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## **Entrepreneurship and innovation as levers for economic growth in Morocco**

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### **Abstract**

Innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth are key elements of Morocco's economic development. The country has implemented several strategies to encourage innovation, promote entrepreneurship, and support entrepreneurs across various sectors, which contributes to its economic growth.

In recent years, Morocco has undergone a significant transformation in its economic landscape, with increased focus on technological innovation. The Moroccan government has launched initiatives such as the "*Morocco Digital Plan*" and the "*Industrial Acceleration Plan*", aiming to strengthen innovation capacities and attract foreign investment. These plans seek to diversify the Moroccan economy, traditionally focused on agriculture and the textile industry, by integrating emerging sectors such as information and communication technologies (ICT) and renewable energy.

Entrepreneurship is also booming in Morocco, with a notable increase in the number of startups and SMEs. These businesses play a crucial role in job creation, representing about 90% of the country's enterprises. Young Moroccan entrepreneurs benefit from incubation and acceleration

programs that provide them with access to funding, training, and professional networks. Initiatives such as the "*Startup Act*" aim to facilitate business creation by simplifying administrative procedures and offering tax incentives.

However, several challenges remain. Access to financing is still a major obstacle for many entrepreneurs, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, insufficient infrastructure in certain regions can hinder economic development. Bureaucratic complexities and a lack of coordination among different economic actors also pose barriers to innovation.

To overcome these challenges, it is essential for Morocco to continue fostering an entrepreneurial culture and improving its regulatory framework. Support for scientific research is also crucial to encourage sustainable innovation. By integrating research more effectively into economic strategies, Morocco can not only boost its economic growth but also strengthen its position on the international stage.

**Keywords:** Innovation; entrepreneurship; economic growth; sustainable development

## Introduction:

Innovation and entrepreneurship are widely recognized as crucial drivers of economic growth and sustainable development. In the context of emerging economies, such as Morocco, these factors play a role in addressing the challenges of competitiveness, employment, and international integration. In particular, Morocco is increasingly engaging in initiatives aimed at stimulating innovative entrepreneurship by strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem and facilitating access to financing. Public policies and institutional support, combined with new technologies, enable entrepreneurs to overcome traditional obstacles and exploit opportunities in sectors such as renewable energy, digital technology, and agro-industry (Benkirane, 2022). On the one hand, innovation translates into the adoption of new methods and technologies in Moroccan companies, which contributes to improving their productivity and competitiveness in international markets (Amine, 2023). Morocco has indeed adopted several national strategies, such as the Morocco Innovation Plan and the Morocco Digital Strategy 2025, which aim to make the country a regional technological hub. These initiatives aim to encourage the creation of technology start-ups and stimulate investment in research and development projects, particularly in high-value-added sectors.

On the other hand, entrepreneurship is developing in Morocco with increasing support from financial institutions and funding initiatives, such as the "Forsa" program and the Innov Invest Fund, aimed at promoting access to financing for young entrepreneurs. (World Bank, 2021). In addition to financial resources, the development of training and incubation programs strengthens the entrepreneurial skills of young people and facilitates their integration into the job market. This entrepreneurial movement also plays a role in reducing unemployment and creating new economic opportunities, thereby addressing the needs of Moroccan society and contributing to the country's economic resilience. However, despite these advances, persistent challenges remain. Moroccan companies must overcome obstacles related to regulation, access to financing for advanced growth phases, and the scarcity of specialized skills in emerging sectors. To strengthen the impact of innovation and entrepreneurship on growth, additional efforts are necessary, particularly in the areas of improving the business climate, encouraging academic research, and promoting public-private partnerships (Ndiaye, 2023).

## The key question is:

How do innovation and entrepreneurship contribute to Morocco's economic growth and socio-economic

development?

## Hypotheses:

**H1 :** Innovation, as a tool of entrepreneurship, positively contributes to job creation and stimulates economic growth in Morocco.

**H2 :** Entrepreneurship programs in Morocco promote the creation and sustainability of businesses, which positively contributes to national economic growth.

