

3 *Fund, Divide, and Rule*

The upper floor of the City Hall of Tangier offered a clear view over the periphery of the city, whose skyline was neatly visible in that sunny but breezy morning. Christine, another European migration researcher, and I had taken a cab together to the building to attend a migration conference organised by an aid-funded organisation. The event gathered civil servants, aid workers, and civil society representatives from various European, African, and Middle Eastern countries. After completing the registration procedure, we headed towards the lunch buffet, where a few early participants were already helping themselves to food. We served ourselves and then backed off, standing with our plates by the door. Our conversation was soon interrupted by Thérèse, a Senegalese woman and an acquaintance of Christine. Thérèse seemed to know most people in the room personally, and she addressed all of them with a frank and direct tone. After chatting to Christine, Thérèse asked who I was, and I returned the question. “I have an NGO, it’s called *MarocAfrica**. I also did a movie . . .” she said. The movie in question was a documentary about migration in North Africa, that I happened to have recently watched. I congratulated her and assured that I had really liked it. Thérèse spotted two aid workers that she wanted to talk to, and left us. Christine then took me aside. “It’s not true that she made that documentary,” she whispered, containing her laughs, “she makes it up, she is a bit . . .” and then shook her head, rolling her eyes as if to say that Thérèse tended to exaggerate her role in certain things.

Throughout my fieldwork, I kept on bumping into Thérèse at other events organised by aid-funded organisations. Her position as a civil society leader was helping her to secure invitations to various meetings, workshops, and conferences. At all these meetings, she networked and distributed her contact details, seemingly looking for organisations to partner with and obtain funding from. Although Thérèse seemed to be a stable presence in the migration industry, *MarocAfrica** never

seemed to come up in my list of organisations receiving funding from European donors for migration-related projects. I ended up casually talking about Thérèse with Sherylin, a European aid worker. Sherylin had recently started managing a project which had to rely on other local organisations for the delivery of assistance to migrant people. The search for local partners, however, had been more difficult than she expected. After Sherylin mentioned the organisations that she was considering partnering with, I told her I felt that – in certain Moroccan cities – funding was always being channelled through the same organisations, leaving many migrant NGOs on the side. “Lorena, I understand what you mean, but I need reliable partners,” she blurted out. “I cannot partner with someone like *MarocAfrica*!* And then, I don’t even understand, everybody is introducing me to this woman as Thérèse, but I am sure that the first time I met her she introduced herself as Aminata.”

Thérèse’s story speaks to the unequal and racialised power dynamics structuring the Moroccan aid market. The explosion in funding attributed to migration-related projects in the past twenty years has generated economic opportunities for NGOs and IOs working with migrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking people in Morocco. As the president of *MarocAfrica**, Thérèse appears to be more and more integrated into the aid industry – she is invited to conferences, she knows aid workers, and she tries to use her connections to obtain international funding. Thérèse, however, navigates the aid industry in a clear position of disadvantage. Despite her networking efforts, *MarocAfrica** does not seem to receive funding. Aid workers like Sherylin, who are reliant on local organisations to implement their projects, dismiss her as not conforming to their parameters of ‘reliability’ (in this case, having the impression that she introduces herself to people under two different names). Researchers like Christine, whose access to aid-funded conferences is facilitated by their privilege and institutional backing, are also quick to exoticise and mock Thérèse as an ‘exaggerated’ character.

This chapter looks at the actors inhabiting the migration industry, focusing particularly on the effects that funding injections produce on the relations among civil society organisations. I argue that funding injections shake the Moroccan aid market. This happens because aid creates different and conflicting civil society subjectivities vis-à-vis border control policies: some organisations are keen to collaborate with donors, others are sceptical and try to take the distance from the

aid system, others again aspire to become aid recipients but are prevented from doing so. Funding injections create inequalities and conflict between civil society organisations, thus limiting their capacity to take a unified stance in favour of or against the border regime.

The three sections composing the chapter show that funding injections for migration-specific purposes shape civil society relations by triggering three different processes: co-optation, when organisations decide to accept donors' funding (Lecadet 2016a); distancing, in case they refuse or distance themselves from aid in the fear of being enlisted into border control policies; and subordination, in the case of organisations, like *MarocAfrica**, which aspire to be part of the aid market, but navigate it in a position of disadvantage (Magallanes-Gonzalez 2020). These dynamics, in turn, create as many kinds of civil society subjectivities: newcomers, non-specialised NGOs that decide to engage in migration activities; radicals, who fear co-optation into border control policies and that decide to refuse aid or to carefully incorporate it within their own militant strategy; and those remaining on the doorstep, organisations that would like to receive donors' funding but are differentially included in the aid market along racial lines. Aid thus creates conflict among civil society organisations, fracturing them into "a collection of separated individualities" (Foucault 1979b, 201), with differentiated stances vis-à-vis the border regime.

