STREET VENDING IN MOROCCO: THE REGULATION POLICY OF A PROMISING ACTIVITY

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ABSTRACT

Street vending, is usually accused of informality, by being a source of unfair competition and by being the main cause of public space invasion and its anarchy. But at the same time it remains as an activity that generates incomes, creates value and emerges from an entrepreneurship vision. This paradoxical situation has led the governments to have various attitudes that vacillated between laissez-faire, repression and regulation. In Morocco, different programs under the aegis of the N.I.H.D. (National Initiative for Human development) were initiated in order to restructure this activity but most of them have been considered as a failure.

Key words: street vending, regulation policy, restructuring, reorganization, National Initiative for Human Development.
INTRODUCTION

Since the changes that Morocco has undergone in the recent decades, the informal sector and in particular street vending represent an important part of urban economies. In fact, these activities are the source of income for a very large number of urban citizens. They also provide goods and services to a large part of the population. However, political rhetorics continue to demonize these activities, making them appear as an unwanted scourge that should be eradicated.

Therefore, street vendors, who are considered as actors of the informal sector, find themselves as a center of conflicts due to the use of public space, a space where everyone is supposed to have his account, but which becomes a place of work of many other citizens. This situation has many negative consequences such as affecting the traffic, the safety and the esthetics of the city. Furthermore, for many other actors, public space represents an "informal rent" due to the spread of corruptive practices (Salès, 2016).

In this context, structural reforms are urgently needed in order to fight bad practices, such as transgressions, diversions and arrangements, especially in an informal sector where various actors take place: local administrations, elected officials and national authorities. These reforms are part of a strategic vision that Morocco is trying to put in place with a principal aim: good governance, the fight against poverty and urban modernization.

Street vending, even if it is accused of all the evils, remains as an activity that generates incomes, creates value and emerges from an entrepreneurship vision. At the same time, this activity is characterized by its informality, by being a source of unfair competition and by being the main cause of public space invasion and its anarchy. This paradoxical situation has led the governments to have various attitudes that vacillated between laissez-faire, repression and regulation.

In the last years, Morocco has started various programs under the aegis of the N.I.H.D. (National Initiative for Human development) in order to reorganise the activity of street vending in a large number of moroccan cities.

After a litterature review that will expose an overview of the governmental strategies towards informal activities, the aim of this article is to respond to the questions below:

- What is the importance of street vending as an informal activity in Morocco?
- What are the programs set up by the Moroccan authorities to reorganize the activity?
- And finally, what these programs are considered as a failure?

To answer theses questions, the present paper will be structured in four sections. The first will be a literature review of the governments’ attitudes towards informal activities of which street vending is a part. The second section will expose the importance of street vending in Morocco. The third section will explain the restructuring programs set up in sevral cities in the country. Finally, the fourth section will be a critical analysis of the rehabilitation process.
1. INFORMAL ACTIVITIES, FROM REPRESSION AND LAISSER-FAIRE TO REGULATION: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE.

Street vending is constantly propagating especially in the developing countries. This activity is very particular since the owner moves freely in the public space and goes to meet his customers in order to sell his goods or services. Thanks to the mobility of their activity, street vendors offer advantages of proximity, low prices and can even offer very small units according to the needs of his customers. These traders occupy the space differently depending on the time, day and season. Their location is determined according to the importance of the traffic and to customers’ concentration.

Thus, street vending can be considered as the activity for which the shadow economy is more visible. This activity has reached an important growth and is a source of employment for a large part of the urban population. In the following sections, we will focus the study street vending as a branch of the informal sector. We, therefore, assume that all the literature that treats the shadow economy can be applied to street vending that is a part of it.

