

Promotion Nationale :
45 Years of Experience of Public Works in Morocco

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Contents

ABSTRACT	3
1. PRESENTATION OF LA PROMOTION NATIONALE	4
2. <i>PROMOTION NATIONALE</i> PROGRAMS	5
3. PN PROGRAMS ACHIEVEMENT.....	6
4. FINANCING.....	8
5. IMPACTS OF EXPENDITURES ALLOCATED TO PN WORKS.....	10
6. MAIN DIFFICULTIES	13
7. PN LIMITATIONS	14
CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES.....	15
APPENDIX : PN REALISATIONS	16

Abstract

Created in 1961, *Promotion Nationale* (PN) is an autonomous public entity in charge of mobilizing under-employed or unemployed labour force for the implementation of labour intensive projects, calling upon a simple technology likely to provide employment to unskilled workers. It is one of the major programs of social protection in the country, the oldest, most important and best targeted social program in Morocco.

Vis-a-vis the importance of the rural under-employment, especially during dry years, estimated per million working days, PN aims at improving employment by developing collective working methods, by generating large-scale investments for the realization of infrastructure works and rural equipment. This institution aims at limiting rural migration through a permanent improvement of local income and living conditions. It thus constitutes a safety net for a large part of the population particularly in rural areas.

The PN has an appropriate administrative structure with a relatively small number of officers. Based primarily on the intensive use of labour, PN, aims to mobilize the labour force of the poor rural populations, in order to address unemployment and attenuate rural migration ; direct its intervention in the rural zones to the construction of water supply channels and cisterns, the digging of wells and the construction of rural roads and reforestation ; contribute to cleaning, maintenance of parks and improvement of the quality of life and environment in the urban areas as well as support sector projects carried out within the framework of the social development strategy.

The Moroccan experience in the public works of unemployed through the PN is remarkable. Indeed, 45 years after its creation, PN has at its credit an important and single assessment regarding the fight against unemployment with small management costs. On average the operating costs represent only 6% of investments costs, which is definitely lower than the average costs of the public administration and lower in comparison of other countries where it is around 10%. In spite of certain difficulties and limitations which particularly hinder the action of the organization regarding the geographical targeting of rural poor zones, PN programs remains one of the most efficient mechanisms of social protection of the country. It is also a buffer stock in period of economic crisis or severe drought.

In order to contribute effectively to the fight against unemployment according to the employer of last resort model, PN has to offer more jobs for all those willing to work ; to remove constraints which weak the turnover of the beneficiaries in urban areas and fight against the acquired advantages, to encourage the Local Communities to deal with the staff costs which weigh the PN budget down and to reallocate the communities program budget to the equipment of the rural areas, as well as to pursue the reduction of the credits allocated to the urban areas and to increase allocations to the rural locations in order to improve the targeting of the poor populations and to modernize the information system by disaggregating by sex data related to beneficiaries.

Introduction

Created in 1961, under the supervision of the Ministry for Interior, *Promotion Nationale* is a public entity in charge of mobilizing under-employed or unemployed labour force for the implementation of low capital intensive projects, calling upon a simple technology likely to be used by a labour force without qualification. It is one of the major programs of social protection in the country, the oldest, most important and best targeted social program in Morocco.

Vis-a-vis the importance of the rural under-employment, estimated per million working days, this entity aims at improving employment by developing collective working methods, by generating large-scale investments for the realization of infrastructure works and rural equipment. This institution aims at fighting against rural migration through a permanent improvement of local income and living conditions. It thus constitutes a safety net for a large part of the population particularly in the rural areas. The resources allocated to this institution were appreciably improved since 2005.

Since 1976, *la Promotion Nationale* (PN) focused its efforts on the development of the Saharan provinces through mobilization of the labour force. In addition, since 1978, it supports local communities by providing assistance in administrative or municipal tasks (cleansing, maintenance of the parks...) to decentralized services that are usually under-staffed. This paper aims at presenting the objectives and the action of *Promotion Nationale* by programs, its funding, its achievements in terms of employment, a trial of evaluation of its impacts on the population, its main difficulties, its limits and prospects.

1. Presentation of Promotion Nationale

Organization: the PN has an appropriate administrative structure with a relatively small number of officers. It has 71 external offices located in provinces with a total staff of 364 persons (59 persons at the central level and 305 in the external offices).

