

Country Youth Profile



MOROCCO



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1. Socio-Economic Profile

1.1. The Kingdom of Morocco is the most westerly of the North African countries known as “Arab West”¹. It has Atlantic and Mediterranean coastlines. Politically, Morocco is a constitutional monarchy with an elected parliament. The Kingdom has an estimated population of 36, 283, 713 in 2018². Morocco is a lower middle-income country, whose gross domestic product (GDP) fell from a high of 4.5% in 2015 to 1.2% in 2016, and in 2017 was boosted by a rebound in the agriculture sector raising the GDP to 4%³. It is projected to fall to 3% in 2018, 3.5% in 2019 and 3.7% in 2020⁴. Between 2001-2004, extreme poverty was eradicated, consumption per capita increased at an annual rate of 3.3% (3.9% for the bottom 20%), monetary poverty and vulnerability fell to 4.8% and 12.5% respectively⁵. The country’s poverty rate has witnessed a steady decrease from 15.3% in 2001 to 8.9% in 2007 to 4.8% in 2016⁶. Unemployment is still on the rise in Morocco, rising from 9.9% in 2016 to 10.2 in 2017, with prevalence among the young (26.5%), educated (17.9%) and women (14.7%) showing a weak capacity of the economy to generate inclusive growth⁷.

1.2. Three different types of classifications are used in categorizing youth in Morocco. Haut Commissariat au Plan (The National Bureau of Statistics) categorizes youth as persons aged between 15 and 24 years, the Ministry of Youth and Sports defines youth as individuals aged 15 to 29 years⁸, and in the political arena, youth are seen as people in the 21-40 years age bracket⁹. Based on the definition of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Youth and Sports’, people in these age brackets represent almost 20% and 30% of Morocco’s population respectively¹⁰. Morocco’s ranking on the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Global Youth Index in 2016 stood at 120th out of 183 countries¹¹.

Table 1: Youth at a Glance in Morocco

Categories	Females	Males
Age of marriage (GoM)	18	18
Labor force participation (World Bank, 2017)	26.76%	78.84%
Unemployment (ILO 2017)	16.71%	18.36%
NET Enrolment (UNESCO, 2017)	63.02%	63.59%
Literacy Rate (UNESCO, 2012)	87.78%	94.63%
Out of School Youth (WEF-GGGR2017)	47.7%	35.9%

2. Youth in National Development: Institutional and Policy Frameworks

2.1. Youth as a category in Morocco is tied to the country’s political and economic history. It was first used in the 1930s by young nationalists to assert their role in the modernization of their country and the struggle for independence¹². In the first decade after independence in Morocco, youth-educated- males continued to be the force of mo-

1 BBC (2018), Morocco Country Profile, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14121438>

2 World Population Review (2018), Morocco Country Data, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/morocco-population/>

3 World Bank (2018), The World Bank in Morocco, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/morocco/overview#1>

4 World Bank (ND), Morocco Country Data, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/morocco>

5 World Bank (2018), Kingdom of Morocco: Governing Towards Efficiency, Equity, Education and Endurance, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/29929/123653.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>, P.1

6 Morocco World News (2017), Poverty Still a Major Concern in Morocco, <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2017/12/236710/poverty-morocco-essaouira-stampede-illiteracy/>

7 World Bank (2018), Morocco’s Economic Outlook, April 2018, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/morocco/publication/economic-outlook-april-2018>

8 Salto (2014), Youth Work in Morocco and Youth Participation Projects at the Local Level, https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3140/def_p_1-40_youth_work_morocco.pdf, P.6

9 Rhanem, K. (2015), Country Sheet on Youth Policy in Morocco, https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3140/def_p_1-40_youth_work_morocco.pdf, P.4

10 Salto, op.cit:6

11 Commonwealth Secretariat (2016), Global Youth Development and Index Report, <http://cmydiprod.uksouth.cloudapp.azure.com/sites/default/files/2016-10/2016%20Global%20Youth%20Development%20Index%20and%20Report.pdf>, P. 124

12 Paciello, M.C. (2016), Public Action Towards Youth in Neo-Liberal Morocco: Fostering and Controlling the Unequal Inclusion of the New

ernity and creativity¹³. However, the economic crisis of the late 1980s and the 1990s and increasing unemployment among urban youth with a baccalaureate/university degree and their political response to the dire situation resulted in a new categorization “educated unemployed males”¹⁴. Even though the government recognized youth and their organization, the Moroccan National Association of Unemployed Graduates (ANDCM), which they formed in 1991, a counter organization, the Conseil national de jeunesse et de l’avenir (CNJA) was established¹⁵.

