes of depopulation and masculinisation of the rural environment. The National Rural Network applies the gender perspective transversally in its actions, and also works specifically on the permanence, incorporation and visibility of rural women. To this end, it participates in women's empowerment and training courses, and analyses and disseminates projects, initiatives, studies and tools related to this subject.

Women in the rural world deserve special attention because of their important role in the fight against depopulation and in sustainable rural development. 54% of rural entrepreneurs are women, compared to 46% of men, as reflected in the report "Women, poverty and sustainable development", produced by the COPADE Foundation in collaboration with the Madrid City Council, which analyses the role of women entrepreneurs as an element that transforms the social and economic reality of Spain, with a commitment to social and environmental sustainability.

80% of rural businesswomen are self-employed and are committed to initiatives on products or services such as ecotourism, agrotourism, experiential tourism, crafts and handicrafts, as well as the transformation of local products or the agri-food sector, which help to diversify the rural economy and complement agricultural and livestock activities.

It should also be noted that many of these new projects are developed through the cooperative model. According to data from COPADE (Trade for Development), there are around 12,000 cooperatives in Spain, employing more than 214,000 people. More than half of these cooperatives, 6,500, are worker cooperatives. Women make up the majority of these cooperatives: 55% of those working in this type of association are women, and this is the most viable way of creating female employment in rural areas.

Palestine :

Yes, women, youth, and other marginalised groups in rural entrepreneurship in Palestine face unique challenges that can hinder their entrepreneurial endeavours. One example is the prevailing cultural and societal norms that limit women's participation in economic activities. Women often face gender-based discrimination, unequal access to resources, and limited mobility, which can restrict their ability to start and grow businesses. However, there have been inspiring examples of women overcoming these challenges and achieving success.

One real example is the "Women's Rural Cooperative" in the village of Burqin in the Jenin district of Palestine. This cooperative was established by a group of women who faced economic hardships and limited opportunities in their rural community. The cooperative aimed to empower women by providing them with a platform to showcase their skills and generate income. However, they faced challenges such as societal resistance, lack of financial resources, and limited market access.

Egypt :

Yes, women, youth, and other marginalised groups are facing unique challenges when it comes to entrepreneurship in rural areas, such as:

1- Limited access to resources such as capital, education, and training, which can make it more difficult to start and grow a business. This can be due to a range of factors such as cultural norms, discrimination, or lack of opportunities. Another point is the limited access to markets due to factors

such as geographic isolation or lack of transportation infrastructure. This can make it more difficult to reach customers, build a customer base, and generate revenue.

2- **Social barriers:** Women, youth, and other marginalised groups are facing social barriers, especially women that make it more difficult to build networks and relationships within the business community. This can include stereotypes, biases, and other forms of discrimination that can limit opportunities for growth and success. As well as the lack of role models who can inspire and guide them in their entrepreneurial journey.

3- **Limited access to support services:** That is to support services such as business incubators, mentors, and other forms of support that can help them start and grow their businesses.

Greece :

In rural Greece, women, young people and marginalised groups face particular challenges in entrepreneurship. Limited access to resources and finance, influenced by gender bias and barriers related to age and social background, can hamper their entrepreneurial efforts. Unequal access to education and training programmes is another barrier that hinders the development of the necessary entrepreneurial skills. Removing these barriers requires promoting gender equality, raising awareness of the abilities and potential of all individuals, and creating mentoring programmes, support networks, and inclusive education initiatives that equip them with the knowledge and skills needed for successful entrepreneurship.

Tunisia :

In rural areas of Tunisia, women, youth, and marginalised groups encounter distinct challenges when pursuing entrepreneurship. These challenges include:

Gender Inequality: Women face discrimination, limited resource access, and fewer opportunities compared to men. They often confront social and cultural barriers that hinder their participation in entrepreneurship, access to finance, and networking prospects.

Limited Financial Access: Women, youth, and marginalised groups often struggle to secure financial resources such as loans and investments due to biased lending practices, lack of collateral, or limited financial knowledge. Access to startup and working capital remains a significant challenge.

Socio-cultural Constraints: Cultural norms and expectations can impede the entrepreneurial aspirations of women, youth, and marginalised groups. Traditional gender roles, societal biases, and cultural stereotypes may discourage or restrict their involvement in certain industries or business activities.

Skills and Training Gap: Limited access to entrepreneurship education, vocational training, and mentorship programs hampers the development of essential business skills and knowledge. Women, youth, and marginalised groups may face a lack of tailored training programs and lack access to role models or mentors who can guide them.

Networking and Support Systems: Building professional networks, accessing mentorship, and finding supportive communities can be challenging for women, youth, and marginalised groups. Limited networking opportunities, especially in rural areas, impede their ability to connect with experienced entrepreneurs and gain valuable support and guidance.

Balancing Responsibilities: Women, particularly in rural areas, face the additional challenge of juggling multiple roles and responsibilities. Balancing caregiving duties, household tasks, and agricultural work alongside entrepreneurial endeavours requires additional support structures.

Conclusion :

In diverse rural contexts, women, youth, and marginalised businesses come across unique challenges that may restrict their participation in entrepreneurship. These demanding situations include:

- **Gender Inequality:** Women often face discriminatory practices, unequal get right of entry to sources, and social norms that restrict their capability to have interaction in entrepreneurial sports. Cultural expectancies and biases can restrict ladies's mobility, choice-making authority, and get entry to financing.
- **Limited Financial Access:** Women, young people, and marginalised corporations may also war to secure financial resources because of factors which include confined collateral, biased lending practices, and a lack of financial literacy. This can hinder their potential to begin or grow groups.
- **Socio-cultural Constraints:** Cultural norms and traditional gender roles can create boundaries for ladies, children, and marginalised corporations. Societal biases and expectancies approximately appropriate occupations might also limit their possibilities to pursue certain entrepreneurial ventures.
- **Skills and Training Gap:** Limited entry to first-rate education, vocational training, and mentorship programs can avert the development of essential entrepreneurial abilities. This can be mainly difficult for marginalised corporations in search of to go into the commercial enterprise global.
- **Networking and Support Systems:** Establishing professional networks and locating mentorship can be difficult for ladies, youth, and marginalised groups, specifically in areas with restricted access to entrepreneurial groups and resources.
- **Balancing Responsibilities:** Women, in particular in rural regions, frequently juggle multiple roles, together with caregiving and family obligations. Balancing these responsibilities along entrepreneurship may be tough.

Support Systems and Resources :

2.3. What support systems or resources exist to help entrepreneurs overcome these challenges?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : In inland areas with extensive low-income crops (not intensive like orchards for example) so arable crops adapting to the weather the only real support is the PSR - Rural Development Programme and the CAP - Common Agricultural Policy which provides the contribution per hectare which is not much but is essential and you receive it even if you are a tenant.

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Spain :

In Spain, the **Desafío Mujer Rural Programme** is an initiative of the Women's Institute, co-financed by the European Social Fund, which promotes entrepreneurship and the consolidation of businesses of women living in rural areas, boosting innovation and promoting the competitiveness of their business projects.

The programme offers:

Resolution of doubts, consultations and personalised advice throughout the process of starting up rural entrepreneurship projects, including support in the preparation of business plans or during the development of the improvement plan for existing companies or businesses.

Training in everything related to the start-up and management of entrepreneurship projects, such as: courses on the development of business models and plans, digital marketing, commercialisation, finance, communication and innovation.

- Information and resources for entrepreneurship, including references to grants and subsidies.
- Networking and contacts with other women entrepreneurs and businesswomen at national level.
- The registration period for the Programme is now open.

At the same time, Microcredits without collateral, an initiative within the framework of the PAEM programme, offers the possibility of access to micro-financing of up to 25,000 euros to women who are thinking of setting up their own business or promoting and consolidating one that has already been set up.

- No third party guarantees are required from the beneficiaries of the Programme.
- They are granted with advantageous conditions.

There are also launchers for rural entrepreneurship projects such as **Ruraltivity**, under the Federation of Rural Women's Associations (Fademur), which has been working for more than 20 years in rural areas in 15 Autonomous Communities including the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands. On this platform, they offer advice to projects regardless of their sector and the stage they are at. They also offer training for all these entrepreneurs, from the most fundamental skills to more specific aspects.

The **Association of Rural Entrepreneurs (AER)** is a platform that was created ten years ago in the Valencian Community, when a group of entrepreneurial friends created this platform to promote networking in the villages of the region.

Rural Development Plans (RDP) of the European Union (specifically, the LEADER Plan), to improve the participation of the rural population in the public sphere, in management and decision-making.

European Network for Rural Development (ENRD), helping Member States to implement their rural development programmes (RDPs). ENRD serves as a platform for sharing ideas and experiences on how rural development policies work in practice and how they can be improved.

Palestine :

In Palestine, there are several support systems and resources available to help entrepreneurs overcome challenges and enhance their chances of success. Here are some specific examples:

Small Enterprise Center (SEC): The Small Enterprise Center, based in Ramallah, offers comprehensive support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It provides training programs, business advisory services, access to finance, market research, and assistance with marketing and export activities.

Palestinian Businesswomen's Association (ASALA): ASALA is an organisation that focuses on empowering women entrepreneurs in Palestine. They offer training programs, mentorship, networking events, and access to funding sources specifically tailored for women-owned businesses.

Incubation and Acceleration Programs: Various incubation and acceleration programs exist in Palestine, such as the Palestine Startup Accelerator (PSA) and the Disruptive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program (DIEP). These programs offer mentorship, access to workspace, business coaching, networking opportunities, and funding to early-stage startups.

Egypt :

- 1- **Providing access to capital:** Providing access to capital through loans, grants, or other forms of financing can help to overcome barriers related to limited resources.
- 2- **Creating mentorship and networking opportunities:** Creating mentorship and networking opportunities can help build relationships and support networks that can help entrepreneurs overcome social barriers and develop the skills and confidence needed to succeed.
- 3- **Providing training and education:** Providing training and education programs can help build the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in entrepreneurship, and can help in overcoming barriers related to limited access to education and training.
- 4- **Addressing cultural norms and biases:** Addressing cultural norms and biases can help create a more inclusive business environment that supports the success of women, youth, and other marginalised

Greece :

In Greece, entrepreneurs in rural areas can access various support systems and resources to overcome the challenges they face. Business incubators provide infrastructure, mentoring, and networking opportunities. Entrepreneurship training programs and educational initiatives offer skills and knowledge development. Funding options such as grants, loans, and financial support programs are available through government agencies and private investors. Government support includes policies, tax incentives, and regulatory simplification. Digital platforms and e-commerce solutions enable broader market access. These resources can be accessed through local organisations, government agencies, and online platforms dedicated to promoting entrepreneurship. By leveraging these support systems, entrepreneurs can receive guidance, access funding, acquire skills, and connect with a network of like-minded individuals, increasing their chances of success.

Tunisia :

In Tunisia, various support systems and resources exist to assist entrepreneurs in overcoming the challenges they face, including those specific to rural areas. Here are some examples:

Business Incubators and Accelerators: Incubators and accelerators provide a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurs, offering workspace, mentoring, training programs, access to networks, and potential funding opportunities. These institutions help entrepreneurs refine their business models, develop essential skills, and connect with industry experts and investors.

Microfinance Institutions: Microfinance institutions offer financial services tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs, including small loans, microcredit, and savings accounts. They focus on reaching underserved populations, such as women, youth, and marginalised groups, and provide access to capital that traditional financial institutions may not offer.

Government Support Programs: The Tunisian government has implemented various support programs and initiatives to foster entrepreneurship. These include funding schemes, grants, subsidies, and tax incentives targeted at rural areas and specific groups, such as women and youth entrepreneurs. Government agencies also provide information, guidance, and advisory services for aspiring and existing entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship Training and Education: Vocational training centres, universities, and non-profit organisations offer entrepreneurship training programs, workshops, and courses designed to enhance entrepreneurial skills and knowledge. These programs cover various aspects, including business planning, financial management, marketing, and networking.

Networking and Industry Associations: Business associations and networks play a crucial role in connecting entrepreneurs, providing opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and access to resources. These organisations organise events, seminars, and conferences that facilitate networking, learning, and business development.

Digital Platforms and E-commerce: Digital platforms, online marketplaces, and e-commerce solutions enable entrepreneurs to reach a broader customer base and overcome geographical limitations. They provide opportunities for rural entrepreneurs to showcase their products or services, connect with customers, and facilitate online transactions.

Non-Profit Organisations and NGOs: Non-profit organisations and NGOs dedicated to entrepreneurship development and rural empowerment offer resources, mentoring, and training programs. They support entrepreneurs by providing guidance, facilitating access to finance, and fostering partnerships with other stakeholders.

Mentorship and Coaching: Mentorship programs connect entrepreneurs with experienced mentors who provide guidance, advice, and support. Mentors offer insights, share industry knowledge, and help entrepreneurs navigate challenges, enhancing their entrepreneurial capabilities and decision-making.

These support systems and resources contribute to the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem in Tunisia, providing entrepreneurs in rural areas with the necessary tools, knowledge, networks, and financial assistance to overcome challenges and thrive in their ventures.

Conclusion :

Across exceptional areas, numerous initiatives were set up to empower women, children, and marginalised businesses in overcoming these obstacles. Here's a comprehensive evaluation of the guide systems available:

- **Financial Inclusion:** Microfinance institutions provide on hand loans and credit score to underserved entrepreneurs, together with girls and marginalised agencies. Government

applications provide grants, subsidies, and tax incentives targeted at rural areas and specific demographics.

- **Education and Training:** Entrepreneurship schooling packages, vocational facilities, and universities provide guides on enterprise making plans, monetary management, advertising, and virtual talents. These programs beautify entrepreneurial talents and bridge knowledge gaps.
- **Mentorship and Networking:** Business incubators, accelerators, and mentorship applications connect marketers with experienced mentors and enterprise professionals. Networking occasions, institutions, and online structures facilitate collaboration and know-how sharing.
- **Government Support:** Governments put in force rules and projects to sell entrepreneurship in rural areas. Desafío Mujer Rural and PAEM packages empower girls in Spain, while the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) assists member states in rural development.
- **Digital Transformation:** Digital systems and e-commerce answers permit marketers to get admission to large markets beyond neighbourhood communities. Online marketplaces offer visibility and facilitate transactions.
- **Community Collaboration:** Non-earnings agencies, NGOs, and institutions provide resources, mentorship, and education applications. Collaborative efforts expand the impact of aid projects.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Organisations like the 3rd of October organisation in Palestine focus on empowering women entrepreneurs whilst preserving cultural heritage. Incorporating traditional practices into commercial enterprise fashions can entice clients in search of real studies.
- **Advocacy and Awareness:** Awareness campaigns venture stereotypes and biases, developing an inclusive surroundings for entrepreneurs. Advocacy efforts aim to exchange societal norms that avert girls's and marginalised corporations' participation.
- **Incubation and Acceleration:** Incubators and accelerators provide infrastructure, mentorship, and get right of entry to networks. These applications help marketers refine business models and navigate demanding situations.
- **Skill Development:** Vocational education centres and academic establishments provide applications tailored to the wishes of rural entrepreneurs. Skill-constructing projects enable marketers to broaden skills important for commercial enterprise success.
- **Access to Capital:** Microcredits without collateral, as visible in Spain, ease entry to financing for ladies marketers. Microfinance establishments provide loans designed for small and medium-sized businesses.
- **Awareness and Resources:** Platforms like Rurality offer recommendation, schooling, and networking possibilities for rural marketers. Resources for entrepreneurship encompass facts on grants, subsidies, and investment assets.

By tapping into these assist structures and sources, entrepreneurs can construct a basis for fulfilment regardless of the challenges they face. These tasks not only empower people however also make a contribution to the monetary increase, cultural power, and sustainable development of rural communities. By championing inclusivity and fostering entrepreneurship, societies can harness the capability of all contributors, no matter their history, to create thriving rural economies.

Effective Policies and Initiatives for Entrepreneurship :

3.1. Are there any local or regional policies, initiatives, or programs that have successfully supported entrepreneurship in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : All farms have the CAP and practically everyone tries to access a RDP (PSR - Programma di Sviluppo Rurale)

Diego Gandolfo : It is difficult to answer this question unequivocally. Thanks to some measures and sub-measures of the Sicily Region's Rural Development Plan, there are certainly entrepreneurs who have benefited, but others have not, perhaps because of a badly written call for tenders. I would say that there are success stories, not success policies. For example, the Common Market Organisation with wine and/or honey has supported entrepreneurship, but for every entrepreneur who has succeeded, there is one who has failed because funds are scarce or funding arrives too late. If a successful policy means an effective and efficient policy then I would say no, there are no successful programmes.

Spain :

Innovation in rural areas involves the introduction of changes and new ideas to address economic, environmental and social challenges. This is why innovation is an integral objective in rural development policy for the period 2014-2020. Operational groups and innovative projects are the two most important tools for promoting innovation in rural areas.

At European level, the European Innovation Partnership in Agriculture (EIP-AGRI) promotes the competitiveness and sustainability of the agri-food and forestry sectors by establishing a network between the various actors involved in innovation, such as farmers, advisors, researchers, businesses and non-governmental organisations. This partnership facilitates the connection between research and practice, building on Member States' rural development policy and the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

In recent years, through different lines of funding from European funds and promoted by the National Rural Network and its members, numerous projects have been promoted with the aim of improving the quality of life of young people in rural areas and creating new opportunities to combat the growing problem of depopulation in these areas. These initiatives aim to reduce the gap between the quality of life, rights and opportunities of young people in rural areas compared to young people in urban environments.

From an economic point of view, the rural territory is closely linked to the primary sector, especially agriculture and the food industry. However, in recent decades, this sector has lost importance and weight in GDP and in the economy in general. Therefore, it can be seen that many of the selected Best Practices focus on the recovery of this sector, improving its conditions, revitalising activities in danger of extinction and applying innovation to increase its efficiency, among other aspects.

In addition, this guide highlights other areas, such as awareness-raising and dissemination, especially aimed at improving environmental conditions and the recovery of the natural environment. It also considers leisure and sport as sources for improving the quality of life of young people, tourism as an engine for strengthening the productive and economic structure of rural areas, the use of new technologies and the improvement of socio-health services.

Palestine :

Yes, there are local and regional policies, initiatives, and programs that have successfully supported entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine. One example is the "Palestinian Market Development Program" (PMDP), which is implemented by the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy in collaboration with international development partners.

The PMDP focuses on promoting economic development and entrepreneurship in rural areas by providing targeted support and resources. The program offers various components, including: Business Development Services (BDS): The PMDP provides training, capacity building, and technical assistance to rural entrepreneurs. This support helps them enhance their business skills, improve productivity, and access new markets.

But this is the only initiative in Palestine, it has contributed to job creation, income generation, and sustainable economic growth in rural areas but we need more support to enhance entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine.

Egypt :

Yes, there are local and regional policies, initiatives, and programs that have successfully supported entrepreneurship in rural areas in Egypt, such as:

- 1- USAID which funds and assists entrepreneurs in the field of entrepreneurship and economic development, trains them in labour market skills improving agricultural productivity, assists them in the financial plan for projects, and grants them the required funding for projects if necessary.
- 2- Business incubators in Egypt which are organisations providing support to startup companies during their early stages of development. These organisations offer a range of services and resources, including office space, access to equipment and technology, mentorship and coaching, networking opportunities, and training programs.

3.2. What impact have these policies or initiatives had on the local economy and community?

These organisations offer a range of services and resources, including office space, access to equipment and technology, mentorship and coaching, networking opportunities, and training programs.

Greece :

Rural Development Programme (RDP) in Greece

The 2nd Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in Greece encompasses Rural Development Programmes (RDP) aimed at supporting agricultural development. The Greek 2014-2020 RDP, approved by the European Commission, outlined the country's priorities for utilising 5.93 billion Euros of public funds (4.7 billion Euros from the EU budget and 1.23 billion Euros from the national contribution) during this period. The RDP focused on six goals of rural development, including knowledge transfer, competitiveness, food chain organisation, ecosystem preservation, resource efficiency, and social inclusion.

To achieve these objectives, a network of partners and institutions, including agronomists from Farmers' Service Centres (FSCs), collaborated closely. Regular training seminars and continuous communication with agronomists ensured up-to-date information and support. Digital tools, such as online forums and applications for credit point calculation and proposal submissions, enhanced

effectiveness. Collaboration with certification bodies and external partners further strengthened the provision of integrated services to producers and entrepreneurs⁶.

Tunisia :

Tunisia has implemented local and regional policies, initiatives, and programs to successfully support entrepreneurship in rural areas. Here are some examples:

Rural Development Programs: The Tunisian government has launched various rural development programs that aim to promote entrepreneurship and economic growth in rural areas. These programs provide financial support, infrastructure development, access to markets, and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the specific needs of rural entrepreneurs.

Regional Business Support Centers: Regional business support centres have been established to provide specialised services and resources to entrepreneurs in rural areas. These centres offer guidance, training programs, access to financing, and business development support, helping entrepreneurs navigate challenges and grow their businesses.

Local Investment Promotion Agencies: Local investment promotion agencies play a vital role in attracting investments to rural areas. They facilitate investment opportunities, provide information on incentives and regulations, and offer support to entrepreneurs seeking to establish or expand their businesses in rural regions.

Regional Entrepreneurship Competitions and Awards: Regional entrepreneurship competitions and awards encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in rural areas. These initiatives recognize and reward successful entrepreneurs, providing them with visibility, networking opportunities, and potential access to additional funding or resources.

Agricultural and Rural Development Funds: Agricultural and rural development funds provide financial support to entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector. These funds offer loans, grants, and subsidies for agricultural projects, equipment purchase, modernization of farming practices, and value-added processing initiatives.

Social Entrepreneurship Programs: Programs focused on social entrepreneurship have gained traction in rural areas. These initiatives support entrepreneurs who aim to address social or environmental challenges while running a sustainable business. They provide mentorship, training, and access to networks and funding specifically tailored to social enterprises.

Local Partnerships and Cooperatives: Local partnerships and cooperatives are encouraged as a means to enhance collaboration and collective action among rural entrepreneurs. These partnerships allow entrepreneurs to pool resources, share expertise, and access shared facilities, thereby fostering mutual support and enhancing competitiveness.