Its objectives: based primarily on the intensive use of labour, PN, aims to:

- Mobilize the labour force of the poor rural populations, in order to address unemployment and attenuate the rural migration;
- Widen the field of its action and to prioritise more profitable and less expensive projects;
- Direct its intervention in the rural zones to the construction of water supply channels and cisterns, the digging of wells, the construction of rural roads and reforestation...;
- Contribute to cleaning, maintenance of parks and improvement of the quality of life and environment in the urban areas;
- Support sector projects carried out within the framework of the social development strategy.

In rural areas: PN acts by providing employment through construction and development of sites for a limited duration. It is especially men who are recruited at the local level.

In urban areas: PN supports the community by recruiting secretaries, cleaners, nurse's aides or instructors for specialized centres (for handicapped, orphan, abandoned children...), hospitals and health structures. The PN also provides employment for the maintenance of gardens and parks (often men).

Manpower employed is currently around 50,000 persons per annum. According to PN estimations, women represent nearly 20% of the total employed.

Recruitment is done randomly (by selecting national ID's cards) in the rural areas. In urban areas, the PN decides to recruit on the basis of needs expressed by certain public establishments (care centres, hospitals, communities...).

Remuneration is indexed to the guaranteed agricultural minimum wage (SMAG) and to the guaranteed inter-professional minimum wage (SMIG) with a scale for the semi-qualified workers and not specialized : not qualified labour (SMAG, 41 DH/day); semi qualified (48,75 DH/day); and qualified (53,75 DH/day)². The workers are paid every 15 days.

Procedures: The cycle of projects selection is based on a set of precise criteria. The formulation of projects is carried out at the local level, the selection of the projects at the provincial level and the final decision is made at the central level.

2. Promotion Nationale programs

PN acts through the following main programs: the communities program, the equipment program, the development of Saharan provinces program, the social priorities program (BAJ1) completed in 2003, the employment promotion in the South provinces program and the social proximity actions program.

Community program: This program is intended for employment of officers working in public services lacking personnel as well as subordinate officers (drivers, caretakers, cleaners, nurse's aides...).

Equipment program: In urban areas, the PN takes part in the improvement of cities environment through cleaning and maintenance of parks. In rural areas, the actions particularly aim at providing the communities with a minimum of equipment and at fighting unemployment and the rural under-employment, while trying to reduce regional disparities. The equipment program includes the development of local infrastructure and the equipment of the urban zones.

Saharan provinces development program: Since 1976, this program contributes to mobilizing the labour force available in the Saharan provinces.

Social Priorities Program (BAJ1): The first social priorities program BAJ 1, completed in 2003, represents the implementation of the social development strategy. It was composed of 3 projects: basic education, basic health, National Promotion and coordination/follow-up of the social programs. Within the framework of BAJ1, PN aimed at improving the level of basic education and health infrastructure and raising social development indicators of the 14 most underprivileged provinces.

The main achievements were the development of medical and basic education infrastructure and the reduction of unemployment through labour-intensive works in targeted rural provinces. This program was supported by a loan from the World Bank in 1996³.

Employment promotion in the South provinces Program: In addition to its traditional activities in the Saharan provinces, the PN is also in charge of undertaking specific actions to

² Social protection in Morocco, World Bank, December, 2002.

³ Social Priorities Program BAJ1, National Promotion, coordination and follow up of social programs in Morocco, Evaluation report, World Bank, May, 1996.

promote employment in the Southern provinces (Laayoune, Boujdour, Oued Eddahab, Aousserd, Smara, Tan Tan, Guelmim, Assa-Zag and Tata).

Social proximity action program: This program promotes social proximity actions, actions in favour of young people, the organization and the housing of hawkers, the elimination of adult's illiteracy and the program "holidays for all".

3. PN programs achievement

The various works launched by PN allowed the creation of 13,559 million working days in 2002, 12,263 million in 2003, 13,834 million in 2004 and nearly 14 million in 2005.

Achievements of the Equipment program: the main achievements of the equipment program which includes development works, the development of local infrastructures and the equipment of urban zones, are as follows.

- *The development works* have as a principal objective the restoration of the grounds, the reforestation, the parks, the digging of wells, the construction of irrigation channels, cisterns, fountains and water sources. (See table of achievements in appendix).
- *The local infrastructures:* primarily focus on constructing rural roads or structures.
- *The social equipments* consist in providing the rural localities with social equipment in order to improve the standard of living of the populations. The achievements relate in particular to social housing, boarding schools, hostels for the young or for women, classrooms, latrines within schools, sports grounds, dispensaries, drinking water conveyance and cleanse networks.
- *The urban zones equipment* aims the cleaning and the parks maintenance to improve the life environment. These works allowed the creation of 11.957.607 working days during the period 2002-2004.

