Summary of the Mawjaat Mid-term meeting
“Escale à Marseille”



Photo Credit: Caroline Dutrey for La Friche

18-20 May 2026

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Photo Credit:

Caroline Dutrey for La Friche, 2026.

I. Welcome words & presentation of Bayt Ali Gana in Libya

The workshop opened with welcoming words from Alban Corbier-Labasse, Director of La Friche, who introduced the Institut Français' "Saison Méditerranée" launching program in Marseille, and more specifically at La Friche. He reaffirmed La Friche's interest in the Mawjaat project as an opportunity to connect cultural hubs across the Mediterranean and establish a community of places run by civil society. Alice Comte then presented the workshop agenda and introduced the morning session, in which we would delve into La Friche's economic and governance model.

Hadia Gana, founder of ***Bayt Ali Gana*** in Libya, presented her art space in Tripoli :

مؤسسة علي قانة
Ali Gana Foundation

I founded "Bayt", an **art center attached to a museum** dedicated to my father's work. The museum contains many archives of traditional Libyan crafts that quickly disappeared in the 1950s due to the economic shift caused by the development of the oil industry. We are open only on Saturdays, and we have a coffee shop, a library for children and adults, a multidisciplinary space, and a small residency program.

I started the project after 2011 to stay busy amidst the chaos outside. Initially, **it was a personal project** to transform the family home into a cultural institution. For ten years, I posted about the renovation work on Facebook, and a community started to follow me, eager to discover the space. Two years ago, I opened it to volunteers who wanted to support me in various ways. We began organizing workshops and small activities based on the volunteers' initiatives. **I work through organic collaboration**. People come to see me, and if I like their proposal, I lend them the space. The second year, the community was more proactive. We hosted Ramadan nights with Libyan movies, followed by a festival of Libyan cinema and a cinema club. It was organized by a group of young people on a volunteer basis, which is rare in Libya because initiatives tend to be individual. They even asked me to open for an extra day so I had no choice but to make them self-reliant and give them the key. Trusting strangers is uncommon in Libya due to 40 years of dictatorship. With "Bayt," my goal was to show that **we can achieve things independently of government support,** a concept foreign to our mindset. Although Libya suddenly became wealthy, our mentality remained desert-like and tribal. The place is now a "bayt": the kids come and then grow and leave the house.

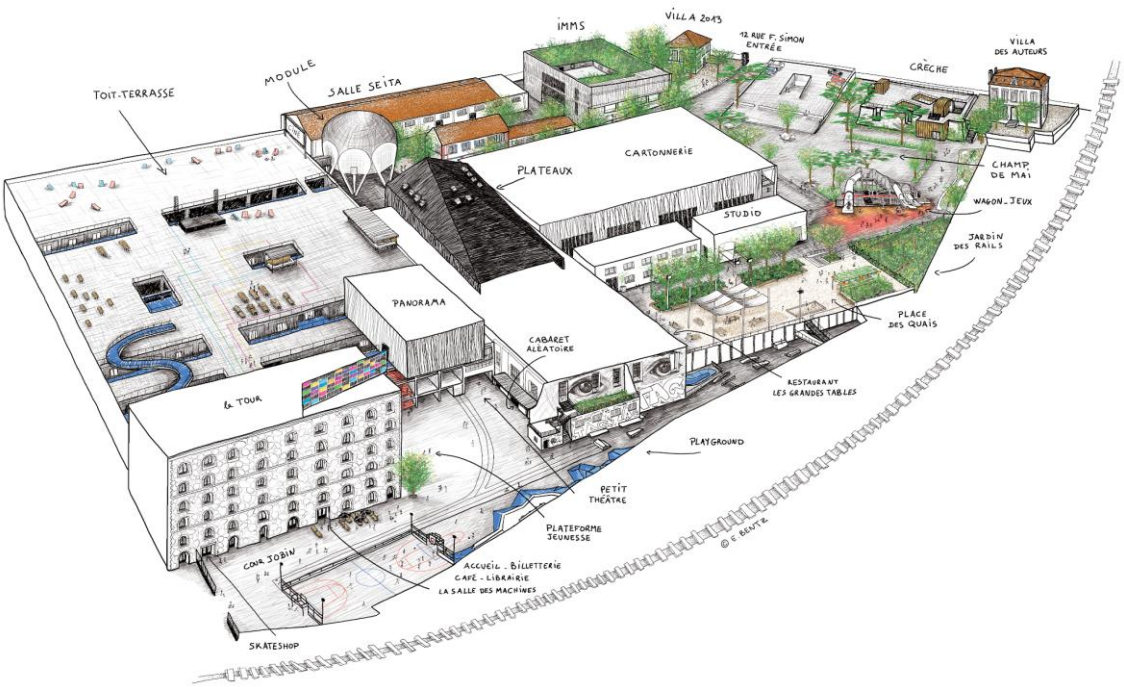
II. Friche Belle de Mai presentation

1. Economic and governance model

Johan Nicolas, the deputy director of La Friche, presented the group the institution's economic and governance model. He started by reminding us of the history of the place: La Friche la Belle de Mai is a massive **urban cultural reconversion** project located in a former tobacco factory in Marseille. Spanning 100,000 m² of floor space, the site has been transformed over the last 30 years from an industrial heritage site into a thriving creative and cultural district.

The presentation highlights several key aspects of the project:

- **Social and Urban Impact:** Initiated in the early 1990s, the project aimed to **regenerate one of the poorest districts** in France through art and culture. Supported at the time by the deputy mayor in charge of the culture, the idea was to occupy the building for temporary uses seeking general interest for the population. It received a significant boost when Marseille served as the **European Capital of Culture in 2013**.



- **A "Living Place":** The site is open year-round and functions as a diverse ecosystem. It hosts **70 permanent resident organizations**, provides jobs for 400/500 workers, and attracts **500,000 visitors and users** annually. Facilities include exhibition halls, a playground, a restaurant, a nursery, an art school, and a large rooftop terrace.

- **Cooperative Governance:** The project is managed by a **Cooperative Society for Collective Interest** (Sociétés Coopératives d'Intérêt Collectif -SCIC-), a private society focused on social utility. It operates on a democratic principle of **"one shareholder, one voice"** and does not redistribute profits, instead allocating them to reserves. Decisions involve 100 shareholders across four categories: contributors, producers, workers, and users.

- **Financial Model:** The cooperative society has an **annual budget of 10M€**. This is funded by a mix of public subsidies (60%), property operations such as rental income (19%), and project-related revenues like ticket sales (21%). The economic model of the residents is the same as La Friche's, which relies heavily on public funding. This dependence has a significant impact because, when funds are scarce, it creates a domino effect. The current challenge is to make the community more sustainable and one possible solution could be to open more to an entrepreneurship model.