Co-optation – On the Newcomers

The most evident consequence of funding injections into the Moroccan aid market has been the co-optation of civil society organisations into donors' externalisation policies. Migration, in fact, has not always been a sector of the aid industry in Morocco. In the early 2000s, MSF was the only organisation with a structured programme dedicated to migrants (Maleno Garzon 2004) (see Chapter 7). Aside from MSF, vulnerable foreigners were given sporadic assistance by several small, Moroccan and faith-based organisations, operating with very limited capacity and mostly on a volunteer basis (see Del Grande 2007; Rachidi 2016). The arrival of European funding shook the Moroccan aid market, attracting NGOs and IOs into migration work.¹ The

¹ Migration scholars argue that aid transforms NGOs and IOs either into direct local implementers of exclusionary migration policies produced in the Global

expansion of the migration industry to its current size was facilitated in particular by two critical funding junctures, which created space for Moroccan and international NGOs, as well as for IOs, to implement projects in the field of migration. The first relevant funding injection dates back to the early 2000s, shortly before the Ceuta and Melilla events. In 2002, the EC launched the first call for proposals for the preparatory action B7-667 (Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, n.d.), the first EU budget heading specifically devoted to migration, replaced in 2004 by the AENEAS programme (Europe Aid 2006). After the Ceuta and Melilla events in 2005, the number of aid-funded organisations assisting ‘sub-Saharan migrants’ increased (Guerini 2012; Natter 2014; Peraldi 2011). In the wake of the border “crisis,” the Swiss Development Cooperation ramped up its interest in migration-related projects, the IOM expanded its operations and activity portfolio, the UNHCR rushed the appointment of a new mission chief (Collyer 2012; Valluy 2007c),² and NGOs that had never worked in migration before reconverted their activities to assist ‘sub-Saharan migrants’.³ The second main funding injection was the announcement of Morocco’s migration policy. Following the King’s announcement in 2013, Moroccan authorities actively exhorted European actors to play a role in the implementation of the new migration policy. On 11 September 2013, the departments of Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Justice issued a communiqué stating that:

... the partners of Morocco, in particular the EU, are equally concerned in the first instance by the new migration scenario. They have to demonstrate a more concrete engagement in their support to the implementation of this new Moroccan immigration policy. (MAP 2013a, 3)

Donors’ response did not fall short of expectations. Existing donors confirmed their engagement in the field of migration in Morocco,

North (Bartels 2017; Geiger and Pécoud 2010), or into brokers that mediate the relation between Northern and Southern country authorities (Lavenex 2016; Wunderlich 2012). In this chapter, however, I use the term ‘co-optation’ in a looser way, not so much to point to the outsourcing of specific border functions to NGOs and IOs. Rather, I adopt it to gesture towards the formation of a civil society sector linked to European donors through funding allocation, and being allocated the task to loosely assist Morocco in managing migration in a context where border containment has been pushed South.

² Interview, former officer of the UNHCR Morocco, Skype, October 2017.

³ Interview, officer of a Moroccan NGO, Rabat, July 2016.

transforming their action from ‘assistance to stranded migrants’ to ‘favouring migrant integration’. As I said in Chapter 2, in 2015, the EU granted Morocco a 4-year budget of €10 million under the SPRING allocation to promote the integration of migrants in Morocco (EU Delegation in Rabat 2016). The following year, the EC approved and granted Morocco a further €35 million budget support⁴ for the implementation of the new National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum, focusing on law implementation, capacity-building, voluntary return, and social assistance (European Commission 2016).⁵ Since 2015, the German Development Agency (GIZ) and the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel) have accounted for €12.9 million (GIZ n.d.) and €4.6 million (Enabel n.d.) respectively for projects supporting the implementation of the new migration policy. As a respondent from the MDMCREAM commented, “Now a panoply of actors want to help Morocco implement the new migration policy.”⁶

As had happened in 2005, this second funding juncture attracted more organisations to work in migration (see Rachidi 2016). *SudSud**, a European NGO specialising in rural development, started working on migration, closing its office in the rural centre of Morocco and opening a new one in Oujda, to better suit the geographical relocation of its activities.⁷ *The Association pour la Culture et le Développement Nador**, a Moroccan NGO that had long been involved in campaigns against Moroccan irregular emigration in the North of the country, started cooperating on projects on the fight against xenophobia and assistance to ‘sub-Saharan migrants’, recycling some of the material and infrastructure used for previous projects.⁸ Fatoumata, a Cameroonian woman member of a migrant-led NGO active in the field of women’s rights, told me during an interview in the summer of 2019 that she had recently met with the Moroccan branch of a large INGO to discuss migration issues in Morocco. “But they do not work on migration here – do they?” I asked. “No, they don’t, *mais la*

⁴ The program was divided into €28 million for budget support and €7 million for technical support (European Commission 2016).

⁵ Chapter 4 will further highlight how the European Union and Switzerland adjusted their strategy to support Moroccan authorities more directly in the implementation of the new policy.

⁶ Interview, officer of the MDMCREAM, Rabat, September 2016.

⁷ Interview, officer of an INGO, Rabat, September 2016; Interview, officer of an INGO, Oujda, November 2016.

