Women's Leadership Motivations and State-Sponsored Empowerment: The Case of Moroccan Associative Leaders

Afsaneh J Haddadian

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Reading Committee
Reşat Kasaba, Chair
Sabine Lang
Mary Kay Gugerty

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Abstract

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Afsaneh J Haddadian

Chair of Supervisory Committee:
Reşat Kasaba, Henry M. Jackson Professor of international studies
at the University of Washington Jackson School of International Studies

This dissertation examines the impact of participatory development programs promoted by the International development banks and International NGOs (INGOs) on gender equality in Morocco. Looking at a country case study of Morocco, my research explains the motivations of women leaders who participate in development programs either as elected political representatives of their communities or as leaders of local associations/Moroccan NGOs. Through a study of official publications and interviews with women leaders, this dissertation shows how Moroccan women leaders navigate between altruistic, professional, and personal goals. Contrary to what previous studies suggest, the women leaders I interviewed exhibited much more agency as participants in different INGO and state-sponsored women's empowerment programs.

These Moroccan women leaders demonstrated self-conscious and concerted efforts to use their positions in INGO and state-sponsored programs to advance the goals of their communities, coopting corrupt male politicians in this process. Although the women leaders I interviewed

cared about supporting women and advancing gender equity, their main motivations centered on broader questions of poverty in their communities.

This dissertation shows that these women associative leaders constitute a bridge between the progressive feminist left and the conservative Islamist women groups. But given their community, professional, and personal intensions they tend to be pragmatic in their approach. That is, they use practical reasoning to deduce the right action and they reject ideology as a guide. In this regard, they would agree with Paul Collier who wrote, "in real communities the relative importance of values evolves" (Paul Collier, 2018). Between their interest in non-domination and gender equality, and community development, and their professional obligations, they constantly ask 'What, here and now, is most likely to work?'

As their work and their livelihoods occur in communities that are dealing with systemic poverty, the women associative and NGO leaders might "have to join the political parties that do not have gender justice in mind," and/or are dominated by men and a culture where "all decisions are made by men at nights in the cafes." Therefore, this group of women leaders has to constantly satisfy multiple obligations. By trying to satisfy all these obligations, these women NGO leaders, like their counterparts in Northern 'funding' agencies, 'want to do good, and do it right' (Sarah de Jong, 2018). Their work is necessary, and in many instances, positive for the goals of gender equality.

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Acronym List

NPM – New Public Management
MENA – Middle East and North Africa
GII – Gender Inequality Index
AGR – Income Generating Activities (activites generatrices de revnue)
ADFM – Association démocratique des femmes du Maroc
UAF – L'Union d'action féminine
AMDF – l'Association marocaine pour les droits des femmes
ADS – Agency for Social Development
CEDAW – The
GAD – Gender and Development
IGO – International Organization
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
IMF – International Monetary Fund
INDH – National Initiative for Human Development
NPA – National Plan of Action for Including Women in Development
UNFM – Union Nationale des Femmes Marocaines
USFP – Union Socialistes des Forces Populaires
WID – Women in Development

Chapter One – Introduction

Part I: Women's Empowerment and Global International Organizations

Throughout the 1980s, as the efficacy of central planning came into question and as the ideological discrediting of "the state" gained momentum, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were embraced by donor governments and multilateral funding agencies as partners in development. This shift in thinking was also reflected in the growing proportion of development funding handled by the NGO sector. During the 2000s in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), for instance, about half of World Bank development funds were channeled through NGOs.[1]

Social movements are supposed to be catalysts for change, according to feminist ideals. But, in practice, civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs are entrusted with the task of grassroots organizing and democratization from below and empowering women by giving them more voice in, and control over, decision-making.[2]

In 2005, King Mohammed VI of Morocco introduced the INDH (National Initiative for Human Development), emphasizing human development and democratization in forms of "social development" and "partnerships" between the state and CSOs as well as for gaining legitimacy. The project was met with encouragement and support from the international community, namely Northern development banks like the IMF and the World Bank.[3]

[1] Miller, C. & Vivian, J. M. (2002). Women's employment in the textile manufacturing sectors of Bangladesh and Morocco. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
[2] Kabeer, N. (1994). Reversed realities: Gender hierarchies in development thought (4th printed ed.). Verso; Moser, C. (1993). Gender planning and development: Theory, practice and training. Taylor & Francis Group.
[3] World Bank. (n.d.). National Human Development Initiative (INDH) Project: Maroc - Projet Initiative Nationale de Developpement Humain. World Bank. https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/261081468322770701/Maroc-Projet-Initiative-Nationale-de-Developpement-Humain

According to the World Bank and the IMF, human development is defined based on measures of the Human Development Index (HDI, developed by the United Nations Development Programme, or UNDP) and the Human Capital Index (HCI, developed by the IMF and the World Bank). The HDI is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, and have a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions.[4]

The UNDP has constructed the HDI since 1990. The 2010 Human Development Report introduced the Gender inequality index (GII), which reflects three dimensions of gender-based inequality—reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. Reproductive health is measured by maternal mortality and adolescent birth rates; empowerment is measured by the share of parliamentary seats held by women and attainment in secondary and higher education by women and men; and economic activity is measured by the labor market participation rates for women and men. The GII can be interpreted as the loss in human development due to the inequality between female and male achievements in the three dimensions of the GII.

Morocco, for example, is doing poorly: the index ranges between 0 and 1, and the country had a GII value of 0.454 and a rank of 111 out of 162 countries in the 2019 index. In Morocco, 18.4% of parliamentary seats are held by women, and only 29.1% of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 36.0% of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 70.0 women die from pregnancy-related causes, and the adolescent birth rate is 31.0 births per 1,000 women of ages 15–19. The participation of

[4] United Nations Development Programme. (2016). *Africa Human Development Report 2016*. United Nations. http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/2016-africa-human-development-report.html

women in the labor market is 21.5% compared to 70.1 for men. In comparison, Tunisia and Libya were ranked at 65 and 56, respectively, on this index.[5]

The 2010 Human Development Report also introduced the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which identifies multiple overlapping deprivations suffered by individuals in three dimensions: health, education, and standard of living. The health and education dimensions are based on two indicators each, while the standard of living is based on six indicators. The most recent survey data that were publicly available for Morocco's MPI estimation were collected in 2011. Based on this data, 18.6% of the population (6,702 thousand people) of Morocco were multidimensionally poor while an additional 13.1% were classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty (4,734 thousand people). The breadth (intensity) of deprivation in Morocco, which is the average deprivation score experienced by people in multidimensional poverty, was 45.7 percent. The MPI, which represents the share of the population that is multidimensionally poor, adjusted by the intensity of the deprivation, was 0.085. In 2011, Tunisia and Libya had MPIs of 0.003 and 0.007, respectively.[6]

NGOs, States, and Women

There seems to be a common assumption that policymakers are most responsive to political pressures, and that to be able to exert such pressure, women must organize (Young, 1993; Moser, 1993; Shiva, 1998). NGOs are thus entrusted with the task of reaching the least

[5] United Nations Development Programme. (2020). *Human Development Report 2020: The Next Frontier - Human Development and the Anthropocene*. United Nations. https://doi.org/10.18356/9789210055161; Martinez, R. (2012). Inequality and the new human development index. *Applied Economics Letters, 19*(6), 533–535.

[6] The IMF came up with the HCI (Human Capital Index) in 2014 that uses *survival rates and stunting rate instead of life expectancy* as a measure of health, and *quality-adjusted learning instead of merely years of schooling* as a measure of education. The HCI also excludes per capita income whereas the HDI uses it. Two other significant changes from the HDI are the exclusion of the income component and the introduction of quality adjustment in learning.

privileged and poorest women, helping to strengthen their existing organizational capacities into a political framework or facilitating group formation (since the poorest have often the least structural capacity to organize).

It is important to note that these gender policy advocates do not premise their arguments for NGO involvement in development (i.e., welfare provisioning, service delivery, or productive employment) on a neoliberal critique of the state. Instead, they believe NGOs to hold an advocacy role, "creating space" for women to help them articulate their demands and exert pressure on the state; in other words, to make the policy-making process more responsive to the needs of women. In this sense, the collective empowerment of poor women means "enabling them to take control of their lives, to set their agendas, to organize to help each other, and make demands on the state for support and on society itself for change" (Young, 1993, p.158).

Since it is difficult to engineer social movements, the intermediate strategy is to use NGOs as catalysts to bring together those most affected, help them understand and articulate their circumstances, and assist them in building their organizational capacities. Given the difficulties in carrying out consciousness-raising and organizational capacity building in a vacuum, some advocates have come to appreciate the practical issues around which women can be brought together. Most of these practical initiatives are essentially projects with welfare (health, education, sanitation) or production (micro-enterprises) objectives.

Moser (1993) concedes that "change instigated through 'top-down' interventions of the state as the dominant 'structure' of power, control and domination is distinct from change achieved through bottom-up mobilization of 'agency' in civil society." Since the success of gender planning depends on the participation of women, "it is the organization of women within civil society that requires examination." She then goes on to describe how NGOs can make

planning an "emancipatory process […] because of their capacity to reach the 'grass-roots' where 'real people' are … NGOs have increasingly been identified as the institutional solution for 'alternative' development models" (1993: p.191; all inverted commas in original).

Similarly, Young (1993) sees NGOs as a channel through which gender planners—state institutions and Northern funding agencies—can be kept informed of women's needs and priorities so that women's views may constitute essential inputs into project and plan revisions. In this way, NGOs can fill a missing link in efforts to integrate gender into development planning. "Government works best when it is responsive to and accountable to the bulk of the population," and NGOs can play an important part in "promoting the interests of the citizenry" (Young, 1993, p. 162). NGOs, in this sense, become catalysts for making civil society more sustainable, increasing the labor force, modernizing social relations, and running public service delivery like businesses on behalf of the state.

By following this latter logic and describing these participatory and small revenue-generating activities as purely neoliberal, critics argue that those who participate in NGOs and civil society with government funding are co-opted by the state because the state controls all the programs and funding of NGOs. This, therefore, becomes a way for the state to monitor people's participation, especially in such an authoritarian and deeply patriarchal setting as Morocco.

Since the 1990s, the engagement of national and international NGOs, whether operating in the field of development, women's rights, health, or migration, has increasingly been under scrutiny (Shiva, 1989; Escobar, 1995; Sogge 1996; Miller and Razavi 1998; Kothari 2005; Kane 2013).[7] The three factors that importantly defined NGOs—independence from the state,

[7] Shiva, V. (1998). *Staying alive: Women, ecology, and development.* Zed Books.; Escobar, A. (1995). *Encouraging development: The making and unmaking of the Third World.* Princeton University Press.; Sogge, D. (1996). Settings and choices. In D. Sogge (Ed.), *Compassion and Calculation: The Business of Private Foreign Aid* (pp. 1–23), Pluto Press.; Kothari, U. (2005). Authority and expertise: The professionalization of international development and the

nonprofit status, and their nonviolent nature—have been questioned because of, respectively, NGOs' increased reliance on state donor funding and involvement in global governance, the aid sector's transformation into an industry where aid workers act as moral entrepreneurs, and, finally, NGOs' support for Western military (humanitarian) interventions. Today, NGOs are often contrasted with social movements, with the former characterized as more bureaucratic, depoliticized, hierarchical, and dependent on external funding than the latter (Petras 1997).[8] Many critics of NGOs generally tend to favor autonomous social movements as a locus of politics "from below" over the more top-down NGOs.

Critics have also pointed out that NGOs, rather than being answerable to those they seek to represent and provide services for, are only accountable to their donors. Donors generally encourage a concentration on service delivery over political advocacy (Miller and Razavi 1998; Eyben 2006). Though a result of "NGOization" of the women's movement has been relative job security for some former activists, it is also feared that this has led to a reduction of radical feminist political spaces, an increasing dependence on the state, a legitimization of state's pull-back in welfare provision, and a rise of project-based work that negates long-term political goals (Lang 1997; Alvarez 1998, Mayoux 1998; de Alwis 2009). Postcolonial feminist Chandra Mohanty speaks of a "mainstreaming of [the] feminist movement" in which feminism has been replaced by (women's) rights discourses (Mohanty 2003, 249). Furthermore, because only a few organizations have the material and economic capacity to transform themselves into NGOs with high-status networks, it is feared that the divide between professional NGOs and informal

ordering of dissent. *Antipode, 37*(3), 425-446; Kane, M. (2013). International NGOs and the aid industry: Constraints on international solidarity. *Third World Quarterly, 34*(8), 1505–1515.

[8] Petras, J. (1997). Imperialism and NGOs in Latin America. *Monthly Review, 49*(7), 10–27.

organizations mirrors other inequalities along the global North–global South axis (Moghdam, 2005).

There has been a strong feminist tradition of questioning whether the bureaucratic form of organization is by its very nature oppressive to women as the "institutional arm of male dominance."[9] We might see bureaucracies as instruments of discipline that work to maintain the status quo, sometimes despite the best intentions of those working for change from within. Thus, feminists face the dilemma of engaging with the state machinery in order to change it, while devoting most of their time to performing the tasks that the bureaucracy requires of them, after which the machinery fails to deliver the "hoped-for" transformations.

This sheds further light on the fact that even if the state seems to be disengaging itself from some of its core duties (education, poverty reduction, etc.) when integrating private actors into the implementation of public policies, it does not, in fact, lose much of its control.

If the state seems to be disengaging itself from certain public policies (as is the case in several other countries in the era of neoliberalism), by leaving space for private actors such as NGOs to take over its duties, the state is actually—as Hibou[10] (1998, 1999) argues—integrating and co-opting these same actors as the state system weakens representative forms of rule through a mode of governance that Weber called "the discharge."[11] Standing[12] further argues that donors' conventional approaches to policy lead to their failure to consider how bureaucracies work in

[9] Calás, M. & Smircich, L. (1999). Past postmodernism? Reflections and tentative directions. *The Academy of Management Review, 24*(4), 649–671. doi:10.2307/259347; Ashcraft, K. L. (2006). Feminist-bureaucratic control and other adversarial allies: Extending organized dissonance to the practice of "new" forms. *Communication Monographs, 73*(1), 55–86.
[10] Hibou, B. (1998). Retrait ou redéploiement de l'État? *Critique internationale (Paris. 1998),* (1), 151–168.
[11] Weber, M. (1991). Histoire économique. Esquisse d'une histoire universelle de l'économie et de la société,1923; édition française, Paris, Gallimard-NRF, Bibliothèque des Sciences humaines, pp. 85-92 notamment.
[12] Cornwall, A. & Edwards, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Feminisms, empowerment and development: Changing women's lives.* Zed Books.

many aid-recipient countries, with gender "focal points," tools, and checklists becoming part of a self-perpetuating industry that depoliticizes and makes technical what had begun as a political agenda. Gender planning "which place[s] the onus on the bureaucracy to drive social transformation, especially where the political legitimacy of the institutions of government is already fragile, will therefore continue to run into the hot sands of evaporation" (Standing, 2014: p. 84). Standing further argues that donors are naïve about the causal links between policy intentions and outcomes, and unrealistically confident that gender and development planning can identify women's interests and devise pathways to advance them.

Part II: Women's Empowerment in Morocco: Partnerships Between the State and Associations

> "Dear people, the social question holds my full attention and calls out to Me both as King and as a man [...]. I insist on the need to focus on the emergency measures to be implemented in the following areas: [...] Launch the third phase of the National Initiative for Human Development, by consolidating its achievements and refocusing its programs on the development of human capital, the promotion of the condition of rising generations, support for categories in difficult situations, and by launching a new generation of income-generating and job-generating initiatives."[13]

Morocco entered the era of neoliberalism with the implementation of a structural adjustment program (1983–94) mandated by the World Bank and the IMF, which entailed policies of market deregulation and the state's withdrawal from the public sector in favor of private investment and voluntary organizations.[14] (Bogaert, 2011; Newcomb, 2017). This process

13 Moroccan Ministry of the Ingerior. INDH. Chantier de Règne—Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain. INDH. http://www.indh.ma/chantier-de-regne/

[14] Newcomb, R. (2017). *Everyday life in global Morocco*. Indiana University Press. http://lib.myilibrary.com?id=1042722; Zemni, S. & Bogaert, K. (2011). Urban renewal and social development in

followed three main paths: first, a constitutional reform authorized the gradual participation of the (leftist and nationalist) opposition in the government; second, indirect negotiations with the Islamists of al-Islāh wa-l-tajdīd gave birth to the first Islamist party of the country, al- ʻAdāla wa-l-tanmia, authorized in 1997; and third, state institutions and the media were engaged in discourse on citizenship and human rights (Waltz, 1995).[15]

As part of these neoliberal reforms, the Moroccan government made efforts to modernize its public services by introducing new public management (NPM). Making its appearance in the late 1990s, NPM aspired to manage public services as private companies are managed.[16] As NPM emerged in OECD affiliated countries,[17] its adoption required redefining public sector values such as increasing women presence in the public decision-making (Hyndman, 2016; Hood, 1991). The NPM reform narrative included the growth of markets and quasi markets within public services, empowerment of management, and active performance measurement across initiatives. In Morocco, these reforms included the adoption of results-based management and increased decentralization with a focus on the practice of internal auditing and measurements within the government.[18] This meant that, in delivering public services, the government emphasized entrepreneurship and citizen participation.

