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LEARNING AND EVALUATION

# USAID/MOROCCO

# CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT

October 2020

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USAID/Morocco

## CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT

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USAID's YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation (YP2LE) generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) and cross-sectoral approaches in international youth development. We are leading research, evaluations, and events designed to build the evidence base and inform the global community about transitioning young people successfully into productive, healthy adults. PYD is defined by USAID as:

Positive Youth Development (PYD) engages youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. PYD approaches build skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems.

Visit us at [YouthPower.org](http://YouthPower.org) to learn more and follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.



For public inquiries and additional information, please email [comms@youthpower.org](mailto:comms@youthpower.org) or send mail to Making Cents International, Attn: YouthPower Learning, 1350 Connecticut Ave N.W., Suite 410, Washington, D.C. 20036.

## Acknowledgments

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## Executive Summary

USAID/Morocco requested that USAID's YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation (YP2LE) project<sup>1</sup> conduct a Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment (CSYA) to understand the status and aspirations<sup>2</sup> of Moroccan youth aged 15-29<sup>3</sup> and how to best support youth on their journey to self-reliance. This assessment provides in-depth findings from the research conducted from August to September 2020. The report analyzes results and actionable recommendations relevant to the Development Objectives (DOs) of USAID/Morocco. We based the recommendations on an integrated strategy to prioritize Positive Youth Development (PYD) as the next programming period's central tenet as articulated in the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), 2013–2020.

Youth are the foundation of a prosperous future for Morocco. However, as demonstrated by the analysis, they confront growing risks from a combination of education, economic and workforce development, civic engagement and participatory governance, and community resilience challenges. This reality emerges clearly from the results of the desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and the online youth survey. The findings present a remarkably consistent profile of youth needs, priorities, and challenges. Results from the data collected during this assessment are summarized below.

### Findings

#### Education

- Despite Morocco's high levels of access to education, more than half of the country's students leave the education system early or without proficiency in the skills required for the labor market.
- While Morocco's primary school gross enrollment rate (GER) is 116 percent<sup>4</sup> and its primary completion rate is near 99 percent, only 66 percent of students who enroll in lower secondary education complete the three-year cycle.
- Only 34 percent of upper secondary entrants graduate, and only 11 percent take the baccalaureate exam.
- An estimated 431,876 youth dropped out of school in 2018, of which nearly three-quarters were girls.
- Youth with disabilities face the most significant challenges in accessing education as schools often lack foundational requirements to support their attendance and cultural and social norms make it difficult for these youth to succeed.
- Vocational schools lack enough teachers, materials, equipment, and infrastructure to support effective student learning. Curricula are often misaligned with private-sector needs, and vocational skills are more difficult to access outside of urban areas.
- Most youth in Morocco lack French and English mastery, which creates barriers, especially at the tertiary education level.

#### Economic and Workforce Development<sup>5</sup>

- Youth employment is precarious and fragile. About 73.3 percent of active 15–29 year-olds have no medical coverage, and 80 percent work without a contract.

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<sup>1</sup> USAID's YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation Project is a global initiative based in Washington, D.C., that generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) in international development. For more information, see <http://www.youthpower.org/youthpower-learning>.

<sup>2</sup> The Morocco Ministry of Youth and Sports defines youth in Morocco as ages fifteen to twenty-nine.

<sup>4</sup> Gross enrollment rates include students of all ages in that grade, including repeaters. As a result, the total enrollment can exceed the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education—leading to ratios greater than 100 percent (<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/114955-how-can-gross-school-enrollment-ratios-be-over-100>).

<sup>5</sup> Abdelhak Kamal, "National Youth Policies: The Case of Morocco," *SAHWA Policy Paper*, no. 14 (2016).

- Over 50 percent of working youth are employed in commerce, other market services, and administration and nonmarket services, principally in urban areas.
- Almost 82 percent of active youth earn salaries under 3,000 Moroccan dirham (MAD) per month (under US\$275),<sup>6</sup> while 93 percent of young women earn less. About 63 percent of employed youth used personal and family relations to secure their job.
- Youth unemployment rates rose from 24.9 percent in 2019 to nearly 27.0 percent in the first quarter of 2020. Women face higher unemployment rates (35 percent), and women, aged 15-35, represent nearly 83 percent of unemployed women.
- The economy is shrinking, with GDP growth rates declining to 2.3 percent in the past two years. This is now exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 on the economy. There is insufficient formal employment, particularly in areas of interest to youth like business, tourism, and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Weak support networks and systems, a complex business start-up process, and inadequate access to credit hinder the promotion of an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship. Despite this, starting their own businesses was the top priority for youth who participated in this assessment.

### Civic Engagement and Participatory Governance

- Thirty-one percent of surveyed youth from urban areas reported that CBOs are available in their community compared to 6 percent of youth from rural areas.
- CSOs are also more widespread in urban areas, with close to 50 percent of urban youth reporting that these programs are available in their community compared to 9 percent of youth from rural areas.<sup>7</sup>
- Youth-led organizations are similarly more common in urban areas, with 43 percent of urban youth reporting that these programs are available in their community compared to only 11 percent of youth from rural areas.
- Lack of engaging political platforms and lack of resources were consistently cited as the top two barriers to civic engagement across all age segments. Female survey respondents cited the lack of resources (e.g., financial, transportation) as the main barrier to civic engagement, followed by a lack of engaging social media platforms and a lack of awareness about the importance of engagement for local development. For men, the main barrier was a lack of interest in civic engagement followed by a lack of engaging social media platforms with ways to become civically active. A lack of resources was cited as the third most important barrier.
- Nearly 70 percent of surveyed youth believed their needs and opinions are not taken into consideration by government programs and services targeting youth. This finding was supported by KIs with leaders of civil society organizations (CSOs) and CBOs, who noted that the lack of opportunities for youth to engage in civic activities along with cultural challenges around being taken seriously makes youth feel disenfranchised.

### Community Resilience

- There is insufficient capacity among local stakeholders to design, implement, and evaluate effective community resilience programs.
- There are insufficient gendered and youth-led approaches to community resilience in Morocco, and there is a need for more evidence-based models that could be used as templates and adapted locally.

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<sup>6</sup> Decree no. 2-19-424 of June 26, 2019, provided in the official bulletin no. 6790 of June 27, 2019, that the legal minimum wage, starting July 2019, would be approximately MAD 2,698.83 per month in the sectors of industry, commerce, and liberal professions and MAD 1,903.72 per month in the agricultural sector (<https://www.cnss.ma/fr/content/le-salaire-minimum-de-b%C3%A9n%C3%A9fice-des-allocations-familiales-augmente>).

- The Government of Morocco (GoM) uses a top-down approach to youth engagement and community resilience, more often drawing on a security and law enforcement approach than more collaborative models.
- There are inadequate community-led initiatives to address resilience and few CSOs/CBOs to take the lead in community resilience activities and to act as positive influences on youth, particularly at-risk youth.
- Youth respondents ages 18-35 who responded to an online survey as part of this youth assessment reported that community leaders (e.g., religious leaders, CBO leaders) and their peers offered the most support.

## Recommendations

USAID/Morocco has an opportunity to begin addressing many of these youth challenges through both short-term wins and long-term investments. The following section summarizes recommendations that can help USAID/Morocco address the assessment findings.

### Short-term wins

- Educational reform takes time, and many changes require long-term investments. However, USAID can achieve some short-term momentum by:
  - a. Promoting quality education for youth and building off existing programs such as the HEP-M and RFS-NPS programs. These programs are already addressing the need for improved foundational skills and an updated curriculum and preservice teacher training program.
  - b. Scaling up existing programs that already link schools, higher education institutions (HEIs), and technical and vocational education and training (TVETs) to the job market by working with the private sector to create internships, apprenticeships, and work study programs. The World Bank is currently financing a new program called Supporting the Economic Inclusion of Youth, which focuses on innovative approaches to training lower-skilled youth. USAID can draw on lessons learned from this program.
  - c. Scaling up in-school communications programs (e.g., video presentations, job fairs that feature successful TVET graduates—especially youth with disabilities and women—and career days at TVETs) by adapting the university-level model developed with USAID support so that professionals can present possible career paths and discuss networking and follow-up strategies. USAID public-private partnerships (PPPs) with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), EON Reality, FESTO Didactic, the H2O Maghreb project, the Office de la Formation Professionnelle et de Promotion du Travail (OFPPT), and the Ministry of Education (MOE) provide successful models for such activities.
- Promote youth entrepreneurship by supporting business development services to increase the chances for youth business start-up survival and the growth of youth-led micro-, small-, and medium-size (MSM) businesses. The Career Center (VCC/virtual career center), Small Enterprise Assistance Fund, and the planned GiveDirectly interventions offer models for these activities.
- Focus on entrepreneurial inclusiveness by setting aside a portion of funds to support business start-ups and expansions led by young women and youth with disabilities as well as providing the additional support described in the above bullet. Consider the SEAF approach, which has already supported creation of several start-ups, and GiveDirectly, which will provide funding for marginalized micro-entrepreneurs.
- Fund local (regional, provincial, and communal levels) labor market surveys (building on those already undertaken by the Career Center and USAID PPPs through UNIDO) that are sector-, subsector-, and firm-specific, pointing to value chain gaps, niche opportunities, and opportunities for subcontracting and joint ventures between small and larger firms.

- Include a mechanism in projects to provide grants to youth-led organizations that can strengthen their capacity to grow. This can have a direct positive impact, motivating youth to participate in youth groups. However, these short-term investments need to continue into the long term to be effective.
- Harness the influence and untapped potential of social media activists and influencers to increase awareness of opportunities, mobilization, outreach, advocacy, and learning.
- Engage youth and local communities in cocreation seminars or workshops where the outcomes focus on concrete interventions that can be incorporated into USAID programming.