The expansion of the informal sector in general and of street vending in particular has led public authorities to have various attitudes towards this activity. De Soto (2000) represents the liberal current explains that the laws are not considered good or efficient unless they encourage the emergence of entrepreneurial activities. Therefore, the informal activities are just the consequence of excessive state regulation. In other words, the more the state set up a restrictive regulation system, the more informal activities and corruption would develop. The solution would be then to put up a liberal system with limited administrative restrictions and constraints in order to encourage entrepreneurs to integrate the informal sector. In this case, the informal activity is considered as the consequence of a non-liberal state policy rather than a scourge that should be eradicated by implementing restructuring programs and reforms. However, this theoretical approach was deeply criticized since it is difficult to make the link between state regulation policies and the development of the informal activities. In fact, Kus (2010) explains in his studies that with an identical level of regulation, the level of development of the informal sector is not the same.

The reality also demonstrates that the relationship between the authorities and the informal actors is much more complex since this activity, even if it is informal, doesn’t suppose the absence of rules. These rules don’t usually take a form of laws but are rather de facto standards where the several parts, informal actors and authorities, find a situation of “balance”. Thus, the approach of the regulator state that has to struggle against informality by adopting a liberal system is substituted by the negotiator state. In this sense, Cantens (2012) explains that there is “a form of informal governance” which manifests itself by “the negotiation of daily rules” between the authorities and the informal actors.

Indeed, studies on the relationship between the governments and the informal sector have focused on the question of whether the government should contribute to the improvement of the performance of the informal sector or, on the contrary, to its eradication. Regarding the first approach, the researchers state that the government should help the informal sector to become more productive since it benefits to a part of the society who is suffering from poverty and
precariousness. Therefore, developing the informal sector would help to maintain social peace and to reduce poverty (McGee and Robinson, 1995).

The literature since the 90s recognizes generally the role of the informal sector in urban employment and the Gross Domestic Product (G.D.P.), so the I.L.O (International Labor Office), at its 1991 conference, proposed specific strategies for a protected informal sector that include the establishment of an appropriate regulatory framework for this sector, the improvement of the basic equipments, the organization of the workers, the providing of financial funds and the training of the sector actors (ILO 2002). In the same sense, the New Urban Agenda -Habitat III- of 2016 indicates that the informal activity must be integrated into the urban formal sector in order to achieve inclusive governance (The United Nations, 2017). However, the integration of the shadow economy in the modern sector seems to mean for most researchers "formalizing the informal". It is therefore a way of confirming implicitly the vital role that these activities have in the economic and social development of the countries.

However, according to Kamete (2018), recent attempts to integrate the informal urban economy into the formal economy have faced many problems caused by the regulation mechanisms that are set up mechanically without taking into account the local context and the expectations of the beneficiaries. Thus, many policies put in place by governments lead to a strengthening and an increasing of the informal economy for which it is hard to find a definitive solution (Cross, 2000). This is the reason why some authors expose the informal activities as a creation of the state, either through policies that are set up or their absence (Lautier, 2004).

In this sense, Charmes (1989) explained that state policy is justified by the wish of providing informal activities with the benefits of the modern sector. But the reality portrayed by the author is quite different, since he describes ambiguous and even contradictory state policies. He explains that the state concept could hide many facets and thus not have a single aim. The state is at the same time several entities but whose objectives would be poles apart from each other. For example, if the ministries of finance are thinking of broadening their tax base by formalizing informal activities, the ministries of Housing and Urbanism are rethinking the city's plans by razing the sites of informal activities without thinking of the eventuality of their regulation or resettlement. If other ministries are concerned with promoting employment, the persons in charge of security will not hesitate to free up public space and limit the proliferation of street vendors.

For the author, few countries have set up a real policy of the informal sector. Sometimes it could be the opposite. Some states instead of having a well built strategy prefer to put in place measures to limit the activity. These measures take various forms. Some countries require a professional card in order to exercise the activity in order to limit one of the most important advantages of the informal activity, which is the absence of barriers to entry. Others prefer to promote small businesses through the granting of microloans. Indeed, Lefilleur (2008) explains that the spread of the informal sector, particularly in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, can be explained by the entry costs which are seen to be more important than the potential benefits drawn from the formal sector and which limit the opportunities for future entrepreneurs who find no way to finance their activity. However, Charmes (1989) criticizes this measure because of its delayed effect and also because of the reluctance of banks to grant financial funds with
limited or inexistent guarantees. The consequence as presented by the author is that these measures were benefic for a "higher slice of the informal sector" who found more advantages to finance their informal activities through microloans rather than through their own resources which were spent in their personal investments.

