

أعمال الملتقى الجهوي للبحث والابتكار بجهة مراكش أسفي الجغرافية التطبيقية في خدمة التنمية الترابية بجهة مراكش أسفي: التحديات والفرص



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الجغرافية التطبيقية في خدمة التنمية الترابية بجهة مراكش أسفي:
التحديات والفرص

La géographie appliquée au service du développement territorial
dans la région de Marrakech-Safi : défis et opportunités

Actes du Colloque régional de la recherche et de l'innovation de la région Marrakech-Safi: La géographie appliquée au service du développement territorial dans la région de Marrakech-Safi : défis et opportunités



Mélanges en l'honneur du professeur
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de Marrakech-Safi : défis et opportunités**



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Axe 2 :
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Traditional craft in mountainous areas: an economic backbone between marginalization and the challenge of valuation case study of province Al Haouz, Morocco

L'artisanat traditionnel, locomotive de l'économie locale entre marginalisation, enjeux de valorisation et développement territorial : Cas de la province d'Al Haouz

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Abstract: Traditional handicrafts constitute a fundamental component of local economic dynamics and cultural heritage. Rooted in centuries of interaction between local communities and their territorial environments, as well as in exchanges with other societies, these practices reflect a rich body of knowledge, technical expertise, and self-sufficiency strategies. Handicrafts encompass a wide spectrum of economic activities, including food processing, herbal and pharmaceutical preparation, weaving, textile production, pottery, and carpet-making—activities that are often transmitted across generations. Their presence extends across multiple territorial scales: national, regional, local, and even household levels. In the province of Al Haouz, part of the Marrakech-Safi region, traditional crafts remain a vital—yet often marginalized—economic pillar. Despite the structural constraints they face, these crafts hold strong potential for territorial valorization and can play a strategic role in sustainable local development by fostering innovation, preserving cultural identity, and mobilizing endogenous resources.

Keywords: Traditional Handicraft, Al Haouz Province, Local Economy, Cultural Heritage, Territorial Development, Valorization, Sustainability.

Résumé : Les artisanats traditionnels constituent un élément fondamental des dynamiques économiques locales et du patrimoine culturel. Enracinées dans des siècles d'interaction entre les communautés locales et leurs environnements territoriaux, ainsi que dans des échanges avec d'autres sociétés, ces pratiques reflètent un riche corpus de savoirs, de savoir-faire techniques et de stratégies d'autosuffisance. Les artisanats couvrent un large éventail d'activités économiques, comprenant la transformation des produits alimentaires, la préparation de remèdes et de produits pharmaceutiques, le tissage, la production textile, la poterie et la fabrication de tapis—des activités souvent transmises de génération en génération. Leur présence s'étend à diverses échelles territoriales : nationale, régionale, locale, voire au niveau des ménages. Dans la province d'Al Haouz, faisant partie de la région Marrakech-Safi, les métiers traditionnels demeurent un pilier économique vital—mais souvent marginalisé. Malgré les contraintes structurelles auxquelles ils font face, ces métiers recèlent un potentiel fort pour la valorisation territoriale et peuvent jouer un rôle stratégique dans le développement local durable en favorisant l'innovation, en préservant l'identité culturelle et en mobilisant les ressources endogènes.

Mots-clés : Artisanat traditionnel, Province d'Al Haouz, Économie locale, Patrimoine culturel, Développement territorial, Valorisation, Durabilité.

Introduction

Traditional industries are the cultural product of thousands of years of active interaction between local communities, their visions, cultural values, and their natural environment, as well as between these communities and others. In Al Haouz Province,

these industries are an integral part of the cultural and technical memory of local communities. These industries encompass various economic fields such as food and medicine production, spinning and weaving, clothing, carpets, mats, and pottery. This diversity reflects the capacity of traditional industries to spread from the national to the local level, whether in villages, oases, towns, or even down to the smallest social and cultural unit, the nuclear or extended family.

In Al Haouz Province, traditional industries boast a technical heritage that has been tested and developed over generations. This heritage provides distinctive future directions for thinking and creativity rooted in the cultural uniqueness of the region. These industries reflect the economic and cultural strength that contributes to sustainable development, enhancing the capacity of local communities for self-reliance and innovation.

