



## The Solidarity Role of Social Work Institutions in Algeria The Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity as a Model

**CHAA BadrEddine**

University of Mohamed Lamine Debaghine Sétif (Algeria).

[b.chaa@univ-sétif2.dz](mailto:b.chaa@univ-sétif2.dz)

**KEROUANI Mohamed Amine**

University of Mohamed Lamine Debaghine Sétif (Algeria).

[m.kerouani@univ-sétif2.dz](mailto:m.kerouani@univ-sétif2.dz)

### **Abstract:**

The state relies in implementing social policy on many official institutions with the aim of reaching the welfare of all individuals in various fields. However, some social groups need special care due to the specificity of their economic, health, or social condition. Therefore, a set of mechanisms was created to take care of the most vulnerable groups in society, among them the Social Development Agency, which is one of the social work institutions that provides multiple services to disadvantaged social groups, in order to alleviate their suffering and to achieve a standard of living that guarantees them a decent life, helping them to integrate and achieve the desired social cohesion.

This study aims to identify the solidarity role of the Social Development Agency through the programs it possesses, in addition to identifying the needs of families targeted by the Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity program.

**Keywords:** social work; social work institutions; Social Development Agency; Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity.

**Résumé :**

Pour mettre en œuvre sa politique sociale, l'État s'appuie sur de nombreuses institutions officielles dans le but d'assurer le bien-être de tous les individus dans divers domaines. Cependant, certains groupes sociaux nécessitent une attention particulière en raison de la spécificité de leur situation économique, sanitaire ou sociale. C'est pourquoi un ensemble de mécanismes a été mis en place pour prendre en charge les groupes les plus vulnérables de la société, parmi lesquels figure l'Agence de développement social, qui est l'une des institutions de travail social fournissant de multiples services aux groupes sociaux défavorisés, afin d'alléger leurs souffrances et de leur permettre d'atteindre un niveau de vie leur garantissant une existence décente, en les aidant à s'intégrer et à parvenir à la cohésion sociale souhaitée.

Cette étude vise à mettre en évidence le rôle de solidarité joué par l'Agence de développement social à travers les programmes qu'elle met en œuvre, ainsi qu'à identifier les besoins des familles ciblées par le programme des « Cellules de solidarité de quartier ».

**Mots-clés :** travail social ; institutions de travail social ; Agence de développement social ; Cellules de solidarité de quartier.



## **Introduction:**

Since its emergence, social work has undergone many changes and developments. Its first beginnings were as charitable and voluntary work known to societies through different stages of their development. With the transformations that societies witnessed in the modern era, especially with the emergence of the industrial revolution, major cities, and migration, multiple and complex problems appeared, such as poverty, begging, etc., which faced many groups in different societies. Consequently, they became threatened in their cohesion and harmony, which led governments to establish social policies to reduce these problems, address them, or prevent them.

To embody the objectives of social policies, states mobilize various agencies and organizations with the aim of achieving social care for individuals and groups, covering various aspects of life such as employment, health, education, housing, and social insurance, etc. However, some groups considered the most vulnerable in society need specialized institutions in social work, supervised by professionals specialized in various fields of social work, who provide social care for specific groups such as the disabled, the elderly, widows, orphans, divorced women, etc., in order to alleviate their suffering and work on their integration into society.

In Algeria, the emphasis on the state's social orientation has continued from the early years of independence to the present day, as successive governments adopted social policies that covered various sectors such as free education,

the right to work, the right to housing, free healthcare, etc. Specialized institutions were also established to care for vulnerable groups in society, operating under the supervision of the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Issues, among them elderly care centers, first-aid childhood centers, pedagogical medical centers for disabled children, and centers for the protection of delinquent juveniles, etc.

The Social Development Agency, established in 1996, is one of the social work institutions set up by the state. Its main objectives are combating poverty and all forms of marginalization and deprivation through a set of mechanisms and programs directed to care for the most vulnerable groups in society, including the Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity program, which aims to meet the needs of various social groups, especially in the poorest areas, through intervention based on scientific and professional foundations.

This study includes two parts: the first, theoretical, in which the subject of the study was addressed through a number of elements consisting of: the importance of the study, objectives of the study, the problem and hypotheses, definition of concepts, fields of the study, study population and sample, methodology and data collection tools. The field part of the study dealt with introducing the Social Development Agency, its organizational structure, and its tasks, in addition to presenting the programs managed by the agency, reaching the partial results of the first hypothesis, presenting and analyzing data of the second hypothesis, reaching the partial results of the second hypothesis, then the results and their discussion, and the conclusion.



## **1. The Theoretical Framework of the Study**

### **First : Importance of the Study**

- Research on social work institutions in Algeria carries particular importance due to their crucial role in taking care of the most vulnerable groups in society.
- The importance of the study appears in addressing one of the institutions specialized in social work, which is considered a recent experience in Algerian society (the Social Development Agency was created in 1996).
- Shedding light on an important aspect related to the characteristics and needs of the most vulnerable groups, in light of the changes witnessed by Algerian society.