Communities Program: The total working days carried out within the communities program for the period 2002-2004 reached 5.928.096 working days.

Employment promotion in the South provinces Program: actions of this program generated 10.609.871 working days, from 2003 to 2005.

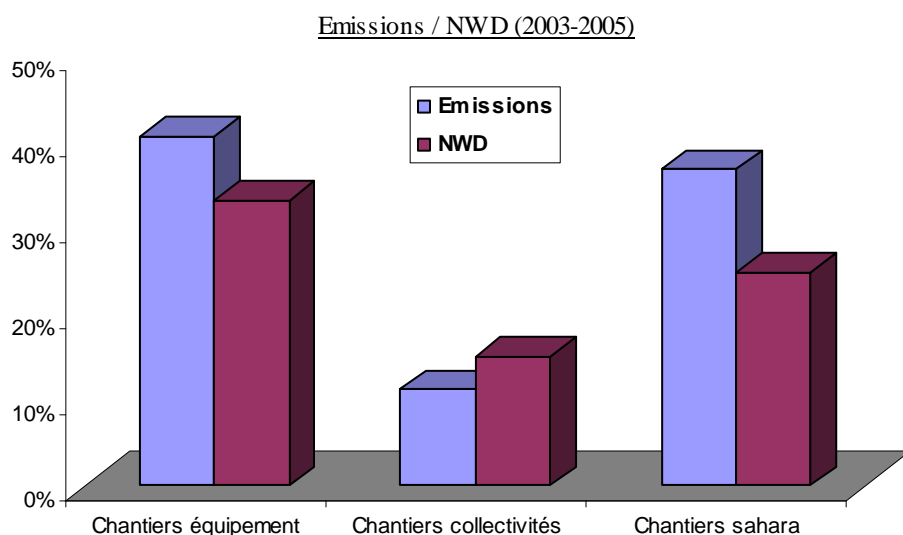
Saharan provinces development Program: The total working days carried out on this program during the period 2002 - 2004 rises at 18.970.564 working days.

PN achievements in number of working days (NWD)

Programs	Year 2003	Year 2004	Year 2005	Total achievements	2006 (forecast)	2007 (forecast)
Communities	1979910	1959663	1956540	5.896.113	1952292	1952292
Urban zones's equipement	3404744	4768634	4866440	13.039.818	4345348	6094950
Employment promotion in the South provinces	3855805	3377033	3377033	10.609.871	3428729	3377033
Saharan Provinces	2821368	3196729	3711952	9.730.049	3819012	3819012
Total	12061827	13302059	13911965	39.275.851	13545381	15243287

Source : Promotion Nationale

The following graph compares the expenses for each activity with the number of working days (NWD) generated. We note that communities Program have the highest NWD/expenses ratio.



Several actions of the PN are undertaken in partnership with other Government departments. Indeed, the technical Ministries were always associated to PN's projects in order to guarantee its quality; we can give as example the partnerships with:

- State Secretary in charge of Water (SEE): The PN has a partnership agreement with the SEE for the construction of small dams, irrigation and the fight against floods. The SEE ensures the technical supervision and the PN provides labour force and the fuel.
- Within the framework of the cooperation with the Social Development Ministry (MDS), PN is in charge of the construction of social centres while the MDS take care of equipment and operation expenditures.

- Partnership with the State Secretariat in charge of Youth for the construction of youth houses in rural zones.
- Partnership with the *Entraide Nationale* (National Mutual Aid organisation) for the construction of Dar Attalib (boarding school) ...

The importance of the programs

During the Sixties, infrastructure works occupied the most significant part of the activities of PN, taking into account the important needs of Morocco: opening of rural roads, improvement of access to mountainous areas... Equipment occupied a less important place during this period, for two reasons: uncertain profitability of some works and priority given to the rural areas development. Currently the equipment takes the first place.

PN's projects were implemented in an integrated way. For example, the replacement of an old dam by a modern one benefits the receiving area fully only if it allows, on the one hand, to use in the most effective way water available upstream, and on the other hand, to distribute this water according to a geographical and agricultural distribution likely to get the maximum of economic advantages to all the users. The integration of a public work in its geographical and economic context is a fundamental aspect.

