

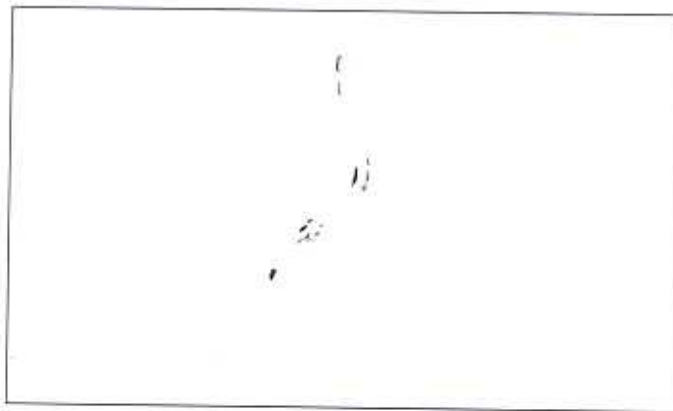
جامعة الأخوين  
AL AKHAWAYN  
UNIVERSITY

Special Topics:

Development Issues In Morocco

Final Project:

Sidi Tuhami Association for Development and Culture



Ait Hamza Wadia  
Nejjar Bassam  
Tber Hamza

For Dr. Shoup

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## I. Introduction

Following the classical approaches to development that advocated the involvement of the State, new schools of thought focusing their interest on civil society, emerged within development studies. The modern approaches argue that the civic commitment of citizens, through associations and organizations, is the most promising solution to development issues. In order to better understand what lies behind the concept of civil society, scholars have conducted many researches. In line with these investigations, a team of professors from Al Akhawayn University is currently conducting a project to which we have participated. The project in question is concerned about civil society, the impact of new irrigation schemes on traditional agriculture patterns and the possible solutions for the Tafilalet region. Our participation consisted in a field trip to the area of Rissani. During this trip, several groups of students carried out interviews with the members of some local associations. More, while traveling around the oasis, students had the opportunity to observe both the traditional and the modern irrigation schemes.

The field trip was meant to link the new theories on development to the actual reality of an emerging civil society. The hitherto frail civil society that is trying to rise in the Tafilalet is articulated around few associations that are not yet fully active. Among these associations, the *Sidi Tuhami Association for Development and Culture*<sup>1</sup> was the focus of our group. Located in al Ghorfa next to Rissani, this association stands as an evidence of the will of the Fillali people to constitute a dynamic and private entity that could help the region to develop. Although, the Sidi Tuhami association is still in the process of finding its final shape and goals, it is definitely an initiative that clearly falls within the understanding of civil society. First, this newly born association aims to constitute a bridge that could link the state and the local population. Second,

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<sup>1</sup> Jamiyat Sidi Tuhami li Taqafa wa Tanmiya

the association aspires to provide the locals with means to rely on themselves regarding the economic, social and cultural development. Last, it is a private association that does not rely on any governmental support, be it financial or administrative. Yet, once identified as a materialization of civil society, the Sidi Tuhami association is nonetheless suffering from numerous handicaps. In the present paper, we intend to present and assess the findings of our group regarding the positive as well as the negative features of this association. Eventually, we also propose to present recommendations based on the theoretical body discussed during the course of the semester.

## II. Research Questions

Prior the field trip, our assumption was that an existing civil society materialized in an association was necessarily a proactive answer to the problems that local people might face. Hence, our initial research question was merely designed to let us say whether or not civil society existed in the region of Al Ghorfa. More precisely, we thought we were to estimate if the Sidi Tuhami association was an actual manifestation of civil society or not. Yet, shortly after our return we came to realize that the relationship between development and civil society could not be reduced to the simple occurrence of an association. Indeed, there seemed to be a core problem behind the apparent failure of the present association. Actually, the institutionalized goodwill of some people is not enough to match the definition of a dynamic civil society. Indeed, the fact that there is an association in Al Ghorfa does not mean that this association is competent in achieving its declared objectives. Certainly, there are obvious and relevant attributes to such associations (cultural awareness, commitment and involvement of locals,...). However, it might happen that a civil society institution is not or not yet adapted to the problems it means to tackle.

