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The financing modalities of banking foundations: Case study of social and solidarity economy sector in Morocco

As modalidades de financiamento das instituições bancárias:
Estudo de caso do sector da economia social e solidária
em Marrocos

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Abstract: The objective of this article is to make an inventory of the means of financing of SSE actors by questioning the particular role of the CSR approaches of Moroccan banks in the financing of this sector. To provide answers to these questions, we have listed, by using a qualitative analysis, mainly documentary components of the CSR approach of seven Moroccan banks, based on data available in their latest CSR reports and information made public on their institutional websites. The main contribution of this article is to offer a first support of reflection on the willingness of the banking sector to support SSE through the CSR approach of its actors.

Keywords: social and solidarity economy, corporate social responsibility, banks; financing.

Resumo: O objetivo deste artigo é fazer um inventário dos meios de financiamento dos atores da Economia Social e Solidária (ESS), questionando o papel particular das abordagens de Responsabilidade Social Empresarial (RSE) dos bancos marroquinos no financiamento deste setor. Para responder a essas perguntas, listamos, por meio de uma análise qualitativa, principalmente componentes documentais da abordagem de RSE de sete bancos marroquinos, com base em dados disponíveis em seus últimos relatórios de RSE e informações divulgadas em seus sites institucionais. A principal contribuição deste artigo é oferecer um primeiro suporte de reflexão sobre a vontade do setor bancário em apoiar a ESS através da abordagem de RSE dos seus atores.

Palavras-chave: economia social e solidária, responsabilidade social das empresas, bancos, financiamento.

Introduction

In Morocco, social and solidarity economy is a major theme and a priority lever for action in the fight against poverty, precariousness, exclusion, discrimination and all kinds of social inequalities. It aims to achieve harmonious and sustainable growth by forming a third pillar on which a balanced and inclusive economy rests alongside the two strategic sectors, public and private. Indeed, this economy has the potential and the means to create significant wealth, both material and immaterial.

In Morocco, solidarity practices and mutualism are rooted in the culture of citizens who have witnessed sustained economic growth until 2010. However, this growth remains irregular due to several factors such as the dependence of Moroccan economy on the agricultural sector, which is subject to the vagaries of the climate, the low activity rate of the population, the informal nature that dominates labour relations and the precariousness that results from it. In addition, there is the great disparity between urban and rural areas, which does not favour the improvement of living conditions for a large part of the population.

Issue:

In their actions, social economy organizations in Morocco adopt a participatory approach directly involving the beneficiary populations by making efforts to better satisfy their needs and offer them local services capable of ensuring them the conditions for a decent life. However, in Morocco, the SSE faces constraints that limit its development, including the lack of premises and equipment, the difficulty of mobilizing qualified human resources and, above all, the difficulty of accessing funding.

In the end, this last topic remains largely neglected in the absence of specialized financial institutions and specific financing tools. We note that for SSE actors, equity and quasi-equity financing as well as public and private subsidies remain the most used modes.

On the banks' side, within the framework of COP22, the Professional Grouping of Banks in Morocco (GPBM) presented the sector's roadmap, intended to frame the Moroccan banking sector's action in mobilizing financing for sustainable development and to accelerate the implementation of the means and tools of a

solidarity-based and inclusive Finance. The juxtaposition of these two elements motivated us to ask the following question:

To what extent can the CSR approaches of the banking sector participate in financing SSE in Morocco?

In order to answer this research question, we began by presenting the origins and definitions of the SSE, followed by its current status in Morocco and its components. Then, we described its institutional framework and developed the means of financing available to the actors. In the empirical part, we announced our methodological choices and proposed the results of our investigation. We ended this phase with a discussion of the results.

1. Origins, definitions, and theoretical framework of the social and solidarity economy

The roots of the SSE go back to the 19th century in the first workers' associations, consumer and residents' cooperatives and mutual aid societies. Its definition varies from country to country. However, there is a general agreement internationally on certain values that distinguish the field of SSE.

Origins

The modern social economy has its origins in very ancient human associations dating back to the Egypt of the Pharaohs, to Greek or Latin antiquity, to medieval Europe, to imperial China or to pre-Columbian America. However, the genesis of the modern social economy corresponds to a slow process of emergence of a true freedom of association (Cattani & Laville, 2006; Boucher et al., 2013). Historians consider the first modern example of the social economy to be the creation of the Rochdale Pioneers Co-operative in the United Kingdom (1844) (Autes, 2006).

The religious spirit also participated in the development of the social economy. Indeed, many initiatives by Christian communities called for the fight against the isolation of the individual and against all kinds of discrimination and social exclusion. Moreover, the Muslim religion has participated in the development of the social economy thanks to the corpus of theological texts that govern the social life of individuals and give meaning to the notion of solidarity. Among the

fundamental tools of this mutual aid within the Muslim community, we find almsgiving presented in two forms. The first is obligatory (Zakat), while the second is voluntary (Sadaka). To these practices, we can add those that are considered traditional but not religious. These are mainly Touiza, which is a tool of solidarity between individuals without legal obligation. It takes two forms: the Tuiza of common interest, pronounced by the Jmaâ according to the interests of all the members, and the Tuiza of individual interest, which is the help requested by an individual in need from his community.

