

## UNDP IN MOROCCO

Morocco made steady progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly in reducing absolute poverty, but inequalities remain in terms of education and gender, and across regions. In 2011, a major political and social reform resulted in a new Constitution, with provisions that include universal suffrage for the election of regional councils.

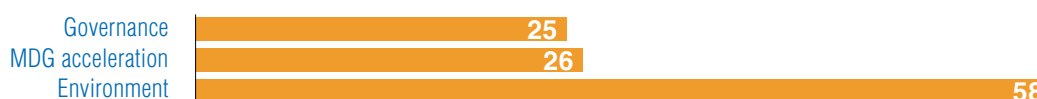
UNDP has provided support in the closely related areas of democratic governance, accelerating the achievement of the MDGs and reducing vulnerabilities and inequalities, and the environment and sustainable development. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2007 to 2015.

### TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2007-2014: \$109.8 MILLION

#### FUNDING SOURCES, 2007-2014



#### PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE BY THEMATIC AREA, 2007-2014 (\$ MILLIONS)



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP is a trusted and responsive partner in Morocco, with the capacity to engage with diverse stakeholders. It has been a pioneer in the field of decentralization and the territorial anchoring of democratic governance, and achieved positive results through pilot projects, notably in its environment portfolio.

Support in developing the capacity of selected governance institutions has evolved through training, awareness-building, advocacy activities, study tours and experience sharing. A civil registry project prepared trainers to train 12,000 employees of the Ministry of the Interior and local authorities on modernized technology and updated regulations. Other governance efforts aided the creation of management structures and results-based systems for monitoring and evaluation, and fostered a climate for dialogue and cooperation. The Interministerial Delegation for Human Rights, in preparing its Universal Periodic Review report for the Human Rights Council, took a new, participatory approach, building on discussions with nearly 400 representatives of civil society, unions, the media, universities and governmental and national institutions throughout the country.

Although UNDP has not been the driving force behind the movement towards greater decentralization, it has adapted activities to a national move in that direction through integrated local development programmes and strategic planning with municipalities. Work with 140 local governments, primarily in rural areas, helped

them draft local development plans; a provincial development plan was devised for Tata province. The initiative reinforced strategic planning processes proposed by the Local Authorities Office, testing different methodologies later included in nationally disseminated guidelines.

UNDP bolstered the capacities of local stakeholders to engage in participatory approaches, and integrate gender dimensions, results-based management and environmental concerns in local plans. Work with civil society has facilitated networking, learning, project implementation and participation in various consultative fora, with local associations now seen as essential partners of local and regional governments.

Towards accelerating MDG progress and reducing vulnerabilities, projects sought to directly or indirectly reduce poverty, inequalities and exclusion, although results have been relatively modest in quantitative terms. At the local level, the majority (if not all) projects were implemented in disadvantaged regions, and aimed to improve living conditions and livelihoods. Jobs and opportunities for income were generated, although these results remain modest and are mostly not sustainable.

Nationally, UNDP has provided tools and capacities to reorient public policies in favour of the disadvantaged. Consideration of the multidimensional facets of poverty enhanced the income poverty approach used previously, revealing significant disparities and inequalities. Decision makers subsequently prioritized social spending in

the national budget, and drew up an action plan for nine priority regions on reducing child mortality and improving maternal health.

On gender equality and women's empowerment, results have been modest, particularly in older projects that did not integrate gender concerns in their design, as well as those with a national scope and with a focus on technical issues related to the environment. Results were more notable at the local level, especially as a result of support to income-generating activities that primarily targeted women's associations and cooperatives. The activities of the decentralized Southern Oasis and Tafilalet Oasis programmes created a number of economic interest groups and cooperatives in agriculture and artisan activities, with 60 percent of cooperatives made up entirely of women.

With respect to other forms of inequality, UNDP facilitated the participation of stakeholders who have not traditionally been engaged in development debates, notably youth. A national integrated youth strategy was created, and over 500 workshops and discussions on the MDGs were attended by some 40,000 youths.

The majority of interventions on the environment and sustainable development led to immediate results. Greater understanding of these issues in some cases led to their integration in national, sectoral and/or local planning tools. Pilot projects did not contribute significantly to expected results such as effective environmental protection or improved living conditions. They did, however, serve as models to be replicated on a larger scale.

UNDP projects were relevant to Morocco's national priorities and international commitments, and the continuation of a number of interventions demonstrated a certain coherence in the programme. Although exit

strategies were rarely developed, the potential sustainability of the majority of projects is good, given partners' strong ownership, and effective individual and institutional capacity development. This potential is threatened, however, by frequent delays in decision-making processes at the end of projects, and in replication or upscaling. Projects supported by UNDP are often innovative in nature, but their relatively short duration means they do not reach the maturity needed to be quickly scaled up.

UNDP competencies in project management and its contributions in the area of capacity development were considered its greatest added value. For projects funded by the Government, relatively fast and flexible procedures, transparent and robust management, and high-quality reporting have all been appreciated. A monitoring and evaluation unit was established in 2011, and annual and mid-year reviews instituted with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

A widely recognized ability to forge partnerships supported exchanges with countries in both the South and the North that allowed partners to benefit from others' experiences and good practices. This form of cooperation, however, while seen as one of UNDP's principal missions, was considered insufficient.

In 2012, UNDP adopted an interdisciplinary approach to programming. Projects incorporate several thematic areas, and are designed and monitored through a collective process that involves all relevant national stakeholders. This approach should be encouraged. Particularly at a time of heavy dependence on a limited number of funding sources—the Government provides over 60 percent of resources—UNDP needs to sharpen its comparative advantages, including innovative interventions and capacity to bring people together.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- UNDP must ensure that the interventions it supports remain innovative and that it does not become confined to a role of fund manager. While continuing to capitalize on its project management capacities, UNDP should strengthen its thought leadership and advocacy work so that it can continue to be a leading voice in development debates at all levels.
- UNDP should continue its role as a convenor, bringing together different institutional stakeholders, as well as traditional and non-traditional stakeholders.
- UNDP should create conditions conducive to the sustainability of results achieved through its support.
- UNDP should further capitalize on its programmes and projects by putting greater emphasis on knowledge sharing between different national institutions as well as with other countries.
- UNDP should continue to support the establishment of monitoring systems by national partners in order to institutionalize a culture of results-based management.
- UNDP should take advantage of new financing and partnership opportunities.

## ABOUT THE ICPEs

Independent country programme evaluations (ICPEs) are the backbone of the work of the Independent Evaluation Office. They capture evidence of UNDP's contributions to development results and the effectiveness of strategies supporting national development. They enable continued improvement in UNDP programmes, contribute to strengthened national ownership and evaluation capacity, and underpin accountability to national stakeholders and UNDP's Executive Board. To date, over 100 ICPEs have been conducted worldwide.

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