2.2 Although the CNJA was tasked with undertaking research on unemployment among graduates and make recommendations to government on how to solve the high unemployment, it had little or no impact on public policy¹⁶. However, a change in public policy which started in 1998 with the “gouvernement d’alternance” of Youssoufi and the ascendancy on the throne by King Mohammed VI in 1999¹⁷. To manage the increasing social tension in the country, the Government of Morocco (GoM) placed the “social question” high on the agenda¹⁸. The “youth question” together with the “woman question”, regained renewed interest in the national discourse¹⁹. In December 1999, the King requested the GoM to include the “integration of youth” (“integration de jeunesse”) as one of the primary goals of the 1999-2004 development plan, along with women and marginalized regions²⁰. As a result, public initiatives and programs targeted at unemployed spiked in the 2000s, especially in the second half of the decade²¹

2.3 The Ministry of Youth and Sports, established in 1964, is responsible for youth affairs. Its functions include among others, preparing legislation, policy, and regulations in the field of youth, developing programs for youth, children and women, and commissioning studies to promote the development of youth²². The youth sector in Morocco is guided by three legal frameworks, the 2004 Family Code, the 2011 Constitution, and the National Integrated Youth Strategy 2015-2030. Child marriage was officially outlawed in Morocco in 2004, with the review of the Moudawana, the Personal Code. In the framework of the Family Code, the age of marriage for girls was raised from 15 to 18 years in the Family Code. However, the inclusion of the judicial caveat allowing judges and parents to approve the marriage of minors when “justified” has resulted in the continuation of the practice. For instance, data from the Ministry of Justice in May 2014, showed that the number of minors almost doubled in the past years, comprising 10.72% of all marriages²³. According to UNICEF’s 2017 data on child marriage, 3% and 16% of marriages solemnized were for 15 years and 18 years old respectively²⁴. The 2004 Family Code prohibits the system of guardianship that was required for women, irrespective of age, and the practice of unilateral divorce by husbands. The New Code establishes the principle of co-responsibility and equality of rights and responsibilities between two spouses or more, it protected divorced women and restricted the practice of polygamy²⁵.

2.4. The 2011 constitution institutionalized youth participation and associational life in Morocco. Article 33 calls for youth participation in the social, economic, cultural and political development of the country. It also stipulates that youth should be assisted in establishing organizations that will promote and assist them when confronted with scholarly, social and professional challenges. It was recommended that an Advisory Council on Youth and Community Action, Conseil Consultatif de la Jeunesse et de l’Action Associative be established to assist youth in overcoming these challenges. Article 170 outlines the mandate of proposed Council and in Article 171, the composition, organization, attributes, and regulations of the Council²⁶ are described. The Council of Government approved Bill NO 89-15 on the Advisory Council on Youth and Community Action on December 2017²⁷. The bill should pave

Generation, http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y_05.pdf, P.3

13 Ibid:3

14 Ibid:4

15 Ibid:4

16 Ibid:4

17 Ibid: 4

18 Ibid:4

19 Ibid:5

20 Ibid:5

21 Ibid:5

22 EU (ND), Ministry of Youth and Sports, <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Morocco-Youth-and-sports.aspx>

23 USAID (2018), Morocco Gender Analysis, <https://banyanglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/USAID-Morocco-Gender-Analysis-2018.pdf>, P.23

24 Child not Brides (2017), Child Marriage Around the World: Morocco, <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/morocco/>

25 Euromed (2009), Studies on Youth Policies in the Mediterranean Partner Countries: Morocco, http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Morocco_2009_Youth_Policy_Study.pdf, P. 15

26 Constitute Project (2012), Morocco’s 2011 Constitution, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Morocco_2011.pdf,

27 Le Martin (2017), The Advisory Council for Youth and Community Action: A Force for Proposals for an Integrated Youth Policy, <https://lematin.ma/journal/2017/le-conseil-consultatif-de-la-jeunesse-et-de-l-rsquo-action-associative-de-nouveau-sur-la-table-de-la-commission-des-secteurs-sociaux/273516.html>

the way for assembling an institutional framework for the implementation of the provisions of Articles 33, 170 and 171 of the constitution.

