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***The Role of Local Broadcast Media in Achieving Sustainable  
Development:  
The Algerian Broadcast as a Model***

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**Abstract:**

The topic discussed revolves around the role of local broadcast media in sustainable development. The paper presents a conceptual approach to the main used key terms, which allows a good theoretical understanding, and their practical applications in the field. It also explores the dimensions and objectives of development, the historical evolution of local broadcast media in Algeria, their functions and developmental roles, especially in issues related to the extent of its contribution to sustainable development. This is achieved through an exploratory analytical approach to determine the relationship between local media, or what is known as "**Community media**," and its role in achieving development.

**Keywords:** *broadcast ; community media ; local community ; development ; sustainable development.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Broadcast media play a crucial role as a mass communication medium in all fields, given their features that enable them to perform informational, educational, and awareness roles. Since their inception in the mid-twentieth century until today, they have undergone several developments in their technical and artistic aspects, both quantitative and qualitative, to adapt to their assigned tasks in the continuous evolution of modern information and communication technologies. They strongly contribute to broadcasting and analyzing news, participating in the international, national, and local information and communication processes.

In Algeria, broadcast media have witnessed significant progress since independence, aligning with the developments in the Algerian state and society at all levels. They have been and continue to be present in supporting public authorities and citizens in national and local development, symbolizing this commitment through being democratized across all the nation's provinces (wilayas); that was, especially in the last two decades through regional and local community broadcast media. In addition to their traditional main tasks and functions, they have shown interest in local affairs, citizens' lives, their relationship with local authorities and decentralized institutions, as well as their daily activities and concerns, becoming an effective intermediary between the actors of local community.

Building on the aforementioned, this study aims to shed light on the role of broadcast media - specifically the audible medium - and its contribution to achieving sustainable development, through attributing a significant attention to this topic within the framework of the strategy adopted by the national broadcast media, especially considering the environmental and ecological repercussions, amidst future challenges and prospects. To achieve the desired goal, the study adopts a survey method with an analytical and prospective approach aiming to understand the extent to which national broadcast media, through their local branches, contribute to sustainable development? and the specific role played by the audible broadcast media in local sustainable development?

There are various concepts of broadcast media, including their organized continuous or intermittent broadcast through receiving devices by the public or audience, constituted of individuals or groups, which aims to inform, educate, raise awareness, and entertain.

The British Encyclopedia defines broadcast as organized spreading or broadcasting for entertainment, information, education, etc., simultaneously received by a direct audience using suitable receiving devices (**Khelifa , 2006**).

Radio broadcast, as a medium, transmits voices wirelessly by converting them into electrical waves through broadcast stations, to be listened to using receiving devices. It regulates diverse programs that cater to various segments of society (**Ahmed Zaki, 1985**).

### 1.2. Definition of Community Media:

Several definitions exist, but they generally agree that community media are associated with the local community. Audible broadcast seeks to respond to the concerns, interests, and service needs of the local community, influencing it in the process, in addition to considering local broadcast media or local, regional or territorial radio station the most

important local communication stream, which has a significant effect on local community, especially in the developmental aspects.

in this context, Algerian local broadcast media are considered an intermediary or a sub-medium affiliated with the National Broadcast Institution, known as regional or local radios. These radios are spread across the country; each of them covers a province or many provinces. They are public institutions with general programs focusing on all the issues related to all what concerns the geographical areas covered by that radio, addressing all aspects of life relevant to the residents of that area. Their objectives include breaking isolation by providing various services, addressing citizen concerns, and serving as an intermediary between local administration, with all its institutions, and the citizens who constitute the center of any local policy, through their involvement so that they contribute to various developmental activities relevant to them. "To reach their audience, local broadcast media take several forms in the communication processes, such as acting, radio reportages and using sound and music effects to prepare the audience to receive the information messages, accepting ideas and be convinced of them (**Mohammed Mounir, 2002**). It is evident that this type of local media is closely linked to the concept of the local community.