### Long-Term Investments

- Continue to strengthen preservice and in-service teacher-training programs (as being done via the HEP-M project) for primary and secondary school teachers with emphasis on effective pedagogy and support to the MOE to scale up training at the national level. Teachers can apply their new knowledge with pedagogical support from inspectors and supervisors.
- Design and/or scale up flexible out-of-school accelerated learning programs for youth, especially for NEETs and particularly in rural areas, that promote literacy and numeracy and offer certificates of achievement recognized by the MOE that are linked to income-generating activities (e.g., as done by FORSATY<sup>8</sup>) that incentivize youth participation. In some cases, youth could move into or back into TVET programs or continue directly with their livelihood activities.
- Promote youth entrepreneurship by supporting business development services to increase the chances for youth business start-up survival and the growth of youth-led micro-, small- and medium-size (MSM) businesses. These services can include providing tools that explain the business start-up process, facilitating the application process for youth, improving access to grants to offset barriers related to accessing credit, and organizing innovation seminars that help youth develop strategic business ideas. Robust mentorship and “accompaniment” for skills capacity-building is also vital. The Career Center, Small Enterprise Assistance Fund, and the planned GiveDirectly interventions offer models for these activities.
- Focus on entrepreneurial inclusiveness by setting aside a portion of funds to support business start-ups and expansions led by young women and youth with disabilities as well as providing the additional support described in the above bullet. Consider the SEAF approach, which has already supported creation of several start-ups, and GiveDirectly, which will provide funding for marginalized micro-entrepreneurs.
- Provide technical assistance to national, regional, and local government on proven models of intervention in youth job creation, inclusive growth, youth entrepreneurship, and all aspects of the program cycle linked to PYD.
- Help uncover underexploited or unexploited and youth-friendly income-generating and entrepreneurship activities via labor market and value chain assessments and community youth mapping (such as the one completed by FORSATY) that can help identify gaps viewed as opportunities and then help youth to understand the promise of these opportunities and generate excitement about new prospects.
- Strengthen existing programs (e.g., Civil Society Strengthening Program (CSSP), Local Works, FORSATY, and planned regional activities) and, when indicated, build new pathways for youth individually and via youth-led organizations to participate more actively in their societies through subnational institutions and mechanisms at the regional, provincial, and community levels (e.g., by training local officials on principles of PYD and how to use local mechanisms to enhance inclusion).

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<sup>8</sup> FORSATY (Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today’s Youth) helps strengthen bonds between youth and their communities in northern Morocco.

- Provide technical support and training to youth-led and youth-serving CSOs to promote community-led initiatives to proactively engage government institutions on specific issues of direct concern to those communities (e.g., enhanced sports facilities, trash collection, support for community day care, outdoor market hygiene).
- Continue to strengthen the capacity of entities that engage youth (CBOs, CSOs, youth-led groups), especially those that have been marginalized, so they become active participants in local governance activities in ways that facilitate scaling up of local initiatives (e.g., securing youth inclusion on local committees, holding youth workshops to train youth on organizing, advocacy and communication). CSSP and Local Works can provide guidance here.
- Boost the participation in civil society of female youth (especially those in rural areas and with disabilities) to help address acute gender disparities by (1) including benchmarks and quotas for female youth participation in relevant USAID activities, (2) incentivizing local and regional governments to increase youth participation in governance, and (3) supporting communication advocacy efforts by youth and women's groups.
- Continue and enhance donor coordination initiatives (such as those ongoing with the UK, GIZ, World Bank, the Netherlands, and others) that go beyond information-sharing and prioritize closer alignment of complementary projects while documenting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned using a learning agenda to build synergies and improve effectiveness of activities funded by USAID and others.
- Develop a community of practice amongst YSOs so they can share lessons learned and increase coordination on ways to build youth resiliency by strengthening assets and agency and promoting youth participation in civil society.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFD	Agence française de Développement
ANAPEC	National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills Development (Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences)
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CRI	Regional Investment Center (Centre Régional d'Investissement)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSSP	Civil Society Strengthening Program
CSYA	Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment
DO	Development Objective
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FISSIP	Financing Innovative Start-ups and SME Project
FORSATY	Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today's Youth
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GoM	Government of Morocco
HCP	Haut Commissariat au Plan
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEP-M	Higher Education Program – Morocco
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INDH	Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain
IP	Implementing Partner
ISED - BMK	Inclusive Socioeconomic Development -
J2SR	Journey to Self-Reliance
KII	Key Informant Interview
LYC	Local Youth Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAD	Moroccan Dirham
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSME	Morocco Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

MTIP	Ministry of Labor and Professional Insertion (Ministère du Travail et de l'Insertion Professionnelle)
NEET	Not in Employment, Education, or Training
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OFPPPT	Office de la Formation Professionnelle et de Promotion du Travail
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PPP	Public–Private Partnership
PYD	Positive Youth Development
RFS-NPR	Reading for Success-National Program for Reading
SEIY	Supporting the Economic Inclusion of Youth
SEFP/DRFP	Secretariat of Vocational Training
TTAH	Tanger-Tétouan Al-Hoceima
SMPP	Strengthening Moroccan Municipalities Program
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VE	Violent Extremism
YCB	Youth Consultative Body
YLO	Youth-Led Organization
YSO	Youth-Serving Organization

# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. Background

USAID's overarching development goal is to build self-reliance by supporting activities that strengthen civic and government capacities, thereby helping countries to accelerate their 'Journey to Self-Reliance' (J2SR). The J2SR framework does not explicitly refer to positive youth development (PYD) as a factor used when calculating the commitment and capacity scores of countries partnering with USAID. However, USAID/Morocco, through its Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), engages Moroccan youth in ways that advance the J2SR via efforts to enhance youth participation in local and national governance. The CDCS also promotes gender equity, seeks to strengthen youth voice in civil society, ensures inclusion of marginalized youth, spurs youth entrepreneurship, supports youth workforce development and employability, and strengthens resilience to internal and external shocks. These approaches are consistent with USAID's Youth Policy (2012) to empower youth so they can build assets and agency and contribute to and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities and nations.

## B. Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this youth assessment is to provide USAID/Morocco with a recent update on the current context for youth and provide input into future USAID/Morocco strategies and programs within the CDCS framework, particularly regarding youth contributions to Morocco's development. The key overarching research questions for the CSYA are focused on understanding the conditions, challenges, and priorities of youth and providing insight into the most effective interventions that USAID can adopt to address youth challenges and help them move forward on the J2SR. These questions were developed in partnership with USAID/Morocco:

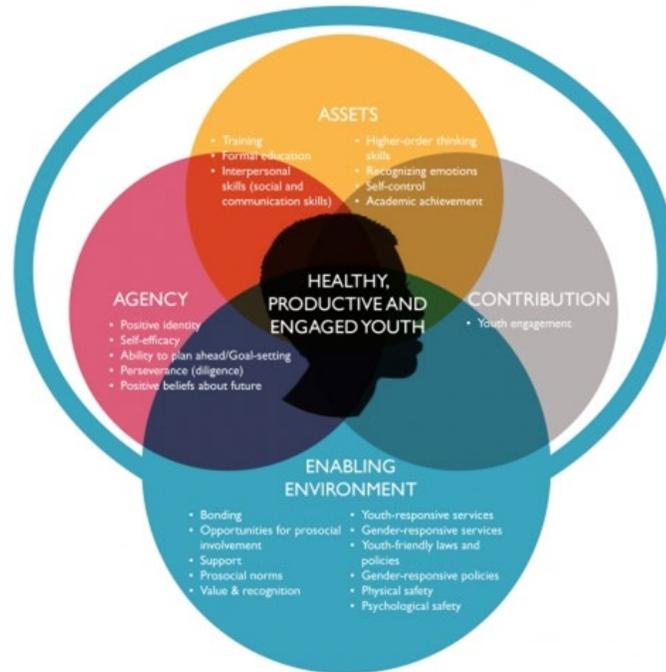
1. What are the conditions of youth 15-34 years old in Morocco?
2. What are the challenges, priorities, and opportunities faced by youth, specifically in the areas of participatory governance, education, economic growth, and community resilience?
3. What are gaps and potential synergies for working with other donors in youth programming?
4. What are the most effective interventions that USAID can adopt or continue to use to address challenges for youth? How can USAID/Morocco better integrate a PYD perspective?

## C. Positive Youth Development (PYD)

The situational analysis is informed by USAID's PYD strategy, and it has driven the analytical framework both in terms of the kinds of questions asked of youth and the search for promising and innovative approaches to address priorities identified by youth during the assessment.

PYD is both a philosophy and an approach to youth development that "engages youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. PYD approaches build skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems." This approach has had a proven positive impact across an array of outcomes and sectors in the United States and other high-income countries. Development partners, governments, practitioners, and policymakers are increasingly applying this approach to provide more holistic support for youth in low- and middle-income countries. The PYD framework offers four domains through which the vision of healthy, productive, and engaged youth can be achieved:

Figure 1: Positive Youth Development



- **Assets.** Youth have the necessary resources, skills, and competencies to achieve desired outcomes.
- **Agency.** Youth perceive and can employ their assets and aspirations to influence their own decisions about their lives and set their own goals as well as to act upon those decisions to achieve desired outcomes.
- **Contribution.** Youth are engaged as a source of change for their own positive development and for that of their communities.
- **Enabling environment.** Youth are surrounded by an environment that develops and supports their assets, agency, and access to services and opportunities and that strengthens their ability to avoid risks and stay safe, secure, and protected and live without fear of violence or retribution.<sup>9</sup>

#### D. Methodology

The team used a mixed-methods approach to the CSYA, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. Methods included a desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and an online youth survey. Assessment activities took place in three regions targeted by USAID: Tangier-Tétouan-Al Hoceima, Marrakesh-Safi, and Béni Mellal-Khénifra. The team focused on youth ages 15-34, in line with the USAID/State Department’s standard F indicator age groupings and Morocco’s Haut Commissariat au Plan (HCP).<sup>10</sup>

**Desk Review:** The assessment team conducted a comprehensive desk review of relevant Morocco youth-related material available between 2015 and 2020. This included academic studies, assessments, surveys, and

<sup>9</sup> An enabling environment encourages and recognizes youth while promoting their social and emotional competence to thrive. The term “environment” includes four key domains: (1) social: relationships with peers and adults; (2) normative: attitudes, norms, and beliefs; (3) structural: laws, policies, programs services, and systems; and (4) physical: safe, supportive spaces.