### **Second : Objectives of the Study**

Introducing the institutions specialized in the field of social work in Algeria (the Social Development Agency), in addition to identifying the groups targeted by these institutions and the various programs they provide, through which they aim to meet the needs of various social categories.

- Identifying the social groups targeted by the agency, particularly through the Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity program, in addition to knowing the characteristics and needs of these groups.

### **Third : The Problem of the Study**

Since the early 1980s, Algeria has faced economic difficulties and problems represented in the decline of the GDP growth rate, increasing budget deficit, as well as the rise in the volume of external debt and its servicing and the inflation rate, and the growth of unemployment. To reduce

these economic difficulties and problems, the “structural adjustment program” was adopted, which led to the reduction of major economic pressures and the restoration of economic balance in addition to reducing inflation. However, these results were accompanied by many pressures at the social level, especially the decline in purchasing power, increase in unemployment, and generally the expansion of poverty during that period.

Despite moving into a market economy, the state did not abandon its social orientation and sought to embody its basic mission of renewal and change for the better by creating programs that keep pace with the new social and economic conditions experienced by society. Since the beginning of the implementation of the structural adjustment program in the 1990s, the Algerian authorities established social protection mechanisms, among them the Social Development Agency, a public institution of a special nature that enjoys administrative and financial autonomy ensuring it flexibility and transparency in managing its programs. It was established in 1996 under Executive Decree No. 232/96 of June 29, 1996.

The Social Development Agency, which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women’s Issues, was established to mitigate the negative effects of the structural adjustment plan on vulnerable social groups. Its main goal is combating poverty, unemployment, and marginalization affecting disadvantaged social groups through a set of programs, especially the Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity program, through which it seeks to solve some problems and improve the living conditions of the population.



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From this standpoint, we will try through this study to answer the following questions:

1. What are the programs of the Social Development Agency directed to vulnerable groups in society?
2. What are the characteristics and needs of the social groups targeted by the Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity?

#### **Fourth : Study Hypotheses**

- The Social Development Agency has a set of programs directed to vulnerable groups.
- The needs of vulnerable social groups include the social, economic, and health dimensions.

#### **Fifth : Definition of Concepts**

##### **1. The Concept of Social Work:**

In researching the concept of social work in various sources, we noticed the use of the term “social service” as synonymous with social work. In this regard, Zaki Badawi believes that it is not easy to give a precise definition of social service because of the ambiguity and confusion surrounding it, as is the case in every modern science, as well as the great differences in social service work from one country to another and the multiplicity of aspects of examples that fall within the field of social service. All this makes its definition difficult (Zaki Badawi, 1987: 9). This is supported by Ayad Hussein Mohamed Ali, who considers “social service to be preventive and therapeutic, meaning carrying out an organized effort to prevent deviant behavior, or to treat certain pathological cases, or to reorganize society... and this organized effort may be official and institutional, such as the state establishing

institutions for orphans or the elderly, or for widows, or establishing mechanisms of aid and protection through loan funds, or providing credit facilities and marketing opportunities, or it may be unofficial although institutionalized, such as civil society organizations helping certain groups of the disabled and widowed women, or establishing research centers, or organizations for the protection of women and children. Social service has its preventive effort alongside its therapeutic effort, and both aim to maintain or restore the security of the individual and the community, and to work on its continuity” (Ayad Hussein Mohamed Ali, 01/04/2010: <https://www.iasj.net>).

The *Dictionary of Social Service Terminology* defines social service as “a set of professional activities aimed at helping individuals, groups, and local communities to improve – or at least maintain – their abilities to perform their social functions. It also aims to bring about changes in societal conditions to achieve those goals, and social service includes professional applications based on a set of values, principles, and skills to achieve one or more goals, represented in helping people obtain tangible services (direct), psychological counseling and therapeutic services for individuals, families, and groups, helping local communities and groups to provide and develop social and health services in addition to developing them, participating in related legislative processes. Practicing social service requires knowledge of personality development, knowledge of human behavior and its nature, as well as understanding society through recognizing the influence and interaction of social and economic factors on it” (Abdulaziz Abdullah Al-Dakhil, 2016: 181–182).



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The International Conference on Social Service, held in Paris in 1928, defined it as the sum of efforts intended to provide assistance in several areas related to alleviating the pains resulting from misery – this is the “absolute service” aspect; placing individuals and families in suitable medical conditions – this is the “curative service” aspect; preventing the occurrence of social disasters – this is the “preventive service” aspect; and improving the condition of society and raising the standard of living – this is the “constructive service” aspect (Zaki Badawi, 1987: 10).

Mahmoud Fahmy Al-Kurdi defines social work as “the activity taking place within society regardless of its forms or manifestations (political, economic, social, or cultural), through which the individual participates in developing his society, a participation based on awareness of the extent of this activity, which is embodied in numerous social and economic projects, and practiced through some political institutions” (Mahmoud Fahmy Al-Kurdi, 1986: 318).