### **1.3. Local Community:**

It is a community with a limited number of residents living in a specific administrative or geographical area, which could be a village, a group of villages, a municipality, or a province. It distinguishes itself from other communities by its characteristics and activities, predominantly in the economic and social fields, as well as other areas. The local community has components and dimensions related to geographical boundaries, demographic characteristics, and population features. Its members share mutual relationships and social systems, interacting with each other, feeling loyalty, and a sense of belonging to the community.

### **1.4. Development:**

The concept of development encompasses various backgrounds and dimensions, making it challenging to have a comprehensive definition that provides a complete understanding of development. "It is all the result of human efforts to transform natural elements in the environment into resources, meaning goods and services that meet people's needs. This transformation depends on human effort, scientific knowledge, tools, and the employed technological means, as well as the utilization of available resources" (**Mohammed Abdelaziz and Iman, 2003**).

Development is one of the tools and methods to uplift humanity, serving as a means to utilize environmental resources for the benefit of society, individuals, and the environment itself. It involves consecutive actions and processes undertaken by society to manage and control the paths of change with the aim of satisfying its needs and transitioning from a stage of underdevelopment to a stage of progress.

Development is a multidimensional historical transformation process that touches upon all structures and fields. It seeks to achieve goals in various aspects of life (**economic,**

social, cultural, political, etc.) and is closely related to improving the quality of life. It facilitates and increases people's general participation in decision-making processes, as well as their active contribution to the implementation, construction, and development.

### 1.5. Sustainable Development:

The concept of development has evolved historically, starting from economic development and growth, passing through comprehensive development, and culminating in sustainable development. Sustainable development is concerned with all economic, social, and environmental aspects, as well as other variables, all interwoven at the same level. It is defined by Koji Taira as "the development that harmonizes environmental, social, and economic aspects, creating an effective economic cycle, social equity, and environmental feasibility. It is the development that respects natural resources and ecosystems, supports life on Earth, and ensures economic aspects without sacrificing social goals" (Suleiman and Ourida, 2009).

## 2. Dimensions and Objectives of Sustainable Development:

### 2.1. Dimensions of Sustainable Development:

The concept of sustainable development encompasses several intertwined dimensions that integrate with each other, including political, economic, social, environmental, technological, and institutional dimensions. Additionally, there are other dimensions that operate in harmony to manage resources towards the desired horizon, including:

- **The Political Dimension:** Sustainable development requires a clear and coherent political framework that allows participation through elected, political, or administrative institutions in building visions and proposing projects serving agreed-upon horizons.
- **The Economic Dimension:** It calls for considering all variables, material, financial, and available resources in successful ways to employ them in the service of sustainable development goals.
- **The Social Dimension:** Efficient management of the social system is a fundamental pillar in mobilizing social factors to eliminate poverty, unemployment, and manifestations of underdevelopment. This is achieved through effective management of human resources and optimal control of variables related to social issues, creating conditions that allow responding to evolving needs and desires.
- **The Environmental Dimension:** Environmental resource conservation has become essential due to ecological changes. It primarily involves protecting everything related to natural resources and efficiently utilizing them. In addition to these fundamental dimensions, there are other dimensions that are equally important, such as institutional, technical-administrative, and cultural and civilizational dimensions. Understanding them, being aware of their consequences, and effectively utilizing them create a positive dynamic for achieving sustainable development. Therefore, development is a blend of various economic, social, and political processes with multiple aspects and dimensions. It is a purposeful, conscious, and evolving human process (Ali Falah et al., 2015).

### 2.2. Sustainable Development Goals:

Development is a strategy or plans to achieve a sustainable future for everyone, combating and eliminating poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, and climate issues. It encompasses all goals and aspirations of sustainable development, summarized as follows:

1. Work towards eradicating poverty in all its forms.
2. Provide quality and comprehensive education and training for all.
3. Ensure food security, promote sustainable agriculture, and provide all necessities for life and development, including water and energy security, infrastructure, by improving patterns of production and consumption to achieve healthy growth, a decent standard of living, and well-being for all.
4. Effectively implement various projects and stimulate interactive initiatives to give momentum to sustainable development.

