

ABSTRACT

This article analyses the progress, achievements, constraints and prospects of the Local Development Programme for 145 Territories (PDL-145T) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It highlights the progress made in the construction of educational, health and administrative infrastructure, with 1,011 projects completed as at 31 October 2025. However, the

programme's implementation continues to face several challenges, notably insecurity, territorial isolation, logistical and financial difficulties, weak institutional coordination, as well as issues relating to maintenance and community participation. The study also highlights significant regional disparities in the level of implementation. It recommends, in particular, accelerating the works, strengthening funding and security, improving governance and coordination, and

establishing sustainable mechanisms for maintenance and monitoring and evaluation.

Keywords: PDL-145T; local development; territorial development; rural infrastructure; governance; funding; security; Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Introduction

When we think of cinema, the first thing that often springs to mind is entertainment. Going to the cinema is, above all, 'going to see a film'. This spectacular aspect is an integral part of the cinematic experience. It evokes pleasure, escapism and the sharing of a collective experience, enjoyed within a setting governed by the rules and conventions specific to cinema screenings.

Reducing cinema to this recreational function alone, however, would be to underestimate one of the most powerful means of communication that humanity has ever invented. Since its inception, the seventh art has continually exerted a profound influence on both individuals and societies. Its role extends far beyond mere entertainment.

In reality, this is merely the tip of the iceberg. Behind every narrative, behind every image and every shot, lies a whole array of messages, values and representations that shape the way we view the world, often without us even realising it. Cinema tells stories, but it also conveys worldviews, behavioural models, collective imaginations and cultural references.

Entertainment certainly has value in its own right. It fulfils a deeply human need for relaxation, escapism and emotion. But it is almost always accompanied by a deeper meaning. No film is entirely neutral: each one conveys, more or less explicitly, ideas, beliefs and a particular interpretation of society.

In this respect, cinema can be compared to play in a child's development. When a child plays, they are not merely entertaining themselves. Through play, they learn, discover the rules of social life, build relationships with others and gradually shape their personality. This learning takes place naturally, without the constraints typical of traditional forms of education, in accordance with the well-known principle of 'learning through play'.

Cinema follows the same logic. Behind the narrative conveyed by images and sounds, it conveys values, emotions and representations that stay with the viewer long after the film has ended. After all, is there not a part of childhood within each of us that continues to love stories?

Chapter I: Why cinema? The lights that emanate from darkened theatres

At first glance, the question may seem almost superfluous, so obvious is the answer. Yet, when one takes the time to reflect on it, one discovers that cinema fulfils functions that go far beyond the realm of entertainment.

As an artistic language and a means of communication, it operates on several levels. It influences individuals, shapes collective perceptions and can even, in certain circumstances, help to bring about changes in social norms or support legal reforms when a film helps to build a consensus on a social issue.

Because it combines narrative, imagery, sound, direction and all the resources of screenwriting, cinema possesses an exceptional capacity to evoke emotions, shape the imagination and influence the collective consciousness. As such, it is one of the principal agents of socialisation. Like the family, school or the media, it plays a part in passing on knowledge, values, cultural references and behavioural models from one generation to the next.

1. Cinema as a force for socialisation: influencing individuals and shaping the collective consciousness

For Émile Durkheim, socialisation is a form of methodical education designed to ensure social cohesion by passing on society's values to new generations. For his part, George Herbert Mead considered that individual identity is constructed through relationships with others, whilst Jean Piaget viewed socialisation as the process by which one generation passes on to the next the knowledge, norms and behaviours essential to collective life. (Al-Haidari Abdullah Al-Zain, 2012)

Socialisation thus appears as a continuous process through which each individual gradually learns to internalise the cultural codes, values and reference points specific to the environment in which they live. By internalising these elements, they build their personality whilst developing their ability to live in society.

From this perspective, cinema plays a vital role. The ideas we form about love, family, heroism, success, foreigners or even peoples we may never meet are largely influenced by the films we watch. Films nourish our imagination just as much as they shape our understanding of the world. (G. Rocher, 2005)

One of the strengths of cinema lies precisely in its ability to influence both the conscious and the unconscious simultaneously. Whereas traditional educational discourse

often relies on explicit instructions — what one should or should not do — cinema favours suggestion, identification and emotion. It does not dictate; it evokes feelings. It is precisely this ability to move the viewer without giving them the impression of being lectured that accounts for much of its power.

