

BMCM: Hi!

MZ: Hello!

BMCM: What is your name?

MZ: My name is Mohammed Zainoune .I was born in 1969 in Casablanca. I studied in a primary school in Sidi Othman Moulay Rashid and continued my studies until University, the University of Science Ben M'sik Sidi Othman. I had a degree in physics. After years, I found myself not properly educated when it comes to computer science, which I had to go to a private school for.. By having enough knowledge when it comes to computer science I was not so attached to my job anymore. I chose another direction which the speeches of His Majesty the King Hassan II talked about saying that the person should always go for his own contract so he can find his true identity because the job is not everything .That is what I chose and I created my own contract [business]. It was a kind of an office which has grown with time. I relied on my family's money without any bank advances or anything. After I surpassed the challenges of finding the area, the place, and the work, I built a new challenge, which is helping a group of youth from this neighborhood. And so I had this idea of creating an association works in the area of Moulay Rachid under the philosophy of "educating and training are the base of sustainable development," which is a way of following the speech of His Majesty Mohammed VI who created the National Initiative of Human Development as a new spirit and a boost for Moroccan...and that is the philosophy we are working with.

We even got close to the inhabitants of the neighborhood; we studied the area and their needs and we found that there is a group of people who are not trained enough for computer science and not well educated and so we had a special field in computer science and training. Thank God it was successful and we found a great support from regional interest, presented in a centre, which helped get us out of our N.G.O located in Hay Alfarah. It gave us a new boost for the association to grow bigger. If it is possible to pay a visit to it, you will find that lot of students are interested when it comes to computer science training, which may need [require] money. We also engaged in a social contract with the goal of improving the skills or people who are part of the association. There is also a free activity which we added to the program which is the political activity; that may enable us to participate in the process of developing the area .

The general condition of Moulay Rachid is medium—I mean there are illiterate people as well as literate people. The percentage of youths is higher. The area needs to be taken care of, that's what you will get as a result of a sociological analysis. It needs lot of things and efforts from the youth in the area itself because no area can rise if it wasn't for the young people. I guess that's enough and the floor is yours for more questions or suggestions.

BMCM: In general, what do you do to improve the level of these young people who come to your association?

MZ: Their level is improved thanks to the daily meetings because we want to get to know them because they are different and that's what you will realize once you see the streets of Moulay Rachid.And so we will get to know them by daily meetings to know their problems.

Some of them are maybe alike, some of their personal problems affect others . So the strategy of getting to know them is like approaching a disease which you can't find the cure of it until you know it. These people also are involved in finding this cure; that you can't find it all by yourself.

BMCM: Do you speak to these young people about your childhood and your youth?

MZ: I always try to talk to them about my experiences though between my generation and [yours] there is a change. I also try to talk about other peoples' experiences which can be found in books and the internet. Generally I try to speak about my experiences, others' experiences, and recent ones.

BMCM: In the neighborhood you are living in, can we still find traces of the human relationship that used to be between neighbors? Did they disappear?

MZ: That's a very good question. Thank God that kind of relationships are still alive not only in my neighborhood but in Morocco as a whole. For example, whether there is a celebration or death ceremony or someone sick you will find these type of relationships.

BMCM: Where are you from Mr. Mohammed, your origins I mean?

MZ: My parents are from the area of Beni Mellal Fqih Ben Saleh.

BMCM: What is the folk art in the area?

MZ: There is that ..I forgot it .Oh!! Yeah, Abidat Errma.

BMCM: Abidat Erma?

MZ: Abidat Erma

BMCM: Are they still practicing their art?

MZ: Yes! When you get there and there is a celebration of marriage of marriage you will find them.

BMCM: I think they brought it here to Casablanca too.

MZ: Yeah!! Because Casablanca in general is a multiport, because all those who got here brought their heritage with them. When a person invites his family over to celebrate an event he presents them what is modern and cultural.

BMCM: When it comes to your work in the association is it only for youth or for the elderly too?

MZ: I try my best through that training in a year to help them to get out there and look for a job because the way of training is more professional and practical than theoretical .If you noticed there was a computer science training which is 100% practical and maybe after a year a person can find a job in a cyber café, for instance. This year we added electronics and again in just a year a person can be ready to fix mobile phones, small radios and things like that. If that person is creative and he is among those who are under our training, who can be people that finished their studies and couldn't find jobs with the diploma they have .There are people who are graduated and working with us in the training. With the professional diploma they will be able to find a job with a decent salary.