Definitions:

The social economy is defined by several authors as a "Third Sector" that is distinct from public authorities and private for-profit enterprises (Chopart et al., 2006; Allemand et al., 2012; Maxime & Vienney, 1984) has proposed a specific definition of the social economy by actors and by four particular rules in order to avoid its confusion with the informal economy and the domestic economy:

- relations between members (democratic functioning),
- member-company relationships (member determination of activity),
- company-member relationships (distribution of surpluses or allocation of results),
- the company (long-term collective ownership).

Furthermore, the International Labour Organization (ILO) & (Aguilera et al., 2007)—defines the social and solidarity economy as "a concept that designates enterprises and organizations, in particular cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises, which have the specificity of producing goods, services and knowledge while pursuing both economic and social objectives and promoting solidarity"¹.

For the purposes of this article, we have adopted the definition proposed by the EESC, which considers the social and solidarity economy to be "all economic and social activities organized with in the framework of formal structures or groupings of natural or legal persons pursuing a goal of collective and societal interest, which are independent and enjoy autonomous, democratic and participatory management, and to which membership is free". (Ammar & Bouhassine, 2015) ²

¹ "Social and solidarity economy: our common path to decent work". second edition 2011.

² Report of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council of 2015 "Social and Solidarity

Theoretical framing:

In order to theoretically position our research and to know the CSR approaches of the banking sector that can participate in the financing of the SSE in Morocco; we were particularly interested in the theory of "stakeholders" which constitutes a translation of the "Anglo-Saxon stakeholders" theory³. Initiated mainly by Freeman's work (1984), it constitutes a challenge to the shareholder model⁴ in which the company must be managed solely in the interest of the shareholders. In contrast, the stakeholder model argues that the company should be managed in the interests of all stakeholders. The most commonly used definition is that of Freeman (1984, p. 46): A stakeholder is "an individual or group of individuals who may affect or be affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" (Freeman, 1984). From this perspective, banks' CSR approaches must respond positively to stakeholders' expectations and claims in order to anticipate or avoid them. M. C. Jensen proved that the company couldn't maximize its value if any of the stakeholders are ignored (Branco & Rodrigues, 2007). To this effect, the TPP is an inevitable process in the operationalization of CSR (Matten et al. cited by Branco M. C. et al., 2007).

2. Overview of the economic and social situation in Morocco

Since the launch of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) by King Mohamed VI on 18 May 2005, social economy organizations had mobilized to make a success of this major project (Combes, 2005). They intervene to identify the needs of the populations, to carry out income-generating activities, to organize the beneficiaries of the projects, etc. Their proximity to the populations and their knowledge of the field have allowed them to develop in fields such as the fight against illiteracy, the creation and the accompaniment of projects, the promotion and the integration of the women and the young people in the economic circuit⁵.

Economy A lever for inclusive growth").

³ The term Stakeholder Theory (ST) stands for Stakeholder Theory. Its purpose is to study the stakeholder model. For the sake of convenience, we will use either of these two terms interchangeably.

⁴ The *shareholder* model, characteristic of Anglo-Saxon capitalism, gives primacy to shareholders and to the objective of creating "shareholder value".

⁵ Institutional website of the NHRI

Demographic context

The latest General Census of Population and Housing of 2014 indicates that the size of the Kingdom's population reached, as of September 1, ^{er}2014, 33,848,242 including 33,762,036 Moroccans and 86,206 foreigners. Compared to the 2004 Census, the number of the Kingdom's population has increased by 13.2%⁶.

Economic context

In 2018, the Moroccan economy recorded a growth rate of 3% with a GDP of MAD⁷ 10815.21 billion and an unemployment rate of 9.8%. During this year, the authorities launched a process of gradual flexibilization of the exchange rate regime whose main objective is to strengthen the resilience of the national economy to external shocks and to support its competitiveness. The developments that marked the year 2018 show that the performance of the national economy remains insufficient to meet the growing social expectations. It is under these conditions that Bank Al-Maghrib and the Ministry of Economy and Finance decided to develop the national strategy for financial inclusion, which aims to reduce the deficit and inequalities in this area⁸.

Social context

Bank Al Maghreb's report shows that nearly 10 million Moroccans are poor or at risk of becoming poor. Between 2010 and 2015, the country recorded a sharp decline in poverty; the trend is expected to continue, but its pace is expected to slow down significantly according to forecasts based on GDP per capita. In 2019, extreme poverty measured by the \$1.9 PPP international poverty line will be slightly below 1%, while poverty measured by the \$3.2 PPP line will be just above 6%, which is certainly a modest improvement from the 6.36% projected in 2018.