Our group, thinks that the Sidi Tuhami association presents some features that are evidences of a certain inaptness. Consequently, we decided to reformulate our research question to enable us not only to asses the existence of civil society but also its efficiency as an instrument for development.

### III. Methodology

Prior attending the meeting scheduled with the population of *Qsar Jdeed*, we already had a rough sketch about some of the projects that the association had carried out. Moreover, we also had some general information about the members of the association. Indeed, before we actually conducted the interviews, Dr. Shoup briefed us about the association called *Sidi Tuhami for Development and Culture*, situated in Qsar Jdeed in Al Ghorfa. Students who were to participate to the field trip to Rissani were provided with documents relative to each of the associations that were to be studied.

It is Dr. Shoup who scheduled the meeting with the members of the associations. We take note of the fact that the meeting was pre-programmed and that we did not choose the participants. In other words, all the contacts were made prior our arrival. The meeting was held in the local of the association in *Qsar Jdeed* in Al Ghorfa near Rissani<sup>2</sup>. The members of the association who were attending are:

- Abdellah Naciri: President
- Rachid Bouyahyaoui: General Secretary
- El Maghraoui abdelwahed: vice general secretary
- Naciri Bachir: Advisor
- Abdelmalek Mdrari: Advisor

□ El Maghraoui Abderahman: Member

The meeting was a group interview with the members of the association. We were asked to split into 3 groups. This distribution was meant to allow students to focus on each of the main issues that we wanted to discuss. However, after the short presentation done by the vice president, we decided that a common meeting, involving all the groups at once, was the best way to let all the members of the association to participate. Indeed, we realized that the contribution of each member added to the comprehensiveness of the answers. This method, a group interview articulated as a round table, was good because all students, from the three groups could ask questions they saw as relevant. Indeed, the members of a given group might have ignored to ask pertinent questions that other students could recall to the group's attention. The group that started the interview was ours: Bassam Nejjar, Hamza Tber and Wadia Ait Hamza. Our group emphasis was directed on the structure and the creation of the association. We prepared 25 questions<sup>3</sup> that were supposed to cover the whole focus. Nonetheless, we ended up asking more questions. Actually, the answers of the participants raised new questions that were both a logical sequel to the ones we formulated and a useful source of information for our project. To begin with, we asked questions related to the association and its structure. Then, we raised questions related to how the association was created and to how other associations might have influenced the structure and the goals of Sidi Tuhami. We also tried to find out about the funding of the association and its network of contacts. Some questions about the involvement of external partners, associations and NGOs were also asked.

The second group was composed of Sanae Lahlou and Amal Boughanou who asked the questions related to the educational domain, especially to the literacy programs. The latter group,

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<sup>2</sup> See map appendix A and B

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix C.

composed of two girls only, was able to talk to a young female teacher in charge of the literacy classes. Although held in the same room, this interview was "private" in that the male students who were present could not talk or hear what the teacher had to say.

The third group, composed of Mouaad Ibriz and Housna Al Andaloussi, asked questions relevant to what was meant to be an income generation program, designed around chicken husbandry. Altogether, the meeting lasted for more than 3 hours.

The meeting, as mentioned previously, was held in *Qsar Jdeed* in Al Ghorfa, in the local of the association near Rissani. Actually, the local, a former house, was given as a present<sup>4</sup> to the newly created association. The meeting was held in a small traditional room, next to what seemed to be the central room where the literacy and entertainment<sup>5</sup> activities usually take place. We would like to take note of the poor quality of furnishings and the overall humble character of the dwelling as an evidence of the scarcity of the association's financial resources.

Besides, all the locals who participated to the group interview were males, except for the young female teacher with whom Sanae and Amal had the formerly mentioned apart discussion. Yet, we do not consider that the female teacher actually took part to the group interview since it appears that she had been asked not to talk during our meeting.

The members of the association, in line with the native tradition of hospitality, received us with due diligence. Nonetheless, our guest status called for an informal discussion, around a table with the omnipresent tea and cookies. Yet, it was apparently clear to everyone that the purpose of our visit was academic more than private. Accordingly, all participants proved accommodating in answering our questions with the appropriate seriousness. However, we

<sup>4</sup> Donated by sir Malouki Hadj Abd el Karim, a local notable now living in Fez.