Therefore, the central research question arises: How can traditional industries in Al Haouz Province be integrated with the tourism sector to enhance local development and preserve cultural heritage in the Western High Atlas?

✓ **This study seeks to:**

- Examine the interconnection between the tourism and traditional crafts sectors and their contribution to local development;
- Highlight the beneficial effects of integrating traditional crafts with tourism;
- Identify the key traditional craft products and evaluate the principal tourism attractions in Morocco.

✓ **The Adopted Methodology:**

To comprehensively address various aspects of the topic, we employed a descriptive approach to define the theoretical framework. Additionally, we utilized an analytical method to study the interconnection between traditional crafts and the tourism sector in the Al Haouz Province by collecting available data and recent statistics, followed by their analysis and the derivation of conclusions.

✓ **Field of study**

Al Haouz Province is situated in the middle of the Moroccan Mediterranean Atlas region between 30° and 32° North latitude and 7° and 8° West longitude. It is bounded to the north by the Province of Marrakech, to the south by the Provinces of Taroudant and Ouarzazate, to the east by the Province of Azilal, and to the west by the Province of Chichaoua, strategically placing it at the junction of southern slopes of the High Atlas and the urban area of Marrakech.

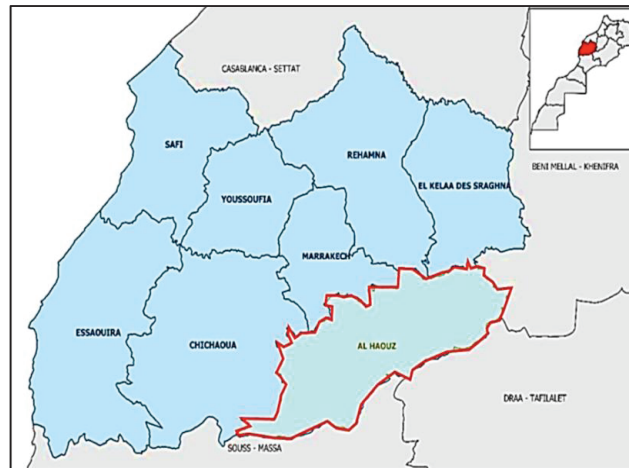


Figure n°1: Map showing the location of Al Haouz Province within the Marrakech-Safi Region

Source: High Commission for Planning, 2024

I. Role and Significance of Traditional Craft Products in the Al HAOUZ Province

1. Definition of the United Nations Organization for Trade and Development (UNESCO) and the World Trade Center (CCI):

UNESCO and the World Trade Center defined traditional crafts in the "Crafts and the Global Market" seminar held on October 8, 1997, in Manila, Philippines, as follows: Handicraft products refer to those made by artisans either exclusively by hand or with the assistance of hand tools or mechanical tools, provided that the artisan's manual contribution constitutes the major part of the final product. These products are made without quantity limitation, using raw materials sourced from sustainable natural resources. Their unique nature is derived from their distinctive features, which may be utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, cultural, decorative, symbolic, or significant, reflecting a religious or social perspective, thus playing a social, cultural, and economic role. (UNESCO.2009)

Thus, traditional industries and crafts can be considered a sector encompassing a wide range of professional families, predominantly manual in nature, that integrate cultural heritage with economic value. In addition to producing goods that reflect identity, traditions, and heritage—thereby contributing to the preservation of societal values—this sector also plays a vital role in creating employment opportunities, fulfilling the daily needs of communities, and serving as a source of wealth generation.

2. Government Focus on Traditional Craft Industries as a Cornerstone of the Economy

The contribution of the traditional craft sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2024, according to available statistical estimates, amounted to approximately 75 billion dirhams, equivalent to 21%. The sector employs around 2.2 million people, making up 22% of the national workforce. The sector's potential can position it as a key player in the national economy, with its widespread geographical distribution across various provinces and regions, whether in urban areas, remote villages, or the poorest areas. This makes it a crucial factor in absorbing unemployment, especially in rural areas, and an important mechanism for national land use planning. Additionally, the sector plays an active and

positive role in the training process, with its enterprises serving as spaces for training young people who wish to integrate into the productive fabric.