<sup>10</sup> Due to data collection limitations, interview, focus group, and online survey data were provided by youth 18-34 years of age. We were not able to obtain any primary data for youth between the ages of 10-17.

analyses produced by international and national institutions, including academic and research institutions. In total, the team reviewed 40+ documents.

**Key Informant Interviews:** The assessment team conducted 31 KIIs across different target groups, including:

- Staff from USAID/Morocco, the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, and the U.S. Consul General in Casablanca.
- USAID implementing partners (contractors, grantees, private voluntary organizations, nongovernmental organizations [NGOs]).
- Key stakeholders, such as program beneficiaries (including youth leaders and youth-led organizations), local academic institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), and GoM officials.
- Donor organizations including staff from the Dutch Embassy, Spanish Cooperation, and UNICEF. The team developed the KII protocols based on the assessment objectives and key research questions to ensure a specific focus was placed on actionable recommendations.

**Focus Group Discussions:** The assessment team conducted six FGDs with various key stakeholders that focus on youth issues. These included development partners, representatives of youth-led organizations and consultative bodies, as well as CSOs.

**Online Youth Survey:** The assessment team designed and implemented an online survey targeted at youth to gather their input. The survey was distributed through CSOs and other youth-serving organizations. Approximately 135 youth ages 18-35 completed the survey across the three targeted regions.

**Study Limitations:** Virtual interviews were less conducive to in-depth technical discussions than in-person conversations. Government stakeholders were less available due to COVID-19 priorities, and many stakeholders were unavailable due to the summer holidays and annual leave period. Due to consent limitations, our survey data collection focused on youth 18-35.

## II. THE SITUATION OF YOUTH IN MOROCCO

### A. Demographic Profile

The Kingdom of Morocco is a demographically young country, with a median age of 29 and approximately 27 percent of its population under the age of 15, 18 percent between the ages of 15 and 24, and 42 percent between 25 and 54 years old.<sup>11</sup> Youth ages 15-29 make up approximately 10 percent of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region's youth population and nearly 30 percent of the Moroccan workforce.<sup>12</sup> A recent article published by the HCP found that 29 percent of Moroccan youth were neither in school nor in the workforce<sup>13</sup> in 2017. The lack of educational attainment is a huge contributor to youth unemployment and underemployment in formal-sector jobs. There are significant gaps in school attendance rates in rural versus urban areas, particularly for girls. In 2019, the enrollment rate at the secondary level (14-18 years old) in rural areas was as low as 12.5 percent for girls and 19.0 percent for boys, compared to 57.4 percent for girls in urban areas.<sup>14</sup> Morocco still has a comparatively low rate of students in higher education. In 2018, only 37 percent of the Moroccan youth aged 18 to 22 choose to enroll in universities, and approximately

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<sup>11</sup> "Morocco Population Live (2020)," World Population Review, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/morocco-population>.

<sup>12</sup> Arne Hoel, "The Challenge of Youth Inclusion in Morocco," World Bank, updated May 14, 2012, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/05/14/challenge-of-youth-inclusion-in-morocco>.

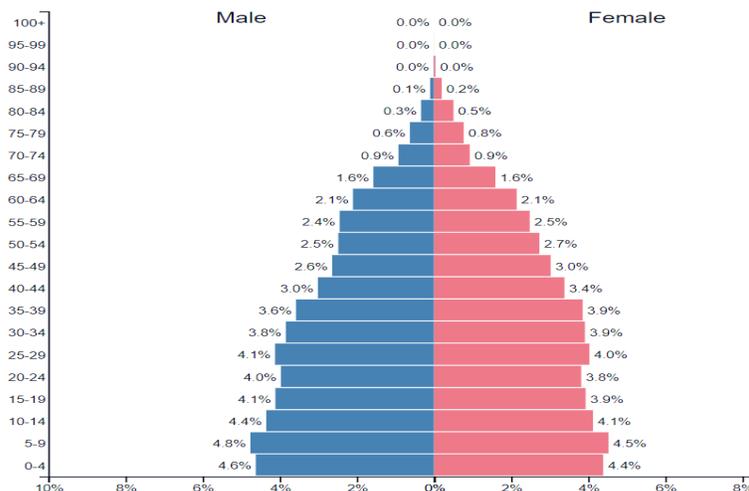
<sup>13</sup> "HCP: 29% des jeunes ne travaillent pas, ne sont pas à l'école et ne suivent aucune formation en 2017," H24, updated March 29, 2018, <https://www.h24info.ma/maroc/hcp-29-jeunes-ne-travaillent-ne-a-lecole-ne-suivent-aucune-formation-2017/>.

<sup>14</sup> Hamza Guessous, "Rural Women in Morocco More Vulnerable to School Dropout, Illiteracy," Morocco World News, updated October 28, 2019, <https://www.morocccoworldnews.com/2019/10/285514/rural-women-morocco-school-dropout-illiteracy/>.

16.5 percent of university students dropped out in their first year. An additional 8.1 percent of the remaining students dropped out by their third year.<sup>15</sup>

Sixty-two percent of the Moroccan population lives in urban areas, and 38 percent lives in rural areas. Poverty declined substantially in Morocco between 2001 and 2014 because economic growth has been pro-poor,<sup>16</sup> yet nearly four million people still live below the national poverty line, and the urban–rural poverty gap remains large. Urban poverty has decreased faster than the national rate.<sup>17</sup> Despite positive outcomes, Morocco is still faced with high subjective poverty (the percentage of households considering themselves poor), especially in rural areas. Nationally, the subjective poverty rate increased from 41.8 percent in 2007 to 45.1 percent in 2014. The largest increase was in rural areas, where subjective poverty increased by 15 percent, reaching 54.3 percent of the population, meaning that more than half of the rural population considered themselves poor.

**Figure A1. Morocco population pyramid<sup>18</sup>**



## B. Youth Marginalization in Morocco

Large proportions of youth in Morocco suffer multifaceted marginalization regardless of age, geography, or status. Social, economic, and political marginalization exacerbate feelings of alienation among youth and risk diminishing their collective sense of belonging to society. The segments of youth most affected by marginalization are the youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET); rural youth; young women; and youth with disabilities.

### Not in education, employment, or training (NEET)

According to the Moroccan Ministry of Youth and Sports (as cited by EuroMed in 2015), 51 percent of Moroccan youth aged 15-29 are categorized as NEET.<sup>19</sup> Dropout rates from secondary education, discontinued higher education journeys, and subsequent unemployment constitute serious hurdles toward

<sup>15</sup> Ahlam Ben Saga, “Half of Moroccan University Students Drop out Before Graduation,” Morocco World News, updated November 7, 2018, <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2018/11/257147/moroccan-university-students-drop-out-graduation/>.

<sup>16</sup> A period that witnessed a series of policies and poverty reduction programs, including GoM’s direct funding programs aimed at supporting poor families.

<sup>17</sup> *Annual Report 2018* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2018), <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/630671538158537244/pdf/The-World-Bank-Annual-Report-2018.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> HCP, 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Mark Snijder, *Youth Work in Morocco and Youth Participation Projects at Local Level* (EuroMed and SALTO-YOUTH, 2015), [https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3140/def\\_p\\_1-40\\_youth\\_work\\_morocco.pdf](https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3140/def_p_1-40_youth_work_morocco.pdf).

inclusive social and economic development in Morocco. In fact, nearly 11.1 percent of adolescents are categorized as “out of school” in Morocco, and these youth are twice as likely to be unemployed as youth that remain in school and achieve higher levels of education.<sup>20</sup> The percentage of inactivity, especially for those between 18-34 years old, is particularly worrying as it impacts youth employability, access to income, contribution to society, and, ultimately, quality of life.

## Youth from mountain and rural areas

Given the seasonal nature of agricultural work and the resulting lack of sustainable income, rural areas are most affected by poverty. Approximately three-quarters of the poor in Morocco live in rural areas.<sup>21</sup> This situation is further exacerbated by underdeveloped agricultural and fishing practices that limit rural populations’ access to higher productivity and potential income. Young females are generally self-employed in agriculture-related fields, while young men take on seasonal nonagricultural tasks. Although the Moroccan economy relies heavily on agriculture, the livelihood of the largest proportion of workers in this sector remains precarious. The precariousness manifests in many ways: seasonality of agricultural work and its unsustainability, working longer hours, and inadequate remuneration (the legal minimum wage in agriculture remains a slim MAD 1,903.72 per month).<sup>22</sup> The lack of access to quality education and diversified economic opportunities puts rural youth at a systemic disadvantage, prolonging their frustration and further deepening their feeling of neglect and unworthiness.