Morocco in an age of neoliberal government. *Review of African Political Economy*, *38*(129), 403–417. https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2011.603180

[15] Waltz, S. (1995). *Human rights and reform: Changing the face of North African politics*. University of California Press.

[16] Saint-Martin, D. (2004). Building the new managerialist state: Consultants and the politics of public sector reform in comparative perspective. Oxford University Press.; Pollitt, C., Talbot, C., Caulfield J., & Smullen, A. (2004). Agencies: How governments do things through semi-autonomous organizations. Palgrave Macmillan.; Hyndman, N., & Lapsley, I. (2016). New Public Management: The story continues. *Financial Accountability & Management, 32*(4), 385–408.

[17] Namely Great Britain and France.

[18] Dekri, M., Maskini, N., & Touili, K. (2017). The new practices of the Public Management in Morocco: The use of the internal audit. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management. 5*(3).; Lahjouji, K. (2019). Reflection of the New Public Management, case of Morocco. *Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM), 26*(6).

In 2005, the Moroccan government launched a participatory development plan to allow neighborhood and local associations and NGOs to run as businesses. The plan enabled the organizations to take a more active role in generating income and deciding what projects they need for their communities and making proposals to finance them with help from the government funding.[19]

The kick-off of this initiative took place on May 18, 2005.[20] That day, King Mohammed VI announced the launch of a large-scale five-year program (2005–2010) to promote the development of the country by favoring a participative approach and close, local partnerships between the state, elected representatives, and associations. The call was made to all the institutions and national actors to participate in what the young monarch presented as a "construction site of reign."[21]

Similarly, associations and NGOs are considered privileged partners in the distribution of foreign aid and in the execution of development programs that particularly target women and the poor. Changes were introduced in 2002 to the law of associations since 1975, and the changes remain in effect today.[22] The new legislation facilitated and encouraged the development of associations. Most importantly, it provided larger sources of diversified funding for the NGOs and associations. Furthermore, the changes made it so associations could receive grants from public or semi-public bodies, regional, provincial, local, or even municipal bodies. Associations

19 Became law with a Dahir by Hassan II in 1975.

20 Lamia Zaki rightly observes that this date was set two days after the anniversary of the May 16, 2003 attacks on the city of Casablanca, which reinforced the idea conveyed by the press in the aftermath of these events that poverty Islamism and terrorism were intimately linked. Zaki Lamia, « L'action publique au bidonville : l'État entre gestion par le manque, « éradication » des kariens et accompagnement social des habitants », *L'Année du Maghreb, édition 2005-2006,* Paris, CNRS, 2007, p. 304.

21 18 March 2005

22 Lafrouji, M. (2010). *Droits des aasociations et des cooperatives*. Najah Al Jadida.

could also benefit from private sector support in the form of loans, donations, and grants in cash or in kind. There are some added tax benefits to these sources of financing, though they remain very limited: all non-profit associations are exempt from corporation taxes for operations specified by the objectives in the organization's statute. As a result, local associations theoretically have access to more diversified funding sources.[23]

Of all the programs and partnership opportunities that have emerged between the Moroccan state and its international and transnational partners, the Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain—or the National Initiative for Human Development, referred to hereafter as the INDH—had the most significant impact on the paths of the women leaders that I interviewed. Major funding agencies, such as the World Bank and the UN (through private–public partnerships), fund and support the INDH.

[23] Yaagoubi, M. E. & Rousset, M. (2006). *Reflexions sur la démocratie locale au Maroc*. El Maârif Jadida.

Table 1: Morocco and the World Bank – 2021

• 2021 Projected Real GDP (% Change): 4.5
• 2021 Projected Consumer Prices (% Change): 0.8
• Country Population: 35.952 million
• Date of Membership: April 25, 1958
• Article IV/Country Report: January 5, 2021

• Outstanding Purchases and Loans (SDR): 1499.8 million (February 28, 2021)
• Special Drawing Rights (SDR): 617.6 million
• Quota (SDR): 894.4 million
• Number of Arrangements Since Membership: 20

In 2019, Moroccan public debt was 69,667 million euros or 77,992 million US dollars, 1,028 million more than in 2018. This means that the debt in 2019 reached 65.16% of Morocco's GDP, a 0.04 percentage point decrease from 2018 when it was 65.2% of the GDP.

Making and Encouraging Associations: The National Initiative for Human Development

To start, the INDH favors work on the local level for social and economic development. Particular attention is paid to priority sites identified by provincial and prefectural committees that are made up of government and association leaders. For example, during the first phase in urban areas, 264 neighborhoods in 30 cities were identified as suffering from precariousness, poverty, and social exclusion, according to institutional reports of a separate agency that was created to coordinate and evaluate the INDH.

King Mohammed VI announced Phase III of the INDH in 2018 and allocated 18 billion Moroccan dirhams to the program over 5 years. This sum is 1/5 of the 2019 GDP of Morocco, which was over 1 trillion dirhams, and is partly covered by the general state budget and by funding from external donors (including the World Bank and the European Union) and private donors. In other words, the INDH helps to channel different sources of funding for development aid into a common program. The subsidies generally go through development agencies like Agence de Development Social (ADS), or public offices like the National Mutual Aid, which then help to channel this funding to the base.

Through this national program, micro-projects are developed and implemented by the public authorities in close collaboration with elected representatives and local associations. The INDH particularly values the work of neighborhood associations. Local leaders, assumed to represent the interests of the inhabitants of each neighborhood, act as the most basic link that allows participation from the bottom up, including the most vulnerable populations.

Associations may propose projects of different scopes and, if successful, their leaders receive a grant to complete them. In the selection process, priority is given to associations specializing in social and local development issues who propose projects that target the most disadvantaged populations of the neighborhoods (women, children, youths, and the disabled). The focus is mainly on projects that promote income-generating activities (AGR) and the development of micro-enterprises that can generate income. Therefore, the training component (e.g., in sewing, carpentry, catering, hairdressing, and business management) is particularly valued.

A national coordination bureau under the direct supervision of the Interior Ministry—the National Observatory for Human Development—manages the INDH. The headquarters for

national coordination of INDH activities is in the Interior Ministry. There is at least one office for INDH activities in the interior ministry for each region.[24] The central state has powers of legislation and regulation, while the local authorities are in charge of operationalizing the objectives put in place by the central power. It is the *Wali* or the governor of each region who monitors the program operations and allocation of funds in each region.

Multiple institutions and intergovernmental partnerships support the operationalization of these activities.[25] The use of language emphasizing partnership and participation among local elected members and government bureaucrats in Rabat, Casablanca, and Marrakech—the majority of whom are men—was common during field my research in 2015 and 2016. When asked about their priorities as local elected members, one responded:

> "Citizen participation in the framework of the INDH is a high stake for us because it helps us in assessing public needs, because they [citizens] are better situated to talk about their concerns. This is why it is necessary to make them participate."[26]

Another public official mentioned that citizen participation is important for local representatives and parties because, according to his majesty the King:

> "The projects have to be the expectations of the population.We no longer ignore the recommendations of the population. The projects are formed on the basis of a bottom-up process; they start from the associations and go up from there. There is a big change in the fact that decisions are no longer made in our offices, but they are taken at the population level. There is a change in the structure of decision-making powers. Our role

[24] I visited the Ministry of the Interior for the Marrakech region in Marrakech to speak with an INDH representative and arrange to visit an NGO for orphaned children that was funded by the National Initiative in 2016.
[25] Berriane, Y. (2015). The micropolitics of reform: Gender quota, grassroots associations and the renewal of local elites in Morocco. *The Journal of North African Studies*, *20*(3), 432–449. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2015.1017815
[26] Interview 1, or I(1)

is to ensure that projects reflect the will of the people because this is what it makes them effective long term." [27]

Alternatively, in order to make citizens participate within the INDH framework, the public powers have made calls for the use of "experts." These are usually independent consultants who are social development agents or members of what are called animation teams (équipes d' animation) in urban quartiers and rural communes. The animation teams are government representatives that are trained to carry out focus groups and interviews, as well as consulting, internal auditing, and evaluation of projects put forward by "citizens."

The literature, though limited, does not paint a positive outlook of the INDH achieving its gender equality goals. In Morocco, many blame the political party system headed by the King as "arbitrator of conflict," as well as the bureaucracy or the elites as its bureaucratic agents as well as the corrupt political parties. The literature does not go beyond describing the initiative as purely neoliberal. As a case study of "inclusive" neoliberalism and institutionalist governance modes to poverty reduction, Bergh[28] notes that the findings on the INDH presented in her article "show the (both intended and unintended) outcomes of such an 'impossibly rational and elaborate, a perfect and expensive system laid down on a very fraught local situation' that ultimately contributes to an 'inclusion delusion', weakened political accountability and the redeployment of (authoritarian) state power." Bono[29] argues that the technical language used by many actors creates a "performance civil society" that applies to women's participation in leadership positions, especially in the INDH framework. This literature rightly argue that state

[27] I(2)

[28] Bergh, S. I. (2012). 'Inclusive' neoliberalism, local governance reforms and the redeployment of state power: The case of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) in Morocco. *Mediterranean Politics*, *17*(3), 410–426. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2012.725304

[29] Bono, I. (2010). *Le « phénomène participatif » au Maroc à travers ses styles d'action et ses normes.*

motivations are diluted in larger factors for state security. These factors are: first, combating "Islamism," especially after the 2003 Casablanca attack; second, gaining legitimacy; and third, presenting a positive image to the international community and the population of Morocco by including them as objects of development (Berriane 2011; Salime 2005; Elliot 2015).

Part III: Women as Subjects and Objects of Development

The "pre-determined political opportunity structures" (McAdam, 1999)[30] discussed in part II that make women the objects and subjects of state development are set against a background of women civil society and party organizing, taking the form of pressures from women feminist and women Islamist (pro-Shari'a) groups to improve the status of women.

In Morocco, women's movements have historically existed at the intersection of a highly centralized political system and highly inscribed patriarchal gender codes. Daoud[31] divides the history of the Moroccan women's movement, which according to her is "a struggle for individual rights and for progress," into three distinct periods. The first period, the nationalist and early independence era (the 1930s to 1965), saw the birth of the "woman question" and the first nationalist women's organization. Daoud describes the following post-independence period (1965–1985) as a "long winter" (*un long hiver*) in which the "woman question" was overshadowed by struggles against the repressive policies of the state. During this period, the

[30] McAdam, D. (1999). *Political process and the development of Black insurgency, 1930–1970* (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press. P.198

[31] Daoud, Z. (1993). Féminisme et politique au Maghreb : 1930-1992. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose. Sadiqi, F. & Ennaji, M. (2011). *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: Agents of change* (Vol. 2). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203851579; Al-Ali, N. S. (2000). *Secularism, gender, and the state in the Middle East: The Egyptian women's movement*. Cambridge University Press.; Ennaji, M. (2010). Multiculturalism, gender and political participation in Morocco. *Diogenes*, *57*(1), 46–57. https://doi.org/10.1177/0392192110374247; Hanafi, L. (2012). Moudawana and women's rights in Morocco: Balancing national and international law. *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law*, *18*(2), 515–529.

modernist convictions of nationalist leaders were sacrificed to neonationalist imperatives of unity under the authority of the highly patriarchal law and a holy father-king.

The period starting in 1985 and ending in 1992, according to Daoud and many others,[32] was "a turning point" in the Moroccan women's movement, and Daoud describes it as an "explosion of potentialities" after a long period of maturation. The first independent feminist organization was established in 1985, and by 1992, leftist feminist organizations had organized the One Million Signatures Campaign demanding the reform of the Moudawana, or personal status code—the law regulating family affairs.

Between 1992 and 2004, several NGOs were established around feminist ideologies, and a struggle for women's rights took over the leadership of a working group that campaigned for reforms of the Moudawana, which severely restricted the rights of women in Morocco. The fight to reform the Moudawana took place over decades, a movement that began with the inception of the law in the late 1950s. However, this particular campaign, led by first by the Union de l'Action Feminine (Union for Women's Action, UAF) and later the Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc (Moroccan Women's Democratic Association, ADFM), is important because it is marked by two major successes, one in 1993 and the other in 2004, that have since redefined both how women are viewed in the public sphere (by the law and society) as well as how women's groups can gain access to the political arena to have their demands realized.[33]

The UAF began its campaign on March 3, 1992, with an announcement through its newspaper, 8 Mars, that they were launching the One Million Signatures Campaign, which would demonstrate the large public support for the reforms of the Moudawana that many

[33] https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/moroccan-feminist-groups-campaign-reform-moudawana-personal-status-codeislamic-family-law-19

feminist groups were demanding. The petition reached its goal of one million signatures and was presented to the Prime Minister who, with King Hassan II, formed a commission of religious scholars to review the UAF's demands, which included the removal of laws on polygamy and of the principle that a husband has ultimate authority over his wife. Members of the religious right responded with a counter-petition as well as a fatwa, a non-binding religious opinion on Islamic law given by an Islamic scholar, which countered the UAF's interpretations of equality, justice, and tolerance.

Despite the counterattacks, the commission formed by the King pushed some of the reforms that had been demanded in the petition, such as a new requirement for a bride's verbal consent to marriage, the elimination of a father's right to force his daughter to marry, and the requirement to obtain a judge's permission in cases of polygamy and a husband's repudiation of his wife.

Although these changes were not a particularly grand success because they did not get at the heart of the demands the UAF and others were hoping for, they were especially important because they broke through a long-standing belief that the Moudawana was inflexible due to its justifications rooted in religious doctrine.

In February 2004, the Moroccan Parliament passed a new code that included over 100 amendments that, for example, abolished marital tutorship and the principle of obedience to the husband, set new divorce procedures, established a legal age for marriage (18 years) for men and women alike, expanded legal guardianship rights for women, added restrictive regulations for polygamy, and allowed grandchildren to inherit from maternal as well as paternal grandparents.

The international and Northern discourse of women in development (WID) also shaped the creation of new institutions supervised by women and new state actors—namely, the Office

for the Integration of Women in Development (IFD). Created within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the 1990s, this office's mission was to channel funds for NGO projects, monitor the work of women's groups, and facilitate their access to global funds and conferences. The office was funded through different UN programs and other sponsors interested in gender and development (Brand, 1998).

In this way, this International discourse also accompanied the opening of state institutions and international funds to women's groups (Belarbi 1997; Denoeux and Gateau 1995). Furthermore, women's groups were well-positioned with their use of liberal rights language to become included in the state project as "experts" in development and forces of "moderation," working alongside state officials and providing expertise for international funding programs.[34]

Women in Feminist and Islamic Organizations

Morocco introduced its first plan for including women in development under the banner of the National Plan of Action for Integrating Women into Development (NPA) in 1999, promising to remove the conditions of gender inequalities from the Moudawana. The NPA was the outcome of teamwork between feminist groups and the newly elected socialist government. It drew heavily upon the United Nations conventions on women's rights, notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). The project was met with opposition by Islamists and conservatives, polarizing Moroccan society and the women's movement alike, with "secular" feminists supporting the reform and "pro-sharia" Islamists opposing it, resulting in street demonstrations on March 12, 2000.[35]

[34] Salime, Z. (2011). *Between feminism and Islam: Human rights and Sharia Law in Morocco*. University of Minnesota Press. http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=776553
[35] Ibid.

Salime (2011)[36] notes that "by rejecting the label of 'feminism,' Islamist activists wish to stress their differences with feminist groups who, presumably, have left the colonial, secular, and individualistic grounds of the term unchecked. To them, feminism sets men and women against one another by placing too much emphasis on conflicts and asymmetries. Their alternative is a discourse that stresses men's and women's equality before god" (page#). Thus, neither women nor men have rights in abstract terms. Women's "rights" are their husbands' obligations before God and vice versa.

Islamists criticize feminism because, instead of engaging in struggles against economic exploitation, (neo)colonialism, and political despotism, it subsumes all social, political, and economic problems under gender divisions. This way, feminist groups shift the focus to men, characterizing them as enemies. The term "gender" is subject to similar doubts. Besides its presumably Western origin, gender narratives may go as far as erasing the natural differences between men and women while paving the way for alternative (and Western) sexual identities, orientations, and families.