Regarding achievements, an audit of the PN carried out by the World Bank in 2000⁴ revealed the main following elements:

- Between 1990 and 1999, some 40.000 jobs were created per year. The average cost per day and per job is approximately 43 DH (4 \$/day). Approximately 40% of the created jobs are in civil engineering works, high intensity of labour and for unskilled workers paid at the minimum wage.
- The general administrative expenses are very low: on average, the operating costs represent only 6% of investments costs, which is definitely lower than the average costs of the public administration.
- The investment budget of the PN ranges on average between 400 and 600 million DH (40-60 million \$), but during drought years, as in 1999 and 2000, it increased to nearly 1 billion DH (100 million \$) in order to improve transfers to the affected rural zones.
- The provincial Governors and the local representatives of the PN constitute a dynamic unit for the implementation of the projects of development and infrastructure in difficult rural grounds.

PN has many 'almost permanent' employees, at part time and in subaltern works for local authorities (gardeners, park maintenance, guards...). The majority of workers is not qualified and has dependent persons.

4. Financial resources

The financing of PN works is ensured by the State Budget through a Special Appropriation account (CAS). This account entitled "Financing of equipment expenditures and the fight against unemployment" aims at accounting operations related to PN programs.

⁴ Social protection in Morocco, World Bank, December, 2002.

From 1990 to 2002, 7,151 billion Dirhams were assigned to this CST account. Those expenditures reached 0,2% of the GDP in 2002.

The expenditures carried out by PN during the period 2002-2004, reached 702,6 MDH in 2002, 849,6 MDH in 2003 and 765,9 MDH in 2004⁵.

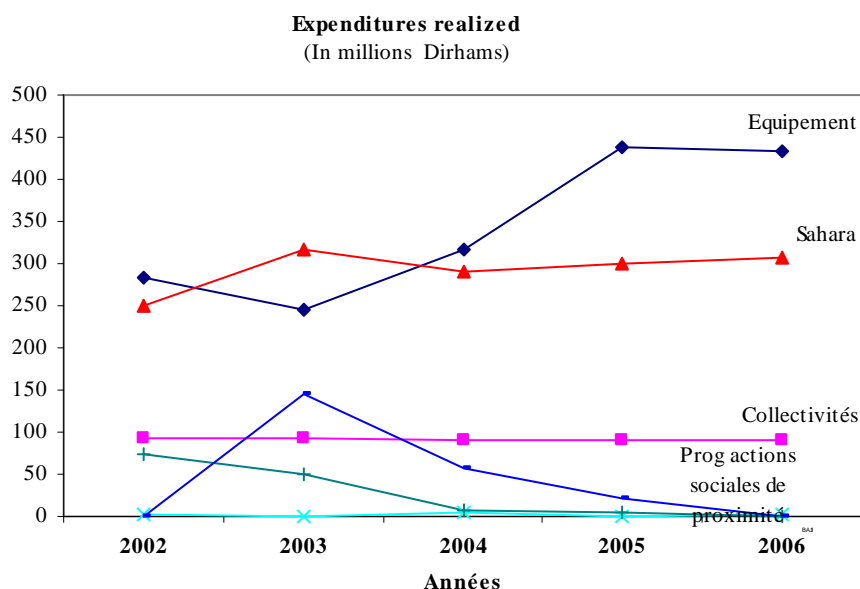
These expenditures allowed the achievement of projects related to various fields such as urban zones equipment, local communities, Saharan provinces, social proximity actions and social priorities (BAJ1).

Expenditures achieved by PN (in Million Dirhams)

Financed Projects	Y2002	Y2003	Y2004	Y2005	2006 (Forecast)	Total
Equipment program	284,4	246,1	317,3	438,35	433,82	1 720,00
Communities program	91,7	92,7	90,7	91,01	90,60	456,83
Saharan provinces	250	316,5	289,9	300,60	307,24	1 464,22
Supervision	2,3	0,1	4,2	1,14	1,20	8,93
Social Priorities Program BAJ1	74,2	49,3	7,1	4,59	0,00	135,20
Social proximity action program	-	144,9	56,7	21,66	0,00	223,22
Total	702,6	849,6	765,9	857,35	832,85	4 008,41

Source : Ministry of Finance and Privatization

The following graph shows that the expenditures carried out benefits to 3 main programs. The equipment program receives the greatest part of the emissions and its share increased since 2004. The Sahara program arrives in second position. The share allocated to the communities is stable these last years and the other programs are in nearing completion.