2.5 Morocco's first national Integrated Youth Strategy (Strategie Nationale Integree de la Jeunesse) was adopted in 2014. The Youth Strategy is a response to the constitutional provisions mentioned earlier. The National Strategy aims at a) ensuring coherence in existing programs and strategies from different ministries and departments on youth, b) reinforcing quality investment for youth, and c) completing and strengthening existing sectoral strategies and plans²⁸. This is a critical objective as it was extremely challenging to assess the impact of governmental efforts on the youth sector due to a lack of a coordinating structure. The integrated approach adopted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports aims to make youth and the youth sector, not just a single and separate policy area, but to ensure that governmental programs are better adapted to the needs of young people²⁹. The strategy emphasizes the economic and social inclusion of disadvantaged youth groups. Lack of access to jobs, informal employment, precarious working conditions, low participation in the social and civic life and poverty, among others, impact those of low-level education, youth in rural areas and young girls³⁰. In short, the strategic objective is to reduce inequalities among all Moroccan youth, who should benefit from the same opportunities³¹. While the ministry's youth target is young persons aged 15 to 29 year, the strategy will extend the age bracket to 35 years to include those who missed life opportunities and are excluded from the system³².

The fifteen-year strategy has the following five pillars:

- Increase economic opportunities for young people and promote their employability;
- Increase accessibility and the quality of basic services for young people and reduce geographical disparities;
- Promote the active participation of young people in social and civic life and the decision-making process;
- Promote respect for human rights; and
- Reinforce the institutional arrangement for communication, information, evaluation, and governance³³.

The strategy outlines policy measures to be undertaken for each area. Overall, there are 137 priority measures, 62 for the period 2015-2020, and 75 policy measures for the period up to 2030³⁴. An Action Plan (2015-2030) to guide the implementation of the strategy was proposed³⁵.

3. Education

3.1. Through the GoM's substantial financial, technical and social support to the education sector, Morocco almost achieved universal education with a net primary school enrollment ratio of 99% in 2014³⁶. However, low learning outcomes and dropouts remain a serious challenge. For instance, gender and location gaps reappear at the lower secondary level with about a 22-point difference in the age-specific enrolment rates (ASER) in rural areas compared to urban areas at 75.7% vs. 97.9% in 2015-2016³⁷. Also, a 14-point gender difference was observed in the rural areas at 68.8% and 82.3% for girls and boys respectively over the same period³⁸. Dropout rates are 10% in lower secondary school, particularly among children with disabilities, 66% of whom are out of school³⁹. Enrollment in upper secondary stood at only 61% in 2014⁴⁰. The literacy rate between female and male in the 15-24 age bracket in 2012 was

28 Rhanem, op.cit:3

29 Salto op.cit:13

30 Rhanem, op.cit:3

31 Ibid:3

32 Salto op.cit:13

33 Ibid:13

34 Ibid:14

35 Ibid:14

36 World Bank (2018a), Kingdom of Morocco: Governing Towards Efficiency, Equity, Education and Endurance A Systematic Country Diagnosis, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/29929/123653.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y> P. 8

37 Ibid:18

38 Ibid:18.

39 UNICEF (2016), Country Program Document: Morocco, <https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2016-PL31-Morocco-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf>, P.3

40 Ibid:3

87.78% and 94.63% respectively⁴¹.

3.1.2. National and international assessments reveal low learning outcomes. For instance, a large-scale national standardized assessment in 2016 shows that 10th-grade students in upper secondary school have not acquired needed proficiency required in the primary and lower secondary national curricula⁴². Students score in the four common subjects (French, Arabic Mathematics and Humanities) was very low, with an average score below 51% in all subjects⁴³. Furthermore, at the secondary level, gaps in preparing adolescents and youth for work and life after school contribute to a very high risk of social exclusion among young Moroccans, especially girls from lower socio-economic groups, poorer regions, and rural areas. The youth unemployment rate among 15-24 years olds stood at 21% in 2015⁴⁴. However, there is light in the tunnel as the Ministry of Education's Strategic Vision 2015-2030 aims to reduce equity gaps in access, improve the quality of learning and address school to work transition⁴⁵.

Table 2: Average level of student achievement per subject (PNFA 2016)

Subject	Original curriculum	Social Sciences & Humanities curriculum	Sciences curriculum	Technical Curriculum
Physics and Chemistry	-	-	39%	48%
Life Sciences	50%	51%	50%	-
Mathematics	38%	38%	33%	42%
History and Geography	42%	42%	48%	50%
French	19%	23%	32%	42%
Arabic	38%	39%	46%	51%

Source: Kingdom of Morocco: Governing Towards Efficiency, Equity, Education and Endurance A Systematic Country Diagnosis.

