

REGIONAL PLANNING AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO

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Summary -- Since its political independence, Morocco based its economic activity on planning. However, the adopted plans were central. And in order to face the need of territories development, the state limited its action to the regionalization of the already established plans. Since 1992, the national planning was abandoned to be replaced, starting from 2005 by sectoral strategies which coincide with a third experience of regionalization marked since 2015 by the adoption of the regional plans. Will the latter be effective in term of territorial development without a planning or a global national strategy?

Keywords -- development plans - regionalization of the plan – regional planning – sectoral strategies – territorial development.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the Second World War and considering the need of reconstructing the economies destroyed by the war, planning had held an important place in the governmental policies in several countries. If the socialist countries had opted for an institutionally necessary imperative planning, the capitalist countries on the contrary, to remain on the path of liberalism, had elaborated an indicative planning. Similarly, in the developing countries, this planning was introduced to supplement the market mechanisms, often imperfect. (p.6, [1]).

Morocco's recourse to planning dates back to the post-colonial period in order to deal with inherited economic, social and spatial problems. However, it was not able to achieve balanced territorial development, or local development as it was called before the 1970s (p.68, [2]), in spite of the attempts to regionalize the national plans. (II)

From 2005 onwards, sectoral strategies will be adopted by supplanting national planning. They coincide with the "advanced" regionalization, put in force since 2015, which insists on the adoption of regional plans. Hence our interest in discussing their effectiveness in the absence of national planning. (III)

Our research thus follows a qualitative method using an inductive approach, starting with the description of the observed realities: the abandonment of national planning, the use of sectoral strategies and the adoption of regional development plans (RDPs). In the context of these observations, territorial development challenges us.

II. NATIONAL PLANNING AND THE REGIONALIZATION OF PLANS

A. National planning: a strategic choice since Morocco's political independence.

Historically, the economists have developed several theories about the development planning by considering it as "a continuous process involving decisions or choices about alternative possibilities in the use of available resources to achieve particular objectives over a specific period of time". (p.2, [1]). The plan is thus considered as an instrument of economic policy, prepared for a fixed period which can be short, medium or long term depending on the objectives and availability of resources. It is supposed to be a continuously readjusted reference document.

According to an operational approach, planning is a system, a particularly complex general function of orientation, management and regulation of the economic activity while having operational data. It is structured in four functions: formulation of economic strategies and policies, investment programming, the implementation of the investment program monitoring, macroeconomic monitoring to readjust, through economic policy measures, the economic and social development strategy. (Pp : 10-11, [3]). Therefore, as a method of managing the development of the national economy, planning is a working process whose result is the plan. (p. 15, [3]) It is a means considered effective in reducing uncertainty through the objectives and means that it recalls.

Ref[4], (p.154), shows that the plan was considered as the ownership of the nation. Thus, if there is a need to localize or regionalize certain actions, the regional policy is limited to a devolution procedure by choosing an executant to apply a central decision locally.

Regional policy experiments carried out since the 1929 crisis have shown that the objectives of the regional intervention remain centralized and without any real effectiveness of land-use planning policies conducted to correct spatial disparities and social inequalities. (Pp : 154-155, [4]).

It was only with the emergence of the concept of local development at the end of the 1960s and the appearance of the concept of sustainable development towards the end of the 1980s that the regional planning evolved with a slight development of decentralization depending on whether the states are federal or centralized unitary.

The recourse of Morocco to planning is essentially a political matter. The study of the socio-economic and spatial situation of the country during the adoption of such a strategic choice, after the political independence in 1956, shows that it was marked by a large-scale spatial and economic imbalances (Useful Morocco and useless Morocco). This worrying legacy has been a reality to face. Hence the application of planning.

Practically, many types of planning have been adopted in Morocco, covering several areas. On the one hand, it targets

the different geographical scales, from the communal to the national level. On the other hand, it is applied in various fields such as (annual) finance laws, land-use planning through the adoption of national, regional and urban planning schemes (between 10 and 20 years), and economic and social development (3 or 5 years), etc.

However, it seems that such a multiple and entangled planning has not led to a balanced territorial development considering several disabilities. We will emphasize the last category, the focus of our study.