Among the concepts of social work is that it is “a profession representing a set of actions aimed at improving the social and economic conditions of individuals as well as developing their life skills. It also represents a direct endeavor to achieve and ensure social justice within society. In both cases, it is a systematic attempt regulated by mechanisms and specific means to change the general response of society and its individuals to various types of daily crises and problems. Thus, the main goal of social work can be said to be achieving the welfare of society by uncovering different problems within it, exposing them, treating them, working to prevent them, and striving to achieve developmental goals” (Wahidi Nabila, June 2018: 342).

Rachid Zerouati believes that social service covers many fields and that in the social field it includes: health social service, environmental social service, housing social service, social service in the field of transport, social service in the field of work, administrative social service, social service for maternal care, social service for child care, social service for youth care, social service for elderly care, social service for the poor, social service for orphans, family social service, social service in organizing leisure time, and social service in various other social aspects (Rachid Zerouati, June 2006: 144).

From the foregoing, it is clear that the concept of social work has several dimensions, among them its essence, which was expressed as “a set of works, activities carried out in society, and systematic attempts governed by various mechanisms and means.” Among these mechanisms are social and economic projects that are implemented or embodied through some political institutions. In addition, there is another dimension represented in the objectives of social work, which these concepts linked to the individual and society; when it comes to individuals, the objective of social work is to identify the various problems facing individuals and groups in society, then treat them and work on preventing them, and to change the general response of society and its members toward different types of crises and daily problems, thus improving their economic and social conditions, and enhancing their life patterns, which allows the achievement of a higher objective, namely ensuring social justice and the welfare of society.

As for social work institutions, they are specialized technical units in which social workers and other technicians and assistants work to provide social services to beneficiaries. These institutions are funded by donations collected from



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citizens, contributions from governmental bodies, and other fees borne by citizens in return for the services they receive. The workers in these institutions perform all functions that end with the impact of the required services within the conditions that must be observed in providing services to beneficiaries (ShadiaMakhlouf, November 2011: 6).

## **2. The operational concept of social work:**

“Social work is a set of activities carried out by specialized professionals belonging to specialized institutions, where these activities aim to detect and diagnose the problems facing individuals and groups in society, then treat them and work on preventing them.”

## **3. The concept of solidarity social work:**

In the *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, the term *Solidarism* was mentioned, which refers to “belief in sharing goals and interests, and solidarity is considered of great importance as a source of strength and resistance, and because it implicitly constitutes an expression of unity of purpose” (Gordon Marshall, 2000: 415). The same encyclopedia also included the term *Social Solidarity*, which is one of the main topics in the works of Émile Durkheim, who was concerned with the sources of moral order and thus the basis of social order. Durkheim was particularly interested in the precise study of the link between the individual and society, and in his famous study *The Division of Labor in Society* published in 1893, Durkheim presented his famous duality: mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity (Gordon Marshall, 2000: 416).

Social solidarity means the feeling of companionship and intimacy, which extends to go beyond the people with whom one has a personal connection. At its minimum, it means accepting strangers as human beings with the same needs and rights. Social solidarity has social causes, and social isolation or social exclusion is one of the important factors in strengthening solidarity: participation in shared institutions and experiencing common experiences. People's lives are better in a society whose members share some aspects of that life. Making society live in mechanical solidarity requires material foundations for participation in the life of society, and public service facilities provided by basic systems (such as schools and health services) are considered one of the means of forming solidarity among members of society (Hoda Ahmed Alwan Al-Deeb, Mahmoud Abdel-Alim Mohamed Suleiman, May 2015: 125-126).

Anthony Giddens sees that strengthening the meaning of social solidarity among people goes through individuals enjoying a full and active life by going beyond issues of food, clothing, and shelter, and by obtaining basic goods and services such as transportation, telephone, banking, and insurance services. The availability of elements of integration in society is also conditional upon the participation of its members in the services provided by many public institutions such as schools, health care facilities, and public transportation (Anthony Giddens, 2005: 394).

Social solidarity means the process of mutual support, cooperation, and assistance, whether material or moral, in various occasions and situations. It is informal solidarity, without which social cohesion cannot be achieved (NouriaSoualmia, Taher Gharraz, June 2019: 205).



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The above concepts refer to social solidarity as being at the heart of the concerns of sociologists, affirming its role in defining the relationship between the individual and society. These concepts showed the aspects and forms of solidarity, which varied between informal solidarity related to kinship, cooperation, and mutual support, and formal solidarity focused on basic needs issues such as food, clothing, health, and education, the provision of which is ensured by governmental social work institutions or those that fall under civil society and the associative movement.

#### **4. The operational concept of solidarity social work:**

What is meant by solidarity social work in this study is: “A set of services provided by the Social Development Agency through its various mechanisms and programs, especially the Neighborhood Cells of Solidarity Program, through which it aims to fight poverty and meet the needs of the most vulnerable groups in society.”

#### **Sixth: The fields of the study:**

- 1- Temporal field: The preparation of this study covered the years 2019 and 2020, through a sample of families who benefited or had benefited from one of the programs of the Social Development Agency.
- 2- Spatial field: This study was conducted in 11 municipalities in the Wilaya of Sétif, which are characterized by diversity between urban, semi-urban, and rural nature.
- 3- Human field: The study was conducted on 204 families who benefited from one of the programs of the Social Development Agency.