- **Future Challenges:** Moving forward, La Friche aims to focus on **ecological redirection**, strengthening its local roots within the neighborhood, and diversifying its financial resources.

2. Territorial Development

Alice Comte and Nicolas Dupont (local cooperation officer) then detailed La Friche's territorial Cooperation project and its evolution from 2021 through May 2026. They talked about the mechanisms of shared governance with the inhabitants and its challenges : How to organize democratic paths? How to facilitate contributions? How to discuss ecological issues, while promoting accessibility, inclusivity and legitimacy? This way of doing means a lot of time spent to share information with transparency in informal bodies of governance (non decision spaces). For instance, a venue called "la petite agora » was created for the inhabitants.

La Friche has a "SIEG" (Service d'Intérêt Économique Général) Contract with the State and the local authorities and has to ensure a general interest mission with providing general interest activities. The primary goal of this initiative is to strengthen the relationship between the Friche cultural ecosystem and its surrounding neighborhood to co-construct a "true cultural district". Here below are detailed the different steps of the initiative:

- **Origins**: In 2021, 52 stakeholders established a "Cooperative Orientation Framework" to define the future of the site, focusing on co-construction and decentralization.

- **HR**: To make this vision operational, two key roles were created: an Head of Territorial Development and a Local Cooperation Officer.

- **Shared Priorities :** In December 2023, a first seminar gathered local stakeholders (residents, organisations, inhabitants) to strengthen cooperation and 5 major priorities have been collectively identified:
    - A cooperative territory
    - A territory that empowers youth
    - A territory that produces rights
    - A territory of user-based governance
    - A caring and hospitable territory

- **Thematic groups**: To make this territorial cooperation truly operational, dedicated working groups were established. Five key thematic pillars were identified:
    - Cooking Group (includes hygiene and safety training
    - Memory Group
    - Ecology Group
    - Co-Education Group
    - Contribution Recognition Group



- **Participatory Fund**: A key tool that provides local grants of up to €2,000 for citizen-led initiatives that serve the common good, such as projects focusing on youth, social rights, or shared spaces (i.e: construction of a shared bread oven).

- **Status and Impact**: By 2026, the project has established solid foundations with 64 local stakeholders involved, including residents' collectives, local associations, and Friche staff. The initiative has transitioned from initial seminars to a shared territorial diagnosis and the active co-production of public action (10 projects supported in 2025).

III. Making cultural projects and activities more sustainable

1. Presentation of the Ecological Redirection Framework

Agnès Cibiel and Robin Barrallon of the Collectif Interstices introduced the Ecological Redirection conceptual and operational framework which is designed to help organizations stay within planetary boundaries. They also presented the **RE.EC project** (Ecological Redirection of Cultural Establishments), a three-year initiative involving La Friche la Belle de Mai and other French cultural structures from 2025 to 2027.

- The context : Since 1950, the **Anthropocene** and "The Great Acceleration" have witnessed a massive increase in socioeconomic activity (population, GDP, energy use), which has led to a "Great Disruption" of Earth's systems (CO_2 levels, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss). By 2020, the weight of human-made mass (concrete, plastic, etc.) exceeded the weight of all living biomass on Earth.

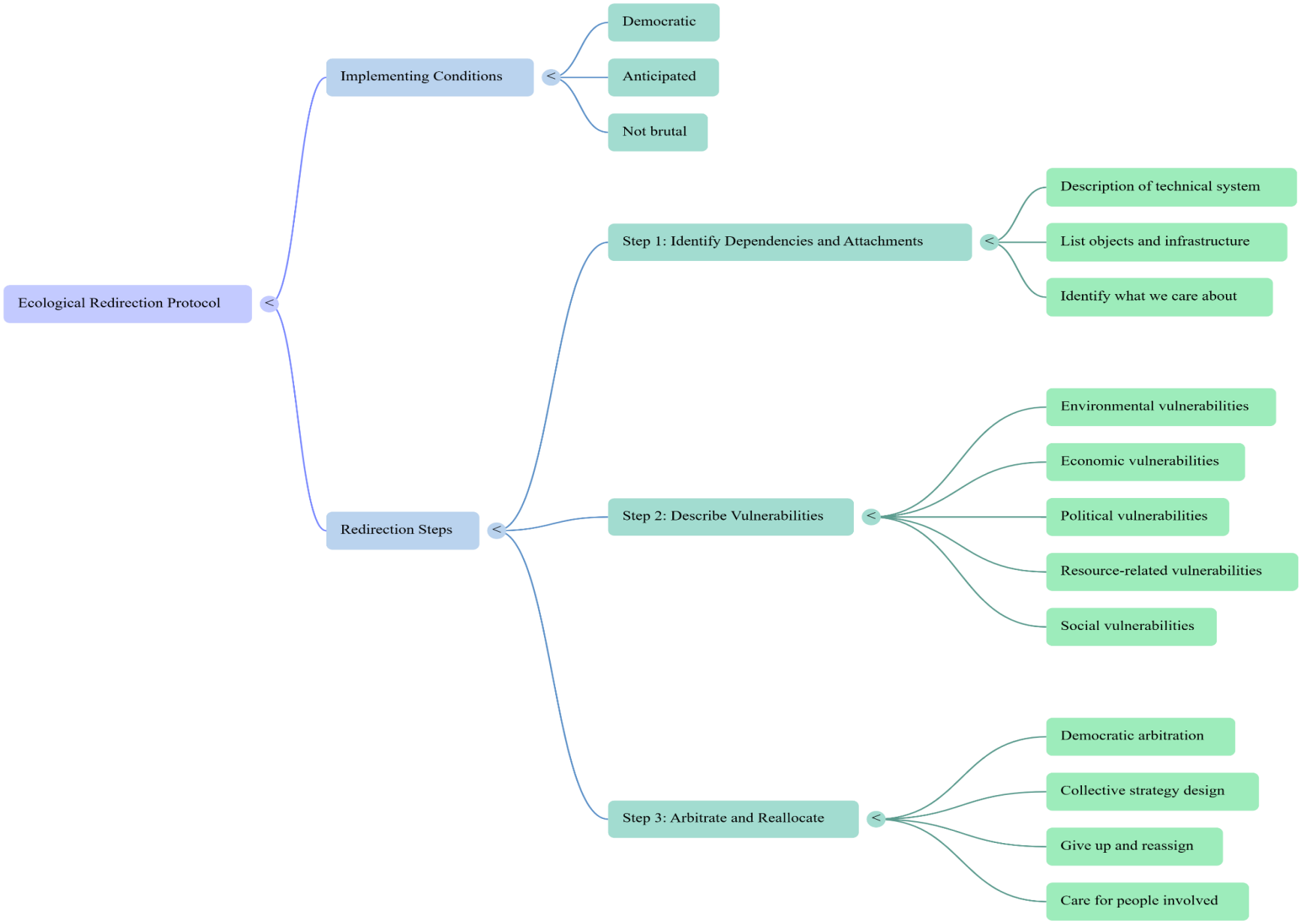
- The concepts (Redirection vs. Transition): While **transition** focuses on finding green *means* to maintain current growth, **redirection** questions the *ends* (objectives) and insists that arbitration and renunciation are necessary because we cannot maintain everything.