As far as employment is concerned, the situation threatens social stability. Indeed, the Moroccan school continues to produce a youth ill equipped for

⁶ BAM Report

⁷ IMF - World Economic Outlook Database - October 2018.

⁸ BAM Report

adequate insertion into the labor market⁹. The number of unemployed reached 1.2 million in 2017, or 10.2% of the active population. Young people looking for their first job represent more than half (58%). Moreover, the financial situation of households is already precarious. "Access to employment does not guarantee a decent standard of living¹⁰. In the private sphere, the minimum wage in industry, commerce and the liberal professions is 2,800 DH; while it reaches 1,813 DH in the agricultural sector. On average, the salary of a civil servant is 82% higher than that of a worker in the private sector. In addition, the public sector benefits from a very generous pension system.

3. SSE Components

The social and solidarity economy in its current form is recent in Morocco. It emerged particularly with the encouragement of the State in order to help deal with some of the negative consequences of the policies pursued during the 1980s and 1990s (Ibrouk & Fatiha, 2003), particularly in the social sphere. These difficulties are related to the population's access to basic social services, the entrenchment of poverty and the problems of unemployment (De Boissieu & Couppey-Soubeyran, 2013). From an organizational point of view and following the example of several countries around the world, the social economy in Morocco is made up of three main components: cooperatives, associations and mutuals.

Cooperatives

With reference to law 24/83 establishing the status of cooperatives in Morocco, we can define a cooperative as "a grouping of individuals who agree to join together to create an enterprise responsible for providing, for their exclusive satisfaction, the product or service they need. Legal persons meeting certain conditions may become members of a cooperative". As of January 2, 2019, the number of cooperatives has reached about 20,000 with 504,715 members, including 146,368 women (29%), and a turnover exceeding 9.5 billion dirhams, up 23% compared to 2010¹¹. The

⁹ Statement by the Wali of BAM

¹⁰ Alert the Central Bank

¹¹ Institutional website of the State Secretariat for Crafts and the Solidarity Economy

Moroccan cooperatives carry out their actions in all branches of human activity by seeking essentially to:

- improve the socio-economic situation of their members;
- promote the cooperative spirit among members;
- reduce the cost and selling price of certain products or services;
- to develop and enhance, to the maximum, the production of their members.

The associations

Associations have developed in Morocco within the framework of the code of public liberties. They are governed by the dahir of 15 November 1958, amended and completed in July 2002 (Bouchra, 2003). This text defines an association as "the agreement by which two or more natural persons permanently pool their knowledge or activities for a purpose other than sharing profits"¹². Several political and economic explanations have been put forward to explain the growth in the number and scope of associations. Some are based on the rather mixed social consequences of the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme between 1983 and the early 1990s. They also point to the increase in poverty and social exclusion, the worsening of unemployment, the accentuation of regional disparities, etc.

Mutual insurance companies

Dahir No. 1-57-187, on the status of mutual societies in Morocco, defines mutual societies as "non-profit-making groups which, by means of their members' contributions, propose to carry out, in the interest of their members or their families, an action of foresight, solidarity and mutual aid aimed at covering risks that may affect the human person". The aim of mutuals is to ensure access to services and protection on a basis of solidarity. Two general principles underlie mutuals (Saïdi et al., 2003):

- Solidarity between members, which consists of improving the social conditions of its members in a spirit of foresight, solidarity and mutual aid. Thus, mutual insurance companies refuse any form of exclusion or risk selection, whether

¹² Le travail associatif au Maroc : éléments de stratégies ", proceedings of the round tables organized by Espace Associatif, Rabat - Casablanca 1998-1999.

based on age, health, income level or socio-professional criteria.

- The non-profit nature of these organisations means that they do not pay any interest on share capital or dividends to members. Any surplus of income over expenditure must contribute to the achievement of the common goal.

4. Institutional framework of the social economy in Morocco

Poverty, the vulnerability of the population, the informal nature that dominates a large part of labor relations and the precariousness that results from it have obliged the public authorities and private actors to mobilize to shape an economic, legal and social framework in order to make a success of the social economy in Morocco.

THE National Initiative for Human Development

With the advent of the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH), several projects had initiated to promote the emergence of new activities in several areas such as agriculture, handicrafts, tourism, fishing, local products ... etc.)¹³. To succeed in this ambitious initiative, strategies had put in place. These are mainly the "Green Morocco Plan for agriculture", the "2015 Vision for handicrafts", the "2010 and 2020 Vision for tourism", the "2020 Halieutis Plan" for the fisheries sector, etc. The realization of these strategies was mainly the responsibility of the Ministry of General Affairs, which has been in charge of the sector since 2002.