B. National development planning: centrality and simple regionalization of plans.

Planning had been identified as an effective means for the development. However, economic and social development plans were restricted to take into consideration the regional data in their programs. It was the province, the pre-eminent political-administrative territorial unit that was favored as the territorial framework for the planning implementation at the expense of the region. (p.25, [5])

Table I lists the various development plans, specifying their objectives and certain limits.

TABLE 1
RECAPITULATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN MOROCCO

Plan's type	Objectives	Limits
Biennial 1958-1959	The transition Plan: an Equipment Program to ensure the transition of the equipment plan 1953-1957 under the protectorate.	Technical role
Quinquennial 1960-1964	To modify the structures of the Moroccan primary and dominated economy. Its main objectives: Executive education and training; Agrarian structures reform; Industrialization; State reform.	the province's growing place
Triennial 1965-1967	-Agricultural development (modernization of the sector); -Tourism development; -Executive training; -Industrialization	-Unachieved Objectives -the province's growing place
Quinquennial 1968-1972	Same priorities. We add : the demographic policy ; the industrial development and the commercial exchanges ; the thrift and aid policy; the projects elaboration and implementation of certain reforms (administrative, fiscal...); the implementation of the process of regionalization of the plan.	-The first steps of regionalization to allow the stakeholders participation in the implementation of the plan. -Projects with a provincial character.
Quinquennial 1973-1977 or «economic and social development plan»	Accelerated economic growth (7.5% per year) and increased investment (18% per year)	Unachieved objectives due to the decline of phosphate prices in the world market.
Triennial 1978-1980	Its main orientations: The imports reduction; The improvement of the internal and external fundamental balances; pursuing a social and territorial planning policy.	Various regional studies without balancing effects.

Quinquennial 1981-1985 or «economic and social re-launch plan »	The territorial integrity defence and the relaunch of the economic activity by: Mobilizing private savings, Increasing the investment, Improving the external balance by increasing exports, Tackling unemployment, Tax reform.	Marginalized plan in favor of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1983.
Quinquennial 1988-1992 Or « orientati on » plan	The accentuated liberalization of the economy, the disengagement of the State and the privatization. The plan identifies the following priorities: encouraging small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); encouraging the private initiative through privatization; developing the agriculture sector; and tourism.	An attempt to strengthen the area. 1992: Its erection as a local collectivity. Regional planning is only mentioned in the perspectives of the plan.
Quinquennial 1996-2000 Or economic and social strategic development plan	The private sector promotion; The fundamental balances maintenance; The exports development; The rural world development.	It was not concretized (the alternation and the second experience of regionalization).
Quinquennial 1999-2003	The improvement of the national economy's competitiveness; The enhancement of human resources; The development of the rural world.	Return to planning in the context of free trade agreements.
Quinquennial 2005-2010	Preparing Morocco for the 2010 free trade area.	It was not concretized.

Source: our own elaboration on the basis of the PDES and our doctoral thesis [6]

Indeed, the planner's awareness of all the disparities had existed, but the advocated policies had not followed the path leading to balanced development. The entire policies had a global approach, or in the case of areas specification, they were chosen according to their inherited importance. (p.358, [6]).

The region-oriented territorial practice took place only in the 1970s. Thus, since the quinquennial plan 1968-1972, a process of the plan's regionalization called "regional development" will be implemented with emphasis on regional projects. (p.169, [6]).

In the context of a new regional development strategy, the 1988-1992 orientation plan emphasized the strengthening of regional and local planning in parallel with the royal directives in terms of the reinforcement of the territorial collectivities' economic role and the deepening of decentralization and regionalization processes (Royal Speech of 1984 and the constitutional revision of 1992 setting up the region as a local collectivity). The new regional planning vision was based on a multiannual communal equipment's programming and an integrated regional priorities programs. (p.285, [7]).

However, the planning problems were tremendous in terms of funding and governance (decentralization and deconcentration). The 26 years of implementation of the first experience of regionalization have been strongly criticized at several levels: regional division (seven regions), the region's law, its tasks and prerogatives, its human and financial

resources and its relationships with deconcentrated and decentralized authorities, etc.

