

ERP Sustaining Rural Services & Infrastructure Project

Evaluation Report of the Field Research

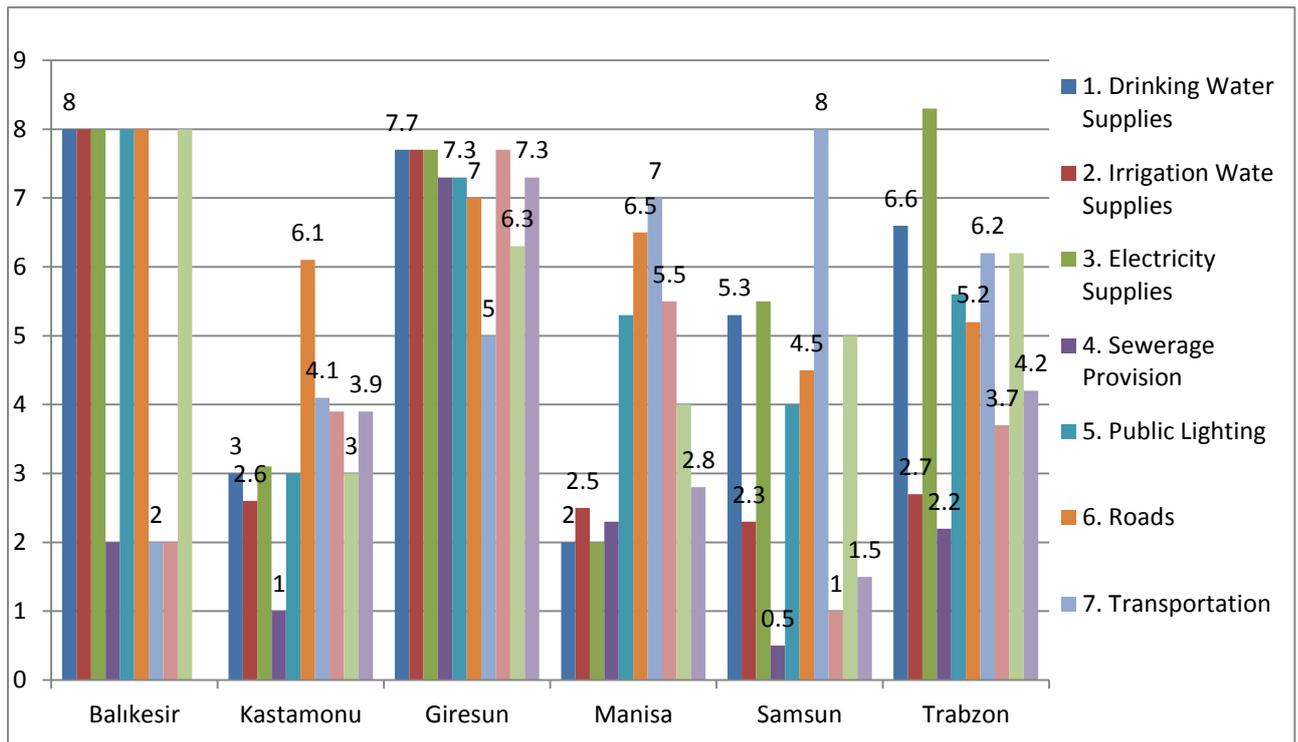
Conducted by

Development Foundation Turkey

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute's data for 2012, approximately 22% of the total population of Turkey, which corresponds to 17.178.953 habitants, resides in rural areas, while urban population is estimated as 58.448.431. (With the New Metropolitan Municipality Law that went into operation in 2013, 13 provinces in Turkey have been changed into metropolis status. The regulation has changed the districts that used to have village status into neighborhood units of the new metropolis. Consequently, there emerged a dramatic decrease in rural population in statistics of the following years (from approx. 17 million to approx. 6 million, from 2012 to 2013). We have taken the statistics of 2012 to provide a more reliable index for the existing population distribution.). Having an economically active population rate of 67.7%, Turkey has an enormous potential for future economic development. However, the unequal distribution of financial investments that concentrate on industrial and service sectors has shifted the focus of administrative politics to urban districts that has left rural districts in an inert position in long term. Despite the fact that there exist certain rural renovation projects for enhancement of material conditions of rural population in order to prevent further deprivation, a more systematic interventions are necessary to regenerate the economic and social effects of existing material conditions of rural population.