Unfortunately, the integration policy has led governments to adopt the second approach which consists in the adoption of repression policies in order to guarantee the success of formalization. Most governments began to "criminalize" street vending, and eradication measures were emerging in several developing countries. Thus, deportation campaigns against street vendors have been initiated in several countries. These were justified by the authorities’ desire to make cities more attractive, particularly for tourism and foreign investments (Reyes, 2013).

Also, some countries carried out eradication policies under the pressure of formal traders who suffer from the informal actors’ unfair competition (Gallouj, 2017). Indeed, the formal actors could have sometimes strong representative unions that heighten the pressure towards public authorities in order to eradicate informal activities. However, these measures are often punctual and limited. Sebti (2009) explains that the authorities should try to resolve the problem from its deepest root instead of promulgating punctual repression descends from time to time that turn into opportunities of corruption and extortion.

These measures could never be a definitive solution that may eradicate informal activities since the same actors come back and restart their activities when the repression descends are off. This situation was for several years a source of conflicts between authorities and informal actors who have been forcibly evicted from the streets in many countries. Indeed, the “Arab Spring” in Tunisia has started violently after the tragedy of the street vendor, Mohammed Bouazizi, who immolated himself after the confiscation of his cart and goods by the Tunisian authorities. Mejjati Alami (2009) explains that governments are usually unable to impose the rules that they promulgate in order to avoid social explosion. In fact, the informal economy is a source of incomes and jobs that the state is unable to offer to the active population. This is why during several years, especially the 70’s; most developing countries preferred the policy of tolerance instead of repression (Recchi, 2020). However, the absence of the government assistance towards informal activities leads to the growth of rural exodus that would limit the development of the city by causing overcrowding, housing shortages and an increasing number of slums without basic amenities as well as the increasing of the urban unemployment (Bromley, 1978).

Regarding street vending in specifically, many governments prefer to adopt a regulation policy instead of repression or laissez-faire towards street vending. Indeed, several street vendors have been dislodged from their usual locations and resettled in other areas generally far from urban centers in order to offer to them a regular and a healthy workspace (Weng & Kim, 2016). Nevertheless, Schindler (2014) noticed that many rogue authorities agents have taken advantage of this situation by adopting new forms of harassment and abuse against informal street vendors: extortion, bribery and confiscation of goods to satisfy their personal needs.

To sum-up, regardless of the adopted policy, the goal remains the same: to make street vendors as invisible as possible from the urban space, whether through repression or resettlement (Crossa, 2009).
In Morocco, there have been many debates concerning the informal sector generally and street vending particularly. Indeed, this activity is crucial in employment, production and value creation. This is why for many decades, the government strategy towards street vending have been fuzzy and vacillating between repressing campaigns and laisser-faire. However, considering the urban development and the demographic growth, the urban public space has been invaded by street vendors, a situation that leads to the spread of anarchy and insecurity. In this situation, the Moroccan public authorities have decided to set up programs in order to reorganize the street vending activities. These programs would allow freeing the public space and to give to improving the city’s aesthetic.

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to answer the questions that we exposed above, we have conducted 17 interviews with street vendors, reorganized street vendors, authority officials and heads of the National Initiative for Human Development.

This study was limited to the Casablanca-Settat department and was conducted from March 2020 to September 2020.

The issue of these interviews as well as the analysis of the rehabilitation process led us to the critical analysis below that expose the limits of these programs and the difficulties faced during the reorganization process.

3. THE SITUATION OF STREET VENDING IN MOROCCO: SOME FIGURES

Informal activities have taken, in these last decades, an important place in the Moroccan economy (High Commission for Planning (H.C.P.), 2016). These activities take different forms: handicrafts, industrial, services or even trade.