Currently, and in continuity with the dynamics started in 2005, the INDH has reached its third phase; it considers human capital as an essential lever for development and places it at the heart of its concerns. Its main achievements are summarized in table 1.

¹³ Institutional website of the NHRI

Table n°1: The main achievements of the INDH

Domains	Achievements
Access to basic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8,200 km of tracks and roads completed ▪ 230,000 households served with drinking water ▪ 60,000 households connected to electricity
Access to care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 519 Health centers, ▪ 240 Dar Al Ummah, ▪ 1150 Ambulances, ▪ 560 Medical caravans & health campaigns.
Support for schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1400 Dar Talib / Taliba, ▪ 1260 School buses.
Support for people in precarious situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1,134 Centers for women in difficult situations, ▪ 630 Centers for people with special needs, ▪ 140 Centers for the elderly.
Social integration of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2,200 Sports areas, ▪ 512 Youth centers, ▪ 350 Cultural centers and libraries.
Economic inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9,400 income-generating activities (64% in rural areas).
Financial leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 43 billion dirhams of investments generated of which MAD 28 billion financed by the INDH budget (leverage of 53%).

Source: Made by the authors¹⁴

The efforts of the Ministry of the Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development¹⁵

The Ministry was forced to review its national SSE strategy 2010-2020¹⁶ and to launch a study for the development of a new SSE strategy and action plan for the next ten years. The objective is to outline new directions and make recommendations in order to provide Morocco with a strategic framework for SSE with an action plan for the next ten years that addresses the following issues increase the participation of SSE in GDP and its contribution to wealth and job creation;

- to improve the social situation of the population working in this sector;
- promote the synergy of public policies dedicated to the development of the SSE;
- participate in the proper management and preservation of natural resources;
- develop the culture and values of social solidarity.

¹⁴ Institutional website of the NHRI

¹⁵ Institutional website of the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development

¹⁶ National Strategy for the Social and Solidarity Economy 2010-2020, page 45.

Other public organizations

Currently the State has shown a particular interest in the sector by creating a Ministry dedicated to the sector: "Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicraft and Social Economy". By putting at its head a Secretary of State particularly in charge of "Handicraft and Social Economy". Alongside these Ministries, other departments are involved, each with a specific focus. More specifically, these are the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of the Interior.

In order to promote the SSE sector, the State has also created public organizations dedicated to the social economy. Firstly, the Office for the Development of Cooperation (ODCO) created in 1962 and which is the public organization responsible for the management of cooperatives in Morocco. Secondly, we would like to highlight the important role played by the Social Development Agency (ADS), created in 1999, which works to strengthen the capacities of local actors, promote income-generating activities and employment, and improve the living conditions of the targeted populations in urban and rural areas. In addition, the Ministry has launched the design of the SSE Observatory in order to make reliable and relevant data available on the components of the sector and to provide visibility on its economic weight.

5. Financing the social and solidarity economy and the position of The Ministry of Economy and Finance's mechanisms

In order to achieve the development policy, the Moroccan authorities had to make up for the accumulated delays in financing the projects that enter the SSE sector by setting up project support mechanisms.

In order to find a solution to the financing problem of the sector, the Minister of Economy and Finance, has put in place two main measures to support the financing of very small, small and medium enterprises (VSEs), before and during the presentation of the 2019 Finance Bill (PLF). The first is to reconstruct mechanisms of state guarantees, the number of which will have to be reduced from 12 to 2 (operating and investment financing). In addition, the second measure consists in increasing the ceiling of microcredit's from 50,000 DH to 150,000 DH to finance VSEs and project holders who were previously excluded from both the banking

system and the microcredit system. In this perspective, some measures had deployed:

- Launch of a new guarantee mechanism for microcredit's enabling microcredit associations to grant more financing to VSEs, improve financing conditions and increase the authorized financing ceiling.
- Doubling of the guarantee ceiling for the benefit of project holders, which goes from 10 to 20 MDH per operation and from 20 to 40 MDH.
- Launch of a guarantee fund to facilitate access to participatory financing products. This fund offers two main products: a "business" guarantee and a "housing" guarantee.
- Comprehensive overhaul of the co-financing system (GCC-banks) to strengthen the quasi-equity (equity equivalent) of undercapitalized SMEs, thereby facilitating their access to bank finance.
- Preparation of a national strategy for financial inclusion by Bank Al- Maghrib and the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

These measures strengthen the existing system, which has recently been enhanced by:

- The creation of the "Innov Invest" fund in October 2017 to support innovative projects. It has a public contribution of 500 MDH (700 MDH in total).
- The preparation of the bill on "crowdfunding" or collaborative financing.
- Strengthening the role of business angels in the financing of startups through the establishment of co-financing mechanisms, and integration in the 2018 finance law of measures to encourage investment in startups.
- The development of a guide to the different support mechanisms for SSE.
- The establishment of an electronic portal dedicated to the SSE.

