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Manifestations of poverty and health conditions of residents of the urban fringe a field study in the chaotic neighborhood of Borj Al-Senussi and the tin housing at the foot of the Red Mountain 'Amqran' Boukhnfous, In the city of Laghouat, Algeria

Abdelkader Badawi

Sherif Boushousha University, Aflou, Algeria, Lab: Social Empowerment and Sustainable Development in the Desert Environment, Amar Thelidji University, Laghouat, Algeria

Email: a.badaoui@cu-aflou.edu.dz

Zoubir Ben Aoun

Amar Thelidji University, Laghouat, Lab: Social Empowerment and Sustainable Development in the Desert Environment, Amar Thelidji University, Algeria

Email: z.benaoune@lagh-univ.dz

Nawal Taibi

Social Development and Community Service Lab, Hamma Lakhdar University, El Oued, Algeria

Email: taibi-nawal@univ-eloued.dz

Abstract--Through this study, we aim to identify the manifestations of poverty for the inhabitants of the urban margins, who live in a deteriorating housing and urban condition, and in order to come up with realistic results, we used the descriptive approach, and we used scientific observation and interview to collect information from the field from a sample of heads of households, settled in the chaotic neighborhood of Borj Al-Senussi and the tin housing scattered at the foot of the Red Mountain "Amqran" in the Boukhanfous area in the city of Laghouat, and after presenting and analyzing the data, we concluded that these neighborhoods and their residents live in a privileged state of poverty, and this is evident through the fragile nature of the tin housing, suffering from difficult social and economic conditions that led them to spatially isolated from urban and social field.

Keywords--urban poverty, urban marginality, chaotic neighborhood, tin housing.

Introduction

Arab cities, and particularly Algerian ones, have undergone profound changes encompassing political, social, economic, and cultural aspects throughout their historical development. Although Algerian cities have achieved a certain degree of urbanization and embraced urban lifestyles, the process remains incomplete, facing obstacles that impede progress. One such challenge is the multicultural nature of urban society, with variations in the level of urban development among cities.

Challenges of Rapid Urbanization

The swift urbanization in Arab cities, including El Oued, has resulted in housing shortages, leading to increased population density, the proliferation of impoverished neighborhoods, and the formation of poverty belts. Housing crises, intensified by rapid population growth and premature urbanization, have given rise to additional challenges such as transportation issues and the rise of social and environmental problems.

Urbanization in El Oued

El Oued has recently witnessed continuous urbanization, evident in population density, urban planning, construction, and urban expansion through the emergence of new neighborhoods due to migrations and population movements between neighborhoods. The swift urbanization has enabled migrants, primarily from rural and tribal backgrounds, to claim vacant land outside the city for disorganized and unplanned settlements, resulting in inadequate living conditions.

Challenges in Informal Settlements

The study emphasizes the existence of informal settlements, often comprising tin houses, on the city's outskirts. These settlements lack essential services such as roads, water, electricity, parks, and public facilities like schools and mosques. Families residing in these areas encounter economic and social hardships, facing exclusion and marginalization from urban society. The passage concludes by suggesting that the difficult conditions in which these families live in informal settlements warrant a thorough examination of their circumstances through field observations and scientific practices. The author raises questions about the impact of rapid urbanization on these marginalized communities:

- What are the social and health conditions experienced by residents of tin neighborhoods in urban areas?
- What are the main reasons that have driven families to live in such neighborhoods?

- Where do manifestations of poverty appear among the residents of tin neighborhoods, and what are the effects on their health?
- How do local authorities deal with the residents of tin neighborhoods?
- What is the perception of city residents toward those who settle in marginalized urban areas?
- What effective measures can be taken to lift them out of this distressing reality?

Importance of the Study

Our study holds significant importance, derived from the importance of the addressed issue, which is the phenomenon of urban poverty and the health conditions of residents in informal and tin neighborhoods in the city of El Oued. The scientific and knowledge importance of the study lies in the fact that while similar studies have been conducted by various researchers in the West, Arab regions, and Algeria, this particular phenomenon has not been thoroughly investigated in El Oued across various scientific fields. Furthermore, the local authorities and city administrators show minimal concern for this prevalent phenomenon, characterized by the spread of informal settlements and tin housing. Hence, our study aims to examine the reality of these neighborhoods and the living conditions of the residents, shedding light on the repercussions on various aspects of life. The practical importance of the study lies in presenting results and recommendations to understand the reality of poverty and health conditions experienced by those living in tin and informal residential areas. Diagnosing the economic and social situation of the residents in these neighborhoods aims to provide proposals and recommendations to local authorities and city administrators for legal and regulatory interventions.