Throughout its history, cinema has refined a set of narrative and aesthetic techniques that have been extensively studied by social psychology. Among these, storytelling occupies a central place.

Every film is, first and foremost, a story. Whether inspired by real events or entirely imaginary, it invites the viewer to embark on a journey alongside the characters. Human beings have always learnt through stories. Fairy tales told to children, novels, legends and films all serve the same purpose: to convey experiences and values through a story.

In a film, the characters face trials, experience successes and failures, harbour doubts, evolve and undergo transformation. The viewer journeys alongside them. Carried along by the dramatic progression, they share the characters' emotions right up to the story's climax, before being led towards its resolution.

Most cinematic narratives are built around conflict, the essential driving force behind all drama. Every character, every setting, every situation is permeated by a dominant emotion — fear, anger, loneliness, hope, courage, determination or even the desire for justice. The more accurately the screenplay manages to articulate these tensions, and the more skilfully the direction brings them to life, the greater the film's emotional power becomes, capable of leaving a lasting impression on the audience.

The humanisation of characters: the art of evoking empathy

Why do we spontaneously feel sympathy for certain characters and aversion, or even hatred, for others? Why, from the very first minutes of a film, do we instinctively choose the side we will support right through to the dénouement? We share in the hero's victories, suffer through his trials and rejoice when justice is done. Some films even manage to push our emotions to their peak, to the point of tears, anger or almost unbearable tension. (Albert Laffay, 1947)

Yet the character we become attached to does not always uphold the values we champion in real life. We may find ourselves siding with a thief being chased by the police, hoping a criminal will escape, or even sympathising with a character guilty of betrayal. Even more surprising is that

almost all of us root for Jerry over Tom, even though common sense would suggest we should instead defend the cat — a familiar companion in our daily lives — against a mouse that has invaded our homes.

This reaction is by no means spontaneous. It is the result of meticulous staging.

One of the most effective techniques used in cinema is to humanise the character the director wishes to place at the centre of our empathy. Before being a thief, a soldier or a fugitive, they first become a human being. They are given a face, a first name, a backstory, a family, wounds, doubts and aspirations. The viewer then ceases to perceive a social or moral category; they encounter a person.

The thief is no longer defined solely by his criminal act. He becomes a father worried about his children, a young man driven to desperation by poverty, or an individual faced with impossible choices. Without necessarily excusing his behaviour, the film invites the viewer to understand the path that led him there.

The same approach is evident in war films. The soldier is not portrayed solely at the moment when he presses the button that triggers the bombardment. The camera follows him beforehand in his daily life. We see him looking at photographs of his children, writing a letter to his wife, worrying about his mother's health or discussing the financial difficulties weighing on his family. Moments before take-off, he sometimes performs an act of generosity or solidarity that ultimately reveals him to be profoundly human.

By sharing in his private life, the viewer discovers a part of themselves. The character's concerns become their own because they resonate with universal experiences: loving and protecting one's family, fearing the future or hoping for better days.

Conversely, the characters whom the narrative identifies as antagonists are often deprived of this depth. Their past remains unknown, their motivations remain superficial, and their private lives disappear almost entirely from the narrative. Even when their story is touched upon, it lacks the same emotional richness as that of the protagonist. This difference in treatment subtly guides the viewer's perspective and shapes their judgement without ever giving them the impression that they are being persuaded.

Cinema thus demonstrates that it is often more effective to evoke emotion than to explain.

2. Recognising oneself in the characters: the mechanism of identification

Humanisation is the first step. The second is identification.

If the viewer feels empathy for a character, they can go even further: they eventually recognise themselves in that character. The hero then becomes a projection of the viewer, a mirror in which they recognise some of their own aspirations, fears or hopes.