⁵ Special Appropriation account (CAS) Report, Financial Law 2006, Ministry of Finance and Privatization.

5. Impacts of expenditures allocated to PN works

The advantages really generated by PN works are either direct (such as immediate benefit of the work, for the area or the nation) or indirect (later economic effects pulled by the work created and in a more general way, induced effects following the achievement of works with profit to the country).

The direct effects of PN works are an opportunity for the poor in marginal areas. One can quotes :

- The acceleration of the national economy monetization. The circulation of the currency was very weak in some areas dominated by barter in the Sixties to Seventies.
- Improvement of the purchasing power of the marginal zones thanks to the wages paid on the development works which resulted in the improvement of the wellbeing of the households. In 1969, the distributed wages represented almost the half of monetary incomes of the farming population, which means that the purchasing power of these populations was increased by 50% through PN works⁶.
- Improvement of the human development with the increase in the schooling of the children.
- Reduction of the cost of realization of the hydro-agricultural works allowing to increase the Country total capacity of investment. It is estimated that the realization of hydro-agricultural works by PN works, was 30% less expensive compared to an execution by a company.
- Deceleration of the rural migration towards the cities, while allowing to fix the populations and to get incomes on the spot to them.
- Improvement of the environment which was strongly degraded in certain rural zones.

If they are overall benefits for the areas in Morocco, it was noted during the first two decades that PN works had in the past some negative effects. Indeed, some too important works in very poor areas upset the balance of traditional trade via a localised inflation. The works considered could destabilize the fragile agro-economic balance of an area, by a sudden and temporary release of liquidities.

Indirect effects : are all the achieved results, once the works finished. These results are very variable according to the effect of the work to the area, and according to the degree of permanence of the achieved results.

Poverty geographic targeting

The examination of the expenditures of PN programs at provinces level⁷ shows, a strong concentration in some provinces which are not among the poorest. According to the PN provincial expenditures analysis from 1994 to 2002 (see the figures below), it appears that the expenditures per capita at the provincial level is not correlated with the incidence of poverty. For considerable provinces, the amounts per capita are relatively the same ones. The average receipt was 77 Dh⁸ per capita. But there is also the aberration of certain rich provinces which receive 15

⁶ 1969 estimations, in Y. Lancelot, "Valoriser le travail humain ou le mécaniser ? la réponse de la Promotion Nationale". CIHEAM, Options Méditerranéennes, 1970.

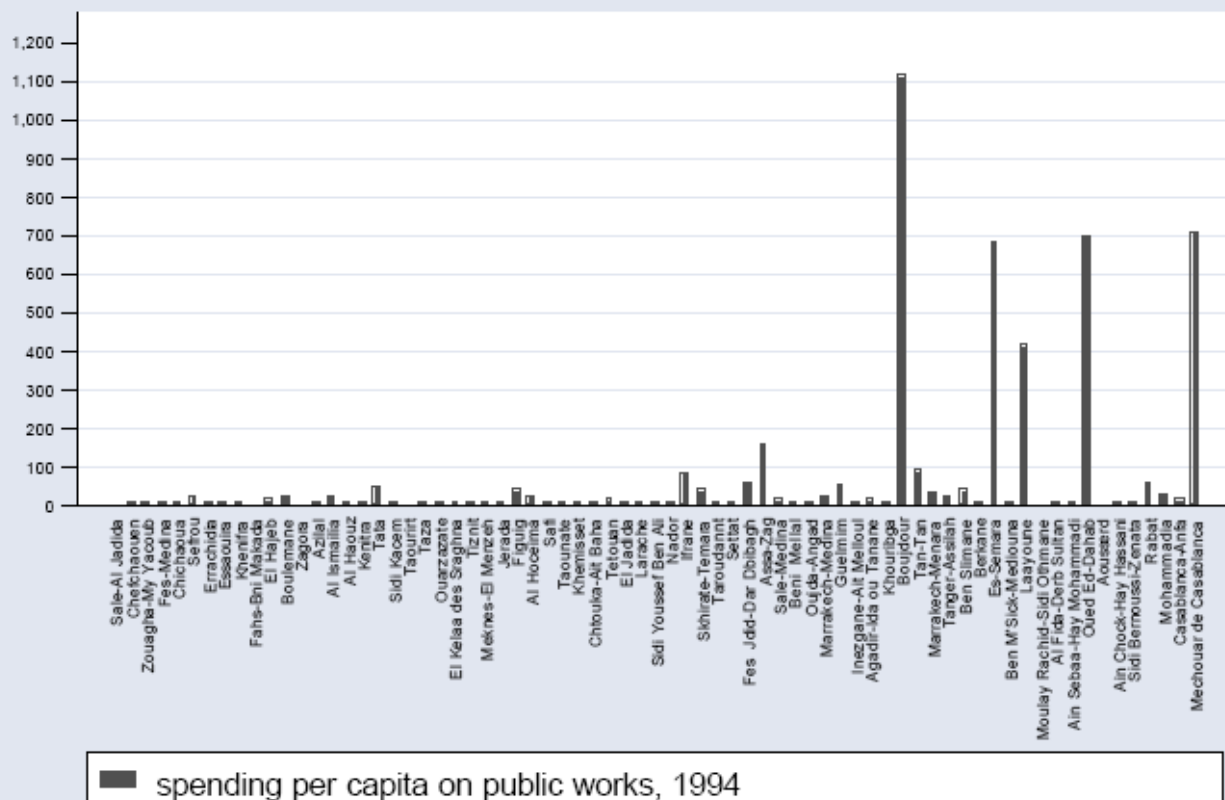
⁷ Poverty Report : Comprendre les dimensions géographiques de la pauvreté pour en améliorer l'appréhension à travers les politiques publiques", World Bank, Septembre 2004.