*“There are a lot of [young] people wandering in the streets—some of them could be key resources for the country, but we are not taking care of them. In some countries, structures exist to take care of them, coach them, and help them to grow.”*

## Young women

In 2018, nearly 50 percent of girls were not in primary school. However, for those females that do attend primary school, 94 percent finish.<sup>23</sup> In 2016, 20 percent of women aged 15-24 were unemployed even though young Moroccan women represent 47 percent of students in tertiary education. Moreover, although the illiteracy rate has decreased, it remains relatively high among women (about 38 percent of Moroccan women were illiterate in 2015), particularly in rural areas. However, the illiteracy rate is much lower for women aged 15-24, at 6.5 percent in 2015.<sup>24</sup> Preconceived gender roles also affect young women’s accessibility to economic opportunities.<sup>25</sup> While the status of “married” conveys positive qualities in the employment of

<sup>20</sup> Safaa Kasraoui, “More Than 400,000 Moroccan Students Dropped Out of School in 2018,” Morocco World News, updated January 1, 2020, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2020/01/290288/moroccan-students-drop-out-school/>, and “Adolescents out of school (% of lower secondary school age) – Morocco,” World Bank, updated 2019, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.UNER.LO.ZS?locations=MA>.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40961691/Investing+in+rural+people+in+the+Kingdom+of+Morocco.pdf/3c9fc494-168c-4147-a7de-8e79b69b15cb>

<sup>22</sup> Decree no. 2-19-424 of June 26, 2019: “Le salaire minimum de bénéfice des allocations familiales augmente,” CNSS, updated August 30, 2019, <https://www.cnss.ma/fr/content/le-salaire-minimum-de-b%C3%A9n%C3%A9fice-des-allocations-familiales-augmente>.

<sup>23</sup> Erin Duffin, “Primary School Completion Rate in Morocco from 2000 to 2018,” Statista, updated July 20, 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/645209/primary-school-completion-rate-morocco/#:~:text=Primary%20school%20completion%20rate%20in%20Morocco%202000%2D2018&text=In%202018%2C%20the%20primary%20school,completion%20rate%20was%2098.02%20percent>.

<sup>24</sup> Youth Engagement and Empowerment: In Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia (Paris: OECD, 2018), <https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/youth-engagement-and-empowerment-report.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> S. El Feki, B. Heilman, and G. Barker, eds., *Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) – Middle East and North Africa* (Cairo and Washington, D.C.: UN Women and Promundo-US, 2017).

men, the perception of married women is less positive as they are expected to strike a balance between work commitments and family responsibilities.

### **People with disabilities**

According to a 2014 study by the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family, and Social Development,<sup>26</sup> 6.8 percent of Morocco's population has a disability (2,264,672 people). One-quarter of all Moroccan households are home to at least one person with a disability.<sup>27</sup> The employment rate for people with disabilities in Morocco is three times lower than the national employment rate, with an estimated 612,000 youth with disabilities remaining unemployed. Women with disabilities are even more disadvantaged. Of all people with disabilities employed in the formal sector, only 8.9 percent are female. Sixty-two-point-eight percent of those with disabilities that are employed are not registered and do not have medical coverage or social protection benefits.

The social stigma and attitude that characterizes public perception of disability also affects the desire and motivation of people with disabilities to integrate into the workforce.<sup>28</sup> In addition, there is a serious lack of incentives both for public and private organizations to hire people with disabilities.<sup>29</sup> This category of youth faces even harsher obstacles in accessing economic opportunities and thriving within the workforce. People with disabilities are more likely to miss out on economic opportunities due to lack of information, services, and accessible transportation and buildings.<sup>30</sup>

### **C. Youth Dreams and Aspirations**

Youth in Morocco have many dreams and aspirations for their lives. Youth who participated in the online survey for this assessment indicated that their top priorities in life include starting their own businesses, owning a home, owning vehicles, having families, and working in the public sector.<sup>31</sup> Unemployment is the most pressing issue for youth, and economic success is their most important life goal. According to the results of the online survey, youth strive to overcome the challenges of unemployment through entrepreneurship, though many still dream of working in the public sector. Approximately 65 percent of survey participants indicated that starting their own business was among their desires for the future, and 61 percent said supporting their family financially was a top interest. When we look at data disaggregated by age group, we see that close to one-quarter of youth in two age groups (20-24 and 30-34) indicated that starting their own business and supporting their family financially are among their top priorities for the future. The third and fourth most common interests were owning a house (57 percent) and owning a car (41 percent), goals that require financial success. Youth in the same two age groups were most likely to indicate that owning a house and a car are among their top interests. Youth also believe that improving their economic situation is the most important factor for improving their lives (65 percent of respondents selected this choice as among the top three most important factors, and youth over 20 years old were most likely to select this factor). Only 28 percent of respondents prioritized having a public sector job, and youth in the 30-34 age group were more likely to select this goal. Only 9 percent prioritized getting a job in the private sector (see additional graphs in Annex F). Youth in the 18-19 and 30-34 age groups were least likely to indicate getting a job in the private sector as their dream for the future.

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<sup>26</sup> *Enquête nationale sur le Handicap 2014* (Rabat: Ministère de la Solidarité, de la Femme, de la Famille et du Développement Social, 2014), <https://www.men.gov.ma/Ar/Documents/Rech-Nat2-FTech-fr.pdf>. It is important to note that the data in this citation includes only "mild to very severe" cases, which appears to differ from HCP statistics/definitions: <https://www.hcp.ma/file/112338/>.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, 2014.

<sup>28</sup> Jean-Francois Trani et al., "Disability as Deprivation of Capabilities: Estimation Using a Large-Scale Survey in Morocco and Tunisia and an Instrumental Variable Approach," *Social Science & Medicine* 211 (2018): 48–60.

<sup>29</sup> Arssi Abdelaziz and Taibi Nour, "Disability and Employment in Morocco," *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research* 8, no. 12 (December 2017): 585–98.

<sup>30</sup> Arssi Abdelaziz and Taibi Nour, "Disability and Employment in Morocco," *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research* 8, no. 12 (December 2017): 585–98.

<sup>31</sup> YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation Morocco Task Order online survey, 2020.

Youth are dependent on many people to reach their goals and aspirations. Youth indicated that community leaders and their peers had the most influence on their ability to reach their dreams. In fact, community leaders were the most commonly selected choice among all respondents except young men (ages 18-24), who indicated that their peers and friends were the most influential. Youth cited social media and the government as the two elements that have the greatest negative impact on youth in Morocco. Interview data suggest that the negative influence is possibly related to two things: (1) Social media is a platform where anyone can share materials on violence and extremism, pushing youth to look at the content and recruit young people to their cause; and (2) when the government fails to provide employment through their programs, youth become disenfranchised and may seek alternative avenues, opening themselves up to violent extremism (VE) perspectives and recruitment.

*“[A] poor and weak education system creates weak and incompetent generations.”*

–Youth consultative body

## D. Education

Despite Morocco’s high levels of access to education, more than half of the country’s students leave the education system early or without proficiency in the skills required for the labor market. Although Morocco’s primary school gross enrollment rate (GER) is 116 percent<sup>32</sup> and its primary completion rate is near 99 percent,<sup>33</sup> only 66 percent of students who enroll in lower secondary education complete the three-year cycle, only 34 percent of upper secondary entrants graduate, and only 11 percent take the baccalaureate exam.

An estimated 431,876 youth dropped out of school in 2018, of which nearly three-quarters were girls.<sup>34</sup> The regions of Marrakesh-Safi, Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima, and Béni Mellal-Khénifra are the most affected by school dropouts.<sup>35</sup> Morocco also continues to underperform on international student assessments and performance measures, ranking seventy-third of seventy-six countries on the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and in the bottom third in eighth-grade math and science on the 2011 Trends for International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).<sup>36</sup> Morocco also lacks strong instruction that focuses on building foundational skills<sup>37</sup> for children and youth, particularly in languages and communication. Only 699,265 four-to-five-year-old children are currently benefiting from preschool classes, which represents a national average of 49.6 percent, of which 45 percent are girls (35.2 in rural areas, including 27 percent girls).<sup>38</sup>

Education, including vocational training, is critical to the future of Moroccan youth, yet poor learning outcomes and the weak integration of graduates into the labor market reflect an education sector that is

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<sup>32</sup> This figure includes early enrollments, repeaters, and late enrollments. As these are technically not within the official age group but are accounted for in the GER, the ratio can go beyond 100 percent:

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/114955-how-can-gross-school-enrollment-ratios-be-over-100>.

<sup>33</sup> “Morocco,” Education Policy and Data Center, FHI 360, accessed October 7, 2020,

<https://www.epdc.org/country/morocco.html#tab-profiles>.

<sup>34</sup> *Kingdom of Morocco: Promoting Youth Opportunities and Participation*. Report No. 68731-MOR (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> *Atlas Territorial des Disparités en Education 2017* (Rabat: Conseil Supérieur de l’Éducation, de la Formation et de la Recherche Scientifique, 2017), <https://www.csefrs.ma/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Atlas-territorial-des-disparite-s-en-e--ducation-2017.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> Eric Hanushek and Ludger Wößmann, *The Knowledge Capital of Nations: Education and the Economics of Growth* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015).