⁸ Interview, officer of a Moroccan NGO, Nador, November 2016.

migration, ça commence à leur plaire (migration, it is starting appealing to them)” she answered.⁹

Although the appearance of new organisations working in the field of migration is evident, newcomers would rarely justify their entry into the world of migration as a strategic reorientation of their activities as a result of funding opportunities. At the time of the interview, Claudia was tasked with project writing and development for *SudSud**. In her own account, the shift of the NGO towards working on migration was mainly due to her own interest on the topic:

The reason that you asked me at the beginning [why did you start working on migration] is because I like migration, in case you had not noticed [laugh]. For a long time, I also thought about doing a PhD on migration; I studied it and I invested a lot myself to transform it into a sector of intervention for us [as an NGO] as well. Everybody mocks me and says “ah, now everybody throws himself on migration because there is funding available,” but in my case it was a long time that I was trying and now let’s say that we managed.¹⁰

Rosa works for *Solidaria**, a European NGO that had historically focused on education and youth engagement in urban areas. In the early 2000s, the NGO started implementing projects focusing on Moroccan migrants, especially around the theme of diaspora communities. At the time of the interview (April 2016), the organisation had recently started a project on ‘sub-Saharan migration’. Although this was the first project of the kind that her NGO had been implementing, Rosa did not describe it as a deviation from the work that her organisation had historically done:

We tend to [implement] continuous projects; even when donors change we try to follow a durable line [of action], not to implement spot projects. Our migration programme started in 2003, but it never ended. What happened in the meantime is that in Morocco the migratory pressure changed, so what is of public interest now is the phenomenon of the returning migrant rather than the migrant that leaves [...] we are working a lot – I am talking about the past two years – on a phenomenon that up to a few years ago seemed science-fiction [...] that is the integration of non-Moroccan migrants in Morocco, or the wave of sub-Saharan, Syrian, etc., that transit through Morocco and that in many cases want to stay here.¹¹

⁹ Interview with Fatoumata, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

¹⁰ Interview with Claudia, officer of an INGO, Rabat, March 2016.

¹¹ Interview with Rosa, officer of an INGO, Rabat, April 2016.

For Rosa, starting to work on migration was simply a way for her organisation to keep up with the shifting dynamics of public interest, rather than to follow funders' priorities. As she argued, migration was a programme of action that the NGO had been developing for a decade. Background data induced me to take these statements with a pinch of salt, however: the date when Rosa's organisation first started working on migration (early 2000s) coincides with the approval of the first EU budget lines in the field of migration. However, in her narrative, shifting the focus of attention from one migrant population to the other was not seen as a contradiction in the organisation's line of action, but more as the natural evolution of their work.

For other organisations, the evolution of priority areas was intimately connected to the evolution of Moroccan public policies. Driss is a Moroccan man who works for a large Moroccan NGO, quite close to Moroccan authorities. He describes the choice of the organisation to start working on 'sub-Saharan migration' just after 2013 as a rhythm imposed by the transformation of the state's boundaries of permissibility:

We are auxiliaries to public powers [. . .]. Before, in Morocco, migration did not occupy a priority position on the political agenda, and there was no question of regularisation. We, as an organisation, cannot transgress our patron; our priorities are the priorities of state authorities . . . and on top of that, migration was a political topic, and we forbid ourselves to engage in politics. But when migration was included in the Moroccan political agenda, then we started being able to work on a few things . . .¹²

In other cases, forming an NGO was justified by civil society representatives as a way to ensure a form of institutional protection for an activity that emerged out of solidarity. This was the case for *Maroc Accueil Intégration**, a Moroccan NGO operating in a small city in the Moroccan interior. The NGO was run by Malika, a Moroccan woman in her 40s with previous experience in civil society activism in the area. As she explained to me, a couple of years earlier she had started assisting migrants begging at the traffic lights of the town, where they had been dropped off by Moroccan authorities during the internal displacement campaigns that had pervaded the country since 2014. Conscious of the potential risks she could incur in assisting

¹² Interview with Driss, officer of a Moroccan NGO, Rabat, September 2016.

migrant people, Simo, one of Malika's acquaintances, advised her to form an NGO, which would provide her with a legal framework through which to carry out her activities. Malika followed his advice, got other friends onboard, and included Simo on the NGO committee. *Maroc Accueil Intégration** was still running on donations, and on limited funding provided by local authorities, but was actively trying to bid for funding from larger donors to sustain the activities of the organisation.¹³

In her work on racism and inclusion policies in higher education, Sara Ahmed argues that frontline bureaucrats resort to different sense-making strategies to justify their engagement in the implementation of policies which are matters of contestation. One of these is "building a social justice framework for themselves" (Ahmed 2007, 241), where participating in the functioning of the policy is instrumental to achieve social progress in a broader scheme of social justice. *SudSud** started working on migration because Claudia thought it was an important topic to address. Rosa and Driss perceive working on migration as a necessary step to fulfil the duty of their respective organisations, namely, to accompany the state in the implementation of public policies. Malika believes donors' financial assistance is a necessary avenue to pursue in order to keep on assisting migrant people in distress. This attitude is very different from a naïve "buying into" security policies: the normalisation of security is mediated through the appeal to a sentiment of care (Bastani and Gazzotti in press) (in this instance, for the theme of migration in the case of Claudia, for the advancement of public policies in Morocco in the case of Rosa and Driss, for the well-being of migrant people themselves in the case of Malika).