Study Objectives

Through our study, we aim to achieve several objectives outlined as follows:

- Understand the social and economic reality of the informal neighborhood in Bourj El Sanousi and the tin settlements in the Boukhennfous area.
- Identify the reasons and factors leading to the settlement of residents in such neighborhoods on the urban fringes.
- Explore the manifestations of poverty in the studied neighborhoods in the city of El Oued.
- Understand the social and economic conditions experienced by residents of informal and tin neighborhoods in El Oued.
- Examine the health conditions affecting the families residing in tin settlements.
- Investigate the approaches of local authorities and city administrators in dealing with the residents of these neighborhoods.
- Explore the strategies and measures taken by local authorities and city administrators to address the needs of residents in informal and tin housing areas.

Methodology

Research Approach

We opted for the descriptive approach as our research methodology for gathering and analyzing information and data within the research scope. This approach was employed to illustrate the path and organize ideas. We chose the descriptive approach due to the nature and characteristics of the field, aligning with the exploratory nature of our research.

Data Collection Tools

Observation

Observation involves the direct examination of the phenomenon. It includes witnessing or directly observing social situations, forms of behavior, interaction patterns, and living patterns such as social, cultural, and economic patterns. Since observation is a primary tool for collecting information from the field, our goal is to record the largest possible amount of information and observations. This is achieved through immediate visual recording by noting observations and instant and delayed recording through interviewing residents and capturing photographic and video footage from the research field. The focus is on observing the economic and social conditions of the studied residential neighborhoods, the housing situations, and the economic and social levels within which the residents of these neighborhoods live.

Interviews

We adopted the method of exploratory descriptive interviews, conducted as personal interviews either between the researchers and a single participant, represented by the head of the household, or between the researchers and several participants. The interviews took the form of a dialogue and group discussion, involving open-ended questions posed to the participants, with direct recording of their responses. The interviews were designed to be conversational and friendly rather than a formal interrogation, allowing us to gather a substantial amount of information. Regarding the recording method, we employed verbatim transcription for all statements made by participants during the discussion. Additionally, some interviews were recorded and transcribed later, enabling us to extract information from the audio recordings for analysis and interpretation.

Research Scope

Geographical Scope

The field research was conducted in the city of El Oued (Algeria), which is located about 400 km north of the Algerian capital and situated in the northern part of the Algerian Sahara. The specific focus of the research was on the urban peripheries, particularly the scattered tin houses on the foothills of Mount Amqran in the Boukhenfous area in the northern part of the city. Additionally, the

study included the informal neighborhood of Bir El-Senoussi, located approximately six kilometers north of the city.

Human Scope

Our human scope encompasses the heads of Bedouin families, totaling six individuals. Three of them reside in tin houses in the Boukhenfous area, and three are in the informal neighborhood of Bir El-Senoussi on the outskirts of El Oued. We used purposive sampling, directly targeting the heads of households involved in the study, considering the field research conditions, effort, and time.

Temporal Scope

The field research was conducted during a specific time period. The first stage took place in the last week of September 2023, where we conducted scientific tours in two stations: the first in the tin houses scattered on Mount Amqran in the Boukhenfous area, and the second in the informal neighborhood of Bir El-Senoussi. During this stage, we collected information through scientific observations and conducted interviews with the participants. As for the second stage, it involved writing the research report. This phase started at the end of November and concluded with the final report's completion in the first quarter of December of the same year.