## 1: Innovation as a driver of economic growth

### 1.1 Definition and Typology of Innovation

Innovation is a fundamental concept that refers to the process by which new ideas, products, or methods are introduced to the market. It can be classified into several typologies:

#### 1.1.1 Technological innovation

Technological innovation is an essential driver of transformation and economic progress in contemporary and classical theories. It represents not only the introduction of new products or services but also the improvement of processes, organizational models, and social systems, thereby contributing to significant structural changes in the global economy. Technological innovation is distinguished by its ability to stimulate the competitiveness of businesses and nations, enabling them to adopt innovative approaches to meet the changing needs of consumers and the challenges of global markets.

In economic theory, technological innovation was particularly highlighted by the economist Joseph Schumpeter, who introduced the concept of "creative destruction." According to him, technological innovation is the main driver of economic dynamics, as it leads to the creation of new sectors and opportunities while rendering old structures and methods obsolete. This process, although disruptive, is fundamental for long-term economic growth. Schumpeter considers entrepreneurs as the main agents of this transformation, as they take risks to introduce these innovations, thereby stimulating competition and productivity.

Endogenous growth models, developed by economists such as Paul Romer and Robert Lucas (1990), also incorporate technological innovation as a key element. These models emphasize that innovation does not solely arise from exogenous factors, but can be cultivated within an economy through investments in human capital, research and

development (R&D), and the accumulation of knowledge. This theoretical framework highlights the importance of public policies in fostering an environment conducive to innovation, particularly through tax incentives, investments in technological infrastructure, and the strengthening of educational systems.

The impact of technological innovation is particularly visible in emerging economies where it plays a crucial role in structural transformation. In Africa, for example, technological innovations in the information and communication technology (ICT) sectors have helped overcome major obstacles such as the lack of physical and financial infrastructure. Digital platforms such as M-Pesa in Kenya have not only revolutionized mobile payments but have also paved the way for cumulative financial inclusion, directly benefiting rural and marginalized populations. These examples illustrate how technological innovation can be a powerful lever to accelerate economic development and reduce inequalities.

Thus, technological innovation, although perceived as an abstract concept, proves to be a tangible and essential reality in the processes of economic and social transformation. Its role in improving living conditions, increasing productivity, and stimulating growth makes it an indispensable element of the development strategies of modern nations. A deep understanding of its dynamics and the mobilization of the necessary resources for its expansion remain imperatives to ensure a prosperous and sustainable economic future.

### **1.1.2 Organizational Innovation**

Organizational innovation constitutes a strategic lever to transform the way companies and institutions operate, by adapting their structures, processes, and management models to a perpetually evolving economic environment. Unlike technological innovation, which focuses on products and technical processes, organizational innovation primarily concerns the internal dynamics of companies and their ability to rethink their organization to remain competitive and efficient. It aims to improve operational efficiency, foster collaboration, and strengthen resilience in the face of market changes.

Economic and managerial theories have long recognized the role of organizational innovation in value creation. Peter Drucker (1985), often considered the father of modern management, emphasized the importance of organizational innovation in adapting businesses to economic and technological challenges. According to him, successful companies do not merely react to changes; they anticipate them and reorganize their human, financial, and material

resources to make the most of emerging opportunities. This principle is particularly relevant in the context of developing economies, where organizational flexibility can help overcome structural obstacles.

Organizational innovation manifests itself in several ways. It can include the introduction of new work methods, such as remote work or flexible hours, which increase productivity and employee satisfaction. It also includes the reorganization of hierarchical structures to reduce management levels and facilitate decision-making. Furthermore, it is expressed through the development of new approaches to talent management, such as the implementation of continuous training programs or the creation of digital collaboration platforms. These changes are not merely technical adjustments, but fundamental transformations that affect the very culture of organizations.

In the context of emerging economies, particularly in Africa, organizational innovation plays a crucial role in modernizing local businesses. Companies facing limited infrastructure, unstable markets, or an inadequately skilled workforce can leverage this form of innovation to enhance their competitiveness. For example, agile organizational models have allowed some African companies to quickly adapt to the economic shocks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic by reconfiguring their supply chains and integrating digital technologies into their daily operations. These initiatives demonstrate that organizational innovation is not only a response to challenges but also an opportunity to redefine business practices and accelerate economic development. Ultimately, organizational innovation is a central pillar of economic and social development, particularly in a world where technological and societal changes are accelerating. By rethinking their organizational modes, companies can not only improve their performance but also contribute to sustainable and inclusive development. The ability to innovate in this area thus constitutes a major competitive advantage, whether in developed economies or emerging markets, and remains a priority to ensure their long-term growth.