3.2. Skills-Based Training

3.2.1. Morocco is suffering from a dearth of skilled personnel, and the gap is more acute among skilled than unskilled workers⁴⁶. As part of the general revamping of the education sector in Morocco, the GoM adopted the National Strategy for Vocational Training (TVET) 2021 in 2015⁴⁷. The strategy aims to attract up to 10 million trainees by 2021 and increase employability rate to 75%⁴⁸. The overall goal of the strategy is to broaden access to training. Moreover, this will be achieved through five strategic objectives namely, a) ensuring access to vocational education for all, b) fostering closer ties with the business community, c) bringing training in line with the needs of the national economy, d) building stronger collaboration with mainstream education, and e) enhancing governance⁴⁹.

3.2.2 Both public and private institutions offer technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Morocco⁵⁰. The Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENEP) offers TVET to youth aged 15-24 years, and at the post-basic and tertiary levels, the majority of students are enrolled (about 90%) in the Office of Vocational Train-

41 UNESCO (ND), Morocco Country Data, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/ma?theme=education-and-literacy>

42 World Bank, 2018 op.cit:86

43 Ibid:86

44 UNICEF, op.cit:4

45 Ibid:4

46 World Bank, 2018 op. cit :

47 Oxford Business Group (2016), Morocco Focuses on Broadening Access to Education <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/wider-reach-sector-strategy-focuses-broadening-access-expanding-role-private-sector-and-vocational>

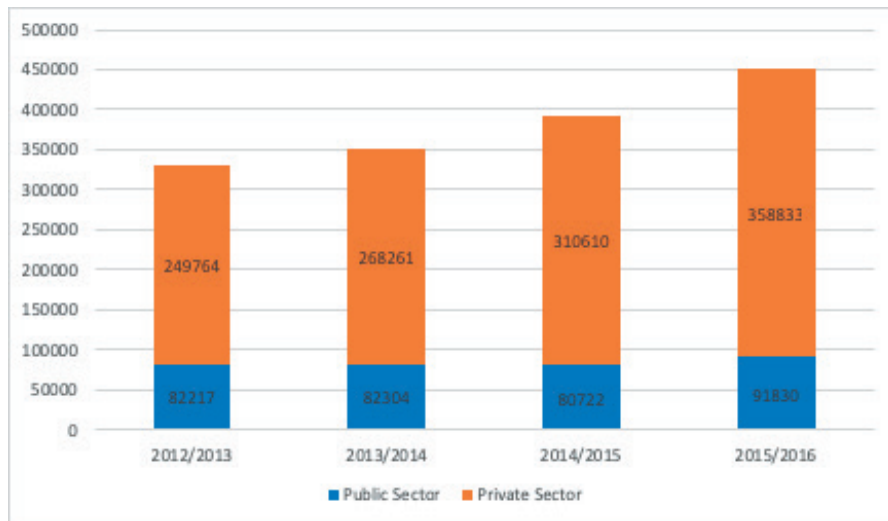
48 Ibid

49 Ibid

50 UNICEF/ILO (2016), Consultation on Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Middle East and North Africa, http://www.oosci-mena.org/uploads/1/wysiwyg/reports/TVET_Consultation_Meeting_Report_Sept2016.pdf, P. 26

ing and Labor Promotion (OFPPT) program⁵¹. OFPPT is a public organization that offers both TVET and short-term vocational training for young people⁵². There has been an increase in the demand for TVET in the post-basic education courses that leads to certificate equivalent of upper secondary and tertiary education levels⁵³ (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Trend in the Enrollment of Students in Technical and Vocational Education and Training



Source: Consultation on TVET in the Middle East and North Africa

3.2.3. To achieve these objectives, the GoM adopted various programs to boost participation in the TVET sub-sector. In 2015, OFPPT TVET graduates were allowed to pursue further training in higher education business and engineering schools. Admitted students will study for a professional bachelor's degree⁵⁴. In 2016, the MENEP started allowing children and teenagers with limited or no schooling to access vocational courses (see Table 2 for details). Furthermore, course options were broadened to include fashion and aeronautics to attract more students. The principle behind the revamped TVET is "the general trend consists in professionalizing training and gearing it towards imminent employability"⁵⁵.