<sup>5</sup> A number of children were watching cartoons recorded by the association thanks to a VCR of which everybody seemed quite proud.

would like to qualify this and mention what seemed to be cautiousness rather than defiance concerning certain topics, especially financial ones.

By the end of the meeting, some students offered to provide help either by translating the publications of the association or by helping the association to find relevant organizations to contact (mainly NGO's). More to the point, Wadia Aït Hamza, from our group, gave them the contacts of Helen Keller International<sup>6</sup> located in Rabat and Ouarzazate. Furthermore, the students and the members of the association agreed to keep contact for further cooperation. Actually, Mr. El Maghraoui circulated an information sheet that all students were asked to fill by providing their respective phone numbers, emails, addresses, major and so on.

To sum up our methodological approach consisted in a group interview (mostly informal) during which we collected qualitative data. As opposed to the literature review, the soft data we gathered requires an explicit encoding. Therefore, in the data presentation section we intend to formulate appropriate categories and operational concepts that will allow us to draw conclusions and eventually recommendations. Indeed, the necessary content analysis calls for precise categories that will help us to better evaluate the core, yet broad concepts such as civil society, literacy programs or income generation.

#### IV. Data presentation and analysis

During the group interview that we had in the local of Sidi Tuhami Association, we gathered the following qualitative data about some aspects of the association.

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<sup>6</sup> An American NGO specialized in curative programs against Trachoma (an eye disease that severely affects the southern provinces of Morocco (Tata, Zagora, Errachidia, Figuig and Ouarzazate))

#### IV.1 The association and its goals

A group of elite and intellectuals who are interested in reviving and developing their region founded the *Sidi Tuhami Association for Culture and Development* in *Qsar Jdeed*, Al Ghorfa, Rissani, in the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2000. The idea of the association came from the elite and the intellectuals of the region of Al Ghorfa in order to develop this important area. They presented the idea to the local people who appreciated it but with preservation due mainly to the complicated structure of the society. In order to gain the confidence of the local population the association organised conferences, debates and various activities. Moreover, the depoliticised contribution of the association's members reinforced the confidence of the local population. Besides, most members are known for their seriousness and honesty.

The local of the association is to be found in the middle of the region between the three main *Qsours* and the six small ones. The physical location is of prime importance for the local population; and was thus chosen with due care. Indeed, the members of the association explain that they chose the site keeping in mind the necessity of remaining "fair" so as to avoid problems (mainly ethnic ones) between the *Qsours*. According to its members, the association tries to propose solutions that would allow the populations to overcome their ancestral rivalry. The participants seemed to imply that the answer to the ethnical issues could have very positive outcomes and could greatly contribute to the development of the oasis. More, the members made it clear that they address development at all levels meaning scientific, social, educational and economic. Obviously, the medieval golden age of the region, with the flourishing city of *Sijilmassa*, is in the minds of one and all when talking about revival.

Among the goals of the association the revival of the region of Al Ghorfa is a core issue. The last was fairly known for its savant people such as Sidi Tuhami after whom the association was named. The revival of the social fibre is clearly stated in the goals of the association. For instance, the members of the association expect to revive the solidarity among the local population. In other words, the associations would like to see the rebirth of a community that sees itself as such and that would be an integrative structure. Accordingly, in order to avoid further marginalization, the association decided to tackle more carefully the issues of both women and children whose condition is miserable.

Since the late 1960's the severe and successive droughts as well as the resulting scarcity of resources caused the migration of about the 2/3 of the oases' population to the major cities of the kingdom. This exodus is one of the main reasons that motivated the creation of Sidi Tuhami's association. The people who remained are badly off, to say the least. Accordingly, in addition to the cultural revival, the association was also intended to help the local population to improve its economic state of affairs. Moreover, the association wants to design project that would be appropriate (culturally and financially acceptable for the locals).

Additionally, Mr. El Maghraoui asserted the involvement of the association regarding the revival of the scientific sphere in the region. Indeed, he plainly explained that the scientific renewal is one of the priorities of Sidi Tuhami's association.