### **3. Historical Development of Broadcast Media in Algeria:**

Broadcast media emerged in Algeria during the French colonization in 1925 and experienced development in service of its interests and goals. It gained popularity among Algerians only after it started broadcasting programs in Arabic in 1943 and in the Kabyle language in 1984, attempting to reach a larger audience to support its colonial project.

Immediately after obtaining independence in 1962, Algeria achieved national sovereignty over broadcast and television on **October 28<sup>th</sup>**, thanks to dedicated professionals who faced technical, artistic, and media challenges to provide news and programs serving construction and development, aligning with aspirations and desired progress.

After the crisis Algeria faced in the early 1990s, the authorities seriously considered establishing local broadcast stations to communicate with citizens due to the shortcomings of other channels in achieving development goals and implementing economic, political, social, and cultural programs. This aimed to achieve broadcast coverage across all Algerian regions, recognizing that national programs had a limited impact on the listening habits of residents in those areas, as broadcast is distinguished by its ability to provide public service quickly, flexibly, with minimal effort and costs. In the context of implementing the broadcast expansion project aimed at securing, connecting, and communicating with the public nationwide, it serves local or regional public communication, also known as "community media." Thus, in **1991**, four local and thematic broadcast stations were established. Regional broadcast stations were launched in **1975** in Oran and Constantine, followed by Bechar and Ouargla in **1988**.

**The Executive Decree No. 91/103, of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1991**, outlined the principles and guidelines that broadcast must follow to be a means of dialogue and development for building a cohesive democratic society.

The first broadcast stations include:

- Saoura Radio (Bechar) in April 1991, covering Bechar, Naama, Adrar, and Tindouf;

Metidja Radio (Algiers) in May 1991, covering Algiers, Blida, Tipaza, and Boumerdes;

El WahatRadio(Ouargla) in May 1991, covering Touggourt, Hassi Messaoud, Illizi, El Oued, El M'Ghair, Ain Amenas, and the southern part of Ghardaia.

Souhoub Radio (Laghouat) in November 1991, covering El Oued, Ghardaia, Tiaret, Biskra, Ouargla, and parts of Bejaia (**Khelifa, 2006**).

The development and expansion process proceeded at a slow pace until the higher authorities approved, in 2009, the launch of what was initially called **regional broadcast stations**, now bearing cultural and civilizational connotations. As a homogenizing factor that enhances effective cohesion, each province has a local broadcast station that focuses on local issues in a significant part of its programs, aligning with national strategies in broadcast broadcasting.

After two decades, local broadcast stations have achieved much in conveying the media message and creating a local audience interested in its issues and development matters. However, there is a need for scientific studies from different perspectives to determine the extent of the contribution of local media to listening, following, and interacting with various programs, and its reflection on the daily lives of the local community, groups, and individuals, expressing their concerns and aspirations.

#### **4. Roles and Roles of Local Broadcast:**

There are numerous roles and functions within the scope of interests of audible broadcast work, and we can mention some of them, which it can perform and include the following:

1. Informing citizens about local news across various areas relevant to them, allowing them to stay informed about matters affecting their environment.
2. Disseminating awareness among the public for positive participation in community development, encouraging individual and collective initiatives, and monitoring their progress.
3. Addressing the diverse and evolving needs of citizens and discussing local issues with stakeholders to find appropriate solutions.
4. Highlighting the characteristics of the region and effecting change in negative or external habits hindering societal progress.
5. Opening up dialogue and exchange, promoting local and regional efforts to support the development process, while strengthening the bond between the local and national community.

Broadcast media, as we presented them, with their limited scope, reflect the cultural reality of the local community. they work to achieve interaction and positive participation, aiming to serve their needs and aspirations. Broadcast media play a crucial role in changing people's attitudes, creating relationships between them and their surroundings in terms of ideas, resources, and technologies. they can introduce new concepts into behavior, habits, and traditions to establish innovative patterns in individual or collective work. All of this is achieved through the content and media messages they broadcast, taking various forms tailored to the subject and intended audience, with the goal of making a necessary impact on developmental issues within the framework of roles and objectives aimed at positive participation, promoting sustainable development.