As Albert Laffay pointed out, cinema possesses a power of suggestion that surpasses that of many other forms of artistic expression. Moving images, movement, sound and the actors' performances give the viewer the impression of witnessing an almost tangible reality. This impression is not necessarily based on a faithful reproduction of reality, but on the film's ability to make what it shows seem credible, even when it depicts a fantastical world. (

Christian Metz sums up this phenomenon perfectly when he states that the power of the unreal in cinema lies precisely in its ability to appear as lived reality. Even the imaginary seems to unfold before our eyes with the simplicity of ordinary events. (Christian Metz, 1974)

This sense of truth fosters identification. The viewer identifies with a character, sometimes because they share the character's story, sometimes because they subscribe to the values the character upholds, or simply because they admire the character's courage, intelligence or resilience.

This connection between the character and the viewer has far-reaching implications. It enables everyone to realise that their doubts, wounds or hopes are not unique. Others face similar trials; others grapple with the same inner conflicts. Cinema thus creates a sense of belonging and breaks down isolation.

Its influence therefore extends beyond the realm of entertainment. By shaping the representations, emotions and role models with which individuals identify, it contributes to the very construction of personality. Whilst the news media primarily help to shape public awareness, works of art – and cinema in particular – play a decisive role in shaping our imagination and our unconscious.

This capacity explains why cinema is also a powerful tool for raising awareness. A film about the dangers of drugs, for example, can sometimes be more persuasive than a lengthy prevention talks. By putting a face to suffering, telling a story and encouraging viewers to identify with the characters, it transforms an abstract problem into a deeply felt human experience.

Cinema thus reveals its true nature: behind the spectacle lies a formidable tool for education, cultural transmission and social transformation.

Chapter II: The film industry in Morocco: from funding to distribution

Although cinema is first and foremost a form of artistic creation, it cannot be separated from the economic realities that determine its existence. Inspiration, talent or the quality of a screenplay, however crucial they may be, are not enough to bring a film into being. Between the initial idea and the film projected on a screen lies an inescapable reality: that of funding.

Producing a film requires considerable resources. Sets, technical equipment, creative and technical crews, visual effects, post-production and promotion are all areas of expenditure that demand significant investment. Without sufficient financial resources, even the most promising projects struggle to progress beyond the script stage.

One need only look at the budgets of major international productions to gauge the scale of investment mobilised by the film industry. Cinema is a capital-intensive industry, combining high artistic standards with particularly significant economic constraints.

However, in most countries, private investors are naturally reluctant to commit capital to a sector where the prospects for profitability remain uncertain. Unlike other economic activities, the commercial success of a film can never be guaranteed. This uncertainty is a major barrier to investment.

This reality is even more pronounced in a market of limited size such as Morocco's. The Moroccan film industry operates in a highly competitive environment, where it must contend with the dominance of international productions, the appeal of Arabic-language films, the rise of digital platforms and the relative weakness of the domestic market.

In such a context, what producer would agree to raise several million dirhams to make a feature film without benefiting from a support mechanism capable of mitigating the financial risk?

The answer to this question largely explains the choice made by Morocco, as by many other countries, to intervene directly in the financing of film production.

Aware of the structural difficulties facing this industry, the Kingdom has gradually put in place a system of public support, the main pillar of which remains today the **Moroccan**

Film Centre (CCM). Several national and international funding mechanisms also revolve around this framework, contributing to the development of Moroccan film production.

1. Public funding: good intentions are not enough

Established in 1944, the Moroccan Film Centre is one of the oldest public institutions dedicated to the regulation and development of the film industry. Operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, it has legal personality and financial autonomy.

Its remit covers the entire film industry. In particular, it is responsible for:

- The regulation of the production, distribution and exhibition of cinematographic works;
- Overseeing the audiovisual sector;
- Support for film creation and production;
- The promotion of Moroccan cinema at national and international level;
- The preservation and promotion of the national film heritage.

In addition to these remits, the Centre carries out a number of complementary activities, including post-production services, the management of the Cinémathèque, the operation of the *Le Septième Art* cinema in Rabat, the organisation of the National Film Festival and the Tangier Mediterranean Short Film Festival, as well as the development of international cooperation in the field of cinema.

The Centre is also responsible for issuing filming permits, professional licences, film distribution licences and the various licences required to practise professions within the sector.

Public policy to support the film industry dates back to 1980 with the creation of a support fund, which became operational in 1987 under the name ‘**Fund for the Support of Film Production and Distribution**’.