These policies, initiatives, and programs demonstrate the commitment of Tunisia to promote entrepreneurship and economic development in rural areas. By providing targeted support, access to finance, capacity-building opportunities, and infrastructure development, these efforts create an

⁶ <https://www.c-gaia.gr/en/services/programma-agrotikis-anaptyxis-paa/>

enabling environment for rural entrepreneurs to thrive and contribute to the growth of their communities.

Conclusion :

Across distinct areas, nearby and local rules, tasks, and applications have effectively supported entrepreneurship in rural areas, contributing to monetary boom and community development. Here's an overview of those impactful tasks:

Italy's Rural Development and CAP Programs: Italy's commitment to rural development is clear thru the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the Rural Development Programme (RDP). These programs provide essential assist to farmers, such as financial contributions in step with hectare, that is important for sustaining agricultural activities and making sure the livelihoods of rural marketers.

Spain's Innovation and Rural Development: Spain's cognizance on innovation in rural regions via operational companies and innovative tasks has been critical. Initiatives like the European Innovation Partnership in Agriculture (EIP-AGRI) connect numerous stakeholders and facilitate the utility of research in practice. This method promotes competitiveness, sustainability, and efficiency in agriculture and forestry sectors.

Palestine's Palestinian Market Development Program (PMDP): The PMDP, applied in collaboration with international companions, gives centred guidance to rural marketers. Through commercial enterprise development offerings, schooling, capacity building, and technical help, the PMDP complements business abilities, productivity, and market get admission to, leading to activity introduction, income technology, and sustainable growth.

Egypt's USAID and Business Incubators: USAID's investment and help for entrepreneurs, blended with the support of enterprise incubators, offer assets and mentorship in the course of the early tiers of business development. These initiatives equip entrepreneurs with the important capabilities, understanding, and networks to conquer challenges and thrive.

Greece's Rural Development Programme (RDP): Greece's RDP below the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) focuses on understanding switch, competitiveness, surroundings preservation, and social inclusion. Collaboration among partners, including agronomists and certification of our bodies, enhances service provision to producers and marketers, fostering innovation and sustainability.

Tunisia's Local and Regional Programs: Tunisia's diverse tasks include rural development programs, local business assist centres, investment advertising agencies, entrepreneurship competitions, and agricultural improvement finances. These efforts provide financial support, schooling, infrastructure, and networking possibilities tailored to the desires of rural marketers.

These projects together underscore the significance of tailor-made support structures that address the specific demanding situations of rural entrepreneurship. By combining financial help, training, mentorship, networking, and infrastructure improvement, those projects have undoubtedly impacted nearby economies, created jobs, greater productivity, and advanced the overall pleasant lifestyles in rural communities.

Policy Impact Assessment :

3.2. What impact have these policies or initiatives had on the local economy and community?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Impact is widespread and helps innovation but it is difficult to become independent from these policies. If you are a small company but have a valuable product (e.g. saffron), the European programme is of little importance because you are already making money on your own. The fundamental impact of these measures is actually for medium/large companies. In reality, the really small companies gain very little from the CAP. The RDP seems to be written for medium/large companies. The funds are there but are disbursed slowly.

Diego Gandolfo : Support for some not for all. It is a spotty picture.

Spain :

The report entitled "Employment Opportunities in the Rural Environment", prepared by a multidisciplinary team of professionals linked to the rural environment and coordinated by the Directorate General for the Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment of the Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs (MARM), reveals a significant change in society's perception of rural areas. Thanks to improvements in services and infrastructure, as well as the diversity of economic resources and business opportunities, there is now a workforce willing to work in rural areas and more options for entrepreneurs.

Palestine :

The policies and initiatives aimed at supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine have had a positive impact on the local economy and community. Some of the key impacts include: Job Creation, Economic Growth, Skill Development, and Community Empowerment but it needs more to be covered for all the rural areas in Palestine.

Greece :

The involvement in the Rural Development Programme's measures has gained popularity among Greece's rural community due to expertise, reliability, and efficiency. Over 4,000 producers and entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector have benefited from the support, committing significant funds for the development and modernization of their holdings and enterprises, totaling €115,095,675 from the 2014-2020 RDP funds.

Tunisia :

The policies and initiatives implemented to support entrepreneurship in rural areas of Tunisia have had significant impacts on the local economy and community. Here are some of the positive effects:

Economic Growth and Job Creation: The policies and initiatives have contributed to economic growth by fostering entrepreneurship and business development in rural areas. This has resulted in the creation of new job opportunities, reducing unemployment rates and providing income sources for individuals within the local community. The growth of rural businesses has also stimulated economic activity, generating revenue, and supporting local suppliers and service providers.

Diversification of Rural Economies: The focus on entrepreneurship in rural areas has led to the diversification of local economies. By promoting a range of industries, such as agriculture, agro-processing, handicrafts, eco-tourism, and rural services, these initiatives have reduced dependence

on traditional sectors and provided alternative income-generating activities. This diversification strengthens the resilience of rural economies and contributes to a more balanced regional development.

Human Capital Development: The policies and initiatives have prioritised human capital development by offering training programs, mentorship, and capacity-building opportunities. This has enhanced the skills and capabilities of local entrepreneurs, enabling them to be more competitive, innovative, and successful. The improved human capital contributes to the overall productivity and growth of the local economy.

Community Empowerment: The policies and initiatives have empowered the local community by providing access to resources, networks, and support systems. They have encouraged community participation and collaboration, fostering a sense of ownership, pride, and collective responsibility. This empowerment strengthens social cohesion, promotes local entrepreneurship, and enhances community resilience.

Preservation of Local Culture and Heritage: Some initiatives focus on promoting rural cultural heritage and traditional crafts. By supporting local artisans and preserving traditional practices, these initiatives help sustain local culture, boost cultural tourism, and create economic opportunities that celebrate the unique identity of rural communities. This preservation strengthens cultural pride and contributes to the overall well-being of the community.

Sustainable Development: Many policies and initiatives prioritise sustainable practices, including environmental conservation, resource efficiency, and responsible tourism. By promoting sustainable entrepreneurship, these efforts contribute to the preservation of natural resources, protection of ecosystems, and reduction of environmental impacts. This supports long-term sustainability, resilience, and the well-being of both the community and the environment.

Overall, the policies and initiatives designed to support entrepreneurship in rural areas have had positive impacts on the local economy and community. They have fostered economic growth, job creation, diversification of rural economies, human capital development, community empowerment, preservation of local culture, and sustainable development. These impacts contribute to inclusive and balanced regional development, improved quality of life, and the overall socio-economic well-being of rural communities in Tunisia.

Conclusion :

The pursuit of rural entrepreneurship has been championed thru diverse policies, projects, and packages. While the effect of those endeavours might also vary, they together share a commonplace aim: to uplift neighbourhood economies and communities with the aid of cultivating innovation, developing activity opportunities, and riding sustainable improvement.

In Italy, Spain, Palestine, Greece, and Tunisia, the implementation of rural entrepreneurship guide mechanisms has yielded noteworthy consequences. From revitalising traditional industries to fostering innovation, these guidelines have shown promise in reworking rural landscapes into hubs of monetary interest.

However, challenges persist. Some tasks prefer larger firms, leaving smaller ventures searching for equitable opportunities. To really harness the capacity of rural entrepreneurship, it's imperative to cope with those gaps and make certain inclusivity across all scales of companies.

The successes performed through these guidelines offer precious insights. They spotlight the significance of collaboration, be it through mentorship, networking, or public-private partnerships. These networks provide budding marketers with the gear, understanding, and assets needed to navigate demanding situations and capture possibilities.

Moreover, initiatives that concentrate on skill improvement, cultural maintenance, and sustainable practices display a holistic method to rural entrepreneurship. By nurturing local competencies, celebrating cultural historical past, and embracing eco-friendly practices, those endeavours foster nicely-rounded growth that advantages each the financial system and the community.

In the end, the adventure in the direction of vibrant and sustainable rural economies is an ongoing endeavour that requires progressive thinking, adaptable strategies, and collaboration among stakeholders. As areas hold to adapt, so must the strategies to rural entrepreneurship. By mastering from successes, addressing demanding situations, and amplifying inclusivity, the pathway to wealthy rural communities becomes clearer. Through these collective efforts, the imaginative and prescient of thriving rural economies can be found out, contributing to a greater balanced, resilient, and interconnected global.

Program Evaluation :

3.3. What are some challenges or limitations of these programs, and how could they be improved?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : From the European point of view, the programmes work quite well. There are interesting principles. The European Parliament currently has an orientation that supports organic farming. Basically the European programmes are written quite well, perhaps there could be more room for agroecology. It is widespread worldwide and it is a step ahead of organic farming, it talks more about local seed biodiversity. The disbursement of funds at the local level should be improved.

Diego Gandolfo : With regard to the Rural Development Plan, more streamlined and less bureaucratic management is needed, procedures must be streamlined. And then there is a need to strengthen the administrative capacity of the regional administration. In addition, the identification of the right priorities is necessary; in this regard, there are over- and under-funded measures. Thousands of people applied for access to measure 4.1, i.e. support for investments in agricultural holdings, and the money ran out, and then the ranking list was not filled, but another call for applications was made, and at the same time it was decided to allocate a great deal of funds to measure 6.4 (Support for investments in the creation and development of non-agricultural activities), thus favouring the proliferation of agritourisme.

Spain :

- Excessive bureaucratisation and too long administrative deadlines before starting the project.
- Apparent lack of institutional support.
- Lack of financial resources.

Palestine :

While programs supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine have shown positive outcomes, there are still some challenges and limitations that need to be addressed for further improvement. Some of these challenges include:

1. **Limited Access to Financing:** Access to finance remains a significant challenge for entrepreneurs in rural areas. Many aspiring entrepreneurs struggle to secure sufficient funding to start or expand their businesses. Improving access to financing options, such as microfinance programs or targeted loans, can help address this challenge.
2. **Infrastructure and Resources:** Rural areas often face inadequate infrastructure, including limited access to reliable electricity, transportation, and internet connectivity. Insufficient availability of physical resources, such as business incubators or co-working spaces, can also hinder entrepreneurship. Investing in rural infrastructure and providing necessary resources can create a more conducive environment for entrepreneurs.
3. **Limited Market Opportunities:** Rural entrepreneurs may face difficulties in accessing broader markets beyond their local communities. This can limit their growth potential and profitability. Supporting market linkages, facilitating networking opportunities, and promoting market access for rural entrepreneurs can help overcome this challenge.
4. **Limited Business Support Services:** The availability of business support services, such as mentoring, coaching, and advisory services, may be limited in rural areas. Entrepreneurs often lack the necessary guidance and expertise to navigate the complexities of starting and growing a business. Strengthening business support networks and providing tailored support services for rural entrepreneurs can enhance their chances of success.
5. **Capacity Building and Skills Development:** While some programs offer training and capacity-building opportunities, there is a need to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of these initiatives. Aligning training programs with the specific needs and challenges of rural entrepreneurs, and providing ongoing support and mentorship, can enhance their entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.
6. **Sustainability and Long-term Support:** Many programs have limited duration or short-term funding, which may hinder their long-term impact. Ensuring sustainability and providing continuous support beyond the initial stages is crucial for the success and growth of rural entrepreneurship. This can be achieved by establishing long-term funding mechanisms, fostering partnerships with private and public entities, and integrating entrepreneurship support into broader rural development strategies.

To improve these programs, it is essential to address these challenges by adopting a comprehensive and holistic approach. This includes targeted interventions to address financing gaps, infrastructure development, market access facilitation, enhanced business support services, and continuous capacity building. Additionally, close collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, private sector stakeholders, and local communities is vital to identify and implement effective solutions. Regular evaluation and monitoring of program outcomes can help identify areas for improvement and ensure ongoing success.

Egypt :

Although there are many benefits to programs that support entrepreneurship in rural areas, there are also some challenges and limitations to these programs in Egypt, such as:

- 1- **Limited funding and access to markets:** there are many programs that support entrepreneurship in rural areas that are limited by the amount of funding they receive. This can make it difficult to provide entrepreneurs with the resources and support they need to succeed.

Also, rural entrepreneurs face challenges in accessing markets for their products or services. This can be due to a lack of infrastructure, limited transportation options, or a lack of consumer demand.

2- Limited access to capital, which can make it difficult to start or grow a business. This can be due to a lack of local investors or limited access to traditional sources of financing, such as banks or venture capital firms.

Greece :

Rural development programs in Greece face challenges that can be improved to enhance their effectiveness. Limited awareness among entrepreneurs about program benefits can be addressed through increased outreach and targeted marketing. Simplifying application processes, providing clear guidelines, and offering support services can help overcome complexities. Access to information and resources can be improved through digital platforms and local training workshops. Tailoring support to address region-specific needs and implementing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms can ensure targeted and effective assistance.

Tunisia :

The programs and initiatives aimed at supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas of Tunisia have been beneficial, but there are certain challenges and limitations that need to be addressed for further improvement. Here are some of the challenges and suggestions for enhancing these programs:

Limited Awareness and Outreach: One challenge lies in the limited awareness of these programs among potential beneficiaries, especially in remote rural areas. To overcome this, it is crucial to enhance awareness through targeted marketing campaigns, localised outreach programs, and engagement with local community leaders. This will ensure that more entrepreneurs are aware of and can benefit from these initiatives.

Access to Finance: Despite efforts to provide financial support, accessing finance remains a challenge for rural entrepreneurs. To address this, closer collaboration with financial institutions is needed to develop tailored financial products that meet the unique needs of rural entrepreneurs. Simplifying loan application processes and exploring alternative financing options like crowdfunding platforms can also enhance access to finance for rural entrepreneurs.

Capacity Building and Training: While training programs exist, it is important to ensure their effectiveness and reach. Programs should be tailored to the specific needs of rural entrepreneurs, covering areas such as business management, marketing, financial literacy, and technology adoption. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation can help ensure that these programs remain relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of entrepreneurs.

Infrastructure Development: Limited infrastructure, including road networks, electricity, and internet connectivity, poses challenges for rural entrepreneurs. Governments should prioritise infrastructure development in rural areas to enable smoother business operations and better access to markets. Collaborating with private sector entities to expand infrastructure can help address these limitations.

Sustainability and Long-Term Support: Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the programs is crucial. Regular evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and impact assessments can help identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments. Offering ongoing support, mentorship, and

networking opportunities beyond the initial stages can contribute to the long-term success of rural entrepreneurs.

Gender and Social Inclusion: Despite efforts to promote inclusivity, gender and social disparities persist. It is important to incorporate strategies that address gender biases, provide targeted support to marginalised groups, and create a more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Ensuring equal opportunities, promoting diversity, and establishing mentorship and networking platforms for underrepresented groups can help address these limitations.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are crucial to assess the effectiveness and impact of these programs. Collecting data on outcomes and challenges faced by entrepreneurs can help identify areas for improvement and inform policy adjustments. Regular feedback from entrepreneurs is valuable in refining the programs and making them more responsive to their needs.

By addressing these challenges and implementing the suggested improvements, the programs supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas can become more effective, inclusive, and impactful. Continued collaboration between government, private sector, and civil society stakeholders is essential to ensure that these programs evolve and adapt to the changing needs of rural entrepreneurs in Tunisia.

Conclusion :

While rural entrepreneurship packages have shown promise, they may be not without challenges. Recognizing those barriers and actively seeking improvements can decorate their impact and effectiveness.

Challenges:

Limited Access to Financing: Access to investment stays a big project for rural entrepreneurs throughout regions. Many face problems securing sufficient capital to initiate or extend their ventures.

Inadequate Infrastructure: Insufficient infrastructure, including reliable power, transportation, and internet connectivity, poses limitations for rural marketers. Lack of bodily sources including co-operating spaces hinders commercial enterprise boom.

Market Limitations: Rural entrepreneurs often wage war to get admission to broader markets beyond their local communities. This restricts their growth potential and profitability.

Skills and Support Gaps: Entrepreneurs may additionally lack the important capabilities and know-how to navigate the complexities of going for walks in an enterprise. Limited entry to mentoring, training, and advisory offerings hampers their fulfilment.

Sustainability and Long-Term Support: Many programs have limited length or brief-term investment, hampering their long-term effect. Sustainability and continuous guidance are critical for the rural entrepreneurship boom.

Improvements:

Enhanced Financing Options: Governments and companies have to work to increase the provision of financing tailored to rural entrepreneurs. Microfinance applications, centred loans, and challenge capital aid can bridge the investment gap.

Investment in Infrastructure: Prioritising infrastructure development, along with reliable electricity, transportation networks, and excessive-speed net, can create a more conducive environment for rural entrepreneurship.

Market Access Facilitation: Initiatives that facilitate market linkages, networking possibilities, and e-commerce systems can help rural marketers make bigger their reach and access large markets.

Comprehensive Capacity Building: Training packages should be tailored to cope with the particular wishes and demanding situations of rural entrepreneurs, covering areas which include enterprise control, marketing, and financial literacy.

Long-Term Funding Strategies: Developing sustainable funding mechanisms, fostering partnerships with personal entities, and integrating entrepreneurship help into broader rural improvement techniques can ensure lengthy-term program fulfilment.

Inclusivity and Diversity: Strategies that cope with gender and social disparities should be incorporated, imparting equal possibilities and help to marginalised corporations. Mentorship and networking structures for underrepresented entrepreneurs are critical.

Robust Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular assessment of application results, demanding situations, and effectiveness can inform essential changes and enhancements, leading to extra responsive tasks.

Digital Solutions: Leveraging digital platforms and generation can enhance admission to statistics, training, and markets, overcoming geographical barriers.

In conclusion, addressing these demanding situations and implementing the counselled enhancements can lead to extra inclusive, powerful, and impactful rural entrepreneurship programs. Collaboration among governments, private sectors, NGOs, and local groups is crucial in creating an permitting environment for rural marketers to thrive and contribute to the boom in their economies and groups.

Local Institutions as Pillars of Support :

4.1. What role do local institutions, such as universities, research centres, or community organisations, play in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Local institutions such as the Region, for example, are a big problem, there is a crazy bureaucracy, they almost seem to sabotage rural activities.

As for the universities, the departments of Catania and Palermo and their faculties of agriculture take part in various activities - professors often participate in EU programmes doing crop experimentation. They promote the use of certain practices.

Diego Gandolfo : Of the Region we have mentioned, the municipalities have marginal roles, more in implementation than in policy development. Research centres are involved in some measures of the Regional Rural Development Programme. There is a measure in the Rural Development Programme that provides for the involvement of research institutes and universities. There is an institutionalised role for universities with a research function, they can do partnerships with farms because they study innovative technology and then they need companies to put them into practice.

Spain :

The migratory exodus has been evident for decades: between 1975 and 2021, the Spanish population increased by 38% (from 34 to 47 million inhabitants), but 17 provinces lost population (the most, Zamora, with 31% less), and those that grew did so by concentrating their population in large urban centres and surrounding areas. So much so that 80 % of the Spanish population is concentrated in urban areas that represent barely 15 % of the territory, while the other 20 % is spread over the remaining 85 %. Thus, efforts are being made to reverse the situation and universities, due to their educational role, play a fundamental role thanks to paid internship projects.

Palestine :

In Palestine, local institutions, including universities, research centres, and community organisations, play a crucial role in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas. These institutions actively contribute to the growth and development of rural entrepreneurship through various initiatives and programs.

Firstly, universities in Palestine, such as Birzeit University in Ramallah, An-Najah National University in Nablus, and the Palestine Polytechnic University InTulkarem, offer entrepreneurship education and training programs tailored to the needs of rural entrepreneurs. They provide courses, workshops, and incubation programs that equip aspiring entrepreneurs with essential business skills, knowledge, and resources. These educational institutions also foster a culture of innovation and creativity among students, encouraging them to explore entrepreneurial opportunities in rural areas.

Research centres play a significant role in conducting studies and research on rural economies, market trends, and entrepreneurial ecosystems. They provide valuable insights into the specific challenges and opportunities present in rural areas, helping entrepreneurs make informed decisions. By analysing market gaps, consumer demands, and emerging sectors, research centres offer critical information that supports the development of sustainable and viable rural businesses.

Local institutions in Palestine play a multi-faceted role in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas. They provide education, research, mentorship, networking, and policy advocacy, all aimed at empowering rural entrepreneurs and driving economic development in these communities. By leveraging their resources, expertise, and networks, these institutions contribute to the creation of sustainable businesses, job opportunities, and improved livelihoods in rural Palestine.

Egypt :

Local institutions such as universities, research centres, and community organisations can play a critical role in supporting entrepreneurship in Egypt. These institutions can provide a range of resources and support for entrepreneurs, including:

- 1- Access to research and expertise: research centres can provide entrepreneurs with access to cutting edge research and specialised expertise in areas such as technology, engineering, and business development. This can help entrepreneurs develop innovative products and services, identify new market opportunities, and overcome technical challenges.
- 2- Networking opportunities: community organisations can provide entrepreneurs with networking opportunities; connecting them with other entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts in their local area. This can help entrepreneurs build relationships, share ideas, and find new business opportunities.
- 3- Training and education programs: Universities (especially FEPS Business Incubator at Cairo University) and community organisations can provide training and education programs to help entrepreneurs develop the skills they need to succeed in the labour market. These programs can cover topics such as marketing, sales, financial management, and technology development.

4- Access to funding: NGOs, national and international organisations and some embassies which work in entrepreneurship can provide entrepreneurs with access to funding through grants and loans which help entrepreneurs overcome financial barriers to starting and growing a business.

Greece :

Local institutions, including universities, research centres, and community organisations, play a significant role in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas in Greece. These institutions serve as knowledge hubs, offering specialised expertise and conducting research in fields such as agriculture, agribusiness, and rural development. They provide training programs, workshops, and educational courses that equip entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to start and grow their businesses. Additionally, they establish business incubators and innovation centres that provide physical spaces, resources, and support services to entrepreneurs, fostering their development and success. Through research and development collaborations, local institutions help entrepreneurs innovate and improve their products or services. They also engage in policy advocacy, working with government agencies and industry associations to shape favourable policies and regulations. Furthermore, these institutions facilitate networking and collaboration among entrepreneurs, researchers, and other stakeholders, creating opportunities for knowledge sharing and partnership building.