### **1.1.3 Social innovation**

Social innovation occupies an increasingly prominent place in discussions on sustainable development and the transformation of contemporary societies. It stands out from other forms of innovation by its primary objective, which is to address unmet social needs or those inadequately addressed by traditional solutions, whether public or private. Social innovation seeks to provide new responses and efficiencies to issues such as inclusion, poverty, access to education, health, and environmental preservation. In this regard, it goes far

beyond mere economic performance by integrating human, social, and environmental dimensions into its processes. In economic and sociological theories, social innovation is often seen as a driver of structural change. It is based on the idea that the complex challenges faced by modern societies cannot be solved solely by conventional approaches. According to the sociologist Joseph A. Schumpeter (1942), although known for his work on technological innovation, process innovations, and social models can also lead to "creative destructions," redefining economic relations and social interactions. This perspective has been broadened by contemporary researchers who emphasize the importance of mobilizing local communities, NGOs, businesses, and governments to co-construct solutions tailored to the specific needs of the territories and populations concerned. Social innovation takes various forms. It can be expressed through the creation of new services, such as crowdfunding platforms to support community projects or worker cooperatives that manage resources collectively. It can also manifest through participatory approaches in local governance, where citizens are directly involved in decision-making processes, thereby strengthening their sense of belonging and commitment. Furthermore, social innovation includes initiatives in the field of the circular economy, such as waste valorization or the promotion of renewable energies in marginalized communities. These initiatives, in addition to their direct impact, often serve as catalysts for other forms of innovation, particularly technological and organizational.

In the context of emerging countries, particularly in Africa, social innovation plays a crucial role in addressing the gaps in infrastructure and public systems. Non-governmental organizations, social startups, and inclusive businesses are emerging as key players in this field. For example, innovative solutions like mobile banking have transformed access to financial services in remote regions, thus providing populations with a means to participate in the formal economy. Similarly, community health programs supported by digital applications today enable the monitoring and management of chronic diseases in under-equipped areas. These innovations, although rooted in a social framework, also produce positive economic externalities by promoting inclusion and job creation.

In summary, social innovation represents an indispensable tool for addressing the challenges of the 21st century. By integrating the diverse needs of populations and mobilizing collective resources, it enables the generation of sustainable and inclusive solutions. Its capacity to transform economic and social structures makes it a powerful lever to promote human development, reduce inequalities, and strengthen the resilience of communities in the face of crises. At a time when

global challenges require collaborative and innovative approaches, social innovation positions itself as an essential response, both pragmatic and visionary.

## **1.2 Economic theories related to innovation and growth**

Several economic theories explain the link between innovation and economic growth:

### **1.2.1 Schumpeter's Theory**

Joseph Schumpeter introduced the concept of "creative destruction," where innovation leads to the disappearance of old businesses and the creation of new ones. According to Schumpeter, entrepreneurs are the engines of economic change because they identify and exploit opportunities for innovation. This theory emphasizes that without innovation, there is no sustainable economic progress.

### **1.2.2 Endogenous growth model**

The endogenous growth model suggests that economic growth is primarily determined by internal factors within the economy, such as investment in research and development (R&D) and human capital. This model highlights that the innovations generated by these investments contribute to sustained long-term growth. These theories clearly show that innovation is not only an essential driver of economic progress but also a key factor in maintaining a country's competitiveness in the global market.

### **1.2.3 Role of Innovation in the Transformation of Emerging Economies**

Innovation plays a crucial role in the transformation of emerging economies by enabling them to improve their competitiveness in the global market. Countries that invest in innovation are better positioned to attract foreign investments and develop high-value-added industries. For example, Morocco has implemented several policies to encourage tech startups, thereby fostering a dynamic innovation ecosystem. Initiatives such as the "Plan Maroc Numérique" aim to strengthen the country's digital capabilities while supporting local entrepreneurs. Moreover, innovations can also help address certain social issues such as unemployment and poverty by creating new job opportunities. Innovative companies are often more flexible and capable of adapting their offerings to the specific needs of the local market.