The sector also holds significant investment potential, given that its units do not require expensive resources compared to other productive sectors. After independence, the industrial sector was influenced by the state's orientations and the structures and organizations it established. Economic plans in Morocco focused on the importance of developing the industrial sector, with plans between 1965 and 1972 prioritizing agricultural industries that Morocco previously imported from abroad (textiles, sugar, oils, etc.) due to their large consumer market and low requirement for local capital. The traditional craft sector underwent some transformation based on the orientations of these plans. The state focused on the most development-capable craft activities and classified them into three types:

- Artistic Traditional Crafts, such as carpets, leather products, copperware, and others.
- Utilitarian Traditional Crafts producing consumer goods like textiles and traditional footwear.
- Service-Oriented Traditional Crafts, including trades focused on repair services like bicycle, car, and agricultural machinery repairs, which are capable of keeping up with development.

The state's attention was particularly directed towards artistic and utilitarian crafts, leading to the establishment of educational centers specifically for training craftsmen and institutes for training technical staff in this sector. Additionally, Traditional Craft Complexes were created in various provinces, with encouragement towards forming cooperatives to facilitate access to raw materials and marketing of products. Investment in traditional craft industry projects was also promoted. Significant development was achieved in some branches due to the private sector's interest in investing in the traditional craft sector, as it does not require large capital and has a short capital turnover period. Investors benefited from tax incentives, loans, and investment laws.

3. Traditional Craft Industries in Mountainous Regions: Preserving Cultural Heritage and Strengthening the Economy

The traditional craft sector holds significant economic, social, cultural, and civilizational importance. It encompasses artistic, productive, and service-oriented crafts, making it a vital part of the lifestyle, particularly in rural areas. This sector, through its various branches, plays a crucial role in regional development and offers employment opportunities for those interested in crafts. The primary crafts in the study area include pottery weaving, jewellery making, blacksmithing, and carpentry. These traditional crafts have a longstanding history in the study area and have endured through time despite societal changes brought about by modernization, such as the adoption of modern tools and the purchase of manufactured products. The value of traditional crafts lies in preserving the community's identity and unique cultural aspects, maintaining professions tied to the material history and cultural symbols of traditional society. This is particularly significant in an area like AL HAOUZ PROVINCE, which has seen various civilizations, including the ALMOHAD and ALMORAVID periods. Additionally, traditional crafts serve as a source of individual income, creating job opportunities and alleviating unemployment, thus improving the living standards of families and providing employment opportunities for mountain women, who often lack other employment options.

Despite the economic importance of traditional crafts, the study area suffers from a limited number of practitioners in the sector. Only 104 individuals are engaged in traditional crafts, followed by 42 in iron manufacturing and 14 in copper products, with a total of approximately 27 traditional industrial units. The sector's productivity is hampered by limited resources and equipment, difficulties in obtaining raw materials, and weak product marketing, often restricted to local and weekly markets, which threatens the future sustainability of these crafts. The state's attention has particularly been directed towards artistic and utilitarian crafts, leading to the establishment of educational centers for training craftsmen and institutes for training technical staff in this sector. Additionally, Traditional Craft Complexes have been set up in various provinces, promoting the formation of cooperatives to facilitate access to raw materials and the marketing of products. Investment in traditional craft industry projects has been encouraged. Significant development has occurred in some branches due to the private sector's interest in investing in the traditional craft sector, as it requires relatively small capital and offers a quick return on investment. Investors have benefited from tax incentives, loans, and investment-friendly laws.

❖ **Sources of Raw Materials and Means of Production in the Traditional Craft Sector**

- **Raw Materials:** Supply channels for raw materials are often undefined and unstructured. Procurement is usually done on an individual basis, although some associations source their supplies through local traders or monopolists, weekly markets, or from Marrakech. Additionally, locally available plant-based raw materials are also utilized.

- **Means of Production:** The tools and equipment in the traditional craft sector can be categorized into three types:

- ✓ **Purely Traditional Means:** Used in crafts such as weaving and plant-based products.
- ✓ **Purely Modern Means:** Employed in modern carpentry and tailoring.
- ✓ **Mixed Modern and Traditional Means:** Utilized in blacksmithing, stone carving, and carpentry.

3. Traditional Craft Products in the AL HAOUZ Province: Diversity and Challenges in Productivity

In the AL HAOUZ Province, the creation of a dedicated space for exhibiting and marketing traditional craft products in the ASNI community has significantly advanced the sector, fostering increased local interest. The Chamber of Traditional Crafts in the Marrakech-Safi region is a vital partner in promoting these crafts, having contributed to various development projects such as vocational training, exhibitions, and cultural events. Additionally, around 16 craft-focused professional associations in the region provide essential support for organising craftsmen and advocating for their interests, both social and economic.

