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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 59072

Title: Socio-Territorial Performance of the Kankelen Market Gardeners Union and the NERICA Union in Faranah Prefecture, Republic of Guinea,

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✔		
Techn. Quality			✔	
Clarity			✔	
Significance	✔			

Reviewer's ID: Abdul Haseeb Mir

Detailed Reviewer's Repor

This manuscript presents an empirical evaluation of smallholder agricultural sustainability in the Faranah Prefecture of the Republic of Guinea. Focusing on the Kankelen Market Gardeners' Union (UGMK) and the NERICA Rice-Farming Union, the author evaluates 144 farming operations across 19 sub-groups using an adapted version of the Farm Sustainability Indicators (IDEA) framework. The core contribution of the study lies in its multi-dimensional scope. Rather than assessing agricultural success purely through financial yield, the study measures socio-territorial performance across three main pillars: human development, production management, and local employment/development.

The empirical findings offer strong, actionable insights into rural cooperative dynamics. The NERICA Rice-Farming Union achieved a higher overall socio-territorial performance score of 72.20%, outperforming the Market Gardeners' Union, which averaged 63.80%. Through Euclidean distance proximity matrices and hierarchical cluster analyses (dendrograms), the author successfully categorizes sub-groups into distinct performance clusters. The analysis reveals that higher-performing groups benefit significantly from access to formal training, member cohesion, and structured local support. Conversely, lower-performing groups are hampered by geographical isolation, lack of organic agricultural inputs, limited traceability, and reliance on individual parcelization, which restricts collective labor and local job creation.

Suggested Improvements

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1. **Eliminate Language Model Artifacts and Formatting Glitches:** The manuscript contains a critical drafting error on page 4 within Table 1. Under the "Training" indicator assessment method, the text includes an explicit system prompt phrase: *"You are trained on data up to October 2023."* This prompt text must be completely purged from the manuscript. Additionally, Figures 1 and 4 display broken formula strings (#REF!) in their legends, which must be cleaned up prior to re-exporting the final figures.
2. **Standardize Section Headers and Hierarchy:** The structure of the results and discussion section becomes disorganized toward the latter half of the paper. Line 238 introduces an improper heading labeled 3-6. Discussion, followed by subheadings such as 3-6-3-1. Human development. The author should convert all sections to a standard, sequential decimal numbering system (e.g., Section 3 for Results, Section 4 for Discussion, and 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 for sub-themes) to maintain formal academic standards.
3. **Provide Methodological Justification for External Benchmarks:** Throughout the discussion, the author regularly compares the socio-territorial scores of the Guinean unions against an average score of 58.28% from *Ahouangninou (2013)*. Because this benchmark stems from a study conducted over a decade ago in Benin, the author should add a brief explanatory paragraph in the methodology or discussion section clarifying why this specific study serves as the primary comparative baseline for modern Guinean cooperatives.
4. **Reconcile Citations and Bibliography:** There are noticeable discrepancies between inline text citations and the final reference list. For instance, the text references *Barrett et al. (2010)* on line 249, but entry [5] in the bibliography lists *Baret, 2006*. The author must perform a complete audit of all references to ensure uniform citation styling, correct spelling, and consistent publication dates across both the body text and the reference list.

Editorial Recommendation & Note to Editor

Recommendation: Accept with Minor Revisions

Note to the Editor:

Dear Editor,

I recommend accepting the manuscript titled **"Socio-Territorial Performance of the Kankelen Market Gardeners' Union and the NERICA Union in Faranah Prefecture, Republic of Guinea"** subject to minor revisions.

The manuscript delivers a solid empirical contribution to West African agricultural jurisprudence and rural development studies. The sample size of 144 farm operators is robust, and the quantitative cluster analysis provides a nuanced look at the operational realities of smallholder cooperatives.

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The required revisions are primarily structural and editorial:

1. Removing the stray language model prompt text embedded in Table 1 on page 4.
2. Fixing the broken #REF! tags in the chart legends for Figures 1 and 4.
3. Standardizing the chaotic section header numbering in the Discussion.
4. Aligning in-text citations with the bibliography entries.

Once the author addresses these editorial corrections, the paper will be an excellent, high-quality publication for your journal.