#### **1.2.4 Empirical studies on the impact of innovation in developing countries**

Studies show that innovation has a positive impact on economic growth in developing countries. For example, a study conducted by Acs et al. (2018) revealed that countries that invest more in innovation see a significant increase in their GDP per capita. Similarly, Khalilov and Yi (2021) found that technological innovations are directly linked to job creation and the improvement of living conditions. These results highlight not only the importance of investing in innovation but also the necessity of adopting favorable public policies that encourage such investment.

### **2: Entrepreneurship as a catalyst for innovation**

#### **2.1 Conceptualization of entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship is a multidimensional and constantly evolving concept that is subject to numerous definitions and interpretations, depending on the theoretical framework and perspectives used. Beyond the mere creation of a business, entrepreneurship encompasses a set of activities, processes, and practices aimed at addressing unmet needs, while taking risks to introduce innovations in the markets. This ability to identify opportunities, organize resources, and overcome the challenges inherent in implementing new ideas distinguishes entrepreneurs from other economic actors.

In a classical approach, entrepreneurship is often associated with the figure of the business creator, someone who initiates, develops, and manages a business. The entrepreneur is perceived as a key player in economic development, capable of transforming ideas into concrete opportunities and introducing innovative products or services. Schumpeter's work has greatly contributed to the understanding of entrepreneurship by defining it as a driver of "creative destruction," a process by which new innovations replace old practices, thereby creating new economic dynamics (Schumpeter, 1934).

However, entrepreneurship is not limited solely to the creation of a business. According to the contemporary perspective, entrepreneurship also includes intrapreneurial initiatives where individuals, acting within existing organizations, autonomously initiate projects or innovations within their professional environment. This form of entrepreneurship, often referred to as intrapreneurship, is particularly relevant in large companies where innovation and agility are essential to remain competitive. Intrapreneurs seek to solve internal problems, optimize processes, or implement creative

strategies without necessarily stepping outside the organization's framework, but by bringing entrepreneurial dynamism to it.

The different types of entrepreneurship, whether classical, intrapreneurial, or social, all contribute to the economic and social dynamics of a country. They generate wealth, enable job creation, and allow for a better distribution of resources. Moreover, they influence the socio-economic environment by contributing to the development of infrastructure, the improvement of public services, and the implementation of solutions to local challenges.

In short, entrepreneurship must be understood in its diversity and complementarity. Every form of entrepreneurship, whether individual, collective, social, or intrapreneurial, plays a crucial role in the economic and social fabric of a country, contributing to the growth, development, and sustainability of societies.

#### **2.2 Opportunity Entrepreneurship**

Opportunity entrepreneurship is a key concept in understanding modern entrepreneurship, characterized by individuals' willingness to exploit market opportunities to create value and generate profits. Unlike necessity entrepreneurship, where individuals default to entrepreneurship often in response to economic constraints or a lack of job options, opportunity entrepreneurship involves a proactive decision to act on an idea perceived as profitable and innovative.

The opportunity entrepreneur is the one who identifies a need or a gap in the market and decides to address it with a product, service, or solution that has a high potential for profitability. This form of entrepreneurship is often associated with innovation, as it relies on the entrepreneur's ability to innovate to meet an emerging demand, use new technologies, or redefine an existing sector. The main characteristics of opportunity entrepreneurship include calculated risk-taking, the identification of under-exploited market niches, and a pursuit of profits through strategic management of resources and capabilities.

In economic theory, opportunity entrepreneurship is associated with continuous innovation processes, where entrepreneurs seek to capitalize on new ideas or improve existing business models. It is therefore considered an essential driver of economic growth, particularly in developing economies, where entrepreneurs play a crucial role in stimulating innovation, creating jobs, and energizing economic sectors. According to Schumpeter's model (1934),

opportunity entrepreneurs are seen as agents of "creative destruction" in the sense that they introduce new technologies and practices that disrupt traditional economic sectors and generate sustainable growth.