- The protocol: framework focuses on a systemic approach that combines design, prospective, and pragmatic inquiry. The implementation process follows three main steps:

  1 **Identify dependencies and attachment:** Distinguish between what keeps an organization running (technical/financial) and what people care about (social/emotional).

  2 **Arbitrate democratically:** Making collective decisions on what to keep or change.

  3 **Give up and reassign:** Intentionally dismantle or redirect unsustainable activities while taking care of the people involved


Ecological Redirection Protocol
Implementing Conditions
Democratic
Anticipated
Not brutal
Redirection Steps
Step 1: Identify Dependencies and Attachments
Description of technical system
List objects and infrastructure
Identify what we care about
Step 2: Describe Vulnerabilities
Environmental vulnerabilities
Economic vulnerabilities
Political vulnerabilities
Resource-related vulnerabilities
Social vulnerabilities
Step 3: Arbitrate and Reallocate
Democratic arbitration
Collective strategy design
Give up and reassign
Care for people involved

1. **Fresque of renonciation workshop**

The participants were split into two groups and had to think about the socio-technical systems of two activities that resonate in the cultural spaces of the Mawjaat collective: artist residencies and exhibition production/design. Together, they identified vulnerabilities (ecological, social, political, and economic) and considered how these activities could evolve, taking into account the identified vulnerabilities, by deciding what to keep, modify, add, or give up.

The two groups worked on different case studies :

- ➢ The production of a Photography exhibition (in Tunisia)
- ➢ The organization of a Music residency (in Egypt)

Identifying current vulnerabilities

While creating the heat maps, the participants realized that both countries were already facing critical vulnerabilities, which are listed below.

	TUNISIA	EGYPT
Critical	Inflation Censorship Limited HR Geopolitical tensions Art material supply Burnout	Censorship Currency Devaluation Energy supply Submersion Geopolitical tensions
Medium risk	Extreme weather events Public international fund International mobility dependence Energy supply	Extreme weather events Limited HR International mobility dependence

Ecological redirection strategies

	Photography exhibition space **Tunisia**	**Artist residency program** **Egypt**
Remove	➔ Decrease the number of events ➔ Decrease international mobilities	➔ Print communication (Flyers & brochures) ➔ Summer Residency (postpone it to winter due to weather conditions ➔ Plastic ?
Change	➔ Pool the travel expenses of international artists with other structures ➔ Resilient scenography (long stay and tour in the country) ➔ Work more with local or international localy based artists ➔ Develop a new communication strategy that incorporate cultural mediation ➔ Federate different public through artistic education	➔ Switch from paper to digital ➔ Collaborating with local artists (more doable in Algeria for El Mahatta) ➔ Extend the duration of the residency
Keep	➔ The photographies ➔ The presence of artists ➔ The human cultural mediation	➔ Public presentation ➔ International mobility for the artists (B'sarya) ➔ Physical residency (not online)
Add	➔ Slowness and duration ➔ Collective care ➔ Taking the time to design a strategy	

Thematic visit of Friche la Belle de Mai by Yann Loric, Technical Director of la Friche



IV. Workshop on collective tools

The aim of this workshop was to share **concrete models and practices** for resource sharing, as well as to co-design intentions for a Mawjaat toolkit. Each cultural hub was asked to select a tool, practice or know-how that they are already using or experimenting with, and to prepare a five-minute pitch to present to the Mawjaat community. They were also asked to reflect on how this practice could be transferable though a shared tool with others.

At the end of the pitch, the other participants were asked to place stickers: Green ("I think it's useful for me"), Yellow ("A step is missing, it need to be adapted to my local context / space") or Red ("Tright now it's not relevant for me or not answering my needs").

1. Tchebbek : Drafting a Charter thanks to collective intelligence

Initial assessment: In our collaborative project with Tchebbek , we are addressing the question of how we can work together practically. Unlike artist collectives, we rarely hear about space-based collectives.

Solution: To build together a Charter that can be also used by others. Our long-term aim with Tchebbek is to advocate for these spaces in Algeria to become more organized so that they can have an impact.

Tool developed: We have started by drafting a charter to establish our long-term collaboration and governance. Since we started from scratch we could experiment with certain approaches. Based on the documentation (draft standard guidelines), we began developing the document article by article. In the governance section, decisions are usually made by consensus, but we considered using collective intelligence and stigmergy instead.

Output shared with the community: We expect the guidelines to be finalized in July. Then, the idea is to open them up to other artistic spaces.

Mawjaat community feedback: 🟢 Friche, Tatmin / 🟡 Bayt, B'sarya

2. **B'sarya : Implementing a residency management workflow**

Initial assessment: As our residencies and productions grew, it became difficult for us as a small team to coordinate timelines, responsibilities, communication, and exhibition preparation without clear shared workflows.

Solution: we had to choose a tool not only to assign the task but to know who is doing what.

Tool developed: After trying online tools that were not satisfying, we developed our own Excel sheet where we could document our real workflows and gradually developed a flexible residency management protocol with a visual Grant chart, task distribution, and production/exhibition timelines. Sometimes we modify by removing or adding tasks. Everything is uploaded in a google drive that everyone of the team can have access.

Output shared with the community: An Excel template that will be shared in the collaborative platform.

Mawjaat community feedback: 🟢 Friche/ L'Blaça/ Tatmin/ Tchebbek

3. **Tatmin : Programming by delegation and ownership**

Initial assessment: it was really difficult to manage the programming because there was painting, photography, stand up etc. When Christel joined us we discussed this issue & she said we are not a programming space but a space to welcome artists. First, we defined the spaces (gallery, downstage, stand-up concerts, coffee stop, concept store, and offices). Then, we delegated programming to people who are grounded in the cultural scene and whom we can trust.