In the AL HAOUZ Province renowned for their diverse and rich range of traditional crafts, which vary in presence across different local communities due to specific natural and human factors. Efforts by civil society have played a crucial role in preserving and promoting these crafts, with several development associations working to enhance various traditional industries.

1.3. Tamounte wirgan association: advancing textile and doum craft

Textile crafts are a prominent part of traditional industries in the High Atlas Mountains, with carpet weaving being particularly notable. Each region has distinct characteristics and techniques in weaving, which differ in design, size, color usage, artistry, and wool quality. The Timounte Association in Ouirgane community, established in 2016, focuses on carpet weaving, woolen garments, and Phoenix canariensis baskets. The association includes 35 to 45 members. Women gather raw materials for carpets from discarded fabrics and clothes, creating Boucharouite rugs that are used to decorate bazaars and tourist lodges. For traditional carpets, they spin wool from livestock. These carpets are sold in Marrakech markets and to hotels. The association has also played a significant role in promoting literacy among women, providing stable income, and improving their social status while showcasing traditional products from the region. This initiative serves as a model for other development associations focused on improving women's roles in their communities. Similarly, the Adrar Cooperative in IMLIL village produces a range of carpets and textiles.

2.3 Sources of Raw Materials and Product Destinations:

Women source weaving materials from old clothes collected from households and wool obtained from livestock shearing. The wool is cleaned, spun, and dyed with dyes purchased from specialist shops in MARRAKECH. Doum (*Hyphaene thebaica*) is harvested from the mountain heights, sun-dried, and used to create various baskets. According to recent field interviews, a significant portion of these products is sold to hotels, guesthouses, and tourists. Additionally, they are showcased at cultural events and traditional craft fairs. (Amahan A. 2011)

3.3. Pottery: A Promising Local Product in Need of Enhancement

Mountain people have long known how to use clay to craft various pottery items, such as plates, cups, jars, pots, vases, and oil lamps. Pottery is a prominent traditional industry in the study area due to the availability of clay soil in some regions, both in rural centers and villages. Pottery products are sold in various shops in AJOUKAK, ASNI, and AMIZMIZ, where young artisans display their products at affordable prices for visitors.

Examples of pottery workshops include one in AJOUKAK with five artisans, another in AMIZMIZ with about 11 artisans, and a workshop at a tourist complex in TAHANAOUT employing around 12 artisans. These workshops aim to reduce unemployment, provide stable income for local youth, and offer unique local products to tourists. (Moussaoui, 2019)

4.3 Sources of Raw Materials and Pottery Product Destinations:

Field interviews with potters have shown that the clay used in pottery is primarily sourced from local areas known for their clay deposits, such as Tahanaout and Ajoukak. Some clay is available for free, while others are purchased at prices ranging from 150 to 200 dirhams per load. Despite this availability, pottery productivity remains limited due to several factors. These include inadequate display spaces, marketing challenges, and the presence of intermediaries who reduce workshop profits. Additionally, artisans encounter difficulties with tour guides during tourist visits, which further impacts their business. (Berrada, H. 2001)



Figure No°2: picture Pottery Workshop in the Ijoukak Community

Source <https://fanaumaroc.canalblog.com/> 02/08/2024

The picture depicts one of the pottery workshops in Ijoukak, highlighting the decline in productivity in this industry. This decline is attributed to the limited demand for traditional products, making it difficult for artisans to sustain their craft. However, if artisans received support and assistance in marketing their products, it would significantly improve their situation. Currently, they rely on occasional tourists traveling towards Taroudant, some owners of tourist lodges, local residents, and restaurant owners, which significantly impacts their daily income, reducing it from 300 dirhams per day to less than 150 dirhams. Therefore, this sector needs support and enhancement, including the establishment of cooperatives or associations dedicated to this craft, and possibly creating a pottery complex to withstand the changes in mountainous areas and contribute to diversifying the regional resources offered to tourists.