Salime shows that similar views about feminism are expressed by the leaders of feminist organizations. Many of them object to the use of the term "feminism" to refer to their activism. But while Islamist activists are unanimous in their rejection of the term, feminists' positions could be described as existing along a spectrum ranging from open feminism, which is a minor trend, to a more nuanced engagement with or total rejection of the term.

Supported by feminists and opposed by Islamists because of a lack of attention to sensitivities of Shari'a law, the NPA became a source of contestation between the two groups resulting in rallies in 2000. The rhetoric of the war on terror in 2001 and the Casablanca attacks

[36] Ibid.

of 2003 eventually changed the equation in favor of the feminists, Salime (2005) notes. It is within this context that the feminists became "experts" in development and the women Islamists pushing for improvements for the status of women got incorporated into the state project as forces of "moderation."[37]

The attacks in 2003 undermined the legitimacy of political Islam in the official discourse and provided feminist groups with an opportunity to reposition themselves as the agents for the new era of fighting "terrorism" through "state feminism." These new arrangements brought about two major effects. First, it was in this context that feminist groups managed to eventually work out the reform of the Moudawana from within these institutions in 2004. Second, Salime argues that the Islamist activists appropriated the discursive tropes of the "war on terror" and redefined their meanings to support their political positions. The discourse of "moderation," a key component of post-9/11 American discourse, was appropriated by these activists as a means to position "motherhood" and "womanhood" at the center of the agenda of fighting terrorism as forces of moderation. The mid-1980s also saw the massive involvement of women in male Islamist organizations. Women became a major force in the Islamist movements because of their grassroots politics and easy access to wide networks of women across social, cultural, and economic spectrums. The imperatives of gender division in space and labor, helped women gradually integrate into some leadership positions. Women were initially needed to provide services and literacy courses to other women. Considered free from sexual harassment and social differentiation, Islamist organizations represented the best option for a young generation of women looking for a safe public space for action.

The two Islamist organizations of al-'Adl wa-l-ihsāne and al-Tawhīd wa-l-islāh include the

[37] Ibid.

most important women's component of the Islamist movement known to date in Morocco, as women form up to 30% of these two movements' various structures. This women's leadership is important, politically salient, and publicly active working both within and parallel to these two mass organizations.

It is worth noting that the rise of this leadership, Salime (2005) notes, owes a great deal to feminist activism, which propelled the Islamist movements to encourage alternatives to secular feminism from within. However, compared to the leaders of feminist organizations, the Islamist women's leadership is composed of a relatively younger generation of educated and middle-class professional women in their late thirties and mid-forties. Zakia Salime showed in her study of Moroccan secular and Islamist women's movements, Moroccan Islamist women have developed a different conception of equality based on the *mutual* submission of both men and women to the will of God. However, she argues that the two movements have major overlaps that have shaped the discursive and visible women's empowerment paradigm in Morocco.

This chapter illustrates that the social and economic development associations established in the 1980s have created spaces that foster the development of women association leaders. These associations are neither partisan nor charity-based and their objective is the amelioration of socioeconomic conditions for marginalized populations. Their activities involve undertaking medium and small enterprises, as well as improving women's socioeconomic conditions by targeting, in particular, sanitary and education problems. These organizations largely benefit from micro-financing and loans from the World Bank and other lending organizations. By the end of the 1990s, the phenomenon of development associations, that had begun in urban areas,

spread to rural regions as well. Migrant youth and marginally literate women have played a key role in establishing such programs in their regions of origin.[38]

As explained in the first part of this chapter, NGOization[39]—promoted by international NGOs (INGOs) and the state of Morocco, especially since 2005—has created a new generation of women association and NGO leaders whom, I argue, complement a bridge between two of the most visible women's movements: the feminist movement and the women's pro-Shari'a movement, both of which are now institutionalized in Moroccan politics. This third milieu demands that the basic needs of every Moroccan family that lives in poverty are met. These women leaders have mentioned being involved in projects for youth activities and building the village elementary school and an olive production site, among other ventures.

Part IV: Research Question and Methods

There are two gaps in the current debates. First, in general, there is little research that looks at Southern women's motivations for helping people (though there is significant research that examines this for Northern women).[40] Studies that have explored the subjectivities of NGO workers have mostly concentrated on the positions of Northern people toward the Other—Southern people—and have therefore not addressed positions of Southern NGO workers towards

[38] Lacroix, T. (2005). *Les réseaux marocains du développement — géographie du transnational et politiques du territorial*. Presses de Sciences Po.

[39] Lang, S. (2000). NGOs, local governance, and political communication processes in Germany. *Political Communication*, *17*(4), 383–387. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600050178997; Beyond NGO-ization?: Reflections from Latin America. *Development (Society for International Development)*, *52*(2), 175–184. https://doi.org/10.1057/dev.2009.23

[40] By Southern and Northern I mean women who live in the Global South and those who live in the Global North as defined by the International and area studies.

the Other.[41] de Jong (2017)[42] explains that Northern women NGO workers justify their work helping others in relation to the opportunities that they have enjoyed themselves. De Jong explains that their sense of professionalism is also personal: that they want to "do good and do it right." When they are asked about their privileged positions as Northern NGO members, de Jong explains that there is a "run to innocence" that happens—they bring their own womanhood into their work, emphasizing how they are underprivileged as women. Their motivations are only for women, and gender is the primary problem partly because of NGOs' priorities set by the NGO leadership and partly for women's own run to innocence which is a "liberal" understanding of development as opposed to a "liberating" one (Cornwall, 2014). The second gap in the literature is the lack of investigation into the micro-dynamics of these practices on the ground in Morocco.[43]

Research Question

Juxtaposing different goals by the state/international organizations (IOs) for women's empowerment (such as increasing representation in the labor force and modernizing social relations/neoliberal development policies) on the one hand and the motivations of women leaders on the other, this study asks whether the motives/intentions of the state/IOs and women leaders

[41] Baaz, M. E. (2005). *The paternalism of partnership: A postcolonial reading of identity in development aid*. Zed Books.; Charlés, L. L. (2016). *Intimate colonialism: Head, heart, and body in West African development work*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315426099; Cook, N. (2007). *Gender relations in global perspective: Essential readings*. Canadian Scholars' Press.; Heron, B. (2005). Self-reflection in critical social work practice: Subjectivity and the possibilities of resistance. *Reflective Practice*, *6*(3), 341–351. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623940500220095

[42] de Jong, S. (2017). *Complicit sisters: Gender and women's issues across North-South divides*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190626563.001.0001

[43] Bergh, S. I. (2012). 'Inclusive' neoliberalism, local governance reforms and the redeployment of state power: The case of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) in Morocco. *Mediterranean Politics*, *17*(3), 410–426. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2012.725304; Berriane, Y. (2015). The micropolitics of reform: Gender quota, grassroots associations and the renewal of local elites in Morocco. *The Journal of North African Studies*, *20*(3), 432–449. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2015.1017815; Bono, I. (2010). *Le « phénomène participatif » au Maroc à travers ses styles d'action et ses normes*. Dissertation publication.

as subjects of development (women leaders) align. If they do not, how do women leaders appropriate the spaces created by the discourse of empowerment? As mentioned, the literature is limited and only describes these initiatives in terms of the negative neoliberal agenda of the state and the IOs from above. This study highlights women subverting and appropriating the positions they hold, thus illuminating their potential to rise beyond the cage of neoliberalization. I argue that:

a. These women leaders are pragmatic bridge-builders between ideologically/religiously divided women's equality agendas. By explaining these women's pathways to association work as well as their activities, ideologies, and motivations, I show that these women leaders constantly adapt and appropriate the state, Islamic, and feminist agendas to advance their own goals.

b. INDH and INGO funding have allowed for political opportunity structures in which these women leaders found training and legitimacy for their work as well as material livelihoods.

c. Therefore, a blanket critique of international development, INGOs, and the INDH in Morocco should give way to a more nuanced assessment that takes the empowerment of local women leaders, and its consequences for poverty relief, social cohesion, etc., into account.

Methods

I used official documents and interviews as the primary sources of inquiry. I interviewed 30 women leaders and close to 50 civil society and political leaders in total—women and men—over the course of 7 months of fieldwork research. The interviews took place in 2015 and 2016. I used two of my contacts in the Moroccan civil society to receive introductions to NGO workers

in the cities of Rabat and Casablanca as well as in the Greater Marrakech region. I then used snowball sampling in order to recruit more research participants in Rabat and Casablanca. I used a demographic survey at the beginning of each interview. View appendices A and B for summary tables of the demographic survey data collected. I visited the interior ministries in Rabat and Marrakech for interviews with key informants and to gain access to some of the NGOs supported by the INDH. The Moroccan association milieu is networked, so snowball sampling seemed to be an effective method for identifying research participants. The "space association" in the Tahanaout region of Greater Marrakech further introduced me to research participants in rural areas of Marrakech. See the Appendices for an overview of the research participants.

I used a grounded theory approach that is more concerned with a direct understanding of the social world than research traditions that rely on indirect observation and perception. The purpose of grounded theory is to develop a theory about phenomena of interest, but this is not just abstract theorizing. Instead, the theory needs to be grounded in observation and build on other theories. Grounded theory is an iterative process. The research begins with the raising of generative questions which help to guide the research but are not intended to be either static or confining. As the researcher begins to gather data, core theoretical concepts are identified. Tentative linkages are developed between the theoretical core concepts and the data. This early phase of the research tends to be very open and can take months. Later the researcher is more engaged in verification and summary. The effort tends to evolve toward one central *core category*.[44] For example, as I started the fieldwork, I was hoping to find some negative and positive cases to compare after a few months. However, I realized that I was asking the wrong question, and I should have been asking what had changed, or whether the women were

[44] Lofland, J. (1995). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (3rd ed.). Wadsworth.

empowered, appropriating spaces, etc. Secondly, looking for outputs similar to existing outcomes[45] with "positive" and "negative" cases for comparison while looking for impacts of a program as diverse as the INDH with equally diverse subjects and objects, did not do justice to the agency of women leaders. Therefore, I revised the research questions to reflect this diversity and non-linearity.

I use a feminist lens, aiming to look for gendered non-domination. The rise of New Social History in the 1960s also entailed a New Labor History, for which proponents such as E.P. Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm stressed the need to contextualize labor struggles in societal structures and cultural praxes. Using feminist philosophy, I contextualize labor struggles using three poles: the protective services of the patriarchal state, the liberalizing forces of the market, and the social reproductive forces of caregiving.[46] Culturally, I put women's struggles between post-colonial national security forces and forces of tradition—and the Islamic Orthodoxy that enables them—in Morocco.[47]

My positionality as an Iranian woman who had spent half of her career in the NGO sector and half at the university has given me an outsider–insider perspective of my research participants: while I understood many of the criticisms leveled towards the women NGO leaders that I interviewed, I also understood women leaders' struggles in navigating the authoritarian patriarchal state's institutions and discourses. Further, as an Iranian woman, I could relate to the many insider reformist perspectives that would describe the INDH as a steppingstone in achieving greater gender equality. As a woman, I denied that the research was about women to begin with because I found it difficult, as in "breaking with old ground," to so directly engage

[45] Gugerty, Mary Kay, & Karlan, Dean. (2018). The Goldilocks Challenge. New York: Oxford University Press.
[46] Fraser, N. (2013). *Fortunes of feminism: From state-managed capitalism to neoliberal crisis*. Verso Books.
[47] Mernissi, F. (1987). *Beyond the veil: Male-female dynamics in modern Muslim society* (Revised ed.). Indiana University Press.

with patriarchy and definitions and instances of gendered non-domination. I had to overcome this researcher bias in order to be able to look beyond hierarchy and the normativity that it created.

Chapter Two – State and Women: Institutions and Discourses

Introduction

By analyzing the context in which the Moroccan state is promoting its "gender approach," this chapter shows that public policies in favor of wider participation of women have the advantage of raising the issue of women's social discrimination, apprehending the problem of their legal inferiority, and promoting their inclusion in the public sphere. At the same time, we will see that these policies also pass through a (re)production of representations that maintain the central patriarchal role of the state and gender stereotypes on which the gendered divisions of labor are based.

This chapter is divided into three parts to show how women leaders navigate the political opportunity structures (POS) available to them and how those structures condition women's activities. The first part describes some of the INDH's participatory discourses and institutions that create the political opportunity context for women association leaders' presence. The second part of this chapter examines the discursive style of King Mohammed VI in communicating with his domestic and international audiences. Finally, the third part of this chapter analyzes the state's intentions by building on the previous two parts with key informant interviews and some of the limited literature on the topic. The chapter shows that, although diluted in larger issues of security, the INDH has opened political opportunity structures for local women community leaders to find support and legitimacy for their work and livelihoods.

In the next chapter, I argue that these women association leaders are identifiable by the work they do, which is focused on infrastructure and service delivery to the poor while married to a state rhetoric that domestically promotes women's participation in the traditional sense—that

is, according to Islamic values. I also highlight the more progressive family code established in 2004 in law, and language and techniques indexed by IOs.

In a 2014 World Bank Report, the outcomes in terms of indicators indexed by the bank were moderate: "Overall, therefore, participation by civil society, elected representatives, women and youth, and the poor, in governance structures exceeded quantitative targets. The quality of this participation is, however, more difficult to determine – the poor, youth and women were present, but did they have a voice in the deliberations? The project team indicates that the voice of community members has been strengthened and that community participation goes well beyond consultation and physical participation. But there are no indicators to confirm that the poor and vulnerable influence proceedings."[48] As discussed, today in Morocco, public authorities encourage privatization and civil society participation in the form of NGOization and women's empowerment, toward goals such as making civil society sustainable, increasing women's participation in the labor force, and fighting poverty, as well as democratization. This is required of the Moroccan state, in accordance with Northern funding development agencies. Among these, the INDH has had the most significant impact on the path of the women leaders that I interviewed, such that close to half of the women association leaders that I interviewed later in their journey became members of the local parties and, therefore, local politicians.

[48] World Bank. (n.d.). *Morocco - National Human Development Initiative (INDH) Project: Maroc - Projet Initiative Nationale de Developpement Humain*. World Bank. https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/261081468322770701/Maroc-Projet-Initiative-Nationale-de-Developpement-Humain

Part I: INDH Institutions and Mechanisms for Participation

Through the INDH, micro-projects are being elaborated, financed, and implemented by local representatives of the state in close collaboration with elected local council members and local NGO leaders. In order to organize citizen participation within the INDH framework, the public authorities adopt a process called "participatory diagnosis."[49] It entails determining what projects the population desires, identifying the citizen groups who can carry them, realizing the projects, and evaluating who from the beneficiaries of these projects—and in what capacity—can contribute to implementation and management of the projects.[50] One leader described:

> "We can see that there is a new environment after launching INDH. There are citizens who have been experimenting and that there has been a long time that no one had come to their help; now this is the case."[51]

The organization of the INDH builds on a pyramid structure. In the first phase, projects are designed by local NGOs and association leaders, in some cases with the help of local authorities called "the animation team," mainly because these local experts, consultants, and planners are representatives of the municipal district or prefecture headed by the ministry of the interior and the governor for each region. In rural areas, "associative spaces"[52] that are housed in the main mayor's offices of the region are responsible for coordinating the NGOs and associations registered in that region. In the region of El Haouz, for example, I frequently visited the "space association" of Tahanaout (the region's capital) in order to coordinate my research activities and meet with women association leaders in the rural High Atlas. Women association

[49] "diagnostic participative"
[50] World Bank. (n.d.). *Development Projects: National Initiative for Human Development Support Project (INDH) - P100026*. World Bank. https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P100026
[51] I (16)

leaders often talked about frequenting the space for their bureaucratic, technical, and training needs.

These projects then go through a municipal or neighborhood selection process that is called the "local human development committee" (CLDH), which includes elected members of the municipal or communal councils, local representatives of the state, and local NGO leaders. The CLDH selects the first set of projects to be financed. After this phase, these projects must go through an additional selection process by "provincial committees for human development" that are led by the governor and include civil society representatives, though one third of the members of this committee are representatives of NGOs and associations.

Along with an emphasis on proximity and association participation, projects that are proposed by *women* or women's associations, or those that target women, are strongly favored. A new ministry of family, solidarity, equality, and social development[53] coordinates the INDH activities beside the Interior Ministry.