Solution: Instead of organizing events ourselves, we provide a framework, including the venue, infrastructure, brand, and Tatmin community. We entrust the driving forces in the sector with

the responsibility of taking ownership of a space or program with true autonomy. While we remain the venue's managers and the guardians of the framework, it is the organizers who decide on the content, the artists/curation, and the flow. In practical terms, our organization is currently experiencing this shift through two initiatives. First, there is Downstage, where Mehdi has taken full charge of the space, programming shows, marketing rehearsals, and promoting filmed live sessions. The other is WIP DANCE, which is different because it's more of a program than a physical space. Solène is beginning to take the lead on the dance scene at Tatmin.

Tool developed: The agreement is still being drafted, but we started experimenting beforehand, relying on trust and an informal framework. This allowed us to start quickly, but we know it's reaching its limits. We've also noticed that ownership doesn't take hold in the same way, depending on whether the initiative comes from the project leader (Mehdi approached us) or the hub (we reached out to Solène). For now, everything is going well, but we're keeping a close eye on the collaboration. There's a real challenge in synchronizing our work rhythms—we handle logistics, infrastructure, and security, while they handle programming and content—and ensuring a clear separation of roles.

Output shared with the community: Agreement contracts with the partners in charge of the programming, including the financial compensation.

Mawjaat community feedback: 🟢 Bayt, Tchebbek / 🟡 B'sarya

4. **L'Blaça : Using cross-activities to build a collective dynamic**

Initial assessment: We are part of a collective dynamic — L'Blaça — but not as a single, unified space. Each organization has its own spaces, audiences, rhythms, and ways of working. We share values and a common territory, but for a long time, each of us was mostly operating within its own logic. We quickly realized that a collective cannot be built through meetings and strategic discussions alone. Trust, shared habits, and real collaboration need to be practiced — concretely, repeatedly, on the ground. So, the question became: how do we learn to work together before we have a fully shared structure or space? We always put the project into a bigger vision and know that the challenge is part of the process. Now we have reached another step and created an SARL to manage the new house. We have to change our vision also regarding our economic model, everything was free for our public and we should develop philanthropy.

Solution: Instead of beginning with governance or formal agreements, we started co-organizing activities together such as collective markets, workshops, cultural events, shared programming moments, activities hosted across each other's spaces. We used these activities as a testing ground. Over time, we came to see these cross-activities not just as events, but as a practical tool for collective building. Each shared activity was an opportunity to test our complementarities, mix our teams and audiences, share resources, and learn how we actually work together — before trying to formalize anything. We learn by doing, it's an empirical approach.

Tool developed: We developed a simple framework: a set of questions to ask before, during, and after each cross-activity — about roles, contributions, visibility, what worked, and what tensions emerged. It's not a fixed model, rather a shared habit of reflection.

Output shared with the community: Template framework (Excel Sheet).

Mawjaat community feedback: 🟢 Friche / 🟡 B'sarya, Tatmin

5. **Beirut Art Center : PLAY BAC for a circular economy**[1]

Initial assessment: Most cultural institutions run in a straight line. Something comes in — funding, an artist, an idea. We turn it into a programme. People experience it. And then… it ends. And we start again. At BAC, we've been trying to break that. Not as a theory. As a practical problem. Because in our context, with our resources… we can't afford for things to disappear. We need everything we do to feed what comes next.

Solution: So we started asking a very simple question: What actually circulates in a cultural institution? Not money. Meaning. Participation. Authorship. And then another question: What would it take to build a system where these don't just end… but come back? Right now, the main way we're trying to do this is through something we're building called Play BAC. And it's a small shift, but it changes everything.

Tool developed: Someone comes to an exhibition. Instead of just leaving with an experience that fades… they leave something behind. A response. A question. A fragment of language. And that doesn't disappear. It enters the system. It feeds the next residency brief. It shows up in the central hall. It becomes something on the radio. It seeds a session in the school. So instead of a line… you start to get a loop. We're redesigning our central hall around this idea. Not as a space that presents finished thinking… but as a space where thinking stays visible. Where you can actually see what the institution is made of at any given moment. Not a finished argument. A live one.

Output shared with the community: We are now asking three questions about everything we do. What comes in? What do we do with it? And does it return — changed — to the people who brought it? If we can't answer all three… we stop. Or we rethink. The reason I'm sharing this is simple. I think every space in this room is losing things that shouldn't be lost. Conversations that end. People who don't come back. Knowledge that doesn't travel. So maybe the question is: What actually circulates in your institution right now? And what doesn't? And what would it take to make sure nothing disappears.

Mawjaat community feedback: 🟢 B'sarya, Tchebbek, L'Blaça, Beyt

[1] Note : Ibrahim Nehmeh (BAC) had not yet arrived in Marseille on the first day, so Louise Guin read his pitch.

💡 **Knowledge sharing within Mawjaat : focus on B'sarya & Beirut Art Center** 💡

During the workshop, B'sarya detailed how they got inspired by the BAC to create a new residency program : *Qaid Al-Takween* ("Work in progress").

After the kickoff of Mawjaat, we added a new track to our residency program called "Work in Progress" (قيد التكوين). It's the result of an interesting, in-depth conversation with Ibrahim from the BAC, during which he shared a lot about the "Room for Practice" program. At B'sarya, most residencies are either thematic or production/outcome-based. In the "Work in Progress" residency, artists have the space and time to explore their practices without an artistic outcome; we present the process. Currently, we are running a second cycle. The program is only existing for Alexandrian artists.

After the first call, we decided to establish selection criteria because we received 60 good applications for only seven studios to host artists. It was difficult to set criteria because the applications are not chosen based on outputs. This is completely different from what we did before. The selection chart is an Excel spreadsheet with several criteria and closed questions, but we still think we need to work more on the selection process.

One important thing for us is that we don't call ourselves artistic curators: Ahmed works in administration and I am a technical producer. We make it clear that there will be no guidance, we tell the artists that we are here to help them achieve their vision.

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→ El Mahatta reacted to the intervention of B'sarya and proposed to share the selection criteria of their artistic residency program Transmitting Stones that they implement with a Tunisian and Switzerland.

V. Where Mawjaat actually becomes real practice by Lieve Wijman

1. Fieldwork feedbacks on Lieve's research action project

Lieve reminded the audience of the shared vision that was discussed during the kickoff meeting, as well as the conceptual framework of her research project, which is structured around these four guiding questions: **Practice:** What currently exists? **Patterns:** What connects these practices? **Direction:** What is the desired future? **Infrastructure:** What is needed to sustain them?