#### IV.2 Problems of the association

In this section we present the problems that the members of the association evoked themselves. The following problems are the ones that the members noticed during the 3 years of functioning of the association:

- Ignorance and unawareness
- The significant percentage of illiteracy among the locale population. Mainly due to the fact that all the intellectuals and literate people left the region.
- The too optimistic expectations of the population following the creation of the association. Obviously, miraculous projects are not what should be expected. The absence of immediate and radical changes disappointed the locals somehow.
- The lack of funding and the lack of commitment of the members.
- The lack of participation of women in the literacy class is a problem that the association encounters because of some cultural constraints (not always due to men).
- People don't believe in the theoretical aspects of the association and want to see some real and physical things happening in the region. They did not believe in the civil society. Gap between the vision of the members and the local population
- The social life within this community is very hard. They don't let new people to suggest new things or to change things within the community.
- The drought years and the water problem in the region (the Hassan Dakhel Dam).
- Problems of communication with the ministries and NGOs.

The weaknesses of the association are mainly due to the absence of the members during the meeting because of their work commitment in other cities, the lack of communication and the un-experienced members of the association.

The drought was the main obstacle that the region had to face it especially affected the association. Since agriculture was crippled by the drought, people were calling for alternative

sources of revenue. Accordingly, the Sidi Tuhami association proposed some activities such as the broidery program which has proved quite successful since it involves 100 persons.

### IV.3 Projects of the association

In the educational field, the association started a non-formal education to help the children, between the age of 4 and 6, by creating a school where they can learn the basis of Arabic and Islamic education. They also give some help session in the Islamic education for the students of primary levels. The members of the association always seek the help of the students who study in Errachidia and Meknes to give some help sessions to the local students during the holidays. The association did not forget the adult people. It aims to help the illiterate adult people by giving them classes of literacy. Those classes are giving also to the girls who left the school at the young age because of the distance between the house and the school.

### IV.4 Structure of the association

Sidi Touhami Association for Development and Culture has an executive board, a committee to elect the new board of 4 people, and each member is responsible for a work or a project to do. They exchange their ideas and achievement during the meetings. The idea of creating this association was inspired from the role that civil society play in Morocco. They were hearing about some associations that were created in the region which were working and making some activities for their people and which also gained some help from the government being it technical, financial or moral. Some members are also members in other associations back in the city where they studied or where they work. The big population of the region was a press on to create the association in order to make some activities for its people.

The association has a poor public relation with the other structure of the civil society in Morocco. During the first 2 years, the association never contacted any organizations, because of the lack of experience and the hard structure of the society. The role of NGOs is vital role in order to develop the local region, and according to the UNDP, "NGOs can play an important role in drawing attention to particular issues and problems, mobilizing public opinion and advancing knowledge. In developing countries, NGOs play a vital role undertaking development programs in poor urban and rural communities, have much better knowledge of community problems and concerns that government and can play a key catalytic role in engaging communities in voicing their concerns." (UNDP, 100).

The first contact that they made was with the office of agricultural investment to implement their first project of chicken husbandry. The members argued that they don't have the necessary possibilities to make the contacts with the local and international NGOs. The office of the agricultural investment helped them first as a link between the association and the provider of chicken; second the office helped with 50% of the cost of the chicken, which is not the case today. Currently, the office plays a role of mediator between the association and the provider without giving any financial help.

The association does not neglect the cooperation part with the local and international NGOs, and it will seek the help of those organizations in the future in order to implement the projects that it intend to do. The association is willing to accept any kind of help being it technical, moral, or financial.

#### IV.5 Financial aspects of the association

Sidi Touhami Association for Development and Culture gets its funding from the aid that the notables of the region give them, or the membership, or the fees of the non-formal education and the illiteracy class <sup>7</sup>. During the 3 years, the association always had a deficit in the budget. The government, normally, help the associations by giving them a financial aid, but the association was able to get this aid once from the local commune, from the region<sup>8</sup> once and twice from the ministry of youth and sports <sup>9</sup>.

To avoid any suspicious kind of financial problems, the association publish the financial report during the general meeting, where all the local population is invited. The report is published and become official right after its acceptance by the members of the association. Taking in consideration the illiterate people, the members try to make the report easy to understand, by giving them the explications in the Arabic dialects and giving the amounts not in Dirhams but in Riyal.