⁸ Budget allocation affected to an area divided by the area population.

times as much. These assignments per capita are not correlated at the poverty rate of these provinces nor at the unemployment rates. The situation did not really change between 1994 and 2002.

Expenditures per capita allocations classified by poverty incidence

(Promotion Nationale 1994)

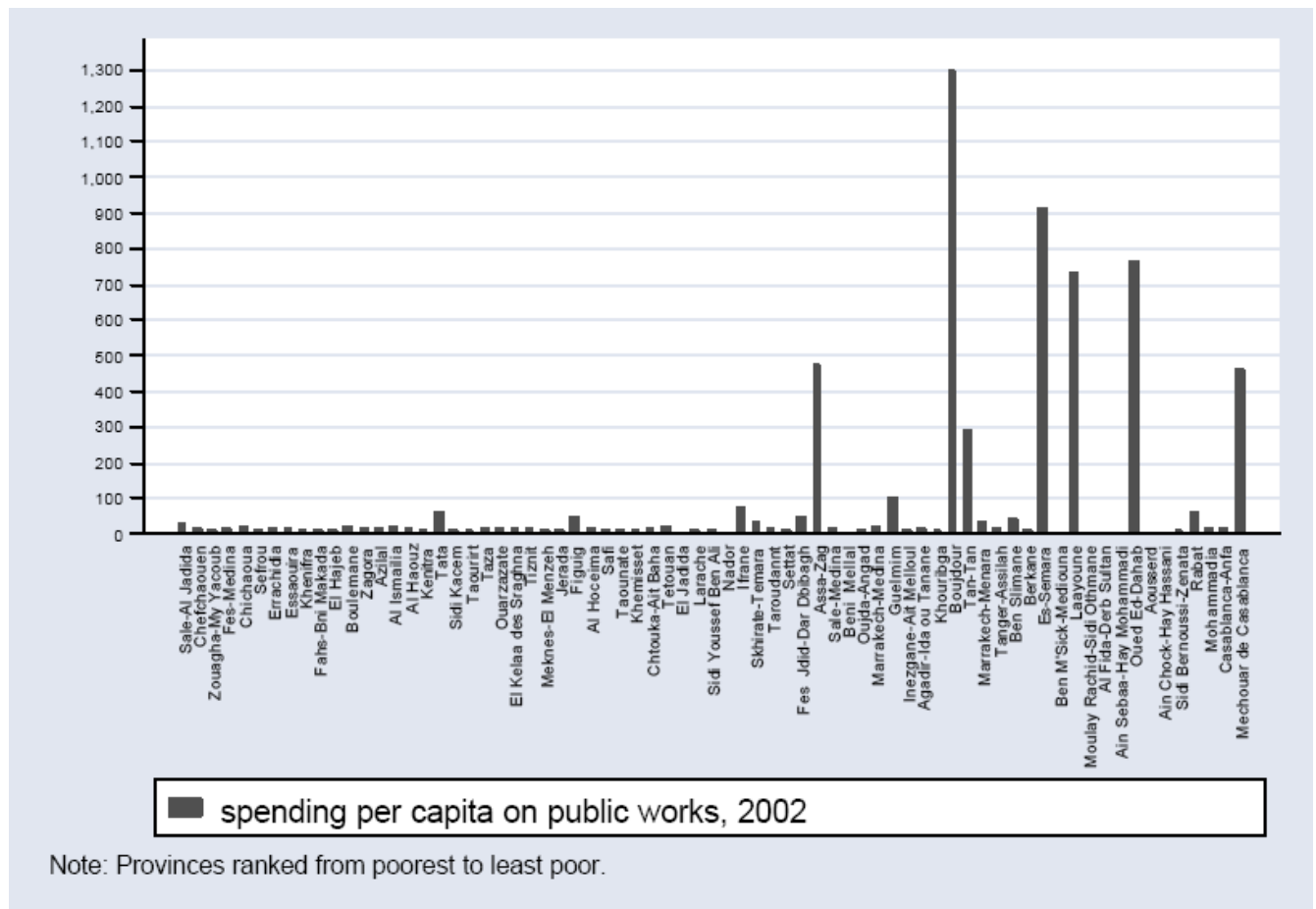


Note: Provinces ranked from poorest to least poor.

Source : World Bank, Rapport sur la pauvreté, 2004

Expenditures per capita allocations classified by poverty incidence

(Promotion Nationale 2002)



Source : World Bank, Rapport sur la pauvreté, 2004

PN programs do not seem to reach the rural poor zones effectively. Indeed, the distribution of the budget (except BAJ) of the PN seems to go to the urban non poor zones.

The phenomenon could be explained owing to the fact that the program has today a set of objectives more complex than during its establishment. Its mandate today exceeds the public-works programs to strong intensity of labour, which had been conceived initially to provide work to the rural households during difficult periods of the year. Currently, 40% of the PN budget is affected to urban households within permanent employment programs. According to the World Bank, the program does not only reach poorest or most vulnerable.

6. Main difficulties

The technical supervision (in the past) and human resources (today) are the principal difficulties which hinder PN action.

Technical supervision

In the Sixties and seventies, Morocco suffered from the insufficiency of the technical supervision. This weakness was raised, in particular, with the technical support of partners like France, the USAID... In addition, the lack of the local labour know how was get round by PN through privet companies of public works.

Human resources

The PN quickly faced human management problems :

- Absence of a legal statute of the personnel employed.
- Requests for establishment (permanent staff status), complaints of welfare benefits (family benefits...) and demand of social protection (insurance, retirements...).
- Difficulties of dismissal of the personal employed especially in urban zones (employment in the communities, orphanages, health centres...) and thus, drop in the people employed turnover, which is completely conflicting with the initial vocation of the PN which aims at creating provisional job.