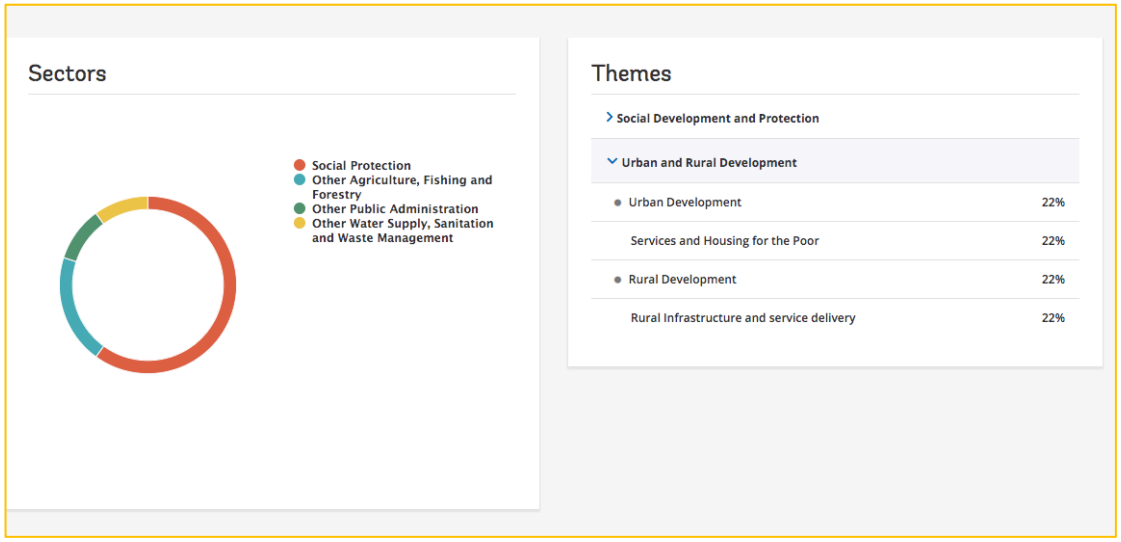
Information on the number of majority women–led associations, their geographic distributions, and the funds allocated to them are not available to this researcher. Between 2006 and 2011, the World Bank financed 100 million USD to the project. These funds are being re-financed (as of July 2021) by loans, with interest charged by the bank. Refer to Appendix D for a detailed description of the finances.

Social protection, in the form of housing and access to infrastructure and services by the poor, is one of the main focuses of the INDH projects, as shown in Figure 1. The figure also illustrates that the Bank's emphasis on access to infrastructure and services puts women

[53] https://social.gov.ma/fr/

association leaders—although not in great numbers—in intensive community infrastructure and service delivery leadership jobs.

Figure 1: INDH Sectors & Themes Defined by the World Bank



The Bank explicitly measures outcomes against men-to-women participation ratios. The Bank's preference for women's participation is mirrored in rhetoric by the King and echoed with the same language by politicians, planners, and key informants during fieldwork—although not explicitly reflected in the King's speeches to his domestic audience. As previously discussed, the inclusion of women as the objects and subjects for development (both as representatives of associations and as beneficiaries) is central to the INDH framework. Literacy programs, which have intensified since 2002, are now focused on women as the main beneficiaries. Organizations such as the Mohammed V Foundation and National Mutual Aid devote most of their funds to women, particularly in the areas of girls' schooling, women's literacy, and the construction of women's centers, and cultivating the first-ever women religiously binding figures.

Part II: Discourses of Mohammed VI

In King Mohammed VI's speeches to his domestic constituency, social and economic development,[54] democratization issues—i.e., expanding opportunities for all citizens in the context of the INDH—and security with respect to Western Sahara take center stage.[55] He emphasizes youth education, which, according to him, is important in a society in which social and economic opportunities are expanded for men and women, for the Islamic family, in order to be able to be ale to raise good children and youth. Economic development, in the King's speeches, is also often related to questions of security, such as the issue of Western Sahara, and combating threats to national security by, for example, preventing the youth from the danger of Islamic fundamentalism. Therefore, Mohammed VI also puts much emphasis on youth associations that support youth development and income generation. Furthermore, he once proposed building railroads that connect Agadir to Marrakech, and Marrakech to Western Sahara.

Women and their entrepreneurship are only usually addressed by Mohammed VI when international human rights bodies and representatives are present. The King has used the word "women" 35 times in his speeches to international human rights bodies and conferences compared to only once to a domestic audience, which was in reference to socioeconomic development for "men and women" over the 2013–2019 period.[56] In a speech to the second World Forum on Human Rights in 2014, Mohammed VI referred to the Beijing Declaration and

[54] Text of King Mohammed VI on the occasion of the throne day, marking this year the 14th anniversary of the enthronement of HM the King (2013)
[55] HM the King Delivers Speech to Nation on 44th Anniversary of Green March (2019)
[56] HM The King Sends Message To Participants In 61st Global Women Entrepreneurs Congress (2016)
Royal Message to the second World Forum on Human Rights (2014)

Platform for Action as a milestone and applauded the Millennium Development Goals. In the same instance, he announces the issue of gender equality as "one of the main topics on the agenda" at the 2016 "Sustainable Innovation Forum in Marrakech." He used the word "women" 29 times in his message to the participants of the 61st Global Women Entrepreneurs Congress which was scheduled September 25–27, 2016 at the sustainability summit in Marrakech:

> "I would like to commend the Moroccan women's struggle for their rights and wish to pay tribute to their selfless involvement in national associations, especially community organizations concerned with children, handicapped people and vulnerable women. Women have been playing an active role in every single region in the Kingdom - whether in urban, peri-urban or rural areas. They have thus become real catalysts for comprehensive and sustainable development and this is truly a source of pride and hope."

Further along in his message he connected the goals of the INDH to those of gender equality and sustainability:

> "This dynamism was highlighted when the objectives of my vision for sustainable development were defined and implemented through the National Initiative for Human Development, a defining project of paramount importance for the Kingdom, which I launched in 2005. In this context, I have made sure National Initiative programs benefitted first and foremost women in rural areas in order to improve their quality of life. I have also made sure the necessary importance is given to promoting girls' schooling in rural areas, which is the main target of all programs aimed at developing infrastructure and encouraging income-generating projects."

In this message, to an international women's conference, the King applauds women's struggles for their rights in terms of their legal and economic goals and achievements for the nation, and in creating a "modern" nation, and not in terms of a "pervasive discourse"[57] that, as one of my interviewees put it, "devalues women every day in the public life."

It is important to note that it is within the context of neoliberal entrepreneurship—what many call "bootstrapping your way out of poverty" (Heller 2012)—that Mohammed VI promotes women's rights in Morocco, with a traditional view that adheres to women's roles as caregivers. In his message to the Marrakech Forum on Sustainability in 2016, he made this emphasis on entrepreneurship and creating women's enterprises clear:

> "The choice of theme for your Congress: 'Women Entrepreneurs: dependable actors for a sustainable performance', is a highly relevant topic, given the current unstable economic situation. By exchanging experiences and sharing opinions, you will be able to achieve the progress we all hope for, as you uphold the values and beliefs that form the guiding principles of the FCEM: First of all, the belief that women value entrepreneurship as highly as men do; Secondly, the necessity to encourage and motivate women, giving them access to funding, as the intention of creating a business releases their energies and potentially boosts growth in the sectors they choose to invest in; Finally, the deep belief that we all have in the need to change the preconceived idea that a woman's enterprise cannot be successful. Entrepreneurship is something that can be learnt.Young girls' education therefore has to include entrepreneurship incentives and behavior."

It used to be the founders and leaders of the smaller associations that would not receive foreign funding who took care of financing the few activities of the organization with, sometimes, limited support from the district. Today, in Morocco, this situation is changing. With the (global) neoliberal regime's emphasis on participation, entrepreneurship, and generating income through small enterprises established with loans[58] and help from the INDH, some of the women-led associations now have large budgets that not only support the day-to-day operation of their organization but also large-scale projects (including training cycles) that contribute to their budgets. Since local associations have access to such funding, their numbers have increased significantly.

As women's representation in politics increases, they have to join male-dominated political parties. There is a trade-off between participating and losing some autonomy of voice and choice. "All decisions are made at nights in the cafes" was a common response when asked about decision-making powers among women leaders who took part in party politics. Zakia, in rural Marrakech, put it in this way:

> "I did not feel like I could do anything. Men were not interested in hearing. […] [W]ell I could still do some things for women and 'sanitization' and children, […] like the elementary school that we built three years ago, but I wasn't interested in the party, I couldn't do much there, so I did not run the next time."[59]

Moreover, women are, mentioned during most of my interviews – with men political leaders – as long as it was brought up during the interview by myself, and many men and women thought that women were best for being assigned to matters related to family and motherhood:

[58] Appendix D
[59] I (25)

"Women are especially positioned to propose issues that can help other women and for schooling youth, for example."[60]

Doubting that allocating more funds to women's proposed projects also would lead to their political empowerment, another INDH bureaucrat—a man—confessed that:

"While the participation of women is being valorized, many men in the offices still think that women are for the décor."[61]

Many other women—more than one third of the population of this sample—mentioned that although the decisions are made by men at night, they still run for office or participate as party members because they think they can still promote projects for women, girls, and the youth, like "organizing the community for demanding to build roads so that girls can go to school." The women association leaders appropriated their traditional caregiving roles to appear in public organizing and decision-making roles. While there is a loss of autonomy involved in joining the male-dominated political parties, there are also gains involved that all the women leaders attested to, as I show in this dissertation.

Several other reforms have been undertaken to improve the status of women and promote gender equality. These reforms also affect the participation of women in the political, judicial, and religious spheres. One of these reforms is the revised electoral law, enacted on the eve of the 2002 legislative elections, which introduced a quota of women making up 10% of parliament through "national lists" composed of women.[62] In the aftermath of these elections, the number of parliamentary elected representatives increased from 2 to 35 (including 30 elected on the national list). During the 2009 municipal elections, a quota of 12% was applied through

[60] I (36)
[61] I (43)
[62] Frédéric, V. (2009). « La « liste nationale » : un quota électoral pour quoi faire ? » *in* Zaki Lamia (dir.), *Terrains de campagne au Maroc. Les élections législatives de 2007*. Karthala.

additional lists exclusively composed of women, in addition to the usual local lists. A support fund for women's electoral participation was also created. In the aftermath of these elections, the proportion of women in the municipal councils increased from 0.54% to 12.25%. Moreover, Mohammed VI emphasizes the link that exists between the promotion of women's rights in Morocco and the international conventions signed by the country.[63] In some of his speeches, he notes that by harmonizing "national legislation with international conventions," it would be possible to redress "the image of Morocco abroad" but also "to position itself as an active partner on the international chessboard."

Part III: Motivations of the Patriarchal State

Many promises—including the empowerment of women—are made to the NGOs by the state and IGOs. The literature does not, however, paint a positive outlook for the fulfillment of these promises. Many blame the political party system headed by the King as the "arbitrator of conflict," and the corrupt political parties. The literature does not go beyond describing the initiative as purely neoliberal. As a case study of "inclusive" neoliberalism and institutionalist governance modes to poverty reduction, Bergh[64] notes that the findings on the INDH show both intended and unintended outcomes of such an 'impossibly rational and elaborate, a perfect and expensive system laid down on a very fraught local situation' that ultimately contributes to an 'inclusion delusion', weakened political accountability and the redeployment of (authoritarian)

[63] Among the conventions signed by Morocco are: Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified by Morocco in 1979, the International Convention on the Political Rights of Women ratified in 1977; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), ratified in 1993 with reservations including Article 16, which establishes the principle of equal rights and obligations between spouses.

[64] Bergh, S. I. (2012). 'Inclusive' neoliberalism, local governance reforms and the redeployment of state power: The case of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) in Morocco. *Mediterranean Politics*, *17*(3), 410–426. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2012.725304

state power." Bono[65] argues that the technical language used by many actors creates a "performance civil society." Sater [66] looks at political change and women's empowerment through the impact of the 2002 introduction of a 10% gender quota system in the Moroccan parliament and assumes that empowerment is going to be in the form of women introducing "woman-friendly" legislation as a result of the quota. The fact that women's answers reflect an official consensus more than any alternatives on questions related to foreign policy, economic policy, and political values, Sater notes, can be explained by recruitment practices, political socialization, and the neo-patrimonial practices that structure Morocco's political system. This is a false assumption made by this author, one that does not consider the evolutional and generational achievements of women leaders and their allies.

As argued throughout this study, there is potential for these kinds of state-sponsored initiatives that promote "add and stir" (Cornwall, 2012) programs to rise above the cage of neoliberalism. Their potential for achieving incremental positive change in favor of gender equality goals is, however, limited by their promise of being a catch-all model for equality.

Conclusion

Many rightly identify a constellation of three factors influencing King Mohammed VI's motivations for promoting public policies in favor of women's empowerment—and further consider these policies as a mere window dressing. These factors are combating "Islamism," especially after the 2003 Casablanca attacks; gaining legitimacy; and presenting a positive image of Morocco to the international community and the population by including them as objects of development (Berriane, Salime, Z Elliot).

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[65] Bono, I. (2010). *Le « phénomène participatif » au Maroc à travers ses styles d'action et ses normes.* Dissertation publication.

[66] Sater, J. N. (2007). Changing politics from below? Women parliamentarians in Morocco. *Democratization*, *14*(4), 723–742. https://doi.org/10.1080/13510340701398352

Although diluted in larger issues of security and purely neoliberal in terms of the ideology, the emphasis on citizen participation through community associations and the focus on women and the poor have nevertheless created a new generation of women leaders. I identify this generation as a bridge between the two more visible women's movements in Morocco that have been actively addressing women's inferiority, namely the feminist movement and the pro-Shari'a Islamist women's movement. In Chapter Three, I show that this emphasis on women and the poor combined with the "semi-traditional" rhetoric of men's and women's equality by the King has created a milieu of association leaders that carry out "male-dominated jobs" by using their traditional roles as caregivers to subvert male-dominated decision-making spaces in favor o and feminist goals and the struggle for women's rights.

Chapter Three – Women Association Leaders

Introduction

This chapter examines who the active women leaders are in the association milieu. I argue that this milieu of women association and NGO leaders constitutes a bridge between the more progressive and more conservative women's movement leaders.

This chapter further shows that these local association leaders come from lower- to middle-class families and neighborhoods of Moroccan society that are characterized by fewer employment opportunities. Therefore, they are identifiable by their particular interest in local and neighborhood-level social and economic development of their communities through establishing small enterprises—for example, orphanages, caring for women who are victims of domestic abuse, advocacy for women's representation in politics, growing olive trees, and pursuits in the restaurant business.

Further, by describing women leaders' activities, pathways, and perceptions of their work, this chapter shows that women association leaders tend to strengthen their reputations in their respective communities before becoming embedded in INDH programs. They describe the task of winning hearts and minds as hard and time-consuming, though they consider it *positive* for women and the communities. The only downside they note is that there is almost no money in it.

I call this third milieu of women leaders "women association leaders." This way, I do justice to a combination of overlapping discursive and institutional currents that both unite *and* separate the women leaders of the feminist left and those of Islamic organizations. These currents include: 1) the fact that leaders striving for gender equality are associated and networked in Morocco, 2) the overlap between laws regulating NGOs and associations in the current state

development agenda, and 3) the similarity in all three discourses identified in the previous chapter, especially in terms of becoming institutionalized in the state agenda. At the same time, one can see in this chapter—because of the emphasis by the state on the work of associations in the community and at the local level, as well as on economic development and fighting precarity—that this third milieu differs from the other two groups of women association leaders in that their NGO work is mainly tied to income generation and local development.

This chapter describes how the local association milieu is different from the "feminist" and "Islamist" movements that dominate Morocco's discursive space on the "woman question" (Sadiqi and Ennaji, 2011).[67] These local leaders are identifiable by their mixed language of community and personal improvements and rights. These leaders—although they self-identify as Muslim—do not seek to understand and interpret their pathways to association work and activities in relation to Islam. However, while they do not mention an Islamic framework having influenced their activities, they also do not mention feminism having done so. Instead, what guides them are the everyday pragmatic, social, and economic needs of themselves and their communities.

This chapter is divided into three parts. Part I delves into women leaders' pathways and activities within the framework of the INDH. Part II considers these women association leaders in relation to feminist and Islamist women's groups in Morocco, as described in the literature. Finally, Part III discusses the women association leaders' perceptions of the INDH as a policy model.

[67] Sadiqi, F. & Ennaji, M. (2011). *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: Agents of Change* (Vol. 2). Routledge.

Part I: Associative Pathways

Pathways

Close to half of the women leaders interviewed share their households with at least 5 other persons. The majority are married and aged between 36 and 55 years old. There is, as Elliot (2015) explains, still a clear bias against younger and unmarried women. Half of the women have completed secondary education, and fewer than one third of them are university graduates. They identify their path to leadership in their respective communities as long and one that "requires winning over many minds."

The women's pathways to NGO and association work within the framework of the INDH can be divided into two groups: the first group includes women who were already association leaders and were "found" by the INDH, who then funded their organizations' activities. The second group includes those who started their association work without prior experience in NGO work; instead, they started their association work when one of the commune officials and/or an intermediary NGO approached them to introduce them to the INDH programs and sources of funding for community projects. Both categories of women leaders claim to have had established reputations in their respective communities—as charitable persons and/or through volunteering to teach women how to read and write—before the start of their association work within the INDH framework.