In Africa, opportunity entrepreneurship is particularly relevant in the context of youth, where many young people, rather than engaging in traditional or formal jobs, choose to exploit economic opportunities that arise in innovative sectors such as technology, digital financial services, or sustainable agriculture. This phenomenon is even more observed in countries where the barriers to entry for young entrepreneurs are relatively low and where emerging sectors are in full expansion. Young African entrepreneurs, particularly those from urban backgrounds, are increasingly inclined to identify market niches and use digital solutions to develop businesses.

Opportunity entrepreneurship also has a positive impact on the competitiveness of local and regional markets. By addressing unmet needs, these entrepreneurs contribute not only to the diversification of the economy but also to the creation of new jobs, the improvement of infrastructure, and the increase in economic efficiency. In developing countries, this type of entrepreneurship can also encourage foreign investments, attract new markets, and strengthen local production capacities.

This refers to individuals who start a business out of necessity, often due to the lack of other available job options. This type of entrepreneurship is common in developing countries where the unemployment rate is high.

### **2.3 Role of entrepreneurs in the diffusion and implementation of innovation**

Entrepreneurs play a central role in the diffusion and implementation of innovation within modern economies, particularly regarding the creation of new businesses and the transformation of traditional sectors. As key players in the economic dynamics, they are responsible for the identification, adoption, and implementation of new ideas, technologies, and processes that add value to the economy. Their ability to innovate and implement these innovations is essential for economic growth, business competitiveness, and the dynamization of local and global markets. Innovation, in this context, can manifest in various forms: technological, organizational, social, or even commercial. Entrepreneurs do not merely create new products or services; they are also responsible for the continuous improvement of production processes, resource management, and the way companies interact with their environment. By acting in this way, entrepreneurs become catalysts for change, promoting the diffusion of innovation throughout their company and

across the entire economic ecosystem.

Entrepreneurs are also facilitators of innovation through their role as "disseminators" or "transmitters" of new ideas and technologies. Indeed, they play a fundamental role in the commercialization and adoption of innovations developed by researchers, research laboratories, or companies. Their interaction with various market actors (consumers, investors, suppliers, etc.) allows them to introduce innovations more quickly and efficiently, relying on a keen understanding of customer needs and market trends. Consequently, entrepreneurs not only ensure the creation of innovations but also their diffusion on a larger scale, contributing to their adoption by a variety of economic sectors.

Entrepreneurs also play a crucial role in transforming innovation into a viable business model. By integrating new ideas into their production processes or introducing innovative business models, they demonstrate how innovations can be exploited on a large scale to meet market demand. The success of this implementation depends not only on the entrepreneur's creativity but also on their ability to manage the risks associated with introducing new ideas. Moreover, they are often the first to take risks on innovations that, although promising, may not yet have proven themselves in the market. Thus, entrepreneurs are not just business creators; they are also agents of social and economic transformation. Their ability to disseminate and implement innovation stimulates competitiveness, improves productivity, and creates jobs, thereby contributing to sustainable development. In this context, the role of entrepreneurs in innovation goes far beyond the mere creation of new businesses, extending to the transformation of economic structures, the modernization of industries, and the improvement of social and environmental well-being.

### **2.4 Case studies on entrepreneurship and innovation in African contexts**

Studies show how African entrepreneurs have managed to innovate despite various challenges such as lack of infrastructure or access to financing. For example, M-Pesa in Kenya has revolutionized financial services through a social innovation that allows users to make transactions via their mobile phones. This initiative not only improved access to financial services for the unbanked populations but also stimulated local economic development.

### **2.5 Factors Favoring or Limiting Innovative Entrepreneurship**

The factors favoring or limiting innovative entrepreneurship

are multiple and interdependent, ranging from socio-economic and cultural conditions to public policies, as well as the individual capabilities of entrepreneurs and the resources available in their immediate environment. Understanding these factors is essential to identify the levers necessary for the growth of innovative entrepreneurship, as well as the obstacles to overcome to facilitate this process. The success of innovative entrepreneurship depends not only on the creativity of entrepreneurs but also on the ecosystem in which they operate, including financial institutions, innovation support mechanisms, and market access.