Funding injections shake the aid market by increasing the number of organisations involved in migration-related work, to the point of creating a migration sector within the aid market. Co-optation into aid-as-border control policy, however, does not happen purely as a consequence of a corporate-driven rationality adopted by civil society organisations. Civil society representatives normalise their involvement into the implementation of security policies by appealing to a sentiment of care towards the object of policymaking.

¹³ Interview with Simo and Malika, officers of a Moroccan NGO, place withdrawn, July 2019.

Distancing – On the Radicals

The availability of funding from European donors to work on migration-related projects is not unanimously welcomed by civil society organisations. Critical organisations are often wary of accepting donors' funding, as they fear that accepting aid might co-opt them into the European migration control project. In an institutional environment where funding for civil society organisations is scant, organisations face a difficult choice: accepting or refusing aid for migration-related projects?

During fieldwork, I found that distinct organisations adopted different strategies to deal with this conundrum. The first strategy consists in rejecting donors' funding. Selma works for a Moroccan organisation which is quite vocal about the human rights violations committed by both Moroccan and European authorities. She explained to me that the organisation just counts on volunteers. "Our referential is the international referential of human rights," she pointed out. Later in the conversation, talking about organisations working with funding from the state and from European donors, she sarcastically commented that "if you have a double referential [the international referential of human rights and donors' priorities], then it becomes complicated."¹⁴ An NGO that has accepted donors' funding can also decide to change its mind halfway through, if the priorities of the organisation and those of the donors irreparably clash. Emblematic was the case, in 2006, of the dispute between the UNHCR, the French NGO La Cimade, and the Moroccan NGO AFVIC, the two latter both active in the field of migrant rights. In 2005, the two NGOs had agreed to implement a capacity-building project for civil society organisations operating in Morocco, funded at 75 per cent by the UNHCR (La Cimade and AFVIC 2006a, 2006b). The establishment of this collaboration had not been straightforward. La Cimade and AFVIC's desire to obtain funding from UNHCR, and their simultaneous fear that they might be co-opted into the European externalisation policy, created a conflict between them and other NGOs active in the field of migration in Morocco. Despite the conflict, La Cimade and AFVIC decided to accept the collaboration, and started training sessions for civil society organisations operating in the field (Valluy 2007b, 2007c). The project

¹⁴ Interview with Selma, officer of a Moroccan human rights organisation, Rabat, June 2019.

included a training component, and cascading funding element, to allow local NGOs to create centres for the assistance of migrant people. With time, however, the two implementing organisations realised that the UNHCR seemed more eager to fund centres that would assist exclusively its population of concern, namely asylum seekers and refugees (La Cimade and AFVIC 2006b, 40). Given the pervasive violence against all migrant people in the country, La Cimade and AFVIC considered that this objective clashed with their own mandate, and therefore decided to cease its partnership with the UNHCR (La Cimade and AFVIC 2006b).

Alternatively, interviews revealed a second strategy of resistance to aid: “juggling,” which means, accepting donors’ funding, but at conditions that would ensure the strategic independence of the organisation. Karim is a Moroccan man who is a member of a local human rights organisation that operates in the field of migrants and refugees’ rights. He explained to me that the organisation does not completely refuse European state funding, but carefully tries to strike a balance between funding needs, the organisation’s agenda and independence:

We participated in several projects; one of these was funded by the EU. Basically what we did is that we transferred certain themes on which we were already working to the project. I have to say that the EU delegation respected our autonomy [...] at the end of the day, the European Union for us should not just be a donor, but a partner to work with. Then after some negotiations we started working with another donor; we transferred activities that we were already doing, because they work according to a different logic, they support us. They work by cycles of strategic identification, and then they were working already with a drop-in centre for migrants, so they knew that there was too much border violence against migrants. [...] we decided not to have a donor funding us for more than 50%.¹⁵

Rejecting or juggling with funding does not necessarily mean that organisations critical of the border regime work in complete disconnection with aid-funded NGOs and IOs.¹⁶ Officers belonging to both worlds often share the same professional circles. The conference for the

¹⁵ Interview with Karim, officer of a Moroccan NGO, Rabat, July 2016.

¹⁶ European state donors are not the only sources of funding for organisations like Karim’s. Funding bodies like the Open Society Foundation, the Fund for Global Human Rights, or the Rosa Luxembourg Foundations give critical civil society organisations an alternative, less conflicting source of income to fund their activities.