![Figure 1: The evolution of the informal production units’ number for the years 2007 and 2014 (High Commission for Planning, 2016)](image-url)

According to the survey of the informal sector in Morocco 2013-2014 carried out by the High Commission for Planning), trade activities represent a great part of the informal sector with 50.6% of informal units. Despite a 7.8% decrease between 2007 and 2014, its number remains predominant.
As for the added value, the informal sector was able to generate 103 346 million MAD in 2013. The trade activity monopolizes approximately the half of it (43,1%) so that to say 44 542,126 million MAD. The importance of this activity also lies in the diversity of the form that it takes. But the most important form is definitively trade activities without “a store”. Indeed, according to the survey mentioned above, this form of trade continues to dominate with a share reaching 51,9% in 2014 from the whole informal trade activities against 49,2% in 2007 which represents an increase of nearly 5,9%. Considering the nature of this activity that is “store-less”, it is essentially composed by street vending. In this form we can count nearly 437 589 informal production units which represents 330 187 MAD as an average of the annual turnover per informal unit.

This activity takes many forms in Morocco. According to Messaoudi (2016 a) and after him Gallouj (2017), we can distinguish five forms of street vendors:

- **Street vendors at stalls**: this category is composed by street vendors who are nearly sedentary since they set up their activity at the same place. They sell various assortments: food, fruits, vegetables, accessories, clothes… They cause many problems to the authorities since they invade the public space and consider it over time as their own.

- **Street vendors with carts** (drawn by animals or pushed by the vendor): these vendors are relatively mobile. They usually set up their activity near street vendors at stalls especially during peak hours where the client traffic is important. Afterwards, when the traffic starts to decline, the street vendor takes his cart and move around to sell his products to consumer who are far away or who cannot leave their homes. This category of vendors usually slashes the prices by the end of the day in order to sell their unsold products especially when the assortment is perishable.

- **Street vendors with vehicles (trucks, cars, motorcycles, bikes...)**: these street vendors benefit from a great degree of mobility more than the other categories. They take profit from this advantage to increase their turnover. They can use their vehicles to provide their clients quickly and move on easily to the different points of the city.

- **“Ferrachas”**: is a Moroccan dialect word used to qualify street vendors who display their assortment on the ground. They usually set up their activity in a public space and are, as well as the street vendors at stalls, nearly sedentary. Their assortment is various and can be even composed of hard-goods such as household products. They propose also clothes, medical plants, cigarettes… Gallouj (2017) precise that the advantage of this kind of activity is in the easy way to transform the tarpaulin used to expose the assortment into a bag that makes the escape easier from an authority raid.

- **Hawkers or “Attars”**: are considered as the “archetype of street vendors” (Gallouj 2017) since they are extremely mobile. They spend their day to move on from a neighborhood to another, passing by cafés, restaurants… They propose various products except the heavy ones. Sometimes they propose services such as shining shoes or repairing watches.

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1 Used by Messaoudi (2016) to name this kind of street vendors. Attars is a Moroccan dialect word that designs the traditional vendor of medical plants, hygienic and cosmetic goods... who used to turn around the neighborhoods and the villages. He is extremely mobile.
However, in their diversity, street vendors are facing several problems, as presented in the figure 2, due to the nature of their activity since it is at the same time informal and practiced in the public space.

We notice that the main problems that street vendors face are mainly caused by their public space invasion and road congestion (cf: figure 2). Moreover, as it’s an informal activity, the authorities consider it as illegal. As a consequence, street vendors are generally vulnerable and exposed to the abuse of some corrupt officials.

The study of the informal sector (2013-2014) carried out by the High Commission for Planning (HCP) shows that several ways are adopted by street vendors to resolve their problems with public authorities. In 26% of the cases, the street vendor chooses to change his location and “to hide” himself even for a while. The second solution practiced in 21,6% of the cases is bribery and corruption. The payment of fines remains as the last resort (18,5% of the cases) since the street vendors still prefer to resolve the problem “amicably”.