#### IV .6 Civil Society

The members of the association of Sidi Tuhami are aware of the concept of civil society. Their understanding of civil society could be summed up to the basic definition of a grouping of people (within associations) that enables to develop almost every aspect of the daily life. According to them, civil society emerged in the region subsequently to the creation of the governmental program against drought and desertification. Although not formalized as such their understanding of civil society is close to the analysis of Mohamed Ait Hamza. Indeed, he asserts that a local association could not exist without the consensus of the local community. Further, he

<sup>7</sup> The fees are 20 Dhs per person.

<sup>8</sup> Region of Meknes-Tafilalet

adds that local development consists in the refusal of normalization and in the acceptance of mutual recognition between the involved parties. In this light, the actions taken by local populations could be perceived either as a resistance to the social marginalization, or as an attempt to confirm their own identity (Aït Hamza: 109). According to the members of the association, civil society is very active in the region. Indeed, they are 6 to 7 associations in the rural area of Rissani and this is perceived as a big achievement. However, we should qualify this and mention that there is a difference between an “existing” association and an “active” association. The respondents argued that civil society should play a more important role in relation to the State. In addition, it seems that the Fillalis expect more from the civil society than from the State. However, we are unable to support or to refute this information, for the approach of the association appears to be contradictory on this point. Indeed, apart from the external difficulties that they encounter, the members of the association do not seem to adopt a proactive line.

## V. Analyses

The association of Sidi Tuhami is a newborn in the term of the civil society, its main objective is the revival of the region. This goal can be only seen as a primary goal. The goals of the association must be realistic. The revival of the *Qsar* is a good idea, but the *Qsar* needs more things than revival like helping the poor people, giving literacy classes, and try to change the status of women in the regions by giving them an active role in the association as well as in the region. The association is truly dedicated to help the people of the region, yet many stumbling blocks still pave the way. Undoubtedly, the leaders of the association need to assimilate the

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<sup>9</sup> The association got 1000 dhs/year

necessity of proactive and participative approaches. Only then would the association be able to assess and eventually propose solutions to the core, structural problems of its community.

Communication is also a central problem for the Sidi Tuhami association essentially at two levels: channels and expertise. Indeed, not only does the association lack mediums of communications to gain visibility (be known to potential partners like NGO's), but it does also lack the skills to actually communicate (translations, format of documents, etc...). Overall, the communication deficiency appears to be a great obstacle to the growth of the association and to the achievement of its goals.

We think that the association did a strategic and very effective choice by locating its headquarters the middle of Al Ghorfa region. As mentioned before, the community's structure of the Tafilalet is very intricate<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, any cultural mistake that the members could make would have damaging effects on the association. The appropriate cautiousness to observe is well illustrated by the invitations made for the association's inauguration. The founding members of Sidi Tuhami association judiciously invited the representatives of all the *Qsours* of the area. Regardless the low theoretical expertise or the dogmatic deficiencies of the association, such examples show the relevance of civil society concerning cultural appropriateness. More to the point, it is, we believe, the "civil" nature more than the "national" nature of the organization that enables it to address adequately the ethnical issues or rivalries. Indeed, the former organizations that operated in the oases of the region were national, employing Moroccan civil servants, yet they all failed to address this specific question of ethnicity.

All the associations in the region are undergoing the same obstacles as Sidi Tuhami association and they are doing very good in terms of development. The members of the

<sup>10</sup> The three main classes that constitutes the Tafilalet community are: Chorfa (descendant of the prophet), Harratin (natives of the region), 'Abid ( former black slave)

association are pessimistic about their association even if they are trying hard. The Achilles' heel of the association are its unskilled members. This state of things is primarily due to the lack of interest showed by the members concerning the useful trainings proposed by various NGOs. Nonetheless, the minimal qualifications of most members stills represent a high educational level in regard to the literacy rate of the region. This human resource deficit might be the reason behind the external supervision of most of the programs implemented by the association. For instance, the office of the agricultural investment backs up the income generation program. However, this assistance is justified by the fact that the association is still in it constructing phase. Since it is new it is still in need of external supervision. More to the point, this might explain the passive attitude of the association when it expects to be contacted, assisted and financed for the realization of projects.