The functions of broadcast can be summarized into the news and informational function, education and awareness function, social reform function, entertainment function, and the developmental function (**Fadil,2013**). In addition to monitoring the environment, seeking information, facilitating social interaction, fostering community cohesion, shaping opinions and attitudes, advertising, promotion, and spreading awareness for a proper understanding of reality within the framework of an **information strategy based on planning for developmental awareness**.

### **5. Developmental Roles of Local Broadcast Media (Community Media):**

Developmental processes primarily rely on media in general and broadcast media in particular, due to their widespread reach and broad audience, in addition to their power and positive effect on receivers. The media, particularly local broadcast, have extensive and varied tasks related to supporting development efforts. Moreover, the impacts of using local radio, or expanding its use through various methods and approaches, were not insignificant. It has become indispensable in development efforts and in the societal life of individuals or groups in various dimensions locally. Its roles have become a prerequisite for participating in development choices and activities, considering it an essential part to support change and development.

Building on what has been mentioned, there is a close relationship between broadcast and development. Developmental media is a comprehensive, purposeful, and multidimensional programming characterized by realism (**Abderrazzak, 2015**). It serves the fundamental role of providing citizens with accurate information about all topics related to their lives, guiding public opinion to contribute to building society according to development plans that involve everyone. It also aims to sincerely and objectively express the opinions, visions, desires, and aspirations of citizens. It is one of the most prominent supporters of national and local development plans, contributing to clarifying the overall picture of life in society, highlighting its problems, proposing ways to address them, and expressing prevailing trends among individuals and in official circles alike.

Local media performs a range of roles and functions, among the most important are:

1. Conveying important news and information to the audience, enabling them to make informed decisions.
2. Effectively acting as an intermediary between citizens and local authorities to discuss issues and address problems affecting the local community, aiming to find tangible solutions that eliminate obstacles to development.
3. Disseminating insightful awareness across all levels to enhance the capabilities of all segments of the local community.
4. Promoting all cultural forms and unique characteristics of the local community.

### **6. The Role of Local Broadcast Media in Sustainable Development Issues:**

There is a close connection between media and development through media messages, components, and functions that media and communication engage in. These

activities fall within their duties as part of the **public service**, especially given the current conditions and various challenges in different fields. This necessitates the preparation of clear strategies and plans, effectively executed, including media through coverage, education, awareness, and continuous positive accompaniment.

Local broadcast media work to provide individuals and communities (citizens and the local community) with information and facts aimed at convincing them of the necessity of development and how it can occur. Additionally, they educate and train them on skills that contribute to the successful implementation of these plans. The evolution of media has allowed them to become a significant force with an unlimited impact on development (**Awatif, 1977, p. 14**). This is achieved by fulfilling goals related to the community served by local broadcast, providing access to training, production, distribution, enhancing local capabilities and positive values, and offering avenues for development to listeners with backgrounds and objectives that serve the desired context and horizon. It also combats negative behaviors by opening opportunities for citizens, especially diverse talents and innovations, and encouraging them.

There has been a shift from traditional roles and tasks to new roles for effective management, serving as a tool to achieve development goals within the national strategy towards internal regions in the medium and long term, amid current challenges and future stakes.

Observers of local affairs note that local broadcast media have a strong presence in accompanying developmental initiatives, both in concept and execution. This contribution involves presenting information on various developments, monitoring changes in different fields, raising concerns, and creating discussions to find solutions to the challenges posed. Local broadcast media invest in issues directly and indirectly related to sustainable development in its various forms, such as collaborative development issues. It also plays a role in activating spaces for positive discussion and exchange in everything related to the management of local affairs through media and awareness, contributing to finding solutions and making decisions for the benefit of the local community.

The local broadcast media also focus on environmental issues in all their dimensions, especially considering the negative impacts on the environment itself and their effects on local communities related to human health and daily life. This includes the consequences of ecological shifts on strategic sectors associated with the local community's security, both as individuals and groups.