Discussion of Results

Reasons for Settlement in Marginalized Areas Migration

One prominent negative consequence of migration is that a significant sector of the population from various regions migrates due to extreme poverty in their environments. This leads to severe outcomes, as they become a heavy burden on the receiving area, similar to the continuous migration from rural to urban areas in developing countries. These cities often struggle to provide employment or various services for the incoming migrants. In turn, migrants, who are untrained and faced harsh conditions in rural areas, end up living in cities at a low standard, forming a marginalized sector of the population, resulting in numerous social problems. For instance, in cities like Mumbai, India, migrant crowds sleep on the streets, facing starvation, and similar situations are not much different in underdeveloped countries (Abu Ayyana, 1985, p. 200). The study results (Trek, 2017, p. 423) indicated that post-independence, Algerian society witnessed intense rural migration, negatively impacting social, economic, and cultural aspects. It resulted in significant pressure on major cities and the emergence of unplanned neighborhoods on their outskirts. Additionally, it adversely affected the agricultural sector due to the shift of agricultural labor to cities.

According to sociological practices and observations in the study area, one of the reasons for settling in the tin houses in the city of El Oued is firstly because the majority, if not all, of the families settled in these areas have rural and Bedouin origins. In the past, they used to reside in the outskirts of the city and in nearby states. Secondly, these families continue to endure extremely poor economic and

social conditions, stemming from the persistent poverty they live under. Furthermore, during the black decade of the 1990s, the prevailing insecurity compelled them to settle in the city. However, they found it challenging to adapt to the urban lifestyle, leading them to settle in marginalized neighborhoods and tin houses.

Economic Factor

It can be observed that there is a relationship between migration, industry, and the proliferation of underdeveloped neighborhoods in cities. Each factor is interlinked, meaning that the industry induces a desire for migration to industrial areas, and migration, in turn, imposes the creation of underdeveloped neighborhoods. These neighborhoods, in turn, reflect other social problems and conditions that result from the social factors and characteristics they possess.

In our field reality, it is evident that residents of tin houses used to live in rural and desert areas, engaging in subsistence farming and livestock breeding for trade and consumption. Upon settling in the city in tin houses, family heads started working in simple jobs, such as waste collection establishments, and in contracting institutions as builders or assistant builders. Additionally, younger family members and teenagers began working in various jobs like collecting stale bread and gathering scrap metals such as iron and copper for resale to recycling companies.

Housing Factor

Housing is considered one of the basic needs of humans, playing a crucial role in determining the type of life and providing various facilities that add comfort, safety, and security to home life. Inadequate housing burdens individuals, affecting both personal and social life. The lack of suitable housing hinders many important aspects of life, causing problems such as resorting to inappropriate places.

The issue of housing crisis and its impact on the emergence of underdeveloped neighborhoods is primarily an economic issue, resulting from a combination of economic factors such as the high costs of location, construction, and rising rental prices. It is also related to income issues, creating a mismatch between housing and economic levels, leading to various problems, especially in developing countries.

Moreover, the increase in migration rates from rural to urban areas, along with intensified struggles for settlement and construction operations and the authorities' inability to meet housing demands, all contribute to housing crises and urban consequences. These factors contribute to the creation of underdeveloped areas that lack essential services such as roads, water, sewage, electricity, parks, and more. These neighborhoods become a burden on the city and its facilities, leading to a deterioration in the service level for both original city residents and newcomers alike.

In our field reality, the majority of families residing in tin houses and chaotic neighborhoods were compelled by necessity to settle in these areas. This is attributed to various reasons, including poverty and the low economic status of family members, preventing them from buying or renting decent housing. Additionally, the poor adaptation and social integration in urban housing with city dwellers lead them to live in areas designated for migrants from the same tribe, fostering solidarity and partial integration into urban social life.

Furthermore, these families choose to settle in tin houses with the intention of benefiting from social housing provided by the government. After benefiting, they may choose to rent, sell, or lease their tin houses to new families arriving in the city.

Social Factor

Marginalized neighborhoods are areas where migrants who have failed to adapt to urban culture live. These residents are socially excluded and marginalized from both social and urban life. Such areas are often referred to as urban jungles, suggesting a sense of desolation, savagery, and aggression (Boudraa, n.d., p. 48). These underdeveloped areas arise due to their urban, economic, and social isolation from the city, making them anomalous urban units that perpetuate underdevelopment. This deviation negatively affects the urban character of the city's other neighborhoods, distorting its urban image.

Our field reality indicates that families residing in tin houses and marginalized neighborhoods have not deeply immersed themselves within the city, interacted with city residents, or engaged with government institutions. Necessity compelled them to settle in these areas, deliberately remaining isolated spatially. Gradually, they begin to adapt and partially integrate socially, urbanistically, and culturally into the city's environment. It is noteworthy that many residents in these marginalized neighborhoods share tribal and clan affiliations, intentionally gathering there for mutual integration, cooperation, and collaborative living in the city.