The related questionnaire has been conducted in six provinces in Turkey, Balıkesir, Kastamonu, Giresun, Manisa, Samsun, Trabzon to make a contribution for an enlarged insight about rural services. We have reached to 58 participants, 21 female – 37 male through our partner organizations. Despite the fact that we have not the opportunity to obtain a sample that represents the whole rural population, we tried to reach as many people as possible from as

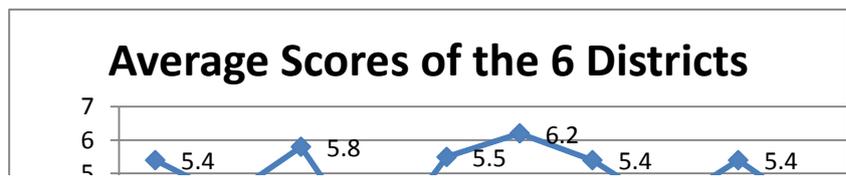
many places as possible and relying on our evaluations of the results we have obtained we do



not hesitate to claim that our results provide a view of the mainlines of existing rural condition that is worth considering.

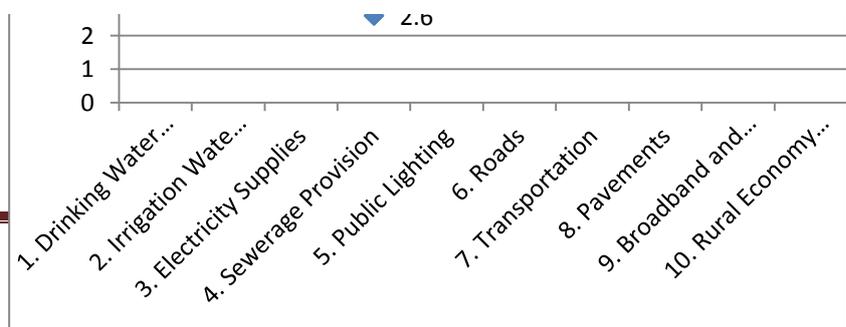
Evaluation of the Questions related to Infrastructure Services

Although participants' evaluations of infrastructure services varies depending on the districts they inhabit, certain patterns related to those services can be observed from their evaluations which could be treated as cues for imagining the level of access to those services for rural population in general. From the ten services which were asked to be evaluated, irrigation water supplies and sewerage provision were found to be inadequate in almost all provinces. In Kastamonu, for instance it was said that only 10 percent of the rural population is able to benefit from sewerage provision. Also, it was noted that traditional flood irrigation is commonly used in the same district which points to a demand for renovation



Average Scores of Participants' Evaluations of Infrastructure Services

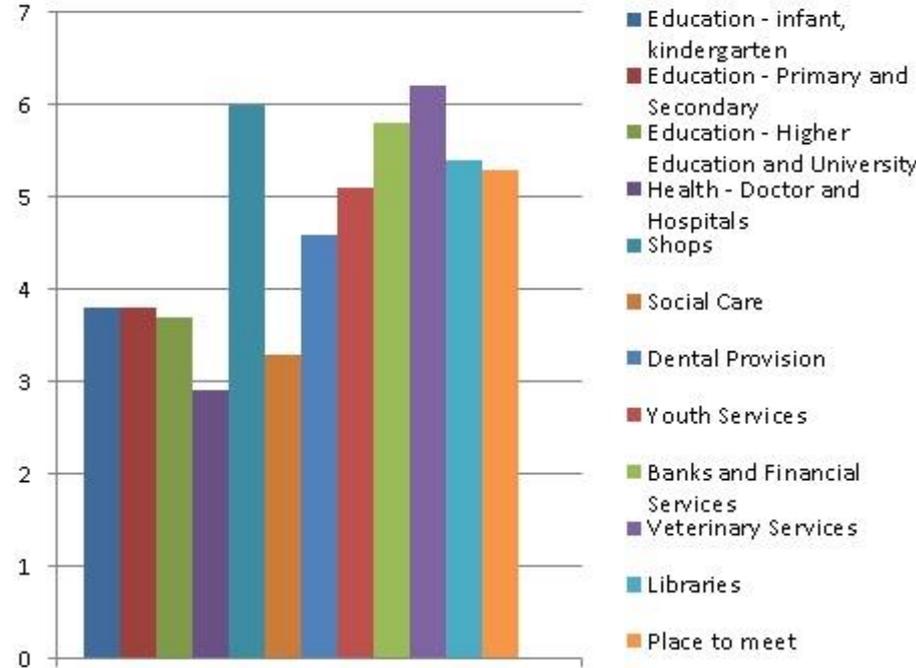
supports that will supply modern irrigation systems. While roads and transport