4. Jewelry Artisans: A Tourist Attraction Awaiting Unification

The study area has several artisans specializing in jewelry making, primarily concentrated in the AL HAOUZ province, especially in ASNI territorial community and TAHANAOUT. These artisans create various products that are marketed locally and regionally, attracting tourists and being showcased at national festivals and exhibitions. Jewelry creation is a fascinating and enchanting process for the artisan, who transforms raw materials into beautiful pieces through forging, casting, drawing, cutting, inlaying, engraving, and carving. An artisan must also possess a sense of decoration, proportion, and harmony to produce attractive pieces that entice tourists to purchase them at the asking price. Jewelry making is a fundamental support for tourism, as tourists often buy jewelry souvenirs due to their ease of transport and precious materials, such as gemstones, silver, ivory, and other valuable substances.

✓ Field Survey Summary: Jewelry Making in Amizmiz and Tahanaout

To further understand the status of jewelry making in some territorial communities in Al Haouz Province a field survey was conducted with specialized artisans. The survey aimed to highlight the conditions and challenges faced by these artisans in their craft and identify potential areas for support and development to enhance the sector's contribution to local tourism and economy.

	Daily Visitor Count	Estimated Daily Income	Type of Craft	Number of Workers in the Workshop	Primary Source of Raw Materials	Marketing Scope	Role of Crafts in Supporting Local Tourism
Territorial Community	Insignificant	0	0	2			
	Secondary	31	17	10			
	Essential	69	83	88			
	National	6	18	19			
	Regional	50	36	25			
	Local	44	46	54			
	National	15	30	24			
	Regional	50	60	64			
	Local	35	10	12			
	7>	0	0	3			
	4-6	0	20	53			
	1-3	100	80	44			
Amzmiz	Professional	20	30	33			
	Autonomous	80	70	16			
	>400	9	36	19			
	200-300	36	50	22			
	<100	36	14	11			
	>11	50	53	27			
	6-10	35	41	15			
	<5	15	6	12			
Tahanaout							
Asni							

Figure No:3 Table1: *The Status of Jewelry Making in the Al Haouz Province by %*

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From this table, it is clear that jewelry making in the communities of Tahanaout, Amzmiz, and now Asni plays a significant role in supporting local tourism, although each community exhibits unique dynamics in terms of visitor flow, income levels, and marketing strategies.

In Amzmiz, 50% of workshops report receiving more than 11 visitors daily, followed by 35% hosting between 6 to 10 visitors, and 15% receiving fewer than five. Similarly, Tahanaout exhibits strong visitor engagement, with 53% of workshops receiving over 11 visitors, 41% between 6 to 10, and only 6% receiving fewer than five. These figures can be attributed to their strategic geographic positions—serving as transit points to surrounding rural communities—which make them accessible to both local tourists and foreign visitors.

The recently surveyed community of Asni reveals a more modest flow of visitors. Only 12% of workshops report more than 11 daily visitors, while 27% receive between 6 to 10, and a significant 61% fall into the low-traffic category of fewer than five visitors daily. This suggests that while Asni benefits from its proximity to Imlil and the High Atlas tourist corridor, the local crafts sector has yet to fully capitalize on this potential. The relatively scattered nature of workshops and limited promotional activities could be influencing this trend.

In terms of financial income, Amzmiz shows a mid-range earning trend: 55% of workshop owners earn between 200 to 300 MAD/day, 36% earn less than 100 MAD, and only 9% earn above 400 MAD. Tahanaout performs better, with 36% of workshops earning more than 400 MAD/day, 50% between 200 and 300 MAD, and only 14% under 100 MAD. This

income distribution is closely tied to workshop location; those situated near markets or main streets benefit from greater exposure and spontaneous purchases by tourists.

As for Asni, income levels are considerably lower: 59% of workshops earn less than 100 MAD per day, only 22% fall within the 200–300 MAD range, and a modest 19% exceed 400 MAD/day. The disparity here likely stems from a combination of low tourist footfall, underdeveloped marketing practices, and dependency on seasonal tourism. Moreover, artisans in Asni often work independently or in semi-formal settings, which limits their ability to scale production or cater to larger markets.