Housing Conditions in Marginalized Urban Areas

"Adel Azar" and "Truth Isaac" define marginalized neighborhoods as: "A lowly situation within a social hierarchy system that results in the entrapment of a social class, isolating it entirely or partially, through control or harnessing and imposing social, economic, and political obstacles, such as depriving marginalized groups of their rights" (Touhami, 2004, p. 23).

These neighborhoods are typically found on the outskirts of cities, where individuals and groups build informal and illegal dwellings without any official planning or construction permits. These dwellings are often chaotic, with narrow, intertwining streets and closely packed houses. Individuals obtain these lands by purchasing them from private owners or through occupation and seizure of lands, often agricultural lands. The housing patterns in these informal residential areas vary, including tin houses, brick-built fragile dwellings, and chaotic improvised housing.

Most of these dwellings are not constructed with suitable building materials but rather serve as makeshift residences consisting of shacks or clusters of huts and tin houses constructed using materials such as corrugated iron, sheet metal, cardboard, wood, and tin. These areas predominantly house poor migrants who moved from rural to urban areas without adequate skills or guaranteed employment opportunities to sustain life in cities. As they cannot afford the rents in formal residential areas, they seize any available empty space in the city, whether in the city center or its outskirts, to establish their makeshift dwellings (Rachwan, 2005, p. 100).

Residents in these areas often face poverty and lack proper housing conditions. These neighborhoods lack public facilities and government services such as water, electricity, sewage systems, and residents resort to bringing water from neighboring homes or mosques. The use of kerosene, theft of electricity, or requesting wires from nearby power lines for any nearby building is common due to the absence of formal infrastructure. The marginalized neighborhoods reflect a deteriorated social, economic, and physical reality, representing a deviant urban model compared to the rest of the city's neighborhoods (Al-Sayed, 2011, p. 235).

Observations show that these marginalized neighborhoods often harbor overcrowding, neglect, social and health diseases, and deviant behaviors. They tend to accommodate the poor, newcomers to the city, unemployed individuals, or youth for limited periods. These neighborhoods can also result from local and international conflicts, persecution, wars, crises, and economic downturns, forming refugee neighborhoods. Poverty is considered the main source where all social crises converge, and neighborhoods of poverty and destitution are widespread in many Arab cities, facing social challenges and exacerbating the problem of poverty. Future expectations suggest that poor and irregular housing will constitute more than a third of the new housing units in most Arab cities, exceeding half in many, such as Cairo, Damascus, Tunis, and Casablanca. These neighborhoods are characterized by high population density, with more than a third of the total population residing in them in the majority of Arab cities (Faour, 2004, p. 139).

Analytical findings indicate that these types of neighborhoods are distributed unevenly in major Arab cities, mainly accommodating the poor and new city residents. Our field investigations in Algeria reveal that the government attempts to eliminate the spread of tin houses in all cities, especially the large ones, by offering social rental housing in the form of apartments in buildings. However, several factors hinder achieving justice and equality in the distribution of these houses to deserving individuals, including residents' strategies to benefit from state-provided social housing, bureaucratic practices, favoritism in land and housing distribution, citizens' unwillingness to comply, and the personal choices of individuals or families who prefer cheap living conditions and a life of humiliation (Ismail, 1994, p. 231).

Sociological observations indicate that marginalized neighborhoods in the city of El Oued can be classified into two types. The first is the chaotic neighborhood of Birk Al-Sennousi, mainly inhabited by migrants from rural areas and neighboring provinces. They initially seized private and state-owned lands and began

constructing simple houses with materials such as bricks and tin. Over time, these residents upgraded their houses using modern construction materials, forming a chaotic residential area with around four hundred improvised homes. Due to population pressure, authorities provided residents with essential services such as water, electricity, gas, educational and religious institutions. The second type is the scattered tin houses on the slopes of Mount Amqran in the Boukhnfouss area. These tin houses were built in the 1990s by migrants who faced miserable conditions of poverty and deprivation. These residents have low living standards, and local authorities show minimal interest in addressing the various aspects of their living conditions (Field Observations).