### **Seventh: The study population and sample:**

Since the study was conducted at the level of the Wilaya of Sétif, the study population concerns families and individuals who benefited from one of the programs of the Social Development Agency, while the purposive sample consisted of 204 families who benefited from the Agency's programs during the years 2019–2020. This sample was chosen for several considerations, the most important of which are:

- The diversity and multiplicity of the social groups to which the sample individuals belong (women in difficult situations, disabled people, people with chronic diseases, etc.).
- The distribution of sample individuals across different areas of the Wilaya of Sétif, including urban, semi-urban, and rural areas.
- The diversity of the needs of sample individuals, which include several aspects such as social, economic, health, housing, and psychological aspects.

## **2. Method and tools:**

### ***First - Method:***

The method is defined as “an organized approach or strategic plan based on a set of principles, rules, and steps that help in achieving the research objectives, in a scientific way characterized by collecting information and facts through objective and organized scientific observation” (Ali Maamar Abdel Moumen, 2008: 14). Since the study aims to know the solidarity role of social work institutions, we considered it appropriate to use the descriptive method, which does not only describe the studied phenomenon, but also describes various indicators related to the phenomenon accurately, analyzes the data, and reaches conclusions. Therefore, in this



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study, we will rely on the descriptive method to describe the data collected through reviewing the official website of the Social Development Agency, in addition to classifying and analyzing the data obtained from the forms distributed to the sample individuals.

*Second – Data collection tools:*

- **Records:** Various documents and information available on the official website of the Social Development Agency on the internet were relied upon, such as the organizational structure, objectives and tasks, programs, etc.
- **Form:** In this study, we relied on a form that included several axes related to information about: family situation, educational level, economic situation, health situation, housing situation, and the type of assistance needed by the family.

### **3.- The field aspect of the study:**

*First – The Social Development Agency:*

The Social Development Agency is a public body of a special nature that enjoys administrative and financial autonomy, ensuring flexibility and transparency in managing its programs. It was created in 1996, under Executive Decree No. 232/96 dated June 29, 1996, with the aim of alleviating the negative repercussions of the structural adjustment plan on vulnerable social groups. Its main objective is to combat poverty, unemployment, and marginalization that affect disadvantaged social groups. The Social Development Agency operates under the supervision of the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family, and Women's Affairs, with its

various activities subject to field monitoring (<https://www.ads.dz/agence.html#content4-172> 07/10/2021 09:49).

The Social Development Agency is present at the national level through its central headquarters and through its affiliated bodies, which are as follows:

1. At the central level: a general directorate and six central directorates: Directorate of Finance and Accounting, Directorate of Administration and Means, Directorate of Social Support, Directorate of Collective Development and Neighborhood Cells, Directorate of Employment and Integration Programs, Directorate of Studies and Planning, Internal Audit Unit, and Communication Unit.
2. At the regional level: eleven (11) regional branches: Algiers, Annaba, Béjaïa, Médéa, Mostaganem, Batna, Sidi Bel Abbès, Tiaret, Tébessa, Ouargla, and Béchar.
3. Legal bodies: The Social Development Agency has two legal bodies: a Steering Council composed of members representing various ministries and the associative movement, contributing to decision-making regarding various management files of the Agency such as the annual action plan, annual budget, and quarterly activity report of the Agency; and a Monitoring Committee composed of members of the Steering Council, responsible for monitoring the implementation of approved programs (<https://www.ads.dz/agence.html#content4-172> 07/10/2021 09:49).



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### ***Second – Tasks of the Social Development Agency:***

The tasks of the Social Development Agency, as defined by the law of its establishment, consist of promoting, selecting, and financing through assistance and subsidies or any other suitable means:

- Activities and projects aimed at disadvantaged and vulnerable social groups.
- Any works or services project of public, social, or economic utility involving intensive labor use, initiated by local communities, population groups, or any public or private body for the purpose of promoting and developing employment.
- The activities that contribute to the development of micro-enterprises.

It is also tasked with seeking, attracting, and collecting all types of financial aid, donations, and grants, whether of a national, foreign, or multilateral nature, in order to achieve its social development projects.

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### ***Third – Presentation and Analysis of the First Hypothesis Data:***

The following presents and analyzes the data of the first hypothesis through the programs provided by the Social Development Agency directed at vulnerable groups.

#### **1- Programs of the Social Development Agency:**

- a- **The Solidarity Lump Sum Grant (AFS):** This program is considered one of the most important social support programs established by the state to care for

vulnerable and needy social groups who have no income and are unable to work, such as the elderly, disabled persons, women heads of households without income, as well as persons with chronic illnesses that cause disability. The solidarity lump sum grant was also expanded to include persons with disabilities, the elderly, the terminally ill, and the blind.

The objective of the solidarity lump sum grant mechanism is to achieve social integration for vulnerable and needy social groups, improve their care conditions, combat all forms of marginalization and exclusion, and accompany them by allocating direct aid in the form of a monthly grant to each registered person, in addition to ensuring coverage and social protection for the beneficiaries as well as their dependents, enabling them to benefit from the "Chifa" card and the related advantages, particularly medical care, equipment, and technical assistance in this field for disabled persons.