- Difficulties of acquired rights arise which one cannot touch any more with sometimes the employment of whole families.

There is more movement in rural zones and those difficulties appear more in urban zones.

The PN intends to integrate the beneficiary of the employment programs within the framework of the insurance system disease for economically stripped (RAMED) which will be set up in 2007 to ensure a medical insurance to them.

7. PN limitations

Public institutions which implement specific social actions to provide employment and to fight poverty, such as PN, are generally facing the following limitations:

- limits of the public financing;
- the reduction or suppression of certain forms of bilateral or multilateral assistance;
- Repercussions of a centralized public management of the programs in terms of insufficiency of the motivation of the personnel executing the projects, and in terms of some inflexibility in the administration of these programs...
- A problem of targeting the right population.

In addition, PN works should not become a source of permanent and sufficient incomes; otherwise the farmer will give up his land and work in PN projects. The effects of PN works will be all the more positive and permanent that this work generates future employment, spread out in the time and is complementary to the traditional activities.

Conclusions and perspectives

The Moroccan experience in the public works of underprivileged through the PN is remarkable. Indeed, 45 years after its installation, the PN has at its credit an important and single assessment regarding the fight against unemployment with weak management costs. In spite of certain difficulties and limits which particularly hinder the action of the organization regarding the geographical targeting of rural poor zones, PN programs remains one of the most efficient mechanisms of social protection of the country.

Indeed, the distribution of PN budget seems to target the non poor urban zones. The phenomenon could be explained by the fact that PN has today a set of more various and complex objectives related to social, political and security issues. Its mandate now exceeds the public-works programs with high labour intensity, which had been conceived to provide work to the rural households during difficult periods of the year. In addition, that can also be explained by the existence of pockets of poverty in the sub-urban zones.