It should be noted that between 2009 and 2017, the guarantee fund for SMEs has benefited 30,000 project holders and has allowed the granting of 64 billion DH of financing through guarantee commitments reaching 34 billion DH. The jobs created amounted to 84,000 positions. The number of beneficiary companies has increased from 2,017 TPMEs in 2013 to 9,244 in 2017. The total amount of financing has

increased from 2.5 to 9.5 billion DH between 2013 and 2017. As for co-financing (CCG-banks), the number of beneficiary companies has increased from 57 in 2013, to 209 in 2017. The amount of financing reached 2.5 billion DH in 2017¹⁷

Despite these important developments, access to financing remains a serious obstacle for a large number of SMEs, which represent 99% of the Moroccan economic fabric. Hence the desire of the Ministry of Economy and Finance to strengthen support mechanisms, simplify the operation and identify the public action in this area. Indeed, as part of the Pact Emergence, the State has established three investment funds Public / Private oriented Venture Capital, Development Capital and Transmission Capital. The objectives of this initiative are:

- Limiting the obstacles of undercapitalization that penalize many SMEs;
- Improving the top end of the balance sheet for better access to bank financing;
- Enable organizations to benefit from management expertise;
- Accelerate the creation of organizations.

Guarantee fund mechanisms: the central guarantee fund (CGC)

The Central Guarantee Fund is a public financial institution, similar to a credit institution. The guarantees granted by the CGC are unconditionally guaranteed by the State. As an instrument of the State, the CGC helps to give an impulse to the SSE by encouraging the creation, development and modernization of projects. The main strategic areas of activity of the CGC cover:

- Guarantees for investment, operating, transfer and financial restructuring loans.
- Co-financing with banks of investment projects within the framework of sectoral strategies (crafts, industry, private education, tourism, etc.).
- Equity financing through investment funds and venture capital guarantees.
- As a natural partner of banks, the CGC has concluded cooperation agreements with them on the use of guarantee and co-financing products. Thus, in order to facilitate the access of SSE actors to bank financing, the CGC guarantees between 50 and 85% of the investment credits intended for the creation and/or extension of their projects.
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¹⁷ BAM Report

The means of financing available to SSE actors

Table 2 shows the main means of financing available to SSE actors.

Table 2: Financing means available to SSE actors

Means of financin		Eligibility requirements
Self-financing	Equity financing to avoid debt	
Love money	ancing of the project with money from relative start of the project.	
Financing by loan	bank loan requires a minimum amount of equit certain level of risk.	bank loan concerns all types of
Medium term credi long run	Banks provide financing to Project holders	Young project holders (creation, extension or modernization)
Private equity	Private equity can be used at different stages o company's development cycle. nature or seed capital, development capital and capital)	Projects concerned must be inn ave high growth potential and en return on investment. (quick investment)
Morocco Business Net	Occasions of business leaders. Its objective is to economic initiative by granting honorary loans to creators	The following are concerned: bus creators
Maroc Télécom Association for creation and promote employment	Association that helps young people to realize business creation projects	Selected young project leader
Guarantee fund for startup employment	The purpose of the CGC fund is to guarantee anted by banks to finance investment projects by young entrepreneurs	Ung entrepreneurs (creation, modernisation...) are concerne
Young enterprise credit	Banks have set up financing facilities to prom investment for the benefit of entrepreneurs	It is intended for natural person moroccan nationality aged between 45 years old on the date of the application and holding a diploma
fund for the Promotion or Employment	It is a fund that finances investment project	Young Moroccans between the age d 40 who do not meet the condition her education diploma or qualification eligible Professional
Medium term credit re-bo Bank Al Maghrib	his credit finances investment projects concern creation, extension or modernization of organization	finances projects with a balance she not exceeding DHS 15 million of investment
dit "IZDIHAR" Credit Populaire	finances the creation, extension or modernization companies producing goods and services	This includes companies operations industry, agriculture, crafts, transport, tourism and other sectors
Participation and Partner Promotion Company (Moussahama)	Participation in Moroccan or foreign companie hichmical assistance and advice panies as well as the elaboration of studies be used as a basis for the acquisition of participation	equity investment is intended start-up or developing compan

Leasing for the acquisition capital goods	Lease financing for the acquisition of new capita for professional use	
Real estate leasing	is credit may be for business premises acquire company or buildings to be built on land belonging to the co	
Guarantee of Financing estment Fund by the G Fund	purpose is to facilitate the access of project ho bank loans for the financing of their own project (creation, extension or modernisation)	

Source: authors' production

6. The CSR approach of Moroccan banks in financing the SSE

The Moroccan banking sector has demonstrated in recent years a high degree of social and environmental responsibility in the management of its activities. It has proven that it is able to make a powerful contribution to sustainable development practices in Morocco, despite the absence of a legal arsenal capable of coercing banks that do not adhere to it. Indeed, our banking companies instrumentalize sustainable development in Morocco by financing sustainable products and investing in social and solidarity projects. The CSR approaches of these companies are therefore of specific importance for the SSE nssofar as each time they make a financing or investment decision they indirectly contribute to developing this economy.