This social mechanism also embodies the principle of equality and equal opportunities in benefiting from the granted advantages, targeting heads of households and individuals of both sexes without discrimination.

**b- The Social Integration Activities Scheme (DAIS):**

This mechanism was established under Executive Decree No. 09-305 dated September 10, 2009, amended and supplemented by Executive Decree No. 12-79 dated February 12, 2012. It aims to ensure the social integration of persons in a situation of social vulnerability (especially school dropouts), aged between 18 and less than 60, in temporary jobs resulting from public utility and social works or services initiated by local authorities, technical departments of sectors, as well as other local development partners, public and private



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institutions, private sector craftsmen, and contractors operating in the social and service field.

**c- The "Blanche Algérie" Scheme:** This mechanism allows the creation of very small enterprises for environmental cleaning and improving the living environment of the population. It also aims at integrating the unemployed, especially those excluded from the educational system, with the contribution of associations and local authorities.

**d- The Community Development Program (Dev-Com):** A program aimed at combating poverty, exclusion, and social marginalization, as well as improving living conditions in poor areas and meeting their needs while ensuring social care for the poor and disadvantaged groups, by involving them in different stages of implementing social and economic projects.

**e- The Public Utility Works Program with Intensive Labor Use (TUP-HIMO):** This mechanism targets populations located in wilayas and municipalities with high unemployment rates and lacking basic infrastructure. It is directed at micro-enterprises and small contractors in the concerned wilayas and aims at the intensive creation of temporary jobs in the maintenance and restoration of public infrastructure with social and economic impact, as well as the promotion of the private sector, especially local small enterprises.

**f- The Neighborhood Solidarity Cells (CPS):** The neighborhood solidarity cell is composed of a

multidisciplinary team that includes: a doctor, a psychologist, a social worker, a social assistant, and an agricultural or economic engineer, depending on the intervention area of the cell, in addition to a driver. The objectives of the Neighborhood Solidarity Cells Program are to identify poverty pockets to which the activities of the Social Development Agency will be directed. This targeting activity is carried out in agreement with the Social Activity Directorates at the wilaya level. It also aims at identifying the needs of the concerned population groups through a participatory approach and preparing a work plan to address the problems and difficulties faced by these vulnerable groups through field investigation.

### **Partial Results of the First Hypothesis:**

It is evident from the above that the Social Development Agency has various programs; some relate to the solidarity field represented in direct aid, such as the Solidarity Lump Sum Grant program and the Social Integration Activities Scheme; some relate to professional integration such as the "Blanche Algérie" scheme and the Public Utility Works Program with Intensive Labor Use; and others relate to social development such as community development projects. The Neighborhood Solidarity Cells Program is considered one of the most important programs of the Social Development Agency since its main objective is to identify poverty pockets to which the programs and activities of the Social Development Agency will be directed, in addition to identifying the needs of the targeted population groups through a participatory approach and preparing a work plan to address the problems and difficulties faced by vulnerable groups in society.



Received: 18/06/2025 Accepted: 06/03/2026 Published: 30/06/2026

#### **Fourth - Presentation and Analysis of the Second Hypothesis Data:**

To determine the characteristics and needs of the families targeted by the agency, especially the Neighborhood Solidarity Cells Program, we transferred the answers of the sample members to the questionnaire questions used into tables and interpreted and analyzed their data. Some of the tables included information about family characteristics, while others concerned their needs. It should be noted that the questionnaire included several themes, among them: general information such as gender, age, marital status, family's economic situation, professional status, health situation (disability, chronic illness...etc.), housing situation (ownership type, housing condition, number of rooms, network connections...etc.), in addition to questions about the problems faced by individuals and families and identifying their main needs.

**Table No. 1 - Families by Gender:**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	96	47.06%
Female	108	52.94%
Total	204	100%

It appears from Table No. 1 that the percentage of females in the sample is 52.94%, although this percentage is not far from that of males, which reached 47.06%. The marital status of the sample members varies, as some are heads of families or family members, whether parents, mothers, sons, or brothers...etc., where one family member benefits from one

of the Social Development Agency's programs or needs assistance of some sort.

**Table No. 2 - Families by Marital Status:**

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Married	102	50%
Single	33	16.18%
Divorced	20	9.8%
Widowed	38	18.63%
Other	11	5.39%
Total	204	100%

It appears from Table No. 2 that the highest percentage recorded among the sample members concerns married individuals at 50%, followed by widows at 18.63%, then singles at 16.18%, while the divorced did not exceed 10%, and a rate of 5.39% was recorded for other cases relating to separated spouses due to family problems or spouses abandoning their wives for different periods. These percentages indicate the diversity and difference in the needs of individuals and families. For instance, the needs of divorced women may include benefiting from the alimony fund or financial aid for widows who have no source of income.