Then, she presented specific "waves" of collaboration she mapped during her residencies in Tunisia and Egypt.

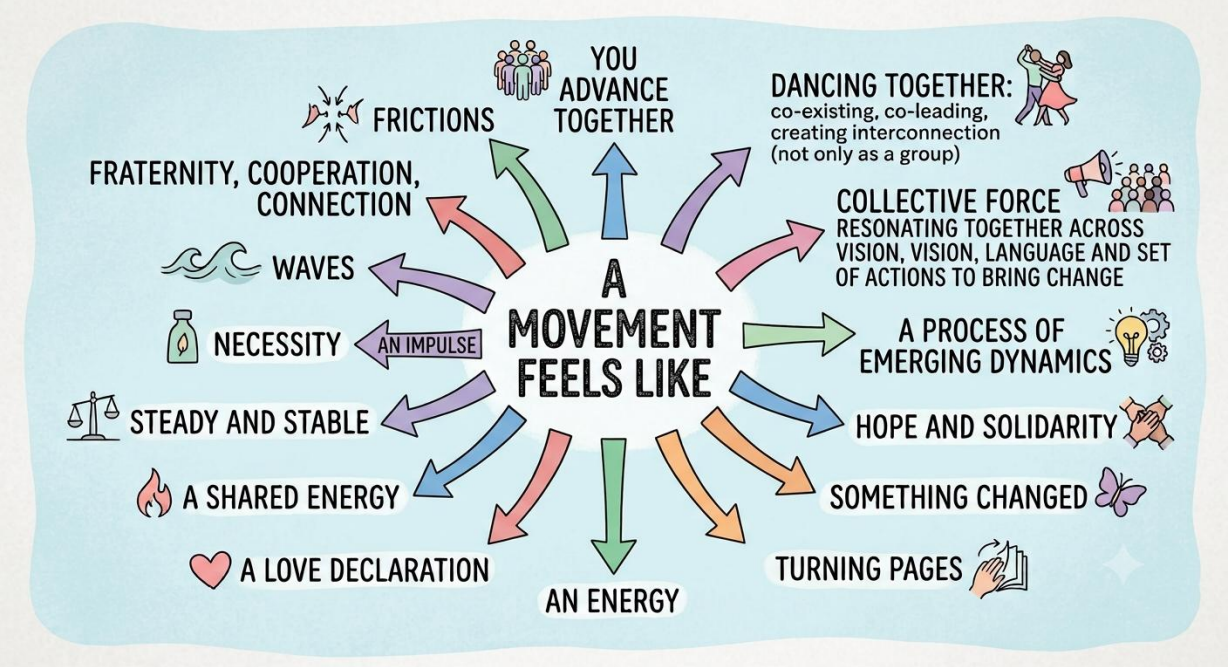
- **Gusra / Safena 7X:** A collaboration between **Safena.7** and **Collective 220** (Cairo, Algiers, Alexandria, and Bousaada). They use the concept of *gusra*—an Algerian term for intimate, casual conversation—as a method for learning and rethinking images through dialogue and companionship.
- **Nessij:** A Tunisian collective founded in 2023 that promotes the Tunisian art scene internationally and encourages solidarity and artist circulation within the Global South.
- **Moving Forward Books:** A distribution venture between **Bao Books** and **Esmat Publishing List** that supports small presses and self-publishers in the Arabic-speaking region and its diaspora.
- **Asameena:** An experimental literary collective of five women from Tunisia and Morocco who produce a literary magazine focused on marginalized or "minoritized" literary forms from the South.

2. Workshop based on the “movement” concept

In a collaborative workshop, the researcher asked the audience to conceptualize the "movement". The participants were asked to complete one of the following two sentences: "A movement feels like" or "We want to build movements that." They wrote their responses on pieces of paper, which were later stuck on a board. The responses, read randomly by the participants, were sometimes poetic and reflected their different professional identities and practices. It is clear, however, that the concept of a "movement" resonated with them far beyond single action. It is a matter of rhythm, connection, and impact.

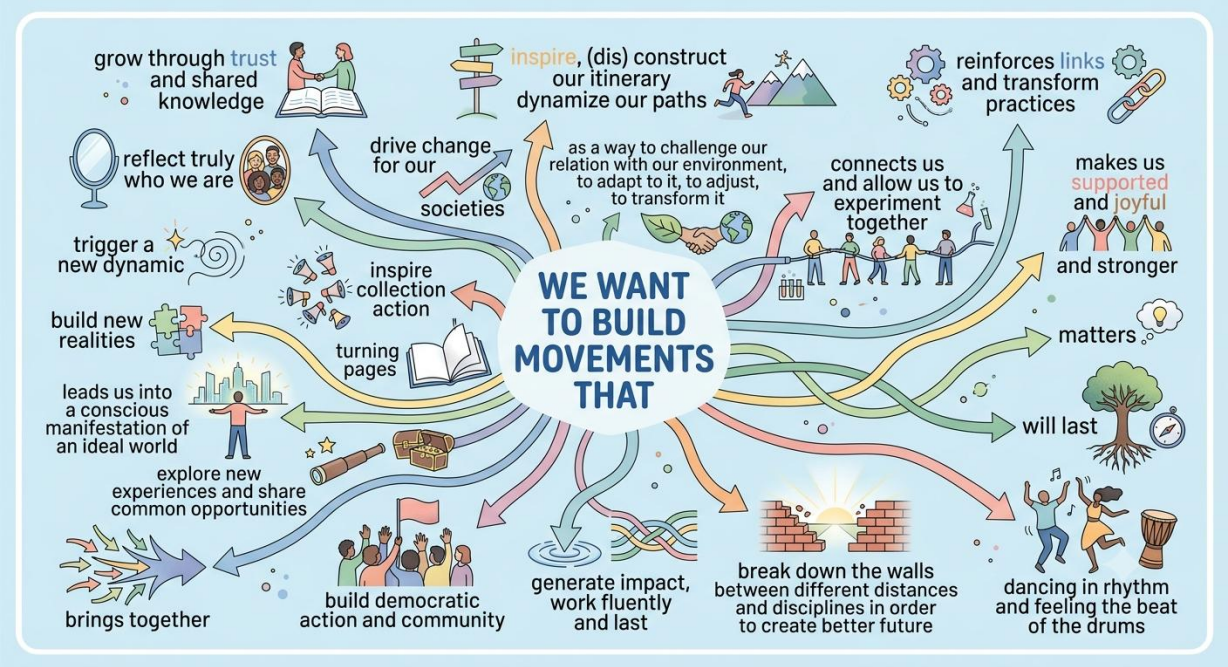
In the first sentence, they describe movement not as a rigid structure, but as a living flow. Three main themes stand out:

- **An organic and rhythmic synergy:** Movement is perceived as a global dance (*"dancing together"*, *"waves"*, *"an impulse"*). It is about co-existing and co-leading while creating deep interconnections.
- **A collective force of solidarity:** This highlights the idea of a shared resonance (*"collective force resonating together"*, *"hope and solidarity"*, *"fraternity"*). It is an energy that transcends the individual.
- **The engine of change:** Movement is inseparable from transformation and need of action (*"something changed"*, *"necessity"*, *"frictions"*). Participants acknowledge that movement shakes things up and creates friction, but it is essential for "turning pages."