Third Anniversary of the SNIA, that I mentioned in the Introduction, was attended by donor representatives, officers of the IOM and the UNHCR, as well as by people qualifying themselves as activists. During an interview with Junior, an Ivorian man and member of a labour union engaged in the defence of foreign workers, and not receiving funding from donors, I noticed that the notebook that he held between his hands had an IOM logo on top. Other IOM brochures were spread in the office. This suggested that Junior had attended an event organised by the IOM, where the organisers had distributed promotional material to the participants.¹⁷

Organisations with a more radical position about migration control policies clearly see European aid as an instrument of border surveillance. Accepting aid therefore constitutes a political dilemma to which these actors can respond in two ways: rejecting donors' funding; or juggling, which means strategising aid in a way that does not clash with the values and politics of the organisation. Distancing from aid, however, does not mean that civil society organisations completely extricate themselves from the aid industry. The radicals, in fact, still interact with aid-funded organisations, either by participating in the same events or sharing the same social spaces.

Subordination – On Those on the Doorstep

Therèse's organisation, whose story I started this chapter with, exemplifies a category of actors that is increasingly taking space within the aid industry: migrant-led civil society organisations. The emergence of a migrant-led civil society movement goes back to the years immediately following the Ceuta and Melilla events. The deterioration of migrants' treatment in the country led foreigners of different origins to organise and publicly denounce the abuses committed by the state (see Chapter 1). These organisations often lacked official recognition by Moroccan authorities (Bachelet 2018). However, migrant-led NGOs have managed to organise public demonstrations, publish press releases and join transnational networks of border activists, like the Migreurop network. Alioua defines the start of migrant militancy as a "shift to politics" for migrants in Morocco. Migrant grassroot organising, in fact, stopped being just a means to regulate and support

¹⁷ Interview with Junior, officer of a trade union, Rabat, summer 2019.

migrant existence in a difficult context, and started becoming also a tool to claim rights from state and non-state actors involved in the militarisation of the border (Alioua 2009).

The political environment surrounding migrant activism significantly changed after 2013. In the conclusions to its report *Foreigners and Human Rights in Morocco*, the CNDH explicitly exhorted Moroccan authorities to involve civil society organisations in the elaboration and implementation of migration policy reforms. The report specifically stated that “the integration of organisations of migrants in this process is fundamental, as is the regularization [...] of the situation of certain organisations assisting migrants [...]” (CNDH 2013, 6, translation by author). The collaboration between migrant organisations and Moroccan authorities was sanctioned by the SNIA, which includes an action specifically targeting the “support to migrant networks in the elaboration of economic co-development projects in Morocco and in their origin countries” (MCMREAM 2016, 96). The MDMCREAM devised three strategies to operationalise the partnership between the state and civil society in the implementation of migration policies: the creation of a permanent system of concertation with civil society; the implication of civil society organisations in the regularisation campaign; and the allocation of funding for projects related to migrant integration.

These political gestures created an environment conducive to the formation of migrant-led civil society organisations, and their co-optation into the integration policy formulated by the state. Before the announcement of the new migration policy, there were “only about ten” migrant NGOs active in Morocco. In March 2016, the National Council for Human Rights estimated that the number had risen to “over twenty” organisations (MCMREAM and CNDH 2016, 134). By September 2016, thirty-two migrant-led civil society organisations had received official recognition by the Moroccan authorities (MCMREAM 2016, 96).

The migration industry quickly adapted to the new political environment. Migrant-led NGOs became a stable presence at events organised by aid-funded organisations. NGOs and IOs started delivering pedagogical workshops providing migrant NGO leaders with notions of project development, of the legal background regulating the freedom of association,¹⁸ and of best practices in the field of migrant protection

¹⁸ Fieldnotes, October–December 2016.

and vulnerability,¹⁹ among others. In at least one case across my interviews, this top-down political momentum appeared to have been central to the creation of a migrant-led organisation. In June 2019, I interviewed Sheila, a European aid worker employed by an IO operating in Rabat. Towards the end of the interview, Sheila suggested I contacted Eric, a Liberian man that she described as “the president of our NGO.” Then, she quickly corrected herself, “No I mean, of the NGO that we supported throughout their constitution.”²⁰ I contacted Eric, who agreed to meet in a café in central Rabat. As Eric explained to me, the creation of the NGO came out of a donor-funded workshop animated by a delegation of an INGO. During the workshop, the facilitators asked participants about the problem of migrants and refugees in Morocco, inviting them to propose possible solutions. “Based on the findings, we formulated recommendations, and then we started thinking – rather than just being aid beneficiaries, why not being actors [of change] ourselves?” Eric then showed me pictures of activities that the NGO had organised or participated in, most of which had taken place either with the support of or in the framework of broader events that Sheila’s IO had organised.²¹ Given the strong involvement that Sheila’s IO had played in the constitution of the Eric’s organisation, it is not surprising that Sheila had inadvertently called Eric “the president of our NGO.”

Even though the institutional environment after 2013 had encouraged the emergence of a vibrant migrant civil society sector, these NGOs always seem to remain on the doorstep of the migration industry (Magallanes-Gonzalez 2020). Migrant-led organisations, in fact, become part of the aid market, but in a subordinated position: they operate as subcontractors for bigger organisations, as beneficiaries of cascading funding, or simply as beneficiaries of training provided in projects implemented by INGOs or IOs, like the IOM. Chief among the factors causing this liminality is recognition by the Moroccan state. For certain NGOs, regularisation had been quite straightforward. Babacar, the president of *Drari dial Ifriquiya** [Kids of Africa, in Moroccan Arabic], a migrant-led organisation supporting West and Central African children and young people,

¹⁹ Fieldnotes, September 2017.