<sup>37</sup> Foundational skills are defined as “the fundamental, portable skills that are essential to conveying and receiving information that is critical to training and workplace success. These skills are fundamental in that they serve as a basis—the foundation—for supporting additional operations/tasks and learning.” [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

<sup>38</sup> “Morocco to Recruit and Train More Teachers,” Oxford Business Group, updated 2019,

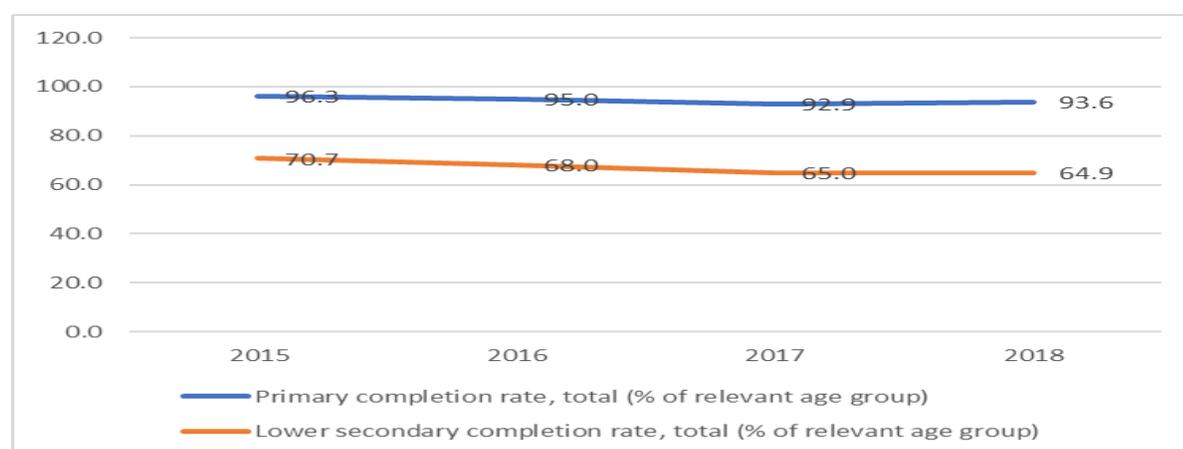
<https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/working-together-efforts-under-way-recruit-and-train-more-teachers-and-ensure-children-stay-school>.

misaligned to the needs of a growing and changing economy.<sup>39</sup> Disparities in education, health, and economic opportunities continue to be large between rural and urban areas. Students and teachers lack the command of foreign languages (French in particular), and the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) curricula does not match job market needs.

### Educational attainment and gaps

At the end of the 2015–2016 school year, the total number of students across the education system in Morocco was estimated at more than eight million, an increase of nearly 1,000 students from the previous year. Half of these students are enrolled in the primary education cycle, and the GER for primary education was 116 percent<sup>40</sup> in 2018. However, the quality of education remains a concern in Morocco. Primary completion rates have steadily declined from 96.3 percent in 2015 to 93.6 percent in 2018. As noted above, nearly 431,876 students dropped out of the public schools in 2018 without obtaining school certificates—a number that represents 78 percent of primary and secondary students who had studied in schools.<sup>41</sup>

**Figure D1. Primary and secondary completion rates, Morocco<sup>42</sup>**



In terms of secondary education, gross enrollment stood at approximately 75 percent in 2018. However, both lower and upper secondary have continued to experience declines in completion rates. Lower secondary completion rates dropped from 70.0 percent in 2015 to 64.9 percent in 2018 (Figure D1). As previously noted, only 34 percent of upper secondary students graduate, and of those who graduate, only 11 percent sit for the baccalaureate exam.

Gross enrollment in tertiary education was approximately 28 percent in 2015 and rising at a rate of approximately 5.2 percent annually.<sup>43</sup> By 2018, over one million students were enrolled in tertiary institutions—nearly triple the number of enrollments from 2000 (295,634).<sup>44</sup> However, while the number of students moving into high education is increasing, much of the population in Morocco remains illiterate.

<sup>39</sup> Kingdom of Morocco.

<sup>40</sup> “How can gross school enrollment ratios be over 100 percent?” The World Bank, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/114955-how-can-gross-school-enrollment-ratios-be-over-100>.

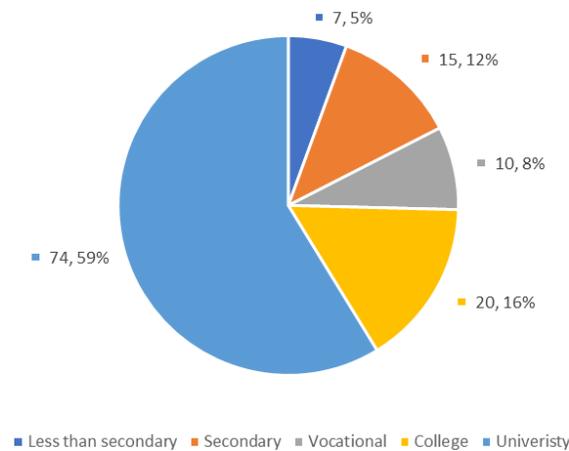
<sup>41</sup> Kasraoui, 2020.

<sup>42</sup> The data for this figure is taken from [www.data.worldbank.org](http://www.data.worldbank.org).

<sup>43</sup> “Morocco - Gross Enrolment Ratio in Tertiary Education,” Knoema, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://knoema.com/atlas/Morocco/topics/Education/Tertiary-Education/Gross-enrolment-ratio-in-tertiary-education>.

<sup>44</sup> Erin Duffin, “Number of students enrolled in tertiary education in Morocco 2000-2018,” Statista, updated August 3, 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/645158/number-students-enrolled-tertiary-education-morocco/#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20about%201.06%20million,tertiary%20education%20programs%20in%20Morocco>.

**Figure D.2. Educational attainment among youth survey respondents**



An analysis of data from the latest general population census of 2014 (RGPH)<sup>45</sup> shows that literacy rates are dropping among the population aged ten and over. In fact, this drop corresponded to nearly 11 percentage points between 2004 and 2014 (i.e., 43.0 percent in 2004 to 32.2 percent in 2014). The drop in illiteracy is more accentuated among women (i.e., 54.7 percent to 42.1 percent) than for men (i.e., 30.8 percent to 22.2 percent). The literary rates also improved the most among women in rural areas—just over 14 percentage points (i.e., 74.5 percent to 60.1 percent) compared to urban areas (i.e., 39.5 percent to 31.0 percent). The regions of Béni Mellal-Khénifra and Marrakesh-Safi have the highest illiteracy rates (39.1 percent and 37.8 percent, respectively). Nearly 44.0 percent of the population has never attended a school or is illiterate (57.9 percent for women and 28.2 percent for men).<sup>46</sup>

The low quality of education and high rates of illiteracy are related to the high instances of school dropout that plague the public education system in Morocco. Students drop out of school for many reasons, including the lack of financial means to continue education, the displacement of students from one municipality to another, inaccessibility to schools in rural, mountain, and remote areas, or even the desire to no longer continue their studies. Dropout rates vary by level and gender. In 2015/16, primary dropout rates were higher for girls (2.5 percent) compared to boys (1.5 percent). However, the situation is reversed at higher levels of education. In secondary education, approximately 12.7 percent of boys drop out of school compared to 8.5 percent of girls.

Youth who participated in this assessment did not reflect the typical Moroccan educational demographics. Survey respondents had a higher level of educational attainment, with some differences depending on gender and community type. Youth survey respondents had much higher levels of education than the country average. For example, 74.5 percent of survey respondents completed university compared to the Moroccan university completion rate of 5.0 percent. Across Morocco, the average number of years of schooling have been steadily rising from 1.9 years in 1982 to nearly 6.0 years in 2014.<sup>47</sup> However, approximately 75 percent of youth survey respondents had a university degree, 20 percent had a college degree, 10 percent had completed a vocational training program, 15 percent had completed secondary school, and only 5 percent had not completed secondary school (see Figure D2).

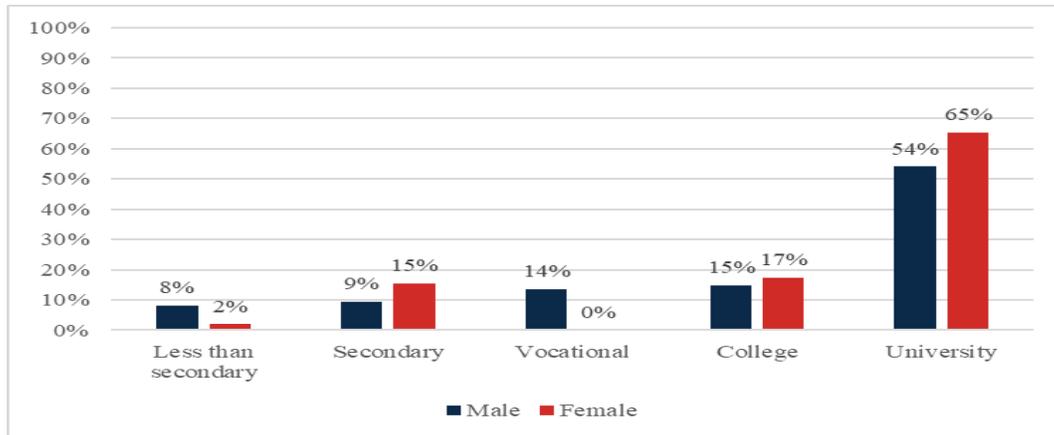
<sup>45</sup> RGPH: Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat. RGPH refers to the national census, which is the process of collecting (grouping, evaluating, analyzing, and disseminating) demographic, economic, and social data relating, at a given moment, to all the inhabitants of a country or of a well-determined part of it.

<sup>46</sup> *Les Indicateurs Sociaux du Maroc* (Rabat: HCP, 2018).

<sup>47</sup> *Atlas Territorial des Disparités en Education 2017*.

Young women survey respondents had slightly higher educational attainment than their male counterparts; 65 percent of the female respondents had a university degree as opposed to 54 percent of males, and only 2 percent of females did not have a secondary school degree compared to 8 percent of males. None of the female respondents had a vocational degree compared to 14 percent of male respondents (see Figure D3).

**Figure D3. Educational attainment among youth survey respondents, by sex**



In terms of access to higher education, the situation has also been improving in Morocco. The number of higher education institutions (HEIs) increased from 43 in 1990 to 126 in 2017.<sup>48</sup> Investments in higher education have increased from nearly MAD 3.6 billion in 2000 to over MAD 10 billion in 2017, an increase of 178 percent. The number of scientific publications in indexed journals climbed from 520 in 1990 to 4,069 in 2017, an increase of 682 percent. Enrollment in higher education has risen from 294,634 in 2000 to over one million students in 2018. Participants in this youth assessment reflect this growing population of educated youth in Morocco.<sup>49</sup>

Morocco currently hosts twelve public universities in eight of the twelve regions, based on the 2015 regionalization plan.<sup>50</sup> These universities combine a total of 145 institutions, located in 36 provinces and prefectures (48 percent of the country’s seventy-five provinces and prefectures),<sup>51</sup> and comprised of sixty-one open-access institutions and eighty-four others with limited access. In 2019, the Ministry of Education (MOE) opened seventeen university institutes and pledged that thirty-four others will open their doors during the 2020–2021 academic year. The objective is the strengthening of the university infrastructure in the various regions in order to ensure accessibility and availability of university studies in the rural provinces.<sup>52</sup>

While access to HEIs is increasing, KIs suggest that there is a lack of universities in rural areas, which may explain why rural survey participants were six percentage points less likely to have a university degree (45 percent) than their urban counterparts (61 percent). However, college degrees and vocational training certificates were more common among rural youth in our survey sample.

