

Corporate social responsibility at the service of associative work in the Covid-19 period: For economic and social development despite the crisis

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Abstract: In order to give the Moroccan economy a new lease of life and achieve stable growth over time, Morocco has designed a new development model for 2035, which aims to identify and exploit all the potential available to Morocco, especially after the shock caused by the Covid 19 crisis.

In this context, development economics is concerned with the study of economic, social, environmental and institutional factors within a macroeconomic and microeconomic framework in so-called developing countries, in order to accelerate their economic growth and address the problems of underdevelopment. On the other hand, the social economy plays an active role in the transition from one development model to another, through social innovations.

Thus, through our documentary study, we want to shed light on the themes of development economics and the social economy as they relate to local development. With this in mind, our paper will be structured around 3 parts: First, we will address the conceptual framework of development economics, focusing on the different development models. Secondly, we will take a look at the notion of the social economy from both the Anglo-Saxon and European-Quebec perspectives, and its impact on local development. Finally, we will examine the case of the Moroccan operator INWI's social initiative "Dir Iddik", and how it has helped to mobilize resources and respond to the social problems and unmet needs of local communities.

Keywords: CSR ; social innovation ; development economy ; social economy ; local development.

1. Introduction

Since its publication, Development Economics has focused on the study of economic, social, environmental and institutional factors within a macroeconomic and microeconomic framework (Figuère & al, 2019) of so-called developing countries, with the aim of solving their respective problems (Raffinot, 2015).

Development economics emerged in the late 1940s and early 1950s as a current of economic thought whose ultimate aim was to accelerate economic growth and address the problems of underdevelopment. It then evolved, taking on a multidimensional character and changing objectives over the decades. But development economics still remains true to its original role of responding to development needs



(Brasseul and Lavrard-Meyer, 2016 ; Figuière & al, 2019), which, in addition to the economic aspect, has taken on cultural and territorial dimensions.

At this stage, the social economy intervenes to respond to social needs, notably through social innovations (Benhaddouch, 2022) that contribute to the transition from one development model to another. In this paper, we will present our literature review and take a closer look at the impact of social innovations in the social economy on local development, illustrating with the example of the Moroccan telecom operator INWI's initiative, in order to answer the question "what is the impact of social innovations on local development under the shadow of the Covid-19 health crisis in Morocco?".

2. Development economics: accelerating economic growth and solving underdevelopment issues

2.1. History and main objectives

Development economics is a current of economic thought that emerged following the industrialization of England and other European countries, including Germany under Bismarck, France at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Russia after the break with serfdom, Japan after the re-establishment of the Meiji dynasty and the United States after the Civil War. However, development economics only took on the forms of an academic discipline in the early 1950s, its main aim being to help underdeveloped countries catch up with industrialized countries (Janvry and Sadoulet, 2013) by analyzing in depth the economic structure of heterogeneous countries and the resulting dynamics (Raffinot, 2015).

But first, we should distinguish between the notions of "growth" and "development". Growth is characterized by a one-dimensional aspect where we see an increase in a well-defined aggregate, whereas development is rather multidimensional and involves changing the structure of the economy and society. The growth that a country might experience does not necessarily mean that it is developing (Raffinot, 2015). In its early days, development economics was intended to solve problems relating to industrial catch-up and accelerated growth, especially after the collapse of colonial regimes and the independence of colonized countries, which were no longer content to import high-cost industrialized products in relation to low-value-added primary sector exports, and were now aiming to catch up (Hugon, 1989) in terms of living standards and industrialization (Janvry and Sadoulet, 2013).

Today, development economics has taken on a more analytical and multidimensional aspect than in the pioneering days (Meier, 1985) and has effectively contributed to the development of countries with, among other things, a globally growing middle class rate (Ravallion, 2010) and the reduction of the poverty rate by over 50% (Chen and Ravallion, 2008), as it has proved its professional success as a scientific discipline through the satisfaction of the "recruitment test" proposed by Hirschman. In short, in the days of pioneers such as Hirschman, Tinbergen, Lewis, Rosenstein-Rodan, Myrdal and Prebisch, development economics was intended to formulate catch-up economic policies to solve the problem of underdevelopment, hence the need for a global understanding of economic policy and close collaboration with the governments of countries considered to be developing.

Thus, development economics at that time was more interdisciplinary and integrative rather than specialized in analytical techniques (Janvry and Sadoulet, 2013). But these objectives are no longer in

force: indeed, they have shifted from meeting basic needs and recognizing the central role of the state in accelerating growth and securing investment funds through international agencies in the 1960s and 1970s, to distrusting the state and recognizing the central role of the market and international trade as a springboard for investment and growth in the 1980s-1990s (Rodrik, 2007; Lindauer and Pritchett, 2002), to the satisfaction of essential and multidimensional needs, including the integration of environmental objectives into global policies in the 2000s, while taking into account that current development objectives must recognize the heterogeneity of countries, and that each country must choose the development model that corresponds to it.