To sum-up and according to the study mentioned above, we can say that street vending is an important income-generating activity. In the same vein, a study curried out by the Moroccan ministry of commerce and Industry in 2011 depicts the street vending as a real job since more than 60% of street vendors are practicing this activity for more than 10 years and the great majority considers it at the principal source of their income. In addition, the study shows also that a large number of Moroccan consumers (1,38 million) consider street vending as a selling method that satisfy their needs.

For all these reasons, street vending is one of the most wealth-creating informal activities, that’s why the High Commission for Planning focused on the study mentioned above focused on the possibilities of formalizing this activity. In this sense, 89,9% of the street vendors approve the idea of setting up markets where they can exercise their activity instead of the public space’s invasion. Almost all (96,1%) claimed being ready to be resettled there. Thus, the Moroccan authorities after many decades of vacillating between laisser-faire and repression have initiated various programs to reorganize the street vending activity.

4. THE RESTRUCTURING PROCESS OF STREET VENDING IN MOROCCO.

Considering the importance of street vending in the informal economy, royal instructions from his Majesty the king Mohamed the 6th were issued in order to find a new way of organizing the

Figure 2: The main causes of the problems faced by street vendors (High Commission for Planning, 2016)
street vending activities in Morocco. This regulation policy has been set up jointly by the interior ministry and the ministry of industry, trade and digital economy.

The purpose of this reform is to supervise the activity, to improve the working conditions of street vendors and to insure at the same time their ability to provide a great part of the Moroccan consumers with the goods they need. This would give to the authorities the aptitude to protect the street vendors, to restore their dignity, to protect consumers by guaranteeing them health and safety conditions and to free up public space.

To reach these goals, the National Initiative for Human Development (N.I.H.D.) has structured the implementation guide for street vendors’ rehabilitation around five main steps:

Figure 3: Steps of the regulation street vending program (Implementation guide for street vendors’ rehabilitation project, National Initiative for Human Development, 2016)

4.1. Street vendors’ census and identification

This operation is carried out by the provinces’ local authorities. The aim is to draw up an exhaustive list of street vendors who could benefit from the regulation program. In order to be more efficient and not to arouse the interest of other people who don’t practice this activity, the vendor who will benefit from the program must respond to some prerequisites and have to respect rigorous specifications. Among these conditions that the street vendor must meet we can cite the carrying out of the activity for at least one year, providing the proof of living in the province/prefecture where the activity is carried out, not being an owner of a store, having a health card provided by the authorities, being a member of a street vendors’ association…
The purpose of this census step is to identify precisely the street vendors who can likely benefit from the regulation programs as well as the various sites that could accommodate them. In addition, the street vendor must fill out an identification sheet that contains various demanded information.

4.2. The implementation of a legal and regulatory framework

In order to guarantee the success of the regulation programs, the authorities have to set up a rigorous legal framework. Thus, it is compulsory for each province/prefecture to adopt a governor’s decree that organizes the street vending activity. The aim of this is to fix the conditions and the modalities for the exercise of the activity as well as to determine the different sites that would accommodate the street vendors. It also specifies the various management bodies, the specifications related to the activity, the street vendors’ obligations, the sanctions in case of infringements of the conditions mentioned in the decree…

4.3. The designation of professional management bodies

To carry out the street vendors’ regulation program, the emphasis was placed on the importance of designating professional management bodies in order to ensure coherence between the various parts, authorities and street vendors. Thus, this governance body is represented through the provincial/prefectural committees chaired by the governors.

4.4. The identification of the appropriate regulation program

There are four regulation’s modes that have been adopted for the reorganizing of the street vending activity:

- **Street markets**

This program consists on keeping the street vendors in their usual area where they are used to exercise their activity or nearby it (Fig.4). The aim is to reorganize the activity by setting up predefined schedules, providing regulatory equipments and by respecting other conditions specified in the governor’s decree.