Tunisia :

While many local institutions in Tunisia strive to support entrepreneurship in rural areas, it is important to acknowledge that not all institutions may play a positive role. Some challenges and limitations that can hinder their effectiveness include:

Limited Resources: Some local institutions in Tunisia may face constraints in terms of resources, funding, and infrastructure, which can limit their ability to provide comprehensive support to rural entrepreneurs.

Lack of Relevance: Institutions in Tunisia may not always align their programs and services with the specific needs and context of rural entrepreneurship, which can diminish their impact and relevance.

Limited Collaboration: Lack of coordination and collaboration among institutions, entrepreneurs, community organisations, and government agencies in Tunisia can result in fragmented efforts and gaps in support for rural entrepreneurs.

Insufficient Entrepreneurial Mindset: Some institutions in Tunisia may not foster an entrepreneurial culture or mindset within their own operations, which can hinder their ability to effectively support and nurture rural entrepreneurial ventures.

Bureaucracy and Slow Decision-Making: Institutional bureaucracy and slow decision-making processes in Tunisia can impede the agility and responsiveness required to effectively support rural entrepreneurs.

Limited Connectivity: Institutions in rural areas of Tunisia may face challenges in terms of connectivity, access to information, and technology, which can limit their ability to provide up-to-date resources and digital tools for entrepreneurship support.

Conclusion :

Local institutions, inclusive of universities, research centres, and community corporations, play a vital role in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas. Their contributions are multifaceted and impactful:

Knowledge and Expertise:

Research Centers: Research centres behaviour studies on rural economies, marketplace trends, and entrepreneurial ecosystems. They provide valuable insights that assist marketers make knowledgeable choices and broaden relevant techniques.

Universities: Universities provide entrepreneurship schooling and schooling applications tailored to rural wishes. They equip entrepreneurs with important skills and foster a lifestyle of innovation, allowing them to explore possibilities in rural settings.

Resource Hub:

Universities: Many universities set up commercial enterprise incubators and innovation centres. These spaces offer marketers with physical sources, mentorship, and networking opportunities, fostering their increase and development.

Community Organisations: These companies provide networking platforms that connect marketers with like-minded people, buyers, and industry specialists. Such connections facilitate concept sharing and partnership building.

Research and Development:

Research Centers: These centres collaborate with entrepreneurs to innovate and enhance their products or services. They make contributions to technological improvements and the improvement of sustainable rural agencies.

Advocacy and Policy Influence:

Universities and Research Centers: These establishments engage in coverage advocacy, influencing favourable rules and guidelines that guide rural entrepreneurship. They paint governmental bodies and enterprise associations to form conducive business environments.

Capacity Building:

Universities: Entrepreneurship schooling applications presented by way of universities equip rural marketers with abilities in regions consisting of advertising, finance, and control, improving their enterprise acumen.

Networking and Collaboration:

Community Organisations: These organisations create systems for rural marketers to connect, collaborate, and share reports. These networks help entrepreneurs research from each other and get right of entry to new opportunities.

Access to Funding:

NGOs and Organisations: They offer admission to funding through presents and loans, lowering monetary barriers for marketers. This assistance allows rural entrepreneurs to launch and enlarge their ventures.

Overcoming Challenges and Enhancing Impact:

Resource Enhancement: Local institutions ought to receive sufficient assets and investment to efficiently guide rural marketers. Adequate infrastructure and centres enable better provider delivery.

Tailored Programs: Institutions should lay out applications that cater to the precise challenges and wishes of rural marketers. Customised schooling and support result in extra applicable and impactful initiatives.

Collaboration: Institutions must collaborate closely to avoid fragmentation and ensure comprehensive help. Partnerships among universities, studies centres, community corporations, and authorities can create a synergistic surroundings.

Entrepreneurial Culture: Institutions must foster an entrepreneurial attitude inside their personal operations. This promotes a lifestyle of innovation and adaptability that could definitely affect the guide they provide.

Efficiency and Flexibility: Streamlined choice-making approaches and decreased forms ensure that institutions can reply hastily to evolving entrepreneurial wishes.

Digital Transformation: Leveraging digital tools can help establishments triumph over connectivity demanding situations in rural areas. Online sources, webinars, and digital networking structures enlarge the right of entry to valuable statistics.

In conclusion, the involvement of nearby establishments in assisting rural entrepreneurship is pivotal for monetary growth, innovation, and network improvement. By playing to their strengths, addressing demanding situations, and embracing innovation, these establishments can substantially contribute to the success of rural entrepreneurs across diverse areas.

Successful Entrepreneur-Institution Collaborations in Rural Areas :

4.2. What are some successful examples of collaborations between entrepreneurs and these institutions?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : A successful example is the Experimental Graniculture Centre in Caltagirone (Palermo - Sicily). It encloses experimental stations which were set up during Fascism for an autarkic project to make the nation food independent. There are germplasm (seed) banks. It is a regional public institution. It preserves and reproduces local ecotypes. So we have the ancient grains (in Sicily we have up to 70 different types of ancient grains) because in the 1920s, the geneticists mapped the seeds and replanted them in the territory. When these seeds disappeared commercially, those who started planting them again were able to do so thanks to the seeds stored by the experimental stations. Also important today is the work of some small nurseries to recover local ecotypes for fruit such as apples, pears, medlars, plums. Some varieties disappeared because they had no useful

commercial characteristics, but now the market is interested and hobbyists are also interested. Some nurserymen sell only the plant, some also the fruit. Now this phenomenon is also multiplying with vegetables.

Diego Gandolfo : There are few good practices in this respect. In Italy, Professor Mario Pagliaro of the CNR (National Research Council) is a luminary in waste management and has supported various companies in, for example, the recovery of lava ash, fishing waste, rural and agricultural waste recovery.

Spain :

Among the successful internships is the Odisseu project, promoted by the Catalan government and in which the UOC participates, which since 2016 has benefited 391 rural companies and more than 400 bachelor's and master's degree students, generating around fifty stable employment contracts, networking activities and crowdfunding initiatives to support entrepreneurial projects. These internships help to solve some of the gaps that rural areas have to develop their activity, with very small town councils that may need experts in law, technology, engineering, telemedicine or cultural dynamism.

On the other hand, 2022 saw the launch of the Rural Campus programme, promoted by the Ministries of Universities and Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, with the support of CRUE Spanish Universities. More than 350 students from 37 public universities participated in this edition. The aim is to enable university students of any degree to carry out immersive academic internships of between three and five months in rural environments or those at risk of depopulation, thus favouring their economic growth. In addition to their work (for which they receive a salary of 1,000 euros gross per month), the participating students must live in their places of destination, and thus be able to get to know in depth and understand the social reality of these environments.

Egypt :

There are some successful examples of collaboration between entrepreneurs and these institutions in Egypt, such as:

- 1- Rise up Summit, which is held in Cairo and which brings together entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts from around the world. The summit provides entrepreneurs with access to training and mentorship programs, networking opportunities, and pitch competitions to help them grow their businesses.
- 2- AUC Venture Lab, which is a startup incubator and accelerator program that provides entrepreneurs with access to funding, mentorship, and training programs. The lab has helped in launching numerous successful startups in Egypt, including Eventtus (an event management platform) and Nafham (an educational platform).
- 3- Flat6Labs Cairo: Flat6Labs is a startup accelerator program that provides entrepreneurs with funding, mentorship, and training programs. The program has helped in launching numerous successful startups in Egypt, including Instabug (a platform for mobile app developers) and Fatura (an invoicing and payment platform).
- 4- The Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (TIEC): TIEC is a government-funded organisation that provides support and resources to entrepreneurs in Egypt. The organisation offers training and mentorship programs, funding opportunities, and access to co-working spaces and incubation facilities.

Greece :

1) **Institutions** such as the **Athens Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ACEin)** and the **Orange Grove**, which is supported by the Dutch Embassy in Greece, have played a vital role in supporting and collaborating with entrepreneurs. These institutions provide incubation and acceleration programs, mentorship, networking opportunities, and access to funding for startups⁷.

Greek universities have been actively collaborating with entrepreneurs to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. For example, the **National Technical University of Athens (NTUA)** has established the **Athens Startup Business Incubator (TheA)** to support entrepreneurial ventures originating from the university. Similarly, the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) has its own business incubator, ACEin, which provides support to early-stage startups⁸.

The **Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas (FORTH)**, one of the largest research organisations in Greece, has partnered with startups and entrepreneurs on various projects, particularly in sectors like technology, energy, and biomedicine⁹.

The **Greek government** has encouraged public-private partnerships to promote entrepreneurship and innovation. One notable example is the "**Reinventing Greece**" program, which aims to bring together entrepreneurs, investors, and institutions to develop innovative solutions for societal challenges. This initiative has facilitated collaborations between startups and institutions to address issues in sectors like tourism, agriculture, and healthcare¹⁰.

Greece has also benefited from various **European Union (EU) programs** that support entrepreneurship and innovation. For instance, the **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)** operates several innovation communities in Greece, fostering collaborations between entrepreneurs, researchers, and institutions across Europe¹¹.

Tunisia :

In Tunisia, there have been successful general examples of collaborations between entrepreneurs and local institutions. These collaborations have facilitated entrepreneurship support and contributed to the growth of rural businesses. Here are a few examples:

Incubators: Several programs in Tunisia have established business incubators that provide support and resources to entrepreneurs. These incubators offer mentoring, networking opportunities, and access to funding for startups. Entrepreneurs collaborate with university faculty and researchers, benefiting from their expertise and guidance.

⁷ <https://acein.aueb.gr/en/>
<https://orangegroove.eu/>

⁸ <https://www.ntua.gr/en/>
<https://www.theathensincube.gr/>

⁹ <https://www.forth.gr/en/home/>

¹⁰ <https://reinventing-greece.com/>

¹¹ <https://eit.europa.eu/>

Research-Industry Partnerships: Collaborations between entrepreneurs and research institutions in Tunisia have led to successful projects. Entrepreneurs may partner with researchers to develop innovative solutions or products based on scientific advancements. These partnerships often involve technology transfer, where entrepreneurs benefit from the research findings and expertise of the institution.

Community-Driven Initiatives: Community organisations and local development associations in Tunisia collaborate with entrepreneurs to foster economic development. These collaborations may involve joint projects, resource-sharing, and community engagement to address local needs and create entrepreneurial opportunities.

Mentorship Programs: Institutions in Tunisia offer mentorship programs that connect experienced professionals with aspiring entrepreneurs. Mentors provide guidance, share industry knowledge, and help entrepreneurs navigate challenges. These programs foster collaboration and learning between entrepreneurs and mentors from various institutions.

Conclusion :

In the end, successful collaborations between entrepreneurs and nearby institutions have confirmed their effectiveness in fostering entrepreneurship in rural regions. These collaborations vary from information sharing, ability improvement, and mentorship to access to funding and market possibilities. These examples show off the potential of partnerships between marketers and establishments in using economic growth, innovation, and network improvement in rural areas.

Optimising Support :

4.3. How can these institutions better support entrepreneurship in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Increasing awareness of how economically relevant it could be to invest in agriculture also at university level. At the moment, it is always the same people, even in university centres, who study rural areas.

Diego Gandolfo : Two things should be invested in: innovation and cooperation networks. The sub-measure dealing with training (1.1) should also be better investigated and probably improved in terms of the quality of training.

Spain :

One of the main challenges facing institutions is to maintain links with rural areas over time; at the same time, rural people need to understand that universities generate young talent and that they can contribute innovation and other ways of working. For example, from the executive secretary of CRUE-Student Affairs at the University of Zaragoza, it is clear how significant the arrival of young students in rural areas can be, but it is necessary to generate links of trust.

Palestine :

To better support entrepreneurship in rural areas, local institutions in Palestine can play a crucial role by implementing the following strategies:

1. **Strengthen Entrepreneurship Education:** Institutions should enhance entrepreneurship education by offering specialised courses and programs that focus on the unique challenges and opportunities of rural entrepreneurship. They can incorporate practical training, case studies, and experiential learning to equip aspiring rural entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge.
2. **Establish Incubation and Support Centers:** Institutions can establish dedicated incubation and support centres in rural areas. These centres can provide aspiring entrepreneurs with access to workspace, infrastructure, business development support, mentoring, and networking opportunities. By creating a conducive environment for innovation and collaboration, these centres can help entrepreneurs navigate the challenges of starting and growing their businesses.
3. **Facilitate Access to Finance:** Institutions can collaborate with financial institutions and microfinance organisations to facilitate access to finance for rural entrepreneurs. They can provide guidance on securing loans, grants, or venture capital, and help entrepreneurs develop strong business plans and financial projections. Additionally, institutions can explore the potential for creating local investment funds or seed funding programs specifically targeted at rural entrepreneurs.
4. **Foster Industry-Academia Collaboration:** Local institutions can foster closer collaboration between academia and rural industries. This can involve joint research projects, technology transfer initiatives, and knowledge-sharing partnerships. By connecting entrepreneurs with researchers, institutions can support the development of innovative solutions, promote technology adoption, and enhance the competitiveness of rural businesses.
5. **Promote Networking and Knowledge Exchange:** Institutions should organise networking events, workshops, and conferences that bring together rural entrepreneurs, experts, and investors. These platforms can facilitate knowledge exchange, create opportunities for collaboration, and showcase successful rural business models. Institutions can also establish online platforms or communities where entrepreneurs can connect, share experiences, and seek advice and support.
6. **Provide Business Development Services:** Institutions can offer a range of business development services tailored to the needs of rural entrepreneurs. This can include training programs on business planning, marketing, financial management, and digital skills. Additionally, institutions can provide access to market information, facilitate market linkages, and support entrepreneurs in adapting to changing market dynamics.
7. **Advocate for Supportive Policies:** Institutions can actively engage in policy advocacy to create an enabling environment for rural entrepreneurship. They can collaborate with government agencies and policymakers to identify barriers and propose policy reforms that address the specific needs and challenges of rural entrepreneurs. By advocating for supportive policies, institutions can help create a favourable ecosystem that encourages entrepreneurship and attracts investments in rural areas.

By implementing these strategies, local institutions can play a vital role in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas of Palestine. Through education, incubation, access to finance, collaboration, networking, and policy advocacy, these institutions can contribute to the growth and success of rural entrepreneurs, ultimately driving economic development and improving livelihoods in rural communities.

Egypt :

By offering training and mentorship programs, funding opportunities, as well as access to co-working spaces and incubation facilities; providing entrepreneurs with access to resources and

support. These collaborations can help entrepreneurs overcome the challenges of starting and growing a business, and contribute to the economic development of the Local Community in Egypt.

Greece :

In order to better support and strengthen entrepreneurship in rural areas of Greece, these institutions can take various measures. Firstly, they should invest in improving infrastructure, providing reliable internet connectivity and creating co-working spaces or innovation hubs. Access to finance is also crucial, so they should facilitate grants, loans or investment programmes specifically for rural entrepreneurs. Capacity building programmes, mentoring initiatives and tailored training can equip rural entrepreneurs with the necessary skills. Networking events and collaboration platforms connect them with industry experts, investors and potential customers. Institutions should also support supportive policies, encourage partnerships between industry and academic institutions and raise awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities in rural areas. By integrating these efforts, they will be able to create an enabling environment that empowers rural entrepreneurs, promotes economic development, and strengthens rural communities.

Tunisia :

To better support entrepreneurship in rural areas, institutions in Tunisia can consider implementing the following strategies:

Access to Market Opportunities: Institutions can facilitate access to market opportunities for rural entrepreneurs. This can be done by organising trade fairs, market linkage events, and business matchmaking sessions where rural entrepreneurs can showcase their products and services to potential customers, distributors, and retailers.

Technology Adoption and Digital Skills Development: Institutions can play a role in promoting technology adoption and providing digital skills training to rural entrepreneurs. This includes offering workshops or training programs on digital marketing, e-commerce platforms, and leveraging digital tools for business growth.

Social and Environmental Entrepreneurship: Institutions can encourage and support social and environmental entrepreneurship in rural areas. This involves promoting business models that address social and environmental challenges, offering specialised support for social enterprises, and integrating sustainability practices into entrepreneurship programs.

Rural-urban Linkages: Institutions can facilitate linkages between rural and urban entrepreneurs. This can involve organising networking events or business exchanges that allow rural entrepreneurs to learn from their urban counterparts, access urban markets, and establish collaborations for knowledge sharing and joint ventures.

Access to Business Support Services: Institutions can help rural entrepreneurs access business support services such as accounting, legal advice, and marketing consultancy. This can be done by partnering with service providers or establishing resource centres that offer these services at affordable rates or through specialised programs.

Continuous Support and Follow-up: Institutions should provide continuous support to rural entrepreneurs beyond the initial stages. This can include ongoing mentoring, coaching, and follow-up to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of rural businesses.

Data and Research: Institutions can contribute to the collection and analysis of data related to rural entrepreneurship. This data can help identify trends, challenges, and opportunities, and inform evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation.

Cultural Preservation and Promotion: Institutions can support rural entrepreneurs in preserving and promoting local culture and traditions. This can involve incorporating cultural elements into product development, organising cultural events and festivals, and creating platforms to showcase traditional crafts and practices.

Collaboration with Financial Institutions: Institutions can collaborate with financial institutions to develop innovative financial products and services tailored to the needs of rural entrepreneurs. This includes microfinance options, loan guarantee programs, and financial literacy training to improve access to finance and financial management skills.

Impact Measurement and Reporting: Institutions should measure and report the impact of their programs and initiatives on rural entrepreneurship. This helps demonstrate the value of their support, attract further funding, and identify areas for improvement.

By implementing these strategies, institutions in Tunisia can create a more comprehensive and supportive ecosystem for rural entrepreneurship, enabling rural entrepreneurs to thrive, create sustainable businesses, and contribute to the socio-economic development of rural areas.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, fostering entrepreneurship in rural areas is a critical undertaking with the ability to revitalise economies, enhance livelihoods, and sell sustainable development. Local institutions, such as universities, research centres, and network organisations, play a pivotal role in this adventure via presenting resources, information, and aid to aspiring rural entrepreneurs. By tailoring education and schooling, organising incubation packages, facilitating market access, advocating for favourable policies, and selling collaboration, those establishments can create an enabling environment for rural corporations to flourish.

Successful collaborations among entrepreneurs and nearby institutions illustrate the power of partnership in riding innovation and financial growth. From helping agribusinesses to technological startups, those collaborations exhibit the capability to bridge the urban-rural divide and create sustainable organisations that cope with neighbourhood demanding situations.

To better guide entrepreneurship in rural regions, institutions must focus on strategies that empower marketers with applicable abilities, join them to funding and markets, and foster an environment conducive to innovation and growth. Furthermore, the mixing of cultural protection, sustainability, and digitalization into rural entrepreneurship can make sure that corporations now not simplest thrive economically but additionally make contributions to the holistic improvement of groups.

By implementing those strategies, neighbourhood institutions can pave the way for vibrant rural economies, decreased migration to urban facilities, and a more balanced distribution of

financial opportunities. The success of rural entrepreneurship isn't only measured in monetary profits however additionally in the resilience, sense of community, and sustainable improvement it brings to rural regions, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and prosperous society.

Rural Entrepreneurship Innovations :

5.1. What are some innovative or creative approaches to entrepreneurship that you have seen in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Those mentioned above - the cooperative realities.

Diego Gandolfo : Those I have mentioned at the beginning of the interview.

Spain :

The +Empresas, +Empleo, +Rural project, promoted in Castilla y León by the Colectivo para el Desarrollo Rural Tierra de Campos, together with 11 other local action groups, aims to promote the sustainable development of the rural environment through technological innovation, support for the business fabric and the generation of employment, and is aimed at both individuals (unemployed or looking for an improvement) and the business fabric (from new initiatives to others that already exist and want to diversify their businesses). Today there is a great economic dynamism and a growing labour market, mainly in the agri-food industry, green energy and tourism services; a high level of entrepreneurship, mainly linked to women; and a business community that has a strong affective relationship with the territory: 83% of them would not move their activity to other territorial areas even if they were offered much more advantageous conditions (Mulero, University of Valladolid).

Palestine :

In rural areas of Palestine, innovative and creative approaches to entrepreneurship have emerged, showcasing the resilience and ingenuity of Palestinian entrepreneurs. One notable example is the establishment of olive oil cooperatives, where small-scale farmers come together to collectively produce, process, and market their olive oil. These cooperatives ensure fair prices for farmers, maintain quality standards, and enhance the marketability of Palestinian olive oil internationally. Another innovative approach is the revival of traditional handicrafts, such as embroidery, pottery, and woodworking, through blending traditional techniques with contemporary designs. This not only preserves cultural heritage but also creates high-quality products with market appeal.

Entrepreneurs in rural Palestine have also tapped into the potential of ecotourism and rural retreats, capitalising on the natural beauty and historical sites in their areas. Through the establishment of guesthouses, eco-lodges, and experiential tourism initiatives, they provide visitors with opportunities to engage with local culture, traditions, and natural landscapes, contributing to rural development and job creation. Furthermore, innovative agricultural practices have been adopted to overcome challenges like water scarcity and land restrictions. Techniques such as hydroponics, rooftop gardening, and vertical farming maximise productivity in limited spaces, ensuring food security and offering potential for commercialization and export.

Tech startups and digital solutions have also emerged in rural Palestine, despite limited resources. Entrepreneurs in these areas focus on developing software solutions, agricultural

management systems, e-commerce platforms for local products, and mobile applications for community services. These initiatives contribute to digital inclusion and economic growth in rural areas. Women's cooperative enterprises have gained prominence, providing economic opportunities for women and promoting gender equality. These cooperatives engage in various sectors, including food processing, textiles, and handicrafts, empowering women and fostering community development

Additionally, rural entrepreneurs have embraced solar energy projects, capitalising on Palestine's abundant sunshine. They establish solar farms, install solar panels, and develop solar-powered products like water heaters and lighting systems. These initiatives promote renewable energy adoption, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and contribute to sustainable development.

