WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN PUBLIC LIFE MOROCCO

Action-research conducted by a coalition of three NGOs represented by the research group:

Réseau des Femmes pour le Mentoring/ Networking (RFMN) (Women Association for Mentoring/ Networking)	Association Démocratique des Femmes du Marco (ADFM) (Democratic Association of Women in Morocco)	Organisation des Filles de la Renaissance (OFR) (Organisation of Renaissance Girls)
Fatima Agnaou Khadija Assari Aïcha Bouhjar	Ouafaa Amdaou Samira Bikarden Jihane Hanane	Jihane Ouchraa Ratiba Rigalma Fatima Zahra El Bahri

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We should also like to thank the UK-based NGO INTRAC for its research action expertise. Credit for any methodological quality identified in this study is largely due to the team of facilitators led and coordinated by Rod Macleod whose scientific contribution is invaluable.

Finally, a special thought goes to all those who devoted their time to contribute towards this research. Without them, the collection of data, critical to building any argument, would not have been possible.

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Introduction

The Moroccan state undertook to promote the rights of women and their participation in public life by putting in place assertive policies, strategies and measures to enable women to participate at all levels. An example is the introduction of the electoral quota system in their favor, a measure demanded in 1990s by several NGOs advocating for improvement in the status and condition of Moroccan women. In fact, to ensure women's participation in political processes and in the governance of local structures and Parliament in particular, Morocco, emulating numerous other countries, instituted the quota as a strategic step to have women represented within several government bodies. This step is a large stride in the country's democratisation process towards promoting gender equality and social justice since the 1990s. Two decades later, the new Moroccan Constitution of 2011 recognised gender equality.

However, despite all these advances in women's empowerment and gender equality promotion, the representation of Moroccan women in politics does not exceed 10.5%.

This observation has led us to put forward the following hypothesis: *Moroccan women take little or no part in public life because they lack self-confidence and economic empowerment*.

As it happens, a number of studies show that the main factors inhibiting gender parity pertain to political, legal and socio-cultural spheres. Other factors are psychological, chiefly lack of self-confidence, and economic, namely lack of financial autonomy.

This study sets out to apprehend the relationship between self-confidence and economic autonomy and its impact on women's participation in public life. The study is conducted as part of a coalition of three NGOs[1] among residents in the Kenitra-Rabat-Casablanca region. The ultimate objective of this research is to issue recommendations that could be harnessed in an advocacy action to facilitate larger participation by women in public life in Morocco.

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1 In alphabetical order:
- ADFM: Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc (Democratic Association of Morocco's Women)
- OFR: Organisation des Filles de la Renaissance (Organisation of Renaissance Girls)
- RFMN: Réseau de Femmes pour le Mentoring/Networking (Network of Women for Mentoring/Networking)

This report covers research action undertaken from December 2013 through April 2014. It is structured in four chapters. After providing terminological details on the definition of key concepts linked to the working hypothesis, that is economic empowerment, self-confidence, and participation in public life, the first chapter describes the state of women's participation in public life, both in Morocco and internationally. The second chapter sets out the methodology and tools used within the scope of this research. The third chapter presents the findings of the field survey. Finally, the last chapter discusses findings in the light of the research hypothesis and similar studies around the same issue and concludes by issuing a set of recommendations.

CHAPTER 1:
Literature review

CHAPTER 1: Literature review

Introduction

To better appreciate the hypothesis that women's participation in public life is closely linked to their self-confidence and economic autonomy, we will seek in this chapter to first define what we mean by "self-confidence" and "economic empowerment." We will subsequently outline the state of play of Moroccan women's participation in public life.

1.1. Definition of concepts

1.1.1. The economic empowerment of women

It is difficult to give a sufficiently precise definition of the notion of women's economic empowerment as it varies depending on institutions and the sociocultural and economic practices prevailing in every society. Definitions, however, are made available by international organisations, in this case the World Bank, OECD and ICRW.

To the World Bank, "economic empowerment is about making markets work for women (at the policy level) and empowering women to compete in markets (at the agency level)."[2]

For its part, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines women's economic empowerment as the "capacity of women to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways that recognise the value of their contribution, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth."[3]

Finally, the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) assumes that "economically empowering women is essential both to realize women's rights and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare."[4]

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[2] World Bank, 2006, p.4
[3] OECD Report, 2011, p.6.
[4] Golla, Anne Marie et al. *Understanding and Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: Definition, Framework and Indicators*. Washington DC: International Centre for Research on Women, 2011.

In Morocco, the notion of women's economic empowerment is still equivocal in view of the major differences existing between rural and urban women and the diversity present in social strata. It should be further noted that as far as commercial and contractual legislation is concerned, Moroccan women had to wait until 3 July 1995 to stop being considered as "underage" economically since, under article 6 of the Trade Act and article 726 of the Obligations and Contracts Act, granting a woman the status of *commerçante* (female trader) was conditional on obtaining the prior approval of her husband (Enhaili, 2013).

For purposes of our study, economic/financial autonomy refers to the fact that a woman works or pursues some gainful activity and has an income at her disposal.

1.1.2. Self-confidence

Self-confidence involves five major characteristics:

Prediction: Self-confidence is always a prediction with a real element of uncertainty. It is not an innate quality or the product of an insight or feeling. It exists above all in the mind.

Realism: Self-confidence is realistic. It rests on the actual experience accumulated by a person. Otherwise, this confidence would be dangerous and would end up in serious failure. We are fortunate, however, to be protected by vital reflexes that prevent us, under normal conditions, from having blind or excessive confidence in ourselves.

Adequate resources: Self-confidence does not go so far as to predict results. It predicts, with realism, that we have adequate resources to confront a situation. It predicts that we are able to find solutions to problems that will inevitably arise on the way.

Specific: Any prediction must be relatively precise to be realistic. A prediction always applies to a specific domain. Outwardly, self-confidence often appears to be general, but in reality it is always specific.

Temporary: Self-confidence is never a permanent gain. It is temporary by definition because it is realistic and rooted in experience.

We can therefore define self-confidence as **"a realistic and temporary prediction when we possess adequate resources to confront a specific situation."**

It is always the result of experience accumulation. It constantly involves partial certainty that applies to a specific domain at a given point in time. It is never a prediction about outcome or performance; it is rather a prediction that concerns the manner in which things will play out. A person who lacks self-confidence, instead of thinking about the advantages, benefits or even utility of an act, will review all possible and notional risks and will end up being convinced not to make any attempt at all.

In addition to this lack, others include:

Lack of experience since the person cannot acquire it due to fear of undergoing the experience or benefiting from it,

Lack of contact and affection since the person cannot reach out to others and even when the person does, the latter's approach is dominated by expectancy and hope as well as lack of enterprise and assurance.[5]

It is commonly observed that women have less self-confidence than men and that they are more likely to display lack of self-confidence in situations requiring achievement. As a matter of fact, as stated by Belghiti-Mahut (2004:157) "we can suggest that senior positions imply that women lack confidence in themselves: as it is a" masculine "function, they would feel less confident and have the feeling of not having the skills to be able to be a successful as men, which hinders progression ". In other words, women underestimate their capabilities more often than men, using a self-motivation mechanism. Low expectations and aspirations may not only lead to decline in performance but may also undermine a person's initiatives. Moreover, people who expect poor performance tend to choose not to engage in activities where there are challenges, opt for less demanding tasks, and get more easily disheartened in the face of failure.

1.1.3. Participation in public life

We will adopt the definition proposed by UNESCO (2002: 61) in the sense that "by public life, we mean everything which concerns the life of the society: political, economic, professional and socio-cultural sectors. It is often opposed to private life.

"More specifically, in this study, it refers to the involvement in community, cooperative and / or trade union and / or political life.

5 In order to distinguish between "self-esteem" and "self-confidence", go to: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-esteem.

1.2. Women's participating in public life in Morocco: state of play

In recent years, Morocco has made significant progress in advancing the rights of women and combating discrimination against them. This progress has been consolidated by the adoption in 2011 of a new Constitution which enshrines gender equality and institutes a series of measures to achieve parity and fight against discrimination based on gender.

However, major challenges remain to be addressed in the years to come to reduce gender disparities and promote the values of equality in all fields where disparities and discrimination are considerable. One of these challenges remains women's participation in public life and their involvement in the management of public affairs, a participation that is still subject to several, legal, socioeconomic, cultural and psychological factors.

1.2.1. Trends in women's political participation

Women's right to political visibility in Morocco was claimed as early as 1946 by Akhawat al Safa (Purity Sisters), an offshoot movement of the *Parti pour la Démocratie et l'Indépendance* (Party for Democracy and Independence or PDI). In the wake of independence, in 1963 to be precise, Morocco granted women aged 20 years and above the right to vote. In 2003, voting age was brought down to 18 years.

The principle of equality in political rights has thus been part of constitutional reform since the 1970s. Strong demand for its introduction emerged in the 1980s and grew in scope in the 1990s with the advent of the *alternating* government and the emergence of civil society. As a result, Morocco affirmed its commitment to internationally recognised human rights in the Constitution of 1992 and ratified the convention on combating all forms of violence against women in June 1993.