²⁰ Interview with Sheila, officer of an IO, Rabat, June 2019.

²¹ Interview with Eric, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

proudly stated that his organisation had been the first one to be regularised after the announcement of the new migration policy.²² Other organisations, however, had encountered multiple obstacles while trying to obtain paperwork. During the training sessions of a capacity-building project implemented by *SudSud**, officers of participating migrant NGOs lamented that the law regulating the constitution of associations was unevenly applied over the national territory. Local authorities of different cities requested different documents to register the organisations, thus creating delays and challenges for associations wishing to formalise their activities. Being critical about the behaviour of Moroccan authorities vis-à-vis migrant rights in Morocco seemed to be an element that can further push migrant-led NGOs into a legal limbo. Stéphane, for example, is a Congolese man who has been on the board of a vocal migrant-led NGO for several years. At the time of the interview, the NGO had not been able to secure recognition by the state. “We have always been associated with NGOs that have bad relationships with the authorities, so it is not easy for us to be recognized [by the State],” he explained to me.²³ Lack of formal recognition significantly affects the capacity of migrant-led civil society organisations to operate autonomously. In virtue of its regular status, *Drari dial Ifriquiya** had managed to partner with several institutions and to receive funding from multiple donors. This was not the case for other organisations. “At the moment we do not have the definitive authorization,” Eric explained to me during our interview. “We cannot apply to the calls for projects launched by the EU, Enabel, etc.”²⁴ Stéphane confirmed that the lack of official and finalised paperwork prevented his organisation from receiving funding from certain donors:

Lorena: And is it an issue for you, the fact that you do not have the definitive authorisation?

Stéphane: Well yes, because if you do not have one you cannot open a bank account, and you have to rely on other NGOs to receive funding. The donors, they often do not accept this, because they want the financial autonomy²⁵

²² Interview with Babacar, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

²³ Interview with Stéphane, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

²⁴ Interview with Eric, president of a migrant-led organisation, Rabat, June 2019.

²⁵ Interview with Stéphane, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

Migrant-led civil society organisations do not passively experience their subordination in the migration industry. To the contrary, they enact strategies of resistance, by voicing their criticisms on social media (Tyszler 2019) or by addressing them directly to aid-funded organisations. In some instances, these criticisms can lead funding providers to find measures to patch the inequality structuring the aid market. The project managed by *SudSud**, for example, included a cascading funding component, accessible only to migrant-led organisations that had attended the training module on financial management. Mario, one of the officers working on the project, explained to me that *SudSud** had decided to include a cascading funding component after migrant-led NGOs had requested to participate more equally in funding allocation:

One of the problems that emerged in other projects, or when you tried to involve migrant-led organisations [in this project] is that they would say “you come and see us to get data [from the field], but then we do not directly participate in the management of funding” . . . so we had the idea to train them to the point of launching a call for projects within the same project.²⁶

The announcement of the new migration policy fostered a political environment formally favouring the formation of migrant-led civil society organisations. Although the institutional discourse praises the involvement of migrant NGOs in migration management, migrant NGOs remain on the doorstep of the aid market. The lack of formal recognition, and the subsequent difficulties in achieving financial autonomy, confine these civil society organisations to the role of subordinated actors.

Conflict

Aid shakes the Moroccan civil society sector, transforming it into a conflictual environment. Two series of cleavages emerge: a conflict between actors accepting aid and actors distancing themselves from donors’ funding; and a conflict between donor-funded organisations and actors who aspire to be aid-recipient, but that are structurally left on the outskirts of the aid market. The increase of actors working in

²⁶ Interview with Mario, officer of an INGO, Rabat, April 2016.

migration sparked criticism among activists and organisations historically engaged in migrants' protection. The people I interviewed found this development concerning in many ways. First, the rising number of Moroccan and migrant civil society organisations conducting work on migration was believed to be just nominal. The newly founded NGOs, some of my interviewees thought, were not really operative. During an interview, Said, a young Moroccan development consultant operating in Tiznit, told me that he had heard that a local NGO working on fair tourism had started conducting actions benefitting 'sub-Saharan immigrants'. "To be honest, I never saw them doing anything about fair tourism," he confessed to me, shaking his head. "I know they have contributed to a distribution organised in favour of sub-Saharan migrants, but I do not think they do much concrete action. They work on migration only on paper."²⁷ Pierre-Marie, instead, is a Cameroonian man that works for a faith-based organisation providing assistance to migrants in a city in the Moroccan interior. While talking, he insisted on tracing a difference between "organisations working on migration" and "organisations working in the field," with real activities and real contact with beneficiaries:

Lorena: So you're the only one working with migrants here, right?