During the second regionalization experience implemented in 1997 (sixteen regions), the region's role was the planning and the regional council develops a regional plan according to the priorities of the national development plan. Certainly, new missions and attributions are noticed for the region but without accompaniment texts. (p.146, [8])

Moreover, the lack of financial and human resources, which guarantee the autonomy, represents a concern for the decentralization actors since the communal reform of 1976. (Pp : 67-76,[9])

Similarly, planning remained captive of an approach that draws an analogy between territory and authority, which considers that "the territory is the place where the State deploys its strategies and exercises its political domination". (p.22, [10]). This has led to collectivities with entangled and interfered competences and limited outcomes.

Decentralization, vital for a unitary State (p.249,[11]), does not imply disengagement but rather the transfer of various competences to local authorities by redefining and refocusing the role of the State on its main tasks such as the promotion of balanced land-use planning. (Pp: 250-251,[11]).

In this key field of planning and economic development, the region is recognized, in recent reflections, as the organizing authority and the framework for spatial planning and participatory programming of structuring actions. (Pp : 251-254, [11])

In brief, the trend towards regional planning was not pursued due to the lack of clear regional development policies. So, is it going to find a place as part of sectoral strategies?

III- THE USE OF SECTORAL STRATEGIES: WHAT GUARANTEE FOR THE REGIONAL PLANNING SUCCESS?

A. Multiple sectoral strategies without a national strategic framework

Since 2005, the Moroccan economy has been oriented towards sectoral strategies that have marked the cut with the national planning era. (p.68, [12]).

Thus, Morocco confined itself to multiple sectoral strategies of an economic and social aspects, which we have tried to regroup in Table II.

TABLEAU II
 THE SECTORAL STRATEGIES IN MOROCCO

	Sectors	Title of the strategy
Economic	Tourism	-Blue Plan in 2003 -Vision 2010 ; -Vision 2020 ; -AZUR Plan.
	Agriculture	-Green Morocco Plan 2008 ; -2020 Strategies of the rural development.
	Entrepreneurship	-« Mouquawalati » Program in 2006

	Industry	Emergence Plan 2005 ; Emergence Plan 2008 ; Industrial Acceleration Plan Emergence 2009-2015.
	Renewable energies	- Renewable energy plan by 2020; - National energy strategy 2030 -Plan solaire marocain -Plan intégré de production d'électricité par énergie éolienne.
	Trade	-Plan/Programme RAWAJ 2020, plan de développement du commerce et distribution. -Maroc export plus / commerce extérieur -The national plan of the commercial exchanges development.
	Logistics	-Logistics competitiveness strategy for 2015
	Maritime fishing	-Halieutis
	Ports	-Port strategy 2030
	NICT	-Digital Morocco 2013 in 2009.
	Craft industry	-Vision 2015 of the craft industry
	Infrastructure	-Infrastructure programs and major projects
Social	Health	-Health Strategy 2017-2021
	Professional training	-Strategic vision of vocational training
	Education	-Strategic vision of the 2015-2030 reform "for a school of equity, quality and promotion". -National strategy of higher education -Multi-Year Action Plan for Higher Education and Scientific Research 2017-2021

Source: Our own elaboration (the list is, perhaps, not exhaustive)

The analysis of these different strategies highlights several observations. In fact, in terms of time, they were developed in different circumstances with different horizons. In terms of adoption procedures, they have been criticized for the marginalization of institutions (parliament and government) and their conception by mainly foreign consultancy companies (p.72,[12]).

Similarly, their objectives, considered to be far from reality, are not being achieved, particularly in terms of job creation: nine plans have envisaged the creation of 3,260,000 jobs between 2013 and 2020 while the Moroccan economy generated, according to the High Commission for Planning (HCP), only 129,000 jobs per year, on average between 2000 and 2014. (pp : 75-76,[12]).

In addition to what is mentioned, it seems that these strategies suffer from a lack of coordination of their governance and of an integrated national strategic framework as underlined in the royal speech of 30 July 2010. They conceal problems related to their elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as raised in the 2014 Report of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, in the 2013 and 2015 Bank Almaghrib Report and in the Economic and Financial Report related to the 2015 Finance Law). (p.77, [12]).

Considering these different sectoral strategies pitfalls, will the regional planning be able to achieve the objective of balanced territorial development?