This type of media contributes to issues of citizenship and political participation, viewing sustainable development as a matter of acquiring the ability to learn and improve performance during these processes. It is seen as mechanisms for problem-solving rather than an end in itself, with an acceptance of public involvement in this context (Mohamed Ali Mohamed, 2009, p. 33). Different perspectives have revealed that it involves a form of public participation and general integration in such activities. It reflects criteria for achievement, performance, and the conditions that affect them.

Local broadcast, as a media tool, serves the local community by broadcasting programs that address its audience as a coherent and homogeneous society from all aspects. It



interacts with the community, influencing and convincing it, providing individuals with as much information and facts as possible to enable them to access and contribute to development. This is within the framework of the social engineering of mass media to guide them towards a decent standard of living. Individuals are at the core and aim of development, and each one has a role in the community's advancement, necessitating awareness, education, and support in the fields of education and training.

To bring about media development, local broadcast, despite its recent establishment and experience compared to other media, focuses on performing its tasks related to news, interpretation, influence, persuasion, and intervention as a fundamental actor in other sectors. In this way, it plays varying roles from one stage to another, including:

- Executing media and communication strategies in the field of sustainable development, such as education, housing, work, water .etc.
- Addressing issues related to the local community within the framework of achieving sustainable development as a global, national, and local requirement. This is achieved by raising awareness through effective exchange and discussion serving constructive change between listeners and relevant official bodies. The messages and mechanisms are diversified to achieve the desired outcome.

Thus, local broadcast media operates according to the needs of each region as a fundamental tool whose content is born out of its environment in connection with its audience. It actively participates in accelerating progress at the level of the local community, serving as a cost-effective intermediary with the ability to activate programs in various fields such as health, education, environment, culture, and social issues, among others, to achieve the goals within the framework of local development.

The contribution of local broadcast media in accompanying sustainable development programs involves opening up discussions, raising awareness, and directing the local community towards a series of measures and behaviors related to various issues and processes. The aim is to enhance education in all its forms, protect cultural heritage, promote social solidarity and justice, empower women and individuals with special needs, address youth issues, tackle employment and unemployment, combat social problems, promote agricultural and industrial development, market local products, preserve citizens' purchasing power, protect green spaces, rationalize energy consumption, address housing concerns, prevent diseases, enhance transportation, fight corruption in all its forms, ensure security, and, finally, encourage talents and capabilities for constructive investment in community development.

Despite its efforts, broadcast media tends to emphasize issues related to sustainable development with an environmental dimension more than focusing on issues across other dimensions. The average citizen may prioritize only issues relevant to their daily lives, potentially overlooking matters perceived as beyond their interests. The local media's role in accompanying local development remains pivotal, even as studies are needed to explore the relationships between listening rates, participation, and their impact on local development. The political and media discourse often lacks clear understanding and direct interaction with citizens, making local development seem unattainable in achieving the desired goals.

**Conclusion:**

Local or community media plays a central role in various forms of development by participating and accompanying initiatives from its perspective. This involves influencing and persuading to raise awareness among the local public about issues concerning them, ultimately driving them towards achieving sustainable development.

Despite the general and broadcast media's contributions to accompanying the efforts made by the Algerian government, particularly in the last two decades, towards issues and problems related to sustainable development, there are still many imbalances and uncertainties in achieving set results and objectives. This is due to considerations related to strategy implementation, citizens' contribution, and awareness of the importance of sustainable development in various fields, urging a comprehensive and integrated effort to achieve the present and future developmental project.

Community media has a fundamental role in educating, informing, and training the local audience, guiding them on challenges and issues through intentional and purposeful programs. This involves providing information and news that serve the local community while preserving its identity, raising its voice, conveying it to relevant authorities, and building societal awareness on issues relevant to both individuals and the state. This encourages active participation towards achieving the common good, addressing challenges, and utilizing opportunities to overcome underdevelopment and achieve desired progress.

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