The association tried the easiest kind of projects that will attract the sight to their side. The association is giving the literacy classes and the non-formal education to its local population to support them. Their aim is to attract women and help them to escape from their homes that often they quit. The members are not willing to have a female in the executive board than helping her in the literacy. The situation of the females in the region of Tafilalet and Al Ghorfa especially, is critical that is very hard to change it just by having them taking illiteracy classes. But we should not neglect this initiative, which give the women the right to leave their houses for a while.

The structure of the association of Sidi Tuhami is similar to the other associations which is to have an elected executive board each 2 years, to publish the reports of the association at each general assembly. The democratic status of the association will give for sure a good image

of it, but we should ask our self a question: If a girl wanted to become an executive member, will they let her to present her self?

The association gets the funding from the usual means of that: membership, the fees, and the aid of the state and some notables.

The members of the association are willing to work within the new concept of civilizations very far from the role of the state. The members created their association because they hear about some other association, which is may be the association of the next *Qsar* to them, who got the funding for their projects and who are working well. . In Morocco, they are more than 2000 NGO but most of them are not active. The association or the NGOs in Morocco are not well functioning because, we think, that they were just created to fill the scene in their area, or just because the next-door neighbourhood or village created an association

## VI. Obstacles

To begin with, the time constraint was the most obvious obstacle we were confronted to. Actually, our interview was scheduled only for the Saturday morning and lasted around three hours. Although, it proved enough to ask the most important question, we believe that further time would have allowed us to make more observations in addition to the interview.

Besides, the members of the association mostly provided us data orally. Our group as the others, had access to very few written documents. Accordingly, we were to handle what we considered as "vague" information. Most of us were asking for written data so as to improve the reliability of the information.

The other problem that we faced was that the meeting was arranged, and we did not have the opportunity to choose our interlocutors. In addition, all the students who attended the meeting

had decided that each group would separately meet one or two of the members. Yet, once we started the meeting the members of the association preferred that all of us remain together in a single room where we held a common group interview. This proved to be a problem because it prevented us from optimizing the time management as we intend. More, the presence of the president and generally the presence of too many members, seemed to restrict some participants in their answers. For instance, the financial issues that we expected to discuss (to a certain extent) were too poorly covered due to a certain reticence that we attributed to the public character of the meeting.

In addition, we noticed that many members of the association were misunderstanding the formal role of civil society. In contradiction with the official statements, most members seemed confused in setting the objectives of Sidi Tuhami's association. Suffice it to mention the name of the association to see that the goals of the association are unclear. Indeed, the authorized name of the organization is "*Jamiyat Sidi Tuhami Li Takafa Wa Tanmiya*"; we believe that this labeling is misleading about its objectives. In fact, the association focuses less development issues per say, rather its main activity is related to literacy programs. Beside the "chicken" program, meant to be an income generation agenda, and the literacy classes we noticed that the association is actually not very active on other development issues.

## VII. Solutions

Although our primary goal was to assess the pertinence and the functioning of Sidi Tuhami association, we would like to suggest some possible solutions that the association might want to consider. During our group interview, we gave some obvious solutions; here we intend to outline our first recommendations in a more formal way. Those solutions varied depending on

the need of the association. The first solution proposed by students consisted in advising the members to create a network of links in order to enhance the communication with the other associations and local NGO's. For instance, we suggested to them to send the information relative to the Sidi Tuhami Association to the Minister of Communication. Thereby, the name, objectives, activities and address of the association could be displayed on the governmental website<sup>11</sup>, as the other Moroccan associations. Thus, by gaining visibility the association could manage to increase the prospect of being contacted by local and international NGO's. In line with the regular recommendations of most international NGO's, we would also suggest to the Association to consider the inclusion of women as official members and ideally as managers.

Another solution is to try to get new skills for managing the Association. For instance, one of the young members could have a skills formation in any big national association or NGO in order to get enough experience and expertise that would be very helpful for the management of the association. Attending the seminars and forums is also a big opportunity to the members to more communicate with the other members of the association and to get the skills related to the managing of the events.