Thus, with the expansion of the multi-dimensionality of development, it is essential to rely on a global analysis and an overall diagnosis based on empirical data to formulate appropriate development strategies for each country in question, rather than generalizing universal principles about instruments when talking about development (Rodrik, 2007) in order to define its objectives and eliminate its obstacles. In this way, experimentation, innovation and learning are major assets for establishing and achieving development goals (Janvry and Sadoulet, 2013).

2.2. Emerging countries and the development model

Development models demonstrate the growth process and explain the development of the economy (Brasseul and Lavrard-Meyer, 2016). In terms of development economics, Ranis and Fei's model (1961) is one of the founding models, stipulating that the economy is made up of two totally different sectors: the modern sector and the traditional sector. The latter characterizes economies devoid of capital, while the former conforms to common assumptions in neoclassical economics (Raffinot, 2015). In this case, we can say that development takes place when the traditional sector begins to disappear and the modern sector gains in scale. Thus, developing countries are characterized by dualism in terms of economic sector: they include both the modern and traditional sectors. Sgard (2008) states that the emerging countries model corresponds to a form of mixed economy, with development occurring as a result of the interplay of imbalances and creative pressures (Hugon, 2003).

At this stage, developing countries are characterized by a flagrant asymmetry in terms of their foreign trade: imports are made up of high-cost industrial products, while exports are generally limited to low-value-added raw materials. This is known as the "Prebisch-Singer effect": the fall in prices of the raw materials in which developing countries specialize, compared with the steady rise in prices of industrialized products, constitutes a real obstacle to the development of these countries (Prebisch, 1950; Singer, 1950). This demonstrates that the comparative advantage approach doesn't work in the case of developing societies, which has generated great mistrust in terms of development possibilities based on the promotion of exported products before the eighties and development strategies were oriented towards the domestic market, and conversely, after the eighties, and under the impetus of the WTO (1994), development strategies were oriented towards the promotion of exports and opening up to foreign trade (Raffinot, 2015).

However, the case of a few Asian countries such as China, Japan and South Korea as emerging countries in the 1950s and their incredibly rapid economic growth overturned the usual theoretical

foundations of economic development (Pistor, 2000), and well deserved the name "the Asian miracle" (Piveteau and Rougier, 2010).

3. The social economy and social innovations: key factors for economic and social development

3.1. The Anglo-Saxon approach and the European, Quebec approach

The social economy is a distinct form of the economy (Defourny and Monzòn Campos, 1992), often referred to as the "third sector". The social economy refers to organizations that belong to neither the public nor the private sector, and which combine private but collective modes of creation and management, and whose aim is far from profit-making (Defourny, 2005 ; Benhaddouch, 2022). According to Develtere and Defourny (1999), the conditions for the development of social organizations boil down to two things: the ability to respond to an unmet need, and belonging to a social group that shares the same destiny or identity. The notion of the social economy is defined differently according to two main approaches: the Anglo-Saxon approach and the European and Quebecois approach.

The Anglo-Saxon approach uses the term "third sector", first used by Levitt (1973), to refer to nonprofit organizations (NPOs), made up mainly of foundations and associations and situated between the private and public sectors. According to this approach, the social economy refers to civic engagement, encompassing all forms of voluntary, non-profit organizations (Bouchard, 2011).

As for the European and Quebec approach, the democratic functioning and governance of these organizations are highlighted, and thus cover a broader field by grouping together mutuals, cooperatives and all non-profit organizations producing goods and services with a social purpose (Bouchard, 2011). Organizations belonging to the social economy are considered to be "a-capitalist" and their vocation is to generate collective wealth (Demoustier 2001, Draperi, 2009).

The table below distinguishes 4 forms of social economy that play an important role in resolving problems linked to market and state economies at different economic, political, social, cultural and environmental stages:

Table 1: Forms of the social economy

Forms of the social economy	Description
Third sector	The so-called "third sector" between the state and the market
The solidarity economy	of aid and cooperation (fair trade, food banks, micro-credit, etc.).
The informal economy	whether marketed or not, monetized or not (sharing communities, local exchange systems, etc.
The green economy	Focuses of preserving the environment and respecting the sustainable development principles

Source: L'économie sociale vecteur d'innovation. L'expérience du Québec, by Marie-J. Bouchard (dir.) (PU Québec, 2011, 276 p.)