The difference in educational attainment between urban and rural areas is particularly large among girls. Urban girls were twice as likely to have a university degree as rural girls (see Figure D4). Education

<sup>48</sup> *Cadre de performance du suivi de la vision stratégique à l’horizon 2030: niveau national 2015-2018* (Rabat: Conseil supérieur de l’éducation, de la formation et de la recherche scientifique, 2019).

<sup>49</sup> *Réforme de l’enseignement supérieur Perspectives stratégiques. Rapport N°5, Juin 2019* (Rabat: Conseil Supérieur de l’Éducation, de la Formation et de la Recherche Scientifique, 2019).

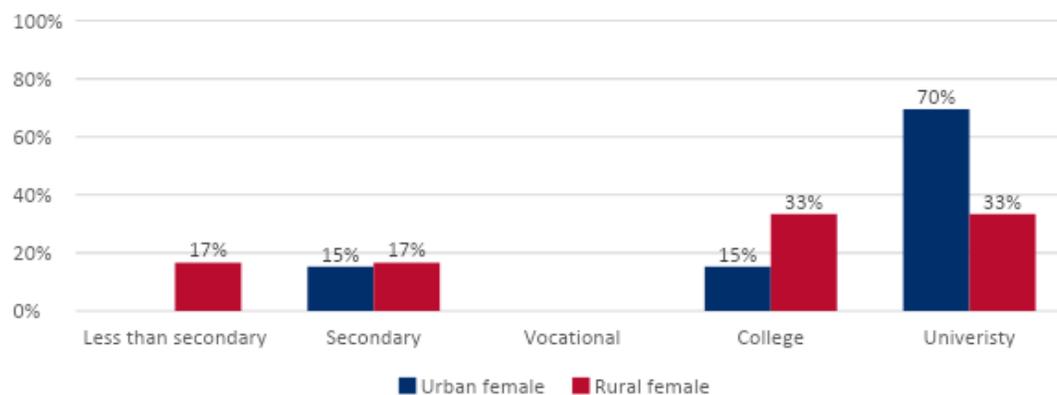
<sup>50</sup> *Statistiques Universitaires Enseignement Supérieur Universitaire Public* (Rabat: Ministry of National Education, 2018).

<sup>51</sup> “National Portal of Local Authorities,” Ministry of Interior, accessed October 2020, <http://81.192.67.16/fr/News/Alaune/Pages/Nouveau-d%C3%A9coupage-r%C3%A9gional-du-Royaume.aspx>.

<sup>52</sup> “Enseignement supérieur: 145 universités au Maroc,” InfoMediaire Maroc, updated January 7, 2020, <https://www.infomediaire.net/enseignement-superieur-145-universites-au-maroc/>.

experts who participated in KIIs suggested that girls in rural settings face more challenges in reaching higher levels of education due to lack of inclusivity in the school system and cultural barriers.

**Figure D4. Educational attainment among female youth survey respondents, by community type**



Access to primary school, though more difficult in rural and mountain areas, remains within reach of most families. However, seasonal changes (e.g., extremely cold winters across the Atlas Mountains) create a rupture in young girls’ education, both at the primary and secondary levels. In areas where the weather is more forgiving, lack of basic infrastructure in the schools (e.g., male and female toilet facilities) makes it difficult for young girls to continue going to school. Infrastructural deficits include water, sanitation, clean and covered toilets, and lighting in the school or on the routes to school.

In most cases, secondary schools do not exist in the small and remote villages. Access to both secondary and tertiary education for rural girls means relocation and living on one’s own away from family (and male figures). Given the culture of male dominance and guardianship, in many cases, pursuing higher education is out of reach and impossible to attain for rural women.

Inequities exist for children and youth with disabilities across the education system. Young girls and boys with disabilities remain, for the most part and particularly in rural areas, outside the education system. The social stigma and perception of disability is a key barrier that keeps this category of children from receiving the proper attention, support, and care they are entitled to in accordance with the 2011 constitution as well as stipulations of a myriad of legal texts, both national and international.<sup>53</sup> These include:

- Compulsory Basic Education Act of 13 Nov 1963 (Dahir No. 1-63-071 of 25 Jumada II 1382, 1963)
- Ministerial Memorandum No. 179 of 19 October 1978
- Law No. 5-81 on the welfare of the blind and visually impaired (law No.5-81)
- Memorandum No. 10 of 16 February 1998
- Law No. 14-05 of Nov 2006 (Dahir No 06-154 Dahir No. 1-06-154 of 30 Shawwal 1427, 2006).
- Memorandum No. 2000/008
- Framework Memorandum No. 2005/89
- Ministry of Social Affairs National Action Plan for Children 2006–2015

Another key barrier hindering access to education for children with disabilities is the educational system’s inability to accommodate their special needs based on the different disabilities, physical and intellectual. Inaccessible buildings, inadequate sanitary facilities, lack of health and safety support services within school,

<sup>53</sup> *Data for Education Programming in Asia and the Middle East: Situation and Needs Assessment for Inclusion of Students Who Are Blind/Low Vision or Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Morocco* (Washington, D.C.: USAID, 2016).

and the scarcity of schools in rural areas are among the main manifestations of the system's incapacity to respond to these special needs.

Data on the subject remain highly inconclusive and can only be considered indicative of a problematic ecosystem for youth with disabilities. The 2014 National Survey on Disability concluded that 66.1 percent of children with disabilities have received little to no schooling. In fact, only 19.6 percent of Morocco's 1.4 million disabled people complete primary level education, while only 9.5 percent are able to complete secondary education. One-point-eight percent survive and reach higher education.<sup>54</sup>

According to the UNESCO 2014 Education for All Report on Morocco, out of 92,400 children with disabilities, only 11,006 were in school. Thus, 88 percent of school-aged children with disabilities were not in school.<sup>55</sup>

Teachers' capacity to deliver information to children with disabilities is also a major obstacle. Awareness, as well as training on disability, special needs education, and inclusive education, continues to be highly insufficient. For example, teachers are not trained on the use of assistive devices that can help children who are blind or have low vision fully access their curriculum. In fact, one of the key issues is the scarcity of these devices in most school in Morocco. The same obstacles face children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The lack of bilingual teaching and the absence of adequately trained sign language instructors limits these children's access to the full content of their curricula, thus limiting their own chances of completing an education.<sup>56</sup>

According to KII and FGD data, the school system is inaccessible for most disabled individuals. Schools do not provide services tailored to students with disabilities, and teachers lack training for teaching students with disabilities. The effect of this is reflected in the youth survey data; youth with disabilities are less likely to have a university education than youth without disabilities (see Figure D5). When we look at national data collected during the 2014 Moroccan census, we also see that compared to youth without disabilities, youth with disabilities are about 12 percent less likely to have completed primary education (17 percent compared to 29 percent), about 15 percent less likely to have completed secondary (10 percent compared to 25 percent), and about 5 percent less likely to have completed higher education (1.5 percent compared to 6.4 percent).<sup>57</sup>

**Figure D5. Educational attainment of youth survey respondents, by disability status**

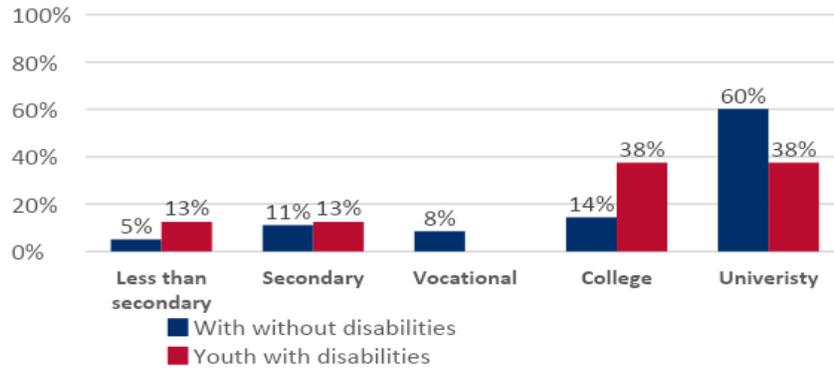
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<sup>54</sup> Mounya El Asri, "Morocco Reading Program Ensures All Students Have Access to Quality Education," Creative Associates International, updated October 1, 2018, <https://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/stories/a-right-to-learn-morocco-reading-program-ensures-all-students-have-access-to-quality-education/#>.

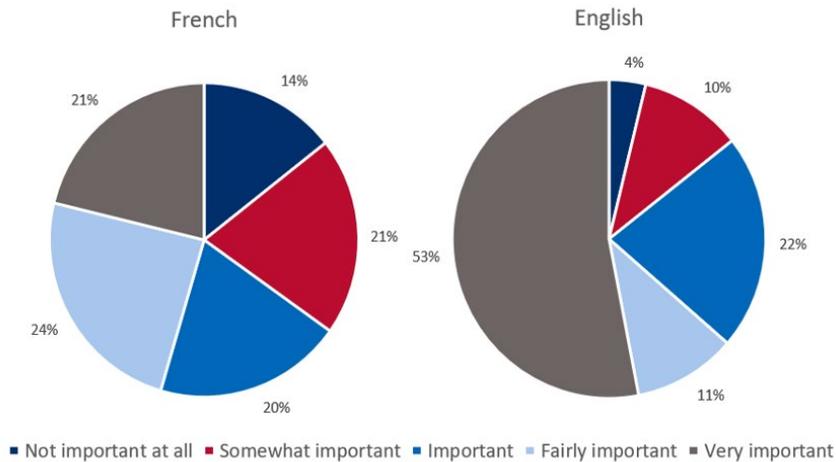
<sup>55</sup> *Data for Education Programming in Asia and the Middle East*.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Nadia Lkhoulf, *Disability Statistics from the 2014 Moroccan Census* (Rabat: HCP, 2017), <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/meetings/2017/oman--disability-measurement-and-statistics/Session%206/Morocco.pdf>.