![Figure 4: New street market to reset the street vendors of juices and grills in Casablanca (le 360.ma²)](https://www.le360.ma/societe/diapo-nouvelles-charrettes-a-jus-et-grillades-a-casablanca-63740)
Street markets can be set up in two ways: either by developing a mixed-use road for vehicles and pedestrian, or by developing only a pedestrian road. The first option gives the ability of managing a space or a sidewalk while maintaining car traffic. As for the second, the road could be transformed for a pedestrian use permanently or temporarily. In the two cases, the possibility of having another access road or creating a new one would have to be studied.

Whichever the way adopted, the organizing system of street markets must ensure the safety of pedestrians and the other public space users by using strips to separate the space dedicated to the sell and the pedestrian walkway.

- **Itinerant trade:**

This program is adopted for some activities and consists in proceeding to the street vendors’ equipments changes.

![Figure 5: Distribution of tricycles for the benefit of 30 fishmongers in the province of Fahs-Anjra](https://lematin.ma/journal/2018/30-poissonniers-ambulants-beneficient-triporteurs-equipes-caissons-isothermes/284980.html)

Thus, instead of using carts drawn by animals or pushed by the owners, governments provide street vendors with tricycles, sometimes equipped by isothermal boxes (Fig.5), to make the activity more aesthetic and to guarantee the respect of health and safety standards. This operation aims to improve the working conditions and the income of the beneficiaries, to respect the required health standards and to adapt the offer to the consumer needs.

- **Periodic markets**

It consists on the laying out of dedicated spaces where street vendors could exercise their activity according to a predefined schedule with defined days and times. Unlike the street markets, this kind of programs is not held daily and could even be seasonal.

- **Permanent markets**

They are spaces specifically designed and fitted out to accommodate street vendors.

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Figure 6: Permanent market at Sidi Bernoussi, Casablanca (lavieeco.com⁴)

The setting up of a permanent market is made after a preliminary study that aims to determine the exact needs of the population and the ability of street vendors to meet them. This study would allow deciding on the type of market, its capacity and its size. These various elements will be very decisive for the space’s organization, the market’s architecture, etc.

The fitting out of the permanent markets must comply with some rules such as: using special equipments in accordance with the specifications, opting for a modern architecture, adapting the vendor’s offer to the changing needs of the consumers…

Permanent markets are not a new since the first ones were set up in the country from 2004. We can count more than 114 permanent markets in the country for a total of 130 000 places (Gallouj, 2017).

While setting up these programs, the emphasis was placed on street markets as a priority form of regulation. Indeed, street markets respect the nature and the location of the activity. Directives were also issued insisting on the importance for local authorities to be innovative, to make the street vendor in the center of the interest and to adapt the regulation solution according to the constraints and the specificities of each activity and each territory.

**4.5. The acquisition of various equipments**

The acquisition of equipment must be made through calls for tenders after choosing the suitable design for the street vendor’s activity. Thus, the equipment must comply with some basic rules such as bearing the N.I.H.D. (National Initiative for Human Development) logo as well as the street vendor’s identity and registration numbers.

Concerning mobile equipments, they will be used in street markets, periodic markets and itinerant shops. Permanent markets, for their part, will be equipped with fixed displays according to their various activities. As for the street vendors who offer services such as plumbers, repairers, etc., who are usually attached to "moukaf" (gathering places), they will also have their specific equipments and will be attached to spaces where they will not encumber pedestrians or traffic.

⁴ https://www.lavieeco.com/societe/souk-namoudaji-questions-a-jamal-daloul%E2%80%85secretaire-general-de-lassociation-pour-le-developpement-de-lspace-public-de-sidi-bernoussi/
4.6. The activation of the management structures

In order to ensure good governance, the different sites are managed in a tripartite manner: the provincial committee for human development, the municipalities and the management associations to which the beneficiaries are compulsory affiliated in exchange for a fee. To ensure professional management of the sites, a contract is set up between the managing entity and the local authorities.

