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**INSTITUTIONAL STRETCHING:
HOW MOROCCAN NGOS ILLUMINATE THE NEXUS OF CLIMATE, MIGRATION,
GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT**

by

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B.A. December 2013, Virginia Commonwealth University

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

INSTITUTIONAL STRETCHING: HOW MOROCCAN NGOS ILLUMINATE THE NEXUS OF CLIMATE, MIGRATION, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Shelby Mertens
Old Dominion University, 2021
Director: Dr. Erika Frydenlund

The global migration crisis the world has experienced thus far is only the tip of the iceberg. As the earth's temperature continues to warm and extreme weather conditions worsen, millions of people across the globe will be displaced, and women in particular will face more difficult challenges. What the climate migration literature fails to study is these longer-term impacts beyond sudden onset disasters. Governments and institutions will be forced to respond and adapt to the new reality resulting from the climate crisis. This research provides a case study of Morocco and, by using institutional ethnography, investigates how NGOs working in areas of development, gender and the environment are responding and adapting to the growing concerns of climate change in a country that is already seeing an increase in rural-to-urban migration flows due to the troubles of the agriculture industry. Moroccan girls are also at greater risk of child marriage and labor exploitation as a result of drought and the water crisis. Are NGOs becoming more aware of this nexus between climate, migration, gender and development? And to what extent are NGOs being stretched beyond their mandates in order to address their community's pressing needs? My study of 30 NGOs' online presence shows that Moroccan organizations are consciously aware that their work indirectly addresses the impacts of climate migration, but they do this unintentionally. The NGOs choose to put climate migration on the back-burner in order to fulfill short-term needs. This study provides a micro-level view that represents a much bigger problem of climate inaction at the global level.

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In memory of my grandmother, Marcie.

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NOMENCLATURE

<i>IDMC</i>	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
<i>ILO</i>	International Labor Organization
<i>NGO</i>	Nongovernmental Organization
<i>UN</i>	United Nations
<i>UNESCO</i>	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
<i>UNHCR</i>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The modern-day story of the traditional Saharan desert dwellers offers a microcosmic view of climate displacement and its impact on vulnerable populations. The Berber and Amazigh tribes of Morocco have lived nomadic lifestyles in the lush oases of the harsh Sahara for thousands of years, but because of climate change, they are increasingly forced to move into Morocco's cities (Mickute 2018). The oases, which provide vital water and life sources, are vanishing due to the gradual process of desertification, which has seen the Sahara Desert expand its reach across North Africa (Mickute 2018). Extreme weather and climatic events are turning once livable land in the desert no longer inhabitable, which leaves populations searching for work and a better livelihood elsewhere. A recent Al-Jazeera documentary shines light on the plight of the Sahara Desert dwellers through the story of Halim Sbai in the oasis of M'hamid El Ghizlane, who describes the situation with a bit of despair: "We don't create causes of climate change. We just experience the effects," he said (Mickute 2018).

The declining precipitation hurts families whose livelihoods depend on farming in the fertile lands of the oases, which has caused a population exodus from the M'hamid oasis into urban centers. According to Al-Jazeera, the population of M'hamid has dropped 25 percent over the last four decades, with less than 7,000 inhabitants today. Sbai himself has seen the environmental consequences of the land that is left behind by those migrating to the cities: "People leave the land but people are the biggest barrier that can stop desertification. It's the same case with the houses, if people leave them, the sand moves in within 15 days" (Mickute 2018). The United Nation's International Organization for Migration has recognized the impact of climate on internal displacement, "notably rural-to-urban migration and the settlement of

nomadic pastoralist communities” but also observing that “Internal and international immigration movements also have an impact on vulnerable degraded areas” (Tangermann and Bennani 2016, ix). Rural communities in the Global South will have to adjust to lower levels of agricultural productivity or be forced to move.

This chapter will provide a background of Morocco’s geographic, social, economic and political structures; a broad overview of climate change and the concerns specifically in Morocco; and context for internal and cross-border migration both on the national and international level. The contents of this chapter provide basic foundational knowledge to understand the situation of climate change and migration in Morocco, which is important for studying the work and messaging of NGOs.

Geography & Governance

Morocco’s location at the northwestern tip of the African continent has always served as a geopolitical advantage. The Arabic-speaking country faces both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, with the Strait of Gibraltar separating Morocco and Spain by a mere nine miles. Historically, trade routes through Morocco connected the two continents, as IOM researchers aptly describe it, “seen from Africa, it is a gateway to Europe; seen from the north, it is an access to Africa” (Tangermann and Bennani 2016, 3). Along with trade routes, Morocco has always served as an important crossroads between goods, people and cultures.

Morocco borders Algeria to the east, as well as its partially controlled territory, Western Sahara, and Mauritania to the south. Known as Al-Maghreb, which roughly translates to “The West” but is sometimes called “The Place the Sun Sets,” Morocco’s highly diverse landscape features coastal urban centers, the Rif and Atlas mountain ranges in the north and central region, and the Sahara Desert sweeping the south. Today the population of Morocco is around 36 million

and the annual population growth is 1.3 percent (World Bank 2018). Morocco is the 40th most populous country in the world and has one of the highest population densities in the Middle East and North Africa. More than 60 percent live in urban areas as a result of rapid urbanization (IOM 2016, 5).

Politically, the Kingdom of Morocco is a constitutional monarchy headed by King Mohammed VI, who ascended to the throne in 1999 upon the death of his father, King Hassan II. Morocco gained its independence on March 2, 1956 after Franco-Spanish colonial rule. The country has enjoyed decades of relative peace and stability, especially when compared to their fellow North African neighbors, and The Democracy Index now considers the government a “hybrid regime” after previously listing it as authoritarian (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2019). The king’s recent socio-economic reforms are credited with giving women with more rights, including the end of male guardianship, the banning of child marriage and the right to divorce. However, Morocco still lacks a free press and is rated as “partly free” by a Freedom House report, an organization that tracks political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2020). Morocco has a parliament made up of elected officials, however, the king has the ultimate authority in setting the agenda and passing legislation. This creates a lack of transparency and accountability of institutions, meaning that governmental institutions in Morocco tend to be weak (Transparency International 2010).

Climate Change in Morocco

Globally, greenhouse gas emissions have jumped 50 percent higher than three decades ago and, according to the UN, human activity is the main culprit of the earth’s temperature rise by 1 degree Celsius from pre-industrial times (UN Development Programme 2020). Since 1880, the earth’s sea levels have expanded 8 inches and the UN estimates that number to rise one to

four feet by the next century. The UN also reported that global net CO₂ emissions will need to fall by 45% by 2030 in order to prevent the earth's temperature from rising 1.5 degrees Celsius (UN Development Programme 2020).

There are 2.6 billion people in the world who work in the agriculture sector, an industry highly dependent on weather for success (UN Development Programme 2020). Water scarcity remains a global challenge, impacting as much as 40% of the world population, with reports suggesting,

Although 2.1 billion people have improved water sanitation since 1990, dwindling water supplies are affecting every continent. More and more countries are experiencing water stress, and increasing drought and desertification is already worsening these trends. By 2050, it is projected that at least one in four people will suffer recurring water shortages (UN Development Programme 2020).

Morocco in particular faces many challenges with these long-term impacts of climate change. A report by the United Nations International Organization for Migration found that Morocco will be the country most impacted by climate change in all of North Africa. According to IOM, "Both slow-onset processes, such as desertification, sea-level rise and salinization, as well as sudden-onset events, such as floods and storms, are expected to worsen in the future, affecting more people in all parts of the country" (Tangermann and Bennani 2016, ix). The kingdom must adopt more green policies in order to alleviate the catastrophic consequences that will affect the agriculture-heavy economy because increasing drought and salinization of soil, as well as declining rainfall, will devastate the entire economy (29). Water scarcity is a particular issue of importance to Morocco, which is being addressed through the UN Industrial Development Organization's H2O Maghreb project, a \$2.67 million plan that seeks to solve the kingdom's water management challenges by involving both public and private sectors, and offering professional training so Moroccans can implement sustainable solutions to water scarcity

(USAID 2019). Additionally, the government has plans to build dams, wastewater treatment facilities and desalination plants.

Desertification – a process in which once fertile land used for farming becomes infertile – is another major climate issue for Morocco because the Sahara Desert has expanded 10 percent over the last 100 years (Mickute 2018). This has caused the disappearance of oases, the sources of water where nomadic indigenous populations, such as the Berbers, live. According to Al Jazeera, two-thirds of Morocco’s oases have vanished, and precipitation is estimated to decline 10 to 20 percent in North Africa by 2050 (Mickute 2018).

The Moroccan government recognizes climate change as an emerging threat and has taken some positive steps, such as the creation of the National Renewable Energy and Efficiency Plan in 2008, which aims for the nation to produce 40% green energy by 2020 (Rafael de Arce et. al. 2012, 335). More recently, in 2018, the country completed the construction of the largest concentrated solar power plant in the world called the Noor Complex, located on the edge of the desert near Quarzazate. The solar farm’s 580-megawatt capacity serves 1 million households and is said to “reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 760,000 tons per year” (Parke and Giles 2018). These initiatives are good, but the Moroccan government cannot act quickly enough to alleviate the impacts of global warming. Moreover, even if the government wanted to, the massive scale of climate change that is causing desertification is not all about the actions that they take within their borders because the issue is global. In other words, they can only do but so much. There will continue to be an array of unmet needs as the government and the world scramble to adapt to climate change, creating room for NGOs to fill those needs as they see them arise.

Cross-Border Migration

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there were almost 80 million people forcibly displaced worldwide by the end of 2019, 26 million of whom are classified as refugees. The majority is classified as internally displaced, at 45 million, which is almost double the number of cross-border refugees (UNHCR 2020). The global refugee crisis that erupted from war in Syria, Afghanistan, and more recently, Yemen, has evolved into a complex issue that has continued to drag on. There are numerous routes migrants and refugees travel across the Mediterranean in order to reach Europe, with some finding themselves in North Africa's far west corner of Morocco for a passage across the strait of Gibraltar into Spain. Syrians and others from the Middle East region make up a large portion of refugees arriving in Morocco, and many others are escaping conflict from various sub-Saharan countries (UNHCR 2020). The migrants cross into Morocco from neighboring North African countries – Algeria to the east and Mauritania, Mali and the Western Sahara territory to the south. The chart below shows the growing number of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Morocco from 2015 to 2020, according to UNHCR. The number of refugees increased from 3,899 to 7,387 in five years, and the number of asylum seekers grew from 1,534 to 3,601 in the same time frame.

A document from UNHCR titled “Overview on UNHCR’s operations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)” reported a total of 284,500 refugees and migrants crossed into Europe either by sea from Libya or by land through Morocco from January to September 2016, 33% of whom were Syrian (UNHCR 2016, 3). It is also worth mentioning that hundreds of thousands of the Sahrawi people, who are native to the Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara, live in refugee camps in Algeria near the border (Tangemann and Bennani 2016, 13). The Sahrawi are displaced due to political reasons revolving around the conflict between Morocco

and Western Sahara. Rebel forces of the indigenous Sahrawi people began fighting for independence in 1973, which led to Spain's withdrawal of colonial occupation two years later. Sahrawi troops then fought against Morocco in the subsequent Western Sahara War from 1975 to 1991. However, the conflict is still ongoing in the territory as the Sahrawi continue to seek their independence from Morocco.

Displaced Persons in Morocco, 2015-2020

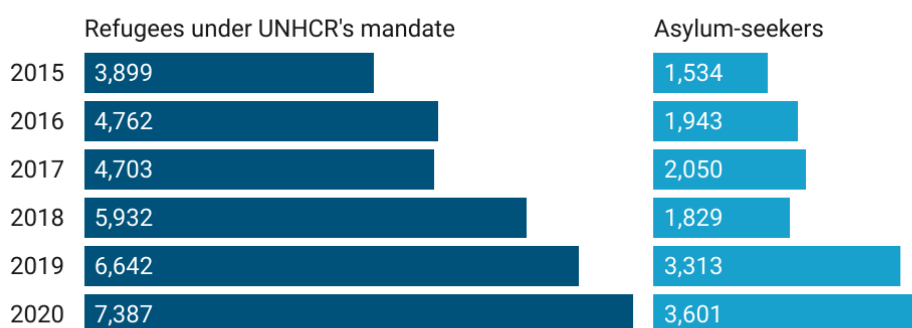


Figure 1. Refugee and Asylum-Seeker Population in Morocco.

Source: Graph created from data from UNHCR using Datawrapper.de

More recently, the UNHCR estimates close to 8,000 refugees currently live in Morocco as well as 100,000 migrants, according to the UN's International Organization for Migration (Pierce 2019). Chart 2 on the following page breaks down refugees and asylum-seekers in Morocco in 2020 by nationality, with Syrians making up the majority of new refugees. These data provide context on Morocco's burden of refugees and migrants entering the country. Climate change adds an extra stressor to the situation, which sees countries like Morocco bearing the burden of accommodating refugees fleeing war and violence from elsewhere while also having to manage extreme climate changes and their own internal displacement caused by climate.

Refugees and Asylum-seekers in Morocco by Nationality in 2020

■ Syrian Arab Rep.
 ■ Yemen
 ■ Central African Rep.
 ■ Cote d'Ivoire
 ■ Cameroon
■ Guinea
■ Mali
■ Other

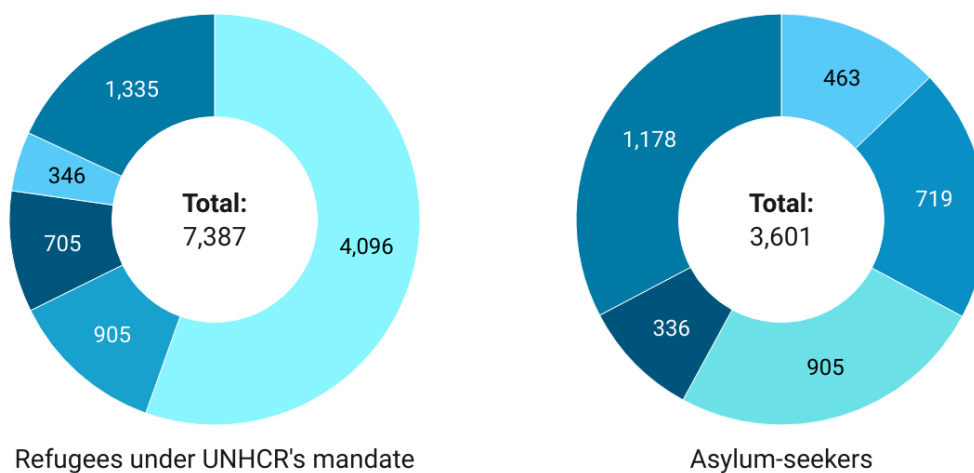


Figure 2. Refugees and Asylum-Seeker in Morocco by Nationality

Source: Graph created from data from UNHCR using Datawrapper.de

Internal Displacement in Morocco

There are several reasons why a person can be internally displaced, including conflict, violence, disasters and climate change among a host of other social factors. The main difference between a refugee and an internally displaced person (IDP) is that a refugee crosses international borders while an IDP seeks refuge within their own country. Both refugees and IDPs are uprooted not by choice but rather by coercion. The UN's 1951 Refugee Convention formally defined a refugee as someone

owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (UNHCR 1951, 14).

The challenge for IDPs is that, unlike refugees, they do not have protection under international law because they have not left their country of origin. The other implication is that people who flee their country from climate-related disasters cannot be legally considered refugees, which activists are working to change (Frelick 2020). Globally, there are more IDPs than refugees. With some sources estimating 41 million people were internally displaced worldwide in 2018 – including 28 million new cases – which is around two-thirds greater than the estimation of global refugees (Global Protection Cluster 2020).

An International Organization for Migration report examining the nexus of migration and climate change found that thousands of Moroccans have been displaced by disasters in recent years. An Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre study reported more than 22,000 people were displaced from climate disasters from 2008 to 2014 (Tangermann and Bennani 2016, 13). Morocco reported 200 new disaster-related displacements of people in the year of 2019, according to data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, which cites flooding in the southwestern desert city of Tata as the reason. There have been nearly 22,000 new displacements since 2008 (IDMC 2019). The organization estimates more than 32,000 people will be affected by natural disaster-related displacement from sudden onset events globally each year.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Disaster-related displacements in Morocco</i>
2008	5,000
2010	15,000
2014	1,700
2019	200
Total	21,900

Table 1. Internal Displacements in Morocco

Source: Table created from data from Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

Internal displacement related to slow-onset environmental change is usually caused by the harmful effects of industrialization and other unsustainable practices that emit greenhouse gases, which leads to the degradation of the environment and the loss of agricultural productivity and natural resources that force populations to migrate elsewhere (Desai, Ginnetti and Sydney 2018, 2). Rising sea levels, desertification and salinization are also sources of environmental degradation that destroy land once fertile and livable. These slow-onset environmental events pose a threat to agriculture and other food industries and can lead to displacement originating from food insecurity as well as economic instability from losing access to livelihoods (2). A challenge with monitoring both cross-border and internal migration is that each person's situation is unique in terms of the timing and distance they migrate.

Some leave their homes with little or no notice, fleeing an imminent attack or disaster with only what they can carry. Others have notice of an impending crisis and more time to prepare for their flight. Once they have been forced to leave their place of residence, effectively becoming internally displaced, many have to flee again, whether it be to the next neighbourhood or beyond (Rushing 2017, 3).

The frequency of disaster displacement is expected to rise as extreme weather events become more regular.

Urban-Rural Divide & Social Inequalities

Urbanization has reached nearly all corners of the world and today the UN reports that more than half of the world's population has settled in cities – a number that is projected to rise to two-thirds by 2050 (UN Development Programme 2020). The developmental growth of Morocco over the past few decades has concentrated heavily in the coastal urban belt of the kingdom, while the rural regions in the heart of the nation have been neglected in development. Rural to urban migration has affected the country's development for decades due to chronic droughts, according to an IOM study (Tangermann and Bennani 2016, 12). King Mohammed

VI's reign ushered in economic reforms that opened up the kingdom's markets and since then Morocco's GDP has grown to \$118 billion, with GDP growth in recent years typically hovering around 3 or 4% each year, with the exception of 2016 when it dipped to 1 percent (World Bank 2018). In 2019, GDP growth decreased to 2.4% (World Bank 2021a). While the percentage fluctuates, GDP growth generally has been on a steady decline since 1996 when growth was at a peak of 12.37%. This suggests that while Morocco generally still has decent GDP growth, the overall trend is downward.

While Morocco has made gains in reducing poverty, around 13% of Moroccans earn less than \$2 per day and 31% earn less than \$5.50 per day (UN Development Programme 2019). Despite these income figures, a UN Development Programme report found that 2 million Moroccans have been lifted out of poverty in the last decade alone, with the country's poverty rate nearly halved since the start of the 21st century. The government has invested in infrastructure projects to improve public access to electricity, clean water and roads and transportation, in addition to managing sustainable budget practices, state tax revenue reforms, expanded bank credit and microcredit for individuals and businesses, the work of NGOs, and the remittance economy, have all factored into Morocco's poverty reduction (Achy 2011, 1).

While Morocco has experienced success in growing the economy and improving the overall standard of living, it still ranks 121 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index (United Nations Development Programme 2019). The Human Development Index evaluates a country's development beyond GDP and economic growth by factoring in other aspects related to standard of living and quality of life such as health and education. The scores are combined into a composite index between 0 and 1. Morocco's score is 0.676, which is lower than its neighbors, Tunisia and Libya, with HDI scores of 0.739 and 0.708 respectively.

Morocco's scores in the areas of mean years of schooling, gross national income per capita, as well as the Gender Development Index and the Gender Inequality Index, negatively impact the kingdom's overall HDI (United Nations Development Programme 2019).

These development disparities with neighboring countries are even further entrenched in where people live within Morocco. The concentration of cities along the coast illustrates the challenges of the urban-rural divide. There is a widening wealth gap between the developed urban centers and the underdeveloped rural areas, which is creating a growing problem of inequality within Morocco. Compared with some regional neighbors, Morocco's internal wealth disparities are particularly large (see Table 3). In general, this also characterizes the urban/rural divide, since most rural Moroccans are poor (Achy 2011, 10). Urban-rural inequality can be seen through tracking income inequality via consumption levels. The table shows the poorest 10% and the wealthiest 10% of the population's percentage of total consumption. Compared with some regional neighbors provided by Achy, Morocco's internal wealth disparities are particularly large (see Table 3).

Total Consumption by:	Poorest 10%	Wealthiest 10%
<i>Egypt</i>	3.9%	27.6%
<i>Morocco</i>	2.7%	33.0%
<i>Syria</i>	3.5%	25.0%

Table 2. Total Market Consumption.

Source: Table Created from data in Achy (2011,10)

The inherent wealth gap, which also represents a general development gap, is why we should study how rural residents are adapting to climate stressors – because they have less economic resources available. As I will show next, rural residents have significantly fewer portions of the population who have access to safe drinking water services, which is the UN Sustainable

Development Goal 6. As another example of inequality, the accessibility of clean drinking water across the country: 88.93% of urban populations had clean drinking water in 2017 compared to just 39.93% in rural Morocco (World Bank 2018). That latter figure was even lower in the year 2000 with a little less than 20% of the rural population using safe water services contrast to 86% of urban dwellers.

A gap in wealth translates to gaps in resources as well as education. Illiteracy remains an issue for kingdom, especially among rural populations. In fact, one study found only 37% of adults in rural Morocco can read and write (Achy 2011, 8). A 2014 study from the Morocco High Commission for Planning reported that 60% of rural women are illiterate, compared to 31% of urban women (Guessous 2019). The national adult literacy rate of 74% reflects the growing urban populations as well as the higher literacy rates among male populations (UNESCO 2018). Literacy rates reflect the continuing gap between urban and rural populations and this has a substantial impact on the livelihood of rural residents, particularly women. Literacy is vital for adults seeking employment in urban environments, but for rural women, illiteracy is linked with child marriage, which is discussed later in this study.

Socioeconomic inequality is a growing problem in Morocco, which is illuminated through the gaps in literacy and water access for health, sanitation and farming, that illuminate the gaps between urban and rural populations. The wealth disparities translate into development disparities in which rural regions cannot catch up to urbanization. As a result, migrants moving from rural to urban areas due to the degradation of the environment and the agricultural industry are severely disadvantaged without reading skills and will find it difficult to find work. At the same time, the rural population in Morocco currently bear most of the brunt of climate change, in

terms of drought and desertification, and make up the poorest segment of society with the least access to services and resources.