**Figure D6. Importance of French and English language skills for life**



Educational experts report that the school content does not teach soft skills or critical thinking skills, instead focusing only on rote memorization of basic topics. Additionally, youth struggle to learn skills such as science and math because of a disjointed language system in the schools; these subjects are taught in Arabic in secondary school but in French at the tertiary level—a language in which many students lack fluency.

Although French has no legal status in Morocco, the impact of the “*francophonie*” is visible in the country’s most vital sectors including public administration, education, media, business, and even in the daily life of Moroccans.

#### Command of languages is a serious issue in Morocco

*There is a serious issue with the language fracture that is taking place across the educational system. Students learn certain subjects (sciences and math in particular) in Arabic throughout their primary and secondary education, only to convert to French at the university. This has an impact on the student’s educational journey as well as the quality of education, and ultimately the quality of jobs later. –Education expert*

*“Using English in schools is now more necessary than ever. It is the language of the global workplace, and our youth must get onboard with it as well.” –Education expert*

Youth need the French language to access tertiary education. English is also becoming vital for international communication, particularly in the business and development sectors.

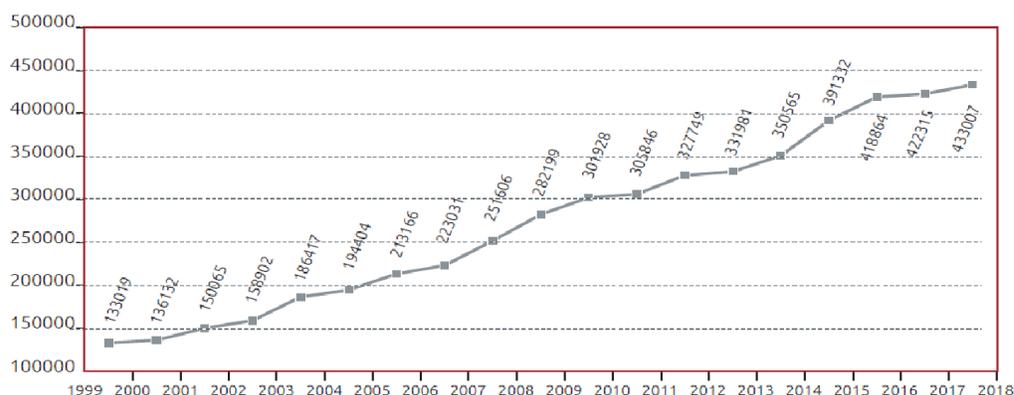
Youth survey respondents believe that both English and French language skills are important for their lives, and English is seen as very important by youth. More than half of respondents (53 percent) said English is very important for their life, and only 4 percent said it is not important at all; in comparison, 21 percent of respondents believe that French is very important for their lives, and 14 percent believe that it is not at all important (see Figure D6). Education experts also stated that English is more important for youth now than ever, since English is the “language of science and knowledge.”

### Vocational training programs

The evolution of the number of young people enrolled in initial vocational training (1999–2018)<sup>58</sup> has nearly tripled between 1999 and 2018, rising from 136,132 students to 433,007 in 2018 (Figure D7). While the vocational system offers training programs in some sectors, overall they have not been successful in helping Moroccan youth achieve better employment opportunities.<sup>59</sup> Most institutions lack enough accommodation to meet the mobility needs of students (e.g., housing and transport for rural youth who move to peri-urban and urban centers), and training programs are often not scalable due to the limited capacity the schools have to evolve into flexible, market-serving systems.

The vocational system also fails to accommodate a large segment of youth, including out-of-school youth ages 12-16, estimated at approximately 130,000 youth per year.<sup>60</sup> Ultra-poor and rural youth do not have real opportunities to access training with high added value for social and professional inclusion.

**Figure D7. Vocational enrollment, 1999–2018**



Only 8 percent of survey respondents had a vocational degree, and less than half of the respondents (43 percent) were aware of any vocational training programs in their communities. Youth do not believe that job prospects are favorable following vocational training programs, and youth face a lack of financial resources and program availability barriers in accessing training, especially among rural youth. Despite the challenges in accessing programs, rural youth are more likely to believe that vocational training programs help link youth to job opportunities.

<sup>58</sup> *Formation professionnelle initiale ; Clés pour la refondation. Rapport N°4/2019 - Mars 2019* (Rabat: Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation, de la Formation et de la Recherche Scientifique, 2019).

<sup>59</sup> *Cadre de Performance Du suivi de la vision stratégique à l'horizon 2030.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

*“The most available jobs for youth are those in low-skilled sectors such as in the informal sector, textile industry, and automotive manufacturing.”*

–Youth respondents

Rural youth face inequities in accessing vocational training programs. Nearly 83 percent of surveyed youth residing in both rural and urban areas believed that vocational training opportunities vary between rural and urban settings. This variation is mainly one of access—while urban areas, particularly in big cities, have a larger number of TVET institutions, as well as a more diverse set of specialisms, youth from rural areas do not enjoy the same access opportunities due to the scarcity of TVET institutions in rural settings.

Rural survey respondents were less likely to be aware of a vocational and technical training program in their community than their urban counterparts by 6 percentage points, and females were less aware than males by 15 percentage points. The most cited barrier for accessing vocational training programs across all respondents was lack of decent job prospects following the program (48 percent), followed by a lack of financial resources (34 percent) and lack of awareness (26 percent). However, a lack of financial resources was 29 percent more likely to be cited as a barrier to access by rural respondents than urban. Rural respondents were also 16 percent more likely to believe that program availability in their communities was a barrier for accessing TVET programs. Annex E provides additional data on youth perspectives regarding vocational education.

### **Career counseling**

As part of Law 01-00, the GoM aimed to promote promising employment sectors and launched initiatives to encourage linkages between universities, the private sector, and the government. These include<sup>61</sup>:

- Morocco Offshoring Initiative
- Plan Azur (geared toward tourism careers)
- The National Industrial Emergence Agreement (impacting food processing, aeronautics, electronics, cars, textiles, etc.)
- The 100,000 Engineers Initiative
- The 10,000 Social Workers Initiative (to support the implementation of the National Initiative for Human Development [INDH])
- The 3,300 Doctors Initiative
- The Training Program for 10,000 Senior Educationalists

*“Without . . . good and suitable training, there is no job.”*

–Youth CSO

HEIs are also working in partnership with the GoM and the private sector to launch alumni networks with the objective of guiding graduates toward promising economic sectors.

Although efforts are deployed, they remain concentrated in some urban areas and end up benefiting the elite among students. According to the youth survey, only 16 percent of survey respondents have ever benefited from career counseling services or other similar services, and female respondents benefited less from such services than males by six percentage points. When asked which institution offered these counseling services, youth typically referred to the National Agency for Promotion of Employment and Skills (*Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences*; ANAPEC), which is a job placement agency

<sup>61</sup> *Overview of the Higher Education System* (Brussels: European Commission, 2017).

for youth with higher education. Rural respondents were much less likely to benefit from career counseling services—only 2 percent of the rural youth respondents indicated they benefited from counseling services. This situation impairs youth’s ability to make important decisions about their future education and career paths.

### **Teacher training**

Careers in teaching do not appeal to youth. Becoming a teacher is perceived to be full of hardships, meagerly compensated, and likely to force youth to work in remote geographical areas.<sup>62</sup> The scarcity of resources, large class sizes, demotivating teaching conditions, and lack of continued professional development are among the reasons why teaching is not attractive to high-achieving students both in the public and private education sectors. In its 2016/17 annual report, Morocco’s Court of Auditors pointed to the poor quality of teachers as the main factor behind the current challenges related to the quality of education.<sup>63</sup> Severe shortages of teachers leave some classrooms unused while imposing large class sizes on other teachers (particularly in rural areas) where grade levels and classes are combined. Teacher absenteeism and a lack of inspector supervision of instructors are also reported as chronic issues.

## **E. Economic Growth**

Morocco’s GDP has sharply decelerated to 2.3 percent in the last two years as the government’s debt-to-payment ratio has increased to 65.7 percent.<sup>64</sup> The decline in economic growth coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic caused the unemployment rate to rise to 12.3 percent in the second quarter of 2020—the highest unemployment rate since 2003. Among the most pressing issues facing youth in Morocco is access to economic opportunity and integration into the workforce. Data on the current landscape remain worrying as the divide between employed and unemployed youth widens due to both systemic and structural disparities. According to the Sahwa Morocco Youth Survey (as cited in Kamal, 2017)<sup>65</sup>:

- Youth employment is precarious and fragile. About 73.3 percent of active 15–29 year-olds are not registered to any system of medical coverage, and 80 percent work without a contract.
- Over 50 percent of working youth are employed in commerce, other market services, and administration and non-market services, principally in urban areas.
- About 82 percent of active youth earn salaries under MAD 3,000 per month (under US\$275), while 93 percent of young women earn less. About 63 percent of employed young people used personal and family relations to secure their job.
- Approximately 50 percent of youth with lower levels of education used job boards or other means to find employment.
- Approximately 61 percent of youth entrepreneurs are financially supported by their parents. These youth cite a lack of information and commercialization as the two biggest barriers to entrepreneurialship. These reasons align with respondents to the online survey given for this assessment.

