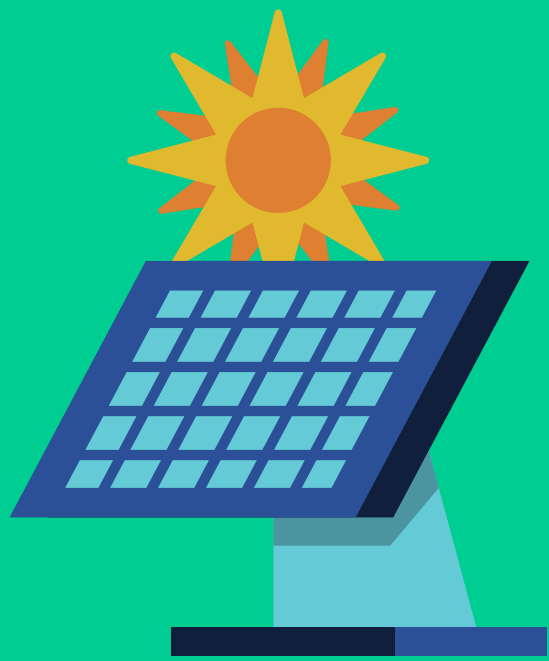


# POWER DYNAMICS AND LOCAL RESOURCE ACCESS IN FOREIGN-FUNDED SOLAR PROJECTS IN MOROCCO



How do large-scale solar power projects in Morocco funded by foreign investors shape power dynamics and what impact does this have on local communities' everyday life and on their relations with local environmental resources?

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## OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

Morocco is becoming a regional leader in renewable energy, with the aim to create 52 percent renewable energy by 2030. While large-scale solar projects provide a secure stream of renewable energy, the impact on local environments and communities cannot be neglected.

Both local and global power dynamics are researched through interviews, document analysis and field research with stakeholder groups including local communities in Ouarzazate, foreign investors, governmental agencies and NGOs. Analysis of this data through the frameworks of the Colonial Matrix of Power as by Quijano (2000) and the Water-Energy-Food Nexus is done to gain an interdisciplinary understanding of the power dynamics involved and the implications on local environmental resources within these projects.

### COLONIAL MATRIX OF POWER

#### 1 Energy too expensive for local market, thus exporting to Europe while Morocco pays



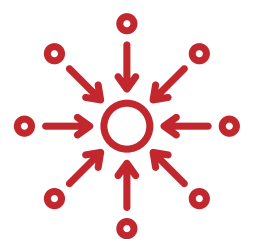
Moroccan state bears price difference in unprofitable NOOR Ouarzazate project, causing annual losses and necessitating World Bank loan.

#### 2 Authority of foreign investors regarding decision-making for CSP technology.



Investment banks prioritize CSP technology, pressuring Moroccan government to choose CSP over PV, neglecting their reluctance.

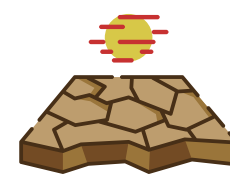
#### 3 Centralised VS. Decentralised Energy Transition



Financing from foreign investors and national government are rarely directed towards local renewable projects, favouring centralized energy projects over decentralized ones.

### WATER-ENERGY-FOOD NEXUS

#### 1 Droughts are intensifying, lack of consensus over impact of solar energy



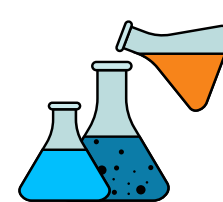
CSP technologies use a lot of water, but there is no consensus on the amounts needed in the nearby dam in Ouarzazate.

#### 2 Agriculture and solar infrastructure: Indirect competition for water resources



Debate on agricultural sector intensification regarding water scarcity: yield vs. equitable distribution of resources.

#### 3 Energy intensive alternative water sources



Morocco explores desalination and wastewater treatment as water access alternatives, facing challenges in cost, energy, and acceptance.

## IMPLICATIONS

### 1

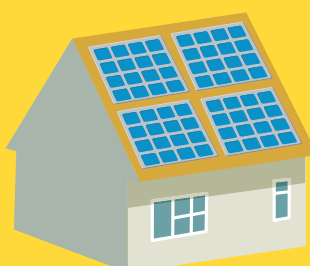
#### Benefits are for foreign investors, burdens for Moroccan government



Foreign transnational companies remain in control over decision making, 'global North' reaps energy benefits while Moroccan government is in debt.

### 2

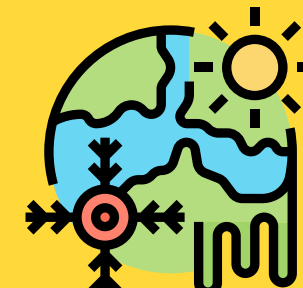
#### Prioritizing decentralised solutions to achieve energy sovereignty



Empowering local communities, reducing reliance on centralised infrastructure, and promoting renewable energy autonomy.

### 3

#### More need for adaptation of green technologies to local context



CSP technology and its suitability within Moroccan context is questioned. High-energy intensive alternative water sources need local adaptation.