When examining the workforce size, workshops in Amzmiz tend to be small-scale, with 100% employing fewer than three artisans. Tahanaout, by contrast, shows more diversity: 20% of workshops employ between four to six artisans, while 80% remain small (1-3 workers), possibly reflecting a slightly higher degree of specialization or operational demand. In Asni, the situation is more dynamic: 44% of workshops operate with 1-3 artisans, while 53% employ 4-6 artisans—suggesting an emerging trend toward collaborative work or task division in response to market demands. A small portion (3%) employ more than seven artisans, possibly in collective production settings or cooperative structures.

Regarding the source of raw materials, Amzmiz relies predominantly on regional supply chains, with 50% sourcing from Marrakech, 35% from local providers, and 15% from national markets (e.g., Casablanca). Tahanaout reflects a similar trend but with a slightly stronger national orientation: 60% regional, 30% national, and 10% local. Asni leans even more heavily on regional sourcing (64%), supplemented by 24% national and 12% local inputs. This shows a heavy reliance on Marrakech's wholesale markets for materials, while national sourcing (such as from Casablanca or Agadir) remains limited due to logistical or financial constraints.

The marketing strategies vary notably. In Amzmiz, 44% of products are sold locally, 50% regionally, and only 6% nationally. This indicates a marketing ecosystem that's highly localized, with few connections to larger urban markets. Tahanaout presents a more balanced approach: 46% local, 36% regional, and 18% national, likely facilitated by artisanal networks in Tiznit and Taroudant—cities renowned for traditional Amazigh jewelry. Asni shows potential for regional penetration, with 54% of workshops marketing regionally, 25% locally, and 19% nationally. These figures are encouraging, reflecting growing awareness of external markets, though more strategic marketing channels and branding are needed.

Finally, when analyzing the perceived role of jewelry making in tourism development, 69% of artisans in Amzmiz see it as essential, with 31% viewing it as secondary. In Tahanaout, this support is even stronger, with 83% rating it essential. Asni follows closely behind, with 88% affirming its essential role in attracting tourism, and only 10% downplaying its significance. This positive perception indicates strong local belief in the sector's potential, despite current limitations in infrastructure, promotion, and training.

Jewelry making remains a cornerstone of the artisanal economy in Al Haouz Province, especially in Tahanaout and Amzmiz, with Asni emerging as a growing hub. While financial returns remain modest for many artisans, the sector contributes meaningfully to employment generation, cultural preservation, and the tourist experience. However, common challenges persist: inadequate workspace infrastructure, weak branding, uncoordinated workshop networks, and overreliance on seasonal tourism events. In Asni's

case, targeted interventions—such as artisan cooperatives, improved visibility on tourism circuits, and support for e-commerce—could significantly enhance sectoral resilience and local development outcomes.

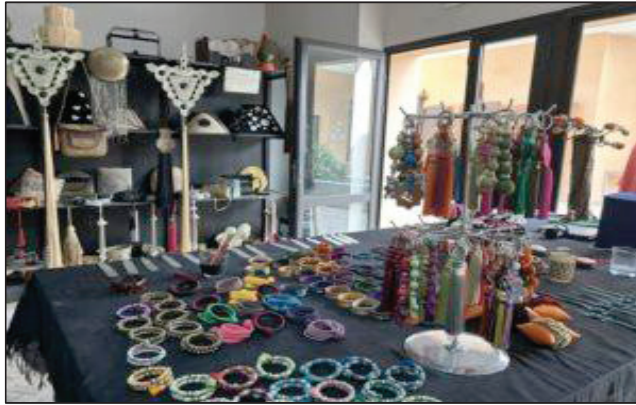


Figure No°4: picture Pottery Workshop in the IJOUKAK Community

Source: <https://maghribiate.ma/> visited at 23/09/2024

The picture shows various jewelry pieces crafted by local artisans, displayed in shops or roadside stands along tourist routes or at traditional industry exhibitions. These pieces, made from various materials, are aesthetically pleasing but require further enhancement to overcome existing challenges and serve as a robust support for tourism. Seasonal activity is a downside of this craft, highlighting the need for organized activities and improved marketing strategies to enhance artisans' financial conditions and the productivity of traditional crafts.

II. Mechanisms for Enhancing and Marketing Traditional Craft Products Al HAOUZ Province

1. Traditional Craft as a Pillar of Tourism and Sectoral Solidarity Foundations

The connection between traditional crafts and tourism is intrinsically intertwined, where traditional crafts play a significant role in supporting and developing the tourism sector. According to the World Tourism Organization, traditional crafts represent 10% of tourism revenues. When tourists purchase traditional products, they take home a souvenir and a reflection of the area or country they visited, making the traditional product a mirror reflecting the visited region or country. The importance of traditional products extends beyond tourists to foreign consumers. The only way a local craftsman can reach the foreign consumer is through exported traditional products that express the region's culture and heritage, thus serving as territorial marketing based on traditional products.