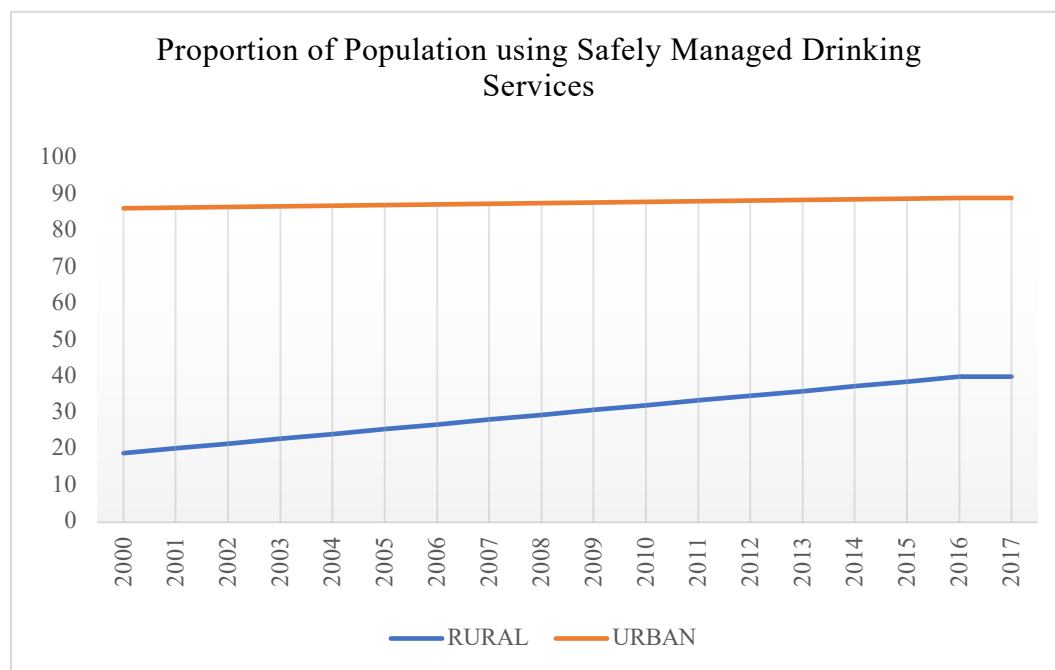


Figure 3. Morocco's Population with Access to Safe Drinking Water.

Source: Graph created from the UNStats.org Indicator 6.1.1, Series: Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services, by urban/rural (%) SH_H2O_SAFE.

Conclusion

Morocco will be particularly vulnerable to extreme climatic events, especially the rural areas of the country where desertification and extreme flooding will likely cause these populations to uproot, and judging by current trends, they will likely migrate to urban centers or abroad. Poor rural Moroccans and women in particular, who lack basic access to education, employment and other essential services such as water, will be the most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate migration. The consequence here is that women who are forced to flee their homes due to climate change will have a more difficult time migrating either internally or abroad

because of the lack of critical skills that would help them with moving, such as literacy and education, as well as with finding employment elsewhere. Women who work in the agriculture sector in rural Morocco will have difficulty translating their generally agrarian skills to the urban workforce. These factors of inequality will place greater stress on women affected by climate change and migration. This translates to rural women being at a greater disadvantage due to the unequal access to education, as well as disadvantages in securing employment linked to illiteracy and a greater risk of child marriage and gender-based violence. A number of the NGOs explored in this study focused on women because of these particular vulnerabilities in education, employment, and resource accessibility.

Although Morocco has developed rapidly in the last few decades, NGOs play an important role in reducing poverty and serving rural communities, particularly women, due to the disparities that continue to exist. The government's actions are a positive move forward for development and mitigating the impacts of climate change, but it does not have the ability to act quickly or far reaching enough. Moroccan NGOs then serve to meet the needs of citizens beyond the reach of what the government is currently capable of doing.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A growing body of literature has sought to link migration to climate change through primarily case studies in various parts of the world where flooding, sea level rise, severe storms, desertification and other extreme weather events have pushed populations mostly from rural to urban areas. The literature emphasizes the complex, multi-dimensional nature of migration and the challenge of pinpointing a particular root cause. In reality, the drivers of migration usually involve many different factors and climate change is increasingly connected to those explanations (Adger et al. 2015). Women already face social and economic inequalities, but sudden onset events such as natural disasters, as well as long-term climate changes, such as sea level rise and desertification, add new obstacles to migration, education, income and employment for migrant women who seek to improve their livelihood. Despite the ongoing impact of climate on migration, there is controversy over the term “environmental refugee” and some question about just how many migrants are fleeing for environmental reasons (Black 2001). Morocco in particular is not as well researched in the climate migration literature as are other parts of the world. Within the climate literature, the vulnerabilities of women and the intersection of gender, climate change, development and migration is lacking sufficient research. For this study, NGOs act as the vessel in which the nexus of these four research areas are contained. The effectiveness and accountability of NGOs, how they engage on social media, and the discourses they build illustrate the critical role they play in responding to needs that emerge among rural and urban populations related to climate, migration, gender and development.

The Role of NGOs

The boom of non-governmental organizations as a mechanism for development began around the end of the Cold War with the purpose of “filling gaps in service delivery” as well as “transformative missions of empowerment and social justice” in order to spread democratic values in communities across the Global South following the colonial era (Banks, Hulme and Edwards 2015, 707-8). The UN defines civil society organizations and NGO, which some researchers differentiate, as

any not-for profit, voluntary citizens’ group that is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, civil society organisations perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens’ concerns to Governments, monitor policies, and encourage political participation at the community level. (UN Civil Society Unit)

NGOs operate on the local, regional, national and international level and serve a multitude of different causes toward helping disadvantaged people, whether it is providing a service like literacy education or clean drinking water, charitable acts from fundraising, or empowering women, minorities and other marginalized groups to improve their well-being. The UN Economic and Social Council has granted more than 5,000 NGOs with consultative status, allowing them to be involved in certain UN matters (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2020). However, millions of NGOs exist around the world today. That are not part of the official UN umbrella and act to fill gaps left by governments or larger agencies.

A report from the Asian Development Bank and the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank studying the urban poor in fast-developing Asian countries found that NGOs had a positive impact in a number of basic infrastructure projects working with community-based organizations (CBOs) and government agencies in Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, India and Pakistan. Highlighting the benefits of NGOs, the report states that they had the advantage of

being “free to assess situations, respond to needs and experiment with new solutions in ways that the public sector was unable to do” (Asian Development Bank 1991, 11). The NGOs were also noted as playing an important role in empowerment initiatives, as well as “sharing information and advocacy” and serving as “an intermediary between the people and the formal sector” due to their greater access to information and resources (12). Other studies have shown NGOs had a positive impact working in education (Banerjee et al. 2007) and that NGO involvement increases the likelihood of democratization (Fowler 1991). On the other hand, the Asian Development Bank report described some of the difficulties and limitations of NGOs, such as the availability of funding. The report found that NGO success depended on the quality of leadership and their ability to build relations with governments and other agencies.” (Asian Development Bank 1991).

NGOs have grown tremendously over the last few decades both in numbers and scope, securing massive amounts of foreign aid under the belief of developing states that these institutions could accomplish the progressive aspirations that they cannot, which has led many to study the role of NGOs and sometimes question their effectiveness in transforming societies into models of good governance. At their advent, NGOs were hailed as the “magic bullet” to save development (Edwards and Hulme 1996, 3). Some scholars have argued that NGOs are generally weak because of their dependency on foreign aid and their inability to resolve complex long-term problems like poverty due to the emphasis on addressing short-term needs that bring in quicker results and money (Banks, Hulme and Edwards 2015, 709). NGO often having to shift and adapt their organizational goals and priorities in order to appease donors and compete for their dollars (for example, see Khaldoun 2012) and also face obstacles in maneuvering around government entities because of “restrictive national rules and regulations [that] act as severe constraints on

the transformative potential of NGOs” (Banks, Hulme and Edwards 2015, 710). Moreover, state regulation of civil society limits the ability of NGOs to carry out progressive agendas for social change, which has led NGOs to shift toward service delivery operations as opposed to social justice activism, in order to avoid government repression (711). Additionally, the stronger advocacy efforts of NGOs can serve as a barrier when viewed as becoming too politicized, especially among NGOs in the realm of agriculture and environment, when involved in rural social justice movements in the Global South dealing with the issue of food sovereignty, as well as human rights (Isgren 2018, 183). NGOs are especially restricted when operating in states with authoritarian regimes that can undermine the activist efforts of civil society (Bogdanova 2017). NGO-government relations can also increase sociopolitical tension if the government – even elected administrations – feel threatened by the work of NGOs (Bebbington and Farrington 1993).

There are a variety of ways in which NGOs practice accountability to donors, governments, regulatory bodies and the public, which one study categorized as self-regulation, performance assessments and evaluations, social audits and reports and disclosure statements (Ebrahim 2003, 813). Another study examined how to measure the effectiveness of international development NGOs through the lens that “accountability relationships are viewed as constructed, negotiated, and contested through the interplay of knowledge and power” (Williams 2010, 28). This research Williams’ (2010) research is based on the framework of three power directionalities of international non-governmental organizations accountability as “upwardly accountable,” which would typically consist of governing and regulatory bodies and donors, “downward accountability” referring to those who depend on the work of the NGO, and “horizontal accountability,” which mostly refers to stakeholders within an organization (32).

“Upwards accountability” manifests through monitoring practices, reports and performance evaluations, whereas “downward accountability” tends to be demonstrated by informal means such as a presentation of a project on the local level (33). “Horizontal accountability” is characterized by “organizational learning,” which Williams described as a strategy that “reframes development failures into ‘learning opportunities’ that should be treated as sources of greater understanding and improvement” (38). Together, the power directionalities reveal how NGOs’ effectiveness is measured and how they can establish themselves as credible and legitimate. The research of this study can be applied to Williams’ framework in that NGOs use social media and websites to play these roles. For example, NGOs use social media to form networks with other organizations which allows horizontal accountability. They also use their online presence to update both donors and their community at large on the progress made on projects, mirroring the notions of upwards and downwards accountability. Ebrahim’s study found that NGOs primarily underscore upward accountability mechanisms such as reporting and evaluations, but these “are of limited use for enhancing downward accountability,” which in turn means downward and horizontal accountability “remain comparatively underdeveloped” (2003, 824). Ebrahim and William’s insight emphasize the need for NGOs to find a balance between the three mechanisms of accountability in order to integrate responsibility to both internal and external actors. Based on my research findings, NGOs view social media as a crucial aspect of their organization for the purpose of attracting donors. This confirms that NGOs tend to place a higher emphasis on upward accountability compared to the others, however, social media can also be a platform for downward accountability because it gives people the space to interact with the organizations.

NGOs as Agents of Climate Action

The everyday impacts of climate change – drought, flooding, temperature rise – are felt by communities at the local level, the space where NGOs work, interact, and witness first-hand how extreme weather hurts communities. Some argue that governments are not suitable to solely implement climate change adaptation plans due to their tendency to conduct a “top-down” approach, whereas “the effects of climate change are experienced locally by communities, local institutions and stakeholders and they are best suited to addressing them” by building local adaptive capacities (Lobo “Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation”). In this sense, NGOs may take notice of changes in a community quicker than governments and may be able to forecast what is coming, acting as a canary in the coal mine scenario – when coal miners used birds to test if any lift-threatening gases were released in the mine, used as a metaphor for a warning sign of danger.

Research by McGregor, Yerbury and Shahid analyzed data from small NGOs operating in Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Kiribati and Tuvalu to study how NGOs located in countries vulnerable to climate change contribute to climate action and knowledge creation through the examination of documents including NGO website data, internal emails, reports, media and Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, which refer to the climate goals states set as part of the Paris Agreement (2018, 63). Their findings confirmed that small NGOs are a key part of the circulation of climate knowledge, both in local communities and beyond. The authors saw that “Mostly, NGOs contribute to the positions for action espoused by their governments, with their main actions being awareness-raising and educating around issues of adaptation” but they did find some NGOs, with the help of scientific research, are “filling the gaps” left by governments and institutions (77). While NGO advocacy and awareness efforts may seem

“passive,” these initiatives actually give rise to “complex transformations of climate information” and the result is that “Climate narratives are developed that engage locally and generate new agendas. These can then themselves influence the wider international climate policy process” (77-8). Other studies have investigated how environmental NGOs engage in climate change discourse on Twitter and form online networks (Vu et al. 2018; Fownes, Yu and Margolin 2018). The literature on migration-specific NGOs study how they respond to various migration crises in the Mediterranean, Latin America and elsewhere, as well as their institutional practices and strategies, and the political narratives they generate regarding complex migration issues (Nichols et al. 2017; Cuttitta 2018; Mourad 2019). The information that NGOs gather and disseminate can have a powerful impact on our understanding of issues like climate change and migration, which can affect how governments and the international community choose to react and respond.

Climate Migration Literature

Critics have disagreed with the “environmental refugees” label because it does not fit the United Nation’s legal definition of what it means to be a refugee (fleeing persecution), and they argue that the term implies that the environment can be a single, direct cause for migration, instead of being one factor in a complex multitude of socio-economic and political factors. Critics also argue that the evidence of mass environmental displacement is lacking, and that the term is deceiving because it has become too politicized (Black 2001; Castles 2002).

More broadly, there is plenty of research that attempts to link migration and climate change in various corners of the world by testing different climate determinants with migration flows. This includes models testing environmental determinants, such as natural disasters, land degradation, chemical spills and development, as being statistically significant to out-migration,

showing that environmental decline is a factor that forces people to move (Reuveny and Moore 2009). Other studies pull census microdata and compare it with climate data to exhibit how migration flows increase with higher temperatures and changes in rainfall in South American nations (Thiede, Gray and Mueller 2016), as well as geostatistical interpolation models that also show a relationship between worsening climate conditions and out-migration from rural areas in Mexico (Nawrotzki et al. 2015). By contrast, a study in the Philippines found that while increasing temperatures and typhoon activity can lead to an increase in out-migration, rainfall was not statistically significant (Pratikshya Bohra-Mishra et al. 2016). Meanwhile, Perch-Nielson et al. found that sea level rise has a greater impact on migration than floods (2008, 390). Many have analyzed the complexity of what causes migration, with results showing that multiple factors relating to the environment, the economy, politics and social life all play a role to varying degrees depending on the individual (Neumann and Hermans 2017; Bates-Eamer 2019; Duda, Fasse and Grote 2018; Doevenspeck 2011; Sanzheev et al. 2020; Martin 2010; Kelman et al. 2019).

People have migrated temporarily in response to weather events such as drought and famine as long as human civilizations have existed. For example, this happens regularly in places such as Sudan and Ethiopia, as well as Central America and the Caribbean during hurricane season (McLeman and Smit 2006, 33). The long-term problem, though, arises when this type of extreme climate and natural disasters begin to occur more regularly. A field of the climate migration literature has formed to study the ways in which populations learn to adapt to onset weather events (see Tucker 2015; Donner 2015; Confalonieri et al. 2014). The literature frequently uses the terms “push and pull” to describe how some factors may “push” migrants to leave their home and other factors may function to pull or “attract” migrants to a certain location

(McLeman and Smit 2006, 38). In addition to economic push factors, there are also other types of push factors such “demographic growth, low living standards, political repression ... political freedom and availability of land” (39). Vulnerability is another theme within the adaptation literature and its precise definition is a much debated topic without an agreed-upon meaning, but this study will use McLeman and Smit’s definition of vulnerability “in terms of the potential to experience harm or loss from some event or condition, and this potential is related to factors that affect the likelihood of the event if and when it occurs” (34). While adaptation studies typically focus on the adjustments communities’ make in response to weather events and natural disasters over time, other studies have examined household strategies for coping with climate change and its negative effects on agriculture (see Bylander 2015; Meze-Hausken 2000; Islam, 2018; Altieri and Nicholls 2013). The term “coping” is used to describe the response to temporary, short-term migration caused by sudden, onset events such as disasters, while “adaptation” refers to long-term changes made from permanent migration (Sobczak-Szelc and Fekih 2020, 3). A case study in Morocco’s North African neighbor, Tunisia, found evidence from data of 120 households that “migration is not only a coping strategy but an adaptation strategy as well,” concluding that “a lack of water, spread of dunes, insufficient arable land, crop destruction, insufficient income, lack of other job opportunities, and lack of money for enlargement of arable land forms a complex set of reasons pushing people to migrate” (14). Given their similar geography, one can expect similar factors to influence climate migration in Morocco. However, a study by Mueller et al. analyzed migration, labor and demographic data from several east African countries and found that people in rural populations typically do not temporarily migrate out in response to climate shocks (2020, 10). They speculate the reason for this may be due to high unemployment in urban areas, which may deter rural populations from migrating. But a study of labor markets

in rural Mexico found a relationship between high temperature rises and decreases in rural employment, as well as an increase in both within country rural to urban and international migration during these climate fluctuations (Jessoe, Manning and Taylor 2018, 258).

Not all research has provided a strong link between migration and climatic conditions. One study in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq found that while villages there did suffer severely from drought between 2007 and 2009, from a socioeconomic point of view, rural-to-urban migration was not a common response of the surveyed communities impacted the most. To the contrary, migration was actually higher in the villages least affected by the drought (Eklund and Seaquist 2015, 436). However, the authors do note the reliance on secondary data and that the small sample size of the data may have affected the results of the analysis. Others have found increasing numbers of migrants, particularly women and children, during severe drought (Findley 1994, 539). Koubi et al., studying migration from both sudden onset and long-term environmental decline, argued “While sudden on-set environmental events, such as storms or floods, tend to increase the likelihood of migration, long-term, gradual environmental events, such as salinity or droughts, are unlikely to lead to migration but in fact decreases its likelihood” following the logic that most people would rather stay put and learn to adapt to the environment than pack their bags and move to a brand new location (2016, 152). The counter to this argument is that certain climatic events will not afford people the option to stay and adapt. In Morocco, the long-term process of desertification causes the permanent disappearance of oases, which forces populations out of the desert in order to have access to water, a necessity of life. Sea level rise is another example of a long-term environmental event that will give people no choice but to move out.

Researchers have sought to fill a research gap by analyzing the destinations chosen by migrants fleeing climate change and “to focus instead on a more nuanced understanding of how climate change may interface with existing and emerging migration systems to produce a very uneven global pattern of environmental migrant destinations” (Findlay 2011, 51). Findlay argued that the more pressing problem is not “forced environmental mobility” but rather the immobility of environmental refugees in more vulnerable regions of the world that are unable to adapt to climate change (57). Migrants may be unable or unwilling to move based on their social networks as well as economic and political factors, which often influence their decision to move or stay. In Morocco, NGOs are stretched because they seek to meet the needs of the rural populations who stayed where they are.

Problems with Climate Action at the Institutional Level

Adaptability to climate-induced migration also depends on vulnerabilities at the institutional level. According to Sowers and Weinthal, “vulnerability within the [MENA] region varies by the adaptive capacity of states and communities to recover and adjust, which in turn depends upon level of wealth, patterns of governance, natural endowments, and national local institutional capacities” (Sowers and Weinthal 2010, 15). How states and institutions respond to climate change and its migratory impacts will be determined by “conflicting national interests” as well as “difficult tradeoffs” for the MENA region in particular, where authoritarian leaders hold all the power and institutions are relatively weak (16). Amongst all the conflict in the region, climate change is hardly on the top of most state agendas in the Middle East, with the exception of Morocco who have at least started taking some concrete steps. Developing states in the Global South that are unprepared to deal with the impacts of climate change will be especially vulnerable, including Morocco. The big oil-producing and oil-consuming states such

as Saudi Arabia are among the biggest contributors to climate change along with the West, China and India; most developing countries in the Global South are not the ones who are polluting the most emissions. Yet, the MENA region is among those who has been so far the most impacted by climate change. Politically, these nations do not have as much power to push through meaningful climate action because of their limited influence at the UN compared to the major powers like the U.S. Another issue that remains is that states tend to prioritize short-term problems over long-term problems, and national issues over international issues. In Morocco's case, this means focusing on their own internal issues with climate change, such as drought and water shortages, as opposed to global efforts to address climate change. This all makes it extremely difficult for Global South states to prepare for and address climate change.

The previous sections explored the wider climate migration literature and its common themes such as adaptability and coping strategies, and concepts such as the term “environmental refugee.” The purpose of this section is to show how others in the field have studied climate-induced migration and their attempts to make sense of such a complex, multidimensional subject matter. The following section looks more specifically at Morocco after which I weave in the conversation about gender and development into the conversation about climate and migration.

Moroccan Climate Migration Literature

More narrowly, climate migration in Morocco is specifically an under-researched subject. The climate migration literature generally tends to focus on parts of the world outside of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which is a bit puzzling considering the MENA region will be one of the most affected areas across the globe (Tangermann and Bennani 2016). When most people hear about refugees coming from the Middle East, it is most often in the context of those who are escaping political and religious persecution or violent conflict, which

may serve as an explanation as to why climate migration research in MENA has been relatively neglected. Some research on climate migration in MENA does exist (see Waha et al. 2017), however scant. A 2011 study published by the World Bank conducted surveys in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Syria and Yemen asking participants how they have been affected by the changing climate and their reasons for migrating. Overall, the study discovered that worsening climatic conditions “may not be the main drivers of temporary and permanent migration. But they do appear to contribute to migration” (Wodon et al. 2014, 14). Moreover, the survey found that 92% of the households working in agriculture claimed to be impacted by extreme weather events, with nearly two-thirds attributing drought as a reason for migrating (xvi). Just three out of 10 households in the five surveyed countries had migrants, although that number is expected to rise once worsening climates intensify migration patterns (xix). The study found that in Morocco, “the impact of weather shocks on permanent migration is not statistically significant, the impact of changing structural conditions such as reduced agricultural yields due to lack of water is, and it does contribute to higher permanent migration away from the affected areas” (xx). Migrants do not name climate change as a reason to migrate, but the secondary effects of economic opportunity lie behind Moroccans’ decisions to move.

According to the 2011 survey, more than 91% of Moroccans agreed that rain has become more erratic and approximately 70% said the temperature is hotter while nearly 60% experienced droughts more frequently (94). Internal migration, however, has always been more common than cross-border migration, which explains the explosion of urban metropolitan cities that “have been growing at more than four times the rate as rural areas over the 2000 to 2010 period” (51). However, Figure 4 below forecasts a rapid decline in population change starting around 2010 and continuing until 2050.