In conclusion, these marginalized neighborhoods reflect a dire socio-economic reality. The poor living conditions, lack of infrastructure, and the improvised nature of these areas contribute to the perpetuation of social and economic challenges for their residents. The attempts by governments to address this issue face obstacles related to bureaucratic practices, corruption, and the complex socio-economic backgrounds of the residents. Achieving meaningful change in these neighborhoods requires comprehensive strategies that address both the immediate living conditions and the underlying socio-economic factors that contribute to their formation and persistence.

Urban Poverty in Marginalized Neighborhoods

The culture of poverty is a way of life passed down from one generation to another through family, encompassing various social, economic, and psychological characteristics. In a capitalist society, the culture of poverty is an adaptive process and a reaction to the marginalization of the poor in the class hierarchy. It manifests itself when there is a shift in the social system, leading to a breakdown in the social and economic hierarchy. Those constantly exposed to the culture of poverty are typically the lower class in urban society, residing in marginalized urban areas. Oscar Lewis defined the concept of the culture of poverty, stating that it is "a way of life passed down from one generation to another through socialization processes, and getting rid of the culture of poverty requires placing the generation under family conditions that are completely different from the conditions they live in" (Al-Juhari, 1980, p. 478).

To analyze the phenomenon of poverty in urban societies, there is a long history in urban studies, with poverty being one of the issues that researchers extensively debated regarding urban life and the impact of rapid urbanization. Researchers like Booth and Rowntree conducted studies on poverty in urban cities in Britain. They connected poverty to income levels, occupations, housing nature, and overcrowding. Their research concluded that the causes of poverty are largely individual rather than structural. Thus, they required individual solutions that the government needed to implement, necessitating improvements in living conditions and increasing income levels for those who are most impoverished. Poverty was not seen as structurally determined but rather as an outcome of individual circumstances (Booth & Rowntree, UK, Research Results).

The urban poor, residing in marginalized neighborhoods, are individuals, families, and communities entrenched in the culture of poverty. For instance, researchers

like Thornstein argued that individuals and families experiencing poverty lack the means to access types of food, participate in activities, live in certain conditions, and have comforts that are familiar or at least socially acceptable. Their resources fall dangerously below those available to ordinary individuals and families because they are, in reality, deprived of ordinary lifestyles, habits, and daily activities (Thornstein, 2009, p. 170).

There is a tendency to attribute the causes of poverty more to individual failures than structural deficiencies (governmental). Some argue that there is a tendency to blame individual failures more than structural (governmental) deficiencies as a cause of poverty. Thornstein, for example, suggested that there is an inclination to attribute the causes of poverty more to individual failures than to structural (governmental) deficiencies, such as deficiencies in the economic activities that constitute the economy (Thornstein, 2009, p. 170).

In conclusion, the culture of poverty is a complex phenomenon deeply ingrained in marginalized urban neighborhoods. It reflects the socio-economic conditions of the lower class, shaped by historical and systemic factors. Addressing urban poverty requires a multifaceted approach that considers both individual circumstances and systemic issues, aiming to break the cycle of poverty through comprehensive social and economic interventions:

- Poverty is a result of productive and distributive relationships among groups of people, meaning there are positive correlations between poverty and lacking income and assets necessary to obtain basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, acceptable levels of health, and education.
- The poor feel the severity of their deprivation in their inability to have their voices heard, their vulnerability to exploitation, and inhumane treatment, and their suffering. Women are deprived of their social and civil rights, and children suffer from life's hardships and face numerous risks such as inadequate nutrition, healthcare, and education. The severity of poverty is heightened among large families, with increasing rates of expenditure and unemployment, as well as overcrowding, unhealthy living conditions, and a decline in the quality of life. This means that poverty intensifies with the addition of each family member.
- The phenomenon of poverty takes varied forms, ranging from extreme poverty and destitution to families relying on leftovers and aid, not to mention the prevalence of legitimate and illegitimate urban activities such as begging.
- Urban populations lack health-related values and personal care, and even nutritional offerings. However, malnutrition plays a fundamental role in the occurrence of poverty-related diseases, along with the spread, consequences, and repercussions of unemployment, homelessness, prostitution, crime, and school dropout.
- The urban phenomenon of poverty is associated with a low standard of living, population density, the absence of health facilities, poor housing conditions, and an unsuitable living environment, leading to the spread of corruption and aggressive behaviors.