This relationship between tourism and traditional crafts highlights the importance of tourism activities as a developmental pillar that can create economic dynamism by encouraging tourism investment and increasing the number of tourists visiting the area. This will lead to a rise in demand for traditional craft products and, consequently, increased investment in this sector, necessitating the development of production capacities and marketing methods. (COURLET Claude,2002)

The continuous strong relationship between crafts and tourism positively impacts job opportunities, reduces migration and unemployment, and improves craftsmen's

income, directly affecting their living standards and contributing to the sustainable growth of both sectors. Additionally, the connection with tourism is evident in festivals and exhibitions that attract tourists from various regions, promoting and marketing local products. Tourism is an effective tool for creating a socio-economic and cultural integration system and a successful means to activate and stimulate traditional crafts. Experts indicate that there are 70 economic activities linked to and directly affected by tourism, thriving with its growth and declining with its stagnation.

Despite the intrinsic link between traditional crafts and tourism, this relationship is not evident in the study area. Hidden conflicts and tensions prevail between the sector's actors, mainly due to financial considerations. Guides or intermediaries often demand a fee from the craftsmen for any transaction involving tourists or trade customers. Traditional workshops often rely on guides' goodwill as they are not included in the tourist routes or maps provided to tourists, further reinforcing the separation between traditional crafts and other economic sectors, particularly tourism. This lack of sectoral integration and collaboration prevents the craft sector from benefiting from the positive impacts that other sectors can offer. The same applies to the tourism sector, necessitating interventions to address the challenges faced by the traditional craft sector, primarily by adopting a local production system.

2. Local Production System as an Attempt to Elevate the Traditional Craft Sector in Al Haouz Province

2.1. Concept of the Local Production System

The local production system (SPL) is a form of functional cooperation (solidarity), a coordination pattern among a range of services and functions of various institutions to achieve economic benefits without merging these cooperating institutions. Therefore, the local production system can be defined as a productive cluster composed of institutions specialized in a primary activity or closely related activities known within a specific area, with these clustered institutions not exceeding the size of a medium-sized enterprise. These institutions are interconnected through intense cooperative relationships supported by local entities and organizations that meet their basic needs. (DITTER J.2005)

Institutions clustered under this system benefit from various advantages achieved through this organizational form, particularly positive externalities (low-cost products, workforce training, reduced raw material costs, information exchange, improved coordination among actors, common language development, etc.), which improve production performance, stimulate innovation, and allow adaptation to changes, while enabling local development and building a competitive advantage for the region. These advantages of the local production system show that it can be an effective strategy to alleviate the challenges faced by the traditional craft sector in Territorial communities in Al Haouz Province

2.2. Importance of Developing Local Production Systems for Traditional Crafts in Al Haouz Province

The purpose of the local production system is to gather craft workshops into industrial complexes or small and medium enterprises. Each craft cluster within a local production system benefit from a professionally trained coordinator who organizes exchanges and cooperation within the sector, overcoming the individualistic nature of craftsmen's work. This system organizes and gathers them alongside various local public and private bodies (local municipalities, industrial chambers, craft associations and

cooperatives, vocational training, etc.), ensuring effective coordination and creating local dynamism within a shared strategy and action plans formulated and implemented in collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Implementing a local production system program can yield positive outcomes. The initial results of applying this program in Morocco have shown success in forming provincial associations comprising craft institutions specialized in various activities and traditional craft complexes where skills and expertise are exchanged, and subcontracting occurs among them. Craft institutions have shown their approval to establish a public utility complex, with many projects and local achievements being realized. This has led to an increase in local production systems, especially in the form of cooperatives, federations, and public utility associations.