These innovative approaches reflect the entrepreneurial spirit of rural Palestinians, who leverage their resources, cultural heritage, and local strengths to drive economic growth, job creation, and community development. By embracing creativity and innovation, these entrepreneurs play a vital role in shaping the future of entrepreneurship in rural areas of Palestine.

Egypt :

Handicrafts and artisanal products have become a popular way for rural entrepreneurs to leverage their local skills and resources. Products such as hand-woven textiles, pottery, and woodwork have gained popularity among tourists and customers looking for unique products. And, social entrepreneurship has become a popular approach to addressing social and economic challenges in rural areas.

Also, the use of solar panels to expel birds and preserve crops is an innovative approach that has gained popularity in recent years. By placing solar panels in agricultural fields, farmers can generate a loud noise that scares birds away from their crops. This approach helps reduce crop damage and losses due to bird infestations, which can be a major problem for farmers in rural areas. In addition, mobile applications have emerged as a popular way for entrepreneurs to connect with customers and provide access to services. Apps like Uber, Indrive and Swvl have revolutionised transportation in rural areas; also apps like Vezeeta have made healthcare services more accessible to rural communities.

Greece :

In rural areas of Greece, innovative and creative approaches to entrepreneurship have emerged, showcasing the entrepreneurial spirit and adaptability of rural entrepreneurs. Agri-tourism has gained traction, as entrepreneurs combine agriculture with tourism, offering farm stays, organic food tastings, and agricultural workshops to attract visitors. Another successful approach is local product branding, where entrepreneurs highlight the uniqueness and quality of rural products, leveraging digital platforms to connect with customers. Social and environmental entrepreneurship is also on the rise, with startups focusing on sustainable agriculture, community development projects, and cultural heritage preservation. Moreover, rural entrepreneurs have embraced digital innovation and technology adoption, implementing precision farming techniques, smart agriculture tools, and data analytics to optimise operations and enhance productivity. These approaches collectively contribute to the economic and social development of rural communities, creating sustainable businesses that capitalise on local resources, promote cultural heritage, and drive environmental stewardship.

Tunisia :

YERAME

Project number: 101093212

In rural areas of Tunisia, several innovative and creative approaches to entrepreneurship have emerged. Here are some examples:

Agri-Tourism: Entrepreneurs in rural areas have combined agriculture with tourism to create unique agri-tourism experiences. They offer farm stays, agricultural workshops, farm-to-table dining experiences, and guided tours that allow visitors to engage with rural agricultural practices and traditions while enjoying the natural beauty of the countryside.

Eco-Friendly Products and Services: Rural entrepreneurs are embracing eco-friendly practices by developing sustainable products and services. They create organic food products, eco-friendly crafts, and natural skincare products, promoting environmental conservation and catering to the growing demand for sustainable alternatives.

Rural Artisanal Crafts: Entrepreneurs in rural areas are reviving traditional artisanal crafts and creating innovative products using traditional techniques. They produce handcrafted textiles, pottery, woodwork, and jewelry, showcasing the unique cultural heritage of the region while meeting the demand for authentic and locally made products.

Social Enterprises: Rural entrepreneurs are establishing social enterprises that address specific social or environmental challenges in their communities. These enterprises focus on issues like education, healthcare, renewable energy, or waste management, combining entrepreneurial principles with a social or environmental mission.

Mobile Applications for Agricultural Services: Entrepreneurs have developed mobile applications tailored to the needs of farmers in rural areas. These apps provide information on crop management, weather forecasts, market prices, and access to agricultural extension services, helping farmers make informed decisions and improve their productivity.

Cooperative Business Models: Cooperative models are being used by rural entrepreneurs to pool resources, share risks, and collectively market their products. By forming cooperatives, entrepreneurs can access larger markets, negotiate better prices, and enhance their bargaining power in supply chains.

Rural Digital Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurs in rural areas are leveraging digital technologies to start businesses and access markets. They offer online services such as e-commerce platforms for selling local products, digital marketing agencies, or remote freelance services, tapping into a wider customer base beyond their immediate rural surroundings.

Renewable Energy Ventures: Rural entrepreneurs are exploring renewable energy ventures, such as solar panel installations, biogas production, or small-scale wind farms. These initiatives not only provide clean energy solutions to rural communities but also create business opportunities and contribute to sustainability.

Community-Based Agribusiness: Entrepreneurs are establishing community-based agribusinesses that involve local farmers and community members in the production and marketing of agricultural products. These ventures create cooperative farming systems, promote shared ownership, and empower rural communities to take an active role in the agricultural value chain.

Education and Skill Development Initiatives: Entrepreneurs are launching innovative education and skill development initiatives in rural areas. They establish training centers that offer vocational courses, entrepreneurship programs, and practical skills training to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills for self-employment or accessing better job opportunities.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, entrepreneurship in rural regions holds massive potential to transform local economies, enhance communities, and deal with specific demanding situations. While rural entrepreneurship has traditionally faced limitations which include restricted sources, getting admission to markets, and infrastructural constraints, modern and creative approaches are reshaping the landscape. Entrepreneurs in rural areas across the globe are demonstrating exquisite resilience, adaptability, and forward-thinking as they carve out pathways to success.

The collaborative efforts between neighbourhood establishments, universities, studies centres, and network groups are proving pivotal in nurturing and helping rural entrepreneurship. These partnerships provide the right of entry to resources, knowledge, mentorship, and investment which might be critical for marketers to thrive. Moreover, they bridge the space among instructional knowledge and practical application, fostering innovation and sustainable business practices tailor-made to rural contexts.

Innovative procedures to rural entrepreneurship span numerous sectors, from agri-tourism and artisanal crafts to renewable electricity, virtual innovation, and social entrepreneurship. These tasks reflect the fusion of subculture and innovation, preserving cultural heritage whilst meeting modern market demands. By leveraging generation, embracing sustainable practices, and fostering cooperative fashions, rural entrepreneurs are creating businesses that are not best economically feasible but additionally environmentally and socially accountable.

The fulfilment of these modern endeavours underscores the significance of a supportive atmosphere. Access to training, mentorship, marketplace linkages, and funding are important additives that establishments, governments, and local communities can together provide. By nurturing an entrepreneurial culture and advocating for favourable guidelines, stakeholders can create an environment wherein rural entrepreneurs can thrive and contribute significantly to neighbourhood improvement.

As rural areas continue to evolve, the spirit of innovation in entrepreneurship will stay a driving force in the back of their growth and transformation. The tales of fulfilment and resilience emerging from rural entrepreneurs are a testimony to the strength of creativity, determination, and community collaboration. With persevered aid, these pioneers have the ability to steer rural economies right into a dynamic and sustainable future, enriching each their very own lives and the broader global landscape.

Unique Advantages and Opportunities in Rural Entrepreneurship :

5.2. What are some unique advantages or opportunities for entrepreneurship in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : You are the master of your time. You have a perception of seasonality, you develop a different relationship with the season, and this has a major impact in my opinion on a person's mental development. You get used to accepting the consequences of what is not up to you. Living in the country having a healthy diet are for me the advantages of doing rural entrepreneurship. Also, having an interpersonal exchange of work, through which you exchange equipment, gifts. Social relationships are traditional and outside of economic interest and are developed from a perspective of gratuitousness or exchange. A less atomistic dimension is widespread in rural culture than in the big centre.

Diego Gandolfo : The possibility of staying in one's own territory, in a fertile land, with an excellent climate for rural activities. Sicily is a territory with a rural vocation. It is an area that has had an agricultural vocation for millennia. There are so-called farmers who are custodians of knowledge related to ancient products. There are ancient and autochthonous rarities. Entrepreneurship in our rural areas can valorise indigenous products that are no longer used and at the same time look to innovation (such as the reuse of ancient products or the use of waste) and produce new products with an eye to the local economy . Then there is the opportunity provided by the production of energy from renewable sources. If farms could all be energy independent, we would have taken a huge step. It is also important to overcome the misconception that zero km is healthy. It is true that we must aim for zero kilometre products, but preserving the healthiness of the product.

Spain :

There is currently a clear window of opportunity in Spain because, firstly, there is a growing interest, on a social, political and media level, in the whole of Empty Spain; secondly, because of the acceleration of digitalisation processes due to the pandemic; because of the increasing presence of organisations that are aware of and collaborative and proactive in the face of this challenge; and finally, because of the presence of aid funds at European level, such as Next Generation [and Leader] and others at national, regional and local level.

Palestine :

Rural areas in Palestine offer unique advantages and opportunities for entrepreneurship, harnessing the distinct characteristics of these regions. One key advantage is the abundance of agricultural resources and fertile land. Palestinian rural areas are known for their agricultural potential, with diverse crops, olive groves, and livestock. This provides a strong foundation for agribusiness and agricultural entrepreneurship, including organic farming, value-added food processing, and agricultural technology innovations. Entrepreneurs can tap into local produce, traditional farming practices, and organic certifications to cater to the growing demand for healthy and sustainable products.

The rich cultural heritage and historical significance of rural areas in Palestine also present opportunities for cultural tourism and heritage-based entrepreneurship. These areas are home to ancient archaeological sites, traditional handicrafts, and cultural festivities. Entrepreneurs can develop unique tourism experiences, such as cultural tours, art workshops, and heritage-themed accommodations, attracting both domestic and international visitors seeking authentic cultural encounters. By preserving and promoting their cultural heritage, rural entrepreneurs contribute to the preservation of Palestinian identity and generate economic benefits for their communities.

Rural areas often have close-knit communities and social networks, fostering a sense of solidarity and collective support. This social cohesion can be leveraged to establish community-based enterprises and cooperatives, where members collaborate and pool resources to achieve common goals. These ventures can range from agricultural cooperatives to handicraft collectives, enabling shared ownership, equitable distribution of profits, and collective decision-making. Such initiatives strengthen community bonds, promote social inclusion, and empower marginalised groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, rural areas offer a quieter and more peaceful environment, away from the hustle and bustle of urban centres. This tranquillity and connection with nature can inspire innovation and creativity, leading to unique business ideas and ventures. Rural entrepreneurship can encompass eco-friendly initiatives, sustainable practices, and nature-based businesses such as eco-tourism, organic farming, and renewable energy projects. Entrepreneurs can leverage the natural beauty and tranquillity of rural landscapes to create immersive experiences and products that resonate with environmentally conscious consumers.

Egypt :

unique advantages and opportunities for entrepreneurship in rural areas provide entrepreneurs with a competitive edge and contribute to the economic development of rural communities in Egypt, such as:

- 1- Access to natural resources such as land, water, and mineral deposits. This can provide entrepreneurs with opportunities to develop businesses in agriculture, forestry, mining, and other industries.
- 2- The cost of living in rural areas is often lower than the cost in urban areas. This can make it more affordable for entrepreneurs to start and grow a business, as they may have lower overhead costs for rent, utilities, and other expenses.
- 3- Rural communities in Egypt often have strong social networks and community ties. This can provide entrepreneurs with access to local resources, such as skilled labour, suppliers, and customers, as well as support from other community members.
- 4- Government incentives: Many governments offer incentives and programs to support entrepreneurship in rural areas; these can include grants, tax credits, and low-interest loans. Moreover, the growing demand for local products and services, such as organic food, artisanal products, and eco-tourism experiences can provide opportunities to develop businesses that cater to these markets.

Greece :

Entrepreneurship in rural areas offers unique advantages and opportunities that set it apart from urban entrepreneurship. Abundant natural resources, such as fertile land and unique landscapes, provide a foundation for businesses in agriculture, forestry, eco-tourism, and renewable energy. Lower cost of living and operating expenses in rural areas enable entrepreneurs to bootstrap their ventures and invest more efficiently. Niche market opportunities exist in organic food production, traditional crafts, cultural experiences, and nature-based tourism.

Rural communities foster community engagement, support networks, and collaborative initiatives that enhance business growth. Moreover, the high quality of life and work-life balance in rural areas attract entrepreneurs seeking a healthier and relaxed lifestyle. Technological

advancements, especially in digital connectivity and remote work capabilities, enable rural entrepreneurs to connect with global markets and access resources remotely.

Rural areas also offer an opportunity to align entrepreneurship with environmental sustainability. Entrepreneurs can develop environmentally friendly businesses, promote eco-tourism, implement sustainable agricultural practices, and cater to the growing demand for eco-conscious products and services.

Tunisia :

Entrepreneurship in rural areas of Tunisia presents unique advantages and opportunities that can contribute to economic growth and community development. Here are some of the advantages and opportunities for entrepreneurship in rural areas:

Access to Natural Resources: Rural areas often possess abundant natural resources such as fertile land, water bodies, and forests. This provides opportunities for agricultural entrepreneurship, agro-processing, eco-tourism, and sustainable resource utilisation.

Lower Operating Costs: Rural areas generally have lower operating costs compared to urban areas. This can include lower costs for land, labour, utilities, and infrastructure. Entrepreneurs in rural areas can benefit from reduced expenses, enabling them to offer competitive prices and maximise profitability.

Niche Market Opportunities: Rural areas offer niche market opportunities that cater to specific demands. This can include organic and locally sourced products, artisanal crafts, traditional cultural experiences, or eco-friendly services. Entrepreneurs can tap into these unique markets and differentiate themselves from larger competitors.

Community Support and Collaboration: Rural communities often exhibit strong social cohesion and a sense of community. This can create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs, as community members are more likely to rally behind local businesses, provide word-of-mouth referrals, and actively support their endeavours.

Preserving Local Traditions and Culture: Rural areas are often rich in cultural heritage and traditions. Entrepreneurship in these areas can focus on preserving and promoting local traditions, crafts, and cultural practices. This allows entrepreneurs to capitalise on the uniqueness of the local culture, attracting tourists and creating distinct products or experiences.

Sustainable and Eco-friendly Business Practices: Rural areas provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to embrace sustainable and eco-friendly business practices. This can include organic farming, renewable energy initiatives, eco-tourism, and responsible resource management. These practices resonate with increasing consumer demand for environmentally conscious products and experiences.

Collaboration with Local Institutions: Entrepreneurs in rural areas can collaborate with local institutions such as universities, research centres, and community organisations. These partnerships can provide access to expertise, resources, research findings, funding opportunities, and market insights, enhancing the growth and success of rural businesses.

Revitalising Local Economies: Entrepreneurship in rural areas can stimulate local economies by creating job opportunities, reducing migration to urban areas, and attracting investments. It can also contribute to value addition within the local supply chains and encourage the growth of supporting industries and services.

Work-Life Balance and Quality of Life: Rural entrepreneurship offers the opportunity for a better work-life balance and a higher quality of life. Entrepreneurs can enjoy the benefits of a close-knit community, a healthier environment, and a slower pace of life, contributing to overall well-being and satisfaction.

Digital Connectivity and Remote Work: With advancements in technology and digital connectivity, rural areas are becoming increasingly conducive to remote work and online entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs can leverage digital platforms and tools to operate businesses from rural locations, accessing global markets and customers.

These advantages and opportunities demonstrate the potential for entrepreneurship to thrive in rural areas, fostering economic development, cultural preservation, and sustainable practices. Entrepreneurs in Tunisia can leverage these unique aspects to create innovative businesses and contribute to the growth and prosperity of rural communities.

Conclusion :

In the end, entrepreneurship in rural areas is a dynamic and transformative pressure that holds substantial ability for economic, social, and cultural development. Throughout diverse areas and contexts, the entrepreneurship panorama in rural areas is characterised through both challenges and opportunities, every supplying precise insights into how these regions can flourish.

Rural entrepreneurship's energy lies in its ability to leverage neighbourhood sources, foster network bonds, and faucet into areas of interest markets. Natural sources, decrease operating costs, and supportive community networks create an environment wherein innovative thoughts can take root and grow. Furthermore, the protection of cultural heritage and the advertising of sustainable practices showcase the multifaceted nature of rural entrepreneurship, aligning financial hobbies with societal well-being and environmental stewardship.

Challenges, together with confined entry to infrastructure, education, and financing, persist, however in addition they underscore the need for comprehensive strategies that deal with the unique desires of rural entrepreneurs. Governments, institutions, and neighbourhood communities should collaborate to create an enabling ecosystem that gives schooling, financial support, and the right of entry to markets and generation.

Across Italy, Spain, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Tunisia, and past, the tales of marketers and professionals screen that rural entrepreneurship isn't always restrained with the aid of geographical limitations. Rather, it's far from an attitude, a manner of harnessing local strengths, and a commitment to crafting revolutionary solutions that resonate each locally and globally. As rural regions continue to conform within the face of urbanisation, digitalization, and converting purchaser possibilities, the spirit of entrepreneurship remains an effective device for developing sustainable futures, preserving cultural identities, and invigorating groups. By embracing this spirit, rural entrepreneurs aren't most effective in shaping their destinies but also contributing to the resilience and prosperity of rural areas internationally.

Scaling Success :

5.3. How can these approaches be scaled or replicated in other rural communities?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Everything could be organised in cooperatives and consortia, potentially. This should be matched by a change in large-scale distribution and sales.

Diego Gandolfo : Every place has its specificities and you have to look at those. If there is an ingenious idea like waste recovery then another area can also look at the product it produces in the greatest quantity locally and exploit that.

Spain :

Many entrepreneurial initiatives focused on rural development are currently being launched. Some examples that are working successfully are the establishment of coliving and coworking spaces for the revitalisation of areas at risk of depopulation or the creation of online platforms, hackathons and competitions that seek to put entrepreneurs in contact with town councils and investors to help them make their project viable.

Palestine :

To scale or replicate successful approaches to entrepreneurship in rural communities in Palestine, several strategies can be employed. Firstly, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building programs can be implemented to disseminate best practices and empower aspiring entrepreneurs in other rural areas. This can be done through workshops, training sessions, and mentorship programs that connect successful entrepreneurs with those looking to start or expand their businesses. By sharing experiences, lessons learned, and practical advice, rural communities can learn from one another and adapt successful approaches to their specific contexts.

Secondly, establishing networks and platforms for collaboration and cooperation among rural entrepreneurs is crucial. Creating forums for entrepreneurs to connect, share resources, and collaborate on joint projects can foster innovation, economies of scale, and collective marketing efforts. These networks can be facilitated through local institutions, community organisations, or dedicated platforms that bring together entrepreneurs from different rural areas. By promoting collaboration and synergy, rural entrepreneurs can collectively address challenges, access new markets, and create stronger economic ecosystems.

Thirdly, supportive policies and incentives from governmental and non-governmental entities can play a vital role in scaling entrepreneurial approaches. This can include financial assistance, tax incentives, regulatory reforms, and streamlined procedures for business registration and licensing. Such supportive policies can encourage entrepreneurship, attract investments, and create an enabling environment for rural businesses to thrive. Additionally, targeted funding programs and grants specifically tailored for rural entrepreneurs can provide the necessary capital to launch and grow their ventures.

Furthermore, building strategic partnerships between rural communities, universities, research centres, and development organisations can facilitate the transfer of knowledge, research findings, and innovation to rural entrepreneurs. Collaboration between academia, researchers, and rural entrepreneurs can lead to the development of new technologies, sustainable practices, and market-driven solutions that address specific challenges faced by rural communities. This

collaboration can be fostered through joint research projects, technology transfer programs, and initiatives that promote the integration of academic knowledge with practical entrepreneurial skills.

Lastly, documenting and showcasing successful case studies and success stories from rural communities can inspire and motivate entrepreneurs in other areas. Creating platforms for storytelling, media coverage, and marketing campaigns that highlight the achievements and positive impact of rural entrepreneurs can create a ripple effect, encouraging others to pursue entrepreneurship and replicate successful models. This can contribute to changing the narrative around rural entrepreneurship and showcasing its potential as a catalyst for economic growth and community development.

By implementing these strategies, rural communities in Palestine can scale and replicate innovative entrepreneurial approaches, fostering sustainable economic development, job creation, and improved livelihoods across various rural areas.

Egypt :

By partnering with local institutions, such as universities, research centres, and community organisations, to leverage their resources and expertise as this can help provide entrepreneurs with access to training, mentorship, and other resources needed to succeed, by developing a business model that is tailored to the local context and market demand, and the very important thing is monitoring and evaluating the impact of the approach on the local community to help identify areas for improvement and ensure the approach is achieving its intended outcomes.

Greece :

To scale or replicate successful approaches in other rural communities, several strategies can be employed. It begins with sharing knowledge and documenting success stories and best practices learned from entrepreneurs in the original community. This information could be widely disseminated through case studies, and online platforms to guide and inspire entrepreneurs in other rural areas.

Additionally, networking and collaboration play a vital role in scaling approaches. Facilitating events, workshops, and online forums allows entrepreneurs from different rural communities to connect, share experiences, exchange ideas, and collaborate on joint initiatives.

Capacity building programs and tailored training initiatives should be also offered to entrepreneurs in target communities. These programs provide practical skills, business development training, and mentorship to empower entrepreneurs and enhance their chances of success.

Furthermore, access to funding and resources is essential for entrepreneurs in other rural communities. Identifying and providing access to funding opportunities, grants, or financial support is critical. Collaboration with financial institutions, impact investors, and government programs can help ensure adequate resources are available to support entrepreneurship initiatives.

Tunisia :

To expand and replicate successful entrepreneurial approaches from one rural community to others, several strategies can be utilised. Here are some methods to facilitate the scaling or replication of these successful approaches:

Access to Natural Resources: Rural areas often possess abundant natural resources such as fertile land, water bodies, and forests. This provides opportunities for agricultural entrepreneurship, agro-processing, eco-tourism, and sustainable resource utilisation.

Lower Operating Costs: Rural areas generally have lower operating costs compared to urban areas. This can include lower costs for land, labour, utilities, and infrastructure. Entrepreneurs in rural areas can benefit from reduced expenses, enabling them to offer competitive prices and maximise profitability.

Niche Market Opportunities: Rural areas offer niche market opportunities that cater to specific demands. This can include organic and locally sourced products, artisanal crafts, traditional cultural experiences, or eco-friendly services. Entrepreneurs can tap into these unique markets and differentiate themselves from larger competitors.

Community Support and Collaboration: Rural communities often exhibit strong social cohesion and a sense of community. This can create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs, as community members are more likely to rally behind local businesses, provide word-of-mouth referrals, and actively support their endeavours.