feasibilities were generally considered as adequate for the moment, there was a considerable demand for renovation of pavements. While drinking water and electricity supplies were evaluated generally as adequate, taking in consideration the significantly low evaluation rates of the two districts, Kastamonu and Manisa, for the related services seems to be of importance due to the vital importance of the related services. The participants marked that drinking water is supplied generally by individual's own means. Although the fact that they have access to drinking water for the moment, resource shortage is considered as a threatening factor for sustainability of drinking water supplies in general. Lastly, rural economy related infrastructure services were also generally found to be inadequate. In the places where we have obtained more positive responses about rural services there was still uneasiness about future conduct.

Evaluation of the Questions related to Rural Services

When it was asked to the participants to rank the rural services, it was seen that health and social care services are of prior importance when compared to the other services. The existing age distribution of the rural population may be interpreted as the reason why health and social care services are declared to be of prior importance. Education services of all kind occupies the following position which is in line with the existing complaints about migration that starts with educational purposes and ends up with evacuation of rural districts due to lack of job opportunities both for educated and also uneducated people. While dental provision, youth services, libraries and



Average Scores of Participants' Ranking of Rural Services in Order of Importance. (1 to 12)

places to meet have intermediary positions in terms of their importance, shops, veterinary services and banks-financial services seem not to be considered as prioritized.

All participants have declared that services are located at province centers and majority of participants have noted that in general, peripheral districts have limited access to services. Also, the majority of the participants stated that services are not equally distributed to the population. When asked what are the main factors that may inhibit the better provision or threaten the future viability of rural services and infrastructure, participants primarily emphasized biodiversity's being under threat, destruction of the habitat as extended environmental effects of dams, environmental pollution resulted from domestic and industrial waste, from releasing those wastes to water sources without treatment, damaging effects of the widespread usage of chemical manures and fertilizers as threatening for the future of rural life. It was generally stated that the present condition of rural is alarming due to the fact that in addition to the existing policies that disregards environmental sustainability, there seems to exist any political attempt that may promise enhancement in material conditions for rural population. Unplanned investments that does not concern development of rural but instead prioritize private monetary interests, treating environmental resources as profit generating resources, haphazard housing, transforming rural areas to zones for construction, in short implementations that exploits rural resources together with lack of material means, like technological equipment for sustaining production, financial resources that will attract qualified labor force to rural areas or at least will prevent the increasing migration to urban, insufficient education and social services, remain rural population insecure about their future. This condition of rural described above ends up with evacuation of rural areas with an extended rates of migration which brings the situation in a dead and circle where lack of services and lack of active population mutually constructs each other.

When asked what main factors favor the provision, viability and improvement of rural services and infrastructure, participants' have mainly proposed possible solutions for their existing constraints which have been described above. Sustainable management of natural resources, enhancement of rural development strategies and capacity increasing plans, innovative projects that will improve the material conditions of rural while at the same time protecting natural environment, financial investments that will both upgrade agricultural

production providing advanced means of production and also that will provide opportunity for diversifying areas of production were some of their main demands. In line with those demands they proposed certain concrete actions like working on for a more systematic administration of rural services, providing solutions for systematic exportation of agricultural production, extending pilot neighborhood projects, giving support for projects that will widespread recycling methods and organic way of life etc. Framing development not on the basis of economic growth in general but on the basis of enhancement of life standards summarizes the demands of the rural population.

In 2005, The Project for Supporting the Infrastructures of Villages (KÖYDES) was put into action by the Ministry of the Interior during the preparation period of the ninth development plan of Turkey. The project has been planned with an aim of providing infrastructure services to the rural districts that are deprived of those services. Major aims of the project were to provide sufficient amount of drinking water, to improve the standards of the roads, sewerage provision and small-scale irrigation water supply. While it may be the most far reaching project aiming to regenerate infrastructure services for rural districts, it has also been criticized for their being inattentive to the priorities of the population living in those areas, providing insufficient technical support and also insufficient supervision after conduct. Considering both the successes and shortages of this project would be beneficial for a better insight of the existing condition.