The main role of these management structures is to ensure scrupulously the application of the internal regulation, to make sure that each part respects its commitments and also that other street vendors do not set up their activity in the vicinity of the site.

4.7. The setting up of the monitoring and the control bodies

The monitoring and control bodies are designated by the local authorities in order to support the street vendor in this new way of exercising his activity. The aim of these bodies is to control the compliance of products with health and safety conditions, to ensure the use of the standard equipments and to ensure the different parts respect the regulatory framework.

They have also has the role of the street vendors’ support during the regulation process, by improving their conditions through the organization of literacy sessions and training workshops in different fields and also by encouraging them for entrepreneurship and self-employment.

5. DISCUSSION: WHY THESE PROGRAMS ARE CONSIDERED AS A FAILURE?

The analysis of the street vendors’ regulation process deployed throughout this paper lead us to question why these programs are considered as a failure. Indeed several press articles describe the street vending reorganization as an abject failure⁵. Also, the studies conducted by Messaoudi (2016 a) and Gallouj (2017) lead to the same conclusion.

Messaoudi (2016 a) states that: “The current situation of street vending is fundamentally a problem of governance. It is the consequence of catastrophic management based on heavy-handed interventions or improvised solutions. The eradication or the sedentary policies have not solved the problem of street vendors (…). As a result, the number of street vendors continues to increase exponentially”⁶.

Gallouj (2017) have studied the sedentary solutions especially permanent markets and noticed that: “there is a countless number of sedentary experiences conducted throughout the several


⁶Translated by us from its original french version Messaoudi A., (2016 a) : "le commerce ambulant au Maroc: un problème de gouvernance" page : 18
cities of the Kingdom. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of these experiments have either not been completed or have ended in a resounding failure”7.

- **The census and the street vendors’ identification:**

The first step of the reorganization programs is the street vendors’ identification. However, many constraints were faced during the census period posing thus the problem of the reliability of the results. These constraints are due to several causes.

At first, as we notice in the description of the reorganization process is the lack of the definition of a street vendor. Indeed, the activity of street vending takes many forms and many aspects. In the beginning of the rehabilitation projects, no definition was provided of what could be considered as a street vendor: is it a street vendor who pushes his cart and goes around the streets, or rather the one who spreads his goods in a public space or the one who fills his car with goods and goes around the traditional markets (souks)?

The second problem is linked to the way of how street vendors are censed. In other words, how can we be sure that this is the real number of street vendors? Indeed, considering the nature of its activity a street vendor is not necessarily at the same place. Moreover, with the various prohibition campaigns, he may not be in his usual place on the day of the census. Moreover, the authorities have not enough human resources to ensure this operation as expressed by a head of the N.I.H.D. As a result, there were a great number of requests and grievances that have led the authorities to carry out another census in order to complete the previous lists. Despite this, the number of the vendors is usually approximate and the most often below the reality.

- **The sites’ capacities and the beneficiaries’ choice.**

One of the main problems faced during the reorganization process is the number of the street vendors that is greater than the capacity of the rehabilitation sites. As a consequence, authorities are obliged to choose the beneficiaries. Normally, the choice is done according to the number of years during which the activity were exercised in this location. But, many street vendors argue that the lists were deemed arbitrary and were not based on objective criteria.

This situation was also raised by many interviewed street vendors. For example a chicken street vendor has been exercising the activity for 18 years in the same public space. He was supposed to be one of the first rehabilitated vendors. However, he was excluded from the rehabilitation project while other recent street vendors were resettled in the new sites.

The authorities place the responsibility of this situation on the management bodies whose task is to allocate the places in the rehabilitation sites. The consequence, as relied by the Commerce Chamber of Casablanca8 is that: “over all the projects that were launched in the metropolis, more than the two-thirds of the places in the permanent markets have been handed over to people who have nothing to do with street vending”.