Preserving Local Traditions and Culture: Rural areas are often rich in cultural heritage and traditions. Entrepreneurship in these areas can focus on preserving and promoting local traditions, crafts, and cultural practices. This allows entrepreneurs to capitalise on the uniqueness of the local culture, attracting tourists and creating distinct products or experiences.

Sustainable and Eco-friendly Business Practices: Rural areas provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to embrace sustainable and eco-friendly business practices. This can include organic farming, renewable energy initiatives, eco-tourism, and responsible resource management. These practices resonate with increasing consumer demand for environmentally conscious products and experiences.

Collaboration with Local Institutions: Entrepreneurs in rural areas can collaborate with local institutions such as universities, research centres, and community organisations. These partnerships can provide access to expertise, resources, research findings, funding opportunities, and market insights, enhancing the growth and success of rural businesses.

Revitalising Local Economies: Entrepreneurship in rural areas can stimulate local economies by creating job opportunities, reducing migration to urban areas, and attracting investments. It can also contribute to value addition within the local supply chains and encourage the growth of supporting industries and services.

Work-Life Balance and Quality of Life: Rural entrepreneurship offers the opportunity for a better work-life balance and a higher quality of life. Entrepreneurs can enjoy the benefits of a close-knit community, a healthier environment, and a slower pace of life, contributing to overall well-being and satisfaction.

Digital Connectivity and Remote Work: With advancements in technology and digital connectivity, rural areas are becoming increasingly conducive to remote work and online

entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs can leverage digital platforms and tools to operate businesses from rural locations, accessing global markets and customers.

These advantages and opportunities demonstrate the potential for entrepreneurship to thrive in rural areas, fostering economic development, cultural preservation, and sustainable practices. Entrepreneurs in Tunisia can leverage these unique aspects to create innovative businesses and contribute to the growth and prosperity of rural communities.

Conclusion :

In the end, entrepreneurship in rural regions holds a big capability for driving monetary growth, fostering community development, and harnessing neighbourhood resources. The various array of modern and innovative tactics discussed throughout distinct regions demonstrates the adaptability and resilience of rural entrepreneurs. From cooperative fashions and agri-tourism to artisanal crafts and digital answers, those methods are as numerous because of the communities they serve.

While every place's precise blessings and challenges shape the entrepreneurial landscape, not unusual subject matters emerge. These consist of the importance of community collaboration, leveraging nearby assets, retaining cultural history, and embracing sustainability. Scaling and replicating hit methods throughout rural groups require strategic efforts which include know-how sharing, potential building, policy assist, and networking.

The collective efforts of rural marketers, local groups, governments, educational institutions, and supportive corporations are essential in figuring out the capability of rural entrepreneurship. By selling innovation, empowering local citizens, and fostering a spirit of collaboration, entrepreneurship in rural areas can contribute to a more balanced and inclusive monetary improvement panorama. As rural regions maintain to conform and adapt, entrepreneurship stands as a beacon of hope and development, connecting traditions with innovation and shaping the future of these groups.

Cultural and Social Dynamics :

6. Do you face any unique cultural or social challenges while doing business in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Consentino: On the subject of culture, if you do organic farming, permaculture, biodynamics, you are recognised more by the people who are highly educated. Culturally the challenge is about restoring dignity to peasant cultures. Even in the countryside culture is being destroyed. Giving back dignity to this knowledge and also making people understand that the countryside is a desirable place, i.e. you can be there even if you don't just do production, so in the countryside you can do events, political discussions. The countryside should be traversed without doing only agritourism, so not just speculative initiatives. In this way the whole system would grow, also on the ecological level. There would be more care for the common heritage and the land would become more manicured.

Spain :

Labour market development alone is not enough to solve the problems of maintaining the rural population. There has to be a much broader social context if we want to attract young people; and for that we have to ensure that there are attractive services. It is not a question of each municipality having all kinds of cultural or tourist services, but they must be linked and, above all, there must be good communications so that they can move around. However, one of the main problems is related to transport, in addition to connectivity and housing, which are even greater. In many rural areas, connectivity is still non-existent or very poor and there is not enough housing available, and if there is, it is very expensive because it is in tourist areas, or it is not available for rent or sale.

Palestine :

Doing business in rural areas in Palestine does come with unique cultural and social challenges that entrepreneurs need to navigate. One of the key challenges is the conservative cultural norms and societal expectations that may shape business practices. In rural communities, traditional values and customs often hold significant influence, impacting how business is conducted.

This can include gender roles, hierarchies, and the importance of personal relationships in decision-making processes.

Gender dynamics can pose challenges, as traditional gender roles may limit the opportunities available to women entrepreneurs. In some rural areas, women may face cultural barriers and societal expectations that discourage their participation in business activities. Overcoming these challenges requires promoting gender equality, empowering women through education and skill-building initiatives, and fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem that provides equal opportunities for both men and women.

Another challenge is the strong emphasis on personal relationships and trust in business dealings. In rural areas, networking and building trust are crucial for successful business operations. Entrepreneurs need to invest time and effort in cultivating relationships with local communities, leaders, and stakeholders to gain their support and cooperation. This can involve participating in community events, engaging in social initiatives, and demonstrating a commitment to the local community's well-being.

Furthermore, preserving and respecting cultural heritage and traditions is essential in rural areas. Entrepreneurs must be sensitive to local customs, practices, and beliefs when developing and promoting their products or services. Cultural appropriation or insensitivity can negatively impact business reputation and acceptance within the community. Incorporating cultural elements into business strategies, such as utilising local resources and traditional craftsmanship, can foster a sense of pride and ownership among the community and contribute to sustainable development.

To overcome these unique cultural and social challenges, entrepreneurs in rural Palestine should engage in cultural sensitivity training, establish strong community relationships, and actively involve community members in business decision-making processes. Collaborating with local institutions, community organisations, and cultural experts can provide valuable insights and guidance. By embracing the cultural richness and diversity of rural areas, entrepreneurs can build strong foundations for their businesses, foster community support, and ensure sustainable growth.

Egypt :

Entrepreneurs in rural areas in Egypt face unique cultural and social challenges that can impact their businesses, especially women. Here are some examples:

The first important point is facing cultural barriers in rural communities in Egypt; they have traditional cultural values and practices that may not be compatible with modern business practices. For example, women entrepreneurs are facing cultural barriers that limit their access to education and training, as well as social barriers that restrict their mobility and networking opportunities. Hence, the limited access to information and resources, such as: market data, training and education, and networking opportunities. This can make it difficult for entrepreneurs to identify market opportunities and develop competitive strategies, and it is more difficult for women.

Also Limited access to finance can be a challenge for entrepreneurs in rural areas in Egypt, as they may not have access to traditional banking services and may find it difficult to secure loans or investment. Moreover, the limited transportation infrastructure, communication networks, and access to basic services such as electricity, water, and sanitation as this can make it difficult for entrepreneurs to conduct business and access markets outside their immediate communities. That is In addition to the limited market opportunities due to their small population and limited purchasing power.

Greece :

Doing business in a rural area poses cultural and social challenges. These include traditional attitudes, limited market size, access to skilled labour, infrastructure constraints, social capital and networks. Addressing these challenges requires entrepreneurs to engage with the community, target niche markets, provide training programs, find creative infrastructure solutions, build social capital, and change perceptions by presenting successful models. By actively engaging the local community and addressing their needs, entrepreneurs can foster a supportive ecosystem for rural entrepreneurship.

Conclusion :

In summary, carrying out enterprise in rural areas provides a fix of wonderful cultural and social demanding situations that entrepreneurs ought to navigate. These challenges vary throughout areas however frequently embody troubles such as maintaining cultural heritage, overcoming traditional gender roles, building consideration inside close-knit communities, and adapting to limited resources and infrastructure. Entrepreneurs want to balance modern-day commercial enterprise practices with the upkeep of neighbourhood customs, and that they need to locate ways to foster inclusivity, gender equality, and community guidance.

In facing these challenges, marketers can leverage cultural sensitivity schooling, community engagement, and collaboration with nearby institutions to construct trust and credibility. Moreover, focusing on niche markets, addressing gender disparities, presenting training and training, and making use of progressive processes to infrastructure can help conquer barriers to success.

By directly confronting cultural and social challenges, marketers not only have the chance to successfully establish a thriving company, but also gain a deeper understanding of their audience's needs and preferences. but additionally make contributions to the empowerment and sustainable improvement of rural communities. The key lies in embracing the individuality of each rural context at the same time as working towards inclusive and innovative answers.

The Crucial Role of Education and Training :

7. What role do you think education and training play in the success of entrepreneurship in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Fundamental. There is no longer an entrepreneur who can just do what they did 40 or 50 years ago because the market has changed. Farming income has decreased relative to the same volume of production. Without training and without being in the network you end up being crushed or become a second business.

Spain :

In a context of opportunity for entrepreneurship as explained above, the role of the university is fundamental, both from the point of view of training (developing the necessary skills) and promoting research and the generation of knowledge in rural areas.

Palestine :

Education and training play a crucial role in the success of entrepreneurship in rural areas of Palestine. They provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge, skills, and mindset to effectively establish and manage their businesses. Education equips individuals with foundational business knowledge, including concepts in marketing, finance, and management. It helps them understand market dynamics, identify opportunities, and develop sound business strategies. Additionally, practical training programs offer specific skills relevant to rural entrepreneurship, such as agricultural practices, product development, and marketing strategies suitable for rural markets. Education and training also foster an entrepreneurial mindset by encouraging creativity, problem-solving, resilience, and adaptability. These qualities are essential for entrepreneurs to navigate the unique challenges of rural areas. Overall, education and training empower individuals by equipping them with the tools they need to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavours, leading to economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development in rural communities.

Egypt :

Education and training play an important role in the success of entrepreneurship in rural areas by providing entrepreneurs with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to succeed in entrepreneurship. So Education and training can:

- 1- Develop essential skills that are necessary for entrepreneurship, such as financial management, marketing, and business planning. Without these skills, entrepreneurs may struggle to effectively manage their businesses, make strategic decisions, and compete in the market.
- 2- Increase access to information and resources that are necessary for successful entrepreneurship. This can include market data, industry trends, and networking opportunities.
- 3- Build confidence in entrepreneurs, to help them take risks and pursue new opportunities. This can be especially important in rural areas where traditional cultural values and practices may discourage risk-taking and innovation.
- 4- Facilitate partnerships between entrepreneurs, institutions, and other stakeholders. This can help entrepreneurs access new markets, resources, and funding opportunities. And also, support

innovation by providing entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills needed to develop new products, services, and business models.

Greece :

Education and training play a crucial role in the success of entrepreneurship in rural areas. They serve several key purposes. Firstly, they provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to start and manage their businesses effectively. These programs offer practical insights into business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and operations, equipping entrepreneurs in rural areas with the tools they need to navigate challenges and achieve success.

Moreover, they cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset among individuals in rural areas. By encouraging creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and risk-taking, these programs shape individuals' attitudes and behaviours, enabling them to identify opportunities, adapt to change, and overcome obstacles. They foster a proactive and resilient mindset, which is crucial for entrepreneurial success.

Additionally, education and training programs provide platforms for networking and collaboration among entrepreneurs in rural areas. By bringing together like-minded individuals, these programs facilitate peer learning, mentorship, and the exchange of ideas and experiences. Networking opportunities enable entrepreneurs to expand their support networks, access valuable resources, and form partnerships for mutual growth and development.

Conclusion :

In precis, education and training play a pivotal role within the success of entrepreneurship in rural areas. They provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the crucial competencies, know-how, and attitude required to set up and control groups efficiently. This training equips individuals with foundational commercial enterprise standards and sensible capabilities applicable to rural markets. Additionally, education fosters an entrepreneurial mind-set, promoting creativity, problem-solving, resilience, and flexibility – characteristics crucial for overcoming the specific challenges of rural entrepreneurship.

Education and schooling additionally provide networking opportunities, enabling marketers to connect, percentage reports, and collaborate with friends. By cultivating an entrepreneurial atmosphere, education fosters peer studying, mentorship, and the exchange of thoughts, leading to the formation of partnerships for mutual increase and development. Furthermore, those applications encourage innovation and empower individuals to perceive possibilities, adapt to change, and navigate demanding situations.

In rural areas, where traditional norms and confined assets might also pose challenges, schooling and training serve as catalysts for economic growth, process advent, and sustainable development. By equipping marketers with the necessary gear, know-how, and attitude, schooling helps the transformation of rural areas into vibrant hubs of entrepreneurial activity.

Strategies for Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility :

8.How do you ensure sustainability and environmental responsibility in your business in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino: My business is geared towards environmental sustainability and the enrichment of biodiversity. Some of the arable land has been reforested (my grandfather started it and now I do it too) and therefore taken out of production to regenerate the land. I do surface tillage and not deep soil tillage to maintain soil fertility. Also, I do agriculture so I cannot do permaculture but I can be inspired by permaculture. I plant and harvest in a way that ensures soil fertility without pesticides.

Spain :

Some of the measures that can be adopted to guarantee sustainability and environmental responsibility include the proposal made by the Rural Action Forum in the document Sustainable development and just transition in rural areas of March 2023:

1. Ensure quality of life, essential public services, residence and sustainable economic activity in rural populations, against depopulation through spatial planning strategies for rural development and making the role of municipalism visible.
2. Pay special attention to the needs of women in rural areas, especially by strengthening the role of women in the primary sector and attacking the cycle of masculinisation-ageing-depopulation, and by giving value to the work carried out by women as the basis for the development of rural areas.
3. Effective support for the incorporation of young people into rural activities, especially in the agricultural, livestock and forestry sectors, and the application of complementary measures to promote the rejuvenation of the sector, with special efforts for those farms and models of greater socio-environmental value.
4. Promote a model of sustainable family farming, consisting of family farming that resides and works in the rural environment and whose main income and dedication comes from agricultural and livestock activity, which applies environmentally sustainable production methods and conserves the natural and cultural heritage. To this end, at least the recognition of Family Farming must be ensured through specific regulations, in order to establish support priorities and other differentiated promotion measures.
5. Promote a fair economic return in the agri-food chain, strengthening the weight of small businesses and family farming in the value chain, with fair prices, contractual relations, compulsory labelling at origin, flexibility in health and hygiene regulations, giving priority to local economies and markets, promoting sustainable differentiated quality production, direct sales and short marketing chains.
6. Promote a sustainable agri-food system through a just transition that leaves no one behind, supporting organic, local and seasonal production and food, including that from sustainable social hunting, through an appropriate orientation of the political and institutional framework (taxation, CAP, responsible public procurement, extensive livestock farming plan, etc.).
7. Promote action plans and measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, through the sustainable management of forests and agricultural systems, taking into account sustainability in the management of water resources available in each area and avoiding speculation and the installation of renewable energies in protected areas and areas of high agro-ecological value.
8. Protect the environment, including the conservation of biodiversity (habitats, species), the appropriate management of natural resources (soil, water...), the use of sustainable traditional agricultural practices (e.g. composting, transhumance) and nature-based solutions, as well as

ecological restoration; all this through appropriate planning and funding, especially of the Natura 2000 Network.

9. Promote the implementation of the Socio-Economic Activation Plan for the Forestry Sector with the aim of promoting responsible forest management, increasing the number of forests with a management project, or other equivalent management instrument, the development of associations and the commitment to the market for sustainable forest products.

10. Establish a state policy for the rural environment with all stakeholders, including the creation of a State Rural Environment Roundtable, updating the Law on Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment, the protection of intangible rural heritage and guaranteeing real and effective participation of civil society.

Palestine :

Ensuring sustainability and environmental responsibility in businesses operating in rural areas of Palestine is of utmost importance for the long-term well-being of both the community and the natural surroundings. There are several strategies to achieve this goal. Firstly, adopting environmentally friendly practices in production processes is crucial. This can include minimising waste generation, implementing energy-efficient technologies, and utilising renewable energy sources whenever feasible. For agricultural-based businesses, promoting sustainable farming techniques such as organic farming, water conservation, and soil preservation can help protect the local ecosystem.

Furthermore, engaging in responsible resource management is essential. Businesses should prioritise the efficient use of water, land, and other natural resources, ensuring their preservation for future generations. This can be achieved through proper monitoring and measurement of resource consumption, implementing conservation practices, and exploring innovative solutions for sustainable resource utilisation.

Collaboration with local communities and stakeholders is another key aspect of promoting sustainability in rural businesses. Engaging with community members, indigenous groups, and relevant organisations allows for the incorporation of local knowledge, traditional practices, and cultural values into business operations. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the environment, as well as promoting social cohesion and supporting the local economy.

Lastly, businesses can contribute to sustainability through community development initiatives. This involves investing in social programs, education, and skill development to enhance the well-being and livelihoods of the local population. By empowering the community and creating economic opportunities, businesses can foster a sustainable ecosystem where both the environment and the people thrive.

Egypt :

Ensuring sustainability and environmental responsibility in business in a rural area in Egypt is very necessary, by conducting a sustainability assessment to identify the environmental impact of the business operations. This helps identify areas for improvement and develop a sustainability plan, using sustainable practices that reduce the environmental impact of the business operations, such as reducing energy consumption, using renewable energy, minimising waste, and conserving water, in addition to using locally sourced materials and products, supporting fair trade practices, and avoiding environmentally harmful practices. This can also be reached through Promoting environmental awareness among employees, customers, and the local community by providing education and training on sustainable practices and encouraging responsible behaviour, Participating in

environmental initiatives in the local community, such as tree-planting programs, waste recycling, and sustainable agriculture practices and finally through monitoring and reporting on sustainability performance to ensure that the business is meeting its sustainability goals and to identify areas for improvement.

Greece :

The first step is to assess the environmental impacts and develop a sustainability plan that includes objectives to reduce the ecological footprint, conserve resources and minimise pollution. Adopting renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, also help reduce the use of fossil fuels and minimise carbon emissions. Another important measure is responsible waste management, implementing recycling and composting programmes and training employees on how to dispose of waste properly. Finally, environmentally friendly transport options such as carpooling or cycling are supported.

Conclusion :

In the end, ensuring sustainability and environmental responsibility in corporations operating in rural regions is important for lengthy-time period success and the well-being of each network and the natural environment. Strategies to achieve this aim encompass adopting environmentally friendly practices in manufacturing methods, responsible aid control, collaboration with local communities, investing in community development tasks, and promoting environmental consciousness amongst employees and stakeholders. Implementing sustainable practices not only helps shield the environment but also contributes to the general health and resilience of rural groups.

Rural vs. Urban Entrepreneurship: Pros and Cons for Business Ventures :

9. What are the key advantages and disadvantages of doing business in a rural area, compared to an urban area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Of the advantages I have already mentioned, the disadvantage is having few connections. Making collaborations requires a lot of effort but is essential.

Spain :

Currently, there is a great opportunity for development in rural areas: city professionals are looking for places in rural areas to develop their talents and improve their quality of life.

In addition, rural entrepreneurship facilities mean that more and more people are deciding to make the leap from the city to the countryside. Aid programmes and an environment with less competition make the rural world a real option for many people who want to change their lives and start up their own business.

It seems that in rural areas it is easier to propose a new business that no one in the area has thought of and to have less competition. Not only that, but when it comes to setting up a new business, everything, in general, is cheaper: the cost of housing, business premises or a warehouse and the standard of living are more affordable than in cities.

The most important limitation of starting a business in rural areas is that of reaching a smaller number of people and having fewer potential customers, but this can be compensated for by lower costs.

Palestine :

One key advantage of operating in a rural area is the potential for lower operating costs. Rural areas often have lower land and property costs, reduced labour expenses, and less competition, allowing businesses to allocate their resources more efficiently. Additionally, the cost of living in rural areas tends to be lower, which can positively impact the overall cost structure of the business.

Furthermore, rural areas offer unique market opportunities. These areas may have untapped customer segments, specialised local demands, or niche markets that can be effectively targeted by businesses. This allows for tailored product or service offerings and the possibility of building strong customer loyalty.

On the other hand, there are certain challenges and disadvantages to consider. Rural areas in Palestine may face limited infrastructure development, including transportation networks, communication systems, and access to utilities. These limitations can hinder logistical operations and increase costs associated with reaching suppliers and customers.

Another disadvantage is the potential smaller customer base and lower population density in rural areas. This can pose challenges in terms of generating sufficient demand and scaling the business. Businesses may need to implement creative marketing strategies to attract customers from surrounding areas or explore alternative distribution channels to reach a wider market.

Access to skilled labour and specialised expertise can also be more limited in rural areas. Businesses may face challenges in finding qualified professionals and may need to invest in training and development programs to build a skilled workforce. Additionally, rural areas may lack supportive business networks and access to financing options, making it crucial for entrepreneurs to seek out partnerships and explore available funding sources.

Egypt :

There are many keys advantages and disadvantages of doing business in a rural area, compared to an urban area in Egypt, Starting with the advantages of doing business in a rural area:

- 1- The cost of living in rural areas is often lower than the cost in urban areas. This can make it more affordable for entrepreneurs to start and grow a business, as they may have lower overhead costs for rent and utilities.
- 2- Access to natural resources such as: land, water, and mineral deposits. This can provide entrepreneurs with opportunities to develop businesses in agriculture, forestry, mining, and other industries.
- 3- Rural communities in Egypt have strong social networks and community ties. This can provide entrepreneurs with access to local resources, such as skilled labour, suppliers, and customers, as well as support from other community members.

But, while there are advantages to that; there are also disadvantages of doing a business in a rural area which are:

Cultural barriers in rural communities in Egypt; as they have traditional cultural values and practices that may not be compatible with modern business practices. For example, women

entrepreneurs are facing cultural barriers that limit their access to education and training, as well as social barriers that restrict their mobility and networking opportunities. Hence, the limited access to information and resources, such as: market data, training and education, and networking opportunities. This can make it difficult for entrepreneurs to identify market opportunities and develop competitive strategies and it makes it more difficult for women. Also limited access to finance can be a challenge for entrepreneurs in rural areas in Egypt, as they may not have access to traditional banking services and may find it difficult to secure loans or investment.

That is in addition to limited transportation infrastructure, communication networks, and access to basic services such as electricity, water, and sanitation which can make it difficult for entrepreneurs to conduct business and access markets outside their immediate communities, as well as limited market opportunities due to their small population and limited purchasing power.