When projecting into the future, participants express clear desires regarding *how* to build these movements and their *ultimate purpose*:

- **Rooted in humanity and trust:** They want movements nourished by shared knowledge, that reinforce links, and bring joy and support (*"grow through trust"*, *"makes us supported and joyful"*).
- **Boundary breakers (Transversal):** There is a strong desire to break down silos and cross-pollinate (*"break down the walls between different disciplines"*, *"connect us and allow us to experiment"*).
- **Sustainable and impactful:** Not just a flash in the pan. Participants want to build structures that endure, generate real impact, and transform practices (*"will last"*, *"generate impact"*, *"drive change for our societies"*).
- **Creators of new realities:** The movement must be the vehicle for an ideal, a space for democratic action, and a way to adapt to our environment (*"build democratic action"*, *"conscious manifestation of an ideal world"*).



3. Project updates and reflections

B'sarya: Our grant experiment is about "how to make Alexandria a music city again." We are organizing **Music Industry Days** in October. First, we analyzed venues, artists, and audiences. We also included music managers and record labels in our research because artists don't work alone. In Egypt, and more specifically in Alexandria, we have a problem with venues. There were multiple venues before 2017, but now, only three places remain where independent artists can perform: The Jesuit Cultural Center, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and the French Institute. Of these three venues, only the Bibliotheca is allowed to sell tickets. This makes the music scene vulnerable and dependent on external funding. This was not the case before because there were many different places, but they were shut down in 2017, either deliberately or due to a lack of funding. After the event, we will be more able to analyze how the Mawjaat project influenced or inspired experimentation.

Tatmin: We are exploring a new way to manage a creative hub, striving to achieve financial autonomy while meeting the needs of the artists. The Mawjaat project has given us **credibility** and a new **vision** for organizing our business and governance model. It is the first month in six years that we have achieved a balanced budget. This is thanks to the support of Mawjaat. It's important to us to analyze different models around the Mediterranean and choose what will work in our context. Before developing, we must clarify our financial autonomy and business model. Donors can support us in developing some aspects, but not in providing core funding.

With the grant, we built the floor for the dancers and now they have a space to express. Since 2025, next to Tatmin there is the INSMAC (Institut National Supérieur de la Musique et des Arts

Chorégraphiques), a public institution teaching music and dance we collaborate with by coordinating our efforts to offer dancers a space outside their school. We are witnessing a good dynamic right now, this week it's the first festival of dance in Rabat. The role of Tatmin is to support emerging artists so later they can go to other spaces. We also explore a new space downstairs adapted for standup, music rehearsal, theater etc.

Our challenge now is to exit from our walls and explore other experiences like fashion défilé. Since Mawjaat we have more partnerships with other organizations like Fondation Hiba and we share contacts & information. We applied to a call for projects for the British Council with the theater collective Rassif.

Tchebbek: To start, I would like to mention that my colleagues could not come because they did not receive visas. We should consider this because we are talking about "movement."
We are trying to **build a network of all the independent art spaces in Algiers**. First, we spent time building relationships between El Mahatta and Mon Autre École, and from July, we will connect with the other spaces. We have mapped the different places, and we plan to include thirteen art spaces and actors. We all know each other and collaborate on an individual level. With the Mawjaat project we aim to create a collective dynamic .Before presenting the project to the other stakeholders, we are establishing the project's foundation, specifically its governance. Currently, we are working on drafting a charter using collective intelligence. We are buying equipment and materials that will be used by the entire network, and we must determine how to manage this aspect too.

→ Alice pointed out that La Friche is working on mutualizing materials and spaces through the collective Bisou, and that it could be interesting to connect and share good practices.

L'Blaça : During the first phase, we mainly focused on the process of our collaboration. Organizing the Mawjaat workshop allowed us to work together and strengthen our collective dynamic. Moreover, having Lieve with us in Tunis helped us ask the right questions to work on together. Our budget is based on cross-activities, and so far, we have organized:

- "**Echos Solidaire**s" in Nafta: Second edition with more than 300 attendees. The audience consisted of more CSOs, and it was an opportunity to share our practices. This is a good example of what we want to achieve together. There were multiple formats and cross-disciplinary activities with a focus on climate change at the local level, particularly among farmers. For the first time, it was grounded, giving the artists and the Collectif Créatif a real possibility to be inspired and to give a voice to real communities, which was missing before.

- **Bahja:** Activities to strengthen their economic model, taking into account how we can promote female-dominated jobs, such as embroidery and beauty care, which are often underpaid. The idea is to give them an entrepreneurial approach.
- **Les chefs du vivant**: the ATP is part of African Sovereignty network. We are trying to work with Tunisian chefs to make advocacy and push them to meet the farmers in their farms and to promote this connection and "circuit court" (short supply chain) raising awareness about the quality of the flour for the bread and the local seeds.
- **Visits of student designers at l'artisanerie and Bahja**: It is in the framework of a new program of residencies that we will launch. We think that artists need to be more grounded with the local and social context. It's important to connect the local craft network and the artists/designers for the creative process. We want to have a holistic approach and make them use also bio-materials.

Lastly, we rented the house close to Shanti and we **created a company called SOGEMU** to manage our shared spaces and mutualize our resources but also to protect us legally at an individual level. We still don't know where it will lead to but we know we are stronger together. We have also created a common brand to communicate for our common activites: **"Nahj el collectif"** (نهج الكولكتيف).

❓ To have or not to have a space ❓

The announcement of renting a new house for L'Blaça raised an interesting debate among the participants. They debated the financial and community trade-offs of maintaining a dedicated venue. **Bsarya** questioned whether keeping their expensive rental was worth it, noting that they successfully hosted major activities, like their contemporary art days, outside of their main venue. However, **Collectif créatif** strongly advocated for a permanent location based on their own experience of spending a year without one; they found that operating without a venue confused the public, restricted their activities, and detached them from the community. **ATP** agreed that a physical location is absolutely non-negotiable for their operations, as they require a reliable gathering hub to host their weekly organic market. **Ftartchi** offered a middle ground, admitting that while they were personally hesitant about acquiring a new space, they recognized how vital it was for groups like ATP and Collectif créatif to build momentum and serve their people.

