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### **Abstract**

The role of language and culture in rural development projects is investigated. Examples taken from the context of Northern Iran, the significance of which is not confined to its agricultural and forestry resources and extends beyond national borders, are presented. A starting point of the analysis is an appreciation of diversity, not only in the biological, but also in the cultural sense, as an asset and viewing development endeavors as sense making acts. It is further argued that new intangible forms of capital are increasingly gaining in importance in the contemporary world. Capital is considered not merely as an asset, but as a relation having accumulation moment as well, and impact on the regeneration of cultural and economic divides. A central concern is enhancing social inclusion and promoting conditions for making voices of otherness heard. It is deemed that vernacular voices encompass valuable indigenous knowledge and modes of perception, the negligence of which can undermine the success of rural development projects.

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