The first group of women describes pathways to their association engagement through professional training and experience that they had acquired by participating in structures that, like centers for youth or national associations, offer training for social work. Among 25 women interviewed, the pathway for 8 was defined by a certain restlessness for independence from the

mother association, either by directing their own associations or working up through the ranks in their respective organizations.

Mina[68] [69] described her pathway to NGO work, detailing how she participated in the women's caravans that went from urban areas to the villages to raise awareness of women's rights and political participation. Similarly, Halima, a woman association leader and now parliamentarian in Marrakech, described that she started her association work by taking part in one of the Mohammed V Foundation's programs at her university.

Madam Z is from an older generation and had started small economic activities and classes to teach women about their rights and encourage them to vote and be active in politics. She is now a member of one of the INDH local committees for human development described in Chapter Two. Madam Z did not start her association work because of the INDH; she is among those NGO leaders who "were later found by the INDH" because of their reputation in their respective communities as being charitable, trustworthy, and willing to help. Madam Z is one of the leaders who are more critical of the state overall but who, at the same time, evaluated INDH to be a positive step toward the gender equality goals. I return to this theme in Part III of this chapter when discussing women's self-evaluations of their work. When asked about the path that association work provides for some women toward becoming locally elected politicians, Madam Z tells me that she calls it "the feminine opportunistic phenomena." Then she explains:

> "there are many people, women, who are not promoting the woman agenda, but they are in office because of hijacking the rhetoric and/or having connections to the political parties, [though] the parties are not representing women's issues."[70]

[68] All names are changed according to the IRB requirements for this study. I refer to each interviewee as I(1), I(2), etc.
[69] I(1)
[70] I(2)

Amena has a bachelor's degree in geography. She served twice as a volunteer member of the National Human Rights Council, or CNDH, monitoring the elections. Amena then started her NGO work when she got hired by an INGO and worked her way up in the organization. Amena describes how she didn't trust associations before because she wasn't aware of their activities. But now:

> "I like participatory governance because it's hard work. Changing mentality takes time. People work hard and that's why I like it. Also, change depends on the personality of people"

Amena's description of her daily tasks reflects the packaged data and product-oriented language used at the IO level:

> "we ask the community what is the problem, solution, and priority for them. We are the facilitator and not the trainer; we ask them what training you need. We show how to go from theory to practicing their ideas. We always meet with them and see how they are doing, help them how on saving and spending money. […] [The] indicators for success are number of people who participated, communication, explaining the results, self-organization, other by-products."

This first group of women spoke of experience and passion as the primary pathways to their leadership roles. They had all been participating in NGOs and associations before their NGOs benefited from the INDH. Their language reflects an awareness of the global accountability requirements attached to citizen participation, women's empowerment, and community development. They further show an awareness of criticisms that are targeted at women who participate in state-sponsored partnerships for human development. In this sense,

they show a great degree of consciousness in knowing their roles and choices, as opposed to what is depicted of them in most of the literature.

The second group is comprised of women who were active in volunteering for charity, but not within an NGO or association capacity, when someone from the state or an intermediary NGO associated with the INDH approached them about creating an association.

Rashida, the president of a rural association, "stayed at home for a long time," and is now happy to have a position outside of her home. She started her work by teaching women how to read and write as a volunteer. Then a representative of an urban NGO with global ties approached her and convinced her to form a women's farming association subsidized by a global cosmetics corporation.

Before the urban NGO representative approached her, Rashida explained that her personal life was a "normal" one: she ate breakfast every day and had some leisure time. She always dreamed of forming a woman's group, but she didn't know how. She is now president of an association consisting of 38 women.

When I asked Rashida about her pathway to her job, she started by explaining how the representative of the urban NGO described the difference between cooperatives and associations in the current official Moroccan law of associations. Rashida explained that "legally, in order to create a cooperative that would produce and sell local products, like couscous, you have to register your organization as an association or an NGO first." Therefore, she and some other village women decided that they would form an association because most of their men were unemployed and the job was financially important to them. Rashida managed to grow the association with help from the urban NGO and "by doing the job." Further, she added:

"We treat the organization of the association with democracy. We hold elections for president and vice-president of the cooperative each year. There would also be a secretary general who'd ask from women members how they are doing and give feedback to the leadership."

By the end of the 2000s, the phenomenon of development associations that had first started in urban areas spread to rural regions as well. Migrant youth and marginally literate women have played a key role in establishing such programs in their regions of origin (Lacroix, 2005).[71] There are real connections in terms of discourses, norms, and practices, instead of divides, between the urban centers and rural areas. Women NGO leaders in urban areas consistently describe their connections to their rural counterparts and/or describe the start of their work as taking part in one of the urban cultural centers that advocated for women's issues in the rural areas. In this sense, the model is closer to what Kasaba (2009) describes in terms of the rural–urban categories as being not representations of a linear progression from rural to urban and, therefore, to civility, but rather in terms of a constant exchange of institutions and norms between urban and rural areas.

I met Yasmine in her family's house in urban Marrakech. She uses one of the rooms of the building to sell her association's products—ranging from olive oil to argan oil and what she calls bioproducts—that they produce in one of the rural regions. Yasmine started her association work by volunteering to teach other women how to read and write. She has a bachelor's degree in agriculture and started her association work in 2005 before the INDH started funding her NGO in 2009. When I met her in 2016, she was a member of the elected commune in her rural

[71] Lacroix, T. (2005). *Les réseaux marocains du développement — géographie du transnational et politiques du territorial*, Presses de Sciences Po.

homeland. Her association is active in generating income for women and developing afterschool activities for the youth. She describes her pathway to association work in this way:

> "After some women approached me to teach them how to read and write, and I was already working on my family lands in the village on farming, I heard that some associations are growing cows and that their work is going well. Then we (myself and other women) started to find out how to create an association. One man from the commune explained to us what is an association. We created Association N. We then first proposed a kindergarten to be created at the village so that kids [aged] from 3 to 5 can be taken care of while women go to work. We proposed this at the reunion for members of associative space of the El Haouz province."

As discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, the elected officials are also involved in the association spaces, comprising one third of the members who make decisions and advise on projects.

Yasmine's association now has seven bureau members and 42 other women participants. The job is important to her because it places value on the local products that they can produce in the village, such as those listed above. She has also worked hard to make it happen:

> "I spent 3 years studying on how to create an association and cooperative and to produce before starting the work, on construction, on communicating with the commune. The INDH has financed the benches and the working material. It does not give loans to new associations; you have got to have some work experience and have a reputation first. There are processes that you have to follow. I have learned by experience a lot."

Madam J had just come out of a party meeting about the upcoming elections when I met her for an interview. We sat down for a quick chat before her detail came to get her outside of the hotel. Madam J described how she started her association work with help from the INDH, by proposing a program to the authorities in order to get funding to address what was needed in the community. Madam J pointed to another woman party member who sat down near us during the interview: "she is from same neighborhood that I come from, she explained what is an association to me first." Madam J said that she and other women association leaders were not influenced by the party directions and clientelism:

> "No, women local associative leaders like myself always militate for the community needs and gain a reputation that way."

The women leaders in this second group do not possess much experience in the NGO world, but they noted having had a degree of involvement and reputation in their respective communities beforehand. Like the first group of women leaders, they show a certain awareness of their positions as community and economic agents as well as agents of the state. They show this awareness when, for example, asked about their roles as community leaders and local politicians. They constantly responded with a "run to innocence" approach described by de Jong (2017)—"we take-off the associative hat when in office"—or along the lines of the response from Interview 9: "women associative leaders are not professionals." When describing Northern women's perceptions of their work in relation to the "other" Southern women that their NGO is funding, de Jong reports that the Northern women showed a "run to innocence"; that is, they referred to their own inferior positions as women when asked about their privileged NGO work. In the case of the women of this study, as described, many of these instances occurred where it

was apparent that the individual was justifying their shrouded activity in relation to a forced hand.

In summary, women association leaders' pathways could be divided into two groups: 1) those who had NGO experience and had worked with established NGOs, and 2) those without previous NGO/association experience. Regardless of the pathway, two main factors enabled the women in their journeys to becoming association leaders in their communities: a) having a reputation in the community, and b) showing awareness of their positions and different priorities and obligations along the way. In response to questions about their pathways, and decisions and trade-offs they have had to make in order to become local association/NGO leaders, women consistently mentioned needing to have a reputation first. They also sympathized with other women association leaders, showed a "run to innocence," and/or criticized others for taking part in politics while being an association leader. For example, Madam Z criticized "feminine opportunist[s]" and stated that "women associatives are not professionals" and "we militate for community needs." This awareness is one of the reasons why I argue in this chapter that these women association leaders constitute a bridge between the women in feminist and Islamist organizations as they have to navigate the already institutionalized women-led NGOs in Morocco and work within those frameworks, as well as the frameworks of party politics.

Another reason for arguing this point is that these women's activities, "for both men and women" and "for the community," encompass diverse activities that overlap with organizations and activities of the two other women's organizations, as described below. The third reason is due to their ideologies and perceptions of the impacts of their work for the goals of gender equality. I delve into this issue in Part III. The women association leaders do not show adherence

to either the feminist or Islamist ideologies; however, their activities and perceptions of their work exhibit a trend toward being more progressive. Because of these three factors—pathways, activities, and ideology—I argue that the women's association milieu constitutes a bridge between the other two more visible Moroccan women's organizations.

Part II: Women Leaders' Activities

As discussed in Chapter One, feminist organizations for defending women's rights were developed in Morocco in the mid-1980s. This period coincides with the beginnings of political liberal openings in Morocco in form of privatizations and a structural adjustment plan promoted by the World Bank, the gradual weakening of the influence of political parties on the associative milieu, and the establishment of associations that present themselves as autonomous from the left's political parties.[72] In 1985, some women from the progress and socialism party (PPS), claiming their absolute autonomy from the party, created l'Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc (ADFM). In 1987, the women's section of the Organization for Popular and Democratic Action (OADP) created l'Union d'Action Féminine (UAF). Other organizations for the defense of women's rights were developed as well; for example, l'Association Marocaine pour les Droits des Femmes (AMDF).

Further, as a result of domestic and global regulatory regimes in the form of "limited and managed political liberalization," women in Morocco's two main women's movements, the feminist left and the Islamists, started to take state positions as "experts" in development and forces of "moderation" during the 1990s. Salime (2005) explains that the anxieties created in

[72] Sater, J. (2002). The dynamics of state and civil society in Morocco. *The Journal of North African Studies*, *7*(3), 101–118.

response to the Islamists' access to the parliament and their mobilization against the NPA eventually brought Islamist and feminist discourses closer to one another. Her main argument is that, since the 1990s, not only has there been an Islamization of feminist politics, but this period has also witnessed the feminization of Islamist politics. She further shows that the two movements are not homogenous by accounting for the various lines of thought that are present in both the feminist and Islamic movements. Salime therefore challenges the dichotomous view that posits feminism and Islamism—and, by extension, feminist and feminine—as non-overlapping. At the same time, she argues that this interpenetration has not led to a change in the core values of either movement. While the secular feminist movement remains "grounded in the discourses of equality and shaped by the United Nations framework," the activism of Islamist women remains "articulated in terms of the supremacy of the Islamic shari'a over international law" (2005: 19 and 46).

Through their activities, these organizations have challenged the gender hierarchies that have structured Moroccan society as well as worked for the amelioration of the living conditions of women and for women to take a more active role in political and economic decisions. They multiply their advocacy in political advocacy and training programs, and sensitization and information caravans (Sadiqi, 2015; Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2011) .[73] Moghdam (2014) notes that the women's movement, although operating since the 1990s in a context of "limited and managed political liberalization," is institutionalized and its organizations, in general, carry out these tasks:

[73] Sadiqi, F. (2015). Eve Sandberg and Kenza Aqertit. Moroccan Women, Activists, and Gender Politics. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2015.1082862

Sadiqi, F., & Ennaji, M. (2011). *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: Agents of Change* (Vol. 2). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203851579

- They research the conditions women live under, disseminating the results through the media, domestic and international conferences, and connections to governments and international organizations.
- They engage in advocacy campaigns and raise awareness of women's rights issues through the media and their publications, sometimes initiating petition drives or staging rallies and protests.
- They lobby government officials or members of the parliament regarding legal or policy issues pertaining to women, or they may lobby international organizations for more attention to women's issues.
- They form and take part in coalitions with each other or with other civil society organizations such as human rights groups, peace organizations, progressive trade unions, and political parties.
- Like other civil society actors, feminists from the greater MENA region are aware that the state is an unavoidable institutional actor. They therefore make claims on the state for improvement of their legal status and social positions, or they insist that the state live up to commitments and implement the international conventions that it has signed (Modernizing Women, 2013, p. 248).[74]

It is within this institutionalized current that women association leaders in the 2000s found legitimacy and financial support for their activities.

The associations are mainly distinguished by their localized character and by the multiplicity of their activities. Covering multiple functions, these associations propose a large

[74] Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East. (2013). Lynne Rienner Publishers

variety of activities and diverse types of trainings, including courses or activities in alphabetization, dressmaking, art, computer skills, catering, and sports, among others. Another of their functions is providing *centres d'écoute*—orientation and moderation services for women victims of domestic abuse.[75]

Furthermore, these associations organize expositions of the products made by members of the community, run cleaning campaigns for the community, and/or initiate and manage "revenue generation activities."[76] As Driss Khrouz highlights, demands for aid are so numerous and so different that "doing a little bit of everything" is imperative for association engagement in marginalized quartiers.[77] A single association may organize activities belonging to many different domains such as social, economic, sportive, religious, and charitable domains.

Though these associations seem to be doing a little bit of everything, they all agree that their activities belong to the larger category of human development and social development promoted by the state. The way that these association directors name their organizations as well imports huge importance to this paradigm. Phrases such as "social development," "human development," and "partnership approach," as promoted by the king, are particularly common in the names of associations formed during the 2000s. This tendency reflects a paradigm that today dominates the politics of development at national as well as international levels.

In practice, in urban areas, "social development" covers a wide array of activities from education to sanitization, human rights, social rights, microfinance, and the economic integration

[75] https://wego.here.com/morocco/casablanca/government-community- l

[76] Les activités génératrices de revenus (AGR) produce the services or goods that allow for generating some sort of revenue. Examples of such activities include dressmaking, cooking, argon oil production, olive farming, etc. These types of activities are particularly encouraged in the INDH framework as remedies for unemployment and poverty.
77 Khrouz, Driss. (2008). A Dynamic Civil Society. Journal of Democracy, 19(1), 42-49.

of women. In other words, this paradigm not only justifies the variety of activities proposed by associations as explained above, it also gives an impression of the unity of objectives and activities that these associations propose.

A multitude of sociocultural centers have multiplied in urban quartiers in the past few years; for example, Centers of Citizenship, foyer feminine,[78] cultural centers, and formation and training centers. From an administrative viewpoint, they are under the tutelage of the Ministry for Social Development, Family, and Solidarity and are managed by an administrative council directed by the governor of the prefectures. Multipurpose training centers have also proliferated in the past few years, managed by various associations and offering diverse types of trainings (such as in foreign languages, computer science, dressmaking, or cooking and catering) to marginalized populations in search of occupations and income.

Part III: Perceptions of Women's Work and Activities

All of the women interviewed, especially those in the rural areas, mentioned that the INDH was attractive and positive because it allows women to be visible in the public sphere and take part in some public decision-making; provides them with the opportunity to learn the techniques and language of the job; and adds to a sense of pride, as in gaining a reputation in the community.

There is a gendered component in terms of a feminine and feminist agenda for the women leaders interviewed. Despite many drawbacks suggested by the interviewees—ranging from corrupt male politicians to lack of communication and transparency in distributing funds to all decisions being made in secrecy (by men)—all of the interviewees evaluated the INDH

[78] These establishments favor the social and economic integration of women. They report back to the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Their principal task is alphabetization and trainings for women.

positively for the goal of gender equality as it reduces some of the anxieties about women appearing in public and public decision-making offices.

Although critical of some of the clientelism by parties and politicians in terms of who they support and fund, Madam Z, like every other woman NGO leader interviewed for this research, evaluated the INDH as being a positive influence on the goals of gender equality.

The only downside, for many women, is that the work does not provide much to them financially. At least two thirds of the women in this study said that their husbands were unemployed. Moreover, Morocco fits in the World Bank's "lower middle income" category.

Madam Z explained that the INDH had been influential in funding her NGO's programs that help women with training and certificates, and for helping women understand their rights and "why they should vote for the candidate of their choice and not their husbands', for example." Madam Z[79] finds the INDH's impact to be even more effective for helping women in rural areas participate in income-generating activities and the public sphere, as well as making them aware of their rights. Madam Z finds the economic impact of the INDH not that significant, however, overall:

"The INDH does not provide enough and/or in-time funding for organizations' programs. They are very sluggish and have favorites in terms of whom they allocate the funds to. They are also looking for results in 1–2 years; that is not just realistic for a human development program to achieve. With its limited informational reach and depth, the INDH is failing to reach to a wider percentage of the population to participate. Especially the call for proposals is not wide reaching enough, and does not have enough institutional reach to the rural areas of the country."