Women's involvement in public affairs is rather recent in Morocco. It is only in 1998 that a woman was appointed, for the first time in the country's history, to head a ministerial department[6], namely the Ministry of Women, Children, Social Protection and People with Disabilities. The appointment was preceded by that of four women to the senior position of secretary of state in 1993 and two others to the same office in 1997.

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6 Secretary of State.

Moreover, the proportion of women serving in local government councils, just as their representation in Parliament, virtually remained static for a whole decade. It went from 0.33% in 1992 to 0.34% in 1997 to stand at 0.56% in 2003. It was not until 2002, the year of adoption of a consensual quota based on a nationwide list reserving 30 seats to women candidates exclusively, that 35 women were seen elected to the House of Representatives or 10.77% of all those elected. In 2009, representation in local elections also saw improvement, recording 12.3% of locally elected representatives thanks to the quota system (additional candidate lists). This trend was confirmed at the end of the parliamentary elections of 25 November 2011 with women holding 65 out of 395 seats in the House of Representatives or 16.46%.[7] This percentage is smaller than the world average which is, in turn, already low and does not exceed 21.4%.

Yet, this gain remains precarious insofar as these affirmative-action measures have not been institutionalised even though the principle of gender parity is enshrined in the Constitution of 2011 and women's representation depends on ad-hoc and voluntary measures and requires a minimum critical threshold of one third (33%) of women to improve their participation in political debate and decision-making. The Economic and Social Council (CES) stipulates in its report on equality that "additional measures in favour of parity are necessary in electoral processes, representative assemblies, civil service and justice."[8]

1.2.2 Access to decision-making positions: towards power sharing

Women's representation within the decision-making structures of public institutions at national, local and regional levels is very low. In fact, the number of women holding senior and leadership positions remains highly negligible: only one woman was promoted to the post of royal aide since 1999, another was named mayor in 2009, a third was appointed to serve as *wali* (provincial governor) while the number of women governors rose from one in 2006 to three in 2014.[9]

Additionally, the public service has opened up, for a few years now, to some women who have started assuming certain senior ministerial responsibilities. Progress is slow but significant considering long years of women's exclusion from senior office and decision-making spheres. Nevertheless, the feminisation of public service and the rise in the number of women civil servants are no indication of existing equity and

7 Ministry of Interior
8 Economic and Social Council (CES), 2012
9 Ministry of Interior

equality between genders in accessing responsibilities and positions. Furthermore, most women civil servants find themselves in middle management posts and are seldom assigned to senior duties. Only 19% serve as heads of sections. This proportion is respectively 11.6% and 16% for heads of divisions, inspectors general and ambassadors.[10] Likewise, in the corporate sector, the representation of women in the management boards of 500 large Moroccan companies remains highly marginal and does not exceed 7%.[11]

1.2.3. Socioeconomic considerations: stereotypes, education and employment

1.2.3.1. Stereotypes and mindsets: the prying eyes of society

Despite adoption by Morocco of the National Charter on Improving the Portrayal of Women in the Media and its fight against stereotypes, a critical measure if the principle of gender equality is to be enhanced and fortified, women's representation in the media and advertising continues to be marred by humiliating clichés and debasing treatment. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Social Development in Morocco in 2009, 85% of published articles feature sexist clichés and stereotypes and paint women in a profoundly negative light[12]. Studies on the Arabic- and French-language press between 2001 and 2009[13]are unanimous in condemning the inability of the press to project an image of women that matches reality and the invisibility of women in news coverage. The press continues to describe or portray them almost exclusively either in the private sphere or as victims in need of protection and tutelage. Themes relating mainly to love, sex and crime are predominant. The report of the CES substantiates this observation: *"Women's representation remains inadequate and highly stereotyped, and the views of women are marginalised. They are less frequently sought to articulate their opinions on political and economic issues of topical interest."*[14]

10 Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Modernisation, and UN Women, 2012
11 Ministry of General Affairs and Governance, and UN Women, 2012
12 Ministry of Social Development, United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA). *L'image de la femme dans les médias, situation et perspectives* (Portrayal of Women in the Media: Situation and Prospects), 2009.
13 Higher Institute of Information and Communication (ISIC), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *L'image de la femme dans le discours médiatique marocain* (Portrayal of Women in Moroccan Media Discourse, 2001; Zakia Daoud, La situation de la femme marocaine au travers de la presse et des medias (The State of Moroccan Women through the Press and the Media), conducted by Khadija Mohsen; *L'image de la femme au Maghreb* (Portrayal of Women in the Mahreb), Ed. Actes Sud/ Barzakh, Paris 2008; Ministry of Social Development; United Nations Population Fund (FNUAP), Op. cit.
14 Economic and Social Council (CES), 2012, Op. cit

Moreover, school curricula and programmes do not sufficiently embrace the values of equality and fail to include programmes designed to prevent discriminatory messages against women.

In addition, women's visibility in the public domain is undoubtedly one of the major changes society has gone through in Morocco. Women's access to education and employment and the trips they make on a daily basis for these purposes have been instrumental in the emergence of women as actors present in the public space.

As an example, the coverage of women politicians in the media, the primary vehicle contributing to the normalisation of the idea of sharing power and decision-making roles between women and men, remains clearly inadequate and out of sync with reality. A 2009 study[15]on the media coverage of women's political participation in three Maghreb countries shows an underrepresentation of politically engaged women. Moroccan daily news publications under review devoted little column space to women participating in public life. Reviewed articles lead to several negative observations, notably that political activity is predominantly male, that women's political participation is sometimes cited in statements made by men, and that certain profiles of women involved in political action are neglected.[16]

Interactions between women and men in public spaces are attended by a large number of prejudices that result in limitations on the women's spatial mobility, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence.

These stereotypes are vehicles of symbolic violence against women and young girls who frequent such spaces as they contribute to the dissemination of negative representations and clichés about them.

1.2.3.2. Education and emancipation

Access to education has been a major stepping stone for women, fostering not only decompartmentalisation and gender mixing in public space but also personal investment and the possibility of building a future beyond socially assigned roles.

15 El Bour, Hamida. *La médiatisation de la participation politique des femmes en Algérie, Maroc et Tunisie* (Media Coverage of the Political Participation of Women in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). Tunis: UN, INSTRAW, CAWTAR, Tunis, 2009.
16 El Bour Hamida, UN-INSTRAW-CAWTAR, op. cit. in *Femmes et Presse écrite au Maghreb, Amélioration de la représentation des femmes dans les médias au Maghreb* (Women and the Press in the Maghreb: Improving Women's Representation in the Media in the Maghreb), Azzalani M., Malchiodi M., UNESCO, 2013.

Schools have educated the first generations of girls who have been able, at a later stage, to gain access to paid employment and assume public and political responsibilities.

Though progress reported since independence is remarkable, a wide gap between urban and rural areas persists, reflecting the existence of large geographical, social and gender disparities.

Ten million people are illiterate; and the majority is women (62%). Gender but also spatial inequalities, as rural women suffer illiteracy more than urban ones. Among the 12.3 million women "of working age, it appears that" more than half (52.6%) are illiterate, "says the study HCP (2014). According to the same source, rural women are more affected than urban: more than seven in ten (71.8%) against about four in ten in urban areas.

Almost one in two women (47.6%) has no level of qualification, and fewer than one in four (24.7%) is active, further notes the HCP, which refers to "low participation" this segment of the population to economic activity.

1.2.3.3. Access to employment: conquering space

Progress in female employment is undeniable. According to the High Commission for Planning (HCP), the number of economically active women in Morocco grew from less than 1 million in 1960 to 2.4 millions in 2010 while the male labour force posted slower expansion.

Despite this growth, the rate of female unemployment is higher than that of men across all occupational groups, both among youth and the long-term unemployed. The female unemployment rate is visibly and structurally higher than that of men. In urban areas, the unemployment rate of women is 24% while that of men stands at 17%.[17] Regarding holders of advanced degrees, the female unemployment rate is 21% in urban areas compared to 11% for men.

We should also bear in mind that the female employment rate remains lower than that of men. Women in Morocco make up 35% of the economically active population but more than half of unemployed Moroccans.[18]

17 High Commission for Planning (HCP), October 2012
18 Idem

Conclusion

Analysis of the Moroccan context shows that, no matter how much effort is applied, inequalities and discrimination are real in everyday life for women at various levels: illiteracy, difficult access to healthcare and resources (water, education, loans, etc), low political and public representation, more pronounced poverty and vulnerability, and higher exposure to alienation and violence, including spousal and domestic.

These factors can be genuine barriers to women's access to public life generally and politics in particular, especially that the absence of media coverage of women's success stories and their active participation generates low visibility for their economic contribution and prevents their propulsion to active roles that break away from the traditional pattern relegating women to the private sphere.

It emerges from this brief review of literature that the main barriers to gender parity in Morocco, as with other countries, originate in political, legal and sociocultural spheres. Other factors are psychological, such as lack of self-confidence, and economic, namely lack of financial and economic autonomy, which are real barriers.

CHAPTER 2 :
Methodological framework

CHAPTER 2 : Methodological framework

This chapter outlines the methodology for the study undertaken in the course of the action research. It presents successively the choice of field survey, the sample the Constitution, investigative tools and the coding process, seizure and analysis of collected data.