Over the years, this scheme has continually evolved to support the sector’s development. In 2003, the system was reformed to introduce the mechanism of advances on box-office takings, whilst from 2009 onwards the amounts allocated to production support were significantly increased.

Today, the Moroccan Film Centre allocates nearly **110 million dirhams**, or approximately **10 million euros**, each year to support national film production. This funding covers the various stages of the creative process: scriptwriting, project development, the production of feature and short films, and post-production.

The scheme has also been enhanced by specific programmes. Since 2015, an additional budget of **15 million dirhams** has been earmarked for the production of documentaries focusing on Sahrawi and Hassani culture. Added to this are funds allocated to the modernisation of cinemas, notably their digitisation, as well as grants awarded to film festivals and events organised throughout the country.

These investments have yielded tangible results. They have helped to accelerate the digitisation of almost all cinemas still in operation, to support the production of around twenty feature films each year, and to support several dozen film festivals and events.

These figures demonstrate the government’s genuine commitment to the film industry. However, they must be put into perspective in light of the costs involved in film production on an international scale today.

For example, Morocco’s annual budget allocated to supporting its entire film sector remains lower than the production costs of many Hollywood blockbusters. Films such as **Avengers: Age of Ultron** required investments of around **365 million dollars**, whilst **Justice League** had a budget of around **300 million dollars** (over **360 million** in present-day terms), before generating several hundred million dollars in global box-office takings.

This is obviously not a matter of comparing situations that arise from profoundly different economic, industrial and cultural contexts. The sole purpose of this comparison is to highlight the scale of investment required by the global film industry today.

However, public support is not the only source of funding available to the Moroccan film industry.

Several complementary mechanisms also contribute to the funding of national productions:

- **International co-productions**, mainly with France, Belgium and Spain, made possible by bilateral agreements, international funding schemes or partnerships with certain European television channels;

- **Private investment**, which is still relatively limited, provided by a handful of independent producers who choose to finance their projects directly by capitalising on their commercial potential;
- **The involvement of Moroccan television channels**, notably through the pre-purchase of broadcasting rights or by contributing to the funding of certain audiovisual works;
- **International grants and awards**, awarded by various foundations, cultural institutions or foreign support organisations.

Taken together, these mechanisms form a relatively diversified funding model. Nevertheless, an analysis of them also highlights several structural limitations that continue to hamper the development of the Moroccan film industry.

It is precisely these limitations that we shall now examine.

a. Excessive reliance on public funding

The available data show that between **70 and 80 per cent of Moroccan film productions** rely primarily on financial support provided by the state through the Film Production Support Fund, managed by the Moroccan Film Centre (CCM).

Whilst this mechanism is currently the main driving force behind the national film industry, it nonetheless remains a source of structural vulnerability. By making a large part of production dependent on public funding, it exposes the sector to fluctuations in cultural policy, the state's budgetary decisions and potential cuts to funding allocated to culture.

Added to this dependence is another difficulty: the inadequacy of available resources in relation to the sector's actual needs. The annual sum allocated to support production generally ranges between **70 and 80 million dirhams**, whilst the production of a high-quality feature film often requires funding of at least **5 million dirhams**. However, the number of projects submitted regularly exceeds **a hundred applications per year**, making a particularly restrictive selection process inevitable.

Beyond this quantitative shortfall, prolonged dependence on public funding can gradually foster a kind of rent-seeking mentality. When a producer's economic survival depends primarily on securing public funding rather than on their work resonating with the public or the market, there is a risk that a certain creative routine will set in and that there will be less incentive to explore new business models.

This situation regularly fuels debates within the profession regarding the procedures for allocating public funding. Criticism centres in particular on the recurring nature of certain beneficiaries, the lack of clarity in the assessment criteria, and the perceived lack of transparency in certain selection processes. Without calling into question the very principle of public support, these concerns highlight the need to strengthen professionals' confidence in the mechanisms for allocating funding.

b. Low levels of private investment: a market that remains too small

Added to this heavy reliance on public funding is the persistent lack of private investment. In Morocco, there is still no genuine culture of investment in the film sector, whether from large companies or private investors.