**Table No. 3 – Families by Educational Level:**

<b>EducationalLevel</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Illiterate	67	32.84%
Primary	53	25.98%
Middle	48	23.53%
Secondary	28	13.73%
University	8	3.92%
Total	204	100%

It appears from Table No. 3 that a third of the sample members are illiterate, while the primary level reached 25.98%. As for the middle level, the percentage reached 23.53%, the secondary level decreased to 13.73%, while the university level did not exceed 4%. These percentages can be explained by the age group of the sample members, as most of them are over 50 years old, when not all residents of rural and isolated areas were able to attend school in the past, in addition to the difficulty of continuing education for others for various reasons such as isolation or the prohibition of females from continuing education in some areas.

**Table No. 4 - Families by Professional Status:**

<b>Professional Status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Unemployed	134	65.69%
Worker	27	13.24%
Retired	19	9.31%
Grant Holder	17	8.33%
Incapable of work	4	1.96%
Other	3	1.47%
Total	204	100%

According to Table No. 4, 65.69% of the sample members declared themselves unemployed, while the percentage of working members did not exceed 14%. Retirees did not exceed 10%, while 8.33% declared having a grant. Those incapable of working represented 1.96%, while 1.47% of the sample fell under "other," being persons practicing independent professions without social coverage. The high unemployment percentage can be explained by several factors, including individuals working in the private sector without insurance, the presence of women in the sample (who cannot work outside for reasons such as childcare, illness, or social circumstances), and the fact that some who declared themselves as workers face difficulties as their income is insufficient to cover all family needs (e.g., rent, medical costs, etc.).



Received: 18/06/2025 Accepted: 06/03/2026 Published: 30/06/2026

**Table No. 5 – Families by Work Sector:**

Work Sector	Number	Percentage
Public	17	62.96%
Private	9	33.33%
Other	1	3.70%
Total	27	100%

It appears from Table No. 5 that the majority of the working sample members are employed in the public sector at 62.96%, while 33.33% work in the private sector, and less than 4% practice independent professions.

**Table No. 6 – Families by Work Field:**

Work Field	Number	Percentage
Agricultural	1	3.70%
Industrial	3	11.11%
Administration	12	44.44%
Construction	4	14.81%
Services	7	25.93%
Other	-	-
Total	27	100%

It appears from Table No. 6 that most working sample members are employed in administration at 44.44%, followed by the services sector at 25.93%, then construction and public

works at 14.81%. The industrial sector decreased to 11.11%, while the agricultural sector did not exceed 4%.

**Table No. 7 shows households according to social security:**

<b>Social Security</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	145	71.08
No	59	28.92
Total	204	100

Table No. 7 shows that the majority of the sample benefit from social security, with a percentage of 71.08%, while the percentage of those not benefiting from social security did not exceed 29%. The high percentage of beneficiaries of coverage can be explained by the fact that the majority of the sample benefit from various programs of the Social Development Agency, such as the solidarity lump sum allowance and the Social Integration Activities Scheme, which grant beneficiaries a monthly allowance in addition to social security benefits. These programs are dedicated to a number of vulnerable groups such as widows, divorced women, and the disabled, etc. As for the non-beneficiaries, social security is considered one of the main needs of some members of the sample.



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**Table No. 8 shows households in terms of monthly income:**

MonthlyIncome	Number	Percentage
Lessthan 10,000 DZD	134	65.69
From 11,000 to 20,000 DZD	36	17.65
From 21,000 to 30,000 DZD	20	9.80
More than 31,000 DZD	14	6.86
Total	204	100

The percentage of the sample who answered that they earn less than 10,000 Algerian dinars per month exceeded 65%, while the percentage of those earning between 11,000 and 20,000 DZD reached 17.65%. The percentage for the group earning between 21,000 and 30,000 DZD decreased to 9.80%. As for the group earning more than 31,000 DZD, it did not exceed 7%. The high percentage of households earning less than 10,000 DZD is due to the target groups of the Social Development Agency, which face multiple difficulties and problems, foremost among them financial difficulties.

**Table No. 9 shows households according to family size:**

Family Size	Number	Percentage
Lessthan 3	83	40.69
Between 4 and 6	102	50
More than 7	19	9.31
Total	204	100

It appears from Table No. 9 that the sample belong to households with a family size ranging between 4 and 6 members, with a percentage of 50%. The percentage decreases to 40.69% for households with 3 or fewer members, while households with 7 or more members did not exceed 10%.

**Table No. 10 shows households according to health status:**

<b>HealthStatus</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Chronicillness	118	65.56
Disability	58	32.22
Psychologicaldisorder	4	2.22
Total	180	100

Table No. 10 shows that 180 members of the sample or their families suffer from health problems such as chronic diseases or disabilities. We find that 65.56% suffer from one or several chronic diseases, while 32.22% were recorded as suffering from disabilities, which vary from family to family and include physical, mental, auditory, visual, and multiple disabilities. The percentage of people with psychological disorders did not exceed 3%. Chronic illnesses and disabilities are among the most important problems facing vulnerable groups, given that many families are unable to provide the necessary financial resources to care for the sick and disabled. The presence of more than one sick person or more than one disabled person in a single household makes it difficult to care for them, and these problems also expose family



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members to psychological pressures that can sometimes be severe.