The discussion also highlighted the unintended consequences of trying to attract broader audiences through secondary activities. **Bsarya** explained that they initially opened a cafeteria to attract different target groups, but the initiative backfired when visitors began coming exclusively for the coffee shop. This shift diluted their identity—making them feel like "B'sarya for Cafeteria" instead of an arts organization—and since it generated little revenue, they ultimately closed it. **Tatmin** strongly validated this dilemma, agreeing that a cafeteria can easily "invade" and overshadow an organization's core mission. They emphasized the need for careful reflection, sharing that while they had attempted an organic market similar to ATP's, only the first edition succeeded, prompting them to reevaluate their approach.

Beirut Art Center:

With Mawjaat's, we started **"Room for Practice**," a space where people from different disciplines and experiences can practice. We asked ourselves, "What else can an institution like us do to break down walls?" Then, we had the idea to open the residency space into the gallery. This small gallery space is generally reserved for exhibitions.This was the first time we shook up our institution. We installed a coffee machine and a tea boiler to boost the experience. We know people won't come for the coffee. Currently, we have six paid residents from different disciplines and practices. They receive a stipend but in exchange they have to do activities that engage the public. The idea behind this multidisciplinarity was to create new ways of being together and imagine other futures. Now that it's over, we want to use this model and bring it to the mezzanine.

We are in a transitional phase and have shifted our focus to solidarity programs for artists displaced from the south due to war. We are welcoming twenty emerging artists from the southern part of the country (and received 150 submissions). We conducted an experiment by opening the studio to the public to encourage interaction between the artists and the audience and this really influenced the creative processes, rather than the public just coming for the opening.

We will have a residency program for seven artists from the south affected by the war. The residency will focus on the Litani River to create a new cartography. Now the Litani river has become a geopolitical issue and is currently dividing the country due to Israeli occupation.

What are we experiencing with the Mawjaat project? I inherited an institution that was stuck in the past and has been impacted by several crises in recent years. Clearly, the entire model of culture and institutions is over. We need to come together and reimagine how an institution can think, act, and behave in our context. In three years, the BAC will celebrate its 20th anniversary, so we started asking ourselves: **Where do we want to be in the next 20 years?** We held "strategy days" with the team and tried to think about how we can embody the future in the present. The Mawjaat grant enables us to conduct this type of experimentation. At the heart of our strategy is the idea of creating a circular economy. We cannot continue spending money the way we have been; it doesn't make sense, so we thought about how our actions could create a circular economy. We don't have an entry fee, but now we're asking for something in exchange. For instance, they can tell us how they felt and what they would like to see. The radio is here to capture these feedback and ideas

4. **Brainstorm session: What dynamics or patterns are emerging beyond individual projects?**



<u>Drawing Mawjaat as a map:</u>

What is at the center?
What is at the edges?
What connects people/projects?
What is missing?

Mawjaat's map is organic and has no center and no edges. It is a territory where there are crossings and intersections on thematics (i.e. care, shared resources, power, mutualization, collaboration, voix, participative…). We are very different from each other so we could not choose one word to define Mawjaat. To illustrate this diversity , we wrote our keywords in the three languages: Arabic, French and English.

<u>Design Mawjaat membership card:</u>

What is written on the card? (name / sentence / statement)
What does it give you access to? What does it ask of you? (commitments, behaviours, ways of being) Who can hold it?

First, we asked ourselves, "Why should we have a membership card?" We are still processing that question. We tried to break it down into points:

- **Why**: Share practical knowledge, skills, and experiences; Identify partners easily (for internal use of the Mawjaat community) ;
- **Access to** : more mobility opportunities for artists in different countries to increase their visibility and promote partnerships.

Then we thought: Why call it a membership card? We decided to rename it the **Mawjaat Hospitality Card**. However, this term is not consensual. Ibrahim thinks it creates a dynamic in which we are the hosts, while people who join Mawjaat should be considered real and full partners. He raised the point that the collaborative platform should not be a locked space.

What feeds the movement? List 10 nourishing conditions

What keeps energy alive between us? What moments made you feel most connected? What drains energy or disconnects people?

Energy	Connection
- The physical meetings and the sharing of our experiences - Louise, our focal point - The experimental grants - A shared sense of purpose	- The informal moments - The collective creative activities
What drains and disconnects	
- Online activities - Geopolitical context - Unclear expectations - The gap between the admin and financial framework (2 years funded project) and our vision of a sustainable network/ movement that can grow. -	

❓ Focus on Mawjaat purpose : where do we want to take the community ❓

The brainstorming session led to a deep conversation about the purpose of the Mawjaat community, which extends beyond the project's funding. Ibrahim from BAC and Ahmed from B'sarya shared how inspired they were by their participation in TransEuropeHalles last April in Marseille. They realized Mawjaat's potential to become a structured, sustainable network because the infrastructure exists to involve other people. Ibrahim believes the network should have one main purpose linked to the vision: connecting different hubs, whether or not they collaborate. At this stage, according to him, there is no need to complicate the project by requiring collaboration or tool sharing. It could be decided that the network should meet at least once a year in person. How it will be funded is another question.

To continue this conversation, Ibrahim proposed that the monthly meeting be an opportunity for each hub to suggest a topic for reflection or invite a hub or cultural actor from their national ecosystem to present their work.
Another point to be discussed is the role of the Mawjaat website and how it can be an open space for collaboration.