2.1. Choice of survey field

Our study covers the geographical area of Kenitra-Rabat-Casablanca. On the one hand, this area constitutes the core area of action for our three NGOs and the largest economic and administrative region in Morocco considering that Casablanca is the country's economic heart while Rabat is the political capital. The choice is also justified by impossibility to cover all of Morocco's territory owing to time and financial constraints. The study concerns urban (77%), suburban (13%) and rural areas (9%).

2.2. Sample selection

For purposes of our survey, we selected a sample of women and men representing different age groups and socioeconomic levels. The empirical method adopted is that of quotas. To ensure large representation, we selected the following parameters for setting quotas:

Gender;
Age;
Area of residence;
Involvement or lack thereof in public life.

The questionnaire-based survey concerned 300 adult women and men, whether engaged or not in the public sphere. 222 completed questionnaires were counted, that is close to 74% of our sample. Incomplete questionnaires were discarded.

2.3. Choice of investigation tools

The survey was conducted based on questionnaires, focus groups and testimonials. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data through open-ended and partially open-ended questions. Focus groups enabled us to further investigate certain aspects based on the views drawn from different groups in relation

to gender, involvement, or not, in political, community and union life or lack thereof, and age, particularly young male students. Through testimonials, we were able to look more closely at the daily routine of women and their experiences as activists engaged in public life as defined in this study, namely engagement in community and/or union and/or political life.

2.3.1. Questionnaire-based survey

Our choice of questionnaire as an investigative tool seemed appropriate to collect, in a relatively quantitative manner, factual data on the nature and levels of women's participation in public life, on factors influencing this participation, and on the way male/ female respondents perceive such participation and its relationship with self-confidence and economic independence. The qualitative aspect was also tackled in the questionnaire through open-ended and partially open-ended questions.

2.3.1.1. Construction of questionnaire

Building on research questions and sub-questions and bibliographical examination of women's participation in public affairs, self-confidence and economic autonomy, we came to develop the items of our questionnaire.

Once constructed, the questionnaire was submitted for consideration by the supervisors of INTRAC, the project partner appointed by the British Council, to collect his observations and remarks. It was also tested by a restricted sample of the target population to ascertain the relevance of questions, their understanding, potential interpretation, and time required for their completion. The questionnaire was finalized while taking heed of various form and substance limitations by regrouping certain questions, reviewing value grids, and rearranging the questionnaire as a whole.

2.3.1.2. Questionnaire structure

Consisting of 39 questions, in addition to the unnumbered "General Information" section, our questionnaire is structured around 5 key areas as follows:

Area 1: Nature of women's participation in public life and its levels.
Area 2: Factors influencing women's participation in public life.
Area 3: Society perception of women's participation in public life.

Area 4: Existing mechanisms for enhancing women's participation in public life and their efficiency.
Area 5: Experiences of participation in public life.

2.3.2. Survey based on focus groups

To refine the qualitative aspect of our research and further deepen knowledge of certain components, including those related to perceptions and attitudes, we set up three focus groups to collect data from varied categories as follows:

Young girls and boys active in public life (NGOs and political parties)

Women leaders active in political parties, labour unions and NGOs

Young men, nearly all of them are students

2.3.2.1. Construction of facilitation grid

Focus groups were conducted with the help of a facilitation grid which was designed based on points about which qualitative data was required, namely:

Area 1: Definition of participation in public affairs and perception of women's participation.
Area 2: Difficulties hindering women's participation in public life and influencing factors.
Area 3: Avenues for enhancing and promoting women's participation in public life.

2.3.2.2. Operation of focus groups

Focus groups proceeded as follows:

	Date	Number of participants	Composition
Focus group 1	27 February 2014	12 people	Young women and men active and engaged in public life (PL)
Focus group 2	08 April 2014	11 people	Men involved or not in PL
Focus group 3	12 April 2014	12 people	Women leaders active in public life (politics, unions and NGOs)

2.3.3. Testimonials

The aim of testimonials is to recount life stories that describe the day-to-day reality of women with "striking" experiences to share in participation in public affairs and who stand out in their fields of action. Testimonials were conducted as follows:

NGO	Who	Field of action
OFR	2 young women	Activists in political parties and civil society
RFMN	2 women	Women candidates for election and NGO activists
ADFM	1 woman	1 feminist activist

2.4. Coding of variables, data entry and analysis

To facilitate usage of information collected through questionnaires, data entry and analysis were performed by making use of the online software Google Drive.

To process partially open-ended and open-ended questions (within the bounds of possibility), we regrouped multiple answers given to these questions into relevant categories. We proceeded thereafter to analyse content in view of their qualitative worth.

Concerning the analysis of data derived from focus groups, recordings made using dictation machines were transcribed before proceeding to analyse their content.

CHAPTER 3 :
Presentation of findings

CHAPTER 3 : Presentation of findings

This chapter delineates findings according to the main research areas, namely:

Introductory area: Sample's general characteristics

Area 1: Nature of participation in public life and its levels
Area 2: Factors influencing PIPL
Area 3: Society perception of WPIPL
Area 4: Mechanisms available for enhancing WPIPL and their impact
Area 5: Experiences of participation in public life

The chapter concludes with proposals to improve WPIPL in the context of the questionnaire-based survey.

3.1. Data analysis: field investigation findings

3.1.1. Introductory area: Sample's general characteristics

3.1.1.1. Distribution of respondents by area of residence

The 222 respondents who answered items contained in the questionnaire live in the region stretching from Kenitra to Casablanca. More than three quarters (77%) come from urban areas while residents in rural and suburban areas make up 9% and 13%, respectively. The choice of urban predominance was deliberate as it serves to neutralise several factors that might already prevent women's involvement and participation in public affairs.

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by area of residence

Rural
9%

Semi urban
13%

Urban
78%

Distribution of respondents by area of residence
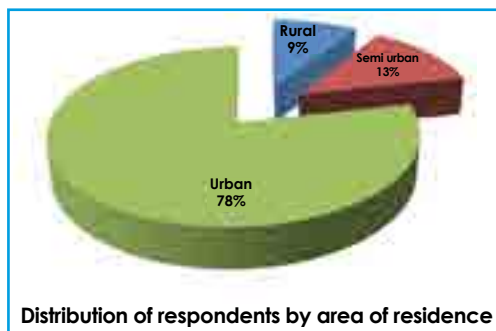
3.1.1.2. Distribution of respondents by gender and age

Since we have intentionally decided to focus in this research on the main parties concerned by the issue at hand, that is women, men

account for only a tenth (9%) of all respondents while women make up91%.

Concerning the age of respondents, close to half of them are below 35 years of age (17% are aged under 25 and 32% between 25 and 35). Only a small proportion of 5% is aged over 60 years as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by age
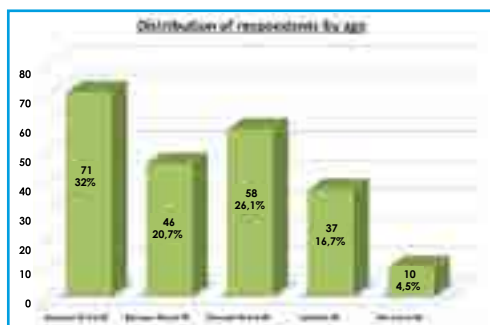
3.1.1.3. Distribution of respondents by level of education & occupation

In our sample, close to two thirds have a high education level as 64% of respondents declare having received tertiary education compared to 20% who claim a secondary education level (15% attended high school while 5% received a lower secondary education). A small proportion of respondents has an elementary education level or received no education. About 9% attended primary school while 3% are illiterate.

Respondents pursue a wide array of occupational activities: 44% are salaried women with 29% employed in the public services while 23% hold no paid employment. The latter consists of housewives and volunteers. Only 8% of respondents declare to be engaged in entrepreneurship, particularly management as business leaders.

One quarter of respondents belong to the "inactive" category as they are still pursuing their studies.

3.1.1.4. Distribution by off-duty activity

Most women and men surveyed state pursuing activities besides their main activities (work or other). They make up 73%. 45% of them are

active in community circles, 28% practise sports and 7% hold labour union memberships. Only 15% of those surveyed displayed an interest in politics. The survey revealed, however, that more than a quarter of respondents (27%) pursue no activity outside of work.
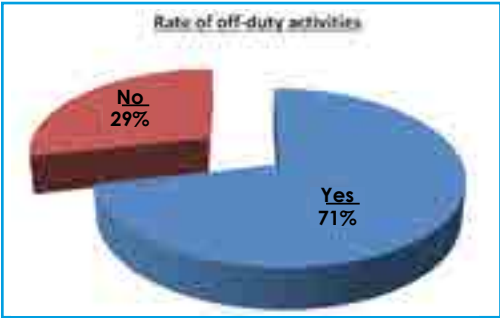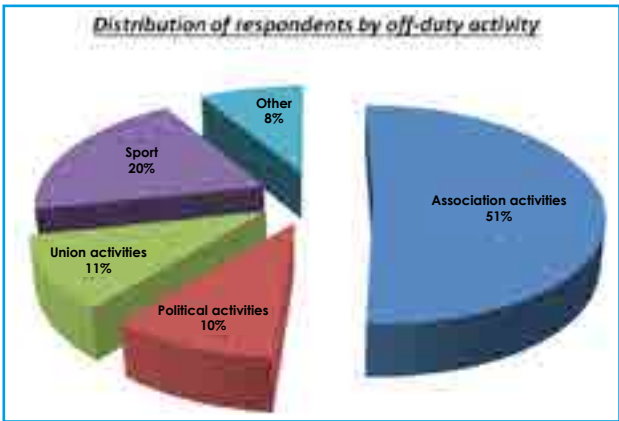
Figure 3: Rate of off-duty activities

Figure 4: Distribution of respondents by off-duty activity

3.1.2. Area 1: Nature of participation in public life and its levels

For purposes of our study, participation in public life refers to participation in community, cooperatives, political and/or union life, etc.This definition was upheld by participants to the focus groups who stressed that participation in public life refers to «any act of public interest and which may be exercised at the local, regional, national andinternational level".In addition, twotypes of participationwere identifiedinfocus groupsand testimonials:

- A"positive" participation, characterized by "involvement and appropriation of issues ";

- A "negative" participation, characterized, on the contrary, by "the absence of involvement and by constant criticism."