Greece :

Rural areas often provide lower operating costs, thanks to lower land, labour, and utility expenses. Additionally, access to abundant natural resources, such as agricultural land or forests, can benefit businesses in relevant sectors. Rural areas often have close-knit communities and customer bases, fostering loyalty and support for local businesses. Furthermore, the potential for niche markets and reduced competition can present opportunities for targeted and successful ventures.

However, rural areas generally have a smaller market size, which may require businesses to adapt their strategies to reach a broader customer base or focus on niche markets. The lack of infrastructure and services, including transportation networks and reliable internet connectivity, can pose challenges for logistics and communication. Moreover, market perception and access can be influenced by the association of rural areas with limited economic opportunities, and the distance from major urban centres can hinder market access and distribution.

Conclusion :

In precis, doing business in a rural location comes with numerous advantages and drawbacks as compared to urban regions:

Advantages of Rural Business:

- Lower running costs due to reduced land, hard work, and software costs.
- Access to abundant herbal sources for organisations in agriculture, forestry, and related sectors.
- Strong community ties and help for local agencies.
- Potential for concentrating on areas of interest markets and reduced competition.
- Affordable value of living for entrepreneurs.

Disadvantages of Rural Business:

- Smaller patron base and decreased population density.
- Limited access to infrastructure, inclusive of transportation networks and reliable internet connectivity.
- Perception demanding situations associated with rural monetary opportunities.
- Distance from foremost urban centres may additionally hinder marketplace get right of entry to and distribution.
- Limited get admission to professional hard work and specialised expertise.

- Potential cultural obstacles and conventional values that may not align with modern-day enterprise practices.

Entrepreneurs in rural regions must carefully recall those factors and broaden strategies to capitalise on the benefits whilst addressing the demanding situations as a way to ensure the achievement and sustainability of their groups.

Customer Engagement in Rural Markets :

10.How do you attract and retain customers or clients in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Bridging with urban areas. Making themselves known, doing activities, participating in joint initiatives, holding markets, fairs, touring with products to make them known.

Spain :

One way to attract and retain customers is to have a detailed and focused business plan. Among the considerations should be detailed: objectives, strategies, market analysis and economic viability of the business project. This document is essential to assess the feasibility of the project, anticipate possible difficulties and establish a roadmap to guide the owners and managers in the development and growth of the business. In addition, a complete and well-founded business plan can be very useful for attracting investors or applying for financing from banks.

Palestine :

Attracting and retaining customers or clients in a rural area in Palestine requires a strategic approach that considers the specific characteristics and needs of the local community. Here are some key strategies:

1. Understanding the target market: Gain a deep understanding of the rural community's demographics, preferences, and buying behaviours. Conduct market research to identify their needs, challenges, and aspirations.
2. Building strong relationships: Focus on building personal connections with customers or clients. Engage with the community through local events, gatherings, and social platforms. Develop a reputation for trustworthiness and reliability.
3. Tailoring products and services: Adapt your offerings to meet the unique needs and preferences of the rural community. Customise your products or services to align with their values, culture, and lifestyle.
4. Providing excellent customer service: Deliver exceptional customer service that goes above and beyond expectations. Be responsive, attentive, and reliable in addressing customer inquiries, concerns, and feedback.
5. Leveraging word-of-mouth marketing: In rural areas, word-of-mouth recommendations play a significant role. Encourage satisfied customers to share their positive experiences with others, and consider implementing referral programs or incentives.
6. Showcasing community involvement: Demonstrate your commitment to the local community by actively participating in community events, supporting local initiatives, and giving back. This fosters a sense of loyalty and goodwill among customers.

7. Embracing digital marketing: Leverage digital platforms and online marketing strategies to reach and engage with customers in rural areas. Establish an online presence through a website, social media channels, and targeted advertising.
8. Offering convenience and accessibility: Make it easy for customers to access your products or services. Consider providing delivery services, creating mobile-friendly platforms, or establishing partnerships with local businesses.

Continuous improvement: Regularly gather feedback from customers and use it to improve your offerings. Adapt and innovate based on changing market dynamics and evolving customer needs.

Egypt :

Strong social relations and networking with people working in trade are important things to consider in the rural area in Egypt, as the beginning of the success of projects in these areas depends primarily on social relations. So, in light of the challenges that rural areas face with infrastructure and internet connection, many entrepreneurs resort to word-of-mouth marketing instead of online marketing. That is in addition to the good knowledge of the market needs, and knowledge of the products that are a priority for people in rural areas.

Greece :

To attract and retain customers in a rural area, it is necessary to understand the local community and its needs. Most importantly, build personal relationships and prioritise excellent customer service to foster loyalty and trust. In addition, providing unique products and services tailored to the rural market, addressing specific needs and gaps, is a prerequisite for maintaining customer relationships. The use of the internet and digital marketing, including social and local media, also leads to increased visibility and thus an enhanced customer base. However, every entrepreneur should remember that a strong customer base in a rural area requires time, effort and a tailored approach.

Conclusion :

In summary, attracting and preserving clients in a rural area requires a aggregate of strategies that are particular to the local community's wishes and options:

Understanding the Market: Conduct thorough market studies to apprehend the demographics, alternatives, and buying behaviours of the rural community.

Building Relationships: Establish private connections with clients via network occasions, social gatherings, and engagement on social media structures.

Customization: Tailor your services and products to align with the values, culture, and lifestyle of the area people.

Excellent Customer Service: Provide top notch customer service to exceed expectancies and construct a popularity for reliability.

Word-of-Mouth Marketing: Encourage happy clients to proportion high-quality reviews and tips with others.

Community Involvement: Participate in nearby events, assist network initiatives, and showcase your dedication to the community.

Digital Presence: Utilise virtual systems and on-line advertising and marketing to attain and have interaction with clients, even in regions with confined internet connectivity.

Convenience: Ensure clean get right of entry to products or services by means of presenting shipping alternatives and person-pleasant structures.

Continuous Improvement: Gather client comments and use it to improve your services and adapt to converting market dynamics.

By enforcing those techniques, marketers in rural regions can set up robust relationships with clients, drive loyalty, and ensure the long-term fulfilment of their businesses.

Rural Entrepreneurship Essentials: Key Skills and Qualities for Success :

11. What are the most important skills or qualities needed to succeed in entrepreneurship in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Don't stop studying, don't stop observing, know how to observe climate change, know how to experiment, have market perception (i.e. have an idea of which new products to introduce and which to replace) and then the ability to do it.

Spain :

Motivation to start a business: Reality shows us that a person creates a business out of vocation or necessity. In both cases, success or failure does not depend so much on the reason for starting the business but rather on the way it is set up and managed. In any case, there are many nuances and options between the two positions.

The choice of the type of business to start is the starting point of any business project. Around the ideas initially put forward by the promoters, a whole series of actions will be articulated that will lead, over time, to the creation of the company. The choice of the idea is an important factor, although not the only one in the process of creating a company, and must be carefully analysed. It also **involves knowing which sectors of our economy** are likely to be booming and which are likely to stagnate. In short, it means knowing where to invest, what business to start up with certain guarantees of success, in other words, the essence of any business idea. In addition to **commitment, ambition, capacity for sacrifice and imagination** - the right psychological qualities to be an entrepreneur - we must also possess one of the fundamental pillars on which to base the future development of our business: information or access to it. It is essential to focus on this aspect from an advisory perspective and to analyse the knowledge of the entrepreneur who wants to set up a certain type of company.

Palestine :

1. **Adaptability and resourcefulness:** Entrepreneurs must be able to navigate limited resources and infrastructure, finding innovative solutions to overcome challenges.
2. **Strong problem-solving skills:** The ability to identify and address challenges is crucial in a rural setting where resources and support may be limited.
3. **Effective communication and networking:** Building strong relationships with the local community, suppliers, and stakeholders is essential for business success.

4. Resilience and perseverance: Entrepreneurs should have the determination to overcome obstacles, learn from failures, and stay motivated in the face of challenges.
5. Work ethic and self-discipline: Entrepreneurs must be self-driven, willing to put in the necessary time and effort, and manage their time effectively.
6. Understanding the local community: Entrepreneurs should have a deep understanding of the community's culture, values, and needs, aligning their business ideas with the community's aspirations.
7. Access to support systems and resources: Entrepreneurs can benefit from local institutions, government initiatives, programs, and resources that provide guidance, training, funding, and networking opportunities.
8. Leveraging technology and digital tools: Utilising technology can help entrepreneurs overcome geographical limitations, reach a wider audience, and streamline their operations.
9. Environmental and social responsibility: Considering sustainability and community impact can help entrepreneurs create businesses that contribute positively to the local economy and environment.

By embodying these skills, qualities, and strategies, entrepreneurs in rural areas in Palestine can navigate the unique challenges they face and build successful businesses that not only generate economic growth but also uplift the local community.

Egypt :

Working in the field of entrepreneurship in the Egyptian rural areas requires the entrepreneur to be distinguished by many advantages and skills that are not only focused on establishing his project, but also on gaining respect and popularity among the people in these areas.

- 1- Cultural sensitivity: rural areas in Egypt have traditional cultural values and practices that must be respected and taken into account when developing business strategies. Entrepreneurs must be able to navigate cultural differences and communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
- 2- Innovation: entrepreneurs must be able to identify new opportunities and develop innovative approaches to meet the needs of their communities. And they should be able to effectively market and sell their products or services to a smaller, more dispersed customer base.
- 3- Building strong relationships with other businesses, suppliers, and community is essential for success in a rural area in Egypt, in addition to leadership skills; to be able to lead businesses and inspire others to join them in their vision for growth and development.

Greece :

As rural entrepreneurs face unique challenges and limited resources, adaptability, perseverance and resilience are the most necessary skills to have. Flexibility allows you to navigate changing conditions and find creative solutions. Self-motivation is also vital as networking opportunities and mentoring can be limited. Additionally, building relationships with community members and organisations provides support, collaboration, and access to resources, while strong problem-solving skills are essential to overcome unique obstacles. Moreover, understanding local market dynamics and consumer preferences and effective communication are important for developing products and services that resonate with the community and building trust.

Conclusion :

The partner countries have confirmed both demanding situations and opportunities. Operating an enterprise in a rural location demands a completely unique set of abilities and traits. Adaptability, hassle-fixing, powerful communication, and resilience are critical due to confined sources and distinct challenges. Entrepreneurs should understand the local people, build robust relationships, and leverage to assist structures. Additionally, embracing era, being environmentally responsible, and respecting cultural sensitivities make contributions to sustainable fulfilment.

In phrases of blessings, rural areas often provide lower running costs, get admission to herbal assets, and capacity areas of interest markets. However, the smaller customer base and constrained infrastructure pose challenges. Attracting and preserving customers requires customised techniques, remarkable service, and information nearby wishes.

Education and training play a pivotal role, equipping entrepreneurs with the abilities, information, and mindset important for fulfilment. Sustainability and environmental obligation are important, thinking about the lengthy-time period properly-being of each community and the surroundings. Bridging with urban regions, participating, and taking part in joint tasks can beautify visibility and growth.

Ultimately, rural entrepreneurship gives possibilities for economic growth, community improvement, and environmental stewardship. Successful marketers in rural areas showcase a mix of strategic thinking, adaptability, cultural attention, and a sturdy dedication to their communities.

Profitability and Social Impact Harmony :

12.How do you balance the need for profitability with the desire to have a positive social impact in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Not making too many compromises and trying to be consistent with one's choices. For me, the two things belong together. You take on a lower but decent and ethically sustainable profitability. You have to make it on your own so the profitability has to be decent. Being alone can be very difficult, so you may be alone in the territory but if you are in a network with which you can grow new ideas you can do it better. Before, farmers lived with their families in their territories that they cultivated. Today you cannot be totally a farmer and you cannot just be an entrepreneur.

Spain :

The growing impact investment market provides capital to address the world's most pressing challenges in sectors such as sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, conservation, microfinance, and affordable and accessible basic services such as housing, health and education. Impact investments are investments made in companies, organisations and funds with the intention of generating measurable social and environmental impact as well as financial return.

Palestine :

Balancing profitability with the desire to have a positive social impact in a rural area in Palestine requires a thoughtful and strategic approach. While profitability is essential for sustaining a

business, it is equally important to consider the social impact on the local community. To achieve this balance, entrepreneurs can adopt several strategies.

First, they can prioritise socially responsible practices within their business operations. This may include implementing environmentally friendly initiatives, promoting fair labour practices, supporting local suppliers, and actively engaging with the community.

Second, entrepreneurs can develop products or services that address specific social or environmental needs in the rural area. By aligning their business goals with the local community's needs, they can create a positive impact while generating profits.

Third, entrepreneurs can collaborate with local organisations, non-profits, or government entities that focus on social development. By partnering with these stakeholders, they can leverage resources, knowledge, and networks to maximise their social impact.

Furthermore, transparent communication and stakeholder engagement are essential in balancing profitability and social impact. Engaging with the local community, listening to their concerns, and incorporating their feedback can help entrepreneurs make informed decisions that benefit both the business and the community.

Ultimately, achieving a balance between profitability and social impact requires a long-term perspective and a commitment to sustainable practices. By considering the social and environmental consequences of their actions and actively seeking ways to create shared value, entrepreneurs can contribute to the well-being of the rural area while ensuring the financial viability of their businesses.

Egypt :

- 1- By identifying specific social impact goals that are aligned with the mission and values of the business. This can include goals related to environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and community development.
- 2- Integrating social impact goals into the overall business strategy and decision-making process. This can include considering the social and environmental impact of business practices and products, and incorporating social impact metrics into performance evaluations.
- 3- Engaging with stakeholders, including employees, customers, and the local community, to ensure that the business is meeting their needs and expectations and developing a sustainable business model that takes into account financial, social, and environmental considerations.

Greece :

Balancing the profitability of the business with the positive social impact it will bring to a rural area requires a careful approach. Firstly, a clear definition of the social mission is made, identifying the desired impact, and integrating its initiatives into core business activities, finding ways to align profitability with addressing a social need. The key objective is to create a sustainable business model that balances economic sustainability and social impact.

Additionally, it implemented a system to measure and monitor the social impact, using metrics to evaluate effectiveness and communicate results. This can lead to continually adapt and refine the business strategies to achieve better balance. By integrating these approaches, you can create a sustainable business that delivers financial returns while making a meaningful positive impact on the rural area.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, entrepreneurship in rural regions provides a unique set of challenges and possibilities that require a distinct technique in comparison to urban environments. The success of rural entrepreneurship hinges on a combination of things, ranging from information about the local people's needs and tradition to leveraging revolutionary strategies for overcoming restricted assets and infrastructure. Entrepreneurs in rural regions should own a numerous skill set, along with adaptability, resilience, and a sturdy connection to the community they serve.

Striking a stability between profitability and social effect is a central consideration in rural entrepreneurship. While profitability guarantees the sustainability of the commercial enterprise, integrating tremendous social impact into the commercial enterprise version is essential for the well-being of the community and the environment. Achieving this balance necessitates cautious making plans, a long-term angle, collaboration with neighbourhood stakeholders, and transparent communication.

Furthermore, education and schooling play a pivotal function in rural entrepreneurship via equipping individuals with the vital capabilities, know-how, and attitude to navigate the dynamic commercial enterprise panorama. By empowering entrepreneurs with business acumen and fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, schooling and education contribute to financial boom, process introduction, and sustainable development in rural communities.

Ultimately, the achievement of entrepreneurship in rural areas extends past character ventures—it has the capability to drive significant transformation within communities, foster innovation, and contribute to the general development of these areas. By embracing neighbourhood values, addressing unique desires, and embracing sustainability, entrepreneurs can construct businesses that now not only thrive but also make an enduring effective impact on rural regions.

Fostering Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystems :

13. What are the most important factors for building a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurship in rural areas, such as access to mentorship, networking, and funding?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino: Individual entrepreneurship. Bottom - top initiatives. Knowing how to organise oneself. Giving oneself the entrepreneurial tools to function. However much training is done, it often remains theoretical. I see more successful training dealing with the commercial or communication side; certainly new technical knowledge can also be relevant (e.g. on new pruning systems). Training should include more such specialised opportunities/sessions, for example training on certain crops and avoiding sporadic training.

Spain :

In an initiative carried out in 2021 promoted by the National Rural Network, a study was carried out in which a working group called "Youth and the Rural Environment" was created with 39 rural experts with different profiles (academic, institutional, scientific, associative, rural inhabitants, etc.) and with a wide representation of the national territories, where 1,053 responses were received during the 15 days that the survey was open. Participation corresponds mainly to young people under 41 years of age (83.5%), of whom more than half are under 31 years of age.

Among some of the aspects that stand out among the needs of young people to stay in rural areas, 32% indicated the need for employment. On the other hand, 22.74% of those surveyed give importance to self-employment and entrepreneurship, which is why they demand specific training for entrepreneurship.

The most demanded are education and health services (more than 30%) and the improvement of infrastructures that connect with other population centres. In second place - with 14% - a commitment to digitalisation and access to quality internet is demanded. More financial aid is required from public authorities, as well as aid for access to land and housing.

Palestine :

Building a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine requires the presence of various factors that facilitate and nurture entrepreneurial endeavours. Access to mentorship, networking, and funding are among the most important components of such an ecosystem.

Firstly, mentorship plays a crucial role in providing guidance, knowledge, and expertise to aspiring entrepreneurs. Having access to experienced mentors who can share insights, provide advice, and offer practical assistance can significantly enhance the chances of success for rural entrepreneurs. Mentors can help navigate challenges, provide industry-specific knowledge, and offer valuable connections within the business community.

Secondly, networking opportunities are essential for entrepreneurs to establish relationships, collaborate, and learn from their peers. By connecting with other entrepreneurs, industry professionals, and stakeholders, rural entrepreneurs can gain access to valuable resources, partnerships, and market insights. Networking events, workshops, and conferences serve as platforms for sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and building meaningful connections that can lead to collaboration and growth.

Thirdly, access to funding is vital for entrepreneurial ventures to start, scale, and sustain their operations. In a supportive ecosystem, there should be diverse funding sources available, including grants, loans, angel investors, and venture capital. Financial institutions, government programs, and private sector initiatives can play a significant role in providing funding opportunities tailored to the specific needs of rural entrepreneurs.

Moreover, it is important to establish a collaborative and inclusive culture within the ecosystem, where knowledge-sharing, cooperation, and mutual support are encouraged. This can be fostered through the establishment of co-working spaces, incubators, or innovation hubs that provide a physical space for entrepreneurs to connect, collaborate, and access shared resources.

Lastly, the involvement and support of local government and relevant institutions are crucial for creating an enabling environment. Policies that promote entrepreneurship, streamline bureaucratic processes, and provide incentives for rural businesses can significantly contribute to the development of a supportive ecosystem.

By focusing on these factors—mentorship, networking, funding, a collaborative culture, and supportive policies—Palestine can foster a thriving ecosystem for entrepreneurship in rural areas. Such an ecosystem would empower rural entrepreneurs, unlock their potential, and drive economic growth, job creation, and community development.

Egypt :

Partnerships and networking are important factors in creating an ecosystem for entrepreneurship, in addition to facilitating communication and access to international and governmental institutions in order to present project ideas and obtain financing.

It is important to provide training to create business planning, marketing and sales, financial management, and other relevant topics, and participate in exhibitions that are held annually in order to network to obtain grants and opportunities to display products and projects and know the updates about the labor market. In addition, access to mentorship is critical for entrepreneurs in rural areas, who lack the resources and knowledge needed to start and grow successful businesses.

And the most important point is a supportive policy environment that encourages entrepreneurship and innovation, and provides incentives and support for rural entrepreneurs that can help foster a thriving ecosystem for entrepreneurship in rural areas. This can include policies such as tax incentives, regulatory support, and funding for rural development initiatives.

Greece :

Building a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurship in rural areas requires several key factors. Access to mentorship and guidance is crucial, providing aspiring entrepreneurs with experienced mentors who can offer valuable insights and industry knowledge.

Networking opportunities can also foster relationships and connect entrepreneurs with like-minded individuals, potential customers, collaborators, and investors. Ensuring access to funding and financial resources is vital, including exploring various funding options and promoting financial literacy.

Additionally, collaboration and partnerships among entrepreneurs, local businesses, and educational institutions create a supportive ecosystem by pooling resources and sharing expertise. Improving infrastructure, such as business incubators, lowers barriers to entry and facilitates entrepreneurial growth.

Furthermore, education and training programs tailored to rural communities equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge. Continuous learning and capacity building through workshops and training programs ensure entrepreneurs stay updated and enhance their capabilities.

Finally, providing access to market information and resources helps entrepreneurs make informed decisions and identify opportunities. By considering and fostering these factors, rural areas can create an ecosystem that nurtures entrepreneurship, supports business growth, and empowers entrepreneurs to succeed.

Conclusion :

In summary, organising a supportive environment for entrepreneurship in rural areas is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a holistic approach. Access to mentorship, networking, and investment are key factors in growing an environment that empowers rural entrepreneurs to thrive.

Mentorship presents helpful guidance, knowledge, and enterprise insights that may steer entrepreneurs in the right course. Networking opportunities allow them to connect with friends, experts, and stakeholders, fostering collaboration, know-how-sharing, and potential partnerships. Access to diverse funding sources is vital for commercial enterprise introduction and growth, using innovation and sustainability.

To foster such an environment, collaboration among numerous stakeholders is crucial. Government support, policies that inspire entrepreneurship, and streamlined bureaucratic approaches can create a permitting environment. Educational establishments, incubators, and innovation hubs offer academic applications and resources that equip marketers with vital skills and understanding. Moreover, a way of life of collaboration, know-how-sharing, and mutual help in the entrepreneurial community bolsters achievement.

Ultimately, by addressing these factors together, rural areas can cultivate an atmosphere that no longer only helps entrepreneurship but additionally drives monetary boom, activity introduction, and community improvement. This comprehensive technique paves the manner for a brighter future for rural entrepreneurship and contributes to the overall prosperity of those areas.

Cultural Integration in Rural Business :

14. How do you incorporate local culture and traditions into your business in a rural area, and what are the benefits and challenges of doing so?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : By going organic, the preservation of traditions is implicit. There is a return to cultivating local ecotypes because they respond better to climatic stresses. The challenge is to find the target market for these products.