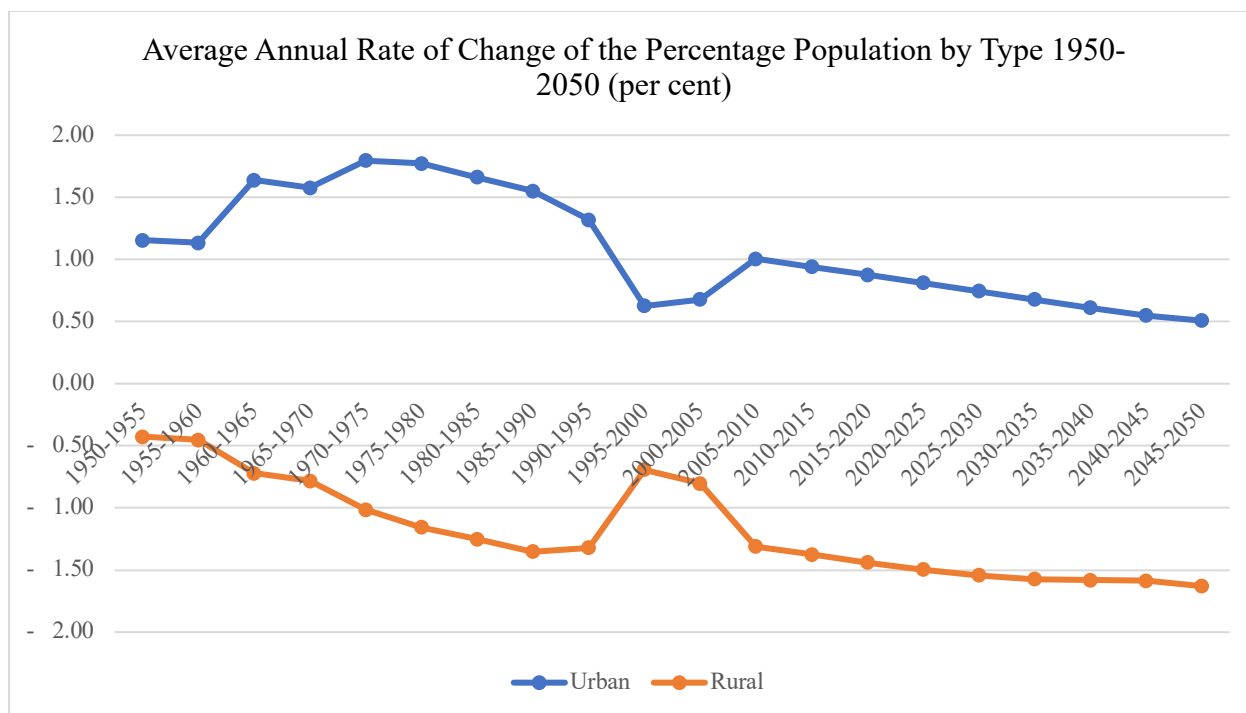


Figure 4. Percent Change of Morocco's Population by Rural and Urban Locations

Source: Graph created from data from UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

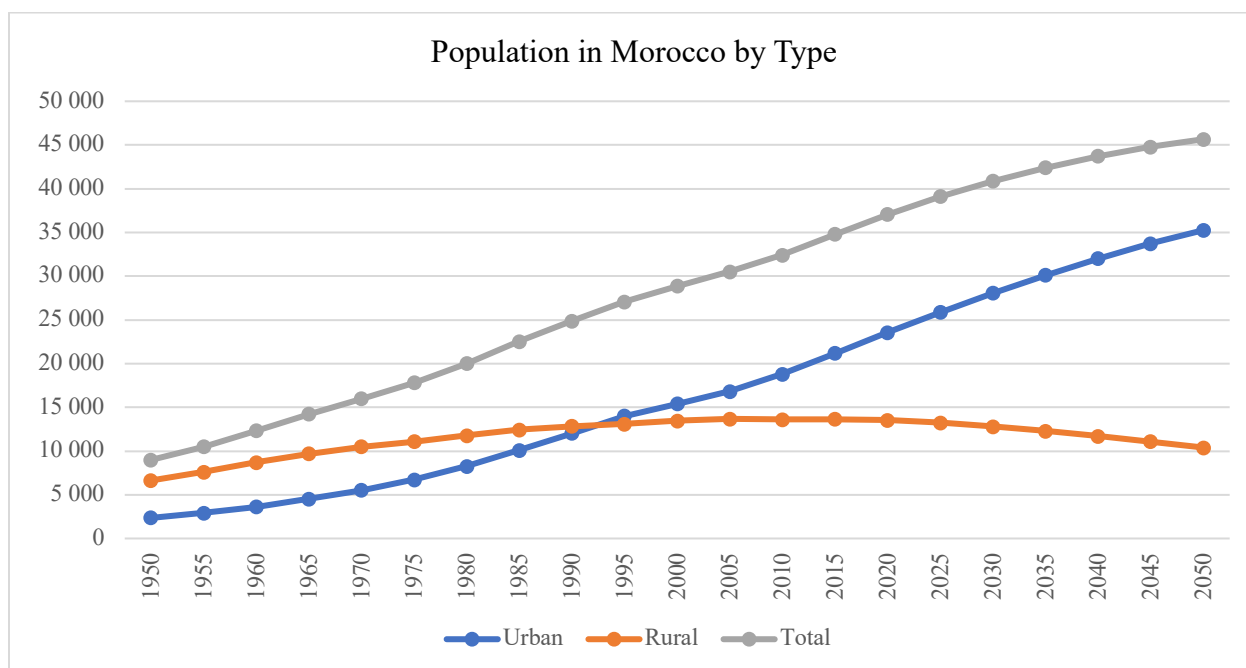


Figure 5. Population Change of Morocco by Rural and Urban Locations

Source: Graph created from data from UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs.

Presumably this may be based on projections of Moroccan workers migrating to Europe and elsewhere for work. The Moroccan diaspora stems from its colonial past, with large workforces of Moroccans living in Spain, France and the Netherlands due to high unemployment in their homeland (Tangermann and Bennani 2016, 9).

In the sample, 5.71% of Moroccans migrated temporarily in comparison to the 4% who moved permanently (Wodon et al. 2014, 208). The study suggests between one tenth and one fifth of migrants at the time were motivated by climate, but an estimated 80 to 100 million in the MENA region will be impacted by water stress by 2025 (xxiv, 4).

The survey answers from households in the five MENA countries illustrate the critical challenge to climate migration research: right now, most people do not specifically label climate change as their main reason for migrating whether internal or internationally, but further investigating shows many factors they share are actually linked to environmental degradation. For example, a survey participant may only say they are migrating for employment opportunities, but the reason why they are searching for work in the city may be due to the lack of jobs in their place of origin. If the person is from a rural area of a developing country, they are more than likely a subsistence farmer (World Bank 2020). The impacts of climate change, such as drought, temperature rise and soil erosion, have led to declines in agricultural productivity (Desai, Ginnetti and Sydney 2018, 2). So if a person is migrating from rural to urban in order to find work in the city, presumably there is a good chance their livelihood may have been negatively impacted by the affected of climate change on agriculture. While many people do not readily identify climate change specifically as a reason for migrating, it can be implied that many migrants in developing countries come from rural areas dependent on agriculture.

A case study of migration and climate in Morocco was conducted in the rural oasis villages of M'hamid and Tagounit/Ktaoua, two palm groves located in the eastern part of the country near the Algerian border, documenting the decline of the nomadic population from 1960 to 2008. The case study found that the population drop was related to extreme drought beginning in the 1980s, as well as damaging consequences of a dam, and the increasing needs and pressures of urbanization and tourism (Ait Hamza et al. 2009, 8). The authors find a link between rural to urban migration and agricultural losses, as well as the rise of small cities in rural regions that provide other types of employment (12). Interestingly, de Haas (2007) pointed out that micro and meso level urbanization and development in Morocco's rural villages has actually led to a population increase as opposed to shrinking numbers. Although urban populations in Morocco have generally grown faster than the rural parts, there are rural areas that have experienced a net increase in population due to the rise of small or mid-size cities grown out of villages located within a rural region (de Haas 2007, 16).

The localized case study by Hamza et al. was based on a sample size of 30 migrants and 30 non-migrants in the rural parts of the palm groves, and it found that 70% credited environmental degradation as a factor in their decision to migrate (22). However, it should be noted that the extent of the role worsening climatic conditions plays depends on the individual and their socioeconomic circumstance (21). Interestingly, this case study observes that women in rural Morocco tend to stay in the village while their husbands leave for temporary work. "In a traditional and conservative society, the women who do not join their migrant husband will not leave their village. The study showed that only males participate in the migration movement" (25). However, widows and unmarried women do migrate to the city or sometimes abroad. Traditionally, a woman leaving her family for work was looked down upon "for it endangers the

dignity of the entire family” but the study indicates that attitudes in rural Morocco are changing toward more openness (25).

This section provided an overview of migration patterns in Morocco and documented cases of environmental degradation linked to rural to urban migration movement. The next section covers an overview of the broad gender migration literature, followed by gender issues and gender migration literature specifically in Morocco.

Gender Migration and Development Literature

Much of the literature on gender development related to climate change focuses on how women cope and adapt to an increasingly hostile environment that sends their husbands away for work outside of agriculture (Banerjee et al. 2019). One particular case study documents the experiences of women in India’s Bengal Delta after the devastating cyclone Aila in 2009. The study argued, “Vulnerable groups, especially women, bear the disproportionate burden of the impact of natural disasters induced by climate change” (Ghosh, Banerjee and Naaz 2018, 63). In this scenario, “half the men from the most affected blocks of the Indian Sundarbans” migrated internally while the women were left “to shoulder the entire burden of running the household and deal with the disastrous effects of the cyclone” (63). The study, however, focuses on women’s self-help groups as a way to cope with the aftermath of the cyclone to illustrate women’s agency and ability to adapt. Women who are displaced by natural disasters are more vulnerable than their male counterparts because of “little opportunity in terms of alternative livelihoods, which leads to wage discrimination, least paid jobs as well as sexual harassment and exploitation in the workplace” (65). There are some positives that can be derived from the situation, in that mass male out-migration can lead to women gaining more confidence and economic independence, as well as better living conditions, as a result (68). Another case study on rural-to-urban migration

of women in China arrived at similar conclusions about the socio-economic and cultural effects on women. It was found that rural women who migrated to China's eastern urban coast were "empowered by a degree of autonomy from the patriarchal authority of parents or of in-laws and broadening of horizons when they migrate to urban areas" (Gaetano and Jacka 2004, 2). Many of these rural women migrants are also fleeing domestic violence situations or other forms of gender discrimination and violence, which is thought to lead to a decrease in suicide rates (2). Gaetano and Jacka sought to challenge the widely held notion that women migrate less often than men. Rural women in particular tend to be willing to work the types of jobs available in developing cities: unskilled and temporary. But these jobs have almost no benefits and are very physically demanding in unsatisfactory working conditions (17).

Another case study in nearby Odisha, India examined the ways in which women cope with climate change and migration, highlighting both the positives and negatives that can arise (Patel and Giri 2019, 97). The region is similar to Morocco in that it has experienced extreme climate that has damaged the agriculture industry. In this case, women of Bhubaneswar found work in urban construction sites. Most of these women are illiterate or had very little education and went to the cities for unskilled labor jobs that pay low wages (104). Often both girls and boys drop out of school in order to help out at home (106). But women are particularly impacted by climate migration in aspects men typically do not face. This includes gender-based discrimination relating to women's "limited accessibility to work, low literacy, less mobility, reduced access to resources including opportunities, services, productive assets and land" (99).

Gender inequality is a worldwide issue affecting every society, with no country ranking as perfectly equal according to the UN's Gender Inequality Index. As reported by UN's Sustainable Development Goals, women make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns however,

“two thirds of developing countries have achieved gender parity in primary education” (UN Development Programme 2020). The agency notes that while the number of women in the labor market is the highest it has ever been, “there are still large inequalities in some regions, with women systemically denied the same work rights as men. Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, and discrimination in public office all remain huge barriers” and consequently, “Climate change and disasters continue to have a disproportionate effect on women and children, as do conflict and migration” (UN Development Programme 2020). Data from the UN also shows that only 48% of women participated in the workforce worldwide in 2018 compared to 75% of the global male population, which equates to 3 in 5 of the world’s 3.5 billion workforce. The report includes that “Many more women than men are underutilized in the labour force – 85 million compared to 55 million” (UN Development Programme 2020). In Morocco, women’s participation in the workforce has been on a decline since 2005. In 2019, 24.3% of the workforce was female (World Bank 2021c).

Patel and Giri noted both positive and negative aspects found in the study. The migrant women in the study ended up having improved living conditions to their rural counterparts, such as sturdier houses, clean drinking water access, toilets, electricity, electronic items and other household items such as refrigerators and washing machines (106). So while migration allowed some to increase their wealth and standard of living, women migrants must still overcome barriers such as “The non-portability of welfare schemes, lack of land ownership of women, threat of being evicted, insecure environment and no scope of any upward movement in skill and work” (108).

Sugden et al. explain the two frameworks that are frequently used in the climate adaptation literature. The first is risk-hazard, which “tends to understand vulnerability as

multiple outcomes of one biophysical event” and the second approach, social constructivist, “seeks to explain vulnerability as due to multiple causes rooted in social structures” (2014, 259). They utilized the latter framework to examine gender vulnerability in relation to climate change through the lens of class and social formation in the Eastern Gangetic Plains of India and Nepal. Although Morocco does not operate under a caste system like India, it holds true that the poorest classes, and especially women, are hurt the most by climate change and face many barriers in traditional societies. “Women’s vulnerability has increased when access to resources and income derived from key livelihood activities in the ‘female’ domain are disproportionately affected by a changing climate,” according to Sugden et al. (259). The example given by the authors is that the accessibility of water can intensify the amount of work for women if they are required to travel farther in order to find water.

There is a sizable body of literature in the realm of feminist studies that demonstrates the inequalities that put marginalized groups, such as women, at a greater disadvantage in terms of “resources, capabilities, and opportunities” after a disaster strikes, due to social norms and socioeconomic status (Neumayer and Plumper 2007, 551), and seek to highlight the intersectionality of gender with climate, class and poverty (Sultana 2014; Demetriades and Esplen 2008; Belcore and Pezzoli 2019; Chandra et al. 2017; Chidakwa et al. 2020; Djoudi and Brockhaus 2011). Meanwhile, others have criticized the notion of women’s vulnerability to climate change (Carr and Thompson 2014; Skutsch 2002) as an over-generalization that also “denies them agency while constructing women’s vulnerability as their specific problem. In doing so, it reinforces differences between women and men as given and unchangeable, as for example in the generalization that poor women are always more vulnerable and more likely to die in catastrophes while the major polluters are men” (Arora-Jonsson 2011, 748). These critics

point out that women are not a homogenous group and argue that power relations play key role in determining who is vulnerable because “Different power relations are privileged in different situations and class, gender, ethnicity or nationality assume importance depending on the context” (750). It is important in this study to keep in mind that not all womens’ experiences are the same, and the intersectionality of class, ethnicity and other social and cultural identifiers should be acknowledged.

Gender Disparities in Morocco

Montanari and Bergh studied the importance of rural Moroccan women’s traditional knowledge of production and agriculture that has been incorporated into sustainable policies that aim to adapt to climate change, but they also highlight some of the barriers rural Moroccan women face in the labor market in relation to lower wages, poorer working conditions, benefits and opportunities in a patriarchal system, as well as limited access to land (Montanari and Bergh 2019, 2-3). It is true that women in Morocco have recently gained more rights, but barriers to employment and education still exist for many, especially rural women. Despite an overall increase standard of living in Morocco, rural women are still at a disadvantage. For example, the national average life expectancy for women in Morocco is 78.2 years, compared to 75.3 years for rural women and 79.6 among urban women (Guessous 2019). However, women overall have a higher life expectancy of men. The national life expectancy of Moroccan men as of 2018 is 75 years (World Bank 2021b). The UN’s Gender Inequality Index, which rates countries on a scale of 0 to 1 based on reproductive health, empowerment and the labor market, gave Morocco a score of 0.492 (UN Development Programme 2019). For reference, Switzerland ranked the best in the world with a score of 0.037. Zero represents a perfect score.

In terms of literacy and education, in North Africa, specifically, one in four girls are unenrolled in school and out of the 103 million children who cannot read or write, more than 60% are female (UN Development Programme 2020). In Morocco, girls tend to be less educated than boys. Children in the kingdom are expected to attend 13 years of school; however the dropout rate remains a problem. There were nearly 90,000 children not enrolled in primary school in 2017 and almost 200,000 were not attending secondary school (UNESCO 2018). Those numbers are typically higher among girls compared to boys. For example, of the 200,000 teens unenrolled in secondary school, nearly 121,000 were female. The population of children in Morocco ages 6 to 11 is 3.862 million while 3.597 million are 12 to 17 years old. That means roughly 2.3% and 5.6% of the school-aged population were out of primary and secondary school, respectively. These figures are a significant improvement from 2010, when there were slightly more than 431,000 adolescents not attending secondary school and approximately 242,000 children not enrolled in primary school, which would have been a much greater percentage of the school-aged population (UNESCO 2018).

Girls also tend to drop out of school more frequently than boys, with 4.7 mean years of schooling for girls compared to 6.6 mean years for boys (UN Development Programme 2019). Dropout rates are also higher in rural areas than urban. Girls living in the rural parts of Morocco typically attend little to no school in order to help the family with farming or other kinds of housework, and usually end up marrying at a young age. Without access to a proper education, the cycle of poverty and inequality continues.

Gender Migration and Development in Morocco

The literature regarding female migration in Morocco is quite mixed. While the case study in the Middle Draa Valley by Hamza et al. found that the migrants in that part of Morocco

were exclusively male, other migration studies paint a different picture. The authors of the aforementioned case study pin the reason down to conservative cultural norms, in which husbands migrate to urban areas temporarily for work while the wives stay in the village and run the household: “Leaving one’s village and family to work elsewhere used to be an impossible thing to do for a woman, for it endangers the dignity of the entire family and in particular, that of her husband and her siblings” (2009, 25). It is more common for widows or unmarried women to migrate to the city or sometimes Europe. However, the study by Hamza et al. indicates that education and migration have started to change the norms for women to stay in the rural villages. “It is the start of a new cultural era in the zone,” they wrote (25). With gender equality becoming more normalized, it will become less taboo in Moroccan society for women to migrate to the cities in search of a better life.

Wodon et al. described a different scene in Morocco, claiming that the temporary migration rate is actually already higher for women than men: “this is confirmed when looking at the position of the individual in terms of being a head of household or a spouse (rates for spouses are much higher), or at the interaction effects between gender and marital status” (2014, 208). For instance, their study found 7.51% of married women migrated temporarily, and 5.97% of women were head of the household, whereas the category for married men had a temporary migration percentage of 1.92% (210). But their study also found that migrants in the MENA region as a whole are mostly male, both rural-to-urban and cross-border. Women who stay in the village face “the burden of increased workload” and when women do migrate the “job opportunities tend to be less attractive than those for their male counterparts” (4). They most likely would work a job in housecleaning or as a seamstress (17). In examining the evolution of North African migration systems, Hein de Haas wrote that women from the Maghreb region are

migrating in greater numbers than before due in part to higher education levels and unemployment rates, less social restrictions, and “increasing demand for domestic labourers, nannies, cleaners and other jobs in the (informal) service sector of Europe” (2007, 79).

Italy has recently become a growing destination for Moroccan migrants in the last few decades. Of the total Moroccan population in Italy, 20 percent are women (Ruba Salih 2001, 657). In 1994, nearly half of these Moroccan women living in Italy obtained a resident work permit, many of them arriving alone. Most were domestic workers or employed in cleaning services. This case study by Salih sought to examine the complexity of transnationalism among Moroccan migrant women in Italy through the lens of conditioned “set of normative and cultural regulations based upon hegemonic interpretations of gender roles, which both in Morocco and Italy condition their activities, their identities and their likelihood of moving across countries or staying put” (656). The study found Moroccan women in Italy did return home periodically and this can create a paradox of transnationalism in which women are “struggling to distribute resources evenly between Italy and Morocco, satisfying children’s needs in Italy and relatives’ expectations in Morocco, operating a balance between the desire to display their success in Morocco and the concrete requirements of everyday life in Italy” (669). This study contributed to understanding the experiences of migrant Moroccan women and the inequalities they faced at the institutional level.

Bordat et al. describes the social and economic struggles of Moroccan women and development initiatives that seek to increase women’s capabilities and promote women’s empowerment (2011, 90). They accomplish this through examining grassroots initiatives by Moroccan NGOs that aim to empower women to have agency and make their own decisions, particularly with finances and legal matters, like for example taking back ownership of micro-

credit loans when so often male family members will try to control these funds (91). The study also looks at other women's empowerment initiatives that target other areas of social life. In interviews with women's rights NGOs in Morocco, the study found that these NGOs face challenges from extreme religious fundamentalist groups who take "advantage of the high illiteracy rates" among women, mainly rural, by telling them false information about Morocco's Family Code and its laws regarding women's rights. They also allegedly "pressure women into wearing 'proper Islamic dress' in exchange for financial assistance" (98). To combat the spread of misinformation and manipulation, women's empowerment initiatives seek to educate women on their legal and economic rights, as well as teach them how to read and write, and offer vocational skills training and other types of income-generating activities for women. The gender-focused NGOs researched for this study have very similar mandates.

In sum, an education gap exists for rural women who migrate to the cities and are forced to look for jobs that require skills and knowledge they do not possess. Outside of the education gap, women migrants also face inequalities in security and domestic violence; that is all on top of the already given gender migration issues. All of these factors compound the impact of climate and migration for women and girls, illustrating the need to look at the nexus of climate, migration, gender and development to truly understand what's happening in the country in response to climate change.

Conclusion

Most of the research that makes up the climate migration literature at this point stresses the complexity of migration as a multi-dimensional phenomenon in which many social, economic, political and cultural factors are at play. In other words, there is a broad agreement that climate change is not a single driver of migration but rather one explanation amongst a host

of others that all intersect. That may be the case up until this point, but climate science research tells us that the consequences of global greenhouse emissions will only worsen with time. While environmental degradation may not be a single migration driver now, it indicates that in the future it will be. The literature underestimates the possibility that climate change can actually be a primary reason for migrating, whether domestically or abroad. Most of the case studies surrounding climate change and migration focus on places like Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent where events such as cyclones force people to migrate temporarily. But what happens when migration from climate changes become permanent? Islands in the Pacific are already becoming uninhabitable due to sea level rise, including Tuvalu and Kiribati, which is expected to completely sink below sea level in the next 10 to 15 years (Godin 2020; Roy 2019). The climate change-migration nexus needs to be examined not as a temporary issue but rather a long-term problem.

This is where Morocco presents an interesting case. Water scarcity and desertification are two of the biggest environmental concerns for the kingdom that will have long-term impacts, rather than sudden onset events where the focus naturally goes to temporary migration and eventual return to “normal.” Morocco is a politically stable country surrounded by unstable neighbors as well as a European continent that is restricting its borders, which will limit where Moroccans can go if their communities become uninhabitable. This will present a challenge to Moroccan women in particular because of the socio-economic barriers they already face. If forced to migrate and obtain work in the city, Moroccan women would be acting against cultural norms that could unsettle the traditional family structure. Women also deal with higher workloads, poor working conditions, low wages and gender-based violence and discrimination.