B. The regional planning: a tool for balancing the territory

The main purpose of this tool is a balanced land-use planning. It is envisaged in a region as a means of accelerating economic development. It has been demonstrated that, in order to establish a good regional program, several dimensions must be taken into consideration by the plan: the level of the administrative scale (regional, national, rural areas...); the economic activities diversity; the existing laws and political structures; the surrounding physical environment; the interactions between social groups and the way they meet to define values and norms and to identify their critical problems. (Pp : 19-20,[13]).

Unlike the regionalization of the plan, which is limited to taking regional data into consideration when elaborating a national plan, a regional plan is considered as a "strategic document", drawn up by the region according to its own specificities, allowing the medium-term coherence of public interventions in the regional territory through the State-regional plan contracts. (P.205, [14])

Since the territory has become a strategic development actor, within the framework of "glocalization" (p.21,[10]), and since we are talking about the "Big Bang of organizations"[15] and also about the "winning regions"[16], it appears that the problem of territorial development in Morocco can only be apprehended by the realization of the integrated development of each region. The latter requires that plans should be drawn up for each regional entity according to its local resources and development prospects. It had to tackle, as a priority, intra-regional disparities through the eccentric reorientation of economic flows concentrated in poles, created according to the regional conception of the seventies.

Such a conception will be implemented through the new experience of regionalization in Morocco. This is what was proposed in the report of the consultative commission on regionalization (set up by the King in January 2010) where regional competences in terms of integrated development are listed according to the rules that specify on the one hand, areas of competence that may be shared between the State and local authorities (water, energy, transport, etc.), by applying the principle of subsidiarity, on a contractual basis and in a progressive way, by making the corresponding resources and means available to these authorities; and on the other hand, the areas of competences in different fields which are updated according to the evolution of the local authorities' resources and intervention capacities. Another rule that reinforces the decentralization process is the recognition of the pre-eminent role of the regional council in the elaboration and monitoring of regional development programs. It elaborates, in a concerted way, the development plan of the region as well as the land use regional plan, then it adopts it after the State' consultation. (p.14, [17]).

C. Regional plans without national planning!

In 2015, and following the three reports established by the Consultative Commission on Regionalization, the third

"advanced" regionalization experience is launched by granting new prerogatives to the region. Thus, Article 5 of Organic Law No. 111-14 on Regions stipulates that: "*In application of the provisions of Article 143 of the Constitution, the region shall play a pre-eminent role in comparison with other territorial authorities in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of regional development programs and regional land-use planning schemes, while respecting the specific competences of other territorial authorities*". (p. 197, [18])

Such an extension of the new regions' powers would enable them to create a new territorial development dynamic based on the RDPs because of the differences in their specificities and therefore in their strategies.

Practically, to this day, ten out of twelve regions have adopted RDPs. [19]. Thus, the two remaining regions are: Darâa-Tafilalet (Region 8) and Guelmim-Oued Noun (Region 10).

Thus, these regional plans, developed gradually, are established when the country has invested in sectoral strategies whose limits have already been identified.

This leads us to the question of the need for a national strategic vision to ensure the success of RDPs. It seems that the interaction between regional and national planning is essential as the first is established by reference to the second. In the regional planning, the presence of the State remains significant considering its national role as an arbiter and its capacity to ensure the coordination and the coherence of all the regional plans by reference to a concerted strategic vision of economic and social development. (p. 182, [20]).

V- CONCLUSION

Confronted to the territorial development issue, Morocco is, it seems, required to put in place a coherent and concerted strategic framework in order to strengthen the regional planning and guarantee the success of the RDPs. The current regions remain, despite the efforts made in the context of "advanced" regionalization, entities that suffer, in part, from the lack of sufficient financial resources and therefore autonomy.

Admittedly, the participatory approach is one of the requirements for the establishment of good territorial governance (p.128 [21]). But, it must be conducted far from the double-headed practices between decentralized and deconcentrated authorities, far from the cleavages between politics (concerted RDPs but without significant financial means) and economics (dirigiste and uncoordinated sectoral strategies but financially supported by the State).

The opportunity of the quest for a new development model (Royal Speech October 2017) should be taken to review the sectoral approach, considered until recently as "the most decisive" (p.58[22]), and establish a holistic strategic vision to achieve territorial development that requires democracy and socio-spatial equity.

However, such an experience, still embryonic, requires an evaluation by conducting an impact study of the RDPs on territorial development in the medium and long term.

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