Pierre-Marie: No, there are more than 40 NGOs.

Lorena: 40 NGOs? But you mean in general, not working with migrants, right?

Pierre-Marie: No, I mean that work with migrants. Well, I mean, then they are virtual, because on the field, it is just us.²⁸

In their accounts, Said and Pierre-Marie suggested that the apparent presence of a vibrant civil society movement active in migrant assistance was deceitful: many organisations *claimed* that they worked on migration, but few of them were actually engaging in the field.

A second point of concern raised by experienced aid workers and human rights advocates related to the capacity of newcomers to navigate the migration world and deliver quality work. Sara, a European human rights activist with a long experience in migration, told me that her organisation had recently received an invitation to participate as a beneficiary in a project on capacity-building for NGOs operating in

²⁷ Interview with Said, development consultant, Tiznit, July 2019.

²⁸ Interview with Pierre-Marie, officer of a faith-based charity, city in the Moroccan interior, July 2019.

the field of migration. The project was implemented by an INGO that was new to the migration world. “I don’t know if they are your friends or not . . .” Sara commented, giving me a strange look. “I wanted to reply that they are the ones that need capacity-building! They have never worked in migration before.”²⁹ Sara clearly felt sceptical about the capacity of this newcomer NGO to navigate the field of migration, and even more so given that they seemed to be unable to differentiate between newly born civil society organisations (and that would more likely need capacity-building) and those, like Pauline’s, that have been active in the field for years. The coexistence between experienced organisations and newcomers is therefore uneasy: a hierarchy of purity and professionalism has been established between the two, as first-comers do not recognise the newcomers as legitimate actors in the field of migration (Natter 2018, 10). The subtle hostility increases the distance between them, fostering a form of partisan politics (“I don’t know if they are your friends or not . . .”).

A third concern that emerged in the interviews was the risk of co-optation of newcomers into the border control policy enacted by the EU and its member states. Julia, a French aid worker based in a big Moroccan city, considered that non-specialised organisations were particularly exposed to the risk of becoming “partisans of European priorities” (Soukouna 2011, 38, translation by author):

There are NGOs that are not at all specialised in this field that embark on huge programmes in regions that are a bit complicated . . . in any case, we cannot read the Moroccan context without putting it in perspective with the bilateral relations with the EU . . . really, there is a business of migration, there are actors that emerge and that have nothing to do with migration, it’s super visible. This can be counter-productive, because if someone does not know, then the programme will be very general, it will be something very complacent that will not tackle the entirety of the situation . . .³⁰

According to Julia, the lack of professional capacity of newcomers is not only detrimental to their capacity to deliver quality work, but also to their ability to apprehend the political complexity of the field that they inhabit. Co-optation into border control, therefore, is not necessarily considered a matter of political orientation of an organisation,

²⁹ Interview with Sara, human rights activist, Tangier, December 2016.

³⁰ Interview with Julia and Nicole, NGO officers, August 2016.

but also as a direct consequence of the level of professionalism and knowledge of the field displayed by newcomers.

A second, important cleavage that emerged during interviews is that between migrant civil society organisations that struggle to access funding, and aid-funded NGOs and IOs. Despite the resistance strategies that they enacted, migrant leaders clearly felt being confined in a subordinate position within the migration industry. During the interview with aforementioned Fatoumata, she complained about the dearth of funding available, and about the scarce consideration given to migrant-led organisations by donors, INGOs, and UN agencies:

The organisations, they do not give you even a cent – the EU has money that they need to give away. The ministry of migration had launched a call for projects, but their eligibility criteria were impossible to comply with; you needed to have years of experience, a head office, [enrolment in] the National Fund for Social Security . . . and then if you ask Moroccan NGOs, they want to be the ones leading the project. Even [international] NGOs, they always want to go towards the Moroccan NGOs. We do not see ourselves as winners in this framework.³¹

Actually, the subaltern position of migrant-led organisations in the distribution of aid money was reflected in my research work as well: migrant civil society leaders, in fact, did not feature prominently in my interviewee list until late in my work, because their organisations did not tend to appear on the lists of funded projects published by donors. In the attempt of unravelling the workings of the migration industry, my research risked ignoring those actors remaining on its doorstep.

That migrant-led organisations do not equally participate in the division of migration money did not mean that they were not considered as crucial in borderwork. At the beginning of our conversation, Fatoumata had highlighted how “being in the field” was one of her main comparative strengths. Later, however, she pointed out that other actors seemed to expect her to share her knowledge, in a very unequal exchange:

The Mutual Aid calls us to know the amount of [migrant] people in this and this situation . . . and I give them a number, and the guy is seated in his office . . . but I am not the National Institute of Statistics! We have to do the

³¹ Interview with Fatoumata, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

fieldwork and then . . . even researchers come to ask us things! To be honest, just me, I must have supervised at least a hundred students.³²