Despite these challenges, there are also positives for women who migrate in raising their standard of living and receiving better education and employment.

The graphic below (Figure 6) visualizes my research as a nexus between climate, migration, gender and development and the orange dot in the middle represents the intersection of the four research areas. I propose that, since migrants often do not cite climate change as a primary factor motivating them to move, either abroad or to cities, looking specifically at the NGOs and how they adapt their missions to changing needs at the very local level help us to understand the intersection of climate, migration, development, and gender in ways that other approaches cannot. Focusing on this orange dot in the middle gives insight into the challenges facing rural Moroccans increasingly dealing with desertification and other climate stressors. I propose to view this through the lens of NGOs changing their mandates and expanding their purpose as they witness the evolving needs of the individuals they serve.

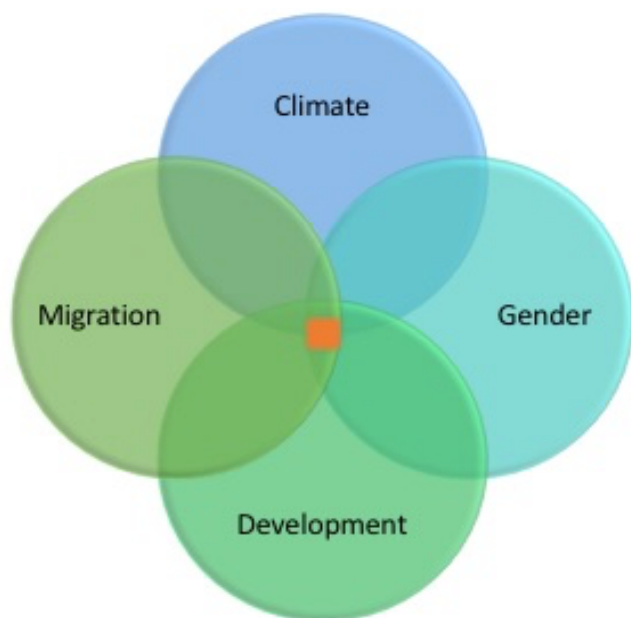


Figure 6. Research Nexus

Using Morocco as a case study allows for further exploration into the long-term impacts of climate-induced migration and how certain groups, such as women, will be left especially vulnerable, while also shedding light on a country that is currently lacking in climate migration research. In the bigger picture, the problem is that states prioritize national issues over international issues, and short-term concerns over long-term concerns. States have to start thinking about climate change as a long-term issue and it has to be addressed now rather than later once it is too late.

Taking an institutional ethnographic approach, the study will focus on social media activity and online messaging of Moroccan NGOs in the areas of development, gender and environment to determine if institutions in Morocco are expanding their operations in order to meet the needs caused by climate-induced migration.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The Institutional Ethnography Approach

To examine the nexus of climate change, migration, gender and development in Morocco and its potential impacts, this study will employ an institutional ethnography approach by analyzing social media and website data of 30 non-governmental organizations. The Canadian sociologist Dorothy E. Smith developed institutional ethnography as a feminist research method in the 1980s. She began by analyzing the policies and behavior of school administrations, as well as health care providers and child protective services, in order to highlight the difficulties single mothers face (Smith 1987). In its inception, the feminist methodology was created to show the institutionalization of patriarchy, and since then it has mushroomed into other fields such as nursing, health care, education, politics, development and more (Rankin 2001; Townsend 1996; Eastwood 2002; Eastwood 2005; Quinlan 2009; Braun 2011; Xenitidou and Gilbert 2009). Even human geographers have used institutional ethnography to analyze socio-spatial relations (Billo and Mountz 2016).

Traditionally, ethnographic research is defined as “the detailed study of everyday life,” with ethnographers using participant-observation, fieldnotes and interviews in order to “study how people interact and interpret meaning” (Billo and Mountz 2016). The purpose of institutional ethnography is to observe the workings of institutions; or more specifically, institutional ethnographies function as a method of investigating work processes and the

...study of how they are coordinated, typically through texts and discourses of various sorts. Work activities are taken as the fundamental grounding of social life, and an institutional ethnography generally takes some particular experience (and associated work processes) as a ‘point of entry’ (Devault 2006, 294).

Institutional ethnographies also typically include a mapping element to visualize coordination and relationships among social organizations.

An important element of Smith's institutional ethnography is the concept of "ruling relations," which refers to the textual forms of administration and governance that are implemented through an institution's policies and practices (DeVault and McCoy 2006, 29). For this research, ruling relations are manifested through the upwardly accountable relationship between NGOs and their donors, who can influence an organization's work processes, including their priorities and agendas. NGOs depend on their donors for funds, so they may have an impact on the kinds of issues NGOs choose to address and what they talk about online. The ruling relations may vary according to the organization and the funders, but it can give insight into how and why an NGO stretches its mandate and the role it plays in the everyday actions of NGOs. However, the ruling relations between NGOs and their donors is beyond the scope of this study, but it is a fruitful research area for the future. The funding agency information for NGOs included in this study are detailed in charts by NGO size in the Appendix.

For this study, I conducted an institutional ethnography through the analysis of Moroccan NGOs and their social media activity on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as well as organizational websites. Some of the social media and website data was translated from either Arabic or French, while the interviews were all conducted in English. Institutional ethnography was originally developed through the examination of different kinds of documents; however, this study presents a more modern twist to the approach by taking advantage of technology since NGOs now have the ability to shape their message through posts on the internet and social media. Any text or information that NGOs push on their channels was considered data.

My hypothesis based on the literature is that NGOs serve as indicators of the changing, evolving needs of a community. These institutions witness on-the-ground the emergent needs a locale faces that surface from the nexus of climate, migration, gender and development – from access to clean drinking water to literacy skills – and this impacts the way institutions function. NGOs take it upon themselves to respond to emergent needs and are forced to adapt to the new reality generated from climate change, whether they realize it or not. They do this naturally, I believe, by observing needs and changing their scope and mandates to address them. That means NGOs should be able to give us insight into needs as they are emerging, rather than waiting to observe them at the state policy level or trying to extract secondary motivations from individual interviews. NGOs provide a unique middle level of analysis that is important for helping to reveal what lies in the orange dot of Figure 1 – the intersection of these four important fields.

To what extent are NGOs stretched? Are they acting beyond their mandate in order to address the pressing needs of the community? The study looks at how NGOs view messaging in the fleeting space of social media and how it is an avenue for understanding an organization's goals and priorities by what they post from their experiences on the ground in a particular moment. In the bigger picture, these organizations foreshadow what is to come in ways that other types of studies on migration and climate change that rely on scant quantitative data cannot.

Interviews were conducted via Zoom with founders and representatives from three NGOs: the High Atlas Foundation, The Giving Pool and Education For All in order to supplement the data with insight directly from the source. The NGOs identified for this study were found through Google searches, Facebook pages and the crowd-funding site GlobalGiving.org, which provides a platform for non-profits to promote fundraising campaigns digitally. Many of the NGOs located in cities were found through Google Maps as well. The

NGOs selected for the study represent a mix of urban and rural based organizations in Morocco (Table 2). These NGOs also work in a range of sectors and have a variety of different missions from education, women’s empowerment, environmental stewardship and poverty reduction to disaster response, employment and entrepreneurship. Due to travel limitations from a global pandemic, interviewing NGO workers on the ground with first-hand knowledge provides meaningful insight into the situation of climate-induced migration in Morocco that cannot be gathered from first-hand qualitative research among affected populations. Moreover, the benefit of institutional ethnography and other types of qualitative methods is that it allows the researcher to explore the nuance of social situations and the complexity of issues such as migration, development and climate change.

Rural	Urban
High Atlas Foundation	Open Hands Morocco
Dar Moustaqbel	L’Union Feministe Libre
Education For All	Morocco Alternatives Forum
Dar Si Hmad	Enactus
The Giving Pool	Transparency Maroc
Atlas Cultural Foundation	Association Al Ihssane
National Institute of Solidarity with Women in Distress	Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection
Association Al Youmn	Samusocial
Caritas	Moroccan Association for Human Rights
AFCDD Foundation	Association Bahri
Anouar Association for Sustainable Development	International Youth Foundation
Project Soar	Association Anaroz
CARE Morocco	Amal
Morocco Foundation	UNHCR Maroc
Global Diversity Foundation	
HER Education	

Table 3. Nongovernmental Organizations Included in the Study (30 total)

An ethical dilemma that can arise in institutional ethnographies is what Smith called institutional capture, which refers to when “the informant’s account is in institutional terms and is descriptively empty” (Smith 2005, 156). Or in other words, social media content alone may not be fully representative of an institution. This study mitigates institutional capture by triangulating three different types of information disseminated by NGOs: fleeting, written permanent and spoken. The social media content represents “fleeting” information that is public, dynamic and loosely affiliated with the organization. NGOs often employ social media managers to handle the marketability side of operations in order to attract donors, engage with supporters and form networks with other organizations for potential collaborations (Wieners 2019; Gardiner 2017). The advent of social media gave NGOs a tool to mobilize and build communities in a way that websites could not (Lovejoy and Saxton 2012). Social media channels are a place for NGOs to post what is on their minds in the moment and share their on-the-ground experiences as they see them. It is also a place for NGOs to test the waters on new ideas, which was confirmed by Yossef Ben-Meir of the High Atlas Foundation when speaking about the organization’s participatory approach to development during an interview.

The content that NGOs publish on their website, by contrast, is for the most part static. Organizations use their website to state their mission, values, vision and other things such as the organizational hierarchy, that form their brand and their identity (Huang and Ku 2016; Tuckman, Chatterjee and Muha 2004). Interviews with the founders of the High Atlas Foundation and The Giving Pool, as well as the founder and fundraising and communications manager of Education For All, allowed me to obtain information that could not be found by looking at social media and websites alone as they were able to speak in-depth about their organization and how they work. They confirmed that their organizations use websites as a place for static information concerning

their mission and other long-term information, while social media allows them to attract and engage with supporters about what they are doing in their communities. They all view social media as the better platform for sharing information but there are some varying opinions. The founder of The Giving Pool suggested that websites are becoming obsolete but the fundraising and communications manager of Education For All views websites and social media as complementary to each other. Together, these three different types of information – interviews, websites and social media – create meaning about the organization’s purpose and values.

Data Procedure

I used NVivo, software that allows researchers to code data for qualitative analysis, for this study. I selected thematic analysis, a type of content analysis, as the most appropriate method for extracting and interpreting data. With this approach, I was able to identify recurrent themes in the data by coding words and phrases related to the research topic in addition to making observations on organizations’ content and communication. For the purpose of this study, the interaction between Moroccan NGOs and how they regard the nexus of climate, migration, gender and development in their social media and online activity helps us better understand how institutions are responding and adapting to the impacts of climate change and migration.

Tweets, Instagram images, Facebook posts and other online texts from the 30 NGOs were imported into NVivo as the data sample and coded for certain words related to women, climate change and migration (Figure 7 below). First, the existence and frequency of key words in the text were analyzed through open coding, followed by further exploration into the relationship between these concepts through thematic analysis, which involved analyzing and interpreting patterns or themes within the data. In addition to social media pages, data from NGOs’ published

websites and documentation were used to contrast their posts with their original mandates and origin stories.

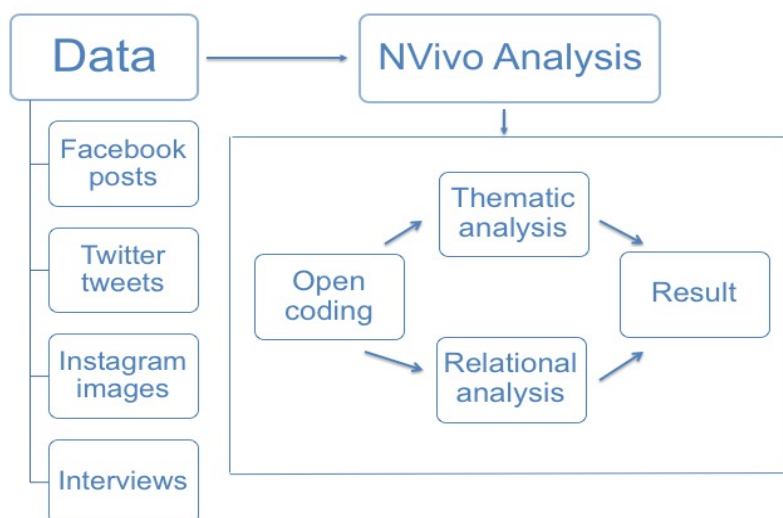


Figure 7. Visualization of Study Methodology

In the case of Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection, I only used website documentation in the absence of social media. Most of the NGOs recycled the same content from their Facebook page to their Instagram account. Posts that were repetitive, meaning the content was posted on the social media account more than once, such as requests for donations or promotion of an upcoming fundraiser, were not coded more than once if the text was the exact same. Some organizations also choose to publish the same posts across their social media platforms simultaneously, and in that case, the posts were coded on one platform to avoid redundancy.

For this thesis, I collected social media posts dating back from the last 2 to 8 years from each of the organizations, noting their original mandates and areas of specialization as expressed

on their websites and published reports. The number of years coded depended on each individual organization in terms of when they created social media pages and the volume of posts. It was important to code NGOs' social media posts back to a minimum of two years in order to have enough data to be able to distinguish patterns in their online behavior. Instagram was relied upon the least in the data due to the frequency of NGOs posting the same images and captions from Facebook. I also arranged interviews with representatives of three NGOs to fill gaps in what can be gathered from the online presence as well as triangulate my findings through discussion with those who have first-hand experience observing the impacts of climate migration.

Limitations

Several limitations exist within this study. First, the research was carried out remotely in Norfolk, Virginia, almost 4,000 miles away from Morocco. The 30 Moroccan NGOs were selected out of the abundant quantity that operate in the kingdom. Additionally, these NGOs were not chosen at random but instead at the researcher's discretion. The implication of non-random sampling means the selection of NGOs reflect my own personal bias and the study's findings could potentially be different if the organizations were randomly chosen. The NGOs used for this research all work within the realm of development, gender and the environment, so the research findings are not representative of all NGOs who serve a plethora of different mandates. Another thing to consider is that some NGOs are more active on social media than others – some barely posted at all – and what they choose to post online may not necessarily be a full representation of their organization. It is also important to note that this study is focused on a single country – Morocco – and so its findings will not be generalizable to other states or regions of the world. In 2020, the future of our planet is much at stake and the extent to which climate

change will affect our world is yet to be seen. This study functions as a snapshot of Morocco in 2020 and the current circumstances surrounding climate change, gender and development.

Social Location

As acknowledged in feminist research methodology, the analysis and interpretation of the study is shaped by the researcher's social location – which comprises a host of social factors such as race, gender and class, that determine one's position in society – and it is important to consider these biases and how they impacts the research study. My identity as a white American woman with a middle-class upbringing influences how I engaged with interview participants, as well as how I collected, interpreted and analyzed data. While I have experience traveling to several different cities across Morocco, I do not possess local knowledge and my Arabic language-speaking ability is intermediate. The lens with which I study the impact of climate migration on Moroccan women reflects my own personal privilege. However, being an outsider does offer some strengths in that I do not have the same biases that a native Moroccan may have toward institutions and people in Morocco. As an outsider, I present a different perspective from other studies that are produced by native Moroccans.

Themes

By analyzing the social media activity and website documentation of 30 Moroccan NGOs representing a variety of humanitarian causes, I was able to distinguish two main themes in the data that point to how organizations operate in Morocco, and what issues they prioritize and identify as immediate needs in their communities. The first theme is that NGOs are filling the needs that the Moroccan government cannot or will not address, such as providing education to rural girls or access to clean drinking water. This is consistent with the literature on NGOs and their function. The second theme is that some NGOs in Morocco are addressing climate

The most frequently coded word in the data, covering social media platforms and website documentation, is the word collaboration, which was coded to mark instances where NGOs partnered with other organizations or government agencies, followed by women and girls' empowerment, rural, youth and environment. The table below shows the top 20 most frequently coded words or phrases in the dataset that included websites and blogs.

Top 20 Most Frequently Coded Words or Phrases	
Words or Phrases	Number of references
Collaboration	600
Women & girls' empowerment	519
Rural	405
Youth	346
Environment	346
Educational outreach	304
Skills training	288
Donation	244
School	238
Human rights	227
Climate change	202
Girls school	183
Gender equality	162
Pandemic	154
Sustainable development	141
Migrants	136
Development	135
Agriculture	134
Water accessibility	123
Poverty	115

Table 4. Word Frequency in Study Data

Noticeably, climate change, gender equality, development and migrants are all featured in this list, and that gives evidence of an intersection of these issues found in the content of NGOs' online presence. The fact that NGOs are mentioning or discussing these topics on their social

media feeds indicate they are aware of the impacts of climate migration despite giving it low importance in their programming.

The next chapter will focus on the role of social media based on the interviews with NGO representatives, followed by an analysis of the social media data from gender and human rights focused NGOs. The second data analysis chapter will discuss the themes shown in the environmental, migration and development NGOs. Many of the issues raised in these chapters overlap, and so the two themes are woven together throughout both. Each section will discuss findings and key insights from the relevant NGOs of that particular topic. The next two chapters reaffirm the literature and the earlier parts of this study that climate change is almost never at the forefront of decision-making, except when it is a sudden disaster; however, it is at the forefront of decision-making in ways that are subtle. The following chapters will reveal how this phenomenon is manifesting through the use of social media by organizations, followed by an in-depth analysis of several gender-focused NGOs in Morocco.

CHAPTER 4

FRAMING AN ONLINE INSTITUTIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

NGOs have adapted to the technological age by taking advantage of social media platforms in order to expand their reach for attracting donors, fundraising and educating the public. I spoke with three individuals in varying positions at NGOs operating in the domain of girls education, clean water access and sustainable development via Zoom to clarify some themes that emerged from the social media analysis. There was consensus that websites establish a fixed presence for static information such as mission statements, vision and values, organizational history and staff hierarchy, while social media is a space for interaction, experimentation and documenting life in real time. However, there was one opinion that websites are even becoming obsolete because of the unique benefits that social media brings. Although funding is always on the minds of NGOs, some see themselves as serving a greater purpose in educating not only their own community, but social media audiences that span the globe. Local issues have now become global issues, and NGOs see an opportunity to make their challenges generalizable to a wider audience. Social media has become a proxy platform for activism, but as we see in the next chapter, it does not always translate to real action.

NGOs view social media as an effective space for donor attraction and engagement. Sonia Omar, who is in charge of fundraising and communications at Education For All, an NGO that runs six boarding houses in the High Atlas Mountains region providing approximately 200 rural underprivileged girls with access to secondary education, has been building her organization's social media presence for seven years now. In an interview conducted via Zoom, she spoke about the benefits of NGOs establishing themselves on the social media platforms that

so many of us spend our time on daily; but she sees websites and social media working together, explaining, “I think it’s a way to set the net out far and grab the attention of lots of people and then those that are then very interested in what we do are likely to then go to our website to find out more” (Sonia Omar, personal communication). However, Omar said that social media functions as the “key first step now, whereas before it really used to be websites, but people want easy interactive information.” Her strategy for posting on social media is to facilitate a “lively” presence that shows followers the work of the organization,

...as well as just the serious message of what we do, the lives of the girls, the atmosphere of the houses, the people that are involved in the charity and really sharing the stories from the girls, their lives, what changes they experience through being at the houses and what it means to them to have an education (Sonia Omar, personal communication).

They also have professional photographers who document the events and activities around the boarding houses on a daily basis to give followers as sense of what life is like for the girls in rural Morocco. Omar said this helps them raise awareness to a large audience and allows them to network with other organizations that educate and empower rural girls. The key insight from Omar’s discussion about her organization’s social media strategy is the emphasis on engaging with followers and providing them with daily updates, which indicates that this type of information is representative of what is currently happening on the ground.

While Omar saw websites and social media as two complementary components, Shelley Cleverdon of The Giving Pool saw websites as an aging part of the internet. She also views social media as a gold mine for donor attraction, follower interaction and awareness-raising. She said in an interview via Zoom that she “always thinks that the website is more to give legitimacy” while most of the organization’s donations have come through Facebook fundraising campaigns (Shelley Cleverdon, personal communication). Cleverdon admitted that she does not

update her organization's website often and that she uses social media for advocacy and awareness. Cleverdon's fairly new NGO seeks to provide Moroccans with clean drinking water, focusing on women and children in particular. Cleverdon sells water bottles equipped with a filter that purifies the water, and for every water bottle purchased, she now donates three to a Moroccan child or family (according to The Giving Pool's website, they also distribute family-sized water filtration systems). The Giving Pool has partnered with another NGO, Education For All, also featured in the study, to deliver water bottles to the girls at boarding houses. While The Giving Pool's website contains information about the water crisis in Morocco, the American NGO founder feels she has to educate her followers – many of whom are from her hometown back in the US – about Moroccan people and culture, as well as the issues they face, such as water shortages and growing income inequality between urban and rural populations.

Yossef Ben-Meir, founder of the High Atlas Foundation, considered social media and websites to both serve important roles in an NGO's messaging. During an interview via Zoom, he described the dichotomy of the two as such:

Whereas the website is more like a fixed static part of your organization, I think we need to be in the moment and we need to be introspective and thoughtful and deliberate and see ourselves within ... We need to be that thirty second video for people that consume in that way and we need to be that five hundred-word essay on renewable energy that's peer reviewed and published (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication).

The High Atlas Foundation is a sustainable development NGO that assists Moroccan farmers with planting a variety of fruit trees at a discounted price in order to help generate more income for poor rural farmers. The organization is also involved in women's and youth empowerment initiatives. Ben-Meir described the High Atlas Foundation's website presence as a "portal for giving" but also a "library of development knowledge" as the organization enthusiastically

supports the participatory development approach. He hopes his foundation can not only provide information about Morocco, but also appeal to a wider audience,

When we write about cooperatives, we'd like it to be meaningful to someone in another part of the world entirely. So, we want to describe a local situation – we want to describe Morocco's national context, but we want to focus on themes that our people can relate to in other cultures, societies and nations all together" (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication).

Ben-Meir views his organization's online platforms as an opportunity to reach across different cultures to bring together issues related to sustainable development. It is clear that he sees social media as an avenue to bridge these interconnected problems on a higher level because issues such as climate change, migration and poverty are experienced worldwide. He realizes that Morocco's problems are also global problems. An effect of globalization is that an NGO operating in a small rural community in Morocco can interact with, connect with, and have an impact on people and cultures thousands of miles away. Ben-Meir sees social media as a space to share with the High Atlas Foundation's followers the experiences and lessons of the participatory development approach in real time, which can have a broad appeal.