Banks' commitment takes different forms: improving internal working conditions, reducing the company's ecological footprint, sponsorship, philanthropy, partnerships with NGOs, offering responsible products and services (green loans, socially responsible investment (SRI), solidarity savings, controlling the environmental and social risks of investments, etc.). Such a commitment would be beneficial for shareholders as well as for all other internal and external stakeholders.

On the eve of COP 22, the banking sector has understood that it must play a major role in eradicating poverty and addressing the many social and societal issues at stake by mobilizing diversified and stable resources over time to support sustainable development projects. The wealth of annual reports and CSR reports devoted to this issue testifies to their awareness and their desire to act responsibly on behalf of all economic and social players.

7. Methodological approach

We have chosen the banking sector as our field of investigation. Indeed, banks are considered among the most committed companies in the framework of CSR and financing of the SSE sector. We have therefore chosen the following 7 banks: Attijariwafa Bank (AWB), the Moroccan Bank for Foreign Trade (BMCE BOA), the Moroccan Bank for Domestic Trade (BMCI), the Central People's Bank (BCP), the General Society of Morocco (SGMA), the Agricultural Credit of Morocco (CAM) and the Credit of Morocco (CDM).

We conducted a qualitative, exploratory study in the form of documentary research (Lardy, 1997). It is a systematic approach, which consists in identifying, recovering and processing various elements (figures, bibliography, texts...) on a given subject. We had to follow the following steps:

- Choose relevant sources of information (Moroccan banks' institutional websites, their annual and sustainable development reports, press articles...
- study all CSR reports published on institutional websites,
- analyze all data made public on institutional sites,
- Present the results.

Content analysis of CSR reports is a frequently used technique to identify what organizations consider responsible practices. It is generally done using the coding method. The latter consists of categorizing the textual content of the reports using predetermined or emerging themes or a combination of these two types of codes. In the context of this research, we opted for the open coding technique proposed by the Nvivo 12 software, which consists of characterizing text segments according to codes that are mostly emergent, i.e., they are extracted from the text in an intuitive way.

8. The results of the study

The study of the reports of banking companies in Morocco allowed us to highlight that AWB, BMCE BOA, BMCI, BP¹⁸ and CDM have chosen to publish CSR reports on their institutional sites, independent of the annual report. We found information on their responsibility towards customers, employees (human

¹⁸ Banque Populaire publishes its first independent CSR report

resources management) and the community (philanthropic contributions). In this context, we must recall that only BMCE BOA and AWB report respectively in the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) and (GRI-G4) standards. We present in the table below the nature of the different CSR reports of Moroccan banks.

Table 3: CSR reports of the banks analysed

REPORT	AWB	BMCE BOA	BMCI	BP	CDM	SGMA
CSR Report	X	X	X	X	X	-
Last report	2017	2016	2016	2015 ¹⁹	2017	2016
Name	Social responsibility report	Sustainability report	Social and Environmental Responsibility Report	CSR Report Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR REPORT 2017	Annual Report 2016
Number of pages	180	64	50	75	60	a 10 page chapter

Source: authors' production

We recall that our results are twofold: the first focuses on the importance of social inclusion in the CSR approach of Moroccan banks, while the second aims to identify the main CSR actions of these companies in favour of SSE.

The bank's responsibility for social inclusion

Social inclusion is the process of improving the conditions under which individuals and groups participate in society. It is primarily about improving the capacity and dignity of disadvantaged people.

As part of their CSR efforts, banks are particularly committed to promoting inclusion (Hikkerova & Bortolotti, 2013). The analysis of the CSR reports of the seven banks that participated in our study indicates that these companies target disadvantaged populations through "Low Income Banking". Indeed, this is a system that allows low-income populations to benefit from free account management, as well as products offered in Arabic and at very reduced rates. We have grouped together in table n°4 presented below, the establishments that have implemented this principle.

¹⁹ Realized for the first time

Table 4 Accounts for disadvantaged populations

Banks	Accounts for disadvantaged populations
BMCE BOA	Lilkoul account (account for all),
AWB	Hissab Bikhir (satisfaction account),
BCP	Hissab Chaâbi (popular account),
SGMA	Hissab Hani pack (tranquility account)
CAM	Hissab Al Fellah pack (farmer account).