This reluctance is mainly due to the perception of the film industry as a low-profit sector. The fragility of the distribution market, the limited cinema network and the uncertainty surrounding box-office takings make investment particularly risky.

The situation is all the more complex given that Morocco, unlike several European countries – notably France – does not have regional support funds capable of complementing national schemes. Banks, for their part, generally remain reluctant to finance film productions, due to the lack of financial guarantees and the high level of risk associated with this type of project.

Nor is access to international funding a solution available to all filmmakers. Access to such schemes often requires a well-established professional network, a good command of foreign languages or experience gained abroad. In practice, these opportunities most frequently benefit directors with dual nationality or who have already worked in international circles.

Furthermore, foreign funds generally direct their funding towards themes that align with their own cultural or political priorities. Projects addressing issues of identity, gender, migration or diversity are often given priority. This focus may lead some directors to adapt their screenplays in order to meet the criteria set by funding bodies.

Whilst not questioning the legitimacy of these programmes, this situation nevertheless raises questions about creators' ability to maintain complete artistic freedom. There is a risk that certain works may respond more to the expectations of international funders than to the cultural or social concerns specific to the Moroccan context.

c. The lack of specific support schemes for young filmmakers: a path fraught with obstacles

Access to funding remains particularly difficult for young filmmakers.

The fierce competition among projects submitted to the Support Fund naturally favours producers and filmmakers who already have recognised experience. In practice, the award committees often take into account the director's track record as well as the production company's credentials, which constitutes a considerable advantage for established professionals.

Whilst this approach is understandable given the need to safeguard public investment, it nevertheless tends to limit the emergence of new talent that could otherwise revitalise the Moroccan film industry.

It therefore seems necessary to consider introducing mechanisms specifically designed for debut films or young directors. Such a policy could be accompanied by a clarification of the criteria for evaluating screenplays, in order to ensure that selection is based not only on the artistic quality of the projects, but also on their cultural relevance, their social impact and the audiences they are aimed at.

A thorough review of projects would thus help to better justify the use of public funds allocated to film production and encourage the emergence of works that address the challenges facing Moroccan society.

2. Distribution: films in search of their audience

Once a film is completed, a second challenge—just as crucial as funding—begins: that of distribution.

Producing a film is, in fact, only the first stage in its life cycle. It must still be seen. Distribution is therefore the essential link connecting the film to its audience.

The producer must then identify the distribution channels capable of ensuring the film's circulation and its screening in cinemas. In this regard, the distributor occupies a central position in the film industry's value chain. They acquire the screening rights from the producer and then market them to cinemas. They also play a vital role in negotiating broadcasting rights with television channels and streaming platforms.

The revenue generated from cinema screenings is then shared between the distributor and the cinema operator in accordance with the terms set out in their contractual agreements.

However, according to the professionals interviewed as part of this study, several obstacles continue to hinder the development of a genuine distribution market in Morocco.

a. High market concentration in the hands of French groups

The Moroccan cinema exhibition market is largely dominated by two operators: **Megarama** and **Pathé BC Afrique**.

These groups occupy a strategic position as they are involved in both cinema operations and film distribution. This concentration significantly reduces the level of competition and hinders the development of a national network of distributors capable of effectively supporting Moroccan productions.

Most local distributors have limited financial resources and lack sufficiently developed networks to ensure nationwide distribution of their films. They also face difficulties in persuading cinema operators to schedule films that do not offer immediate commercial potential.

This economic concentration also has cultural implications. By favouring the screening of productions that follow the same commercial logic, it tends to standardise the range of films on offer to the public and reduces the diversity of films available in Moroccan cinemas.

b. Cinemas: a worrying decline

Since the early 1980s, the number of cinemas in Morocco has been steadily declining.

According to statistics from the Moroccan Film Centre, by 2025 the Kingdom had only **30 cinemas, comprising 65 screens**.

Most of these cinemas have only a single screen. The Megarama complexes in Rabat, Casablanca, Tangier and Marrakesh are an exception thanks to their multiplex layout, which allows several films to be screened simultaneously and attracts a more diverse audience.