The High Atlas Foundation collaborates with many NGOs, universities and government agencies, and in order to secure funding, Ben-Meir said the organization frames its work depending on the context, showing agility in both messaging and actual programming. The example he gave during an interview was from 2003 when the young NGO received its first funding from the U.S. embassy, and the tree-planting project was proposed as a "measure to enhance public diplomacy" and "a gesture of goodwill and trust building" by fulfilling a need of the Moroccan people in that particular rural community (Ben Meir, personal communication). Ben-Meir explained that even though the project was simply planting trees,

...we need to be able to speak to [it] in detail and in more ways than what I'm saying ... but the process of explaining it to your different audiences and for different regions at different budgets, emphasizing different outcomes, all of that needs to be adapted to the moment (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication).

Ben-Meir's words illustrate the NGOs' agility and the way that they shape their messaging for the particular moment they are in, in order to appeal to their target audience. Although they did not explicitly express the same level of organizational agility as Ben-Meir, Omar and Cleverdon also see social media as an opportunity for reaching out to wider audiences. Cleverdon distributes water bottles, but by starting a collaboration with Education For All to provide clean water access to a girls boarding house, her work becomes framed as a gender issue. She spoke about wanting to help Moroccan girls so, in a way, she has incorporated gender into her messaging as an adaptation of the moment. In 2003, the High Atlas Foundation framed their work as an act of solidarity, but now it is framed on social media as more of an agricultural, environmental and economic initiative. When the NGO was new, it needed to gain public trust in the community so the locals would be receptive to their presence and participate in their projects. As the organization established itself and began involving the community in the decision-making processes, it was then able to expand beyond solidarity and into forming projects based on community needs that could be addressed through action. The word solidarity is not included in their mission statement, but the organization still uses the word on social media occasionally.

The founders and representatives from the NGOs interviewed for the study had varying opinions about the usefulness of websites, but all agreed that social media played an important role in how their organization shapes its messaging, reaches out to potential donors and networks with institutions. At the end of the day, NGOs need funding in order to operate, and they take advantage of the fundraising tools social media platforms now provide. For example, when it is your birthday, Facebook asks if you would like to start a fundraising campaign for nonprofit.

Cleverdon said Facebook's fundraising campaigns have helped her organization. But the implication is that the importance to NGOs of attracting donors and raising funds means that the donors' interests must carry some weight. This may also help NGOs adapt to changing needs by listening to the evolving interests of their donors. In that sense, NGOs are not just canaries in the coal mine for issues happening on the ground, but also for the public consciousness. Institutional stretching toward climate change then indicates that the public consciousness has stretched as well. Their comments tell us that social media and website data is worth studying due to the fact that the NGOs treat their platforms as a serious part of the way they function, and they have identified different purposes for each channel. Together with in-person interviews and website data, I was able to analyze a comprehensive sample of three different avenues of NGOs' communication with the public. This triangulation of data sources gives meaning to how NGOs frame their work and adapt to community needs. The next chapter takes this framework for understanding how and why NGOs use social media to look at NGOs focused on children, women, and migrants.

CHAPTER 5

ALL TALK, NO ACTION

Introduction

Within the last decade, climate change has become a trendy topic among internet activist circles, and phrases such as climate justice and climate action have become social media buzzwords. On Facebook and Twitter the NGOs in this study used hashtags such as #ClimateAction and #GirlsInCrisis alongside #WithRefugees, indicating conceptual connections. But these may be included for the purpose of casting a wider net to attract more potential donors; the interviews revealed that NGOs believe the problems of Morocco are also felt on a much wider scale outside of their own country and thus, their messaging is used to bridge societies together around a common issue. In general, the disinterest from Moroccan NGOs in incorporating climate migration into an explicit part of their mandate and programming, but at the same raising awareness of the issue on social media, serves as a micro-level view of a global dilemma where climate and migration are long-term issues that do not make it to the forefront of anyone's agenda. While the NGOs in this study generally represent the notion of "all talk, no action," there of course may be exceptions to this. Some NGOs may fall outside of this generalization. For example, the High Atlas Foundation, featured later in this study, is an organization that is taking action, but without the talk. A recent study looked at the evolution of climate change discourse since the 1970s and found that migration has moved away from being a central research interest (Nalau and Verrall 2021). We see at the macro-level that governments and institutions treat climate migration as a secondary concern despite recognizing its future peril.

The actions of gender and human rights-focused NGOs in Morocco illustrate the ways in which organizations address climate migration indirectly. As the literature suggests, the impacts of climate change as a driver of migration are not quite explicit yet, but looking at the online presence of these NGOs working on the ground in Morocco paints a picture that they see connections between climate, gender, migration and development indirectly. These indirect linkages can be found through the programming of girls education NGOs. As the previous chapter revealed, the interviews with NGO representatives confirm the idea that while the organizations are aware of climate migration as an emerging problem, it is often put on the backburner of their priorities because they seek to address the timelier needs of the moment.

The NGOs do not include climate change and migration in their mandates, but they do choose to post about these issues on their social media platforms, which show they are aware of climate and migration and are making the connections with their mandates, however that is as far as most go. NGO representatives admitted during interviews that climate migration is not a problem their organizations are actively trying to solve, but their actions do address it indirectly as an unintentional outcome. Other organizations may take on some very small initiatives that also suggest these linkages, like create a recycle program at a girls boarding house. In other words, they recognize climate migration as an important issue that is relevant to their work, but they choose not to pursue it past the level of online advocacy. In this way, they recreate the sidelining of climate change and climate migration as critical issues of our time.

Holistic Education: Stretching to Meet Girls' Needs

The nine gender-focused NGOs in this study represent a range of missions, from women's empowerment to job training and girl's education. This section focuses on two NGOs that run boarding houses for girls to have a place to stay that is safe and near the girls' schools.

Girls education NGOs have formed in order to make up for the government's failure to ensure that girls living in the remote parts of the country have access to secondary school. Through the process of addressing these educational needs, they unintentionally address the impacts of climate migration, namely migration from lack of traditional agricultural activities in rural areas. The online presence of these NGOs, like Dar Moustaqbel's, illustrate how girls education organizations are stretching to make up for the government's inability to ensure girls in rural Morocco have access to secondary education after identifying the need in rural communities.

Dar Moustaqbel, which means "house of the future" in Arabic, is a boarding house NGO for disadvantaged girls coming from poor families. Located in Marrakesh, Dar Moustaqbel targets girls from poor remote areas of Morocco and, in addition to providing a safe place to study, offers French and English language instruction, as well as tutors. The creation of this NGO represents "stretching" in the sense that their website's home page says the organization was created "Due to the failures of the state schools" because "the girls often lack the basic knowledge they need for a successful entry in high education" (Dar Moustaqbel 2019). Their social media posts and website documentation conveys the message that the rural girls who come from poor rural families would not otherwise finish high school or attend college. Take for example, one Facebook post that stated,

For their dreams to become reality, a small miracle was necessary. Many of their peers in the villages in the mountainous areas surrounding Marrakesh are financially disadvantaged and will never get a chance to get a university degree, let alone a successful career (@darmoustaqbel, Facebook, January 30, 2017).

The post acknowledges this gap in government education for rural girls, even though it has been improving gender equity in education in urban centers. The online data from this NGO crosses over with the second theme of unintentionally addressing climate migration. A blog post on their

website features a profile of a student named Jamila, whose family lives in a rural part of Morocco and lost their home due to flooding. Her family was forcibly displaced by a natural disaster. Because this boarding house is located in the city and these girls all come from rural areas, they are all technically rural-to-urban migrants trying to better their lives, and in some cases, the environment played a factor in their family's situation (Dar Moustaqbel, "Losing and finding a home"). This is an example of real life ways in which the impacts of climate change caused migration and how it affects families, particularly as they adapt to try to find educational opportunities for their girls. The girl featured in the blog went to the boarding school so that she would have better access and proximity to a school. So, on the surface, it appears to be an education and poverty alleviation issue, but we see that the environment also played a role in her family's displacement and choices. Or in other words, it illustrates the problem with labeling climate migrants when there are typically many layers involved. From the perspective of the NGO, they framed this blog post through the lens of their organization's mission to help educate girls, as opposed to the intersection of gender, migration and the environment. They are aware of Morocco's issues of flooding and natural disasters, but they choose not to make climate change part of their messaging. This parallels the ways in which the global discussion of climate migration avoids the real reasons why people move, how they adapt, and the multilayered decisions they make in this process, such as the impact on girls' education. All of these issues are interconnected, but at the NGO-level, we see that climate is just a minor player in this story.

Similarly addressing the secondary effects of climate change's impact on rural agrarian communities creates a thread of conversation with the bigger picture. An NGO was formed after the founder witnessed the disparities of the Morocco's rural communities and the lack of secondary education readily accessible to girls. Mike McHugo, the founder of Education For All,

originally started a sustainable tourism company in Morocco called Discover Ltd, but after spending years in the country, came to recognize the disadvantages the rural villages faced. Initially his company helped provide things like an ambulance, a garbage disposal system, and a public bath house. Education For All was then formed around a decade later in 2007 and now operates several boarding houses near schools to reduce transportation barriers. McHugo learned about the public school system and how girls in the rural areas usually attend primary school but drop out at the secondary level because these schools tend to be fewer and far between. Parents were hesitant to send their girls away to the boarding houses, McHugo said, but have since come around to it. He explained,

The school system in Morocco is under such pressure that they have a rota [rotation] system. So you might have lessons at secondary school from eight in the morning to ten in the morning, and then you might not have another lesson until two in the afternoon, which means you are sort of hanging around on the streets wherever the school is, and that's sort of acceptable for boys, but it wasn't acceptable for girls (Mike McHugo, personal communication).

The Moroccan government does maintain state boarding houses, but McHugo said the facilities are overcrowded and very understaffed, so the girls are not well supervised. The government is unwilling to accommodate female students with more educational facilities, resources and staff, and because it is culturally unacceptable for girls to be unsupervised and loitering in the streets, it means they often miss out on secondary education. McHugo's Education For All is filling a need by providing a safe place for the girls so that they can get an education. In another instance of filling needs, Education For All raised money to buy tablet devices and SIM cards with internet data so that the girls could continue their education online during the COVID-19 pandemic, in which the schools in Morocco were forced to close and the girls had to return home

to their villages, and many were left without internet access. In a social media post, the organization stated,

This lockdown has highlighted the huge digital divide faced by those living in remote rural areas. The EFA girls have not had access to the online lessons offered by the Moroccan government during these 3 months of lockdown. That impacts their educational access and so we felt obligated to respond to this (@educationforallmorocco, Facebook, June 1, 2020).

Here we see the organization providing a need that the Morocco government will not supply.

Though COVID-19 is not a climate disaster, it is a crisis that generated a secondary displacement: rural girls getting education and opportunities through these boarding houses were forced to return home to their communities in a kind of reverse migration. While he does not explicitly point to this, the efforts to stretch to meet the girls' internet access needs shows an indirect connection between NGOs' main mandates stretching to meet the changing gender and migration needs on the ground.

Although climate change is not a formal part of Education For All's mandate, Sonia Omar said in an interview that there is a linkage between girls education and climate change through their aim to reduce poverty. She explained,

If girls are educated and communities can therefore be raised out of poverty, they're better able to deal with the impact of climate change, to be able to have more resources. ... Alleviating poverty at least gives communities a chance to find solutions for the things that we don't know yet what will happen (Sonia Omar, personal communication).

Omar added that while climate change education is not a direct part of their program,

We know that an indirect benefit of them being educated is coming out of poverty, being able to make more choices. We've seen in the communities where all the mothers and grandmothers were illiterate. Now these girls are literate. They're finishing their secondary school education and many are going to university as well.

So that just shows a shift in just one generation that will support that community in the future (Sonia Omar, personal communication)

Omar's words illuminate the ways in which the implications of climate change are not direct, but rather indirect through what the NGOs see on the ground in day-to-day life in real time. Her mention of mothers and grandmothers being illiterate while their daughters and granddaughter are literate, the linkage between education and poverty, and how the young girls are the future leaders of their communities highlights the indirect connections between gender, development and climate.

#GirlsInCrisis #WithRefugees

Ending child marriage is an issue that many gender-focused NGOs in Morocco have incorporated into their programming and advocacy. The issue of child marriage is framed by the NGOs as a problem of gender-based violence and exploitation. However, it becomes clear through the analysis of the interviews and social media posts that the problem of child marriage runs deeper. The reason why poor rural families allow their daughters to marry early and become child laborers boils down to poverty from drought-stricken regions that rely on agriculture as their biggest economic source. In other words, the degradation of the environment is indirectly related to child marriage and labor. The NGOs seem to be aware of these linkages based on their social media activity that includes hashtags like *#GirlsInCrisis* and *#WithRefugees*. However, they still do not frame their work as a climate migration issue, so we see once again that it is a secondary concern from them, as an indirect outcome of what they do.

Although child marriage is illegal in Morocco, it still occurs in remote areas. Shelley Cleverdon of The Giving Pool spoke about this issue during an interview with me. She described a common scenario in which a wealthier family from a city like Marrakesh will approach a poor rural family about taking their daughter in exchange for money and marrying her off, promising

to give her an education and provide her with a better life than living in poverty. They convince the parents and the daughter ends up becoming what is essentially an indentured servant, working as a domestic worker often in very poor conditions. Cleverdon said this typically happens to the indigenous Berbers, who have been historically discriminated against in Morocco and are also disproportionately affected by climate because of their nomadic lifestyle in the oases of the desert. Cleverdon, who works closely with Education For All, said “the house mothers celebrate every Monday when all of the girls come back from their homes” because it signifies that none of the young girls were married off (Shelley Cleverdon, personal communication). The National Institute of Solidarity with Women in Distress (INSAF) addresses the same issues by advocating for women’s rights and against child labor. The NGO’s social media activity includes building awareness around the plight of the “little maids,” as they call them, and the exploitation of poor families. Some of their posts include messaging such as, “Many little girls get married too soon to contribute to the financial resources of their families! A practice that violates their rights and destroys their children’s life!!” (@insafassociation, Facebook, October 16, 2018); according to another post, 45,800 girls are married before they turn 18 in Morocco (@insafassociation, Facebook, August 2, 2018). Despite child marriage being prohibited, it appears the Moroccan government does not do enough to stop them. Ending child marriage, practically and not just by law, would allow more girls a chance to get an education and break the cycle of poverty, gender inequality and violence. The issue relates to migration in that girls who are married off young do not finish school and live in poverty; thus, they are more vulnerable to effects of climate migration. For example, supporters of INSAF can financially sponsor a girl, and one interesting post asked donors to sponsor a girl so that she has (translated from French) “a chance to get out of the farm by helping her make her life sustainable”

(@insafassociation, Facebook, December 3, 2018). Poor rural families who rely on farming for income feel pressured to marry off their daughters and have them work as housemaids because of reduced agriculture and unpredictable weather as a result of climate change. The NGO is offering ways for girls and women to escape these situations through education and empowerment. A post advertised some their workshops, which included literacy and personal development (@insafassociation, Facebook, September 19, 2018). They have made the indirect links between the nexus of climate, migration, gender and development because as conditions worsen and the impacts of climate change become more pronounced, rural Moroccan girls will be at a higher risk of exploitation and violence when their agriculturally-based communities become inhabitable – an issue that disproportionately affects girls. This organization is already taking steps to address this issue indirectly by helping to educate and empower girls and women so that they can avoid the cycle of poverty and exploitation and obtain jobs with better pay and working conditions, giving them agency to adapt in their own ways as their families' rural lives change as a result of climate disruptions. In a sense, this organization is helping women adapt to the growing realities of climate migration.

NGOs have used hashtags on social media that together draw a connection between child marriage and migration, despite the organizations not making this linkage more explicit through their programming. Project Soar, a girls' empowerment NGO, retweeted a tweet from Plan International that read: "Education gives girl refugees a future. It gives them independence and helps them build networks outside the family. It's a barrier against forced marriage. #WithRefugees #GirlsInCrisis" (@PlanGlobal, Twitter, June 27, 2019). I conducted a search of these hashtags on Twitter to compare how they are used. I found that the #GirlsInCrisis hashtag is primarily tweeted by Plan International in posts relating to the challenges that girls face, like

education access, quality of life and forced displacement. It appears Plan International may have created this hashtag in order to show solidarity with girl refugees and raise awareness for the problems they face. The #WithRefugees hashtag is largely posted by UNHCR Twitter accounts, also with the purpose of solidarity and advocacy. The pairing of these two hashtags show that a connection is being made between the two issues they represent – forced migration and gender disparities. The stress that climate change places on the environment affects the livelihoods of rural farming families and thus, girls become more at risk for child marriage and labor.

In addition to Twitter, Project Soar also uses Facebook to raise awareness for ending child marriage. A post that was published in reference to the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates the connection between early marriage and vulnerability:

As can be seen from the Ebola crisis and other natural disasters, a catastrophic crisis is linked to an increase in underage and forced marriages. Girls and women from the most marginalized groups are disproportionately at risk. Rising uncertainties and hardships influence families to marry off their daughters (@Projectsoar, Facebook, June 19, 2020).

A theme that emerges from this is that gender-focused NGOs like Project Soar are deliberately incorporating climate and migration into their social media messaging, however, it does not necessarily translate into real action. This organization recognizes the impacts of climate migration but they are still not making it a central part of their programming. It is simply one aspect of their online advocacy efforts in which they can use trendy hashtags and buzzwords on social media in order to boost their online engagement, but at the end of the day, climate migration is still left out of the things they do intentionally.

Gender-Climate Connection

Several of the gender-focused NGOs showed signs of organizational stretching and filling community needs through education, improving quality of life and eliminating child

marriage. The NGOs in the previous sections showed awareness of the impacts of climate migration through their social media advocacy, but they did not place the issue of climate migration at the center of their work, treating it more as a back-burner issue from indirect outcome. The NGOs focused on women's empowerment initiatives displayed similar behavior in addressing climate migration indirectly, raising awareness about it online, but not carrying their advocacy over to their operations. The NGOs featured in this section, such as Association Anaroz, CARE Maroc, Amal Women's Training Center and L'Union Feministe Libre, are primarily concerned with either providing women with job skills training to become financially stable and independent, or advocating for women's empowerment and feminism. The NGOs stretched beyond their mandates in order to address the immediate needs of Sub-Saharan migrants in response to sudden disaster, which illustrates the agility of NGOs to shift in times of crisis.

Women's empowerment is a very frequent part of Moroccan NGOs' messaging. This is usually achieved through training women to acquire professional job skills, such as culinary skills, various crafting skills, and entrepreneurial skills. By facilitating job training, they are helping women earn their own income and become independent. The organizations also empower women by teaching them reading and writing skills, educating them on the Mudawana – Morocco's family code that provides legal protections for women in the areas of marriage, divorce, child custody and property rights– as well as programs aimed at boosting women's confidence and self-esteem. Most NGOs focus on serving rural women, both in the rural areas and in the cities to which they have migrated, who tend to lack access to education and non-agricultural jobs. Association Anaroz is one such organization. It offers workshops and training for young women to enter culinary, sewing and hair cutting professions. On social media, they

use terms like “income generating activities” or “income generating crafts,” which means they are working to reduce poverty (Association Anaroz, Facebook, June 4, 2020). Interestingly, Association Anaroz’s Facebook page dates back to December 2014, and from that time period up until 2016, the organization posted almost exclusively about youth soccer games. This was before they opened a center for teaching craft skills, so it would appear they saw a need to help young people in their community secure jobs that are available and pay decently, indicating that they, too, are stretching to meet changing needs on the ground.

Some of these NGOs created projects with environmental impacts, but instead choose to emphasize the social and economic aspects. CARE Maroc, the Morocco branch of the international anti-poverty NGO, started a project that intersects agriculture and women’s empowerment. The orange blossom pickers program helps women in rural areas sustain themselves with an income-generating activity, and an assumed outcome of that is women staying in the rural areas instead of migrating to the cities. Another outcome of this project is encouraging a more sustainable agriculture based on the production of cash crops. The NGO emphasizes the social and economic impacts of the project more so than the agricultural, or in other words, empowering women and creating income-generating activities. Their website states, “With people increasingly migrating to cities, rural Morocco is extremely poor and often lacks basic public services,” which tells us that the NGO is aware of the growing inequality between urban and rural populations and the need to create sustainable sources of income for rural dwellers (CARE Maroc 2020). Though the social media messaging does not explicitly point to this, the project has an environmental aspect in that sustainable forms of agriculture can help reduce the negative impacts of climate change; however, the NGO focuses more on the social and economic aspects. The data shows that they are aware of increasing urbanization and

migratory flows to the cities, as well as the need to create more environmentally-friendly agricultural practices, but they do not make that an active part of what they do, or at least how they talk about what they do. Here we see another example of climate migration as indirectly linked to an NGO's work and the lack of attention the issue receives from the NGO despite its awareness of its existence.

There are instances when gender-focused NGOs use popular climate change hashtags in posts that are about relatively small things such as a new recycling program, which indicates their objective to manipulate their messaging in ways that will expand their social media audience, even if it does not necessarily advance a climate change focus for the organization itself. Amal Women's Training Center works similarly in Marrakesh, focusing on providing women from underprivileged backgrounds with professional culinary training. The NGO seeks to empower women to become independent and helps them obtain jobs after graduation at restaurants and hotels. According to their social media posts, they also teach women how to read and write, which indicates that many of the women they train probably come from the rural areas due to the higher illiteracy rates. The NGO has adopted environmentally friendly practices, such as recycling, conserving water and composting and they have incorporated eco-friendliness into their mission and social media messaging. For example, on Earth Day, the organization posted,

Amal's trainees are taking action treating the earth starting with their center. For them a clean environment is not a luxury. It is a right, and it is a massive opportunity for sustainable development. It's time for everyone, everywhere, to rise up in support of a healthier, more stable environment with the hashtag #ClimateAction (@AmalNonProfit, Facebook, April 22, 2019).

The NGO used the #ClimateAction hashtag for a fairly small step in saving the environment like initiating a recycling or composting program. #ClimateAction is a popular hashtag on social media platforms that is frequently used by environmental activists as well as the UN. They have

found a way to manipulate their messaging in order to use these popular hashtags and broaden their base on social media, even if they do not explicitly identify eco-friendly behaviors and climate change as part of their official agenda beyond this social media messaging.