Spain :

In Spain, for example, a cultural project needs a community around it: of audiences, artists, sponsors and collaborators. The rural environment provides ideal natural conditions to build that community of support. You will probably find much better possibilities in the immediate rural environment with the perfect conditions for networking prior to funding. In rural areas, the wind is generally at your back because these conditions are already naturally present.

Villages, on the one hand, are home to a defined community with a strong identity. The fact that there is a pre-defined community is crucial, because we start from an obvious target audience and an initial supportive constituency. And at the same time they offer a friendly environment to live in and get to know your cultural community better. It is very easy to develop direct and close relationships in a village with the different people or institutions involved in the project. Invite them to spend time getting to know better what you are doing on the spot, because the village is both the container and the content of the project.

A village is also a good place to do business. Because, contrary to the romantic idealisation of villages as places where everything happens very slowly, they are often a good place to deal with, to develop and to imagine. The rural environment cannot be the exclusive object of the work of agronomists and foresters, culture has a special incidence; there are a series of imaginaries associated with being from a village that need to be re-read and overcome.

Engaging with communities not directly related to the rural world opens up infinite possibilities. The strategy can come through shared interests; to give an example, the commons are objects of study that are becoming increasingly relevant as the focus is on the community and its capacity for agency. Maker, hacker and other communities related to social innovation are in this space; building bridges between both communities opens a wide space to share learning and knowledge and to continue doing from the multifunctionality that is so common in both communities.

<https://culturayciudadania.culturaydeporte.gob.es/dam/jcr:fc60db21-3e5f-458b-8e2c-a4deb753f3a4/pensar-hacer-compressed.pdf>

Palestine :

Incorporating local culture and traditions into a business in a rural area in Palestine is essential for building strong community connections, fostering authenticity, and respecting the local identity. By embracing and showcasing the unique cultural heritage of the region, businesses can create a deeper sense of belonging and attract both local customers and visitors.

One way to incorporate local culture is by sourcing materials, products, or ingredients from local artisans, farmers, or suppliers. This supports the local economy and showcases traditional craftsmanship or agricultural practices. It also creates a sense of pride and ownership within the community.

Another approach is to incorporate cultural elements into the business's branding, aesthetics, and customer experience. This can be done through the use of traditional designs, symbols, or motifs in packaging, signage, or interior design. Celebrating local festivals or hosting cultural events can also create a vibrant atmosphere and attract customers who value authentic experiences.

By integrating local traditions, businesses can create a strong bond with the community, gain their trust, and generate positive word-of-mouth. Customers appreciate businesses that honour and respect their culture, as it demonstrates a commitment to the community's values and traditions.

However, incorporating local culture also comes with challenges. It requires a deep understanding and respect for cultural sensitivities, ensuring that traditions are accurately represented and not exploited for commercial purposes. It is crucial to engage with local stakeholders, consult community leaders, and seek their input and approval to avoid cultural appropriation or misrepresentation.

Additionally, businesses may need to navigate cultural norms and customs that could affect operations or marketing strategies. Understanding local customs, etiquette, and communication styles is crucial for building strong relationships and avoiding misunderstandings.

Overall, incorporating local culture and traditions into a business in rural Palestine can bring numerous benefits. It strengthens community ties, attracts customers who appreciate authenticity, and preserves and promotes the rich cultural heritage of the region. However, businesses must approach this process with sensitivity, respect, and a genuine commitment to honouring the local culture to ensure its positive impact.

Egypt :

Egypt has many cultures, and this affects the manufacture of handicrafts and heritage products, as it is the most successful business in Egypt, especially in rural areas. It is the integration of local culture and traditions in work and projects, as heritage and cultural products, that produce the most sold products to tourists in Egypt. These products are made from local materials, so using local material in the production of goods and services can help connect the business with the local community and support the local economy.

Also, Participating in local festivals and events can help businesses build relationships with the community and showcase their products or services. In addition, Incorporating local art and design into the business can help create a unique and authentic experience for customers. For example, a hotel might decorate its rooms with locally crafted art and furniture.

in order to effectively integrate these elements into the business, a thorough research and understanding of the local culture and traditions should first be done. Interacting with the local community, hiring local workers, sourcing local resources and materials can further enhance the integration of local culture into the business. It is also important that products and services align with local preferences and needs, incorporating design elements and flavours that reflect local culture.

The resulting benefits are many and include increased community participation and support, as well as a differentiated competitive advantage. By showing respect for the community's heritage, values and traditions, customer loyalty and trust, cultural preservation and local economic development are enhanced.

However, challenges may arise, such as the need for cultural sensitivity and authenticity. Care should be taken to avoid cultural appropriation or misinterpretation that could be offensive. Balancing tradition and innovation is another challenge, which requires understanding customer preferences and adapting traditions to modern contexts.

By carefully and respectfully incorporating local culture and traditions, however, businesses in rural areas can build stronger community ties, differentiate themselves in the marketplace, and contribute to cultural preservation and economic development. It is important to approach this process with sensitivity, and to adapt the deliverables in a way that aligns with evolving market needs and preferences.

Greece :

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Conclusion :

Incorporating nearby culture and traditions into corporations in rural areas holds great significance, contributing to the authenticity, network engagement, and preservation of cultural heritage. However, this enterprise comes with both benefits and demanding situations.

Benefits:

Community Connection: Embracing neighbourhood tradition fosters a robust bond with the community. Businesses emerge as extra than simply monetary entities; they become integral components of the social fabric, enhancing community help and loyalty.

Authenticity: Infusing neighbourhood traditions into products, services, or studies creates an authentic and specific offering. Customers, in particular those looking for real stories, are more likely to be attracted to businesses that honour and have a good time nearby.

Cultural Preservation: Incorporating local culture facilitates in maintaining traditions that may in any other case fade with time. By valuing and showcasing those traditions, groups contribute to the cultural legacy of the place.

Differentiation: Businesses that integrate local ways of life stand out inside the marketplace. They have a competitive aspect over standard services, attractive to clients in search of unique and remarkable studies.

Challenges:

Cultural Sensitivity: Care should be taken to make sure that cultural elements are portrayed with appreciation and accuracy. Misrepresentation or appropriation can cause backlash and damage the commercial enterprise's recognition.

Balancing Tradition and Modernity: Finding the right balance among conventional practices and present day commercial enterprise necessities may be challenging. Adaptations have to be made without compromising the integrity of the culture.

Local Acceptance: The local community's response to cultural integration can range. Some would possibly recognize it, while others would possibly view it sceptically. Engaging with network leaders and looking for input is important.

Risk of Commercialization: There's a satisfactory line between authentically celebrating subculture and exploiting it for industrial benefit. Businesses have to actually honour traditions in place of commodifying them.

Incorporating nearby ways of life and traditions requires a deep knowledge of the local people, open communication, and a dedication to keeping and respecting cultural background. When accomplished thoughtfully and authentically, it has the capacity to create a harmonious courting among companies and the groups they serve, contributing to the holistic boom of each.

Innovation and Tradition in Rural Entrepreneurship

15. How do you balance the need for innovation and modernization with the desire to preserve local traditions and values in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Simenza, for example, talks about the concept of retro-innovation. New technologically advanced techniques reconciled with ancient knowledge and ancient seeds.

Spain :

The wealth of a territory is not only measured by the per capita income of its population, but also by the quantity and variety of the natural and cultural resources it possesses and by its uniqueness. For example, the Valencian Community has been on the verge of losing its red sheep - because of the colour of its skin - the *guirra*. Reduced to two thousand head 20 years ago and doomed to extinction due to the high level of inbreeding in the flocks, today it is almost three times that number. To prevent the disappearance of this red-skinned sheep of African origin, the Valencian Administration has had to provide financial incentives to the MAPAMA's rural women livestock farmers for their track record in a sector as masculinised as the livestock sector. In this sense, a way of balancing innovation with preserving the values of the rural area implies the need to visualise opportunities as a reality and to have aid available to provide economic incentives for the business¹².

Palestine :

Balancing the need for innovation and modernization with the desire to preserve local traditions and values in a rural area in Palestine requires a thoughtful and inclusive approach. It is essential to recognize and respect the importance of preserving cultural heritage while embracing advancements that can enhance the community's well-being.

One way to strike this balance is through a collaborative and participatory process. Engaging local community members, cultural experts, and stakeholders in decision-making can ensure that innovation aligns with the values and aspirations of the community. By involving them in the planning and implementation of new ideas, it becomes possible to integrate modern practices while maintaining a strong connection to local traditions.

Furthermore, education and awareness play a crucial role. By promoting the understanding and appreciation of local traditions and values, innovation can be guided by the principles that are held dear by the community. This can involve incorporating traditional knowledge and practices into modern solutions or adapting new technologies to align with cultural values.

Preserving local traditions and values can also be supported through initiatives that promote cultural tourism and local entrepreneurship. By showcasing traditional crafts, culinary heritage, or cultural events, innovation can be harnessed to revitalise and sustain local cultural practices. This not only preserves traditions but also generates economic opportunities for the community.

It is important to emphasise that innovation and modernization should complement, rather than replace, local traditions and values. By embracing technology and new approaches that respect and enhance cultural identity, a harmonious coexistence can be achieved. This requires striking a balance between preserving the authenticity and legacy of the past while embracing the opportunities and benefits that innovation brings.

Ultimately, finding this balance requires ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and an appreciation for the intrinsic value of local traditions and values. By nurturing both innovation and cultural heritage, rural areas in Palestine can thrive while preserving their unique identity and sense of community.

¹² https://www.mapa.gob.es/ministerio/pags/biblioteca/revistas/pdf_DRS/RRN32_completa.pdf

Egypt :

It is possible to achieve both goals by adopting an approach that respects and incorporates local traditions and values while embracing innovation and modernization, through understanding the local culture and values of the rural area in which they operate. This can help identify areas where innovation and modernization can be introduced without compromising local traditions and values.

And Introducing innovations gradually can help build trust with local customers and stakeholders. Also, involving the community in the innovation and modernization process can help build support and buy-in. It is important to seek feedback and input from local stakeholders and be open to incorporate their ideas and suggestions.

Greece :

To achieve this balance, it is important to understand the local traditions, values, and cultural heritage that hold significance to the community. Identifying areas for innovation that can enhance and complement local traditions without compromising their essence is crucial.

Collaborating with local artisans and experts who possess traditional knowledge and skills also allows for their participation in innovation initiatives while preserving and promoting their crafts and traditions. Adapting and evolving traditional practices to meet contemporary needs and market demands, while maintaining their core values, demonstrates a commitment to both innovation and tradition.

Additionally, promoting education and awareness about the importance of preserving local traditions and values while embracing innovation is essential. This includes educating the community and external stakeholders about the cultural significance and economic potential of traditional practices.

Finally, developing sustainable tourism initiatives that showcase local traditions and provide economic opportunities, along with encouraging cultural exchange programs, supports the preservation of traditions.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, navigating the stability among innovation and the preservation of nearby traditions and values in rural regions needs a touchy and strategic approach. Entrepreneurs throughout numerous areas emphasise the importance of harmonising advancements whilst respecting the cultural cloth of the community.

The key techniques are:

- Retro-Innovation: Integrating advanced techniques with traditional understanding and practices can bring about retro-innovation. This approach respects nearby values while benefiting from modern-day answers.
- Community Engagement: Involving the area people, professionals, and stakeholders in decision-making procedures guarantees that innovation aligns with cultural values and aspirations.
- Education and Awareness: Promoting expertise and appreciation of nearby traditions fosters an environment wherein modernization may be guided by network values.
- Gradual Introduction: Implementing innovation incrementally can construct belief within the network and allow for smoother transitions.

- Collaboration with Local Experts: Collaborating with neighbourhood artisans and specialists in traditional practices allows their participation in innovation whilst retaining their abilities and historical past.
- Adapting Tradition: Adapting traditional practices to modern desires at the same time as keeping their middle values permits for a relevant continuation of the historical past.
- Tourism and Cultural Exchange: Showcasing local traditions via sustainable tourism initiatives and cultural alternate applications gives monetary possibilities whilst preserving traditions.
- Visualising Opportunities: Recognizing and selling possibilities at the same time as offering monetary incentives can assist stability innovation with neighbourhood values.
- Feedback and Collaboration: Seeking enter and feedback from the network and concerning them within the innovation process can garner help and cooperation.

Ultimately, the symbiosis of innovation and neighbourhood values contributes now not the simplest to the increase of rural groups however additionally to the resilience and enrichment of rural communities. By treading this direction thoughtfully, entrepreneurs can foster a future that honours the beyond at the same time as embracing the capability of the present.

Digital Tools' Role in Rural Entrepreneurship

16. What kind of role do you see technology and digital tools playing in the future of entrepreneurship in rural areas?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : The technology discourse has been the same for 70 years. Mechanical means I recognise make work possible, they relieve you of a lot of fatigue. Digital means I still don't understand how they should work. Certainly they help you collect more data that can improve your choices. Digital tools make you known and so people know you without you knowing them. For the kind of production that I do, face-to-face relationships are key again. People want to see you, meet you, they want to go to the market. The two things should go in parallel, meaning that we do a slower, more sustainable agriculture and you consumers organise yourselves in a group of networks; if the two things go together the digital can also be left aside.

Spain :

Connectivity, through infrastructure networks that allow adequate data transmission between citizens, companies and the Administration, is a fundamental part of digitalisation and of the territorial, social and environmental structuring of the country, as it is the key to access for the whole of the population to the services and opportunities derived from it. The COVID-19 pandemic has made evident the need for digital connectivity in all aspects of our lives and economic activity: teleworking, digital entertainment, e-commerce, distance learning, digital financial services and digital administration services have alleviated the effects of the confinement of citizens and companies.

The provision of connectivity infrastructures beyond urban concentrations favours the deconcentration of population and activities, and promotes equal rights and opportunities in the territory, which in turn contributes to solving the challenges posed by the demographic and ecological challenge.

Although much progress has been made, there is still a significant gap in coverage between rural and urban areas, between small and large enterprises, and between different social groups.

Very high-speed communications give potential access to economic, social and personal opportunities, but only the use of such infrastructures fosters the emergence of new business models and prosperity and well-being, being one of the factors that help to fix the population, contributing to the structuring of the territory by overcoming distances. They are also a driving force for progress. According to the EU, investment in ICTs has generated a 50% increase in productivity in Europe in recent years. The pandemic has highlighted the importance and the need to bring these opportunities to everyone.

Palestine :

Technology and digital tools have the potential to play a transformative role in the future of entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine. As technology continues to advance and become more accessible, it presents new opportunities for entrepreneurs to overcome geographical constraints and connect with markets, resources, and knowledge on a global scale.

One key role of technology is in improving connectivity. Access to reliable internet connections can bridge the geographical divide and enable rural entrepreneurs to reach customers, suppliers, and partners beyond their immediate surroundings. This opens up new markets, facilitates online sales, and enables remote collaboration and communication, ultimately expanding business opportunities.

Digital tools also enhance efficiency and productivity. Automation, data analytics, and online platforms can streamline business processes, improve inventory management, and enable more informed decision-making. These tools can help entrepreneurs in rural areas optimise their operations, reduce costs, and increase their competitiveness in the market.

Furthermore, technology empowers rural entrepreneurs with access to knowledge and resources. Online learning platforms, digital marketplaces, and e-commerce platforms enable entrepreneurs to acquire new skills, access market information, and connect with mentors and experts. This helps overcome traditional barriers to information and expertise, levelling the playing field and fostering innovation and growth.

In addition, technology has the potential to promote sustainability and resilience in rural entrepreneurship. Renewable energy solutions, precision agriculture technologies, and smart resource management systems can help address environmental challenges while improving productivity and reducing waste. This aligns with global trends toward sustainable practices and can contribute to the long-term viability of rural businesses.

However, it is important to ensure that technology is inclusive and accessible to all. Efforts should be made to bridge the digital divide, provide training and support for technology adoption, and address any infrastructure limitations in rural areas. Collaboration between government, private sector, and civil society is crucial to create an enabling environment that fosters digital literacy, connectivity, and technological innovation in rural entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, technology and digital tools have the potential to revolutionise entrepreneurship in rural areas in Palestine. By leveraging these advancements, rural entrepreneurs can access new markets, enhance productivity, acquire knowledge, and contribute to sustainable development. Embracing technology in a thoughtful and inclusive manner can drive economic growth, empower communities, and create a more connected and prosperous future for rural entrepreneurship in Palestine.

Egypt :

It plays an important role in the future of entrepreneurship, as it is now necessary to digitally communicate and market products using digital tools and also to create a website for the sustainability and success of selling products, not only within the region in which we live but also outside the geographical area.

Therefore, technology and digital tools will have an important impact in presenting new ideas for product design, display and sale, using electronic payment instead of cash, using social media applications to reach customers, using applications to request means of transportation in order to transport products to other regions, and also introducing modern methods in irrigation and agricultural systems to increase the production of agricultural crops, as well as the use of clean solar panels in the fields. Technology will change the old style of rural areas in the future.

Greece :

Technology and digital tools are crucial for the future of entrepreneurship in rural areas. They provide access to larger markets, enable efficient communication and collaboration, facilitate e-commerce, streamline business operations, and offer valuable information and resources. Technology fuels innovation, supports data-driven decision-making, and helps overcome geographical limitations. Ensuring equal access to technology is essential for the success of rural entrepreneurs. By leveraging technology, rural businesses can thrive, contribute to community development, and access global opportunities.

Conclusion :

In the imminent future, technology and digital tools are poised to play a transformative position inside the panorama of entrepreneurship in rural regions. Entrepreneurs and experts from numerous regions spotlight the ability advantages that era can convey even as acknowledging the demanding situations that need to be addressed:

Connectivity and Access: Technology, mainly reliable net connectivity, can bridge geographical divides by means of permitting rural marketers to get right of entry to global markets, assets, and data. It allows online income, faraway collaboration, and verbal exchange.

Efficiency and Productivity: Digital gear automates approaches, enhances information analytics, and improves decision-making. These advancements result in streamlined operations, better stock management, and in the long run accelerated competitiveness inside the market.

Access to Knowledge: Online getting to know platforms, e-commerce areas, and virtual marketplaces offer rural marketers opportunities to acquire new competencies, access marketplace insights, and connect to mentors. This tiers the gambling area and fosters innovation.

Sustainability and Resilience: Technology helps sustainable practices inclusive of precision agriculture and clever useful resource management. It can address environmental demanding situations while boosting productivity and reducing waste.

Inclusivity: Ensuring that generation is obtainable to all is critical. Bridging the digital divide, offering education, and addressing infrastructure barriers are essential steps to make certain equitable admission to technological advancements.

Digital Marketing and Sales: Digital gear permits businesses to show off products, create web sites for sustainable income, and make use of e-trade structures. This expanded marketplace reaches past local communities.

Innovation and Design: Technology can aid in product design and improvement, allowing marketers to create modern answers that align with marketplace needs.

Communication and Collaboration: Digital equipment facilitate communicate between entrepreneurs, suppliers, clients, and stakeholders. Collaboration can thrive despite geographical constraints.

Market Expansion: Technology permits rural marketers to tap into larger markets, supporting them to conquer the constraints in their physical region.

However, challenges including the digital divide, virtual literacy, and infrastructure boundaries need to be addressed to make sure that the benefits of technology are available to all. Governments, non-public sectors, and civil society want to work collaboratively to create an environment that helps digital literacy, inclusivity, and innovation.

In conclusion, the combination of era and virtual tools in rural entrepreneurship has the potential to revolutionize the way enterprise is carried out. By leveraging those improvements thoughtfully and inclusively, rural entrepreneurs can get right of entry to new markets, decorate performance, gather information, and make a contribution to sustainable improvement. This convergence of way of life and innovation is a pivotal thing in paving the way for the wealthy future of entrepreneurship in rural areas.

Collaborative Ventures in Rural Areas

17. How do you collaborate with other businesses or organizations in a rural area to create shared value and collective impact?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : I am part of a cooperative. We have an agroecology school and we work a lot on training. We are interested in environmental sustainability issues; I am also part of the permaculture network where we are not all producers, some just do it for themselves but we share principles and ethical visions that make rural living possible. We meet 2 times a year which are plenary meetings. At the local level we do mutual aid a couple of times a week. So we help each other with planting for example. Yesterday I was putting up a gate at a friend's house, for example.

Spain :

There are many successful rural entrepreneurship companies and they all have a common denominator: a commitment to innovation and the use of new technologies applied to the rural world.

Grodi Tech. Spanish startup dedicated to the agribusiness sector which, thanks to the use of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, manages to monitor greenhouses or plantations in real time. Through a mobile application, the farmer can obtain information on pests, plant diseases, nutrient levels and other relevant issues and thus anticipate potential problems.

Astro Red Neutra. A Spanish company that aims to reduce the digital divide and promote the development of the business fabric in rural areas. Dedicated to the development of fibre optics in towns with less than 1,000 inhabitants, Astro Red Neutra helps companies to face the challenge of digitalisation by offering them new opportunities for the future in rural areas.

In the case of **Byota** at national level, the Demographic Challenge Action Plan aims to invest more than 10 billion euros (around 10% of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan). The objectives of the plan are to improve the territorial structuring of Spain, eliminate the urban-rural divide and promote actions on the territory to reactivate the most affected areas.

At regional level, the JCCM2 has opted for tax incentives, support for companies, improvement of educational and health services in municipalities at risk of depopulation, in the Law on Measures against Depopulation in Castilla-La Mancha, approved on 6 May 2021.

In addition, initiatives are also emerging at the local level. Byota proposes new agroforestry systems that improve the profitability of producers and generate a more attractive rural model, allowing those who are staying and those who wish to join. Likewise, the urban-rural linkage allows expanding the awareness of the former and the perception of the latter, improving the quality of the product consumed in urban areas and the capacity to reside in rural areas. In this way, Byota's individual perspective goes beyond this, by betting on generating community in the rural environment.

Palestine :

strongly believe in the power of collaboration and partnerships to create shared value and achieve collective impact in rural areas of Palestine. We actively seek opportunities to collaborate with other businesses and organisations that share our vision and values, recognizing that together we can make a greater difference in the community.