Megarama alone operates nearly **48 screens**, accounting for around **82 per cent of the national market**, which illustrates the particularly high degree of concentration in the sector.

The following table shows the trend in cinema attendance and box office takings between 2014 and 2018.

Table 1. Trends in cinema attendance in Morocco (2014–2018).

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of admissions	1,643,647	1,842,348	1,527,224	1,674,563	1,562,350
Revenue (MAD)	66,726,466	74,462,995	61,542,464	74,065,504	73,124,217

Source: 2018 Cinema Report, Moroccan Cinema Centre (CCM).

Analysis of this data reveals an uneven trend in cinema attendance. Following a significant increase between 2014 and 2015, the market experienced a sharp decline in 2016, followed by a slight recovery in 2017, before falling again in 2018.

The Moroccan Film Centre has not yet published, in the data used for this study, consolidated statistics relating to the period after 2020. However, given the prolonged closure of cinemas during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is reasonable to assume that this crisis has sharply exacerbated the decline in cinema attendance.

c. Relations between producers and distributors: an often-invisible tension

Moroccan producers face real difficulties in finding distributors capable of ensuring satisfactory distribution of their films. The high concentration of the market amongst a limited number of operators considerably reduces negotiating power and leaves producers with few alternatives.

Faced with this situation, some are forced to distribute their films themselves, whilst others manage only to organise a very limited release, or even abandon theatrical distribution altogether.

This situation has direct consequences for the visibility of Moroccan cinema. Many films, sometimes acclaimed for their artistic qualities, struggle to reach their audience. The paradox is clear: films exist, but their potential viewers simply do not have the opportunity to discover them.

3. Attempts at reform: between ambitions and obstacles

On 20 December 2024, Morocco took a further step towards reforming its film sector with the publication, in the Official Gazette, of Law **No. 18.23**.

According to statements by the Minister for Youth, Culture and Communication, **Mehdi Bensaïd**, this reform aims to establish a clearer and more attractive legal framework, capable of both supporting domestic production, encouraging foreign investment and, more broadly, ‘serving the national film industry and strengthening the film sector’.

This law brings about a far-reaching reorganisation of the Moroccan Film Centre (CCM) and redefines the rules applicable to the entire industry: production, distribution, cinema exhibition, the practice of film-related professions, as well as the promotion of Moroccan cinema internationally.

Among the major innovations is the separation of distribution activities from cinema exhibition. From now on, a single company may no longer carry out both these activities simultaneously, nor hold shareholdings in companies operating in either sector. This measure is explicitly aimed at limiting economic concentration and promoting more balanced competition.

The reform also broadens the remit of the Moroccan Film Centre, which has now been entrusted with new responsibilities, notably in supporting national and international productions, providing vocational training for film-related professions, preserving Morocco’s film heritage, and establishing a national film register listing productions and the sector’s key contractual data.

Finally, the new legislation simplifies and harmonises the system of professional licences, in order to make the regulatory framework clearer for all stakeholders in the sector.

Whilst this reform covers the entire film ecosystem, it is primarily the issue of distribution that has sparked the most heated debates.

By mandating the separation of distribution from cinema exhibition, the legislator has directly challenged the current market structure, which is dominated by a handful of operators, foremost among which is **Megarama**.

As Morocco’s leading cinema operator, Megarama has **48 screens spread across the Kingdom’s major cities**, representing over **11,000 seats** – nearly two-thirds of the national market. According to figures released by the company, it generated **€7 million in box-office takings in**

2023, accounting for around 82 per cent of the Moroccan cinema market, whilst distributing 77 films, representing nearly 35 per cent of all films screened that year.

This reform has provoked strong reactions from its founder, **Jean-Pierre Lemoine**, who expressed his concern in the pages of the daily newspaper **Le Monde**:

“I am shocked. I feel rejected. We built Africa’s first multiplex in Casablanca and invested millions of euros. If we have to work in a climate of mistrust, I would rather sell everything.”

Conversely, several industry leaders consider this reform essential to restoring fairer competition.

Also quoted by *Le Monde*, **Abdelaziz Bouzidini**, then acting director of the Moroccan Film Centre, believes that:

“Some multiplex operators, who are also distributors, impose unfavourable conditions on Moroccan producers, making it more difficult to screen their films and thereby weakening national production.”