Women's rights and feminist NGOs have made the connection between gender and climate change through their social media activity. L'Union Feministe Libre, a feminist NGO that assists victims of gender-based violence, tweeted an image explaining that ecofeminism is: "A movement that sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world and the subordination and oppression of women ..." (@UnionFemLibre, Twitter, February 9, 2019). The organization is aware of the connection gender and climate; however, climate change is not part of their mandate. They definitely acknowledge that the environment intersects with their mandate, but it is treated rather as a secondary to the issue of gender-based violence. Climate is incorporated into their online advocacy efforts but there is no evidence that they have included climate change in their actual programming. As on the national and global level, climate change is not put on the forefront of policies, but rather is reduced to a discussion topic on Twitter, and possibly simply a means of branching out into new social networks.

The gender-focused NGOs exhibited agility by quickly shifting their focus to Sub-Saharan migrant populations in times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Amal launched a campaign to distribute food to poor, vulnerable people in Marrakesh, and a portion of their food donations went to Sub-Saharan migrant families in Morocco. They identified the Sub-Saharan migrant population as a vulnerable group with needs, however serving migration populations is not part of their mission. The organization shared a Facebook post from an individual on April 17, 2020 that said Sub-Saharan migrant families do not qualify for government assistance (presumably because they are not Moroccan citizens), so that is one way

the Amal Women's Training Center has stretched beyond its mandate to fill a need in the community that the Moroccan government will not. Their primary interests lie in providing culinary training to Moroccan women from poor backgrounds for the purpose of empowerment and income-generating activities. Amal, however, is responding to the immediate needs of the community by helping vulnerable cross-border migrants. The National Institute of Solidarity with Women in Distress also donated food and supplies to Sub-Saharan migrants during the pandemic, which is a case of organizational stretching. The NGO distributed more than 7,000 meals to homeless migrants in Casablanca and partnered with the International Organization for Migration for (translated from French) “the distribution of hygiene kits made up of 6,400 protective sanitary masks, 4,000 soaps, as well as 4,000 posters to raise awareness of protective measures against Covid19” (@Insafassociation, Facebook, December 5, 2020). Both Amal and the National Institute of Solidarity with Women in Distress illustrate the ways in which NGOs stretch during times of crisis, adapting to meet needs that speak to the wider migration, development, gender nexus even when they do not necessarily change their organizations’ agendas for the long-term. While climate is a slow onset crisis, we see in this case that in the wake of a sudden disaster, NGOs immediately shifted part of their efforts toward serving migrants, who are not usually part of their mandate. Like climate change, these issues—migration, gender, and development—are so vast and far-reaching into the everyday lives of people around the world that these organizations have to touch on them from time to time, even if temporarily, or even if just through messaging to join in wider conversations online.

L'Union Feministe Libre also posted a few times on Facebook about migrant and refugee rights in the context of raising awareness. Their mandate is centered on helping victims of domestic violence; refugees are not specifically mentioned as part of their mandate, but this

suggests that perhaps the organization may have formed an indirect connection between the issues, and that refugee women are at a higher risk of domestic violence. However, refugees are still not a central part of their work. This is illustrative of a pattern shown among Moroccan NGOs of incorporating issues related to climate change and migration into their social media advocacy and awareness, but not actually placing a very high priority on these issues judging from their mandates and programming. They have identified needs in their communities and have thus adopted these issues into their messaging, but we still have not seen it become integrated into their actual work. Again, this is a microcosm of the ways in which the climate, migration, gender and development nexus feature into conversations on a global scale, but not in ways that advance meaningful, deliberate change.

Climate Migration From Human Rights Perspective

Due to the recent surge in Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco, human rights NGOs in Morocco have identified the need to provide the migrant population with legal aid and access to resources and services. Climate can be found a few times in their messaging, but it is clear that it is a secondary issue for them. The legal status of refugees is still a debated topic, and growing concern with the lack of legal protections for climate migrants will no doubt become a bigger issue in the future. Moroccan human rights NGOs slowly putting together the connection between migrants, climate and rights foreshadows the future.

Human rights organizations such as Morocco Alternatives Forum and Moroccan Association for Human Rights advocate and raise awareness on issues relating to migrants and the environment on social media. For instance, the Morocco Alternatives Forum's tweets in 2014 were mostly concerning the issues of free speech, freedom of the press, government censorship and democracy. However, in 2018 the organization began tweeting about migrant rights due after

a conference event they attended on the subject. The organization also retweeted content from one of their partners, Majalat, an organization made up of civil society networks concerned with the Euro-Mediterranean region, about a workshop covering topics of climate, migration, human rights and security: “#Majalat workshops on #migration, #security & #violence, #climate, #socialjustice #EU & #civilsociety dialogue ...” (@Majalat_org, Twitter, April 19, 2019).

Several of these topics are not an explicit part of the human rights NGO’s mandate, like the European Union and climate, so their participation in these workshops shows the way in which they are involved in climate migration dialogue but do not place it at the forefront of their own work. Around this time, they also started integrating women’s rights into their messaging and even organized events on the topic of gender equality. There could be some stretching here in that they have identified migrant rights and women’s rights as important issues in Morocco, and they have incorporated them into not just their social media messaging, but also their programming and advocacy efforts.

As an organization, they advocate for the Moroccan government to grant citizens more freedom, which makes sense of why they would include women’s rights in their efforts. They also incorporate the migrant population because they have identified them as a marginalized group that do not enjoy the same full rights as citizens. As mentioned in the previous section, the Sub-Saharan migrant population was not able to receive governmental assistance during the pandemic. Granting migrants more rights, as well as allocating more resources for them, helps them become integrated into the community and alleviates problems like poverty and unemployment. In addition to conflict, cross-border migrants from Sub-Sahara Africa may also be fleeing a region that has also been dramatically affected by climate change as well. Climate change will drive up the migratory numbers, which presents more challenges for host

communities. What we see is that climate permeates all aspects of Moroccan society because drought and water shortages effect everything from agriculture and employment to education and even child marriage, and NGOs recognize this through their on-the-ground experiences unintentionally.

By advocating on the legal side of the refugee issue, Morocco Alternatives Forum is indirectly addressing the issue of climate migration – a problem that will only become worse in the future. The implication is that they have witnessed the marginalization of migrants in Moroccan society, are aware of migrants’ challenges, and have decided to advocate on their behalf. They have evolved their mandate in order to address the needs of the community that they see on the ground. The messaging on climate and migration appears to stem from a conference and that influenced them to post about these issues on social media. But while migrants have become a focal point, the environment is still seen as a secondary, long-term issue. Climate is only brought up on social media and is not an explicit part of this organization’s own programming; however, by focusing on the legal rights of migrants, they could be acting as canaries in the coal mine to the legal issues that surround the uncertain status of climate migrants.

Moroccan Human Rights NGOs include women’s rights and migrant rights into their programming and messaging, but we are seeing subtle ways in which climate has been brought into the background of the picture. The Moroccan Association for Human Rights, the largest human rights organization in the kingdom, published a statement on their website in support of migrants on International Migrants Day that explains the socioeconomic disadvantages and forms of discrimination that migrants face, especially during the pandemic. The NGO condemned the Moroccan government for deporting Sub-Saharan migrants and for not

addressing the needs of the migrant populations during the pandemic, who more often suffer from unemployment, lack access to resources and services, and are food insecure (Morocco Association for Human Rights 2020).

Like Morocco Alternatives Forum, the majority of their social media posts pertain to issues of free speech, democracy and freedom of the press, but they do sometimes touch on issues pertaining to women's equality and migrant's rights. The organization did post a statement on social media for International Human Rights Day, which included the phrase environmental rights. A part of the statement, translated from Arabic, said the occasion was meant "to highlight the unity of action in the face of the deterioration of the reality of rights and freedoms in our country, the serious deterioration of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights" (@AMDHMAROC, Facebook, December 9, 2019). The usage of the term environmental rights indicates that the organization is subtly incorporating climate change into their messaging, although it is not very explicit. That was the only instance of the environment or climate change mentioned on Facebook by them within the last few years. The NGO is aware of the negative consequences of climate change but it does not play a prominent role in what they do, or at least how they message their work. I noticed that some NGOs began posting content related to migration and climate change after they attended conferences around 2018. This represented a shift in the "talk" of climate change online, possibly indicating the organization's "stretching" into a global conversation after the climate-related conference. In sum, human rights organizations in Morocco have identified Sub-Saharan migrants as a marginalized population and have focused their efforts on them in particular, which illustrates the theme of filling the community's immediate needs.

Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the ways in which gender and human rights-focused NGOs in Morocco address climate migration as an indirect outcome of their work. They all have posted about climate change and migration in some capacity, but it remains a topic that is brought up on social media for likes, clicks and follows; their social media activism usually does not translate to real life activism or substantive changes in programming or mandates. We see the NGOs have stretched in order to fill their community's urgent needs, and many times climate is an underlying link, but they choose not to frame their work around climate or migration, instead treating it as a back-burner issue for a later date. The increasing mentioning of climate and migration issues on NGOs' social media feeds tell us that NGOs are gradually recognizing the growing need and thus act as harbingers of what is to come, even if it only appears in their messaging strategies.

CHAPTER 6

PERIPHERAL OUTCOMES: CLIMATE MIGRANTS AS A BONUS, NOT INTENTION

Introduction

The second section of the data analysis builds on the previous chapter by continuing to examine how Moroccan NGOs are illustrative of the two themes found in the study – organizational “stretching” and the unintentional focus on climate migration – by shifting focus to NGOs whose mandates fall within the categories of development, migration and the environment. Like the previous chapter, many of the issues raised in this chapter blend both themes, sitting at the center of the gender, migration, environment and development nexus.

Development and environmentally-focused NGOs also show similar behavior to the girls education and women’s empowerment NGOs in that they recognize the issue of climate migration but it is a byproduct of their work, whether it is harvesting fog or planting trees. Even for the organizations that make the environment an explicit part of their operations, they still do not incorporate climate migration into their main work and messaging. Dar Si Hmad is a possible exception, although they only mention climate migration a few times on social media and there is a little information about it on their website. In other words, climate migration is not something the NGO posts about every day. Many of these organizations started as development NGOs with their core mission to alleviate rural poverty and over time they incorporated the environment more into their work after listening to the needs of their communities, which indicates stretching. This kind of stretching, however, is subtle in nature and, as in the last chapter, does not show intentional change within the NGO mandates to address climate migration.

Some NGOs are very clearly addressing climate migration but they chose not to frame their work as such. The High Atlas Foundation, for example, stresses more of the economic

impact of tree planting, even though the process of tree planting holds back the desert – it literally stops the process of desertification – but that is an aspect not featured in their messaging on this project. The NGOs place greater emphasis on economic issues and poverty reduction than climate migration. This means that although they are conscious of the impacts of climate migration, they choose to keep it as a peripheral outcome of what they do. Dar Si Hmad’s origins are rooted in the consequences of drought-induced rural-to-urban migration, but we do not see this issue featured as prominently in their broad mission statement and vision. Instead, their mission is focused entirely on sustainable development as a whole. We also see a recurrent theme from the last chapter of some NGOs attending conferences and events that deal with the issues of climate change and migration, and that is when we start to see them include it more into their social media messaging. All of this is illustrative of the point that NGOs frame their work around short-term, urgent needs like poverty reduction, and climate migration is not treated as an immediate need. Instead, climate migration itself is treated as a back-burner issue, with most NGOs only addressing climate migration indirectly; this is due to the fact that the organizations in the previous chapter are prioritizing gender issues, which are in reality connected to climate migration. The NGOs in this chapter are focused on the environment, development and migration, but they have also incorporated gender issues, like women’s empowerment, into their work, exemplifying the nexus of climate, migration, gender and development.

Addressing Climate Migration Through the Water Crisis

One glaring observation from coding the data is that the water crisis is the most urgent environmental concern in Morocco, and the crisis encompasses a few different issues, from access to clean drinking water, especially dire in the rural parts of the country, to the need for better waste management and irrigation practices. NGOs are addressing this problem through a

variety of solutions, some innovatively like the groundbreaking fog harvesting operation created by Dar Si Hmad, others more conventionally distributing water bottles with filters (The Giving Pool) or building wells in rural communities (Morocco Foundation). This section will explore what these development NGOs are doing to address not only environmental concerns like the water crisis, but migration as well. This is to illustrate from a different angle from the previous chapter that the nexus of climate, migration, gender, and development is a critical area in which many NGOs operate and message for social media activism, even if they do not explicitly recognize this nexus as their focus.

Dar Si Hmad is an NGO working in rural southwest Morocco, specifically in the regions of Agadir, Ait Baâmrane and Sidi Ifni. The organization supports sustainable development efforts to improve the lives of rural Moroccans through youth educational outreach, literacy education, cultural preservation, women's empowerment and poverty reduction. Additionally, the NGO funds scientific research and offers study abroad opportunities for students interested in studying in Morocco. Environmental protection and addressing climate change are a core part of their operations though it is not explicitly mentioned in their mission statement, which describes the organization in broad terms of sustainable development through education and innovation. The environment is, however, buried on its mission webpage under education in the section called fields of activity (Dar Si Hmad 2016c). This NGO is clearly focused on the environment, but it still frames its work under the broad umbrella of sustainable development. In writing its mission statement and vision, a conscious decision was made to keep it general, and that may have to do with appealing to wider audiences. But one of their biggest projects they have is fog harvesting – the collection of water from mountain fog – to supply the dry, drought-afflicted region with clean water. It is the largest fog harvesting operation in the world, according to its

website, and its CloudFisher technology is a pioneer in climate adaptation, drawing recognition from the United Nations (Dar Si Hmad 2016a). In addition to helping rural communities with water scarcity problems stemming from drought and desertification, the fog harvesting project supports rural women by providing them with better jobs and a source of empowerment, first in the economic sense of being able to make their own money and become financially stable, and also socially in the sense that being part of this massive community effort can build confidence and self-esteem. Before the fog harvesting project, the women of the villages were spending more than three hours a day collecting water, the NGO stated, so the project eliminates unnecessary chores (Dar Si Hmad 2016a), thereby opening up time to participate in other aspects of social life, education, and opportunity.

Water scarcity is a driver of migration, and so this NGO makes it clear that one of their aims is to bring migrants back and keep the rural populations from migrating. However, they do not frame these as climate migrants or return climate migrants, they only make separate connections with the need to protect the environment, and the need to provide livelihoods to reverse rural/urban migration. Dar Si Hmad's other major project besides the fog harvesting is an educational farm situated on land that was donated to the organization by a local family who had farmed there for centuries. The project's aim is to stimulate sustainable agroecology practices among local farmers. The NGO's website states that starting in the 1980s, members of the family began migrating to the city for better work due to the frequency of droughts (Dar Si Hmad 2016b). Here is a prime example of what a climate migrant looks like: not naming themselves climate migrants, but moving because drought makes their way of life unsustainable. In Dar Si Hmad, we see an organization that was originally build in response to the impacts of drought-induced migration, without labeling them climate migrants at the time. Dar Si Hmad is a canary

in the coal mine in that its history forecasts what is to come. A long-term goal of the project is to “reverse the rural exodus” in the hopes that the implementation of sustainable agricultural methods will improve the fertility of the land for farming and resist desertification (Dar Si Hmad 2016b). This NGO differs from most because it actually does include information about climate migration as part of its social media messaging. For example, the organization posted, “With desertification and erosion increasing in the doors of the Moroccan desert, rural exodus among men seeking work has become more frequent. What can be done to reverse this phenomenon?” (@darsihmad, Facebook, May 20, 2020). This comes as little surprise given the organization’s history. But it is telling to see that even though climate migration is a significant part of the identity of this institution, it still does not quite get enough attention. Climate migration is nowhere on its mission statement web page; instead this information is relegated to the educational farm project webpage.

The NGO has posted about its long-term aim to reverse the rural exodus. A Facebook post reads,

On this international migrants Day, we would like to celebrate the FOG on Mount Boutmezguida that encouraged numerous climate change migrants to return back to their villages in Ait Baamrane ever since the launching of Dar Si Hmad’s fog harvesting project (@darsihmad, Facebook, December 18, 2020).

This is an unusual case because this NGO is more vocal than most about its intention to curb rural-to-urban migration by improving environmental conditions. In that regard, Dar Si Hmad is ahead of the curve by the fact that they even talk about climate migration and the rural exodus on their website and on social media very explicitly. While the case of Dar Si Hmad does not fall under the theme of unintentionally addressing climate change, because the awareness is certainly there, it does serve as a great example of an NGO identifying an urgent community need (water

scarcity) and filling that need through innovative adaptation, which addresses climate migration as a peripheral outcome.

On the other hand, there are NGOs addressing the water crisis in different ways that also have the indirect outcome of preventing rural-to-urban migration because of climate, and these organizations are not as vocal about that angle of their work. For example, the Morocco Foundation, an NGO whose stated mission is to reduce poverty and illiteracy among rural populations, started a fundraising project to build a well in order to give rural residents greater access to water. The organization brought attention to the project on Facebook, stating (translated from French) “In partnership with Zakat Foundation Association Morocco Foundation is launching the water well funding project for anyone in need of a well in their area and for those who are struggling to supply water ...” (@MoroccoFoundation, Facebook, August 11, 2017). This project also represents the theme of filling community needs and organizational stretching since climate change and the environment is not an explicit part of their mission. The organization identified an urgent need in the community to supply clean water and took it upon themselves to fix the issue, stretching beyond the realm of illiteracy. It could be that this organization indirectly, or unintentionally, has identified the linkage between water, poverty and illiteracy.

Shelley Cleverdon of The Giving Pool began distributing water bottles equipped with a cleaning filter in rural Morocco not with the intention of addressing climate migration, but because she wanted to help poor rural communities –women and children in particular – have access to clean water after she saw a lagging effort by the government. It all started in 2015 when she visited Morocco as a tourist and began a conversation with her Moroccan tour guide who curiously asked about her water bottle, Cleverdon recounted in an interview with me. The

man remarked that he would like to have one and knows some people who could really benefit from having one, too. That is when Cleverdon learned that Moroccans in the urban areas typically drink from purchased water bottles, but those in the rural parts of the country are usually too poor to afford bottled water, so they end up drinking unclean water from community wells out of necessity. Cleverdon also learned about some of the government initiatives to address the water crisis, such as building dams and constructing wastewater treatment facilities and desalination plants, but she realized that, while those initiatives are good, they do not happen overnight. It is a slow process. So, the Giving Pool started as a small scale, short-term solution. The organization's website emphasizes the urgent need to provide rural Moroccans with clean water because the government cannot act quickly enough. On a page of the website explaining the water crisis in Morocco and the steps the government is taking, it states,

Solving the water crisis in Morocco is a huge effort. Governments, universities and world organizations are implementing many ideas. This is the Macro level. Pioneering ideas. Grand projects. Huge resources. Expensive endeavors. These things move slowly. But the families are thirsty now. They are drinking unsafe water out of necessity. They need help now (The Giving Pool, "The Water Crisis).

Giving rural dwellers access to clean drinking water potentially prevents them from moving to the city, an idea to which Cleverdon agreed in an interview with me, but admitted it is not the purpose of her non-profit. Her words and the lack of explicit connections between these issues in her online messaging confirm that NGOs are aware of the impacts of climate migration and that their organizations indirectly address these issues, but they chose not to frame their work around them, letting them slide as a secondary concern. Again, this reflects the larger global political sentiment around climate migration as a long-term issue rather than something that warrants being high on the agenda right now.

Stretching to Fill Migrants' Needs

The Global Diversity Foundation showed clear signs of institutional stretching as they integrated migration into their environmental mandate over time. This evolved after the organization identified a marginalized population whose needs were not being met. Oddly enough, this NGO appears not to have connected the dots between migration and climate change despite addressing both of these issues in their work. In 2018, Global Diversity Foundation's Morocco program launched the Marrakesh Migration Network in partnership with the Global Migrants Project. This project was created to form a network to "improve coordination between organisations working on migration" internally and provide migrants with information and resources (@globaldiversity, Facebook, July 21, 2018). The network is made up of eight NGOs and government entities in Morocco who hold routine meetings to share information and coordinate efforts in serving the needs of the migrant population (@globaldiversity, Facebook, December 10, 2018). The organization posted the following message on the project:

We address the needs and provide opportunities for more than 500 Central and West African migrants in Morocco. Our approach can be expanded to support migrants all along migratory corridors from sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East to Europe (@globaldiversity, Facebook, January 18, 2018).

This represents an act of organizational stretching because migration, neither internal nor international, is not a specific aspect of their original mission of biodiversity conservation. This NGO was formed in 2000 as an environmental organization with a focus on biodiversity and agriculture; the Global Migrants Project was not launched until 18 years later. Their environmental efforts and promotion of sustainable agriculture practices counteract the impacts of the climate crisis. Additionally, they are responding and adapting to the needs of migrants by launching the migrant network. Critically, however, they have not bridged these two issues

together in the form of climate migration in their messaging. It is intriguing to see this organization address both climate and migration as separate issues, although it seems like they should have made the connection between them. Perhaps they are aware of how these issues intersect, but they do not believe climate migration “sells” on social media. Again, climate migration is indirectly addressed as an outcome of their work to increase biodiversity in rural Morocco by improving agroecosystems, capacity building and preserving traditional knowledge; however, the NGO does not integrate climate migration itself into their primary goals and messaging.

Global Diversity Foundation’s Morocco program is part of a global network whose main objective is biodiversity conservation. The Morocco program works in the High Atlas Mountain region, focusing on preserving local indigenous knowledge, skills and practices in agriculture through education, workshops, and agroecology projects. The underlying belief is that traditional pastoral practices are better for the environment and can thus play a role in solving the climate crisis. A byproduct of conserving biodiversity and preserving indigenous knowledge and agricultural practices is that their actions, whether purposeful or not, keep people in the rural areas instead of migrating to the cities because of climate-induced loss to livelihoods.

The Marrakesh Migration Network project, the spin-off from the Global Diversity Foundation in Morocco is twofold: first, to serve the immediate needs of migrants with access to food, legal services, medical care, education, and job training; second, to integrate the international migrants into Moroccan society by creating “intercultural spaces” (Global Diversity Foundation “Global Migrants Project”). These goals stand in stark contrast to their agricultural focus at the outset, though clearly putting this amount of resources and time into a migration project indicates some overlap in objectives. According to the NGO’s website, the goal is to

provide migrants with assistance from every point in the migratory process. The organization states that Morocco in particular experiences “the triple challenge of being a country of departure, transit and destination” (Global Diversity Foundation “Global Migrants Project). On a different page of their website, the NGO writes that in addition to addressing urgent needs, another objective of the project involves “seeking an integrated vision of migrants [integrated into society] and their reasons for leaving countries of origin, whether economic, environmental or political” and “to ensure people migrate out of choice rather than necessity” (Global Diversity Foundation “Theory of Change”). The NGO recognizes climate change as a driver of migration, but not as a condition of the hosting community. The refugees in Morocco, wherever they are coming from, are settling in cities and there is a good chance at least some or most came from rural parts, which means the environment could have played a role in why they migrated, even if it is outside Morocco.