The results of (Maqawsi, 2008) align with the findings of many Arab studies in the field of urban poverty culture. The study by (Al-Farsi, 2001, p. 22) indicated a correlation between poverty, family size, and the likelihood of poverty in larger families more than in smaller ones. This is because the dependency rates increase more in larger families due to the higher number of family members. Similarly, the study by (Qira and others, 2003) emphasized that marginal areas are characterized by poverty, increased family size, frustration, and deprivation.

The results also resonated with "Hala Mustafa Al-Sayed Yehia," who found that informal settlements overcrowded with inhabitants suffer from poverty and a low standard of living. In a similar context, (Firaj, 1998) concluded that informal areas in Cairo and Giza are characterized by population density. This result was further confirmed by the study of (Al-Farsi, 2001, p. 36) on poverty and income distribution in the Arab world, which found a strong relationship between education rates and poverty. The data showed that poverty and unemployment increase among the illiterate.

Generally, the manifestations of poverty in Algerian urban areas are numerous and stem from the effects of the structural adjustment policy witnessed by the Algerian economy. This policy aimed to create new urban poverty pockets characterized by misery, marginalization, and social and economic deprivation. This led to the emergence of various aspects of poverty, including the spread of scavenging, various forms of begging, deterioration of the ecological appearance of the city due to the proliferation of shantytowns, exacerbation of divorce and family disintegration, practice of marginal urban activities (street vendors, porters), increase in social deviances, and the spread of infectious diseases due to poverty.

Despite the Algerian government's efforts, policies, and resources invested in achieving comprehensive development to enhance the social welfare of citizens in various social categories and eliminate the manifestations of poverty and marginalization, the practical field differs from the theoretical realm. Despite all the efforts, the researcher observed that these indicators did not positively impact the socio-economic and living standards. The statistical focus on gross domestic product (GDP) does not reflect the positive effects that this development provides in terms of education, health, employment, housing, and other developmental goals related to reducing poverty and improving purchasing power and equitable wealth distribution.

The field observations conducted in the neighborhoods of Borg El-Sennousi and Boukhenfouf revealed a significant decline in the living standards of the residents. Many of them are in need of housing, and some have settled in the tin-plated neighborhoods to receive land relinquished by local authorities. However, not everyone in these neighborhoods is poor or in need; some live ordinary lives like any Algerian citizen, and some even have a better economic status than urban residents. The difficult living conditions in rural areas and the desire for a better life, along with insecurity and instability, drove them to migrate.

Despite the challenging living conditions, there is a sense of joy and happiness among the residents. They believe in fate and accept the difficulties they face,

relying on unity and solidarity within their community to withstand poverty, marginalization, and exclusion. The exclusion they feel is from the social organization imposed by local authorities rather than from urban residents. They assert their right to live a comfortable life and enjoy social well-being as Algerian citizens.

Housing is a crucial factor in ensuring stability and social life. Governments aim to address housing issues by providing various types of housing, including social, cooperative, upgrading, and justice housing. However, the problem extends beyond migrants to affect urban residents facing housing challenges. Many urban families, consisting of seven to ten members, live in deteriorating apartments, warehouses, and houses on the verge of collapse. Thus, addressing the housing problem requires a broader perspective that considers the living conditions of Algerian citizens in general.

The living conditions of urban poor in underdeveloped neighborhoods

are characterized by inadequate housing that is unsuitable for human habitation. These areas are crowded with buildings, some of which are old and in need of renovation, while others require demolition and reconstruction due to their pyramid-like and outdated appearance. Despite the risk of collapse during natural disasters such as hurricanes or earthquakes, individuals still inhabit these precarious dwellings, exposing themselves to danger.

These neighborhoods exhibit overcrowding not only in terms of buildings but also within their interiors. There is a lack of essential amenities, and the housing conditions are far from suitable. The dwellings lack natural ventilation methods like wide windows and individual bathrooms for each household. Additionally, there is a shortage or absence of bathrooms, poor heating, and lighting conditions. Residents often share one bathroom and one kitchen, separated by curtains and narrow corridors.