This debate is far from over. It is likely to continue fuelling discussions on the future of film distribution in Morocco, given that it constitutes a crucial link in the entire production chain.

Beyond institutional reforms, however, other avenues are worth exploring in order to improve films’ access to their audience. Among these is a long-standing tradition that Morocco might do well to rediscover: film clubs.

4. Film clubs: when yesterday’s solutions can inspire those of tomorrow

The collective experience offered by a cinema remains irreplaceable. It differs profoundly from the individual consumption of films on digital platforms, where the viewer watches a film alone on the screen of their phone, computer or television.

Nevertheless, Morocco has another cinematic tradition that could usefully be revived: that of film clubs.

Without seeking to replace cinemas, these spaces could serve as a valuable complement to them, promoting the dissemination of films whilst contributing to film literacy and the development of a genuine cinematic culture.

During the second half of the 20th century, film clubs served as veritable intellectual and cultural laboratories. They played a decisive role in shaping audiences’ critical perspective and

in the emergence of several generations of filmmakers, critics and intellectuals.

The first Moroccan film society was founded in Rabat in 1956. In 1973, the **National Federation of Moroccan Film Societies (FNCCM)** was established, and it quickly became the main umbrella organisation for this movement across the country.

Beyond simply screening films, these clubs pursued a broader ambition: to disseminate film culture, develop visual literacy and promote the values of freedom, citizenship, dialogue and human rights.

Several leading figures in Moroccan cinema were nurtured within this environment, including **Noureddine Saïl, Farida Benlyazid, Abdelkader Lagtaâ and Abdelkrim Derkaoui**.

Today, this movement appears to be in sharp decline. The gradual disappearance of cinemas, combined with the digital revolution and changing patterns of media consumption, has significantly reduced its influence.

Yet this decline is by no means inevitable.

Provided they are reimagined and adapted to contemporary practices, film clubs could regain their full relevance. They would not only offer a space for younger generations to learn about film culture, but also an alternative distribution channel for works that struggle to find a place within commercial networks.

Their value also lies in the collective nature of the experience they offer. At a time when streaming platforms are encouraging an increasingly individualised consumption of films, film clubs restore the importance of debate, the exchange of ideas and the collective interpretation of works.

The screening is thus no longer merely a form of entertainment; it becomes a genuine cultural act, contributing to the socialisation of individuals, the circulation of ideas and the construction of a shared culture.

Conclusion

No one today would claim that cinema is experiencing a golden age. Across the world, the film industry is facing profound technological changes that are disrupting its business models as much as they are altering audiences’ viewing habits.

The rise of streaming platforms has shifted a significant proportion of viewers from cinemas to home screens, where a

virtually unlimited selection of films is now available at a relatively low cost.

At the same time, spectacular advances in artificial intelligence are opening up new possibilities whilst raising numerous questions. Certain technical tasks traditionally carried out by professionals could, in the future, be performed more quickly and at a lower cost thanks to these new tools.

These changes undoubtedly present a challenge. However, they also offer unprecedented opportunities. Technological innovations are already helping to reduce certain production costs, speed up production processes and facilitate the distribution of films to ever-wider audiences.

The future of cinema therefore remains largely open. Whilst the ways in which films are produced, distributed and consumed are evolving, there is no indication that the current economic model will disappear in the short term. It is more likely that it will continue to evolve gradually, in step with technological innovations and the sector's adaptations.

In this context, two priorities appear essential for the Moroccan film industry.

The first concerns funding. Whilst public support remains indispensable, it cannot be the sole pillar of the film industry's development. Diversifying sources of funding — whether regional, professional, banking or private — now appears to be a necessity.

The second relates to distribution. Promoting more balanced competition, opening up the market further to new players and encouraging alternative forms of screening, such as film clubs, would undoubtedly help to improve the circulation of films and strengthen the bond between Moroccan cinema and its audience.

Ultimately, the question is perhaps not whether cinema will survive technological change. Rather, it is a matter of determining how it will adapt, without sacrificing what makes it unique: the ability to tell stories, to pass on a collective memory and to create, around a screen, a profoundly human experience.

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