3.2.4. Morocco operates non-formal TVET, and the mode of participation includes residential, alternating and learning programs⁵⁶. The non-formal programs use alternative training methods such as apprenticeship training schemes, evening classes, and distance learning⁵⁷. Most of these programs are at their infancy and/or gradually expanding⁵⁸. The OFPPT organizes evening classes that leads to TVET qualifications. Both public and private providers organize residential training and are offered in educational institutions providing short-term courses⁵⁹. The alternating programs are provided by businesses (50%) and Vocational Training Centers (50%)⁶⁰. Finally, the apprenticeship training comprises on-the-job-training (80%) and education in Learning Training Centers (20%)⁶¹.

3.3 Inclusive Education

3.3.1 The 2014 census listed 1, 703, 424 persons with disability or 5.1% of the population⁶². It was noted that there

51 Ibid:26

52 Ibid:26

53 Ibid:26

54 Oxford Business Group, op.cit

55 Ibid

56 UNESCO (2015), World TVET Database: Morocco, https://unevoc.unesco.org/wtdb/worldtvtdatabase_mar_en.pdf, P.10

57

58 Ibid:10

59 Ibid:10

60 Ibid:10

61 Ibid:10

62 Rohwerder (2018), Disability in North Africa, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b2378d340f0b634cb3dd823/Disability_in_North_Africa.pdf, P.15

was no significant gender difference. However, the prevalence rate was 5.5% and 4.8% in rural and urban areas respectively⁶³. It is estimated that there are approximately 300,000 young people with various degrees of deafness⁶⁴. Morocco has been a state party to UNESCO's Convention against Discrimination in Education (CADE) since 1968⁶⁵ and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability (UNCRPD) in 2009⁶⁶. Morocco adopted Framework Law 97.13 on the rights of persons with disabilities in 2016⁶⁷. The law aimed at harmonizing legislation with the (UNCRPD) as it prohibits all forms of discrimination against persons with any form of disability. However, Human Rights Watch notes that the law is weak in terms of guaranteeing access to inclusive education for children with disabilities, and in affirming the right of legal capacity⁶⁸.

3.3.2. The Ministry of Solidarity, Women Family and Social Development has the responsibility for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health has a working agenda on health and disability, the Ministry of Finance has established a social cohesion fund; the Ministry of Education (MoE) has issued ministerial circulars and memoranda to facilitate the right to education of person with disabilities⁶⁹. The Office for People with Disabilities is the national coordinating committee for policies created for people with disabilities⁷⁰.

3.3.3 The MoE guarantees access to education for children with specific needs such as children with disabilities, child offenders, homeless children, and child laborers⁷¹. UNICEF is one of the leading partners in inclusive education has introduced many initiatives to create awareness of the issue. For instance, inclusive education for children with disabilities was upheld through the participation and engagement of multiple stakeholders, development partners and CSOs, led by the MoE⁷². This resulted in greater awareness of the issue and enhanced policy measures to respond to the educational needs of children with disabilities⁷³. Furthermore, UNICEF's supported inclusive education model for primary education, which was officially adopted by the MoE in 2017⁷⁴. Also, UNICEF supported capacity development at local level and extended inclusive education implementation to 60 schools in 2017, benefiting 19,000 children⁷⁵.

3.3.4 UNHCR with its implementing partner Fondation Orient-Occident (FOO), assisted 343 children and adolescents to access primary or secondary school in September 2016. In August 2016, FOO organized two summer schools in collaboration with civil society organizations working in the education sector. More than 20 Syrians, 5 Yemenis and 25 refugees of Sub-Saharan origin participated in the schools. Also, in September, FOO held two mobilization meetings with parents of refugee children. In attendance were 48 Arab-speaking and 24 French-speaking. FOO provided information on UNHCR education program in Morocco, including administrative to enrol in schools and the conditions for financial aid. Parents discussed the challenges they face in integrating their children into Morocco's public schools⁷⁶.