Women take part in public life in "implicit and explicit ways because, given that they educate future generations and hence have a say in public life". Otherwise, the object of the research is understood in the same way by the investigated and investigators of the study.

3.1.2.1. Nature of participation in public life

Analysis of the quantitative data shows that women are more active in NGOs than in political or union circles.

In urban areas, women are more active. However, community work remains predominant within a rate of 61% while the rate of political participation remains low and does not exceed 19%. The figure is even lower for labour unions and cooperatives with 8% and 5%, respectively.

Participation in the political sphere remains very limited, both for men and women.

Figure 5: Nature of participation
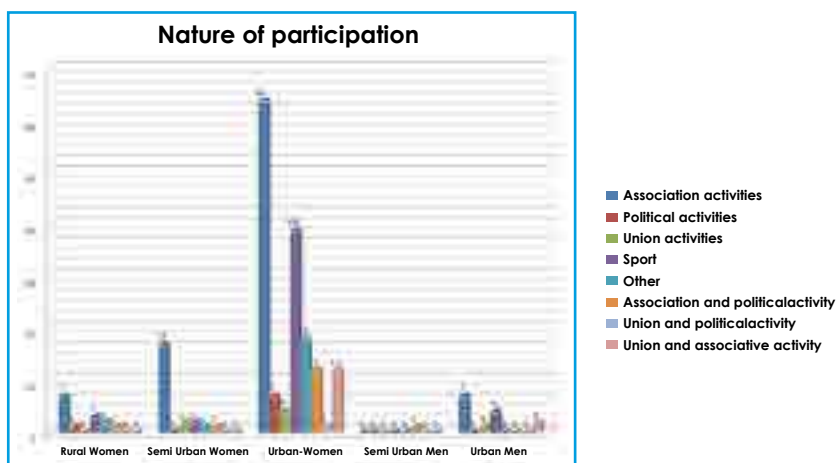
Furthermore, respondents participate in the decision-making structures of NGOs, cooperatives and political parties; the highest rate of this participation (more than 70%) is found among urban-dwelling women.

It is noted, in this regard, that community activities prevail: women are very present and active in causes regarding women's rights and Human rights in general, but remain absent (or excluded)

from economic areas and from the decision-making processes of political parties. The study showed that politics attracts only a small percentage of respondents. This is due to the fact that politics remains a "terrain" for men only and that it is difficult for women to break into political parties even when they are accomplished activists: "*It is a universe that remains obscure and difficult to decipher.*" Additionally, society's perception of politics as "dirty" and "reserved to men," women's illiteracy, and their limited (tardy) access to public space exacerbates their lack of self-confidence. Those who gain access are "disheartened" due to the absence of democracy within partiers and failure to consider gender concerns in the management of these formations (delayed meetings, decision-making out of party structures, absence of mechanisms and measures to encourage women, and the paternalistic approach (wives and daughters of political leaders who came to join parties through this connection remain under "the tutelage" of their fathers, husbands and/or brothers).

These results were confirmed by the low participation observed in government and elected bodies, both at the national and regional levels; in fact, women's representativity in Arab parliaments is one of the lowest in the world.

Moreover, even women who came to prove themselves politically, are only "allowed" by "men" to participate in "social" instances and not in the "decisive" politically bodies; their role is more "advisory" than "decisional". This finding is confirmed by the composition of the present government where women ministers hold positions of delegate ministers in areas believed to be relatively little strategic.

According to studies carried out in Morocco, women's non-participation can be traced to several factors. In this connection, Houria Alami M'Chichi (2002) maintains that Moroccan women are more present in discourse and the media than in politics due to three factors.

The first is linked to **Moroccan law**. The author justifies the situation of women by the fact that gender equality is an issue of dichotomy between Islamism and modernism. In fact, from the country's independence in 1956 until 2004, Moroccan legislation, including the Personal Status Code (Mudawana), treated women as an underage subject that depends on the private sphere but were considered as autonomous in the public sphere. In other words, women's political rights were endorsed without reforming personal rights. It was not until 2004 that the Family Code was revised, introducing three major

advances; namely: (i) legal equality between men and women, (ii) spousal co-responsibility, and (iii) women's access to social majority.

The second factor is related to **the approach followed** in handling the issue of women. The situation of women is analysed in terms of gender as a product hailing from the West, not from Moroccan society.

The third factor that limits women's access to the political realm is the **low literacy rate of women** and the **patriarchal culture** of Moroccan society.

Concerning women's participating in political life, Alami M'Chichi (2002) explains that even when women express the wish to participate in politics, they are confronted with discouraging situations. First of all, representation in decision-making organs, including at the level of politburos and central committees of political organisations, is largely reserved to men. For example, there are only two women currently leading political parties and very few women are present inside central committees.

The author further reveals that women generally run for election in constituencies where they stand little chance of being elected and where there is a strong presence of conservatives, which suggests that female candidacies serve only as an alibi to display parties' embrace of modernity and that women are yet to earn the trust of voters who still are not prepared to entrust female capabilities with the management of local affairs.

In fact, according to the author, this phenomenon is linked to **"a cultural construct of relations between males and females. This ideological construct depreciates their role in public life and restricts them to the traditional roles of 'mother and spouse.''**

This conservative representation of women's role in public life is the product of a traditional society marked by the low education level of the female population.

In Tunisia, Maryam Ben Salem and Giorgia Depaoli (2011) noted that lack of opportunities to gain experience and the absence of real dialogue on existing political platforms preclude a number of women from participating more actively in political life. Another constraint is especially burdensome: when a woman chooses to effectively engage in politics, she will have to address the challenge of reconciling her professional and private life.

In conclusion, we can state that though public policies and laws are more and more aware of promoting the WPIPL, much remains to be done. Furthermore, more efforts need to be made to raise the general public's awareness, since many believe that "the fact that women educate their children is in itself a participation in public life."

3.1.2.2. Participation in elections

Concerning the nature and level of women's participation in the electoral process, in this case elections and voting, 70% of women surveyed declare having taken the initiative to register themselves in electoral rolls, 72% took part in a vote, while 34% participated in a candidate's electoral campaign while only 16% stood for election. It appears therefore that the presence of women in elections is meaningful not as full-fledged actors inside elective structures, but merely as "votes."

It is noted, however, that the lowest rates of registration in electoral rolls and voting are found in the under-25 age group while rurally-dwelling women are not involved in decision-making inside political parties and only 1.92% hold membership of a political party compared to 35.29% in urban areas.

Figure 6: Level of women's participation in elections
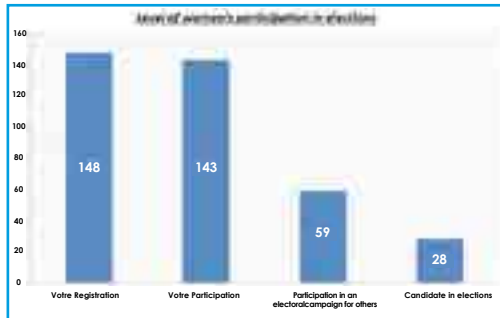
Also of note is that the reason cited when explaining decisions not to stand for election as candidates is disinterest in politics which is, in turn, linked to the poor credibility of political parties. Moreover, although around 2/3 of the women in urban areas are highly educated (64% have university diplomas) and are economically independent (81%), 10% of them feel that they are unfit and that there is no democracy inside political parties. It is in rural areas that "men place barriers to women's registration in electoral rolls".

3.1.2.3. Motives for participating in public life

Analysis of answers given by women to motivate participation in public life shows that they are numerous to assert that reasons behind their participation mainly relate to the wish to contribute to better living conditions for citizenry in general (71%) or more particularly in their community (67%), a sense of civic duty (68%), belief in a cause (68%). It is noted on the other hand that personal reasons come in last, as the majority of the respondents take exception to participation to resolve a private issue (only 40% are concerned), gain notoriety or reach self-accomplishment (45%).