[79] I(10)

When I asked Rashida[80] about the challenges of their work, she spontaneously responded that there are "no negatives." Rashida described that it gave them all a sense of pride for being able to produce and sell the village products. Additionally, the women feel like they have built a second family together among themselves.

"One main negative is that it does not provide economically much," Rashida explained. Her organization had not been paid by the global cosmetics corporation that was meant to be funding them for about seven months at the time of the interview. Setting up a bank account for their association has been delayed because of "some legal issues."

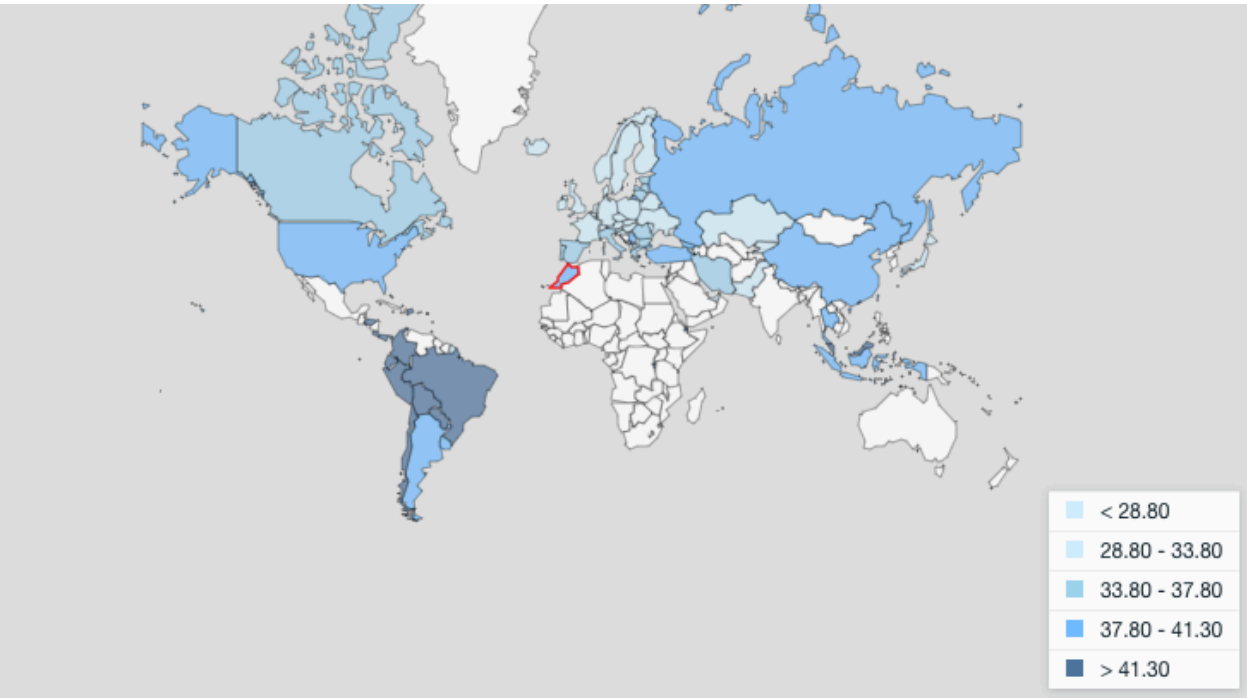
> "For now we are supporting each other financially. We know that there are steps, and we are not stopping. Because we are working, it is possible that we get money. We are hopeful because the president of the commune is supportive, and we voted for him. […] He supported our association before the campaigns started. He has promised to give us a working space as we are working out of one of the associative women's home space."

Rashida's organization in rural Marrakech is an interesting case in terms of the multiplicity of connections and obligations to the community, the state, and the global markets that the women association leaders have to constantly satisfy. She would organize her women's association and their families to ask the politicians for community necessities in exchange for votes, and she would produce for and participate in the markets. Rashida, in the month after her interview, gave a speech at the 2016 Marrakech Forum on Sustainability. Women association leaders perceived the INDH impacts to be positive for women, reflecting on a framework of community and women's rights and issues. In terms of ideology, women association leaders

[80] I(12)

show a pragmatic bridge-building outlook: that is, one that constantly asks, "what here and now could be working" (Collier, 2018).[81] Rashida's case further shows the subaltern positions that these women are operating in, especially economically. Having, on average, four other members in their households, these women come from the low-income to poor neighborhoods and families of Morocco. Morocco is considered a poor country with high income inequality. Morocco's GNI (PPP) in 2019 was 7,680 US Dollars and ccording to the latest World Bank survey to date conducted in 2013 the country shows a high value for the Gini index at 39.5 (Figure 2).[82]

Figure 2: 2013 Morocco Gini Index Value



[81] Collier, P. (2018). The future of capitalism: Facing the new anxieties (1st U.S. ed.). Harper.

[82] In simple terms, the Gini index is a measure of how equal a country's distribution of income is. It is a score between 0 and 1, where 0 represents perfect equality and 1 represents perfect inequality. Perfect equality means a country's total income is shared equally among its residents, whereas perfect inequality means a country's total income is owned by a single individual.

Nevertheless, as mentioned previously in this section, women leaders have found the INDH to have a positive impact on gender equality. In the demographic survey, some of the research participants were asked how much power they feel they have, on a scale of 1–9 with 9 being the highest point. 87% of the survey participants chose either 7 or 8 (view Appendix C).

Part IV: Who Participates? Women Association Leaders

Thus far, this chapter has presented some of the pathways, activities, and perceptions of the women association milieu. Through their pathways and activities, I argue that these women constitute a bridge that constantly acts on a pragmatic and non-ideological basis to satisfy the context in which they are, in many ways, obligated to operate. In this part, I continue to elaborate on this thesis.

Women association leaders come from poor to lower-income classes of Moroccan families. They possess outstanding reputations and their activities revolve around the social development paradigm identified by the state and the IOs. If there is one thing that unites the accounts of the interviewees it is the heterogeneity and non-linearity of their pathways to association work. It is, however, possible to identify commonalities in that they had 1) established reputations in their local communities, and 2) an awareness of their positions, decisions, and compromises that they had to make on their path. These leaders are embedded in networks that spread across Morocco's rural and urban centers and have direct and indirect communication with global development offices.

The women's association milieu, although influenced by the feminist left and Islamists, does not describe the start of their careers as belonging to either the feminist or Islamists movements nor do they pronounce themselves as adhering to any specific ideology that specifically targets the "woman question" in Morocco. While they self-identify as Muslim, they

use the language of rights and community at the same time to describe and justify their participation in the association milieu and their interest in ameliorating socioeconomic conditions for men *and* women in their quartiers and communes.

Whereas the feminist left has been occupied with constitutional change and the women's Islamist groups have been involved in interpretations of men's and women's obligations to god and one another (Salime, 2005), this third group is not as occupied with Islamist or feminist interpretations of their activities—for example, gaining rights on paper. Their main concerns are the social and economic needs of their own and their communities. With their more pragmatic outlook, they constitute a bridge between the more progressive feminist and the more conservative Islamic women's groups in Morocco who have gender equality and non-domination as a goal. Furthermore, by appropriating the "non-ideological" and practical spaces created by the state, these women association leaders bring their agendas—"helping community" and "helping women and children"—and, in many instances, are doing what [one might think] a man would typically do, e.g., building roads and schools. This way, through their soft approach and their traditional roles as caregivers, they participate in the public decision-making processes, albeit on a limited scale. I argue

- through their pathways that pass through established local feminist and Islamist women's group partisans and NGOs, bolstering their reputations in their respective communities;
- their activities that encompass working for men and women and in accordance with local norms and institutions;
- and their ideologies that do not adhere to any of the feminist or Islamist women's groups yet help to articulate their demands within an everyday non-ideological necessities

agenda while at the same time having a feminine and feminist aspect to it, these women association leaders constitute a bridge between the two more visible women's organizations.

The feminist and Islamist women's organizations are the two more visible organizations—that shape the Moroccan gender equality movement positions and, at times, have been described as conflictual.[83] These women association leaders described in this study are pragmatic bridge-builders between ideologically/religiously divided women's equality agendas. It is important to note that these women leaders all self-identify as Muslim and all said that they were working to support women and girls, as well as their communities. Secularism in Morocco does have a religious undertone since the King is both the highest political and religious authority. Therefore, these women leaders feel strongly about their Muslim identity, but they do not consider their association work to be related to Islamic ideology. Since Islam is the state religion, the women association leaders use their Muslim identity to influence their work with the state. At the same time, they emphasize that their work is concerned with elevating the status of women and girls. In this sense, the INDH and INGO funding have allowed for political opportunity structures in which these women leaders found training and legitimacy for their work as well as material livelihoods. Chapter Four delves into the motivations of the women's association milieu.

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Chapter Four – Mixed Motives: Doing Good and Doing it Right

Introduction

This chapter examines the intentions, motivations, and professional positionings of women who work on community issues or support women specifically in their urban neighborhoods or rural villages. The self-understanding and intentions of the women are discussed as they navigate their homes, communities, and politics of the Moroccan state. I show that women NGO leaders' motivations are complex and include personal, professional, and other motivations. I argue that the process of continually re-drawing boundaries between the public and the private spheres, as well as between their professional and personal lives, is vital for women NGO leaders. I also assert that although the notion of public spheres and service to their communities helps to maintain women leaders' ideals of professionalism, these leaders' self-understanding and experiences in traditional roles as mothers and caregivers are central to their passionate senses of public responsibility. Tapping into their traditional and private life experiences, these women NGO leaders re-draw gendered boundaries between the public and private spheres in order to give meaning to their work practices, in addition to positioning themselves as passionate professional workers.

Women leaders are pulled toward two attractive poles: neoliberal, technocratic tools of entrepreneurship on one side and traditional qualities of motherhood on the other. The sense of responsibility of women leaders is both personal and professional. Unlike the dominant thinking in Western feminism, which mostly tends to deem women's experiences in private spheres as "disciplinary", the women leaders of Moroccan NGOs proudly and self-consciously draw on their domestic experiences and backgrounds in order to build and strengthen their public work, and to "participate in a man's world." Furthermore, this is a reciprocal relationship whereby

women NGO leaders bring their professional experiences back to the home in order to add more meaning to their private lives.

This chapter will be split into three parts. The first will review the varied motivations of Moroccan women leaders, which can be broadly grouped into personal, professional, and community-oriented motives. The second part will consider the motives and criticisms of women who both lead NGOs and are elected officials. The last part will specifically discuss issues of gender and gender equity in the women leaders' motivations.

Part I: Personal, Professional, and Community-Oriented Motives

The motivations of the Moroccan women NGO and political leaders who I interviewed are varied and complex. However, it is nevertheless possible to organize the motivations of women leaders into three broad groupings: 1) altruistic motivations to help their communities; 2) professional motivations; and 3) personal motivations for individuals, including for both economic and non-economic gains.

A common theme in my interviews of women NGO leaders is that the women describe the motivation for their work in terms of commitments that they have to both their communities *and* other women. Many of the women I interviewed started their association activities by being active in so-called "alphabetization" (literacy) because other women in the community asked to learn how to read and write. In addition to these teaching requests from others, the women leaders also saw a need for greater literacy in their communities themselves. They emphasize their personal commitment to their jobs in terms of helping others. Later, I show that their professional careers also brought them achievement.

Selma, who is the president of a rural self-help association that herds cows and grows olive trees and organic nuts, started her association work by volunteering to teach other women

how to read and write. She always wanted to form a women's group to herd cows. Then, someone from her commune approached Selma about forming an association. The Moroccan government financed the materials and office space for Selma's NGO. This is how Selma described the motivations for her work:

> "My first motivation is to help the village. I can have influence for women, girls, for our youth, for education, for the future. We fight against illiteracy in our association. We have demanded a creche for our children, so that women can go to work. We have raised funds so that youth can go camping in Agadir. The government does not finance just any project. You have to have a reputation. People—women—have trusted me. The president of the commune came to me and asked me to help him win the election. I organized the community and we demanded roads, so that our girls who go to secondary school and college and who have to travel far can make their studies."

Among the women NGO leaders in Morocco, there are some leaders who both work for NGOs and take part in official electoral politics (i.e., they run for office). In addition to being the president of an association, Selma is also an elected political leader in her commune. When I asked Selma about her motivation to run for elected office, she said that "the women in the association asked me, 'why not you?'" Then, "each woman went and advocated on my behalf in their family and talked with their husbands and other people in the village, and we won without using the [Moroccan King's gender] quota."

Selma also said that men in the commune she represents "make all the decisions at nights in the cafes, and then in the morning at the commune they make a show, as if we really have equal voice." Selma goes on by saying that despite all this, she is nevertheless going to run again

in the next elections because she is hopeful for the future, stating, “this is the first time that women are entering politics at this scale.”

Malika started her association work eight years before her commune started funding different NGO projects. Malika is also an elected political leader in her commune and described the motivation for her work as hoping to make changes that benefit women.

> “I have changed women in this region a lot. As a mother and wife myself, I feel obligated toward my community. Women raise their voices now, they don’t remain violated. They encourage the children to go to school. There are girls whom their parents won’t allow to travel far to go to college. I have organized the community, and together men and women, we have demanded transportation options for our kids. Here women are more autonomous than in communes closer to Marrakech. We also organized for better drinking water for our village. The community has asked me to run for the office.”

Another woman leader, Fatima, is the president of a childbirth and midwife center in a remote area on the outskirts of Morocco’s El Haouz region. Fatima described the motivation for her work in terms of the responsibility she feels towards helping to educate other women:

> “I have a bachelors in Arabic language and literature. Other women in the community approached me and asked to help them with reading and writing. I was doing that for a few years when I was approached by the commune officials to work as the president of this center. This project is 100% government funded. I’m hoping to reach 1,000 women in the next five years.”

Meryem is the leader of an association that works on development issues in Armet. Her association works to support artisans, music, cultural exchanges, agriculture, and programs for children. Meryem was formerly in charge of the African bureau for an INGO in Marrakech. She

grew up in her community, and when Meryem's association needed a president, she volunteered. She stated that her motivation for working to develop her community is: "so that women and girls can sell their products. This is a dream that I want to make happen. Now some girls are beneficiaries of our association's work. And I'm proud of them."

Amira is an association president in one of the quartiers of Rabat. She is also an elected political leader in her quartier. When asked about what motivates her, Amira said:

> "We fight for community needs. Men and women together. The politicians come and ask me for votes. We have asked for an elementary school in our quartier so that children can go to school."

Selma, Malika, Fatima, Meryem, and Amira all establish a link between belonging to their communities and having obligations towards community needs in general—including the needs of both women *and* men.

Nearly all of the women NGO leaders who were interviewed also shared motivations of professionalism and personal/individual advancement. The women expressed desires to learn management techniques, and they also wish to increase their earnings as skilled and well-compensated professionals. The women leaders made it clear that a major benefit of working as professionals for NGOs is learning "technical skills" like management, budgeting, and writing grants. The women interviewees' motivations to "do good" as NGO leaders are intertwined with also wanting to be professionals—being able to enter "the man's world," acquiring skills that men have, and gaining an income through a professional job.

While the women I interviewed commonly justified their interest in working for NGOs based on a sense of responsibility, as well as their passionate commitment to the job, the women's professional roles also provided them with various new opportunities. When asked

about what they gained from their jobs, Farah said both "financial means for the association in form of space and equipment" and "I'm not shy anymore," because "I've gained experience about how to deal with and be with people." Rashida reflected on how her responsibility as an NGO leader gave her new technical skills, stating, "I have learned many things: delivery techniques, preparing budgets, and putting together documents to present them to the commune." All of the interviewees discussed how being responsible for their NGOs and taking advantage of different initiatives made them more professional.

Khadija is a member of an association in El Haouz. She told me that "she always hoped to form a group," but that she "lacked someone to help" her. Khadija was able to form an association with the help of another NGO leader named Amina, who is a member of an NGO with global ties that helps women from all over Morocco form local associations.

Khadija and Amina continued to work together and said that forming an association was "financially important" to them. Amina related that most of the men in the communities that she works with are not employed. This is important context because, with Amina's help, women like Khadija can start businesses to market and sell traditional products from their village to earn money. Amina works with many women who did not know each other before joining an association, but "now they have a family of women colleagues." Amina went on to say that since the women she works with have been given the opportunity to participate in NGOs, they feel strong:

> "Most of us are illiterate, and we used to be shy and not talk. Now we can communicate better and raise our voices. Husbands and wives are now understanding each other better. Sitting at home would not have given us this chance."