4. Economic Empowerment

4.1 Employment and Unemployment

4.1.1. The youth segment of Morocco's labor market is characterized by both high informality and unemployment⁷⁷. The transition to work for youth aged 15-24 make-up 17.5% of Morocco's total population and 26.4% of the working-age population of 15 to 64 years⁷⁸. The labor force participation rate for youth aged 15-24 declined from 45.8%

63 Ibid:15

64 Ibid:15

65 UNESCO (2015), The Rights of Education for Persons with Disabilities, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232592e.pdf>, P.80

66 Ibid:15

67 Ibid:15

68 Human Rights Watch (2017), HRW Submission to the CRPD on Morocco, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/27/hrw-submission-crpd-morocco>

69 Rohwerder, op.cit: 16

70 Ibid:16

71 UNESCO op.cit:80

72 UNICEF (2017), UNICEF Annual Report 2017:Morocco, https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Morocco_2017_COAR.pdf, P.19

73 Ibid:19

74 Ibid:19

75 Ibid:1

76 UNHCR (2016), Morocco Operational Update, 1 July to 1 September 2016, <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/58402c4a4.pdf>

77 European Union (2018), Morocco Country Strategy 2017-2020 -2018 Updates, https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/m/30D-C5A4302109750C1258220003B0B35_CSP%202017-2020%20Morocco_Updates%202018.pdf, P.3

78 World Bank, 2018 op.cit: xvi

in 2000 to 32.2% in 2014, which was due partly to the increase in schooling: enrollment rate increased from 27.3% to 46.4% over the same period⁷⁹. Also, the increase in schooling contributed to lowering the share of not in education, employment or training (NEET) from 35.7% to 27.8%⁸⁰. NEET, however, is higher among women and older youth aged 18-24 years. Furthermore, 70% of male NEET are unemployed, while 93% of female NEET are inactive⁸¹. Slow job creation and entry barriers generate high unemployment among the young and educated.

4.1.2 Morocco's working population increases by 300,000 a year, while the job creation rate of 129,000 per year has been insufficient to absorb the inflow of working population⁸². As a result, youth unemployment rate is twice that of the total population⁸³. The rate has worsened among urban youth since the financial crisis growing from 31.3% in 2010 to 41% in 2016⁸⁴. The most affected are those with tertiary education, they are five times more likely to be unemployed than those without an education⁸⁵. Furthermore, unemployment tends to be more long-term, more than a year for about 70% of youth⁸⁶. Due to the scarcity of jobs, the share of the unemployed is higher among those with tertiary education. In fact, two-thirds of the unemployed and 38.6% of the highly educated are willing to work for wages lower than the minimum wage⁸⁷.

4.1.3 Given the high youth unemployment rate in the country, the GoM launched the 10-year National Employment Strategy in (2015-2025). The policy seeks to promote the social inclusion of women and young people's integration by creating permanent jobs that will support improvement in productivity and the unit cost of labor⁸⁸. The strategy is based on four pillars:

- Guiding the macroeconomic and sectoral policies towards the creation of new jobs (38,000 jobs per unit of GDP or 200,000 jobs on average annually);
- strengthening human capital through intensive training, improved levels of qualification and reform of the social protection system;
- strengthening current employment programs; and
- Improving the governance and functions of the labour market⁸⁹.

4.1.4 To this end, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC), the GoM's program implementing agency for employment issues, launched three initiatives to operationalize the strategy. 1) Idmaj provides wage subsidies to unemployed; 2) Tehil delivers youth training; and 3) Moukawalati focuses on entrepreneurship promotion through training and financial assistance⁹⁰. Similarly, line ministries have adopted three strategies on 1) youth integration- to improve the training system and bringing youth into the labor market through internship or skill matching, b) employment- to increase jobs and productivity, and c) microenterprise promotion- to support microenterprise financing. On the demand side, such as Morocco's Global Jobs and Morocco Green Plan aim to promote job creation through macroeconomics and sectoral policies (e.g. compensation reform, flexible exchange rate policy, pro-growth sector strategies)⁹¹.

4.2 Ecosystem and Entrepreneurship Development

4.2.1 Morocco's burgeoning ecosystem/incubator system was strengthened after the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Marrakech in November 2014. Since then, both national and international entities have either expanded or setup new businesses in Morocco. As noted by MEPI, the US-Middle-East Partnership Initiative, "Morocco's start-

79 World Bank, (2018b), Labor Market in Morocco: Challenges and Opportunities, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/477441523251051211/pdf/125041-WP-ENGLISH-PUBLIC-Summary-labor-market-note.pdf>, P.2

80 Ibid:2

81 Ibid:2

82 Ibid:2

83 Ibid:2

84 Ibid:2

85 Ibid:

86 Ibid:2

87 Ibid:2

88 SAHAWA.eu (2017), National Youth Policies: The Case of Morocco, <https://www.google.sn/search?q=youth+policy+in+morocco&oq=youth+policy+in+morocco&aqs=chrome..69i57.13379j0j7&sourceid=P.10>