One of the main factors favoring innovative entrepreneurship is access to financing. Venture capital, angel investors, grants, and subsidized loans are instruments that enable entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and launch innovative projects. The existence of a financial system conducive to innovation is therefore essential to stimulate the creation of new businesses and the development of advanced technologies. However, in many developing countries, access to this type of financing remains limited, particularly due to investors' risk aversion and the lack of understanding of innovative projects. Besides financing, access to qualified and specialized human resources is also a key factor in supporting innovative entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs need talents with technical, creative, and managerial skills to realize their innovative projects. In this sense, an educational system adapted to the needs of the digital economy and technological industries is crucial for preparing young generations for entrepreneurship and innovation. The establishment of training programs in entrepreneurship and innovation management, in collaboration with universities and research centers, strengthens the capacities of future entrepreneurs to develop and implement innovative ideas.

The institutional environment and public policies also play a crucial role in the development of innovative entrepreneurship. Governments can encourage innovation through fiscal measures, research and development incentives, suitable infrastructures (technology parks, business incubators, etc.), and a legal framework conducive to business creation. In countries like Morocco, public policies supporting innovation, such as tax incentives and subsidies for technology companies, are implemented to encourage the creation of innovative businesses. However, the inefficiency of certain policies and administrative delays can hinder the growth of innovative entrepreneurship, particularly regarding the procedures related to business registration and obtaining public funding.

Relationships with networks and partners are also important elements. Innovative entrepreneurs often take advantage of

their connections with other economic actors, such as suppliers, customers, researchers, or public institutions. Access to these networks not only promotes the dissemination of innovative ideas but also provides access to critical resources such as funding, technology, and strategic advice. In Africa and other developing regions, entrepreneur networks and innovation associations play a major role in facilitating exchanges, sharing best practices, and connecting with financial and commercial partners.

However, the lack of government support, particularly in terms of tax incentives or research and development grants, is also a major limiting factor. In developing economies, entrepreneurs struggle to obtain the necessary support to carry out large-scale projects. The burden of tax regulations, the obstacles to starting a business, as well as the costs associated with intellectual property protection, can also pose significant barriers for those wishing to engage in innovative entrepreneurial activities.

### **3: The relationship between the triptych: innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth (IECE)**

#### **3.1 Theoretical models integrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and growth**

Theoretical models suggest that the interaction between innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth is essential for understanding economic development. These models highlight how an active entrepreneurial dynamic can stimulate innovation.

##### **3.1.1 Endogenous Growth Model (Romer, 1990)**

This model highlights the central role of innovation and the accumulation of knowledge in economic growth. It defines that investments in research and development (R&D) stimulate innovation, which in turn fuels economic growth.

##### **3.1.2 Creative destruction model (Schumpeter, 1942)**

This model emphasizes that radical innovation by entrepreneurs is the main driver of economic growth. "Creative destruction" describes the replacement of old technologies and companies by more efficient innovations.

##### **3.1.3 Innovation Life Cycle Model (Freeman and Perez, 1988)**

This model proposes that major innovations lead to structural changes in the economy, marking economic cycles. Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in the adoption and

diffusion of innovations, leading to periods of economic growth.

### 3.2 Complementarity between innovation and entrepreneurship to stimulate growth

The complementarity between innovation and entrepreneurship is crucial for stimulating economic growth. Innovative entrepreneurs leverage new technologies to create products that meet market needs.

### 3.3 Sectoral impact: key sectors where this relationship is the strongest

Certain sectors show a particularly strong relationship between innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth:

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT): This sector is a key driver of innovation due to its rapid evolution.
- Financial services: Innovation in this sector has improved access to banking services for unbanked populations.

## 4: Analysis of Entrepreneurship Promotion Programs in Morocco

Morocco, as an emerging economy, strives to diversify its economy by placing particular emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship. These two elements are now recognized as key levers for economic and social development. Through this analysis, we will examine the funding programs put in place to stimulate innovation and encourage entrepreneurial spirit. The main objective is to understand the impacts of these initiatives on the Moroccan economic ecosystem.