Researchers have noted the impact of living conditions on the withdrawal of some individuals from their communities, leading to addiction and the adoption of non-urban behaviors. The characteristics of the place influence the well-being of its residents, making them feel restricted and lacking freedom. Consequently, many residents express their dissatisfaction through various non-urban behaviors (Al-Kurdi, 1987, p. 03).

As for the underdeveloped and marginalized neighborhoods in the city of El Oued, they are represented by the chaotic neighborhood in the semi-urban center of Borg El-Senousi. In this area, one can observe informal and unregulated constructions established by migrants on state and private lands. These neighborhoods are illegal and lack organization. There are no paved roads, sidewalks, or public lighting except in some parts of the neighborhood that have existed for a long time and have imposed themselves on government authorities.

Regarding the housing style, the dwellings are constructed from brick and stone, often dilapidated, and not built according to standard construction, safety, and security measures. The houses typically consist of two to three rooms and

accommodate one to two families in a single household. Additionally, there are tin houses in this neighborhood and in the Boukhenfous area. These tin houses are old, built since the 1990s, and constructed from tin, stones, and simple building materials like straw and iron. These tin houses lack the essential amenities for comfortable living.

These neighborhoods are characterized by a lack of cleanliness, and this often has a negative impact on the health and safety of the residents. This includes improper disposal of garbage and dirt, neglecting proper waste disposal methods, and the unsanitary conditions of sewage channels. The sewage channels are shared among residents and are rarely cleaned, despite families using the same watercourse. This lack of concern for cleanliness poses a serious threat to the residents' health, making them susceptible to dangerous and infectious diseases. This observation is evident in both the Borg El-Senousi neighborhood and the Boukhenfous area, where garbage, dirt, scattered stones, and construction debris are prevalent, creating a squalid environment that reflects the harsh reality experienced by the residents of these neighborhoods.

In these neighborhoods, street lighting and traffic signals are often absent, and there is a lack of organization in the electrical wiring, posing a danger to residents and the general public. Additionally, there is a shortage of recreational areas, playgrounds, and gardens. The building system and road distribution lack order, with crowded residential buildings that are not structurally robust due to the use of simple construction materials. This makes them vulnerable to rain and even minor earthquakes, making the structures deteriorated and prone to collapse, putting residents at significant risk.

The Borg El-Senousi neighborhood, despite its small size compared to other city neighborhoods, exhibits both organized and chaotic aspects. The lack of urban planning and development is notable because it is an illegal settlement. Consequently, public lighting is nearly nonexistent, and even if there are electrical poles, residents of these areas do not pay much attention to them and may even damage them. As for the tin houses, they are scattered under the "Amqran," beyond the scope of urban coverage, and residents often draw power cables from neighboring urban areas. Urban planning is lacking in this area as it is considered housing outside the city.

Underdeveloped neighborhoods are characterized by persistent deficiencies in social, health, and various services. There is often a noticeable lack of essential facilities provided by social, administrative, educational, health, recreational, and even religious institutions, which are typically insufficient. This, in turn, signifies a deficiency in social and cultural quality. The factor of communication and transportation plays a role, as services are somewhat distant from these areas, hindering access to a decent living. This is evident in the chaotic neighborhood of Borg El-Senousy. Despite the presence of schools, a post office, and a mosque, there is a shortage of other public institutions that residents could benefit from. Consequently, they have to commute daily to the city center to meet their daily needs. As for the tin houses in the Boukhannoufous area, they lack all the necessities of life.

The most prevalent phenomenon in these neighborhoods is poverty, undoubtedly one of the main reasons compelling individuals to reside in them and preventing them from changing their place of residence. In this context, urban sociologists and urban anthropologists have extensively analyzed the social and cultural conditions of the city in general and its underdeveloped neighborhoods in particular. Most of these analyses concluded that the underdeveloped neighborhood is characterized by a distinct culture primarily linked to the quality of its inhabitants.

From a material perspective, the living conditions of its residents are deteriorating, with a decrease in individuals' income levels. The manifestations of poverty in the studied neighborhoods in El Oued are evident both visibly and in the living conditions. Economically, most residents engage in simple jobs, earning meager wages that are insufficient to support their families. Consequently, some families resort to begging and seek assistance from charitable organizations and social activity foundations to provide a livelihood for their family members. Among the aspects of poverty in these neighborhoods are:

- High unemployment rates.
- Deterioration of public health and the spread of diseases.