The members of the association have also a set of solutions for developing their region. They think that the income generation is the best solutions for the local population to get benefits. We believe that these solutions are good ones, but if it was generalized over the whole region, and to not limit it only to a minority. The population who benefited from this project was only composed of females and the majority of them are relatives to a member of the association. The project of the association should be open to all the population of the area in order to get the real benefit. During our group interview, the members said clearly that they want to help by this

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<sup>11</sup> [www.mincom.gov.ma](http://www.mincom.gov.ma)

project the widowers and the females whose husbands migrated, especially those who have a limited income.

In the wake of globalization, language plays an important role in promoting the information. The Sidi Tuhami Association limited the language of the association to Arabic, which we think is not enough. The translation of the brochures to more than 3 languages is a necessity in order to promote the association. Maybe to have a website is also a solution for the lack of communication that the association has.

The members of the association should be realistic, they don't contact the NGOs or the state agencies, and they believe that the NGOs will contact them. They should take the initiative of contacting them. The NGOs and the associations will not look for them until they are known for their projects. We suggest to them many contacts of the important associations and NGOs, we even gave them contacts of some.

The lack of equipment is also a big problem for the association. During our visit to the local of the association, we noticed that they are lacking equipments. They have only some old chairs and tables, a VCR and a TV for the entrainment of children. The association has to look for some NGOs or the state agencies that give equipment like PCs to the associations. They should know that those organizations do not give the equipments to all the associations. The association should have a realistic objective, good projects and a motivated team. The organizations usually give in the equipment within a project.

The participative approach is very important, and the associations should care about this aspect. The confidence of the local population is very essential for the success of the association. The approach to the local community can be very helpful for the association. More meetings

with the population will increase the communication skills of the members as well it will help the members to know their community more and more.