Amina described her love for and commitment to her job in terms of "doing good for someone else," but also mentioned the personal benefits and opportunities her job provides, from being able to travel, to "doing interesting things" and meeting new people. I accompanied Amina on a visit to Khadija's association in rural Marrakech. Amina brought a desktop computer and a budgeting worksheet to help Khadija keep up the finances for her association. When we arrived, women were busy making couscous. They told me that they were also working in a garden for a major global cosmetics corporation for the last seven months, through a partnership with Amina's NGO. They asked Amina to bring them gardening boots and gloves next time she visits. Oddly enough, they had not been paid by the global cosmetics corporation for the previous seven months of work because of difficulties in setting up bank accounts. The women told me that they are hopeful the money will come, but "for now we are supporting each other." When I asked Amina about what motivates her in doing NGO work, she responded:

> "I like the work because it gives me the opportunity to stay with people, to explain and to communicate. Not just at the community, but at home too. It is not always about the results, but the ways people interact. It is about the relationships that are being forged."

As Amina mentions, the motivations of women NGO leaders are not always financial. For example, another woman leader named Selma talked about many non-economic benefits that she has gained through her association work:

> "Connecting with people, with women, has given me confidence. Connections with other associations, the province, I have entered all the offices, associations, north and south: I have become strong. I don't cry like before. I have learned to take responsibilities, make decisions. I've learned all this by doing. I have learned to use government money and international money and apply and write grants for kids' programs. The kids are now

gone camping in Agadir. Women, we don't know much about politics. Now I understand how it works; the politics, management, and processes. Before, this used to be a luxury for men."

Mattering to the world "outside" the home and becoming a professional—entering the "man's world" by having connections and relations with other women *and* men—are some of the most prominent answers the women gave when asked about their motivations for doing NGO work. A woman leader named Rana described it to me this way:

"Before, I used to be a housewife. I started my work with only one sewing machine. Now I'm president of an association that manufactures cloths, as well as an elected official in the commune. I have power like men do."

The associations that the interviewees are involved with do not just focus on income-generating activities but are also engaged in diverse advocacy efforts. For example, a woman named Leila is involved with an NGO that refers women who are victims of domestic abuse to lawyers who can help defend their cases in court. Lelia's NGO advocates to change Morocco's laws for women who are victims of domestic abuse and discusses these issues with governors and judges. The association also develops the skills of women leaders through trainings in negotiation, budgeting, planning, communications, and management. Lelia sees tangible outcomes of the advocacy work of her association and other NGOs:

"We invest on giving women knowledge trainings. Now they manage their own associations and give other women management trainings. There is a big difference than before. Before, it used to be difficult to go outside of the house for women. Little by little, they start to participate in expositions, they start to travel, their lifestyle changes at home. Now it is her who manages home budgets. They vote. There are women who

become elected officials. This is a big augmentation of women. Thanks to the work of the associations and the King, who has talked in many occasions about the rights of women. But there are still some officials who only talk the talk and not walk the walk."

As previously mentioned, technocratic, neoliberal management tools are very attractive to the women NGO leaders who I interviewed. The same is true for the strong desires of my interviewees to enter "the man world." At the same time, these women leaders' traditional roles as mothers and caregivers are also important to them when they engage in their professional work. The women leaders simultaneously take on multiple roles in their communities, towards the state, and with their local constituents who they "help," depending on what these different contexts dictate. The women leaders do not call themselves "feminists," but they are nevertheless united in their motivations to advance the cause for women. In this sense there is no difference between the feminist and the feminine. The women leaders' motivations concerning gender and their identity as women are complex and will be discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter.

The above interview extracts emphasize women NGO leaders' passionate commitment to their work, as well as how the women's sense of responsibility is linked to their identities, experience, and roles as mothers and caregivers in Moroccan communities. Additionally, the women interviewees highlighted the professional and personal financial gains of working as NGO leaders. But these personal, individual gains are not just financial. Many of the women leaders have gained non-economic advantages as a result of leading their associations, such as "being able to communicate and not be shy," learning "management and technical skills," and "husbands and wives […] understand[ing] each other better." In this latter case, some of the biggest personal gains that women NGO leaders realized were transferable from their

professional and personal experiences at work to adding meaning to their lives at home. They are therefore gaining social capital as well.

The next two parts of this chapter will consider important criticisms of women NGO leaders—including charges of opportunism and co-optation that have been leveled against them—in addition to a deeper discussion of the role of gender in the women leaders' motivations and behaviors.

Part II: Motives and Criticisms of Women Who are NGO and Political Leaders

As previously mentioned, there are some women NGO leaders in Morocco who both work for NGOs and take part in electoral politics by running for office. Because of the Moroccan King's emphasis on women's empowerment and a newly established gender quota system for parliament (see Chapter Two), there is increased interest from political parties to recruit women to run for office. Among Moroccan women NGO leaders, there is a split between women leaders who take part in formal elections and those who look at politics with mistrust. Despite this division, all the women NGO leaders interviewed shared the following three commonalities:

- They stress the importance of helping others with motherhood activities;
- They stress the importance of helping other women and girls; and
- None of them refer to themselves as "feminist."

I asked Leila, whose advocacy NGO is led by another woman who is an elected leader (while Leila herself is not a political representative), about her own views of Moroccan women and politics. Leila says that "sometimes it is the community that proposes to an associative woman to participate in the elections," and adds that having women elected as official representatives is a huge "augmentation" for them.

The women political leaders interviewed navigate spaces in a culture where many of the important decisions are being made only by men behind closed doors, and at nights in cafes. Under such circumstances, the degree of communicative persuasion that women political leaders must engage in to build relationships and indicate that they are trustworthy is enormous. In doing so, the women have to go back and forth between different communities, as well as tap into a multitude of traits that they self-identify with, including caregiving roles associated with motherhood, their intimate knowledge of local issues as members of their own communities, and their professional skills as NGO and political leaders.

A common response of the women political leaders in deciding whether or not to run for office was the importance of "building trust" among the communities they represent. Because being trustworthy is so critical for women political leaders, they must follow through on their commitments to community constituents. Building trust is essential and women political leaders must be trustworthy, as the people they represent as elected leaders and work with in their communities via NGOs are the only supporters they have. In other words, the women leaders' communities of place and communities of choice are not separate (Jaggar & Young, 2000).[84] The women leaders constantly re-draw boundaries between public and private spaces, and strategically essentialize their different identities (Spivak & Harasym, 1990)[85] to pragmatically navigate a patriarchal world. For example, the women political and NGO leaders utilize language from their traditional roles as mothers and caregivers to organize their communities, in order to make economic and developmental demands of corrupt, male politicians. These women leaders

[84] Jaggar, A., & Young, Iris Marion. (2000). *A companion to feminist philosophy* (1st pbk. ed., 2000]. ed., Blackwell companions to philosophy ; 13). Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.
[85] Spivak, G., & Harasym, Sarah. (1990). *The post-colonial critic : Interviews, strategies, dialogues*. New York: Routledge.

make demands either from their positions as elected political members of their neighborhoods or as non-elected NGO leaders who represent both women and their entire communities, for broad programmatic goals that the state supports.

This basic background is important before considering the criticisms that are leveled at women who are both elected and NGO leaders. Two primary criticisms are made against women political leaders, with the second critique having its own important sub-elements.

The first primary criticism is that women political and NGO leaders are individually opportunistic and self-interested, and run for office in order to advance themselves as both leaders of NGOs and elected officials. The second is that women NGO and political leaders are being both deceived and co-opted by more powerful external entities whose interests are to use the women's participation in political arenas for their own goals. This second critique has four important sub-elements, specifically that:

i. Women leaders are being deceived;
ii. Women are being co-opted by the King of Morocco, who is using them for his own gains;
iii. Women leaders are ultimately reinforcing patriarchal structures by participating in state positions and initiatives that are associated with the King and patriarchy; and
iv. Women leaders are being co-opted by INGOs and global foundations, who are also using them for their own goals.

This section will address all of these critiques, with the exception of the criticism that women political leaders are being co-opted by INGOs and global foundations, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

First, the women political and NGO leaders are aware of the criticisms directed at them. The women's self-awareness means that criticizing them for being "duped" by external entities is too simplistic. Additionally, not only are the women political leaders very self-aware of these critiques, they consciously engage in a shrouded but determined effort to co-opt both the state and male politicians. NGO and political women leaders try to subvert the state and male politicians for their own ends with the means that they have, for two primary purposes: to advocate for the needs of their local communities and to advance the cause of women in Morocco.

Moreover, these women political leaders also highlight contradictions that rebut the criticisms directed against them claiming they are individually opportunistic. A consistent theme in interviewing these women is an acute dynamic of building and maintaining the trust of their communities. The women leaders point out in interviews that they have to do what they say they will do, in order to maintain their communities' trust.

Because most of what they say they will do is aligned with community needs, there are real structural barriers to these women being individually opportunistic and self-interested, since acting in their own interests outside of the needs of their communities would result in losses of community trust. Moreover, the women leaders emphasize that they cannot be opportunistic and think only about themselves because of male dominance.

However, male dominance does not stop women political leaders. Because male politicians are corrupt, the women NGO and political leaders are conscious of using this corruption to their own advantage. The women engage in *quid pro quo* negotiations where they ask corrupt male politicians for what their communities want in exchange for voting in favor of the male politicians' priorities. The women political leaders partner with their community

members, including men, and together they use their roles as wives and mothers pragmatically in negotiating with corrupt male politicians. Women political and NGO leaders are able to partner with other men because their community and personal responsibilities align against corrupt male politicians. This alignment takes place primarily around the issue of poverty, as both men and women are poor. Because men are often unemployed and because entire family units are poor, an entire poor community can support the goals reflected by women leaders for development projects, cash assistance, and other policies or initiatives.

The women leaders negotiate with corrupt male politicians both as a means to achieve the goals of their communities to alleviate poverty and encourage development—such as building roads, raising cows, growing olive trees, and nourishing youth—and an end in itself, by asserting their autonomy as women. Taken together, these actions by Moroccan women political leaders, along with those of the men and other members of their communities, creates a kind of "non-movement movement" (Assef Bayat, 2013).

For the women who are both elected officials and NGO leaders, they say that their NGO roles are separate from those of their political positions and that they take off and wear different hats for the different jobs. But this separation is discursive. While the women leaders claim to have separate roles, in actuality, these leaders are subverting the state to advance both the causes that their NGOs work on in their communities and advocacy for greater gender equality.

The Moroccan women NGO and political leaders clearly demonstrate that they use their state positions to simultaneously improve local communities and advance women's broader causes. When I asked women elected officials about their combined roles as political and NGO leaders, they each made "a run to innocence" (de Jong, 2017). Madam J displayed this run to

innocence well, saying "we take our associative hats off when we are running for office, or when doing our jobs at the commune as elected members."

Another elected official and NGO leader, Elene, states that "associations are not professionals, they are the real 'militants;' they are closer to community needs." Elene believes that when a woman from an association takes part in formal politics, she advances the cause for women because they are closer to the community's and women's needs. Elene said, "we have many women politicians like that" in Morocco.

Many women political leaders echo this refrain that "associatives are not professionals!" However, throughout the interviews, I found myself wondering how it is possible for these women to wear only one of their two hats. It is not; it is an abstract distinction, and they cannot and do not separate their two roles. The women say they wear two hats as a discursive move. In practice, the women navigate Moroccan law by saying that they take off their association hats in office, but they continue to subvert the state through their political positions and "militate" for their communities' needs. They must put on these performances in order to maintain their standing and the trust of their communities, like Malika who said that "in this village, people respect me and listen to me as they do to men."

In such limited circumstances where almost all decisions are made by male politicians, women political and NGO leaders have to work much harder and walk a tightrope to gain their communities' trust, make progress on the issues that their associations work on, and, finally, win votes. The women leaders must honor their commitments, since the support of their NGOs and communities is a pivotal part of their success, as is their ability to conduct official business in formal politics.

The women political and NGO leaders are not overly opportunistic or individually self-interested, even if the neoliberal, technocratic, and financial advantages of being leaders are still attractive to them. They cannot be opportunistic and self-interested because they face structural barriers to doing so; if the women leaders do not prioritize the needs of their communities, they will simply not be supported by their constituents, nor re-elected to political office.

Likewise, the women leaders are aware of these criticisms directed against them, specifically that they are opportunistic and co-opted. Despite serving in elected office (in some cases) due to the King's representative quotas, the women political leaders try to succeed in subverting the state positions by negotiating *quid pro quo* deals with corrupt male politicians in support of community priorities. By advancing their communities' needs through their formal positions, the women leaders display and exercise deliberate agency to reach their own political ends, which align with the work of their associations and the popular desires of their community constituents. The women's agency in participating in Moroccan politics does not naïvely reinforce patriarchal systems.

On an international level, the question of whether these women leaders are co-opted by quasi-governmental entities based in the Global North—who are said to use the women's participation in gendered development initiatives to offset criticisms against made against Northern groups for engaging in neocolonialism—will be addressed in the next chapter.

Finally, returning to the criticisms of the women leaders, Elene re-framed these critiques well. Instead of getting caught up in criticizing women who are both leaders of NGOs as well as elected officials, she encouraged me to ask the women political leaders who I interviewed "how [they are] advancing the cause for women in their roles," which should be the starting point in evaluating them.

With all of this said, there is also room for a specific discursive shift. Although the women NGO and political leaders are aware of criticisms made against them—despite also engaging in shrouded but determined efforts to co-opt male politicians themselves—the women leaders do not openly refute these critiques by actively contesting patriarchal discourses. However, it is not that they are unable to do so. Rather, there is an opportunity for new engagement in this discursive arena. By being more conscious of discursive contests and talking about how they advocate for women and their communities more openly, the women leaders can lead a new front in the struggle for gender justice and equality.

It is time for women leaders to take open ownership of their actions and behaviors that they actively engage in but deliberately hide. It is time for women leaders to claim their concurrent traditional, professional, political, and personal roles in their communities. The women have not publicly received the credit that they deserve for their hidden actions, including their co-optation of corrupt male politicians and subversion of state programs continues, shrouded and out of sight.

Part III: The Consideration of Gender in Women Leaders' Motivations

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The consideration of gender is critical in exploring the motivations of women NGO and political leaders in Morocco, first and foremost because of context, as gender oppression in Morocco is very real and intense, and women taking on public leadership roles in such a patriarchal society is far from easy. Leila—an NGO leader of an association that advocates for women victims of domestic violence—described the context of Morocco when asked if she believed her work to be political:

> "If I work on a project with women politicians, then I think that's already political. My objective is to ameliorate the conditions of women in politics, and to encourage women

to participate in decision-making processes. Men think that women are for décor. That it's only men who have the capabilities and money to participate in the elections. But the situation has already started to become better."

A consistent theme throughout my interviews is that women leaders want to support women. The interviewees also consciously bring their caregiving experiences and roles as mothers to their work in leading NGOs and serving as official political representatives.

That being said, neither gender nor gender equity is the primary motive for the women NGO and political leaders I interviewed. For example, it was previously mentioned that leaders like Selma, Malika, Fatima, Meryem, and Amira all emphasized their motivations for the general needs of their communities, including those of women, as well as men.

The women I interviewed consistently discussed supporting their entire communities' needs, because poverty is such a huge problem in Morocco and throughout the international capitalist economy where there is a grossly uneven distribution of resources.

Additionally, poverty is a community issue that transcends gender in terms of the motives of the women leaders. Both men and women are poor, which means that family units are also poor, and poor people and families need cash assistance. This is why the women NGO and political leaders interviewed are primarily focused on development initiatives and other projects that can help alleviate poverty in their communities. Because poverty is the key issue of these women's communities, there are real structural barriers to women leaders focusing either only on gendered issues that apply to women or on being individually opportunistic. If the women NGO and political leaders focus too much on themselves as individuals, or on gendered issues that apply to/are framed to support women, then they would eventually lose the support of their communities, as well as their leadership positions.

Contrary to the criticisms of women political leaders who are said to unwittingly support patriarchal structures by participating in the King's inclusionary initiatives, the women leaders I interviewed are not naïve or unaware of these problems. Instead, they adhere to dominant patriarchal systems on a surface level, while engaging in deliberate, shrouded attempts to use male politicians for their own community-centered objectives.

A similar dynamic exists when considering criticisms from many Western feminists, who problematize gendered divisions of labor in caregiving and in development practices that emphasize only the economic empowerment of women. Being caregivers is not oppressive for the women leaders I interviewed, who drew on their backgrounds as mothers and caregivers as sources of public and political strength. Put differently, women leaders do not have to lose their womanhood in order to be empowered, either in heading up NGOs or serving as elected representatives.