3. Developing a Local Production System Model for Traditional Weaving

Traditional weaving is one of the most widespread crafts in the Nefis and Ghiyaya areas, with a large cluster of female artisans engaged in this craft. It provides significant employment opportunities, especially for women, and serves as their primary income source in addition to its high added value and cultural importance. Hence, this craft is considered promising for development and awaits state support due to the numerous challenges hindering its activities. Developing a successful local production system in this craft could be one of the key solutions to mitigate the challenges faced by traditional weavers in the area. (COURLET C.2002)

4. Planning to Develop a Local Production System for Traditional Weaving in in Al Haouz Province

The success of developing this system in the weaving craft depends on identifying the main challenges faced by practitioners and the means to overcome them, focusing on two main levels:

- Central Level Challenges: Finding solutions to common obstacles shared by all traditional craft sectors, including:
 - Improving the legislative and regulatory framework for the craft at the local level (local municipality, regional tourism, traditional industry delegation, aviation, associations, cooperatives, and craft enterprises).
 - Efforts to ensure that craftsmen benefit from all forms of support and facilitate access to financing from various banking institutions.
- Regional Level Challenges: Addressing the primary difficulties faced by the craft in the area, including:
 - Assisting craftswomen in marketing and promoting their products to facilitate the procurement of raw materials.
 - Enhancing and developing craftsmen's skills and modernizing production techniques.

Finding innovative solutions to these challenges will ease the process of establishing a local production system for traditional weaving in Territorial communities in Al Haouz Province

5. Organizing Potential Actors for the Local Production System

A group of actors intervenes in forming a local production system for traditional weaving in the study area, linked by strong relationships within an open complex that includes both the private and public sectors.

Based on the diagram above, the establishment of a local production system in the area can be proposed by local entities, primarily local municipalities, executive authorities (Amizmiz and Asni districts, various leaderships), craft associations, in coordination with the Traditional Craft Chamber in Marrakech. This proposal is represented by the thick ascending gray arrow from the bottom to decision-makers at the regional level, referring to the Al Haouz province, then moving to the Marrakech-Safi region for study and coordination with other relevant central administrations.

This proposal involves multiple actors, distinguishing between the public sector, where public institutions play significant roles in this proposal in terms of coordination, training, information, and support, focusing on culture, heritage, traditional crafts, and scientific research. In contrast, the private sector includes entities that can finance the proposal and support craftsmen with loans, considering their financial situation by offering incentivizing packages. Additionally, companies that supply craftsmen with raw materials and modern tools to facilitate production are involved, along with national or international non-governmental organizations that share the same objectives as craft associations and wish to support this initiative.

This system has a temporary coordinating body represented by the Traditional Craft Chamber, and when the system matures, a center for the system is democratically elected to coordinate and manage its elements. Locally, craft associations and cooperatives manage the work and increase production after ensuring good working conditions and developing work techniques and tools.

The successful development of traditional weaving using a local production system allows for the creation of an organizational framework that initially adopts a joint project among craft entrepreneurs, aiming to establish a framework enabling negotiations with various actors (suppliers, financiers, customers, public authorities, etc.) on behalf of a network of joint projects. This organization has a legal personality and is linked to all craftsmen through contracts specifying the interaction between the local production system and the craft entrepreneur, ensuring system stability while maintaining the independence of the latter. Craftsperson members, along with other related actors, must sign the internal charter of the system to guarantee organizational stability.

Decisions within the system are made by its managers, represented by the Traditional Craft Chamber of the Marrakech-Safi region, which intervenes in the craft entrepreneurs' decisions concerning the areas of cooperation. This system is funded by public support, with the possibility of other external parties (local or foreign private sectors) contributing. Participating craft entrepreneurs pay annual membership fees (subscription fees).

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is evident that traditional crafts in the study area represent a promising and diverse economic activity that contributes to supporting the principles of social and solidarity economy. This sector has the potential to compete regionally and nationally and can be considered a crucial pillar for local economic development, provided it receives appropriate support and guidance.

Moreover, the successful implementation of the local production system program in the Al HAOUZ province relies heavily on the awareness of various stakeholders and their understanding of the effectiveness of collective work and coordination to achieve common goals. It also requires parallel efforts to organize and consolidate the craft entrepreneurs

with various public and private local entities into coherent local production systems. Such systems enable continuous development and orientation towards competitive markets, helping them to be more present and competitive, similar to other local municipalities and neighboring regions.

In addition to traditional crafts, the study area is rich in significant resources such as salt production, extracted from saline waters. However, this activity remains limited and requires enhancement and development to reach its full potential.

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