### 4.1 Analysis of Financing Programs in Morocco

#### 4.1.1 Government Programs

The Moroccan government has launched several initiatives to support innovation and entrepreneurship, such as the 'Startup Act' and the 'Industrial Acceleration Plan'. These initiatives aim to create an environment conducive to the creation and growth of innovative companies. Dedicated public funds, such as the Innov Invest Fund, play a crucial role in financing startups. In 2022, more than 200 million dirhams were allocated to young entrepreneurs through these mechanisms.

#### 4.1.2. Financial and Banking Institutions

Moroccan banks play a crucial role in supporting startups and SMEs. Specific financial products, such as microcredits and low-interest loans, are offered to entrepreneurs. For example, Banque Centrale Populaire and Attijariwafa Bank have

established partnerships with public institutions to develop solutions tailored to the needs of innovators.

#### 4.1.3. Private Investments and Venture Capital

The venture capital market in Morocco is still developing but shows encouraging progress. Private investment funds, such as Maroc Numeric Fund, support technological and innovative projects. A notable example is that of the startup Chari, which raised several million dollars thanks to private investors, thereby strengthening its position in the e-commerce sector.

#### 4.1.4. International Initiatives and NGOs

International organizations, such as the World Bank and the European Union, provide considerable support to entrepreneurship in Morocco. For example, the Green Entrepreneurship project, funded by the EU, helps young businesses adopt sustainable practices. Moreover, local NGOs like Endeavor Morocco provide personalized support to entrepreneurs, helping them overcome market challenges.

### 4.1.5 The importance of entrepreneurship and innovation programs in Morocco between 2016 - 2024:

→ The following graphs illustrate the main developments related to innovation and entrepreneurship in Morocco between 2016 and 2024, highlighting the impact of R&D expenditures and patent filings on economic growth.

#### 1. Entrepreneurship Programs in Morocco (2016-2024)

This table presents a list of the main entrepreneurship programs launched in Morocco, indicating their year of launch, specific objectives, and the estimated impact on economic growth. It highlights government initiatives aimed at encouraging the creation of startups and strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

**Table No. 1: Entrepreneurship Programs in Morocco (2013-2024)**

Program	Year of Launch	Objective	Estimated Impact on Economic Growth
Maroc Numeric 2020	2013	Develop the digital sector	Contribution of 0.5% to the national GDP
Industrial Acceleration Plan	2014	Strengthening industry and innovation	Growth of 3% in industrial GDP per year



Startup Act	2020	Encouraging startups and facilitating their creation	Increase of 20% in new businesses
Intilaka Program	2020	Support young entrepreneurs with funding and training.	Increase in the business creation rate
Investment Fund for Startups	2021	Funding innovative startups	Creation of 10,000 jobs by 2025
Forsa Program	2022	Facilitate access to financing for SMEs and startups	Improvement of access to financial resources

Source: Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco  
2024

## 2. Statistics on Innovation in Morocco (2016-2024)

This table provides key data on research and development (R&D) expenditures, the number of patents filed, the number of technology startups created, and the overall innovation index. It illustrates the trends in innovation in Morocco and shows how these indicators evolve over the years.

Year	R&D Expenditure (% of GDP)	Number of Patents Filed	Created Tech Startups	Global Innovation Index (Ranking)
2016	0.65%	200	50	80
2017	0.70%	220	60	79
2018	0.75%	250	80	78
2019	0.80%	300	100	77
2020	0.85%	350	120	76
2021	0.90%	400	150	75
2022	1.00%	450	180	74
2023 (estimation)	1.10%	500	200	73
2024 (Forecasting)	1.20%	550	250	72

Source: World Bank and OMPIC (Moroccan Office of Industrial and Commercial Property). 2024

## 3. Evolution of R&D Expenditures (% of GDP) in

### Morocco (2016-2024)

This graph illustrates the increasing trend of research and development expenditures in Morocco, rising from 0.65% of GDP in 2016 to a forecast of 1.20% in 2024. This reflects the country's increased commitment to innovation and technological development.