BMCM: So, not only those who dropped out of school who came to you?

MZ: There are those who finished their studies and those who are still studying. They engage in computer science electronics. Even older women can attend our center for sewing and ceramic so that this house-wife, whatever was her level of education, she can be part of these works of art. She can even practice them at home in her free time. She can create a painting of ceramic which she can sell and so improve her family's way of life.

BMCM: I saw a women before who created a ceramic piece of work that can help her gain 400 Dh, Do you think she can improve her way of life with that amount of money?

MZ: If she has an artistic view of her own and she possesses enough materials to add to her ability she can create her own work. The price in general can reach 1000DH. If she spent 2 weeks on that particular work in a month she will have like 2000DH, which I think it is great support to her family.

BMCM: As a part of a political party, do you try to make youth aware of the importance of voting and participating in politics?

MZ: To answer this question we have to go back to the reason why political parties were created. First they were founded to frame training and spread awareness among all citizens, and that's what we are working on. After that it comes to the part of voting. I think that Moroccans are still far away from politics. They haven't become part of it so to quit it, and this is our job inside these conflicts through which we try to make Moroccans love politics and then we can demand other things. Moroccans have to practice it, trust it, and trust politicians so we can work with them step-by-step in order to reconcile the political parties and people. This must happen gradually, and thank God this will happen in reality.

BMCM: Is this party called "Amal" (hope)? So do you give hope?

MZ: I think so.

BMCM: To give us members of parliament who are not illiterate; members who work for this country not just a member?

MZ: Exactly, even while participating in the first time in 2007, the number of participants wasn't little, yet we didn't win any seats .Still the members whom we trust to belong to the middle class but they honored us with their ideas and experiences.

BMCM: In your opinion what country should Morocco follow as a role model?

MZ: Morocco has its own characteristics: cultural, geographic, religious ...etc. all countries especially those that succeeded in fields such as education and politics, we have to learn it from each one of them and give it a Moroccan flavor. But taking one country and look at it as my only role model I don't think that it will work because we have to analyze what we are bringing to our society. BMCM: How do you look at the U.S.A exactly (the way you look at it as a Moroccan and an Arab)?

MZ: To be honest everyone has his advantages and disadvantages. The USA exists as a democracy, but we depend on its security and peace in society and that's what Morocco is taking from all countries' strategies, and USA is a great example. For Morocco it is kind of ...hard. That country went through lot of fields with strength if we apply them in Morocco, it may work.

BMCM: Do you know any American, or famous ones?

MZ: The N.G.O of “Rahim” worked before with a lady named Susan who was an American working in Morocco as a president of project that aims finding a common ground between the two countries. She organized “Les Gens Mediataires”— one was here in Casablanca and another in Tetouan. We participated with them in order to complete their goal here in Moulay Rachid. We were actually successful and this year we are in the second generation. The first generation consisted of two people; they are still working with us and this week they will finish their training and ... it is goal to find serious people willing to work with you.

BMCM: Were they the source that sponsored you?

MZ: Yes, they sponsored the training of the last generation, concerning the second. We are partners with INDIA which is now sponsoring us.

BMCM: Which state are these Americans from?

MZ: I have no idea.

BMCM: Were they here in Morocco?

MZ: They are still here in Morocco because when they finish a mission they go for another one, just like Susan. She maybe is on a mission now. They give financial support to projects. When they will finish their current project they will move to another.

BMCM: After 9/11 what do you think has changed in the way Arabs look at Americans?

MZ: It depends on each one’s position and analysis. The fact that it was terrorism, all nations, all people, whether American, Israeli, Moroccan or whatever nationality, they are not satisfied with it. Time is the only capable to change the way Americans and Arabs look at each other.

BMCM: Do you think that Muslim Arabs suffer?

MZ: America will always be a country of freedom and democracy maybe that is claimed by people is not reality. Maybe there is little bit of discrimination and suffering.

BMCM: Do you think that Obama’s election will help change the way Arabs look at Americans?

MZ: Foreign policy doesn’t go through change. But American as a country has all eyes on it should go through a total change of foreign policies.

BMCM: Thank you so much Mr. Mohammed.

MZ: You are welcome.