Conclusion

The results of the study show that women are more engaged in community and cooperative work than in political parties and labour unions. The lowest rate of registration in electoral rolls concerns youth who express, as with all other groups, their disinterest in politics. The reasons mentioned are:

lack of credibility of political parties, citing among other reasons lack of democracy inside political parties;

men's resistance to women's entry into this sector.

It should be noted, however, that most women surveyed registered in electoral rolls and took part in a vote while 16% ran for election.

They also confirm that their participation is motivated by their wish to contribute to better living conditions for citizens in general, a sense of civic duty, and belief in a cause. In addition, testimonials from women who entered elective bodies show that they are excluded from decision-making mechanisms and processes: they are confined to social and educational committees only.

3.1.3. Area 2: Factors influencing women's participation in public life (WPIPL)

This section will present the factors that surveyed persons consider as having a strong impact on women's non-participation in public life.

Two types of factors have been identified: intrinsic and extrinsic ones.

Intrinsic factors considered being the most significant are:

Self confidence;
Level of education;
Economic and financial autonomy.
The extrinsic factors considered important:
The multiple responsibilities of the woman in society;
The negative social prejudices surrounding women's participation in public life and
The environment support.

3.1.3.1. Intrinsic Factors

3.1.3.1.1. Self confidence

Analyses of the questionnaires revealed that 98.7% of the people surveyed, across all groups (findings by area, age and gender), consider that women's self-confidence has an impact on its participation in the public arena, while 85% see this impact as strong.

Most of the participants to the different focus groups confirm this result, especially when it comes to women's participation in *political* life, which "is considered a *rough* area and a *male-dominated* space». According to these participants, even when the woman has the chance to access to this space, she often resorts to coaching or mentoring services to boost her self-esteem and confidence in order to face this men's world and the stereotypes and prejudices held against women. Other participants think that self-confidence is not a determining factor, and in case it is, the degree remains relative. Rather it is the macho thinking that constitutes a barrier to the active participation of women, in addition to the lack of economic empowerment. For these reasons, laws, ideologies, as well as the financial side, should be revised to ensure greater participation of women in public life.

As for their view of the literature, it showed that the lack of women's self confidence constitutes an obstacle to their participation in public life,

particularly politics. In this connection, a document entitled "Women's participation to economic, political and union life", edited by the Euromed Trade Union Forum (ETUC), concludes that all the factors that prevent women from participating in public life in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, are often internalized by women themselves and generate among many of them lack of confidence and a low self-esteem, thus blocking and sometimes discouraging them from occupying public spaces and continuing the fight to impose parity.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Congo, Maria Martinelli and Donatella Rostagno (2011) reveal that besides rampant illiteracy in the country, women do not participate in political life due to a trust deficit at different levels: (i) mistrust in politicians who give no attention to problems facing women, (ii) women's lack of self-confidence, which prevents them from standing in elections, and (iii) women voters' lack of confidence in women candidates.

In Burkina Faso, according to a study conducted by Alice Tiendrébéogo-Kaboret (2000), besides lack of training and absence of access to education, lack of self-confidence and assurance also affects women's access to Parliament.

In Niger, according to a report prepared by Souleymane Maâzouz (2010), women are less prepared for political competition with men candidates due to women's lack of self-confidence and the unavailability of financial resources despite a quota law enacted in the country as early as 2002.

3.1.3.1.2. Educational level

Almost all respondents to the questionnaire (91.98%), believe that women's level of education impacts their participation in public life, and this impact is qualified as"important" by73.59%. Indeed, women's level of education is a determining factor, especially in Morocco where one of every two women is illiterate. Moreover, the participants to the focus groups in this study were all unanimous about the fact that to give women a place in public life, they should have access to education and to information. This idea is also confirmed by other authors including Alice Tiendrébéogo-Kaboret (2000) and Maria Martinelli& Donatella Rostagno (2011).

3.1.3.1.3. Economic empowerment

Women's economic and financial empowerment also hinders their capacity to engage in public life since, on the whole, 83.42% of those surveyed consider that this factor has an impact, considered important by 63.51%. This observation remains relevant in the eyes of people surveyed, knowing that 70% of respondents have their own income and that 88% of them freely decide how to dispose of such income.

Figure 7: Economic autonomy and participation in public life (PIPL) (overall findings)
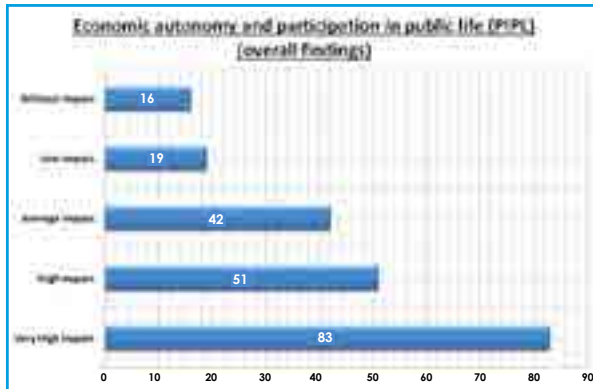
We define economic empowerment as having an income to meet the subsistence needs. According to the testimony of a young woman involved in politics: "in addition to the reactionary attitudes of men towards women, the active participation of women in public life is also hindered byte lack of financial resources". She stated that the most active women in politics are those that are economically independent, and that economic independence allows women to participate in the decision making process either inside or outside their houses "economic power is decisive, and may even equal political power." In other words, through economic empowerment, women will be able to establish themselves and develop self-confidence and self-esteem; they also become ready to engage in politics.

Several women politicians who contributed to the focus groups believe that self-confidence is not a predominant factor: it's rather the economic empowerment and, for those who are financially independent, it is the political will (at all levels, particularly in political parties) to give them the opportunity to access decision-making positions. In this regard, Nadezhda Shvedova (2011), points out that among the obstacles to the non-participation of women in public life, the lack of support for from the political party itself is a decisive factor.

Others say that only the rich, or those that have sufficient material support, can engage in an election campaign. To explain this point, they state the following: "To stand in municipal or parliamentary elections, financial autonomy is not enough; you have to be rich to face the male lobbies that control the wealth and invest in election campaigns."

Therefore, the question is how to set up positive action to enable women to benefit from material support to stand for elections.

Other participants revealed that economic independence is important but it not enough to conduct an election campaign. According to them: "economic independence and self-confidence are not sufficient to be active in public life; women have self-confidence in all areas except in politics, which is considered "hard" and reserved for men; it is the image that society holds of politics which constitutes a hindrance".

According to Nadezhda Shvedova (2011), the dominance of the political space by men leads the standards, laws, decisions to be in favor of men, hence the rejection of women from politics and from the masculine based model. She further adds that there is a correlation between the recruitment of candidates in legislative elections and their socioeconomic status.

In an article entitled Le recruitment politique et les femmes dans le processus politique (Political Recruitment and Women in the Political Process), Hon. Eleni Bakopanos, a Canadian MP, asserts that lack of self-confidence is considered as one of the most difficult obstacles women have to surmount. The author adds that economic equality is also seen as a decisive factor for promoting women's entry into politics. She explains that money is needed to stand for election and that most women simply have no access to funding networks intended for political candidates.

According to Guerline Toussaint (2011), there are times when economic factors prove overwhelmingly important. She explains that in Haiti most women have no financial autonomy. Being more vulnerable economically, they rapidly become financially dependent on men. Political factors are also believed to come into play. Politically speaking, these factors would refer to the structure and practice of political parties which may disadvantage women.

Moreover, Nadezhda Shvedova (2011) revealed that lack of confidence, low self-esteem, and poverty are some of the obstacles facing women's participation in Parliament in India. Other obstacles, according to her, are that women have no access to information nor education, which confirms the results of the present study.

To conclude this section on intrinsic factors, we could deduce that self-confidence is essential for the woman to participate in public life, including politics, because confidence is both a condition and a result of education and economic empowerment of women. The solution is the women themselves. Women have to work on themselves, as any change comes first from within. The desire to participate in public life must come of their own will and, as expressed by one of the participants in the focus groups, "the woman must have confidence in herself and not depend on promotion by other bodies or by the man. It is up to her to seek education, training, access to information, to fight for their rights and participate in public life actively".

3.1.3.2 Extrinsic Factors

3.1.3.2.1 Multiple responsibilities of the woman and the social prejudices

Results of the present study revealed that women's low participation in the public realm is also the result, according to our respondents, of responsibilities assumed by housewives (39%) and their multiple duties within society (41%).

Social prejudices surrounding women's participation in public life, particularly in politics, are also a critical factor. In fact, 38% of respondents consider that these factors hinder the women's participation in public life versus 24% for union work and 23% for community activities.

The impact of social prejudice was confirmed by the testimony of a female trade unionist who claims that *"it is the woman herself who constitutes a real blockage to her own participation in public life, including politics. She still cannot overcome the taboos inherited from traditional society. Women are not combative. Even more, they are afraid to face men"*. According to a report of the conference of Vaira Vike-Freiberga entitled "Women in Europe: for a true parity", held on 19 November 2009[19], the main barriers to women's participation in public life in Europe are:

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19   http://www.vvf.lv/fr/actualites/313-leurope-au-feminin-pour-une-vraie-parite-parlement-eu-ropeen-353

Difficulty in reconciling private and professional life;

Selection procedures tailor-made to fit men;
Prejudices towards women resulting in their lack of self-confidence.