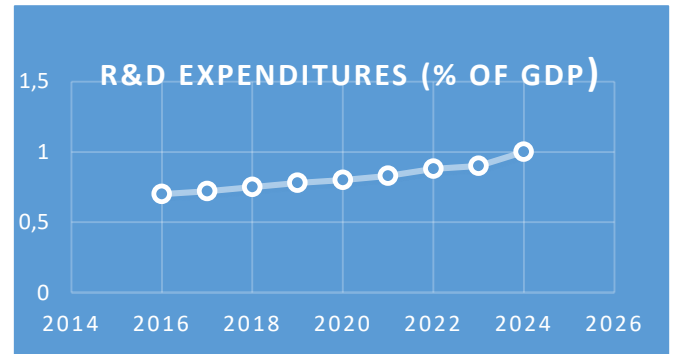


Figure No. 1 Evolution of R&D Expenditures (% of GDP) in Morocco (2016-2024)

Source: World Bank. 2024

## 4. Number of Patents Filed in Morocco (2016-2024)

This graph shows the significant increase in the number of patents filed in Morocco, rising from 200 in 2016 to a forecast of 550 in 2024. This trend indicates a growing innovation dynamic in the country, highlighting the creative potential of Moroccan entrepreneurs.

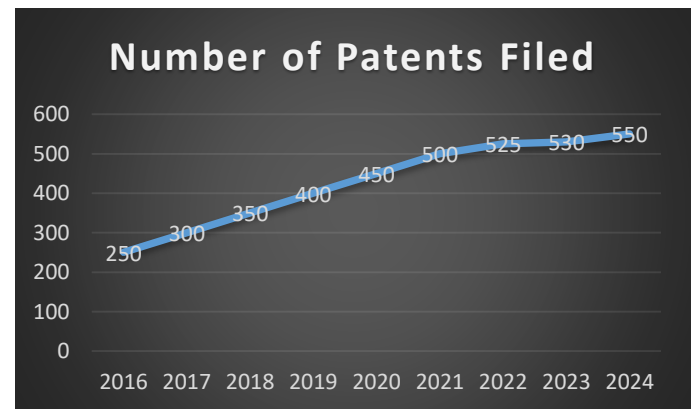


Figure No. 2: Number of Patents Filed in Morocco (2016-2024)

Source : OMPIC.2024

## Conclusion

The analysis conducted, drawing on both theoretical contributions and empirical results, confirms the two hypotheses formulated at the beginning of this research. **H1** postulated that innovation, as a tool of entrepreneurship,

positively contributes to job creation and stimulates economic growth in Morocco. The examined data show that innovative companies, whether from traditional or emerging sectors, not only generate significant added value but also enhance their capacity to create sustainable job opportunities. These results are consistent with previous studies highlighting the structuring role of innovation in entrepreneurial dynamics and the competitiveness of emerging economies.

**H2** argued that entrepreneurship programs in Morocco promote the creation and sustainability of businesses, which positively contributes to national economic growth. The examination of initiatives such as Intilaka, Forsa, and Moukawalati has confirmed their catalytic role. These programs, by facilitating access to financing, support, and training, have enabled numerous project holders to transform their ideas into viable businesses. The observed indicators reveal a tangible impact, both in terms of the number of businesses created and the consolidation of the entrepreneurial fabric.

The confirmation of these hypotheses highlights the importance of a close articulation between innovation, public policies, and entrepreneurship support mechanisms. It also suggests that Moroccan economic growth would benefit from being supported by integrated strategies that value both the innovative capacity of entrepreneurs and the consolidation of support programs.

In conclusion, entrepreneurship and innovation prove to be essential drivers of economic growth, particularly in developing countries like Morocco.

Empirical data and economic theories, such as Schumpeter's "creative destruction," highlight the importance of entrepreneurs in transforming economies by fostering innovation, job creation, and competitiveness. In Morocco, the combined efforts of public programs, such as Intilaka and the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion, as well as the emergence of startups, testify to a promising entrepreneurial dynamic.

However, to maximize the impact of these initiatives, accumulated investments in R&D, better regulation, and deeper integration of social capital are necessary. Collaborations between the public and private sectors, supported by international frameworks such as those of the OECD, offer solid prospects for strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Finally, the success of these initiatives will depend on Morocco's ability to promote an inclusive and sustainable

culture of innovation, thereby creating a virtuous circle of development.

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