VI. Customized itinerary at La Friche : meeting AMI & Radio Grenouille

1. Meeting AMI

Presentation of A.M.I (Aide aux Musiques Innovatrices) by Elodie Le Breut and Lucie Domingo



Since 1985, AMI has been leading an artistic initiative serving residents, artists, and entrepreneurs in the region's cultural sector. Its work in promoting, identifying, and supporting cultural enterprises and artists from the emerging and independent scenes is an essential tool for ensuring the region's relevance in terms of artistic creation, both nationally and internationally. Its activities are structured around:

- ➔ **Plateforme Dynamo** (Support for Cultural Entrepreneurship: Laying the Groundwork and Building a Project Community (Business Incubators, Coworking, Consulting and Training, Networking, and Internationalization)
- ➔ **Rehearsal, Professional Development, and Artist Integration (**A comprehensive support program—from service design and pre-production to networking (professional development training, coaching, and technical support)
- ➔ **Residencies & Creation** (Tools, a network of stakeholders, and artistic expertise dedicated to fostering emerging talent and creative work. (commissions and co-productions, support for creation—including direction, set design, and technical development—as well as European and international cooperation)
- ➔ **Programming & Highlights** (Highlight the process of supporting and championing its artistic vision by providing a framework for innovative engagements with the public (co-productions, concerts, and festivals like showcases Openbox and two festivals Jamais d'Eux sans toi -JEST- et Hip-Hop Society -HHS-)

2. Meeting Radio Grenouille



Radio Grenouille is an independent radio that fosters a culture of listening from Marseille to the world. For 40 years, they have been supporting emerging talents and professionals, both in the studio and out in the field, to bring their voices to the audience's ears. Radio Grenouille is made up of 200 volunteer residents and more than 100 partners, with whom they explore the boundaries between music, art, culture, the environment, youth, and society, driven by one conviction: to give a voice to others.

Radio Grenouille's programming reflects the spirit of exploration that drives the station: curious, open to the world, and rooted in local communities. Every day, it creates a dialogue between emerging cultures and established figures, local scenes, and sounds from afar.

Radio Grenouille is also a station where all genres come together: from reimagined classics to hidden gems, from new releases to forgotten rarities—music at Grenouille is experienced as a never-ending journey.

VII. Saison Méditerranée programmation

1. Visit at Cité des Arts de la rue

The group spent the morning and the lunch with Rosalie Gonzalez and Cléo Smits from the association Lieux Publics that coordinates La Cité des Arts et de la Rue. They gave a tour in this vast performing arts laboratory that houses about ten organizations and brings together a range of skills and expertise in the field of **street arts**: artistic creation, training, set design, production, cultural outreach, and arts education. La Cité des Arts et de la Rue is a key instrument of identity and cultural development at the local, national, and international levels. Since its inception in 1995—amidst changes in location and scale, the creation of new structures, the arrival of new figures, the departure of others, and shifts in cultural policy and the roles of the national government and local authorities—the project has continued to evolve, yet it has always remained a "venue for the creation and development of street arts".

2. Opening exhibitions of Saison Méditerranée at La Friche

Visit of the five new exhibitions in the framework of La Friche's Saison Méditerranée

- « Autoroute Tanger/Marseille » with Amina Mourid
- « Une relève méditerranéenne », collective exhibition - Parallèle
- « Les rêves n'ont pas de titre », solo show by Zineb Sedira
- « Tomorrow again », solo show by Mona Benyamin - Triangle-Astérides
- « Sur les ruines, les pierres fleurissent », solo show by Abdessamad El Montassir



3. Public session "Mediterranean : laboratory for transitions"

The public roundtable, led by French-Lebanese journalist Emmanuel Khoury, brought together **Julie Kretzschmar**, general curator of Saison Méditerranée 2026; **Rim Mathlouthi,** director of l'Association Tunisienne de Permaculture (ATP) and founding member of the L'Blaça collective in Tunis; **Sophia Alami**, architect, artist, and co-director of the artist-run space Rue de Tanger in the medina of Casablanca; and **Hadia Gana,** founder and director of Bayt Ali Gana in Janzour, a suburb of Tripoli, Libya.

The discussion explored how economic, associative, and cultural solidarity serve as survival and sustainability strategies for cultural entrepreneurs. Sophia Alami discussed her experience with **resource pooling** in Rue de Tanger, where they collaborate with three local civil society organizations to promote collective practices, research, and knowledge sharing. Rim

Mathlouthi discussed how the L'Blaça collective initiative and the ATP demonstrate that **inter-associative cooperation and networks** can transform systemic vulnerabilities, such as food sovereignty and resource access, into viable socioeconomic models.

In another section, the speakers exchanged ideas that reversed perspectives and questionned the **reciprocity** in international cooperation. They advocated for a **shift from vertical (top-down) hierarchies to horizontal reciprocity**. Hadia Gana of Libya discussed her decision to remain completely independent and her experience building her center with limited funds. She deliberately bypassed state and institutional funding to maintain total autonomy. Sophia Alami discussed the challenges of securing international grants, citing the heavy constraints and suboptimal project follow-ups by global funding bodies. Julie Kretzschmar then highlighted that Saison Méditerranée 2026 was intentionally designed to dismantle historical hierarchies, prioritize local contexts and temporalities, build trust, and establish healthier horizontal relations.



Finally, the conversation addressed how cultural entrepreneurship and intergenerational dialogue can **empower youth** to co-construct **alternative societal narratives**. Hadia Gana discussed the role of Bayt Ali Gana as a symbol of cultural resistance, as it is the first and only modern art museum in Libya in a post-conflict society. Sophia Alami explained how Rue de Tanger offers alternative narratives to counter aggressive urban modernization and major

construction projects in Morocco in preparation for the World Cup. The panel then discussed how cooperation actors can support youth initiatives amid this sweeping financial crisis.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Mohammed Ben Lamaizi	Tatmin	Morocco
Christel Schouweiler	Tatmin	Morocco
Michel Richard	Institut français du Maroc (attaché culturel)	Morocco
Ahmed Nagy	B'sarya	Egypt
Mohammed Saleh	B'sarya	Egypt
Eric Lebas	Institut français d'Egypte (attaché culturel)	Egypt
Victor Froget	Institut français d'Egypte	Egypt
Réda Mehenni	Tchebbek/ El Mahatta	Algeria
Cécile Renault	Institut français d'Algerie	Algeria
Dhafer Ben Khalifa	Collectif L'Blaça/ Collectif créatif	Tunisia
Aida Ben Ammar	Collectif L'Blaça/ Ftartchi	Tunisia
Mehdi Baccouche	Collectif L'Blaça/ Shanti & Beiti	Tunisia
Rim Mathlouti	Collectif L'Blaça/ Association Tunisienne de Permaculture	Tunisia
Louis Logodin	Institut français de Tunisie (attaché culturel)	Tunisia
Ibrahim Nehme	Beirut Art Center	Lebanon
Charlotte Aillet	Institut français du Liban	Lebanon
Alice Comte	Friche la Belle de Mai	France
Louise Guin	Friche la Belle de Mai	France
Lieve Wijman	researcher	Netherlands
Marianne Roux	Independent consultant	Egypt/ France
Constance Moréteau	Iméra	France
Brian Sandberg	Iméra	France/USA
Jeanne Pierson	Illustratrice	France

Sophia Alami	Rue de Tanger	Maroc
Hadia Gana	Bayt Ali Gana	Libye