Source: authors' production

Inclusion also involves the efforts made by banks in developing the microcredit sector. Indeed, for some time now, banks seem to have been taking a particular interest in this sector, through the Microcredit Associations (MCAs) which are in contact with the underprivileged populations. Today, the sector is currently under the banner of the major Moroccan banks. For example, the Banque Centrale Populaire has strengthened its "Microcredit Foundation"; CDG continues to provide stewardship, Crédit Agricole du Maroc has set up the "Ardi" foundation, and BMCE BOA is promoting through PalnetFinace. These initiatives show that banks are beginning to consider credit as a lever to fight against the "social exclusion" of women and men, especially those affected by poverty and those living in rural areas. In this way, they are responding to the objective of providing banking services to populations that can now have rechargeable bank cards, pay by Internet and mobile phone, have a bank account, receive money orders, family allowances and retirement pensions.

The main CSR actions of Moroccan banks in favour of SSE.

The Moroccan banking sector has thus proved that it is able to make a powerful contribution to sustainable development practices. On the societal level, the foundations of Moroccan banks finance associations that defend interesting causes, sponsor cultural, artistic and sports events and generally participate in the development and fulfillment of Moroccan citizens. We present them in table n°5.

Table 5: Foundations of Moroccan banks

Foundations	Number	Designations	Axes
AWB	1	Attijariwafa bank foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education and entrepreneurship ▪ Art and culture ▪ Editions and debates
BMCE BOA	1	BMCE Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medersat.com Program ▪ Social responsibility of the foundation in Africa ▪ Amazigh language and culture ▪ Environment ▪ Community Development ▪ Rehabilitation.
BMCI	1	BMCI Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Solidarity (education, handicap, operation "coup de pouces", dream up) ▪ Culture (publishing, music, jazzablanca)
SGMA	1	Société Générale Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CSR ▪ Solidarity Sponsorship ▪ Cultural sponsorship ▪ Sports sponsorship
CAM	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fondation crédit agricole du Maroc pour le développement durable ▪ Fondation crédit Agricole du Maroc pour les arts et le patrimoine rural ▪ ARDI Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DD ▪ Art and rural heritage ▪ Help and assistance to rural people
BCP	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attawfik micro finance • Foundation creation of companies • Fondation banque populaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional microcredit: AL INTILAKA, ATTAKADOUM, AL MOUAKABA, AL ISTIKTAB, ALFARDI, ATTAEHIL ; ▪ Rural micro-credit: AL KARAOUI ; ▪ Housing microcredit: ISLAH ASSAKAN, ALMILKIA.
CDM	1	<i>The Crédit du Maroc Foundation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ financial and social inclusion, ▪ social entrepreneurship and culture.

Source: Made by the authors

In the framework of this research, we are also interested in the various actions in favour of SSE that are part of the CSR approaches of the banking sector. In order to summarize these results, we have grouped them in table n°6 presented below:

Table n°6: CSR approaches of Moroccan banks in favor of SSE

Banks	CSR approaches of Moroccan banks in favour of SSE
BMCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medersat.com programme: this is a programme for the construction and equipment of school units in rural areas, the ultimate aim of which is to contribute to the improvement of the living standards of disadvantaged populations. • Patronage actions for the benefit of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Association of Parents and Friends of Children with Cancer, • the General Union of Senegalese Students and Trainees in Morocco, • the Moroccan Association for the Fight against Cancer, • Assalam Association for Social Development • The group's collaborations with multilateral and development institutions in the field of sustainable finance. • Solidarity savings account. • Credit for people who have difficulty accessing banking products and services (Foragrim credit, prepaid cards, passbook accounts, private cards).
AWB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patronage actions through partnerships with Moroccan associations. • Creation of Dar Al Moukawil, a support concept for client and non-client companies;
BCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm with you" awards to support the development of VSEs. • Development of the Master in Banking and Financial Markets. • Mobilization of 1,000 volunteer advisors to support the work of the Injaz Al Maghrib association, which works to create an entrepreneurial spirit among young students. • Promotion of microcredit through its Attawfik Foundation • Professional microcredit: AL INTILAKA, ATTAKADOUM, AL MOUAKABA, AL ISTIKTAB, ALFARDI, ATTAEHIL ; • rural micro-credit: AL KARAOUI ; • housing microcredit: ISLAH ASSAKAN, ALMILKIA ; • distribution of solidarity savings products by transferring the donations from the sharing products to associations or solidarity financial players. • fight against precariousness through the promotion of income-generating activities; • development of the culture of entrepreneurship and to assist young people in their business creation projects; • Upgrading of landlocked schools within the framework of the project "A Banque Populaire branch, an upgraded school"; • Collaboration with NGOs/ public institutions/universities to raise awareness on SD; • Contribution to financial and banking inclusion.
BMCI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial education of social and solidarity economy actors ; • Partnership with the Anaïs association to support people with mild mental disabilities. • Support from the Moroccan Student Foundation • Partnership with the AREF (Regional Academy of Education and Training), and the Al Jisr association to equip 125 schools with classroom libraries throughout Morocco. • Partnership with the association Sourire de Réda to limit child suicide. • Support for the INSAF single mother support centre • The "Coup de Pouce" program, which aims to support general interest and solidarity initiatives carried out by associations in which employees are involved on a voluntary basis (humanitarian, social and solidarity actions).