The fact that the environment is explicitly stated means that it is intentional. The Global Diversity Foundation names “environmental” as a reason for migrants coming into Morocco, but they fail to connect this with the challenges of climate change that Morocco itself is facing. Water scarcity is a serious problem, and therefore climate change in Morocco likely has a significant impact on its ability to accommodate migrants and meet its objectives of changing the circumstances of these international migrants. The organization do not appear to recognize the fact that climate in-migration to cities also impacts the ability of migrants and refugees to obtain work, and this boils down to more competition, as well as education and food. Additionally, Global Diversity Foundation’s programming ignores internal migrants within Morocco, which will be more of a problem for them in achieving their goals.

Urban-based NGOs serving homeless populations have identified international, Sub-Saharan migrants as a key population in need of their services. Samusocial, an NGO that serves the homeless population in Casablanca, provides mobile emergency social service assistance, which includes showers, shaving, clothes, food, medicine, as well as a shelter that the organization also runs. The Casablanca NGO is part of a global network of Samusocial organizations and it is affiliated with the Moroccan government's Human Development Initiative. An examination of the Casablanca Samusocial's Facebook account showed that migrants – particularly Sub-Saharan migrants – are a common demographic that the organization serves. The history page of Samusocial's website includes a bit about how the population they serve has evolved and expanded over time. It states, "Initially focused only on the care of minors, the system has gradually shifted towards providing care for a more diverse public, all people living in the street (elderly people, young women and young adults, sub-Saharans, etc.)" (Samusocial "History of Samu Social Casablanca"). The NGO also mentioned immigrants specifically in a Facebook post that was about the organization's commitment to providing emergency social assistance to vulnerable groups during the pandemic (@SamusocialCasablanca, Facebook, March 31, 2020). The NGO has shifted in order to meet the community's pressing needs by expanding their services to be inclusive of more population groups, including migrants. They are unintentionally addressing the impacts of climate migration by assisting arriving urban migrants with access to shelter and basic necessities, which helps migrants who may have been displaced by environmental disasters or other means.

The official Samusocial Maroc Twitter account (@samusocial_casa) has not tweeted, so I coded relevant tweets from the official Samusocial International (@samusocialintl) twitter account, which covers all of their operations worldwide. I looked for tweets that pertained either

specifically to Morocco, or tweets that were relevant to the nexus of my research. It appears the organization was live-tweeting speakers during an event in 2018 that was about Euro-Mediterranean migration and the refugee crisis. For example, the account quoted a speaker who said (translated from French), “The migratory flows caused by political, economic and climatic issues have common features resulting from the socio-economic policies of the States” (@samusocialintl, Twitter, June 12, 2018). A few years earlier, the account tweeted a link to a live event with the caption (translated from French), “Why are environmental crimes also crimes against humanity?” (@samusocialintl, Twitter, September 18, 2015). It is remarkable that an NGO dedicated to serving homeless people would participate in events centered on migration, the refugee crisis, and the environment. By labeling “environmental crimes,” meaning the destruction of the environment, as a crime against humanity bears a sense of urgency about the climate crisis and implies the immorality of those who purposefully or apathetically harm the environment. What they post on social media is intentional, so it suggests that they must see a connection with what they do in serving homeless people and migrants with the climate crisis. Interestingly, this organization attended a conference around the time as the human rights NGO Morocco Alternatives Forum, who also began posting about climate and migration issues in that time frame.

UNHCR Maroc is unsurprisingly more vocal about climate migration than the others. The Morocco branch of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees posted on Facebook about the urgency of climate migration a few times in the last couple of years, though that is still just a small portion of what they post about migration broadly. The organization’s main goal is the economic and social integration of refugees by helping connect them to resources and services that allow them to obtain employable skills (UNHCR “What We Do”).

They also use Facebook and Twitter to advocate for refugee rights and offer legal aid. Women and children seem to be a particular focus, with many posts about gender-based violence and the disparities that women and child refugees face. One post from the account expressed the urgency of climate migration on the global level (translated from French): “With the entry of the #WorldCommunity on #migration, an international #cooperation will be put in place to take charge of migration flows including #ClimateMigrants. For the #WorldBank this would represent more than 140 million people by 2050” (@unhcrmaroc, Facebook, December 8, 2018). UNHCR Maroc, which is headquarter in Rabat, appears to work with refugees and migrants primarily in the urban areas. There are instances where they refer specifically to urban refugees, such as this post about a job recruitment event for refugees (translated from French): “... As part of the project [of] socio-economic integration of urban #refugees in #Morocco who had prior, employability training are invited to participate in Casablanca at the caravan ...” (@unhcrmaroc, Facebook, October 31, 2019).

The NGOs in this section that have placed migrants as a major part of their programming and social media messaging have a clear awareness of the indirect ways in which they address climate migration, whether it is an environmental NGO establishing a migrant network or an urban-based organization serving migrant homeless populations posting about the climate crisis. But in some cases, I also observed that the NGO failed to make a clear connection between climate and migration. It is clear that the NGOs see climate migration as an emerging threat, but most have not made climate migration itself a focal point of their work.

Climate Migration: ‘That’s Not Our North Star’

NGOs working in the areas of development and agriculture are aware that their work indirectly addresses climate migration, and while they do take the initiative to include the

environment in their messaging, it is still ultimately seen as a long-term, back-burner issue. NGOs – and by extent their communities – prioritize short-term goals, which may have an impact on climate migration but they do not frame it in such a way. Several of the development NGOs featured in this section have stretched because climate touches all aspect of Moroccan society, so the NGOs end up indirectly addressing climate migration by responding and adapting to the needs of their communities, even though climate change is not a primary interest or objective for their organizations.

The Atlas Cultural Foundation is another example of an NGO that has stretched well beyond their original intended purpose in order to address their community's needs, and also could be indirectly addressing climate migration by improving the environment and well-being of rural Moroccans, thus deterring them from migrating. The NGO focuses on community development in the region of Zawiya Ahansal in the Central High Atlas Mountains of Morocco. The organization's name suggests its core mandate was originally cultural and historical preservation of its region when it formed in 2009 and has since expanded into other development areas. Today, the organization's goals and operations include reducing poverty, increasing access to education, clean water and sanitation, improving health, empowering women and girls, preserving indigenous history and culture and protecting the environment. One particularly interesting post on the NGO's Facebook page shares the story of a local woman living in Zawiya Ahansal. The woman says she married at the age of 16 and 15 years later has five children. Her own father passed away when she was young and her mother moved to "a remote agricultural hamlet" which meant that she never attended school, so "she hopes they [her children] will finish their education and get steady jobs. ... With her husband's support she will strive to improve her children's lives in spite of poverty" (Atlas Cultural Foundation, Facebook, May 4, 2012). An

implication of the story and getting “steady jobs” is that agriculture is no longer a sustainable source of income, which is rooted in climate conditions such as drought that lowers agricultural yields. As a result, poor rural farming families succumb to the pressure by marrying their daughters off young in order to bring more money into the family. The families are promised that their daughters will get an education and have a better life, but that is a lie. The young girls become housemaids and are exploited in deplorable conditions, as discussed in the previous chapter.

The Atlas Cultural Foundation announced it was additionally expanding its mandate in a social media post that stated, “In 2013, we are beginning to incorporate environmental sustainability elements in all of our programs, including health and education and of course architectural preservation is one of the largest recycling programs a community can engage in” (Atlas Cultural Foundation, Facebook, January 29, 2013). This was a conscious decision of the organization to adapt environmental sustainability into its model, including framing their original interests—architectural preservation—as a form of “recycling,” which triggers imagery and connotations of climate change mitigation strategies. The organization has stretched beyond its original mandate of historic preservation and development in order to adapt to the realities of climate change, which they recognize impacts the work they do; they also appear to recognize that framing their initiatives in the light of climate change and mitigation strategies has a broader appeal suited to social media. According to its website, the Atlas Cultural Foundation expanded its operations into other parts of rural Morocco in 2019, which is another piece of evidence that the organization has stretched in order to meet the needs of other parts of rural Morocco (Atlas Cultural Foundation “Where We Work”). Taking into account how they have stretched over the last decade across these different issue areas, we also see they have branched out into other

physical locations across Morocco – given the widespread impacts of climate change everywhere in the country – it is almost inevitable that climate change becomes an increasingly integral part of their messaging and mandates, as these early tweets begin to suggest.

The Atlas Cultural Foundation, and the others featured in the study, confirm the theory in the literature that NGOs fill the gaps left by governments in order to address a community's pressing needs. In doing so, they often branch into issue areas, the intersection of which shows us what aspects of life for Moroccans will increasingly require more focus such as climate issues. For instance, the NGO established the Zawiya Ahansal region's first-ever public library in 2018, which gives residents the ability to obtain books and resources they did not previously have access to, and that helps raise the education level of the community (Atlas Cultural Foundation "Community Education, Youth Development). The NGO also built the Zawiya Ahansal region's first waste disposal system in 2013 by constructing a refuse oven for the community, which the local government then adopted, but the organization still oversees. The organization states that the project's goal is to curb "air and land pollution in the villages" (Atlas Cultural Foundation "WaSH, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene). This is another case of an NGO stepping up to provide a need for the community that the government was unable to do. The timing of the NGO's stretching shows a pattern of adopting gender issues like women's empowerment, girls' education and gender equality first, followed by climate. The Atlas Cultural Foundation's stretching mirrors the NGOs in the previous chapter, such as Education For All and their partnership with The Giving Pool to provide water bottles, and human rights organizations like Morocco Alternatives Forum and Moroccan Association, who incorporated the environment into their messaging and programming over the time. The implication is that when the NGOs begin addressing the challenges women face, they also begin addressing the impacts of climate

migration because the two are so interlinked, even if indirectly. To reiterate a previous point, climate issues such as drought touch every aspect of society. When NGOs begin tackling gender issues, they are indirectly also tackling climate issues in terms of drought, water shortages and desertification. However, this pattern does not necessarily apply to every Moroccan NGO. Some of the organizations featured earlier in this chapter like Dar Si Hmad, were addressing environmental issues early on, even making explicit connections with climate migration on social media. The pattern of addressing gender issues first, followed by the impacts of climate migration tends to apply to NGOs in the areas of development, gender and human rights.

The High Atlas Foundation, a sustainable development NGO mentioned in the previous chapter, is another organization that took on an environmental issue early on, but it exemplifies the theme of addressing climate migration without intent. Its mission is to support rural farmers by planting fruit trees and selling them at a discount price, which is meant to boost the income and livelihood of rural farmers. In other words, the organization frames its work in terms of development and economic issues, but this has unintentional consequences for rural-to-urban migration. Reducing poverty and raising the living standards in rural Morocco would prevent a rural farmer from moving to the city if agriculture becomes a viable source of income, which is what the NGO is attempting to do. The process of planting trees also holds back the desert. The NGO is implementing a method of preventing desertification, but it does not frame the project in this way. The High Atlas Foundation says it is aiming to both reduce rural poverty and promote sustainable agricultural methods, such as tree planting, that are good for the environment, with the impact of economically empowering rural inhabitants to stay in their communities, however reversing desertification is not explicitly mentioned. Their projects are framed around input from the community.

The NGO's founder Yossef Ben-Meir explained in an interview how his organization follows the participatory development approach, which means its programming is based on dialogue with the communities they serve in order to receive local input as part of the decision-making process. Before the organization reaches the planning stage, they host empowerment workshops to reflect introspectively before making final decisions.

We are facilitators of community dialogue that results into projects that people most want and that could be an education, clean water, building classrooms, building bathrooms, waste management, I mean, it ranges the kinds of things we do because so, too, does range the priorities of communities and we want to be as responsive as we can (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication)

The projects he describes as community priorities represent the types of needs that are short-term and immediate, like building access to clean water or education. By contrast, climate migration itself is a long-term need so it is put on the back-burner behind the list of short-term problems that receive more attention. However, because he works directly with the community, and climate change impacts most Moroccans, these initiatives end up addressing climate change indirectly, providing evidence of its ever-present, overarching need. The insight from this is that although addressing climate migration is not explicitly mentioned as a priority of the community, it is indirectly linked to the projects like clean water and education, which suggests that communities feel the impacts of climate migration but because it is viewed as a long-term problem, the issue of climate migration itself does not garner the same attention—often it is not explicitly named as a goal or motivation. He described the common profile of a person the High Atlas Foundation typically serves as young, female as well as “rural, disadvantaged, distant, denied secondary school often times, and farming families” (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication). This profile fits the other NGOs interviewed for this study, Education For All and The Giving Pool, who described a similar common profile. It tells us that young rural

women who come from farming families and lack access to secondary education have been identified as the most vulnerable group in rural Morocco and we can infer that they are among the people who are most impacted by the negative consequences of climate migration, such as illiteracy, poverty and child marriage as discussed in the previous chapter.

According to Ben-Meir, 70 percent of Morocco's agricultural land produces 10 to 15 percent of agricultural revenue due to subsistence crops like barley and corn. "There's this huge need to transition to more lucrative – I want to say sustainable [agriculture], but that's not a driving decision-making point for a lot of people because ... the pesticide requiring fruit trees usually yield sooner than the organic ones." High Atlas Foundation encourages farmers to grow organically. When asked if lower agricultural productivity has led to an increase of rural-to-urban migration, Ben-Meir agreed that it has been "immense" in Morocco, which he found unfortunate because he sees a potential in rural Morocco. He further explained, "there is a huge opportunity for sustainable projects in rural places, in agriculture and education and small businesses, all kinds of needs, and that are productive and create livelihood and so forth." I asked Ben-Meir if the High Atlas Foundation actively seeks to curb rural-to-urban migration due to climate change and his response was:

I don't think we do. Is that an outcome of what we do? Yes, certainly. Have there been rural people, women and men, that stayed in their rural communities because of the work of the High Atlas Foundation? For sure, but ... that's not our North Star (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication)

His words confirm the argument of this study that NGOs in Morocco are aware that they are indirectly addressing climate migration, but they choose to be relatively unconcerned about it at the moment. They instead frame their work around short-term issues related to economics. He does see that moving forward, as climate change becomes more profound, rural-to-urban

migration will accelerate, “which makes the work urgent,” he said (Yossef Ben Meir, personal communication). Essentially, Ben-Meir recognizes how his organization indirectly addresses climate migration and acknowledges that it will be a bigger issue in the future, but chooses to keep it in the background for now like so many other NGOs and governments do.

Relatedly, Mike McHugo, the founder of Education For All, said some of the villages in the High Atlas Mountains around where his organization operates have actually grown in population, but he associates this growth with the rise in sustainable tourism in those areas. According to McHugo, some small rural cities like Ouarzazate, located on the edge of the desert, and even smaller villages like Asni, about an hour from Marrakesh, are building up their tourism infrastructure in order to accommodate foreign visitors looking to hike the High Atlas Mountains or experience outdoor adventures in the Sahara, which phases out subsistence agriculture as a major economic source and diversifies income sources. However, he said the more remote villages do suffer from dwindling populations caused by the forces of rural-to-urban migration.

The majority of the NGOs examined as part of this study showed evidence of institutional stretching in order to meet the needs of the community, while some, like the High Atlas Foundation, The Giving Pool and Education For All, have programs and initiatives in place that unintentionally address climate migration by improving the sustainability of agriculture and better the livelihoods in rural Morocco. These programs and initiatives have the indirect outcome of curbing rural-to-urban migration. The findings confirm previous case studies in rural Morocco that linked drought to a decrease in agricultural yields and a surge in rural-to-urban migration (Ait Hamza et al. 2009), but also indicate that many NGOs across a range of sectors and addressing any number of issues—from girls education to water access—are tackling climate change issues even if they do not do it intentionally.

Conclusion

The NGO representatives interviewed for this study confirmed that they are aware that their organizations' work addresses the impacts of climate migration indirectly, but they choose not to address the issue more explicitly. The reason they are addressing climate migration indirectly is because they are stretching their mandates in order to meet the needs of the community, and these communities are being affected by the changes in climate their experience—from reducing access to clean drinking water to diminishing traditional livelihoods. The pattern in stretching suggests that NGOs who address gender issues first end up responding and adapting to the challenges of climate migration because of the connection between women and climate, which plays an integral role in all of society. More specifically, climate stress on agriculture applies pressure on families to send their daughters off to work as housemaids and marry young, which often means women do not finish their education and they are stuck in the cycle of poverty. The NGO representatives described the common person they serve as young rural women from poor farming families that lack access to secondary education. By meeting the needs of poor rural Moroccan women, the NGOs are, by extension, also addressing climate migration unintentionally through improving their outlook with education and employment opportunities. Most NGOs, especially those outside of environmental mandates, do not prioritize climate migration because it is a long-term process and they instead prioritize the short-term needs of the community, which they frame their work around. In reality, this reflects the larger global apathy towards foregrounding climate change issues at the international level. However, some NGOs in this study, like Dar Si Hmad, are historically rooted in the consequences of climate migration and they are, as a result, more vocal about climate migration than others because they have witnessed the impacts much more directly. In that sense, Dar Si Hmad acts as

a harbinger of what is to come: their fog harvesting project seeks to provide an area afflicted with drought with a more sustainable source of clean water and the educational farm project aims to reverse the rural exodus. While Dar Si Hmad is already ahead of the curve in addressing climate migration, the others will have to eventually play catch up.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Since King Mohammed VI began enacting reforms upon his rise to power, the number of NGOs in Morocco has skyrocketed thanks to the amendments made to the Decree on the Right to Establish Associations in 2002, which opened up the space for civil society in Morocco. Today, there are an estimated 116,836 registered NGOs, or associations as they call them, operating in Morocco. This in turn has had a significant impact on the country's development, according to the Washington D.C.-based International Center for Not-For-Profit Law's Civic Freedom Monitor, who state on their website, "These reforms have enlarged the legal space for civil society, expanding its rights as well as its role in policymaking and the public sphere" (International Center for Not-For-Profit Law 2020). This has given more freedom and power to non-profits in Morocco, allowing them to step in where the government fails in order to addressing urgent, pressing needs. However, NGOs face restrictions and even punishment from the government if their activities, speech or advocacy is deemed offensive to Islam or the monarchy, as well as controversial matters in Morocco such as the Western Sahara territorial dispute, the International Center for Not-For-Profit Law states.

This aligns with the literature, particularly Banks, Hulme and Edwards (2015) and Bogdanova (2017) who found that NGOs were constrained by government rules and regulations, and that authoritarian regimes can threaten the work of activists through censorship, the ability to shut down operations and even punishment. But Morocco in particular has established a legal framework that "If implemented properly ... could be considered among the most enabling in the Arab world and a model for other countries" in the support and freedom it gives to most NGOs (ICNL 2020). Yossef Ben-Meir of the High Atlas Foundation expressed a very similar sentiment

during an interview. He said the government's role is "complex" but that one of the most important things the Moroccan government has done for development is to create the legal framework "for communities to design and implement the projects they want ... to get public funding behind it, to make it required by locally elected officials that they assist to embed it in Morocco and Morocco's family code" (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication). But Ben-Meir said making those community ideas and projects come into fruition is the real battle because while the government has created the legal framework based on "people's participation" he says, "it's not being fulfilled" which he found "more complicated and worrisome." Although the government has created a roadmap for NGOs to play an active role in the country's development, Ben-Meir's words suggest that NGOs still face stumbling blocks in their ability to carry out projects. Ben-Meir also sees Morocco as a test that may decide the fate of the rest of the region. The stakes are high, he explained,

The story is being written and it's an incredibly profound one for Morocco, but also the continent and Middle East and Islamic world, because Morocco's success or lack thereof may inspire other countries that may be considering decentralization, for example, or greater women's liberation or a free civil society. If Morocco doesn't achieve what it set out for, it may discourage other nations from wanting to do similarly (Yossef Ben-Meir, personal communication).

The UN's Sustainable Development Report, which assesses how well countries are progressing toward achieving their Sustainable Development Goals, gives insight into what areas Morocco is still lagging in and what their future may hold. Morocco has an overall score of 71.3 out of a possible 100 and the kingdom ranks 64 out of 193 countries. According to the report, the Moroccan government has done fairly well in reducing poverty, as well as primary school enrollment and youth literacy rates, which have both increased over time (Cuarsema et al. 2019; UNESCO 2020b). However, the report indicates that the rate of secondary education completion

has been decreasing since 2015 (UNESCO 2020b). When it comes to achieving gender equality, there is still much room for improvement. The ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received is on the rise, however it is still a way off from where it should be, at a rate of 71.88 out of 100 (UNESCO 2020c). The ratio of female-to-male rate of participation in the labor force is decreasing, most recently valued at 31.41 (ILO 2020). The growth and expansion of girls' education NGOs operating in the rural parts of Morocco have contributed to the increasing number of girls attending school passed the primary level. Other NGOs that focus on girls' empowerment and fighting against child marriage also play a role, not just in raising girls' mean years of education, but also encouraging safe participation in the labor force. It is clear from the numbers that more work is needs to be done, so it is important for these NGOs to continue filling the gap by ensuring that all rural girls are able to go to school. The NGOs that provide girls with access to education, women's empowerment and job skills training shed light on the vulnerabilities that Moroccan women face in regard to gender-based violence, discrimination and exploitation described in the literature, which is especially illustrated through the "little maids," the young rural girls who are taken away from their families to be married off and forced into domestic labor.

Although access to basic drinking water is increasing, the report states that "significant challenges remain," with a current value of 86.78, in addition to "major challenges" with the country's wastewater treatment (WHO and UNICEF 2020). The Sustainable Development Report does not elaborate on what the specific challenges are. However, drought and water shortages add societal stress, and a sign of this could be the push seen in my data from NGOs to educate girls beyond the primary level and train them to enter the workforce in occupations outside of agriculture. The major obstacles Moroccan women already face indicate that the need

will be greater as climate worsens, based on my interviews with representatives from three NGOs.

Morocco has made significant steps towards reducing pollution, CO₂ emissions, and fossil fuel consumption. Under the “sustainable cities and communities” indicator, measurements show decline in air pollution, though still high. The most recent value in 2017 is 32.59, with 6.3 as the goal (IHME 2017). This suggests that rapid urbanization in Morocco has led to high levels of air pollution. However, Morocco has achieved the goal for energy-related CO₂ emissions, and this may stem from the massive solar farm recently built near Ouarzazate, mentioned in the background chapter of this study, along with the other two indicators under climate action, CO₂ emissions embodied in imports and fossil fuel exports. According to Climate Action Tracker, an independent research organization that monitors countries’ progress toward meeting the goals set out in the Paris Climate Agreement, Morocco’s nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are in the “fair share” category, which means its warming is within the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit of the agreement (Climate Action Tracker 2020). The organization states that while Morocco has made important progress investing in renewable energy, those gains may be set back by the construction of multiple coal power plants within the last few years. Coal still makes up a significant portion of Morocco’s energy sources, and part of the terms of the Paris Climate Agreement include eliminating coal energy by 2040 (Climate Action Tracker 2020). While Morocco has made a lot of progress in the energy sector, the development and considerations for rural populations continue to lag.