3.1.3.2.2 Entourage support

We define entourage support as the encouragement received from family, friends and organizations or institutions. Queried about support from their family to participation in the public sphere, only 46% of the people surveyed assert they receive support from their families to engage in civil society. This support is even less when it comes to political (17%) and union (11%) participation. Support comes primarily from friends (28%) and mothers (21%). It is found, moreover, that people who object to their participation in public life are mainly brothers, sisters and spouses. Concerning support extended by organisations, 59% of respondents are supported by **NGOs but only 19% of them receive backing** from political parties and 13% from unions while cooperatives come in last with 11%.

Society generally maintains a negative perception of politics. It is also of note is that the largest support originates from NGOs and very little comes from political parties. This finding is substantiated by testimonials from women serving inside political parties who maintain that the latter pursue anti-gender policies. They state that politics remain a men's world "difficult to decipher by women" that are excluded not only because of their lack of self-confidence or competence but also because they are women while politics "has always been a men's world."

Conclusion

At the end of this section, we find that the main factors impeding women's participation in public life, including politics, in Morocco, as in other countries, are (i) intrinsic factors: including lack of self-confidence, lack of access to education and information and lack of economic autonomy and (ii) extrinsic factors including beliefs, anti-gender practices and policies of the community and integrated by women, whereby the need for a systemic approach to the issue of women's participation in public life.

3.1.4. Area 3: Society perception of WPIPL

3.1.4.1. Women role models to inspire other women

Arguably, in general terms, most answers given to the questionnaire refer to how Moroccans (men and women) perceive women's participation in public life.

The study has been instrumental in understanding the degree of society's assessment (positive or negative) of the various factors affecting women's participation in public life, namely:

Education
Various agents of socialisation
Prejudices and typical representations
Customs and traditions
Division of household tasks between women and men.
Portrayal of women and men in the media
The presence of a role model/female experience in the area

It emerges from the examination of completed questionnaires that the overriding factor influencing women's effective participation in public life is, in the opinion of 80% of respondents, the presence of a "role model" or "the influence of a female experience in the public domain." This is an indication of the perceived importance of having women leaders inspire other women. Education (66%) and various agents of socialisation (60%) also appear to influence women's involvement in public life, albeit to a lesser extent.

Figure 8: Assessment of the presence of a role model as a PIPL factor
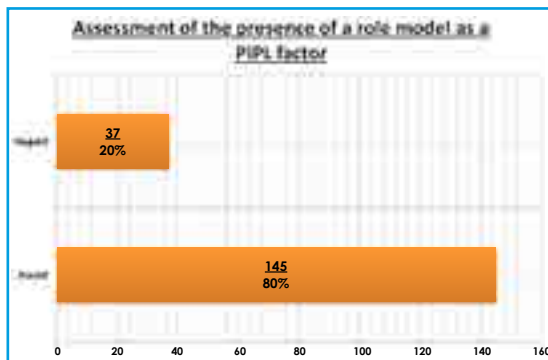
However, the majority agrees on the negative impact of prejudices and stereotypes (89%), primarily, and of customs and traditions (76%),

secondarily, on women's participation. The portrayal of women and men in the media (66%) and the allocation of tasks in the household (58%) are less seen to be critical factors.

"Other" factors suggested by 10 respondents do not differ from factors proposed in the questionnaire. Moreover, the rate is relatively marginal to be consequential.

Figure 9: Degree of assessment of prejudices/stereotypes as a PIPL factor
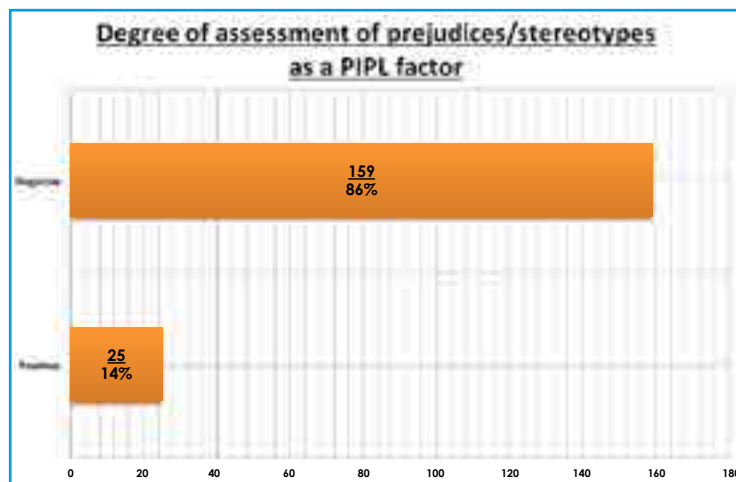
Numerous scholarly studies have documented the impact of gender stereotypes on inequalities existing in the way men and women are treated in society. Indeed, the perpetuation of negative gender stereotypes seriously hampers the introduction of an egalitarian ethos into various spheres of society. It limits to a large degree the advancement of the principle of gender equality in the social development process.

A multitude of studies and surveys help shed light on social areas where these stereotypes are deployed and mechanisms that lead to the reproduction of discriminatory preferences, restrictions and exclusions. *These mechanisms, which are neither natural nor irreversible, should be apprehended by schools, families and the media.*[20]

20 Economic and Social Council (CES), *Promotion de l'Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans la vie économique, sociale, culturelle et politique, Concrétiser l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, une responsabilité de tous: concepts, recommandations normatives et institu-tionnelles* (Promoting Gender Equality in Economic, Social, Cultural and Political Life, A Shared Responsibility: Concepts, Normative and Institutional Recommendations, Voluntary Investigation No.8/2012

Conclusion

Respondents have emphasised the strong impact of stereotypes and traditions as curbs on women's participation in public life. Perception of the role and status of women on economic, social and political fronts is seemingly contingent and conditional on clichés and stereotypes confining women to roles and positions that primarily fall within the private sphere. It appears that the emergence of "role model" women may contribute to changing the unedifying representation of women, congealed through stereotypes that go with the flow of tradition, thus demonstrating strong resistance to change.

3.1.5. Area 4: Mechanisms available for enhancing WPIPL and their efficiency

To get the woman out her private area, where she was confined, to the public space, many NGOs have campaigned to institutemechanisms forWPIPL, including:

- The quota system,especially at thenationaland supplementarylists andinoffices ordecision-making bodiesof political parties;
- Thegovernmental fundto supportpolitical parties;
- Thewomen'sautonomy programs;
- Programs for the political empowerment of women;
- Reform of laws in favor of equality;
- Developing strategies and public policies incorporating the gender approach such as:

> - ICRAM (program for parity)
> - INDH
> - National Strategy for equality

However, we still need to know if the Moroccan woman is aware of such mechanisms. Answers to the questionnaire reveal that 65% of the respondents declare being aware the mechanisms designed to promote the WPIPL, while only 35% are not, only 40% say they have already taken part in a programme designed for this purpose.

It should be noted that only 32% of housewives benefited from one of these programs, including the one pertaining to economic empowerment, and which was estimated very effective by 62% of them. The data collected during the focus groups meetings reveal that:

- Men emphasize the gap between the laws encouraging women to participate in public life and the patriarchal mentality of the community which makes these mechanisms useless;

- Active leader women are generally against the quota mechanism that, in their view, favors relationships (family, friends, tribe) and patronage.

Nonetheless, active young people consider that the quota mechanism, in the current situation, is necessary tool to accustom the community to see women in political processes, to trust them and value their skills.

The efficiency of these mechanisms was measured using a scale from 1 to 5 ("very low" to "very efficient").These measurements are set out in the table below as follows:

Figure 10: Distribution of respondents by assessment of various affirmative measures

	Positive measures	Very low %	Low %	Medium %	Fair %	Highly efficient %
	Level of efficiency					
1	Quota, particularly national and additional candidate lists	28	10	12	15	35
2	Government support funds intended for political parties	28	16	18	14	24
3	Quotas within politburos and decision-making organs of political parties	20	10	18	17	34
4	Women's empowerment programmes	17	7	15	18	43
5	Women's political empowerment programmes	17	4	14	22	44
6	Law amendments in support of equality	18	7	7	12	54
7	Formulation of public strategies and policies incorporating the gender approach	20	7	11	14	48

Affirmative steps that respondents deemed to be the most efficient of all pertain to law reforms (54%) and the formulation of public policies and strategies incorporating a gender perspective (48%). Accumulated results of "fairly efficient" and "highly efficient" show that both mechanisms obtain a rate of about two thirds of respondents who find them fairly efficient (66%) and highly efficient (62%). The

same applies to capacity building through the political (66%) and economic (61%) empowerment programs, considered highly and/or fairly efficient measure.

The quota mechanism – an action implemented through additional and national candidate lists in Morocco to improve women's participation rate in local and parliamentary polls and encourage the adoption of quotas to facilitate access to executive boards and decision-making positions-received the approval of only half of the responses that find it highly (50%) or fairly efficient (51%).

Finally, the measure seen as the least efficient of all to expand women's participation in public life is the government support fund dedicated to political parties. Only 24% of the respondents consider it to be highly efficient.