The gained experience made it possible to define the modes of intervention, the standards of employment and finally the true vocation of this large company of employment of under employed labour capital. One of the first conclusions, which is essential, is that the human investment, insofar as it is channelled towards concerted economic development operations can be highly profitable. Whatever the solutions adopted to install a development tool adapted to the Moroccan needs, one notes that in last resort, it is finally the massive employment of men and women which remains the base of the effort.

The absence of data prevented us from carrying out a deep analysis of the beneficiaries. To contribute effectively to the fight against unemployment and the development of the poor zones one can make the following recommendations with the PN:

- To modernize the information system by disaggregating by sex data related to the beneficiaries to allow gender analysis of PN actions on the population.
- Remove constraints which weak the turnover of the beneficiaries in urban areas and fight against the acquired advantages, which would reinforce the transparency and the equity of the programs.
- To encourage the Local Communities to deal with the staff costs which weigh the PN budget down and to reallocate the communities program budget to the equipment of the rural areas;
- To pursue the reduction of the credits allocated to the urban world and to increase allocations to the rural world in order to improve the targeting of the poor populations.

In our opinion, as long as unemployment and poverty persist, PN action as a provider of public employment must continue even if it means to undergo some reforms for removing the difficulties encountered and the targeting problems mentioned. The public employment remains one of the last public tools against inequalities in Morocco. It is also a social stabilization tool in period of economic crisis or climatic hazards (drought...).

Appendix : PN Realisations

Catégorie	Projet	Unité	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Mise en valeur	Abreuvoirs	Unité	1				1
Mise en valeur	Canaux	ML	960				960
Mise en valeur	Citernes, Bassins d'accumulation et chateaux d'eaux	Unité	13	24	22	9	68
Mise en valeur	Digue de protection contre les inondations	Unité	1			2	1
Mise en valeur	Digue de dérivation	Unité	1				1
Mise en valeur	Barrage (partenariat)	Unité			1	7	1
Mise en valeur	Epierrage superficiel	HA	196				196
Mise en valeur	Pépinières	NJT	14 400				14 400
Mise en valeur	Puits	Unité		8	3	3	11
Mise en valeur	Seguias	ML	5 320	27 410	35 765	20 377	88 872
Mise en valeur	Jardins	M²				2 728	
Mise en valeur	Sources	Unité	3	1	10	3	17
Infrastructure	Ouvrages d'art	Unité	81	13	41	2	137
Infrastructure	Canivaux	ML			1 970		1 970
Infrastructure	Pistes	KM	303	172	247	8	730
Infrastructure	Dallage, carrelage des rues	M²	149 532	50 407	102 064	73 012	375 015
Construction	Radiers	Unité				39	
Construction	Adduction eau potable	ML	5 532	29 900	44 175	16 383	95 990
Construction	Borne fontaine	Unité				47	
Construction	Centre d'éducation	Unité	1				1
Construction	Centre de formation	Unité	1		1		2
Construction	Plate forme pour marchands ambulants	M²				2 200	
Construction	Classes	Unité	3	1	10		14
Construction	Cantines	Unité			1		1
Construction	Bibliothèque	Unité		1			1
Construction	Extension de maison de culture	Unité		1	2		3
Construction	Salles multifonction	Unité	1	1	5		7
Construction	Orphelinat	Unité		2			2
Construction	Dar Talib	Unité	5	16	55		76
Construction	Extension Dar Talib	Unité		4			4
Construction	Dépôts	Unité	1	10	6		17
Construction	Latrines	Unité	15	13	14		42
Construction	Locaux administratifs	Unité	13	5	14		32
Construction	Logements	Unité	61	17	8		86
Construction	Foyers féminins	Unité		4	36		40
Construction	Maisons de jeunes	Unité	2	4	30		36
Construction	Maisons de vieillards	Unité			1		1
Construction	Terrains de sport	Unité		1	5		6
Construction	Dalots	Unité				1	
Construction	Dispensaire	Unité		1	4		5
Construction	Abattoir	Unité			1		1
Construction	Murs de clôture; murs de protection; murs soutènement	ML	5 120	18 254	23 432	1 187	46 806
Construction	Réseaux d'égouts	ML	3 000	5 256	720		8 976
Total unités			203	105	216		538
Total KM			303	172	247		730
Total ML			19 932	80 820	104 092		241 604
Total M²			149 532	50 407	102 064		375 015
Total NJT			14 400	0	0		14 400

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