One of the ways we foster collaboration is through strategic alliances and partnerships. We proactively engage with local businesses, NGOs, community-based organisations, and government agencies to identify common goals and areas of synergy. By aligning our efforts and resources, we can leverage each other's strengths and expertise to address pressing challenges and create sustainable solutions. Through collaborative projects and initiatives, we aim to achieve greater outcomes that benefit the entire community.

Furthermore, we actively participate in networks and platforms that promote collaboration and knowledge sharing. By joining forces with like-minded organisations, we can collectively advocate for rural development, influence policies, and amplify our impact. These networks provide valuable opportunities for learning, exchange of best practices, and joint initiatives that drive positive change in the rural areas of Palestine.

In addition to formal collaborations, we also foster a culture of cooperation and partnership at the grassroots level. We engage with local businesses and organisations to identify areas where we can support each other's efforts and create mutual benefits. This could include joint marketing campaigns, sharing of resources and expertise, or co-hosting community events. By building strong relationships and fostering a sense of collective responsibility, we create an environment where collaboration becomes a natural and integral part of our work.

Ultimately, our goal is to create shared value and achieve collective impact by working together with other businesses and organisations in rural areas of Palestine. Through collaboration, we can pool our resources, knowledge, and networks to tackle complex challenges, drive sustainable development, and improve the lives of the local community. By embracing the power of partnerships, we can create lasting change and build a stronger and more inclusive rural economy in Palestine.

Egypt :

Collaborating with other businesses or organisations requires identifying common goals and values that align with the mission and vision of the business. This can help establish trust and build a strong foundation for collaboration. In addition, establishing clear roles and responsibilities for each partner can help ensure that everyone is working towards the same goals and that there is no overlap or duplication of efforts. Moreover, building relationships with partners is essential for successful collaboration. This requires regular communication, mutual respect, and a willingness to listen and learn from each other. It requires establishing clear metrics and regularly reviewing progress because measuring and evaluating the impact of collaboration can help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the collaboration is achieving its goals.

Greece :

To create shared values and achieve a collective impact, common goals and areas of mutual interest between different businesses and organisations should first be identified. Building relationships based on trust and reciprocity is vital to effective collaboration. Also, by sharing resources and leveraging each other's strengths, efficiency is increased and impact is maximised. Advocating for common interests and constantly evaluating and adapting strategies are essential for long-term success. Through these collective efforts, a significant positive impact on the farming community can be achieved, face common challenges and achieve collective goals for sustainable development and shared prosperity.

Conclusion :

Collaboration amongst businesses and corporations in rural areas is critical for creating shared price and achieving collective effect. From numerous perspectives and reports, several key ideas emerge:

Identifying Common Goals: Successful collaboration begins with identifying common dreams and shared values. Businesses and businesses must align their missions to make certain that their efforts are complementary and make a contribution to a larger shared cause.

Building Trust and Relationships: Building agree with and robust relationships is fundamental to effective collaboration. Open conversation, transparency, and mutual admiration lay the muse for running collectively closer to common objectives.

Leveraging Strengths: Each entity brings specific strengths and resources to the table. By leveraging those strengths, collaboration becomes extra powerful, efficient, and impactful. Sharing sources, understanding, and expertise complements the general final results.

Clear Roles and Responsibilities: Clearly defining roles and obligations for each companion prevents duplication of efforts and ensures that everyone is operating cohesively in the direction of the shared dreams.

Advocacy and Networking: Collaborative efforts can amplify beyond on the spot partnerships. Engaging in networks and structures permits corporations and companies to endorse common interests, affect rules, and increase their collective voice.

Continuous Learning and Improvement: Collaboration is an ongoing method that calls for regular assessment, model, and getting to know from reviews. Periodic reviews make certain that the collaboration remains aligned with its supposed impact.

Community Engagement: Collaborations that interact with neighbourhood groups and stakeholders create an extra inclusive and impactful outcome. Involving the people affected by the collaborative tasks ensures that answers are contextually relevant and sustainable.

Measurement and Accountability: Establishing clear metrics for achievement and duty mechanisms guarantees that the collaboration's impact may be as it should be measured. Regular reporting and assessment assist pick out regions for improvement.

Scaling Impact: Successful collaborations can serve as fashions for scaling impact. Their fulfilment can inspire different businesses and groups to collaborate and make a contribution to collective efforts.

Flexibility and Adaptability: Rural environments are dynamic, and collaboration techniques must be flexible and adaptable to changing occasions. This allows partners to reply successfully to emerging demanding situations and possibilities.

In the end, collaboration amongst organisations and organisations in rural regions is an effective manner to create shared cost and obtain collective effect. By aligning dreams, building strong relationships, and leveraging strengths, those collaborations can cause sustainable improvement, monetary growth, and step forward greatness in rural groups.

Local Community and Environmental Aspirations :

18. What kind of impact do you hope to have on the local community and the environment through your business in a rural area?

Italy :

Piero Cosentino : Defense and protection of the land and the re-establishment of a rural community. Rural communities have all but disappeared. The countryside is either a place of concentrated production or of exploitation (as is the case with migrants). Rebuilding a rural community means giving them work again, being able to revive them.

Spain :

Following Byota, it has been concluded that part of the rural world is trapped in a negative feedback loop. This means that a number of factors, such as low profitability of agricultural activities, climate instability and pollution from intensification of production, among others, result in a series of additional problems, such as soil desertification, loss of biodiversity, abandonment of rural areas and forest fires. These problems, in turn, further amplify the negative effects of the above-mentioned factors.

In this context, Byota emerges as an initiative that draws on the emotion towards the natural world and the need to address the challenges in rural areas. The name "Byota" refers to the "biota", i.e. the set of living organisms that inhabit a given environment. This clearly reflects our purpose: to make the rural environment a living and thriving environment, through specific actions that trigger a ripple effect and involve the whole community.

Finally, they recognise that there are three major challenges that need to be addressed together: economic, social and environmental. To address these challenges, they proposed to start by building on resilience as a fundamental principle to achieve the desired profitability. They also focused on differentiation to achieve exclusivity, on the strength of cooperation, on the demand for

transparency, on the shared vision of biodiversity and, finally, on the elegance of awareness. These are the pillars on which they base their actions and strategies to promote positive and lasting change in rural areas.

The proposal of the Byota Network and its mission is to face the three challenges through our 3Rs: reevaluation of unproductive land, direct relationship with the producer and consumer, and respect for the environment. To achieve these three objectives, we offer agroforestry crops with high added value, such as the desert truffle; direct sales channels that highlight the natural value of the product; and adapted management models that diversify the agro-ecosystem.

Why cultivate the desert truffle? Because it is organic and requires minimal inputs, low maintenance, early production and very low water consumption. Apart from its culinary value. In addition, they offer the consumer a range of truffles to taste all year round, taking care of their origin, the producer, and keeping the rural areas alive.

Palestine :

Through our business incubator, IDEA, in the rural area of Jenin, Palestine, our primary goal is to have a positive and lasting impact on the local community and the environment. We strive to create an ecosystem that fosters entrepreneurship, economic empowerment, and sustainable development. By providing aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary support, resources, and guidance, we aim to generate several key impacts.

First and foremost, we aim to stimulate economic growth and job creation in the region. By nurturing innovative startups and small businesses, we contribute to the expansion of the local economy, create employment opportunities, and empower individuals to become self-reliant. We believe that a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem can have a ripple effect, leading to increased investment, improved living standards, and reduced poverty rates.

Additionally, our business incubator places a strong emphasis on sustainable practices and environmental responsibility. We encourage entrepreneurs to adopt eco-friendly approaches, such as utilising renewable energy sources, implementing efficient waste management systems, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. By integrating environmental consciousness into their business models, entrepreneurs can contribute to the preservation of the local ecosystem and mitigate the impact of climate change.

Furthermore, our work extends beyond economic and environmental aspects. We aim to empower the local community by providing opportunities for skill development, capacity building, and knowledge sharing. Through workshops, training programs, and mentorship, we equip individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavours. By promoting education and fostering a culture of continuous learning, we empower individuals to become change agents and contribute to the overall development of the community.

Lastly, we recognize the importance of collaboration and partnerships. We actively engage with local organisations, government agencies, and international stakeholders to create a collective impact and address common challenges. By forging strong alliances and leveraging resources, we can maximise our efforts and create a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurship that benefits not only individual businesses but the entire community.

In conclusion, our business incubator, IDEA, aspires to have a profound and multi-faceted impact on the local community and the environment in Jenin, Palestine. By promoting economic growth, encouraging sustainable practices, empowering individuals, and fostering collaboration, we

aim to create a vibrant and resilient rural area where entrepreneurship thrives, the community prospers, and the environment is protected for future generations.

Egypt :

- 1- Creating jobs and providing employment opportunities for people in the local community, which can help support the local economy and reduce unemployment rates.
- 2- Environmental sustainability practices, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and using renewable resources. This can help reduce the environmental impact and contribute to a healthier planet.
- 3- Innovation by investing in research and development, adopting new technologies, and creating new products and services.
- 4- Community engagement as businesses can engage with the local community by participating in community events, supporting local causes and collaborating with local organisations.

Greece :

The main objective is the financial empowerment of the business, through which other employment opportunities will be created, supporting, at the same time, local entrepreneurship, enhancing economic development and improving livelihoods.

Additionally, it seeks to prioritise environmental sustainability by adopting environmentally friendly practices, minimising waste, conserving resources and supporting local conservation efforts. This commitment to the environment demonstrates a sense of responsibility and helps preserve natural resources for future generations.

Collaboration and partnerships with other businesses, organisations and stakeholders are also vital to creating shared value and achieving collective impact. By working together, we can address common challenges, respond to community needs and drive sustainable development in the region, enhancing impact and fostering a sense of unity.

Conclusion :

The impact that companies in rural regions hope to gain on the local people and the surroundings is multifaceted and reflects a deep dedication to sustainable improvement and fine exchange. Across distinct regions and contexts, common themes emerge:

Economic Empowerment: Businesses aim to stimulate economic boom by way of creating process possibilities, fostering entrepreneurship, and contributing to the enlargement of the neighbourhood economic system. By producing employment and assisting nearby groups, they purposely decorate the livelihoods and monetary nicely-being of the community.

Environmental Responsibility: Many businesses prioritise environmental sustainability by way of adopting eco-friendly practices that reduce their ecological footprint. These practices can encompass conserving power, minimising waste, utilising renewable assets, and promoting sustainable agricultural methods. By integrating those practices into their operations, businesses strive to defend the environment and make contributions to a more healthy surroundings.

Innovation and Technology: Businesses regularly search to force innovation by making an investment in studies and development, adopting new technology, and growing modern products

and services. By staying at the forefront of technological improvements, they can enhance performance, niceness, and competitiveness.

Community Engagement: Businesses apprehend the importance of community engagement and often participate in local occasions, help network initiatives, and collaborate with nearby organisations. This engagement fosters a feel of belonging, strengthens social brotherly love, and contributes to the overall nicely-being of the network.

Collaboration for Collective Impact: Collaboration with different companies, agencies, and stakeholders is a recurring topic. By running together, companies can cope with shared challenges, leverage assets, and amplify their impact. This collective technique guarantees that efforts are coordinated and that a larger, extra sustainable impact is finished.

Empowerment and Skill Development: Businesses make a contribution to the empowerment of individuals through imparting schooling, mentorship, and skill improvement possibilities. By improving the competencies of neighbourhood residents, corporations permit them to seize opportunities and turn out to be active individuals to their network's boom.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage: In some regions, companies intend to hold and have fun local cultural traditions, background, and values. They integrate these factors into their products, services, and sports, contributing to the preservation of the community's identification and uniqueness.

Quality of Life Improvement: Through their efforts, organisations are looking to improve the general first-rate of lifestyles for the network. This can include higher admission to items and offerings, advanced infrastructure, and enhanced social and recreational opportunities.

In conclusion, organisations in rural regions aspire to create a holistic effect that encompasses monetary, environmental, social, and cultural dimensions. Their dedication to sustainability, collaboration, and community well-being reflects a deep expertise of the interconnectedness among monetary prosperity, environmental fitness, and colourful communities.

General Conclusion :

In conclusion, the research highlights several good practices in the context of entrepreneurship across the six countries—Italy, Spain, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and Tunisia. These practices have proven effective in fostering a conducive environment for startups and encouraging entrepreneurial endeavours. By adopting and building upon these practices, each country can further strengthen its entrepreneurial ecosystem and drive sustainable economic growth.

Government Support and Policy: Italy and Spain exemplify the importance of robust government support and policy frameworks. By offering funding opportunities, tax incentives, and regulatory reforms tailored to the needs of startups, governments can create an enabling environment that attracts entrepreneurs and encourages innovation.

Education and Research Institution Collaboration: The collaboration between entrepreneurs and education/research institutions, as seen in Palestine, Greece, and Tunisia, demonstrates the value of knowledge transfer and resource-sharing. Incubators, research-industry partnerships, and mentorship programs facilitate entrepreneurship support and bridge the gap between academia and business.

Technology and Digital Connectivity: Egypt and Tunisia showcase the significance of embracing technology and digital connectivity. These countries have seen the rise of digital entrepreneurship, proving that leveraging technology can open up new markets, streamline operations, and enhance competitiveness.

Rural Entrepreneurship Initiatives: The successful examples of rural entrepreneurship in Spain and Tunisia underscore the potential of agro-tourism, eco-friendly products, and community-based agribusiness. By promoting these approaches, countries can empower rural communities, preserve local traditions, and drive economic development in less urbanised regions.

Social and Environmental Entrepreneurship: Italy and Greece demonstrate the growing importance of social and environmental entrepreneurship. Supporting businesses with a focus on social impact and sustainability can lead to positive change and address pressing societal and environmental challenges.

Collaboration and Mentorship: Mentorship programs and business incubators in all six countries play a vital role in supporting entrepreneurship. These platforms encourage collaboration, skill-sharing, and guidance from experienced professionals, empowering entrepreneurs to navigate challenges and grow their ventures.

Leveraging Local Identity and Niche Markets: Italy, Spain, and Greece demonstrate the power of leveraging local culture, traditions, and resources to create niche products and services. Emphasising local identity can attract both domestic and international customers, providing a unique competitive advantage.

Ecosystem Strengthening: In all countries, a comprehensive approach to ecosystem strengthening is crucial. This involves coordination among stakeholders, continuous support for

startups beyond the initial stages, access to resources and market opportunities, and measurement of impact to ensure the effectiveness of support initiatives.

By embracing and further developing these good practices, the six countries can foster a vibrant entrepreneurial landscape that drives economic prosperity, social development, and sustainable innovation. The exchange of knowledge and experiences between these countries can also lead to cross-border collaborations, creating a dynamic and interconnected regional ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders.

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- In arabic

1 - ريادة الأعمال في المناطق الريفية في تونس: التحديات والفرص " لعبد الوهاب عبد الرحيم

2 - "الريادة الريفية في تونس: مشغلاتها وتحدياتها وتداعيات السياسات" لصفية البلوي وزينة الهاشمي

Appendix

- Appendix

n°1 :

What are some successful businesses or entrepreneurs in your rural area, and what makes them successful?

What strategies or practices have they used to overcome challenges unique to rural areas?

What impact have they had on the local community and economy?

What are some specific challenges faced by entrepreneurs in your rural area, and how have people successfully addressed these challenges?

Are there any unique challenges faced by women, youth, or other marginalised groups in rural entrepreneurship?

What support systems or resources exist to help entrepreneurs overcome these challenges?

Are there any local or regional policies, initiatives, or programs that have successfully supported entrepreneurship in rural areas?

What impact have these policies or initiatives had on the local economy and community?

What are some challenges or limitations of these programs, and how could they be improved?

What role do local institutions, such as universities, research centres, or community organisations, play in supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas?

What are some successful examples of collaborations between entrepreneurs and these institutions?

How can these institutions better support entrepreneurship in rural areas?

What are some innovative or creative approaches to entrepreneurship that you have seen in rural areas?

What are some unique advantages or opportunities for entrepreneurship in rural areas?

How can these approaches be scaled or replicated in other rural communities?

Do you face any unique cultural or social challenges while doing business in a rural area?

What role do you think education and training play in the success of entrepreneurship in rural areas?

How do you ensure sustainability and environmental responsibility in your business in a rural area?

What are the key advantages and disadvantages of doing business in a rural area, compared to an urban area?

How do you attract and retain customers or clients in a rural area?

What are the most important skills or qualities needed to succeed in entrepreneurship in a rural area?

How do you balance the need for profitability with the desire to have a positive social impact in a rural area?

What are the most important factors for building a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurship in rural areas, such as access to mentorship, networking, and funding?

How do you incorporate local culture and traditions into your business in a rural area, and what are the benefits and challenges of doing so?

How do you balance the need for innovation and modernization with the desire to preserve local traditions and values in a rural area?

What kind of role do you see technology and digital tools playing in the future of entrepreneurship in rural areas?

How do you collaborate with other businesses or organisations in a rural area to create shared value and collective impact?

What kind of impact do you hope to have on the local community and the environment through your business in a rural area?

- Appendix n°2

Through desk research and two interviews, CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE PER LA PROMOZIONE DELL'EDUCAZIONE E LO SVILUPPO ASSOCIAZIONE (CEIPES) identified the following good practices:

Company name, location and brief description	Why they are successful	Strategies and practices adopted	Impact on the community
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<p>Libera Terra (Regions of Southern Italy - Sicily, Puglia, Campania, Calabria)</p> <p>Libera Terra is a consortium, ONLUS (Non-profit organisation of social utility), which brings together the social cooperatives of Libera Terra, supported by other operators who have espoused the cause. The products are many, from cereals, to vegetables, to fruit. From collection to trade.</p>	<p>Libera Terra was born with the aim of enhancing splendid but "difficult" territories, through the social and productive recovery of the lands freed from the mafias and the creation of high quality products obtained with methods that respect the environment and society.</p>	<p>Libera Terra involves other producers who share the same principles and encourages organic farming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultivate and restore dignity to lands for a long time humiliated by mafia crime • respects the agricultural traditions of the territories in which it operates, respecting the natural balance and respecting the environment by doing organic farming • it offers stable, more than fair jobs, with prospects for personal growth and satisfaction for everyone, even for the most vulnerable • manages the seized and confiscated lands, giving meaning to the reparation towards the communities for a social reuse of the territory
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<p>Simenza (Raddusa, Province of Catania - Sicily)</p> <p>Simenza produces ancient Sicilian grains and is an association of several producers</p> <p>YERAME Project number: 101093212</p>	<p>Simenza brings together a series of elements of excellence, namely the overcoming of the cereal growing crisis (due to the lack of European funds, the importation of toxic grain from abroad, the widespread presence of glyphosates and other non-natural substances) and the solution of the disappeared tradition in Sicily, or rather the cultivation of native Sicilian grains. The Simenza producers collect the typical Sicilian grains which have excellent organoleptic characteristics and are of a much higher quality than imported grains. Simenza brings together the recovery of traditions, the solution to the Sicilian grain crisis and the solution to the problem of cereals and the salaries of Sicilian producers. Their innovation consists in the recovery of the ancient. Simenza</p>	<p>Their strategy is multifaceted: from a marketing point of view, the rediscovery of the ancient is a strategic choice that also allows the narrative of cereal production to be reformulated. From a marketing standpoint, the strategy is to highlight the properties of ancient grains in a world dominated by eating disorders, emphasising the far superior nutritional capabilities of local ancient grains. From the point of view of production, the strategy is to network. Sinza brings producers together and offers training.</p>	<p>Simenza employs Sicilian workers. They recover the local (Sicilian) tradition. The land is not treated with pesticides, ensuring respect for the local land.</p>
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<p>Orange Fiber (Catania, Sicily)</p> <p>Orange Fiber uses orange waste and produces the fabrics.</p>	<p>Orange Fiber's innovation is mainly represented by waste recovery. This practice eliminates the problem of waste disposal and recovers the value of the product. Orange Fiber creates sustainable and innovative fashion materials from citrus juice by-products, using an innovative, patented process and collaborating with industry leaders. Orange Fiber contributes to shaping a new concept of luxury based on an ethical and sustainable lifestyle.</p>	<p>OF's practice and winning strategy has been investment in technology and networking. OF is part of a network of investors, accelerators, leaders, industry partners, acceleration program mentors, and alumni who support its growth and encourage continuous improvement. OF is part of an international network of innovators who support the creation of value in terms of sustainability and impact.</p>	<p>The income is distributed among the community actors, since the employees all belong to the territory. Orange Fiber does not use pesticides and therefore respects its territory and adopts sustainable production methods. The main product of extraction is linked to local agriculture, namely citrus fruits.</p>
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<p>Consorzio delle galline felici (Italy - Sicily, France, Austria, Belgium, Germany)</p> <p>Production and distribution of oil, fresh fruit and vegetables and more..</p>	<p>It is a consortium and is managed horizontally. Members are involved in decision-making and business. They also have pre-purchase programs. In effect, they are planting consumer-funded orchards.</p>	<p>They promote ecologically sustainable and socially ethical agricultural practices and have a direct relationship with customers. Just as the production base is organised, so is the purchasing base. The purchasing system goes from the producer to the consumer.</p>	<p>Locals can buy directly from their producers.</p>
<p>Val di Bella (territory of Camporeale - Palermo - Sicily)</p> <p>Production of cereals, oil, fresh vegetables and fruits</p>	<p>Production of cereals, oil, fresh vegetables and fruit</p>	<p>Networking and mutual aid groups among the farms that are part of the consortium.</p>	<p>The members all belong to the territory.</p>

<p>Fuori Mercato (Italy)</p> <p>Production and distribution of fruit, chocolate, coffee and other products.</p>	<p>It is an alternative distribution network. They have worked in welcoming migrants and are slowly involving and employing them, with particular attention to migrants who come out of hiding.</p>	<p>It is about 20 realities scattered from Lombardy to Sicily, from Puglia to Tuscany. Their strategy is to bring together different types of rural businesses.</p>	<p>They are promoters of a culture of the rural economy in an ethical key. They mainly employ migrants to counter the phenomenon of illegal land hiring. Their impact is not only economic, but also cultural and social.</p>
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