### VIII. Conclusions

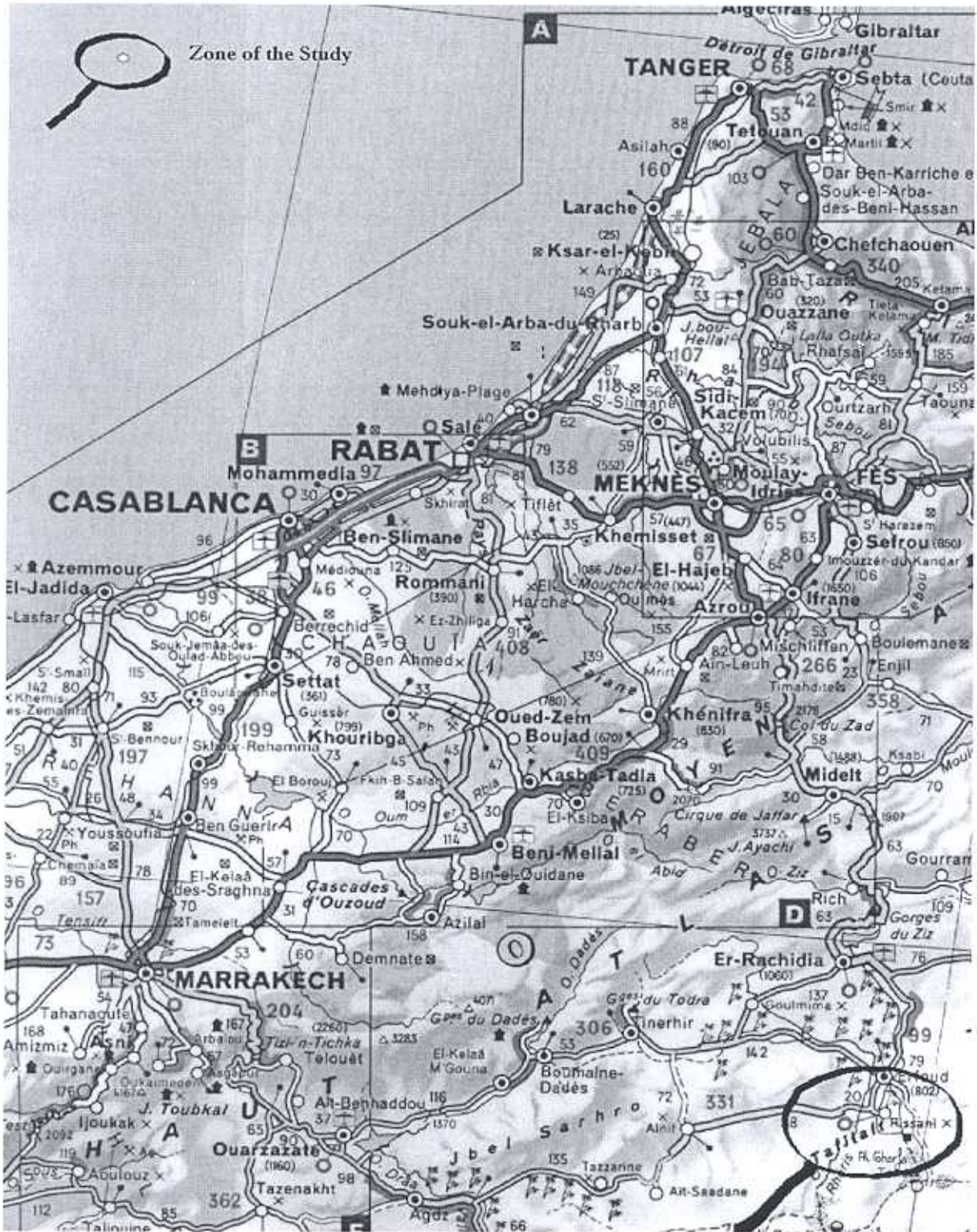
The *Sidi Tuhami Association for culture and development* is an additional and fresh manifestation of civil society in the Tafilalet region. This association constitutes a culturally appropriate and modern effort to develop the region of Al Ghorfa. Nevertheless, we think that this association has not managed to set clear and lasting objectives upon which it could construct a coherent and a durable action. It is however to the credit of the association and the local populations to be increasingly aware of the necessity and pertinence of civil society. The trip that we did to the region of the Tafilalet showed us to what extent local associations were willing to be active and provide their respective areas with the necessary means to develop. Yet, numerous and complex obstacles still prevent the local associations in performing at their optimal efficiency. Namely, the major obstacles are at an rational level are illiteracy and misinformation of the inhabitants of the local *Qsours*. On the socio-cultural and material levels the rigidity of the culture and the lack of infrastructures are the chief obstacles to a further emancipation of civil society in the region. Yet, it would be inaccurate to see the roots of this situation only within external factors. Indeed, we believe that some internal features of the Sidi Tuhami Association explain the partial failure of the programs it designed. Still we actually think that the association is not far from achieving its ambitions since there seems to be a real potential, be it only within the determination of its members. For now, the most immediate and necessary measure to take is to establish a network of connections with the national as well as the international NGOs.

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Appendix A: Map of Morocco, location of the zone of the study



Appendix B: Map of the region of Tafilalet, location of Al Ghorfa



### Appendix C: The questions of the group interview

1. Why was the association created?
2. Who had the idea of this association? Who implemented it?
3. Who are the members? How they are chosen?
4. Can you give us a brief description of the constitution?
5. Do you have different committees? What are they?
6. What are the objectives of the associations?
7. What are the projects (Short and long term)?
8. What are the priorities?
9. Have you been inspired by other associations? Where did you hear about them?
10. If yes, why these specific ones? Why do you think such model is relevant to the association?
11. If there is an overall confidence of the local population in the association?
12. Who formulate the proposals?
13. Did you ever have contacts with other NGOs, individuals, associations, state agencies, ministries....
14. Which of the above has proven to be more helpful?
15. Which kind of help has been proved?
16. Where do you get the funding?
17. How do you manage or spend the money?
18. Do you publish any kind of reports?
19. If not, do you think that it would be a relevant initiative
20. According to you, what are the main weakness of the association?
21. What are the main obstacles (social and cultural)
22. Have you thought of any solutions to overcome these obstacles?
23. How could NGOs, institutions, state agencies... can help the association?
24. What do you think of development issues in the region? In Morocco?
25. What is your understanding of the civil society concept? Do you see it as a solution to the problems of the populations?