**Table No. 11 shows households according to the nature of housing ownership:**

Nature of HousingOwnership	Number	Percentage
Privateownership	49	24.02
Rent	44	22
Inheritance	8	04
Other	103	50
Total	204	100

We note that 50% of the sample answered that their housing falls under “other,” which refers to living in a family home owned by a father, grandfather, or brother. Meanwhile, the percentage of those declaring their housing as private ownership was 24.75%, while renters represented 22.22%. This includes families who benefited from social housing and are required to pay a monthly rent that can reach 2,500 DZD, or families who submitted applications for various housing programs and are waiting, thus finding themselves forced to rent housing that can cost up to 20,000 DZD per month. They may also resort to renting unfinished housing. As for families living in inherited housing, the percentage did not exceed 5%.

**Table No. 12 shows households according to housing condition:**

<b>Housing Condition</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Good	77	38.89
Average	87	43.94
Poor	34	17.17
Total	198	100

Table No. 12 shows the housing condition in terms of the number of rooms and the availability of necessary facilities such as toilets, bathrooms, and kitchens. It was found that 43.94% of families live in average housing, 38.89% in good housing, while poor housing accounted for 17.17%. This category includes traditional housing, unfinished private housing, or garages used as housing.

**Table No. 13 shows households according to connection to vital networks:**

<b>Vital Network</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>	<b>Connection Percentage</b>
Electricity	198	100
Gas	190	95.95
Water	196	98.98
Sewerage	180	90.90

From Table No. 13, related to connection to vital networks, it appears that 100% of households are connected to the



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electricity grid. The percentage of connection to the gas network was 95.95%, while connection to the water network reached 98.98%. However, the percentage of connection to sewerage networks did not exceed 91%, with unconnected households located in remote and isolated areas.

**Table No. 14 shows households according to heating type:**

Heating Type	Number	Percentage
Butane Gas	10	5.05
Natural Gas	188	94.94
Total	198	100

Since the percentage of households connected to the natural gas network reached 95.95%, 94.94% of the sample and their families use natural gas heating, while the use of butane gas for heating did not exceed 6%.

**Table No. 15 shows households according to household appliances:**

Household Appliances	Number of Households	Percentage
Cooker	161	81.31
Refrigerator	193	97.47
Television	194	97.97
Washing Machine	125	63.13

From Table No. 15 on household appliances, the majority of families own a television (97.97%), followed by refrigerators (97.47%). The percentage drops to 81.31% for cookers, while ownership of washing machines did not exceed 64%.

**Table No. 16 shows households according to benefiting from housing:**

<b>BenefitingfromHousing</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	66	32.35
No	138	67.65
Total	204	100

According to Table No. 16, 32.35% of the sample or their families benefited from housing in various forms, while the percentage of non-beneficiaries exceeded 67%. For many in the sample, the lack of housing is one of the main expressed needs.

**Table No. 17 shows households according to the nature of benefiting from housing:**

<b>Nature of HousingBenefit</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Social	33	50
Promotional	2	3.03
Rural	23	34.85
Other	8	12.12
Total	66	100



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The percentage of the sample who benefited from social housing reached 50%. Table No. 17 also shows that rural housing comes second with 34.85%. The percentage in the "other" category was 12.12%, referring to other housing schemes such as self-construction or land plots. As for promotional housing, the percentage did not exceed 4%. The high number of social housing beneficiaries can be explained by the eligibility conditions of this type of housing for the groups targeted by the Agency and the Neighborhood Solidarity Cells program, which require that monthly income not exceed 24,000 DZD, in addition to giving priority to certain groups such as the disabled, widows, and divorced women.

**Table No. 17 shows households according to the type of housing requests:**

Type of HousingRequest	Number	Percentage
Social	44	56.41
Promotional	2	2.56
Rural	32	41.03
Total	78	100

In Table No. 17, it appears that more than half of housing requests are for social housing, exceeding 56%, followed by rural housing requests at 41.03%. Promotional housing requests did not exceed 3%. The high percentage of social housing requests is due to the availability of eligibility conditions for this type of housing among the sample and

their families. The percentage of rural housing requests is also high, given that many of the sample and their families reside in rural areas.

**Table No. 18 shows households according to their needs:**

Type of Needs	Number	Percentage
Financial	114	42.38
In-kind	5	1.86
Housing	61	22.68
Shelter	4	1.49
Psychological and medical support	10	3.72
Social and administrative support	75	27.88
Total	269	100

Before interpreting and analyzing the data in Table No. 18, it should be noted that the total number of cases rose to 269 due to multiple needs per individual or household. For example, one person or household might need financial assistance, housing, and social and administrative support at the same time. Therefore, this table expresses the number of needs, not the number of individuals in the sample. Financial assistance was declared 114 times, at a percentage of 42.38%. Requests for financial assistance among the sample and their families relate to covering treatment costs, rent, or repaying debts, etc. Requests for social and administrative support were recorded 75 times, at more than 27%, and consist of benefiting from one of the Social Development Agency's



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programs and thereby social coverage, or benefiting from special equipment such as regular and electric wheelchairs, motorbikes for the disabled, hearing aids, etc. Housing requests came third at 22.68%, including social and rural housing. Applicants may seek help from the relevant authorities to benefit. In fourth place came requests for medical and psychological support at 3.72%, where sample members and their families sought help through psychological consultations, medical check-ups, medication provision, or solving family problems. In-kind assistance requests did not exceed 2% and consisted of food aid, clothing, etc. The percentage of cases needing services from specialized centers affiliated with the Ministry of National Solidarity also did not exceed 2%, concerning people living in difficult social, family, or health conditions.