89 Ibid:11

90 World Bank, 2018b op.cit:4

91 Ibid: 4

up ecosystem has the potential to reinvigorate the small business environment and reduce the 40% youth unemployment rate⁹². To this end, the GoM in September 2015, introduced a new legal framework with the establishment of the self-entrepreneurship status⁹³. In addition to streamlining procedures for starting up a business, the status provides tax and social benefits⁹⁴. Thus far, about 56,700 individuals have obtained the status, of whom persons aged between 25-34 years old where men accounting for 40% and women accounting for 34%⁹⁵. Furthermore, GoM has launched two initiatives to provide skills and financial support to young entrepreneurs:

- Maroc PME, the government agency responsible for the development of SMEs and startups, which aims to support startups, and their ecosystem with subsidies and access to skill; and
- Caisse Centrale de Garantie (CCG), is a government body that facilitates access to financing for young entrepreneurs and aims to provide seed and early-stage investments in partnership with the World Bank⁹⁶.

4.2.2 To galvanize activities in the entrepreneurship sector, these local and foreign organizations have set up shops in Morocco:

- CEED Morocco was launched in 2013 as the first CEED in Africa. CEED Morocco supports entrepreneurs by providing know-how and networks to accelerate the growth of their businesses, to develop new markets and gain access to finance. In 2015 CEED Morocco launched a 'sole proprietor' project with the aim of encouraging self-employment and promoting the 'sole proprietor' as an entity to run an independent professional activity. CEED worked with more than 400 young people between the ages of 18 and 25 years across Morocco and assisted them to both create and grow their companies. Women make up 30% of the young entrepreneurs⁹⁷.
- Morocco Climate Innovation Center was established in 2014 by Masen, the Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Energy. It is the first clean-tech organization in the region. Its mission is to support green-clean-technology entrepreneurs from Morocco and the Middle-East in the design, development, and launch of their projects and start-ups.
- Reseau Entreprendre, a French-based NGO provides seed capital through loans and mentorship;
- Eirene4Impact Lab focuses on impact entrepreneurship;
- MCISE Darc Inc and Le Comptoir de L'innovation's Espace Bidaya focuses on social entrepreneurship and Cluster Solaire on green technology;
- NUMA, the French accelerator, and innovator in partnership with Eirene4Impact opened shop in January 2016, making it the first generalist accelerator in Morocco;
- Startup Your Life provides early, and seed startups which grow and turn into a high potential business
- Reseau Entreprendre Maroc (REM) and Eirene4Impact provide seed funding of up to \$150,000 and \$10,000 respectively.

5. Youth Engagement and Civic Participation

5.1 Moroccan youth were instrumental in the social and political reforms that were instituted in the country. Due to their prominence in the demonstrations that engulfed the nation on 20th February 2011, it was known as the '20 February Youth Movement'. The activists called for political reforms, more jobs, and an end to widespread corruption⁹⁸. In response, King Mohammed VI announced a major political reform on 9th March 2011. A transfer of powers from the monarchy to the parliament and judiciary, and the drafting of a new constitution and parliamentary elections⁹⁹. Also, a 'consultative commission' was approved. It must be noted that the revision of the constitution was

92 MEPI (ND), Morocco's Entrepreneurship Startups Blossoms, <https://mepi.state.gov/moroccoecosystem/>

93 World Bank 2018a, op.cit:32

94 Ibid:32

95 Ibid:32

96 Wamda (2015), Four Reasons Why Morocco's Startup Ecosystem is at a Tipping Point, <https://www.wamda.com/2015/11/four-reasons-why-moroccos-startup-ecosystem-at-a-tipping-point>

97 CEED (2015) Supporting Young Entrepreneurs Across Morocco, <http://ceed-global.org/blog/2018/02/12/supporting-young-entrepreneurs-across-morocco/>

98 Salto, op.cit:14

99 Ibid:14

approved. For the first time in Moroccan history, the consultations included civil society organizations (CSOs)¹⁰⁰, which submitted over 200 memoranda¹⁰¹.