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7 Translated by us from its original french version Gallouj C., (2017) : «Commerce informel et marchands ambulants au Maroc. Entre répression et institutionalisation », page: 22

8 Translated by us from its original french version “La vie eco” of the 26th June 2015 : “Casablanca : le concept des marchés de proximité va-t-il réussir? https://www.lavieeco.com/economie/casablanca-le-concept-des-marches-de-proximite-va-t-il-reussir-34415/
Gallouj (2017) explains how these social programs were converted into commercial solutions. In fact, the places in the rehabilitation sites were often offered to the highest corruption providers. As a consequence, the places have been acquired in a speculation aim where the price of the place was multiplied by 20 of its initial value.

- **The cost of the street vendors’ participation**

Among the conditions for rehabilitation as exposed previously, is the compulsory for street vendors to be affiliated to the street vendors’ associations. In addition, the reorganization projects, whether concerning the acquisition of equipments or the development of spaces in permanent markets, are financed only up to 70% by the National Initiative for Human Development, the rest being at the expense of the vendor.

Indeed, the fees that the beneficiaries are forced to pay to the associations are sometimes considered exorbitant and are sometimes beyond their capacities. Moreover, street vendors have difficulties in accessing financing. As a result, many prefer to remain in the informal sector since the cost of the investment exceeds their financing capacity.

- **The location’s choice and the communication among the parts.**

The most of the interviewed street vendors either regulated or not, affirmed that they have been excluded from the rehabilitation process. They explain that they were not involved in the beginning of the rehabilitation process, particularly in the choice of the rehabilitation forms and, above all, the location of the new host site.

Indeed, it is usually extremely difficult to find spaces, with sufficient capacity, in the vicinity of places usually occupied by street vendors. Moreover, the lack of land, especially in large cities and metropolises, makes the task even more difficult. As a result, most of the new rehabilitation sites have been located on outskirts areas where customer traffic is limited.

In addition, Messaoudi (2016 a) and Gallouj (2017) agreed both on the existence of governance problems. Indeed, several interviewed street vendors report recurrent non-compliance with specifications as well as project delays. As an example, we can cite an interviewed fruits’ street vendor in Casablanca who was registered in the beneficiary list in 2004 with the promise to be regulated at the same year. He has paid 3 000Dh as required. Unfortunately, due to a problem linked to the land of the rehabilitation site, the vendor is still waiting for a place till now.

Also, we have noticed a great problem of communication between the parts. Indeed, some interviewed street vendors don’t even know the existence of rehabilitation programs. Others denote a permanent conflicting relationship with authorities making it difficult to establish a dialogue between the parts. Messaoudi (2016 b) explains how street vendors have lost their confidence towards authorities because of endless speeches without taking into consideration their interests.

Finally, after more than five years after the setting up of the last regulation programs, we are not aware of any formal post-evaluation operation in order to determine the effectiveness of these projects.
Conclusion

In the face of social and economic tensions, the authorities have often found themselves indulging towards street vendors. It is obvious that the informal sector is a means of avoiding a social explosion while waiting to release the fruits of the liberal system. Since the 1980s, when Morocco has started the path of liberalization, tensions and social problems have continued to proliferate, creating a vicious circle from which it is difficult to get off. Street vending has been a solution that many people have adopted in order to survive in a society where unemployment and inflation are still important. As a result, the government, in its attempt to ensure social peace, has found itself trapped in a situation that can be described today as a dead end.

If, in other countries, street vending is considered as an integral part of the city that is profitable at the same time to the vendor and to the citizen, this phenomenon became in Morocco a live case of the public space invasion that borders the asphyxiation and a source of innumerable dangers to the citizen.

The recent authorities’ awareness of the emergency of the situation has led to several rehabilitation/regulation programs that cannot be called successful. Indeed, the existence of several parts is a real difficulty. It is obvious that the most important part in the regulation process is the street vendor. But instead of being active in the decision making process, he found himself being subjected to it.

Thus, the question that arises is: “given the large budgets and countless issues that this activity represents, what are the rehabilitation solutions that can be adopted in order to resolve definitively the street vending problem?”

References


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