Many researchers consider poverty as an indicator of the prevalence of underdeveloped areas since residents in these areas often suffer from low income, leading to a deterioration in their living conditions. Additionally, crime, deviant behavior, and other characteristics indicate that these underdeveloped areas are fertile grounds for the spread of psychological, health, and social issues that affect individuals, families, and communities.

Through direct observation of the studied neighborhoods, it becomes evident that the living conditions, especially for those residing in fragile tin houses, are associated with various health problems. Residents suffer from diseases like allergies, asthma, and infections caused by non-potable mineral water stored in rusty tanks. Moreover, the lack of public health exposes residents to physical ailments resulting from continuous work or poor housing conditions.

Furthermore, these neighborhoods witness the prevalence of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, psychological stress, social isolation, nervous breakdowns, and mental disorders. Individuals experience a sense of psychological and social alienation, social exclusion, rejection, and spatial and social isolation. They feel lost and disconnected, lacking a sense of belonging to the city, where values, trends, attitudes, and perceptions collide, leading to the breakdown of neighborhood ties and the emergence of various social crises.

Among the social issues, there is a rise in drug abuse and addiction among the youth, as well as an increase in urban crime. Socially, manifestations include theft, deviance, begging, homelessness, increased cases of mental and social breakdowns, marital tensions, high divorce rates, and a sense of non-adaptation and integration with the rest of the city's residents, resulting in social exclusion. In the same context, a study (Ben Aoun et al., 2020, p. 207) highlighted that despite the presence of social control institutions, including security institutions

that oversee the safety of individuals and properties, and combat crime and deviance in the urban community of El Oued, negative behaviors persist in the city's neighborhoods. There is evidence of negligence and the existence of cases of non-standard, non-ethical behavior prevailing among the youth in the urban society.

Conclusion

We have come to understand that urban poverty is a harsh reality present in most, if not all, countries worldwide, whether advanced, developing, or on the path of growth or underdevelopment. It is prominently evident in marginalized neighborhoods, impoverished areas, and particularly in underdeveloped countries lacking in development and attention to this segment by integrating them into urban life. Algeria has many marginalized neighborhoods, often located on the outskirts and suburbs of cities, where residents lead difficult lives amid extremely challenging economic, social, and cultural conditions. They suffer from social exclusion, marginalization, rejection, and exclusion, whether by governments or urban residents.

The Algerian government adopts a national strategy to eradicate urban poverty, especially in tin neighborhoods across the country. However, the rapid and widespread nature of this phenomenon poses a significant challenge for authorities to control, despite efforts such as relocation to suitable housing, urban development for these neighborhoods, and their integration into the urban system. However, there are obstacles facing the government in eliminating this urban phenomenon, such as encroachments on these marginalized neighborhoods and manipulative strategies adopted by most residents to benefit from social housing, despite the economic well-being of some families appearing to be impoverished.

The city of El Oued witnesses this phenomenon to a lesser extent compared to larger cities. Still, it is notable in chaotic neighborhoods like Borg El-Senusi, inhabited by migrants with rural and urban origins, where they illegally own fragile housing. Notably, the focus is on these tin houses scattered around Mount Amqran in the Boukhonfous area, facing marginalization, poverty, rejection, and social exclusion from authorities and urban residents. Regardless of tribal tendencies, regionalism, and racism, and bringing a humanitarian perspective, we propose a set of recommendations for the authorities to address this category and the socially impoverished segment in the urban community:

- Conduct a socio-economic study on the living conditions of these families, approaching their situation with compassion and sympathy rather than neglect and exclusion.
- Examine the living conditions of marginalized families by relevant authorities to understand their lifestyle, whether their challenges are genuine and warrant attention or fabricated, justifying their situation and possible relocation to their original areas if financially secure.
- Prioritize the well-being of these families by either relocating them to decent social housing or improving their living and housing standards.

- Seek to integrate family members into social, economic, and political life in the city, providing assistance by offering job opportunities, enrolling their children in educational institutions, and providing financial and moral support.
- Assist families in adapting to and organizing life in the city by involving them in government institutions, utilizing social security benefits, and providing privileges from municipal authorities and financial aid from charitable associations and relevant departments.

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