Within the aid market, the proximity of migrant-led organisations to members of migrant communities was recognised as a form of expertise, as an advantage that migrant-led organisations had in comparison to Moroccan or International NGOs. In her work on the localisation of aid work, Pascucci argues that locally-recruited aid workers are entrusted with “tasks that mobilize their ‘native’, subaltern knowledges and gendered emotional and affective capacities” (Pascucci 2018, 745), which are deemed by INGOs and IOs as essential for conducting “actual field operations and securing access to hard-to-reach areas” and populations (Pascucci 2018, 744). Aid workers, donors, Moroccan authorities, and even researchers clearly see the value of Fatoumata’s ‘local knowledge’ about migrant communities, and seek to take advantage of it as a resource. Their understanding of her knowledge, however, is marred by prejudice about what Fatoumata ‘should’ know by virtue of her own migrant identity – yet, as she pointed out, she is not “the National Institute of Statistics,” and she has to do fieldwork herself to find out. The knowledge exchange happens on unequal terms: Fatoumata is constantly solicited by a number of actors requiring her knowledge, without receiving much in return. The actors willing to access Fatoumata’s knowledge are what Ruben Andersson calls “migrant eaters” (Andersson 2014, 33), people that make a profit out of migrant suffering and knowledge, and as Fatoumata points out, active fieldwork, in a system where migrants do not equally partake in the sharing of the resources generated by migration.

Eric also expressed the feeling of belonging to a group publicly portrayed as central in the implementation of the new Moroccan migration policy, but then exploited by larger organisations. He complained that European aid workers and high-profile representatives of IOs publicly showed an interest and inclusive attitude towards migrant-led organisations. Offstage, however, their attitude significantly changed:

Sometimes, we exchange cards, but then you send them an email and they never answer. Then, if you see them at a meeting they tell you that they

³² Interview with Fatoumata, officer of a migrant-led NGO, Rabat, June 2019.

forgot, but I know very well that it is because they do not really consider you. Then, I mean ... I do not need anyone's card, if you want to discuss something, we discuss ...³³

As Eric's interview makes clear, the aid industry marginalises migrant-led civil society organisations in a deceitful way. On the one hand, it engages in an onstage spectacle of inclusion, as resource rich-er organisations utilise migrant-led NGOs to foster a narrative of inclusive policymaking ["sometimes, we exchange cards," "if you want to discuss something, we discuss ..."]. On the other hand, this narrative of cooperation is matched by an offstage politics of dismissal and exclusion, as communication with migrant-led civil society organisations is effectively halted ["you send them an email and they never answer"]. Migrant-led civil society organisations are thus subjected to multiple processes of value extraction, in a context that formally praises their 'inclusion' in a 'humane' process of migration policymaking (Magallanes-Gonzalez 2020).

Funding injections create different kind of civil society subjectivities vis-à-vis donors' funding. This, in turn, creates conflicts within the civil society sector. The political character of aid creates a cleavage between actors accepting aid and organisations with a longer, more radical record vis-à-vis the fight for migrants' rights. This establishes a hierarchy of legitimacy, and an attitude of mistrust of the latter towards the former. The structural marginalisation of migrant-led civil society organisations creates a further layer of conflict between them and actors that can easily access donors' funding. Migrant-led NGOs are deemed 'worthy' for migration-related projects by larger NGOs and donors in virtue of their own 'migrantness' – not as peers, but as less-funded or unfunded mediators between the aid world and migrant communities.

Conclusion

Funding injections shake the Moroccan aid market. Civil society organisations are not all equally receptive to donors' intervention, or integrated into the aid market. Three kinds of actors emerge: the newcomers, the radicals, and those that are on the doorstep. The newcomers are organisations that decide to accept donors' funding,

³³ Interview with Eric, president of a migrant-led organisation, Rabat, June 2019.

showing a corporate attitude vis-à-vis security policies. Co-optation into border control policies, however, is not perceived as such by interviewees, who normalise the acceptance of security-related money as part of a broader organisational strategy to achieve a greater good. The radicals are those organisations that consider aid money as an attempt by European donors to co-opt civil society actors into their externalisation strategy. Scepticism pushes these organisations to be careful about the relation they have to aid: some of them decide to simply distance themselves from it, while others try to juggle financial and political independence while accepting donors' money. Those who remain on the doorstep are migrant civil society organisations. They are discursively portrayed as central to the new migration policy and solicited for "field information" by other aid-funded actors, but they significantly struggle to access funding.

By generating dynamics of co-optation, distancing, and subordination, aid entrenches inequalities and creates conflict within the civil society sector. The different stances that organisations assume or are forced to assume vis-à-vis migration money generates a situation where "everyone bickered with everyone" (Andersson 2014, 53). Radical actors criticise those who accept funding. Those who accept funding joke about the critical posture of radicals. Migrant-led civil society organisations criticise those who manage to obtain donors' funding but refuse to share equally, and so on and so forth. The end product of this is a civil society landscape that regularly comes together (at meetings, ceremonies, training workshops), but that is very fragmented within. Whether donors were conscious of this or not at the beginning, funding injections have managed to divide civil society around the issue of migration-related work in Morocco, preventing it from having a unified stance against – nor in favour of – the border regime (see Anderl et al. 2019).