3.2. Social innovation

Innovation has always figured in the theory of the capitalist economy (Le Bas, 2004), and plays a part in the transition from one development model to another, whether economic or social in nature (Lévesque, 2005). It is seen as a distinctive feature of the emerging new model (Cros, 2002).

The simplest definition of social innovation is that it is the solution to social problems. In effect, it responds to unsatisfied and unmet needs, either because of market failure (companies can't find fertile ground to make a profit) or because of public inadequacy (public authorities are either totally ineffective, or simply slow to respond).

In this case, social innovation in the social economy dimension comes into play to fill the development gap and takes on the mission of satisfying unmet needs that neither the market economy nor the public economy has been able to satisfy (Bouchard, 2005). The specificity of social innovation is that it proposes new approaches to meeting unmet needs and new ways of solving social problems.

In other words, social innovation is the path to social transformation and local development. In the following section, we'll look at an example of social innovation from the Moroccan operator "INWI" as part of its "Dir Iddik" initiative, and how it has helped to mobilize resources and respond to the social problems and unmet needs of local communities.

4. "Dir Iddik" initiative, a social innovation introduced by Moroccan operator INWI

Morocco is currently experiencing strong economic growth, thanks to its strategic choices in terms of economic, social and cultural development. Morocco's new development model for 2035 aims to exploit all its potential to achieve stable growth and give a new boost to the Moroccan economy, especially after the shock caused by the Covid 19 crisis, particularly in terms of territorial and social development.

In this context, Moroccan telecom operator INWI has established a first-of-its-kind social innovation in Morocco, through its Dir Iddik initiative. The aim of Dir Iddik is to create bridges between associations and people wishing to volunteer, with no age limit - provided they are at least 18 years old - to help these associations carry out their social projects, using the www.diriddik.ma platform. The aim of this platform is to put associations of all sizes throughout Morocco in touch with volunteers wishing to lend a hand to help carry out social initiatives and projects. The platform has succeeded in mobilizing over 67,000 volunteers and participants to carry out social actions without any financial contribution. The idea is to give your time, not your money.

According to the platform's report dated 17/08/2021, which came out in the midst of the Covid-19 crisis, and despite the negative impact that the Covid-19 health crisis had on the entire associative fabric, Dir Iddik was able to withstand it, according to INWI's official report: "We have nevertheless

succeeded at Dir iddik in increasing the total number of associations registered and active on the www.diriddik.ma platform, which rose from 120 associations in January 2021 to over 146 associations in June of the same year. This 21% increase is largely due to the slow recovery seen from the start of the year, the Ramadan period being a good time for charity work, and the rapid conversion of some associations to less restrictive field action formats (given the health limitations).

Between January and June 2021, associations registered on Dir iddik organized a total of 83 events. In terms of themes, it should be noted that 83% of these actions focused on social and solidarity issues, while 9% focused on education, 7% on sport and 1% on the environment.

Overall, more than 520 volunteers were mobilized for the events organized this year and posted on the website, an average of 7 volunteers per action. A very satisfactory figure, bearing in mind that the authorizations obtained firmly limit the maximum number of eligible participants per action."

These statistics show that digital technology has played a very important role in helping a large number of associations to carry out social actions, despite the confinement and limitations on the number of people in groupings by the authorities. INWI's social innovation has contributed to the realization of social initiatives and local development through social projects around this theme.

5. Conclusion

Development economics is a multi-dimensional approach to solving the problems of underdevelopment. Its current objectives vary according to the country in question, its vision of the future, and the strategic choices that suit it. An in-depth diagnosis of the country's economic and political structure is essential in order to establish a coherent development model based on empirical data, the ultimate aim of which is to help the country in question achieve economic growth and local development. In this context, the aim of the social economy is to carry out actions with a social purpose for the benefit of local communities.

Social innovations step in to fill the development gap and take on the mission of meeting unmet needs. In the context of a Morocco that is more developed and more open to the social dimension and local development, Moroccan operator INWI has launched a social initiative called Dir Iddik, through its internet platform www.diriddik.ma. It connects associative players and volunteers throughout Morocco. Despite the health crisis at Covid-19, Dir Iddik has held up well, with very satisfactory statistical data for the first half of 2021. INWI's social innovation was a real asset to the associative world, at a time when the entire sector was suffering from the fallout of the health crisis.

In short, the associative sector in Morocco still has a long way to go and faces a number of challenges and constraints. However, social innovations such as that of Moroccan operator INWI "Dir Iddik" are helping the sector significantly to develop and overcome its challenges.

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