One of the testimonies goes even further stating that Moroccan women possess all the means to effectively participate in public life but "the real blockage lies in the woman herself ... I discovered this aspect of the woman which saddened me: lack of fighting spirit, fear of men ... the damage is very deep."

Young workers who participated in the focus groups stressed that to involve women in the decision-making process, it is necessary to work first on the mechanisms of participation and equality as well as on the affirmative measures in the programs of political parties.

In an open-ended question in the questionnaire regarding the mechanisms which may encourage women's effective participation in public life, the opinions of respondents are divided mainly among the importance of effective gender equality, the role of education and sensitisation campaigns, and the significance of supervision and mentoring.

Women, in particular, speak of self-confidence, economic independence and the importance of financial empowerment, and consider that the political arena enables women to be involved in public life. Others feel that the system (schematically defined as society+political parties+lack of transparency + corruption) is itself a barrier to women's participation.

For their part, the male participants in the focus groups describe, in order of importance, self-confidence, economic autonomy and

household tasks as obstacles. They consider that "women assume sole liability for their exclusion from public life." This assertion would imply that certain men do not identify society, in general, and men in particular as factors limiting women's access to public life. They assign the blame to women's lack of confidence and "sensitivity». In addition, some referred to the religious factor and maintained that as "Muslims, women should not meet with men and travel without a legal companion." However, they aver that girls do better than boys in studies and that they will become leaders in the near future.

In one of the testimonies, a leader woman in civil society considers that only legislative end educative tools may promote WPIPL.

Conclusion

Law reform and the introduction of gender-responsive public policies are deemed to be the most appropriate mechanisms to enable women to participate in public life. The quota mechanism holds the third position.

It should be noted that respondents disapprove of financial support to political parties and consider that it has no efficiency, which confirms the results of the study on lack of confidence in political parties. The quota mechanism remains highly controversial between those who accept it as a transitional measure and those who are more in favour of women's empowerment and the obligation for parties to offer equal chances to both women and men to contest elections.

3.1.6. Area 5: Experiences of women's participation in public life

This research area reports results of the WPIPL experiences and the change observed at different levels following this active participation.

3.1.6.1. Positive change through WPIPL

To the question "Do you think or not that your real participation in public life and your personal experience in this field have contributed (or will contribute) to changes:

at family level,
at the level of public life,
to encourage or motivate women to participate in public life.

Analysis of the questionnaire data gave the following results:

Figure 11: WPIPL and changes in family/public life/women's participation rate
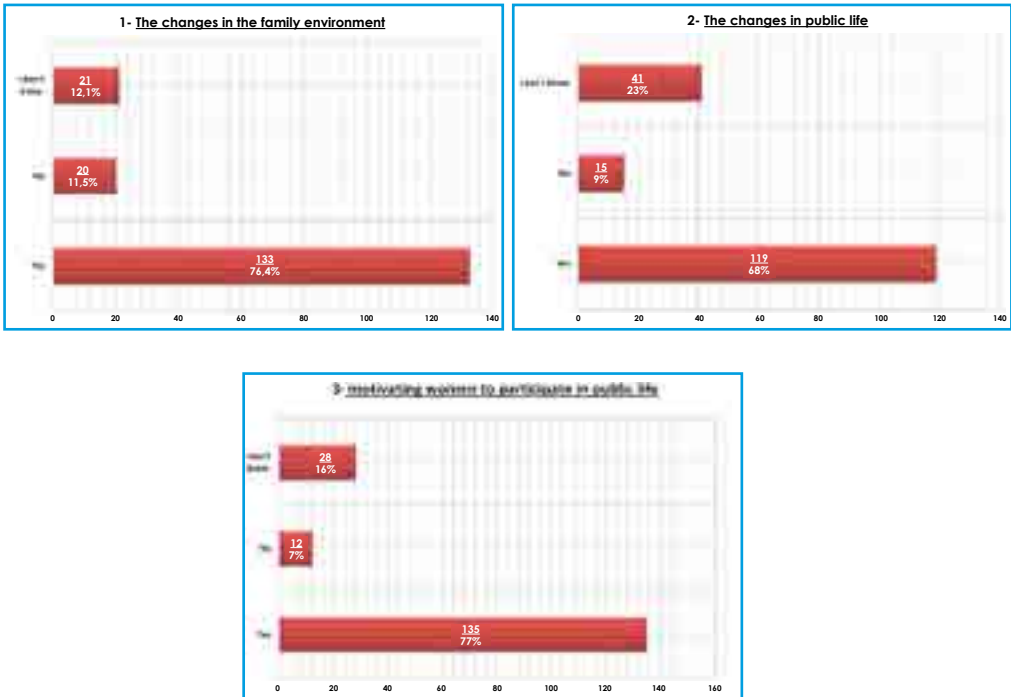
Findings clearly point to a correlation between women's participation and social change in general as responses oscillate between 68% and 77%. The majority considers that women's contribution to the public domain serves above all to foster involvement by other women (77%). The emergence of "role models" is identified as the most visible direct impact, tailed by family change (76%) and with impact on public life itself in general coming out last (68%).

The perception of women's engagement in public life cannot therefore but move things forward not only in terms of publically involved women's perception as models to follow and within family circles but even beyond since their action is believed to bring about change in the public sphere.

The positive or negative aspect of the impact made was submitted for self-assessment in three areas:

Family,
Entourage,
Attitudes.

Self-assessment of the quality of women's participation in public life in general ranges from "good" to "very good" for 59% of respondents. Less than 20% consider the quality of their participation to be poor. In other words, close to 80% positively self-assess the quality of women's participation in public life.

It emerges from the results obtained from answers to these questions that women's participation in public life is positively perceived by almost 70% of all respondents. More specifically, direct positive impact concerned the family in the first instance (73%), followed by entourage (70%) and attitudes at the psychosocial level (63%).

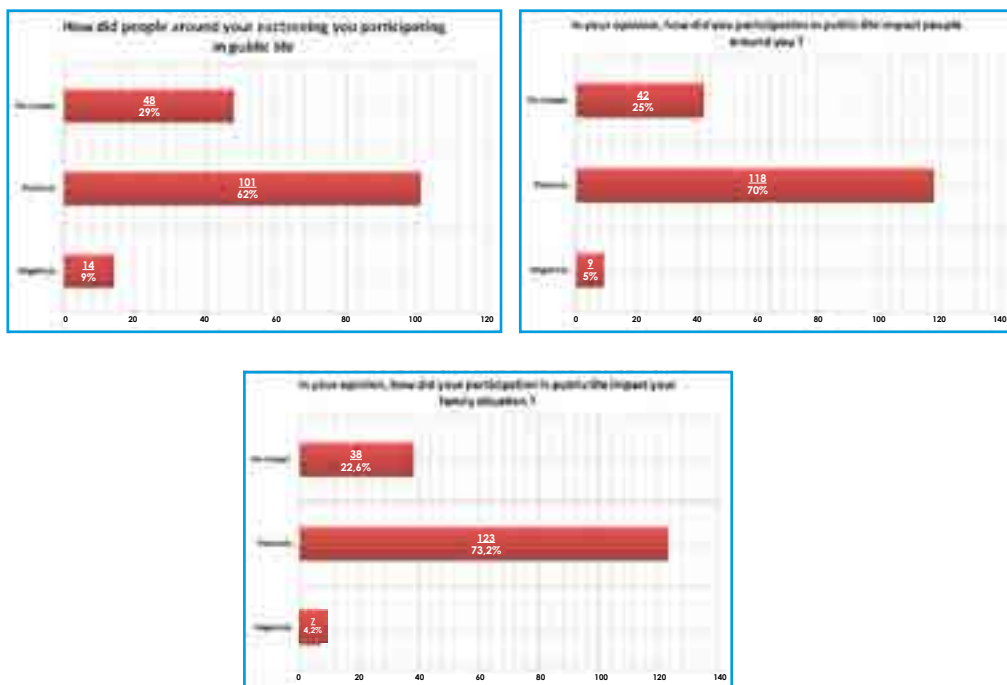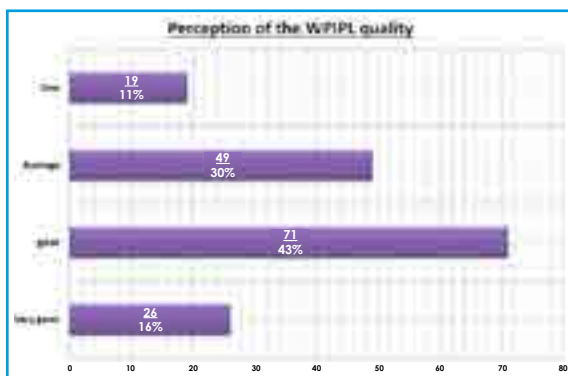Figure 12: Perception of change brought by WPIPL (family, entourage and attitudes)

3.1.6.2. Self-confidence and WPIPL

Self-confidence (which constitutes, we must recall, a critical factor in the light of our research hypothesis alongside economic/financial empowerment) seems to be have been reinforced significantly following participation in public life. In fact, as the following figure shows, the level of respondents' self-confidence grew by more than 30% after their involvement. Before the experience, the "medium to low" rate stood at 52% before dropping to 18% while the "low" degree tended even to disappear (1%). Self-confidence seems even to have risen (+39%) among women displaying self-confidence prior to the experience since the rate moved up from 24% of "Good" to 63% of "Very good." This observation was also confirmed by active women who stressed that their participation in community life had enabled them to build more self-confidence and to engage in the political field. They indicated that "the more we participate, the more our confidence grows."