### **Partial Results of the Second Hypothesis:**

After analyzing the previous tables, the following results were reached:

- The percentage of females and males in families in need of assistance is close, in addition to the diversity of their family situations, as we find married, widowed, divorced, abandoned, or separated women. There is also diversity in the family representatives requesting assistance, as it may be the husband, wife, father, mother, children, or siblings, etc. The family situation in some households contributes to determining the type of needs; for example, widowed or divorced women are often in need of financial aid or housing, whereas abandoned or separated women need psychological support.

- The majority of the sample or their families suffer from health problems such as chronic diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, thyroid disease, cancer, bone and joint diseases, kidney diseases, etc.
- One third of the sample or their family members are affected by disabilities of various types: physical, intellectual, auditory, visual, and multiple.
- Chronic diseases and disability are among the most important problems facing vulnerable groups, due to the inability of some families to provide the necessary financial resources to care for patients and people with disabilities. Illness or disability may in some cases lead to family problems such as marital disputes, divorce, family neglect, in addition to the psychological pressures resulting from them.
- The inability to care for patients or people with disabilities exposes family members to psychological pressures that may sometimes be severe.
- Half of the sample live in the family house, i.e., owned by the father, grandfather, or brother, while about a quarter of the sample rent housing for their families.
- Approximately half of the sample and their families live in housing of medium or good condition, while 17 percent live in fragile housing, which refers to traditional houses, unfinished private houses, or garages attached to private homes.
- The majority of the sample and their families own household appliances such as refrigerators, televisions, cookers, and washing machines. Most of the housing is also connected to vital networks such as electricity, gas, water, and sanitation.



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- Housing represents one of the main expressed needs for many members of the sample.
- Half of the sample benefited from social housing, as the conditions for benefiting from this type of housing are available to the categories targeted by the agency, such as the disabled, widows, and divorced women, etc. Benefiting from rural housing comes second.
- Requests for financial assistance are among the most important needs of the sample and their families, most of which are related to covering the costs of treatment, rent, or debt repayment, etc.
- One third of the sample and their families expressed their need for social or administrative support. These requests consist of benefiting from the solidarity allowance, and therefore from social coverage, as well as from special equipment such as regular and electric wheelchairs, motorcycles for the disabled, hearing aids, etc.
- Housing in its various forms represents the main need for a quarter of the sample and their families.

### **3. Results and Discussion:**

- The Social Development Agency represents one of the most important social work institutions in the solidarity field, as it has established a set of mechanisms and programs to meet the needs of vulnerable groups in society. The agency's programs vary across the fields of support, social development, and professional and social integration, depending on the needs of each group. The agency's programs revolve around three main axes:

1. Achieving social integration for vulnerable and needy social groups, and improving their care conditions, especially in cases of disasters and calamities, through contributing to the implementation of humanitarian, social, medical, and psychological activities.
  2. Combating poverty and all forms of marginalization and exclusion, and embodying the principle of equality and equal opportunities.
  3. Improving the living conditions of the population in poor areas and meeting their needs, with the contribution of associations and local authorities, in addition to involving the population in implementing social and economic projects, as well as proposing activities that can be integrated into the local development program.
- The Neighborhood Solidarity Cells Program represents one of the most important solidarity programs of the Social Development Agency, since its administrators are social specialists. It also targets the most vulnerable social groups, especially in isolated areas.
  - The needs of the sample and their families are multiple and include financial aid, housing, social and administrative support, psychological assistance, and medical mediation, etc.



## **Conclusion:**

The Social Development Agency is considered one of the most important social work institutions in Algeria, as it possesses a set of mechanisms and programs through which it targets the most vulnerable groups in Algerian society, with the aim of alleviating the severity of the problems they face. While programs such as the Solidarity Allowance aim to provide material assistance (financial allowance and social insurance) for groups unable to work or in difficult social situations, other programs aim to integrate young people into the labor market through temporary employment positions, such as the Social Integration Activity Scheme and the Public Works Program with intensive labor use. On the other hand, it works in the field of social development through the Community Development Program, which adopts a participatory approach aimed at integrating the population and civil society movements into projects that can improve the living conditions of individuals and groups, especially in isolated areas.

In addition, the Neighborhood Solidarity Cells Program represents one of the most important social work institutions, managed by a multidisciplinary team working to ensure professional interventions based on scientific foundations, despite some difficulties it faces.

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