5. 2. Youth-led organizations mobilized citizens to participate in the constitution referendum and vote in the pre-matured November 25th, 2011 legislative elections¹⁰². They organized several forums and public dialogues across Morocco to discuss citizens' needs and priorities and sensitized them on the constitutional reforms and the importance of their participation in the process¹⁰³. Due to their activism in the political reform process, the Ministry of Youth and Sports invited CSOs and youth-led organizations to participate in preparatory activities for the National Integrated Youth Strategy. They participated in national conferences, regional forums, committee meetings, and questionnaire surveys¹⁰⁴. They also took part in the drafting of the Strategy through the National Dialogue and gave inputs on the priority areas and main challenges in the sector¹⁰⁵. It is estimated that about 27,000 young people participated in the final event for the Strategy in September 2012¹⁰⁶.

5.3. Although the principles of individual liberties are enshrined in Morocco's first constitution, the country's political participation and civic engagement arenas were highly controlled and restricted during the three decades rule of King Hassan's 11 rule¹⁰⁷. After his ascendance to the throne in 1999, Mohammed VI started opening the country's democratic space. The King called on Moroccans, especially the young, to undertake their civic duties by voting¹⁰⁸. To ensure their participation, the pool of voters and candidates were expanded, and the voting age was lowered to 18 years from 21 years¹⁰⁹.

5.4. The youth sector's place in Morocco's socio-political landscape changed with February 20th, 2011 protest movement. Youth activists mobilized their fellow citizens online to demand significant political changes. Demonstrations took place across 53 cities in Morocco over a period of time¹¹⁰. Unlike their North African neighbors, the Moroccans rallying call was on "reform" rather than "overthrow" of the regime and they did not question the monarchy¹¹¹. They demanded a democratic constitution, the independence of the judiciary, and media, as well as the separation of wealth and politics and to abandon the politics of the rentier economy and the monopolization of resources¹¹². Their demands were met in the new constitution adopted in 2011: Article 33 stipulates the establishment of the Consultative Council of Youth and Community Work, Article 12 introduced the principle of consultation with CSOs in designing, implementing and evaluating public policies, Articles 13 to 15 make provisions for citizens to influence legislation by drafting legislation or presentation of petitions¹¹³. Furthermore, Organic Law No. 27-11 was adopted by the House of Representatives and reserved 30 seats for young people under 40. Article 5 also stipulates 18 years as the legal age for establishing a political party, which is also the age for presenting a candidate for the election and voting¹¹⁴. Law 36.04 on political parties (2006) states that political parties need to specify in their bylaws the percentage of youth and women in their organizational structures¹¹⁵.

5. 5 An enabling environment for associational life in Morocco started in 2002 with the Decree on the Right to establish Associations and the constitutional reform in 2011. In addition to youth-led NGOs, Moroccan youth have other associational engagements such as participating in university and school clubs and associations de quartier (neighborhood and commune) and by organizing festival and sports¹¹⁶. Regarding civic education, USAID supported initiatives to create local councils that are involved in political and social activism¹¹⁷.

100 Ibid:14

101 Ibid:14

102 Rhanem, op.cit:2

103 Ibid:2

104 Salto, op.cit:12

105 Ibid:13

106 Ibid:13

107 Zerhouni, S. and Akesbi, Z. (2017) Youth Activism in Morocco: Exclusion, Agency and the Search for Inclusion, http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y_15.pdf, P.6

108 Ibid:6

109 Ibid:

110 Ibid:12

111 Ibid:12

112 Ibid:12

113 Ibid:4

114 Rhanem, op.cit:10

115 Ibid:10

116 Zerhouni, S. and Akesbi, Z., op.cit:9

117 Ibid

6. Development Partners in the Youth Sector

- Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID);
- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- The World Bank,
- UNICEF
- Plan International
- British Council
- UNIDO/JICA
- USAID
- Millennium Challenge Corporation
- Agence Française de développement (AFD)
- European Union
- Canadian International Development
- ILO
- British Council

7. Recommendations

- i. The IsDB should work with the National Office of Statistics to provide sex and age disaggregated data across all sectors;
- ii. The IsDB should work in coordination with other development partners to assist the GoM in its quest to solve the unemployment rate in the country;
- iii. The IsDB should support the MoE to find solutions to the country's high dropout rate in the education sector;
- iv. The IsDB should work with the GoM to deepen youth civic engagement to ensure that their participation is marginalized;
- v. IsDB should assist the GoM to set up a credit guarantee scheme that youth use to development as fund their businesses;
- vi. The IsDB should work closely with regional office to identify opportunities to access financing mechanisms for youth entrepreneurs; and

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