SGMA	<p>Sponsorship actions in favour of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Mawarid association; • The Mohammed V Foundation to fight against poverty and exclusion in Morocco; • the Zakoura Foundation to conduct a pilot project of a digital non-formal school in the village of Oulad Rfaa; • The Kane Ya Makane association, as part of the "Tanouir" programme to combat school dropout; • SOS Villages to provide abandoned children with a family environment in which they can flourish; the "Académia" Foundation which assists deserving students from the grandes écoles and universities; • The association "Bab Rayan", which accompanies children on their way to emancipation; • the global program of banking and financial education for young people in school. • the association "Sourire de Reda" to help young people in pain to prevent suicide.
CAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with national solidarity foundations ; • Sponsorship of associations and events of social interest; • Tamwil El Fellah, a financing company for agricultural development ; • offers disadvantaged populations, excluded from the traditional banking system, the local financial and non-financial services essential to their socio-economic integration; • assisting rural communities to become more self-reliant so that they can take charge of their own economic and social development; • providing technical and specific expertise in rural development ; • Offers solidarity microcredit to farmers via the Ardi Foundation. • Financing of sustainable products (organic farming, renewable energy production, optimization of energy resources, upgrading of agri-food industries), Solidarity-based financing.
CDM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with The Gramen Crédit Agricole Foundation to fight against poverty. • Helping the inclusion of people in vulnerable situations through socially innovative actions. • social inclusion through the empowerment of socially excluded people; • Encouraging social entrepreneurship by supporting social enterprise project leaders; promotion of culture as a means of social integration.

Source: authors' production

9. Discussion:

The analysis of the CSR reports of Moroccan banks as well as the data on their commitment to sustainable development posted on their institutional websites, indicates that the banking sector has been a central actor in the awareness of the imperatives of sustainability and solidarity in Morocco with proactive policies in terms of sponsorship, patronage and financing of projects belonging to the SSE sector.

Our research has led us to commend the commitment of these companies to social inclusion insofar as they are making huge efforts to increase the rate of

banking among vulnerable populations through innovative, accessible and even free products and services. The objective is to avoid all the consequences of financial exclusion. Indeed, not having a bank account means not receiving income in electronic form, not being able to deposit money in a safe place. It also means not being able to benefit from other products for which holding an account is the entry point, such as credit or savings products, which are nowadays essential for asserting oneself in society.

Moreover, in order to concretize their ambition in the fight against poverty and precariousness, the banks that participated in our study accompany and finance project leaders. Indeed, they have committed themselves, within the framework of their CSR approaches, to providing economic and social actors with the necessary incentive tools to take into account sustainability criteria when setting up their projects. From this point of view, microcredit appears to be a component developed by Moroccan banks as part of their CSR approaches. It mainly consists in granting small loans to micro-entrepreneurs who cannot be financed by traditional bank loans. It helps to improve living conditions, enhance self-esteem, finance schooling and healthcare. From a global perspective, microfinance includes, in addition to microcredit, financial tools such as savings and microinsurance, enabling poor populations to protect themselves in the event of difficulties (climatic conditions unfavorable to production, loss of goods, illness, etc.).

In addition, our study shows that Moroccan banks make interventions of a charitable nature. They finance associations and NGOs in fields related to education, culture, health and social aid through donations and sponsorships by devoting important budgets to them. Our banks have thus multiplied voluntary actions, reconciling the protection of the natural environment, social development and economic development.

Conclusion

Moroccans have always promoted the values of solidarity and mutual aid and have organized themselves in various customary forms to meet their economic and social needs. However, the SSE in its current form only took shape in the 1990s and early 2000s. It emerged under the impetus of the State to help alleviate the social

deficits caused by the various economic policies. These deficits are linked to the problems of poverty and precariousness suffered by Moroccans who have difficulty accessing schooling, medical care and employment.

In order to encourage this sector, the public authorities have adopted a policy of partnership with these organizations with a view to making public action in the field of social development more effective, particularly at the local level. To this end, technical and financial support has been provided, although it is still insufficient, both from the State budget and from international cooperation programmers.

Social economy organizations still face constraints that limit the scope of their interventions and greatly reduce their effectiveness. In particular, their financial resources are insufficient and irregular, which significantly reduces their projects and makes it difficult to plan actions.

In Morocco, the banking sector has not ceased to prove, through innovative and regular initiatives, that it finances the SSE. Indeed, its CSR approaches convey the values of a culture of solidarity, mutual aid and collective work that are rooted in the traditions and practices of Moroccan society. Ultimately, banks play a leading role in the fight against exclusion through the creation of specific financial products and through commendable efforts to increase the rate of banking for marginalized populations. By financing the SSE, our banks inscribe their CSR approaches in a civic ideology focused on the fight against vulnerability and precariousness.

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