This does not mean that gendered problems do not exist for Moroccan women leaders, or that they cannot do more for a spectrum of identity-based equity issues. This chapter notes the real problems with patriarchal discourses in Morocco, which view women as "décor" or window dressing. The interviewees do not actively challenge such discourses, nor do they ask for much recognition for their caregiving, social, or reproductive roles, even given the chance while co-opting corrupt male politicians to achieve their own goals. There is room for a discursive shift and for women leaders to contest dominant, patriarchal discourses more openly.

In summary, the women leaders I interviewed are doing their best to pragmatically navigate the local situations in their communities, and constantly re-draw the boundaries of womanhood, motherhood, caregiving, and the private and public spheres. Moreover, there are also some beneficial outcomes. Nearly all of the women leaders I interviewed talked about

gaining greater skills in developing themselves as individuals, which was transferable to their family settings for some women who spoke of improving communications with their husbands at home. The experiences of Moroccan women leaders show that women do not have to leave their families to be empowered and that their motivations for serving in leadership positions are not primarily for individual gain.

Chapter Five – Conclusion

Part I: Beyond Emancipation versus Instrumentalization

To date, relevant research on women's empowerment initiatives in the Middle East and Northern Africa has mainly focused on studies that highlight state governments' usage of such programs to 1) demobilize women's liberation movements for the stabilization of authoritarian regimes (Sater, 2007; Charrad, 2001; Salime, 2011), 2) reinforce patriarchal societal structures (Bergh, 2012; Berriane, 2015; Bono, 2010; Žvan-Elliot, 2015), or 3) co-opt women leaders and feminist movements at large (Schwabenland et al., 2016; Mohanty, 2003). Other critiques have settled for simply describing women's empowerment programs as neoliberal (Zemni & Bogaert, 2011; Buehler, 2015), while many country-level case studies primarily evaluate these initiatives from a programmatic and organizational perspective, such as by identifying various factors of relative success (Cornwall & Edwards, 2014; Krause, 2012; Miller et al., 2002). A few scholars point out that authoritarian states are also oppressive to men and emphasize the need to pay attention to men in studies of gender relations (Abu-Lughod, 1998; Cornwall et al., 2011; Kandiyoti, 2019; Mernissi, 1987). However, these works stop short at such conclusions and do not follow through with actual empirical research on men's views and perceptions.

The recent work of de Jong (2017) analyzes subtleties in the motivations of women INGO leaders, illustrating women's desires to "do good, and to do it right," in addition to disclosing leaders' "runs to innocence" when confronted with critiques of their privilege or neocolonialism. However, de Jong's study mainly focuses on the experiences of Northern women, based in the Global North, working for INGOs dedicated to women's empowerment in the Global South. Likewise, although there is a significant body of research on the experiences and subjectivities of development workers (Charlés, 2016; Cook, 2007; Goetz, 2001; Heron,

2005; Mosse, 2011), these studies primarily evaluate development models in a North-to-South direction and were inspired by the accumulated unease of some "insiders" in the development and aid sectors at the neocolonial practices of certain INGOs. Three sizable gaps exist in the current literature on international development and gender studies: 1) the voices of Southern women; 2) actual evidence of the experiences and perceptions of Southern men; and 3) attention to South-to-North connections in INGO networks. My dissertation makes an important contribution to the inattention to Southern women's voices by amplifying the experiences of Moroccan women NGO and political leaders.

This research shows that not only do Moroccan women leaders exhibit more agency as participants in women's empowerment programs than previous studies suggest, but they also demonstrate self-conscious and concerted efforts to use these state-sponsored positions for their own community's goals, co-opting corrupt male politicians in the process. My interviews with Moroccan leaders also show that these women's motivations are centered on the needs of their communities, of which alleviating poverty is their biggest priority. Despite discussing a desire to help support women in general, my interviewees did not emphasize gender equity as their primary motivation. Instead, all of the women leaders interviewed talked about their desire to generally fulfill the needs of their communities, including those of women as well as those of men. Poverty is the community issue that transcends gender in terms of women leaders' motivations, because both men and women are poor, which means that family units are also poor, and poor families need cash assistance. This translates into women NGO and elected leaders in Morocco advocating for programs that tackle the problems associated with poverty in their communities.

Further, this dissertation argued that this group of women association leaders constitutes a bridge between the more progressive feminist left and the more conservative Islamist women groups. This "new generation of NGO leaders" presents many similarities to both established groups as one of their main intentions centers around gender equality and non-domination. But between their community, professional, and personal intentions, they are pragmatic. A common response of the women political leaders in deciding whether or not to run for office was the importance of "building trust" among the communities they represent. Because being trustworthy is so critical for women political leaders, they must follow through on the commitments they make, and always strive to do what they say they are going to do in conversations with their community constituents. Building trust is essential, and women political leaders must be trustworthy, since the people they represent as elected leaders and work with in their communities via NGOs are the only supporters they have. In other words, the women leaders' communities of place and communities of choice are not separate. The women leaders constantly re-draw boundaries between public and private spaces, and strategically essentialize their different identities to pragmatically navigate a patriarchal world. For example, the women political and NGO leaders utilize language from their traditional roles as mothers and caregivers to organize their communities in order to make economic and developmental demands from corrupt, male politicians. These women leaders make demands either from their positions as elected political members of their neighborhoods or as non-elected NGO leaders who represent both women and their entire communities, for broad programmatic goals that the state supports.

Caught between multiple obligations, the women leaders use practical reasoning to deduce the correct actions; they reject ideology in that regard, in that no one value is overarching, absolute, and timeless. "In real communities [they understand that] the relative

importance of values evolves" (Paul Collier, 2020). Between their striving for non-domination, gender equality, community, and professional obligations (some to the state), they consistently ask "What, here and now, is most likely to work?"

Through 1) their pathways that pass through already established local feminist and Islamist women's group partisans and NGOs, bolstering their reputations in their respective communities; 2) their activities for the benefit of both men and women, and in accordance with local norms and institutions; and 3) their ideologies that do not adhere to any of the feminist or Islamist women's groups, and articulating their demands in an everyday, non-ideological necessities agenda, while at the same time having a feminine and feminist aspect to it, I argue these "women associative leaders" constitute a bridge between the two more visible women organizations—the feminist left and women adhering to Islamists organizations—that shape the Moroccan gender equality movement positions, and at points have been described as being conflictual.[86] These women leaders are pragmatic bridge-builders between ideologically/religiously divided women's equality agendas. In this sense, INDH and INGO funding have allowed for political opportunity structures in which these women leaders found training and legitimacy for their work as well as material livelihoods. Therefore, a blanket critique of international development, INGOs, and INDH in Morocco should give way to a more nuanced assessment that considers the empowerment of local women leaders and its consequences for poverty relief, social cohesion, etc., into account.

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Part II: Limitations of the Study

There are limited quantitative official data on the scope of funding and reach for the INDH, specially defined by gender. Additionally, this study mainly used snowball sampling as a selection process and, therefore, some of the perspectives—like those of women trying mainly to interpret gender equality in terms of Shari'a demands—are missing. Because this study was looking for "non-domination," and because the more progressive voices have the reputation to seek "non-domination" for women and the LGBTQIA community as opposed to the more conservative women, the snowball sampling method did not produce interviews with more conservative women. Ideally, given more time, the research should include the voices of conservative women to give a more holistic evaluation of the impact of the INDH on the goals of gender equality. Alternatively, the fact that the women in this research did not interpret their work in terms of an Islamic ideology might be further evidence in support of this study.

Part III: Areas of Research for Future Inquiry

Evaluations and critiques of the INGOs' development models tend to focus on misalignments of Northern-based INGO development models with on-the-ground realities experienced by Southern-based constituents (Charlés, 2016; Cook, 2007; Goetz, 2001; Heron, 2005; Mosse, 2011). The work of de Jong (2017) is important in that it contributes rich interviews with women that explore complex connections between elite Northern and Southern INGO representatives, and the mainly Southern-based beneficiaries of these organizations. For example, one of de Jong's interviewees confessed that she felt "less responsibility for the recipients of the project" because it was "just impossible for…[her] to feel connected to each recipient." While de Jong's study adds significant insights into the feelings and perceptions of different actors in global INGO networks, there is still a gap in women's international

development literature on the degrees to which, and by what means, INGOs incorporate specific, programmatic feedback from Southern constituents into their development models. Could specific deficiencies in Southern-originated feedback underlie some of the feelings of discomfort expressed in the literture about the lack of direct relations with the INGOs' beneficiaries? Understanding how INGOs incorporate programmatic feedback into their development models is not only important to the mission and outcomes of these organizations (not to mention their beneficiaries), but such practical information could also assist in bringing different Southern and Northern actors closer together.

My findings on Moroccan women leaders' prioritization of alleviating poverty inspired this question: Are INGOs that promote women's empowerment projects in Morocco aware that women leaders of Moroccan associations care more about fighting poverty than they do about increasing gender equity? How does this information, originating from Southern women, make its way back to elite INGO decision-makers based in both the Global North and South, if at all? How do INGO decision-makers incorporate this information into their development models, or if they are not doing so, what actions are they taking to solicit Southern-originated feedback? How do gender dynamics influence this strategic node of INGO networks? Finally, if INGOs are earnest about incorporating feedback on Southern people's priorities—such as poverty, for example, by promoting women's economic empowerment through greater labor force participation—do INGOs' understandings of these priorities align with the on-the-ground realities of their Southern partners?

As previously mentioned, the literature on international development and gender studies notes that the perspectives of men are missing (Cornwall, 2011; Mernissi, 1987). However, the

authors who make this observation stop short at simply pointing out that men's perspectives are absent. Actual empirical evidence on men's perceptions of gender relations remains uncollected.

This is not to say that the voices of men are underrepresented—they are not. Patriarchal structures reflect dominant masculine views and prevailing thinking throughout every society in the MENA region, and the gender studies discipline arose for the very purpose of prioritizing the experiences of women and other marginalized voices over men. But the pervasiveness of masculinity does not mean that men's experiences and perceptions of women's leadership, certain social reforms, or other issues in gender relations are unimportant. On the contrary, as privileged constituents and beneficiaries of patriarchal societies of the MENA region, men's perceptions of women must change in order to achieve greater gender equity.

Information is also powerful. Not knowing what men think about women's leadership, proposals to allow women more freedom in society, or changes to oppressive laws on marriage, for example, is problematic. Are men aware of their relative privilege in patriarchal societies, and do they know about the institutional barriers that women leaders must overcome in asserting themselves? What do men think about legal reforms, such as Morocco's 2004 legislation that allowed women greater freedom of movement without requiring the permission of their husbands or fathers to travel? What is the logic or reasoning that men base their beliefs upon? Interviewing men on topics of gender relations could provide powerful information to help bridge gender divides, as well as create pathways for more open conversations, better communication, and greater learning between men and women.

Morocco is a relatively less authoritarian country than other MENA states, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, or Syria. Do empowerment programs, coupled with the relative openness of

Morocco (or another similarly less authoritarian country such as Algeria), matter when it comes to the agency of women who participate in these state-sponsored initiatives?

An affirmative answer to this question could suggest the importance of empowerment programs in more open societies for increasing the agency of women leaders. Conversely, a negative finding of women in more authoritarian countries displaying similar degrees of agency to those of Moroccan leaders could indicate more resiliency in the general powers of the women from the MENA region. The latter outcome is quite possible, as Mernissi observes; unlike Western "society's view of women as passive inferior beings," the "Muslim image of women as a source of power is likely to make Muslim women set higher and broader goals than just equality with men" (1985 Rev. ed.: 175–176). Additionally, a finding of similar degrees in agency between women leaders in both more and less authoritarian MENA states could raise new questions about the effectiveness of different empowerment initiatives.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Summary Demographic List of Women Associative Leaders – no. of sample participants: 7

Women Association Leaders (n = 7)	Age	Education	Single	Tribe	Religion	Ethnicity	Household number
	26–55	50% completed secondary or above	6	N/A	Muslim	2 Amizaghi 6 N/A	3–7 (median = 5)

Appendix B: Table of Research Participants – n. of sample participants: 47

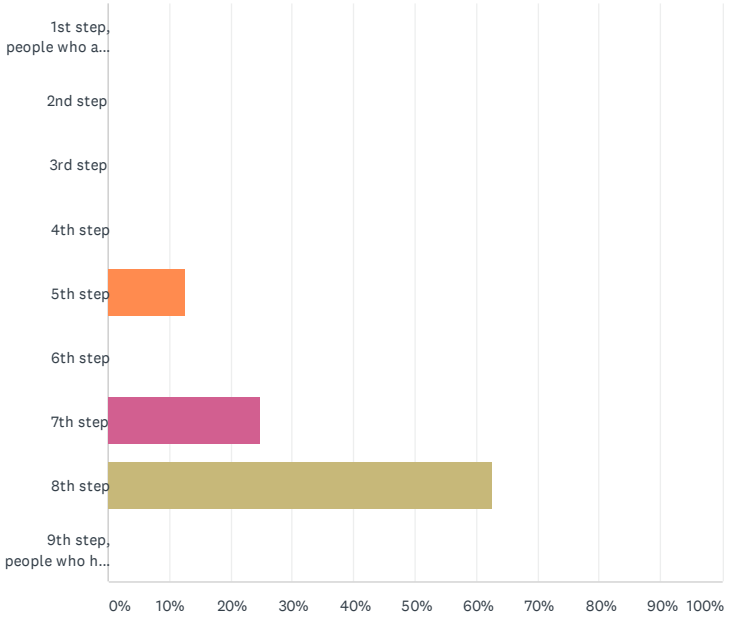
Research Participants	Association	Feminist/Left	Women in Pro-Shari'a Orgs/Parties	Key Informants
Number of Participants	32	8	0	7
Female	25	5	0	2 (e.g., inter-ministry bureau director, INDH evaluation administrator, IGO attaché)
Male	7	3	0	3
Urban	22	8	0	3
Rural	10	0	0	2

Appendix C: Women Association Leaders: How Powerful Do You Feel?

Copy of Example survey

Q10 Please imagine a nine-step ladder where on the bottom, the first step, stand people who are completely without power, and on the highest step, the ninth, stand those who have a lot of power. On which step are you today?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1st step, people who are completely without power	0.00%	0
2nd step	0.00%	0
3rd step	0.00%	0
4th step	0.00%	0
5th step	12.50%	1
6th step	0.00%	0
7th step	25.00%	2
8th step	62.50%	5
9th step, people who have a lot of power	0.00%	0
TOTAL		8

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Appendix D: INDH and the World Bank Finances, 2006–2021

Period	Financier	Transaction	Amount (US$)
Dec, 2006	IBRD74150	Commitmen	100,000,000.00
Sep, 2007	IBRD74150	Fees	160,559.83
Oct, 2007	IBRD74150	Disbursemer	44,849,700.00
Mar, 2008	IBRD74150	Fees	101,766.90
Mar, 2008	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,019,621.58
Sep, 2008	IBRD74150	Fees	83,069.68
Sep, 2008	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,093,307.21
Mar, 2009	IBRD74150	Fees	74,548.42
Mar, 2009	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,094,784.29
Jul, 2009	IBRD74150	Disbursemer	21,992,810.00
Sep, 2009	IBRD74150	Fees	76,366.28
Sep, 2009	IBRD74150	Interest and	578,492.45
Mar, 2010	IBRD74150	Disbursemer	21,109,590.00
Mar, 2010	IBRD74150	Fees	53,693.73
Mar, 2010	IBRD74150	Interest and	423,732.01
Sep, 2010	IBRD74150	Fees	27,070.75
Sep, 2010	IBRD74150	Interest and	487,206.74
Mar, 2011	IBRD74150	Fees	27,178.89
Mar, 2011	IBRD74150	Interest and	607,481.63
Apr, 2011	IBRD74150	Disbursemer	22,558,450.00
Sep, 2011	IBRD74150	Disbursemer	108,996,405.00
Sep, 2011	IBRD74150	Disbursemer	-108,996,405.00
Sep, 2011	IBRD74150	Fees	5,232.49
Sep, 2011	IBRD74150	Interest and	916,341.34
Mar, 2012	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,893,457.98
Mar, 2012	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,560,524.25
Sep, 2012	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,835,512.61
Sep, 2012	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,668,264.17
Mar, 2013	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,763,156.61
Mar, 2013	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,750,923.36
Sep, 2013	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,723,584.79
Sep, 2013	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,910,471.39
Mar, 2014	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,726,584.84
Mar, 2014	IBRD74150	Repayment	4,186,568.92
Sep, 2014	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,534,598.23
Sep, 2014	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,986,578.33
Mar, 2015	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,196,643.55
Mar, 2015	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,348,186.59
Sep, 2015	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,212,475.81
Sep, 2015	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,665,811.96
Mar, 2016	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,122,791.87
Mar, 2016	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,690,839.43
Sep, 2016	IBRD74150	Interest and	1,069,535.50
Sep, 2016	IBRD74150	Repayment	3,830,790.67