Figure 14: Self-assessment of growth in self-confidence (before/after WPIPL experience)
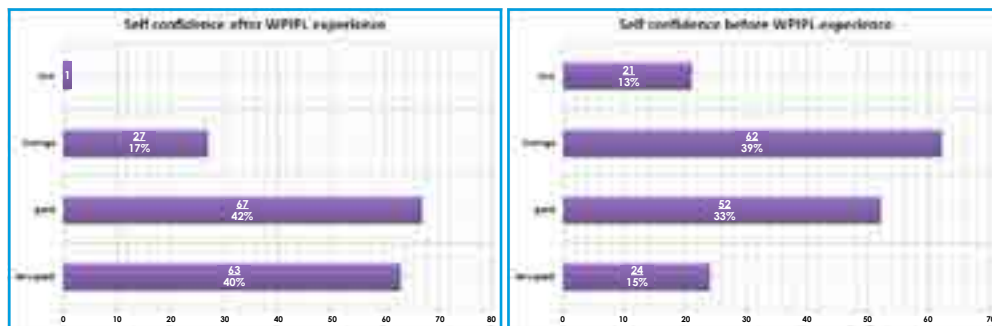
3.2. Proposals for improving wpipl : participation, self-confidence and training

data collected through questionnaires reveal a total of 145 proposals for improving WPIPL in Morocco. Qualitative analysis led to the distribution of recommendations among nine (9) themes as set out in the following table:

| FINANCIAL AUTONOMY	SELF-CONFIDENCE	TRAINING	MEN'S INVOLVEMENT	NON-PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION	FAMILY AS A PRIORITY	CLAIMING RIGHTS	FEMALE SOLIDARITY	Grand Total
1	43	26	1	1	69	2	1	1	145
0,68	29	17	0,68	0,68	47	1,37	0,68	0,68	100

This being said, three overarching recommendations stand out and essentially concern, in decreasing order of frequency:

Participating in public life (69 references, i.e. 47%);

Developing more self-confidence (43 references, i.e. 29%);
Receiving training (26 references, i.e. 17%).

Figure 15: Proposals for improving WPIPL
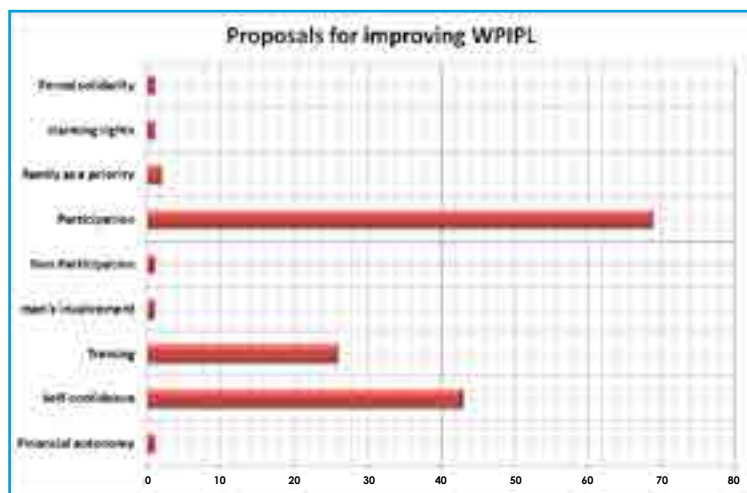
Conclusion

The outcome of the study clearly shows that everyone benefits from the woman's active involvement in public life. First, the woman gains self confidence; hence, the image she conveys improved and she stands as a model for other women. Also, her family and entourage are positively influenced by her participation. Finally, the community recognizes the benefits of her contribution to the management of public affairs.

It appears, therefore, that the proposals made are heading towards promoting or even calling for women's participation, in addition to a call to gain more self confidence. To this end, training is also mentioned as a lever to support the process related to the transition from private to public life.

CHAPTER 4 :
Conclusion and
recommendations

CHAPTER 4 : Conclusion and recommendations
Conclusion:

This study which was conducted *among women (and men) who are active or not in public life around the issue that "Moroccan women do not participate enough in public life and political processes in particular because they lack self-confidence and financial independence" has led to the conclusion that:*

Self-confidence and economic autonomy[21] are two key and indispensible factors for women to gain access to public space and be able to participate in public life.[22] However, even when these elements are present, women face other impediments of a social, cultural, educational and material nature (to be affluent or receive support to launch an election campaign). In addition, women who are active in public life are confronted with lack of transparency and democracy inside political parties.

They also confirm that their participation is motivated by their wish to contribute to better living conditions for citizens in general, a sense of civic duty, and belief in a cause. In addition, testimonials from women who entered elective bodies show that they are excluded from decision-making mechanisms and processes and are confined to social and educational committees only.

The findings of the study show that:

> - Women engage more in community and cooperative work than in political parties and labor unions, and the lowest rate of registration in electoral rolls is found among youth who express, as with all other groups, their disinterest in politics due to poor credibility of political parties, citing among other reasons lack of democracy inside political parties and men's resistance to women's entry into this sector. It should be noted, however, that most women surveyed registered in electoral rolls and took part in a vote while 16% stood for election.

> - Their participation is motivated by the wish to contribute to improving the living conditions of citizens in general, driven by a sense of civic duty, since they believe in a cause;

21 For purposes of our study, economic autonomy is understood to mean access of women to a job/activity that enables them to have an income at their disposal.
22 For purposes of our study, participation in public life is understood to mean participation in community, political and union life.

- Key factors influencing women's non-participation in public life are, in order of importance, self-confidence, training and economic autonomy followed by the multiplicity of responsibilities borne by women in society and in the household. Moreover, very few of them receive meaningful support from their entourage and from husbands in particular. Society maintains a negative perception of politics. Of note is that the largest support originates from NGOs but very little comes from political parties;

- The strong impact of stereotypes and traditions as curbs on women's participation in public life. Perception of the role and status of women on economic, social and political fronts is seemingly contingent and conditional on clichés and stereotypes confining women to roles and positions that primarily fall within the private sphere. It appears that the emergence of "role model" women may contribute to changing the unedifying representation of women, congealed through stereotypes that go with the flow of tradition, thus demonstrating strong resistance to change.

- Though respondents declare being familiar with mechanisms encouraging women's participation in public life, they find it difficult if not impossible to give illustrations or specific information on such mechanisms. This points to lack of media coverage of and sensitisation campaigns on these mechanisms.

- Law reform and the introduction of gender-responsive public policies are deemed to be the most appropriate mechanisms for enabling women to participate in public life. The quota mechanism comes in third. In fact, this mechanism remains highly controversial between those who accept it as a transitional measure and those who are more in favour of women's empowerment and the obligation for parties to offer equal chances to both women and men to contest elections and benefit from their support;

- Respondents disapprove of financial support to political parties and consider that it is devoid of any efficiency, which confirms the results of the study on lack of confidence in parties;

- Where women participate in public life, their contribution helps bring about positive change in society as a whole. Furthermore, the more they participate, the more the level of self-confidence increases.

In conclusion, it is noted that the study has been instrumental in establishing the proposed working hypothesis that self-confidence and economic empowerment are factors influencing Moroccan women's participation in public life. More importantly than the financial situation of women, the psychological aspect consisting in self-confidence emerges as a critical factor for WPIPL. It is even more so in the political arena which draws, as the study findings demonstrate, unfavourable representations from citizens in Morocco, thus exacerbating lack of confidence and, eventually, reducing general interest in politics.

Recommendations

Despite the limited extent of findings in view of the restricted scope of this research, results derived from questionnaires and the qualitative examination of focus groups and testimonials have facilitated the formulation of recommendations in the form of action proposals that could be implemented or, where they already exist, pursued in a more diligent manner to improve Moroccan women's participation in public life.

The recommendations pertain to legislation, politics, media, training and mentoring.

On the LEGAL/POLITICAL level:

- Work towards the introduction of laws and mechanisms to ensure equality and the effective implementation of the body of law already in place;

- Open nationwide debate on the merit of women's participation in public life, in general, and politics in particular;

- Strive to bring political parties to consider gender concerns in their policies by ensuring their good governance through monitoring structures and mechanisms for accountability with respect to gender equality.

On the MEDIA level:

- Work to have the media raise the profile of women active in political life, particularly those engaged in political parties and labour unions (see testimonials on role models);

- Ensure that messages on equality are relayed and conduct sensitisation and mobilisation campaigns around stereotypes prejudicial to women;

On the TRAINING/MENTORING level:

- Encourage women to engage in community life in the first instance since NGOs are considered to be a stepping stone for political action: women active inside NGOs are more willing to consider political engagement and action;

- Implement programmes for the empowerment of women, based on a participatory approach, to enhance their potential and ensure further participation in public life through mentoring/networking;

- Ensure that women become economically autonomous so that they can assert their views and gain more visibility in public space.

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