The enormous number of NGOs operating in Morocco alone tells us that the government relies heavily on their work in fulfilling community needs. The participatory role of NGOs in Morocco’s climate policy was established in the 2030 National Climate Plan, which

confirms the climate objectives set under Morocco's Paris Agreement pledge and lays out measures to enhance climate governance, notably by creating a National Commission on Climate Change, by improving inter-sectoral coordination, and by involving non-governmental organisations in decision-making (Climate Action Tracker 2020).

The findings in this study also align with the literature from Lobo who argued that climate change adaptation should be implemented by local authorities because the impacts of climate change are felt on the community-level (Lobo "Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation"). The projects of The High Atlas Foundation and Dar Si Hmad – the tree planting and fog harvesting – were born out of engagement with rural communities and conversations about needs. Ben-Meir of the High Atlas Foundation said his organization's participatory development approach involves facilitating community dialogue that results into projects. These successful projects thrive because they are created and implemented with local input.

The literature on whether or not NGOs are effective in creating meaningful change has been hotly debated for decades (Banks, Hulme and Edwards 2015; Mitchel 2015; Sanyal 1997; Mercer 1999), but the ability of Moroccan NGOs to come up with innovative ways of solving issues, such as Dar Si Hmad's fog harvesting as a new source of water for drought-inflicted communities, the High Atlas Foundation's organic tree planting project as a means of boosting the incomes of poor rural farmers and introducing sustainable agricultural practices to curb environmental degradation, or Education For All's boarding houses that allow rural girls to attend secondary school by cutting out transportation barriers, aligns with the literature that illustrates the positive impact NGOs can have on basic infrastructure projects when working with government agencies. As my research showed, though these do not all have the intent of reaching across issue areas like climate, migration, development, and gender, they often unintentionally do so because these issues are so interconnected at the community and individual

level. The fog harvesting project is one-of-a-kind and could inspire others to try their technology, which could potentially have an impact on international climate discourse and policy. This is an example that agrees with McGregor, Yerbury and Shahid's (2018) research that illustrated how NGOs play an important role in circulating knowledge and awareness of dealing with climate change. Even though the NGOs I studied are unintentionally addressing climate change, their messaging online also suggests that they play a role in circulating this knowledge of the latent impacts of climate by using climate and migration related hashtags even when those issues fall outside of their core focus areas.

It could be that NGOs are simply opportunistic in following the trends they believe will bring in more funding. They jump on climate change activism in social media spaces because they have seen that it may give them a few more likes, shares and follows, but it does not usually translate into big grants or donations. Raising awareness online about climate change and climate migration can give the impression that the NGO is also probably working on these issues. Social media activism makes the NGO feel like they are part of the wider conversation about climate change, without requiring them to make any tangible difference in their community. If Moroccan NGOs want to have a global impact, like some say they do, they must expand beyond social media activism to real social and political activism. Generally speaking, if NGOs are not activists, who will be? The purpose of NGOs is social transformation, it is their responsibility. Using their online platforms to raise awareness about critical issues like climate change is admirable, but that alone is not enough. A more active NGO role in climate change would include working more closely with the Moroccan government in facilitating dialogue about climate migration specifically. The government has taken some important steps in trying to address climate change, but there is a real opportunity for NGOs to make the climate-migration

connection more explicit by facilitating dialogue with the government, using their own observations and on-the-ground experiences of the impacts of climate migration. Implementing the participatory development approach, like the High Atlas Foundation, acts as a great model for how NGOs can best serve their communities by involving locals in the decision-making processes in order to have the projects they want, based on their own identified needs.

Additionally, because gender is a double vulnerability, NGOs should center gender in their response to climate change by incorporating the gender perspective into everything they do. Consideration must be given to how women are affected by climate in ways that are different to men, and the solutions to address those vulnerabilities must translate into programming. The High Atlas Foundation provides an example of how this can be done through their tree planting project. The NGO also includes women's empowerment into their programming because they have realized that while rural farmers need economic assistance, women face greater challenges so they bring these issues together by forming programs that aim to economically empower women to be financially independent, to be confident and to know their rights.

Future climate migration research will have to address the complexities around labeling migrants who are environmentally displaced in singular terms. Some have argued that the 'environmental refugee' label and the discourse surrounding migrants moving for environmental reasons are problematic in that it bears a negative connotation of migration and strip migrants of their of their agency (Morrissey 2020) . Some suggest that shifting the conversation from the perspective of migration as a problem to "how we talk about them. ... would enable the propagation of a discourse that effectively identifies the state of human vulnerability and the urgent need to act on climate" (6). There are a few potential areas for future research based on this study. One could dive deeper into the funding sources of these NGOs to explore the ruling

relations that exist, which can set the tone for the NGOs' discourse, as well as hold NGOs upwardly accountable. It would be interesting to investigate how influential donors are in setting an NGO's agenda and how that translates into how they message online. Another potential path based on this research could study more closely the time component of when NGOs began incorporating climate and migration into their programming and online messaging. My study noted some shifts in the online discourse of several NGOs around 2018, when they appeared to post more about climate and climate migration after an international conference on climate, but future work could look specifically at the timing of discourse shifts.

While Morocco still struggles with poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, gender inequality and drought, the possibilities are there for positive change, particularly through NGOs like the ones in this study, as they increasingly connect across these issue areas. However, the possibilities will only become actualized if Morocco is able to effectively deal with the long-term issues such as drought, water scarcity and migration. It is difficult right now to separate climate migrants from economically-motivated migrants because the two are so closely intertwined in part of the world that is still dependent on subsistence agriculture. Only time will tell the real impact of climate change on migration patterns, gender disparities, and development goals. Moroccan NGOs are fulfilling unmet needs on the local level and they are beginning to incorporate issues related to climate change and migration as part of their programming and social media advocacy, which will increase as they become more aware of the urgency. The analysis of selected NGO social media activity revealed that when it comes to addressing migration, the majority of Moroccan NGOs right now are focused on Sub-Saharan migrants, who are, in the short-term, the migrant population with the most pressing needs. Climate migrants are, by contrast, a long-term problem. However, the growing awareness of climate migration by NGOs in Morocco indicates

that these organizations may be acting as canaries in the coal mine due to their ability to observe and react to changes in the community much quicker than governments. We can already see some NGOs are thinking of innovative, community-based adaptations to climate change, some of which will slow or even reverse some migration trends, but it is currently not enough. The impacts of drought in Morocco reach every aspect of society – ranging from girls education and child marriage to unemployment and poverty – so if NGOs truly believe climate migration is an important issue and recognize that the need in the community is there, they should increase their efforts to address climate migration from indirect to direct in order to holistically achieve the vision of a better society they wish to create.

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APPENDIX

Table 5. International NGOs' Funding Sources and Partner Organizations

Source: Table Created from Organization Websites.

International Mandate/Scope	Funding sources	Partners
Caritas	The Catholic Church	<i>Not available</i>
CARE Morocco	<i>Not available</i>	World Bank, European Union, Export Development Canada, Moroccan Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training, CARE, Near East Foundation, REMESS, Associative Space, Theater of the Oppressed, Association Management and Enlightenment of the Future Youth, Moroccan Pre-School Teaching Corps, Michoc, Editions Broc-Jacquart, AXA Assurance Morocco, Attijariwafa Bank Foundation, Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, Societe Generale Corporate Foundation for Solidarity, Obelisk Foundation
Global Diversity Foundation	Burggemeinde Bern, University of Bern Center for Development and Environment, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, European Union FP7 Environment Programme, Fondo de Cooperación Internacional en Ciencia y Tecnología, Garfield Foundation, GlobalGiving, IUCN Commission on Environment, Economic and Social Policy, Japan International Cooperation Agency under the Borneo Diversity and Environmental Conservation II programme, MAVA Foundation, National Geographic Conservation Trust, New England Biolabs Foundation, Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, Rolex Institute, Salvia Foundation, Switzer Environmental Leadership Foundation, The Christensen Fund, The Rufford Foundation, UK Darwin Initiative, UK Defra Sustainable Development Dialogues, UNDP GEF Small Grants Program, VMWare Foundation, Open Society Foundation	Moroccan Biodiversity and Livelihoods Association, Radiant Design

International Mandate/Scope	Funding sources	Partners
International Youth Foundation	Al Amana, Al Jisr, Association Achourouk de Developpement, Asosication Amal Eghade, Association Ennour pour le Developpement, Association Mostakbalna des Jeunes Entrepreneurs, Association Nadha pour la Citoyennete et le Developpement, Association Provinciale des Jeunes Entrepreneurs d'El Jadida, Cooperative Sakia El Hamra, CorpsAfrica, Education for Employment Foundation, Entrelles Entrepreneurs, Federation des Associations Jbilet, Fondation Ardi, Morocco Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training, L'Heure Joyeuse, Reseau des Associations de Jeunes d'El Gantour, Search for Common Ground, World Bank Group USAID, Microsoft, GE Foundation, The Children and Youth Foundation, International Organization for Migration, Fondation Phosboucraa, Creative Associates International, Fondation OCP, Silatech	<i>Not available</i>
UNHCR Maroc	United Nations, European Union and many state governments and private donors (for full list, visit https://reporting.unhcr.org/donor-ranking)	UNHCR Maroc partners unavailable, but 745 partners of UNHCR can be found at https://data2.unhcr.org/en/partners

Table 6. National NGOs' Funding Sources and Partner Organizations

Source: Table Created from Organization Websites.

National Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
L'Union Feministe Libre	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
Morocco Alternatives Forum	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
Enactus	<i>Not available</i>	Fondation OCP, Citi Foundation, Ford Motor Company Fund, Oxfam, UNOPS, European Union, U.S. State Department, Stevens Initiative, Royaume des Pays-Bas, United Nations OPS, Dow, Cisco, Bank of Africa, Monitor Deloitte,

National Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
		Cosumar, Green Academy, The Aspen Institute, Unilever, Reseau Entreprendre, Kosmos Energy, Mohammed V University of Rabat, Picerie Verte, Anapec, Moroccan Center for Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship, Morocco Startup Ecosystem, Entrepreneurship Academy, Fondation CDG, Republique Francaise
National Institute of Solidarity with Women in Distress	U.S. Embassy, Norwegian Embassy, Spanish Embassy, French Development Agency, Swiss Embassy, Casal Dels Infants, European Commission, Community of Madrid, UN Women, The Safran Foundation, Pro Victimis Foundation, Drosos Foundation, European Union, Womanity Foundation, UNESCO, Unicef, CHU Casablanca, Mohammed V Foundation, National Human Development Initiative, Africphar, Afriquia Gaz, Alize (Alliance Industrielle du Zenith), Bank Al-Maghrib, Food Bank, People's Bank, Batifer, BMCE Bank, Bottu, Danone plant, African Pharmaceutical Center, Orphans of the World Collective, Cooper Pharma, Cosumar, Morocco credit, CTM, Daba Morocco, Dell, Dicapa, Ecogema, Fast Pak, Fenie Brossette, CRAZY, Banque Populaire Foundation, BMCE Foundation, BMCI Foundation, BNP Paribas Foundation, CDG Foundation, OCP Foundation, Fromagerie Bel Maroc, Atlas cheese dairy, GALENICA, El Alami Holding Group, Palmeraie Development Group, HEM, Hewlett Packard, L'Oreal Morocco, Maghreb Mills, Nestle Maghreb. <i>For the full list, visit https://www.insaf.ma/partenaires/</i>	U.S. Embassy, Norwegian Embassy, Spanish Embassy, French Development Agency, Swiss Embassy, Casal Dels Infants, European Commission, Community of Madrid, UN Women, The Safran Foundation, Pro Victimis Foundation, Drosos Foundation, European Union, Womanity Foundation, South Health, UNESCO, Unicef, CHU Casablanca, National mutual aid, Mohammed V Foundation, National Human Development Initiative, ONEP
Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection	<i>Not available</i>	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN Economic and Social Council, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, Royaume du Maroc, Ministry of National Education, Groupe, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, French Environment and Energy Management Agency, Morocco National Agency for the Development of

National Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
		<p>Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency, AKWA Group, Alstom Foundation, Anapec, Alcatel, Attijariwafa Bank, Association Nationale des Elus du Littoral, Autoroutes du Maroc, Poste Maroc, BMCE Bank, Banque Populaire, CIH Bank, Bouregreg, Confederation Generale des Entreprises du Maroc, Citi Bank, Conservatoire du littoral, Cooper Pharma, Credit Agricole du Maroc Group, Federation Nationale du Scoutisme Marocain, Federation Marocaine des Societes D'Assurances et de Reassurance, Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli,, Fondation BMCE Bank, Fonds Francais pour l'Environnement Mondial, Fonation Janelly & Jean-Rene Fortou, The National Federation of the Hotel Industry, Fondation OCP, Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco, Morocco Department of Water and Forests, Lafarge Maroc, Lydec, Agronomic and Veterinary Institute Hassan II, Institut national de la recherche agronomique, Maroc Telecom, MarchicaMed, Marsa Maroc, Nestle, Meditel, OCP, Royale Marocaine d'Assurance, Royal Air Maroc, TAQA Morocco, Veolia Environnement, VIVO Energy Morocco, Sony Ericsson. <i>For the full list, visit https://www.fm6e.org/fr/cooperation/partenaires.html</i></p>
Transparency Maroc	<i>Not available</i>	Oxfam, Open Society Foundations, International Association of Women Judges, Royaume des Pays-Bas, Transparency International, Heinrich Böll Stiftung
Moroccan Association for Human Rights	<i>Not available</i>	<p>Domestic: Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, National Council for Human Rights, Ministerial Delegate in charge of Human Rights, Mediator Foundation.</p> <p>Foreign: Internatioanl Federation for Human Rights, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, Arab Organization for Human Rights, African Union for Human Rights, Maghreb Coordination for Human Rights Organizations, Habitat Internatioanl Alliance: Housing and Land Rights Network, International Association of Democratic Jurists, World Organization Against Torture, World Coalition Against</p>

National Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
		the Death Penalty, Mediterranean Federation against Forced Disappearance

Table 7. Local/Regional NGOs' Funding Sources and Partner Organizations.

Source: Table Created from Organization Websites.

Local and Regional Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
High Atlas Foundation	<i>Not available</i>	FENELEC, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Experts Benevoles, Power Shift Africa, German Watch, Moroccan Street, Baked by Melissa, National Endowment for Democracy, Las Delicias Patisserie, Moroccan American Community Organization, The Moroccan Alliance for Climate and Sustainable Development, Legal Clinic Faculty of Law of Fes, AESVT Maroc, Lucky's Market, Green Sahara Furniture, PaperSeed Foundation, University of Washington, Kahina, Clinton Global Initiative, Darwin Initiative, The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative, Land O'Lakes Inc., The American School of Marrakesh, Al Akhawayn University, Maroc Export, U.S. State Department, Anna Lindh Foundation, Ecole HEEC Marrakesh, Association Mimouna, OCP Foundation, Global Diversity Foundation, University of Virginia, United Nations Development Program, USAID, Siemens, Farmer to Farmer, Visit Morocco, Ecosia, Trees for Life. <i>For the full list, visit https://www.hihatlasfoundation.org/about-us/our-partners/</i>
Dar Moustaqbel	<i>Not available</i>	The Hadja Zoubida Foundation, Alle Kleine Beetjes Helpen, Stichting Het R.C. Maagdenhuis
Open Hands Morocco	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
Education For All	Amaz, Dar Cilla and Econo-Heat, Discover Limited, Explore Worldwide Limited, Els and Ed Hulshof, Ida Stroosnijder, Kahina Giving Beauty, Kasbah du Toubkal, Medina Spa, Original Editions, Oum Rugs, Rabobank De Langstraat, Rotrary Club of Brampton & Longtown UK, Beauty Heroes, Souljourn Yoga, Sun Trails, Susan Worner Tours, The Tutors' Association UK, Valerius Reizen	The Giving Pool. <i>Others not available.</i>

Local and Regional Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
Dar Si Hmad	Derhem Holding, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – Germany, The United States Development Agency (USAID), La Promotion Nationale (Moroccan Fund for Development), The U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative, The U.S. Embassy in Rabat, Delegate ministry in charge of Energy, Mines, Water and the Environment, Agence du Bassin Hydraulique (Water Agency) – Souss Massa, Agence du Bassin Hydraulique (Water Agency) – Guelmim Oued-Noun, Munich Re Foundation, Deutscher Verein des Gas- und Wasserfaches, Vera R. Campbell Foundation, Global Green Grants Fund, University of La Laguna – Tenerife, Waterlines – Santa Fe, New Mexico, Embassy of Finland in Morocco, Moroccan Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family, and Social Development, United Nations Development Program, Tifawin Institute – Colorado, United States, Suez Foundation and the Institut de France, GlobalGiving Platform	Ait Baâmrane rural communes (Tangrfa, Tnine Amelou & Mesti), Sidi Ifni Province, delegate ministry in charge of Energy, Mines, Water and the Environment, Ministry of National Education – Sidi Ifni and Agadir Delegations, Ministry of National Education – Regional Directorate of Agadir Ida Outanane, Entraide Nationale – Agadir Delegation, National Centre for Studies and Research on Water and Energy – Cadi Ayyad University, Search for Common Ground Alliance for Women’s Empowerment – Morocco, Agadir Association Illigh, Ibn Zohr University, Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange, United Nations Economic and Social Council (Observer Status), Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Conservation Ink – Denver Colorado, Technical University of Munich, FogQuest, ATLAS Institute – University of Colorado, American Institute for Maghreb Studies, School for Advanced Studies, Wasserstiftung Water Foundation, Kuwait Dive Team
The Giving Pool	<i>Not available</i>	Education For All. <i>Others not available.</i>
Atlas Cultural Foundation	<i>Not available</i>	Atlas Cultural Adventures, Konouz Ahansal, University of Montana School of Public and Community Health Sciences, Putney Student Travel, Amideast, Montana State University, HER Education, American Institute for Maghrib Studies, Amezray Snnid, Northwest Vista College, HydroSolutions, AADEP, Atlas Cultural Foundation Morocco
Association Al Youmn	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
AFCD Foundation	Swiss Embassy in Rabat	<i>Not available</i>
Morocco Foundation	<i>Not available</i>	Trekking for Kids, USAID, U.S. President’s Volunteer Service Awards, Yatim Help, The Mosaic Foundation, L’Entraide Nationale, The Association of Moroccan Professionals, Association A Better Tomorrow
HER Education	Arlington Youth Philanthropy Initiative	The Maternity and Child Welfare Association of Pakistan, The Pakistani Women’s Air Force Association, Atlas Cultural Foundation

Local and Regional Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
Samusocial	<i>Not available</i>	Morocco Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Morocco Ministry of Justice, Wilaya de la Region de Casablanca – Settat, Samusocial International, Morocco Ministry of Interior, Morocco Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training, Morocco Ministry of Health, Entraide Nationale, Office of Professional Training and Work Promotion, CHU Ibn Rochd, National Institute, National Institute of Solidarity with Women in Distress, SOS Children’s Villages Morocco, Association Bayti, Moroccan Association for Aid to Children in Precarious Situations, Association Solidarité Féminine, AMVE, The Moroccan Association for the Fight against Violence against Women, Procter and Gamble, Banque Alimentaire
Association Al Ihssane	Royal Air Maroc, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Entraide Nationale, City of Casablanca, Living Arts Studio, Clinique Atfal, Morocco National Human Development Initiative, OCP Fondation, Banque Alimentaire, Working Alliance in Training and Action for Childhood, Sigma, OCP, Cooper Pharma, Procter & Gamble, Sidi Ali, Cercle Amical des Français de Casablanca, Novatis, Santé Plus Maroc, Ferembal Maghreb, Morocco Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development. <i>For the full list, visit https://association-ihssane.org/en/they-help-us.html</i>	Royal Air Maroc, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Entraide Nationale, City of Casablanca, Living Arts Studio, Clinique Atfal, Morocco National Human Development Initiative, OCP Fondation, Banque Alimentaire, Working Alliance in Training and Action for Childhood, Sigma, OCP, Cooper Pharma, Procter & Gamble, Sidi Ali, Cercle Amical des Français de Casablanca, Novatis, Santé Plus Maroc, Ferembal Maghreb, Morocco Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development. <i>For the full list, visit https://association-ihssane.org/en/they-help-us.html</i>
Association Anaroz	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
Association Bahri	<i>Not available</i>	U.S. State Department, Inwi, Le Soir, Groupe Des Brasseries du Maroc, La Tribune, Red Bull, Dindy, Pepsi, Surfriider Foundation Maroc, Planete Citoyenne, Blue Surf School, Haribo, Atlanta Assurances, Ain Diab Surf School, Faber-Castell, 88.7 MFM Radio, 94.0 Radio Plus, VH Magazine, Institute of Higher Studies in Banking, Finance and Insurance, Eumatech, Aufait, Telquel, Mecomar, Aïn Ifrane, Jevoyage.ma, Societe Generale, Sanad Insurance Company. <i>For the full list, visit</i>

Local and Regional Mandate/Scope	Funding Sources	Partners
		http://associationbahri.org/index.php/nos-partenaires/
Amal Women's Training Center	<i>Not available</i>	AIESEC, ALSA Maroc, Regional Association of the Hotel Industry of Marrakesh, The American School of Marrakesh, Association Ennakhil, Association Mawarid, CEED Morocco, Mohammed VI National Center for the Disabled, Dar Cherifa, Cooperative Artisanale Taymatine, Dar Moha Restaurant, ENCG Marrakesh, European Gateways, Fenelec, Fondation Zakoura, Fondation Jardin Majorelle, French Institute of Marrakesh, La Cocina Restaurant – Casablanca, Make Every Woman Count, McDonald's, MarraCashCard, Morocco Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco Ministry in charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs, Oasiria Marrakesh, Originally Morocco, Riad Karmela, Riad Nesma, Travel Link Morocco, Search for Common Ground, Travel Noire, Tripadvisor, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations, U.S. State Department, Your Morocco Tour. <i>For the full list, visit http://amalnonprofit.org/partners/</i>
Anouar Association for Sustainable Development	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>

VITA

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EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts (December 2013) in Mass Communications – Journalism, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Graduate Research Assistant to Dr. Regina Karp, Graduate Program in International Studies, Old Dominion University, August 2020 – Present.

Graduate Teaching Assistant to Dr. Jesse Richman, Department of Political Science & Geography, Old Dominion University, January 2020 – May 2020.

Graduate Teaching Assistant to Dr. Joshua Zingher, Department of Political Science & Geography, Old Dominion University, August 2019 – December 2019.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Graduate Society in International Studies.