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<sup>62</sup> *Advancing the Professions of Education, Training, Research and Management (translated from Arabic). Rapport N°3/2018 – February 2018* (Rabat: Conseil Supérieur de l’Éducation, de la Formation et de la Recherche Scientifique, 2018).

<sup>63</sup> “Morocco to Recruit and Train More Teachers.”

<sup>64</sup> “The World Bank in Morocco,” World Bank, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/morocco/overview>.

<sup>65</sup> “Youth Survey,” SAHWA, updated March 12, 2015, <http://sahwa.eu/Media/Sahwa/Youth-Survey>. Kamal, Abdelhak. (2017). Policy Paper: National Youth Policies – The case of Morocco. Published under the SAHWA Project with funding from the European Union.

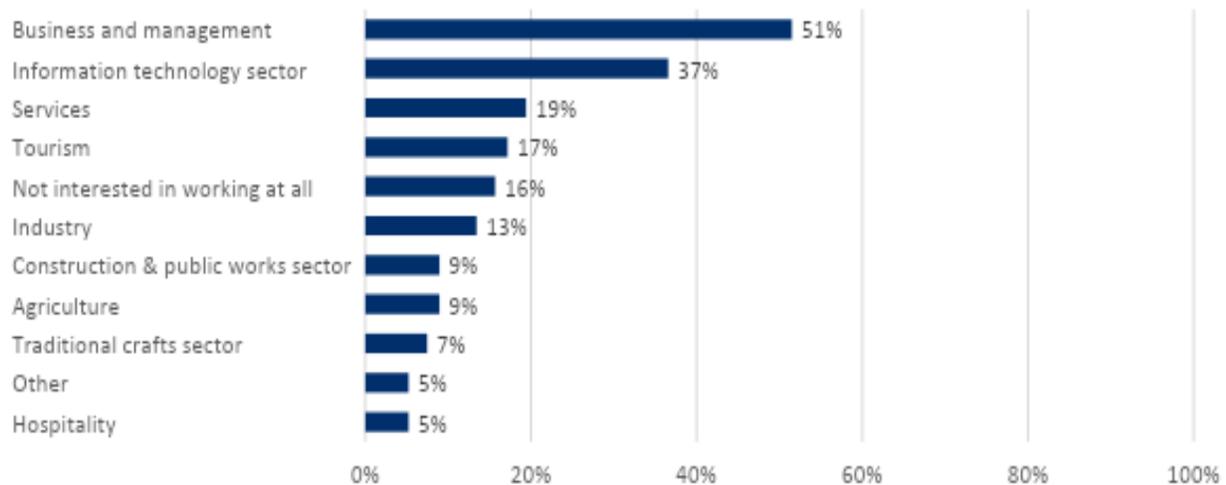
“Most of the job opportunities are concentrated in the urban centers, which results in an internal and external migration.”

–Stakeholder FGD participant

Youth unemployment rates also continue to rise, moving from 24.9 percent in 2019 to nearly 27 percent in the first quarter of 2020. Women face higher unemployment rates (35 percent), and young women aged 15-35, represent nearly 83 percent of unemployed women. A World Bank study on the labor market in Morocco<sup>66</sup> showed that countries faced with large unemployed youth populations often experience increased conflict and instability, particularly during economic downturns. In Morocco, youth unemployment rates do not provide the full picture of the disadvantages in the labor market. Additional disadvantages include the challenges of starting up businesses, accessing credit, and the overall enabling environment related to employment.

In fact, there seems to be a disconnect between the types of jobs that youth desire and the jobs that are available. Approximately 51 percent of youth survey respondents stated that they would prefer to work in the business and management sector and 37 percent the IT sector (see Figure E1).

**Figure E1. Sectors of desired employment**



Key informants suggested that the most desirable jobs for youth were in civil society, tourism, and IT or social media (e.g., audiovisual and content creation). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), most employment for youth in Morocco is found in the agricultural and informal sectors, though a number of other sectors are growing but lack skilled labor. For example, the private sector requires engineers, but only 7 percent of youth entering university seek engineering degrees.<sup>67</sup> A study conducted by SALTO-YOUTH showed that over half of employed young people in Morocco are salaried employees working for private companies; salaried public-sector positions are rare, and only 5 percent of youth are able to acquire such positions. Eighty-eight percent of employed youth work without a contract.<sup>68</sup> Approximately 13 percent of youth are self-employed outside the home. However, youth survey

<sup>66</sup> *Labor Market in Morocco: Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2017).

<sup>67</sup> Snijder, 2015.

<sup>68</sup> Snijder, 2015.

respondents believe that tourism, trade, teaching, industry, and fisheries are the sectors that provide the most job opportunities for them (see Annex F, Figure F3).

The lack of jobs in urban areas, where many youth originate from, is another barrier to employment. Youth are forced to migrate either from rural to urban areas or from smaller to larger cities, and they sometimes go abroad. If given the opportunity, 38 percent of youth surveyed for this assessment would prefer to work in their city of origin rather than relocate to find employment (see Annex F, Figure F2). This finding is supported by the latest available data from the Arab Barometer, which showed that 70 percent of Moroccan youth were considering emigrating abroad in 2019 because of economic challenges in Morocco.<sup>69</sup>



*“What we learn in schools is often not what a job requires—there is a gap between theory and practice.”*

—Stakeholder FGD participant

### **Private-sector engagement of youth**

Barriers to securing work for youth include lack of experience, soft skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking), and needed foreign languages (e.g., French and English). Youth and educational experts report that secondary schools do not teach young people the skills required for jobs. A majority (47 percent) of youth survey respondents believed that English and French are important for securing a job. Youth survey respondents also reported that they lack access to vocational training programs. When vocational training programs are available, the skills they teach often do not align well with the employment opportunities that are available to them in their regions.<sup>70</sup>

### **Barriers to entrepreneurship/livelihoods**

Although starting a business is among the top goals of youth, they face many challenges in relation to entrepreneurship. In 2019, the GoM launched a strategy to facilitate the creation of businesses and to promote national and international investments in the country by digitizing the business creation application process.<sup>71</sup> While Morocco is ranked fifty-third in the world in terms of “ease of doing business,” complex tax codes and difficulties in securing loans and capital make it difficult for many youth to start their own businesses. FGD participants agreed that young entrepreneurs lack support and know-how to overcome legal, technical, and financial challenges to succeed in their business. Youth survey respondents ranked the top five challenges when starting a business as lack of parental support (83 percent), complex bureaucracy (65 percent), lack of business know-how (63 percent), lack of financial means (60 percent), and lack of tax incentives (57 percent; see Figure E7). Few programs that support businesses are available to youth, especially in rural areas, according to KII and FGD participants. Only one-third (32 percent) of all the survey

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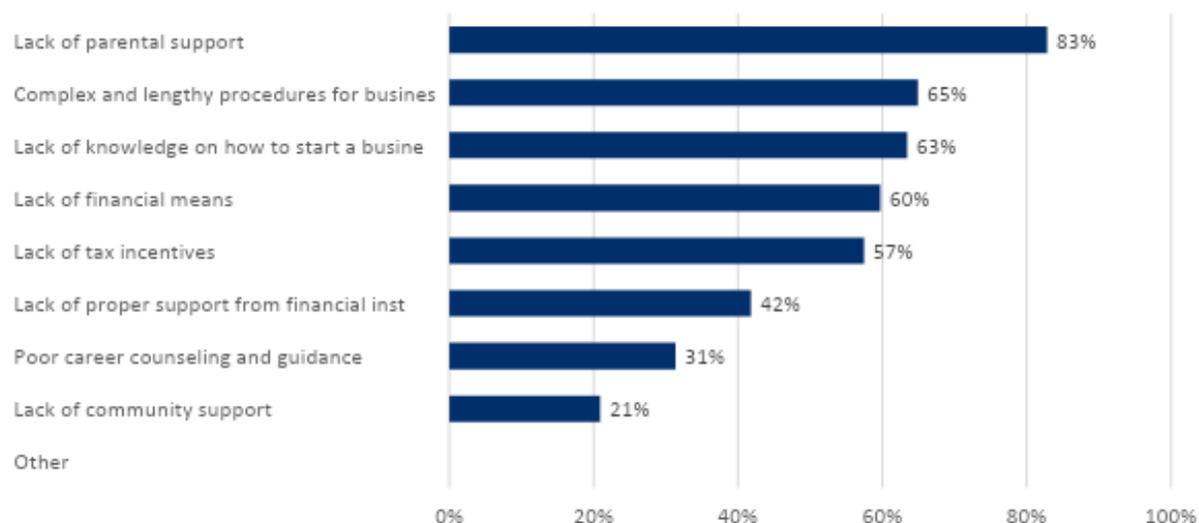
<sup>69</sup> Arab Barometer V: Morocco Country Report (Arab Barometer, 2019), [https://www.arabbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/ABV\\_Morocco\\_Report\\_Public-Opinion\\_Arab-Barometer\\_2019.pdf](https://www.arabbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/ABV_Morocco_Report_Public-Opinion_Arab-Barometer_2019.pdf).

<sup>70</sup> Snijder, 2015; confirmed by stakeholder focus groups, KIIs, and the youth survey.

<sup>71</sup> Margot Eliason, “Changes to Requirements for Starting a Business in Morocco,” Morocco World News, updated July 9, 2019, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2019/07/277711>.

respondents were aware of any credit programs for youth entrepreneurs; awareness of such programs was even lower among rural respondents (22 percent).

**Figure E7. Main challenges for youth businesses**



Literature also indicates the following as barriers to entrepreneurship amongst Moroccan youth:

- *Policy.* Until recently, Morocco has had a narrow view of entrepreneurship and its potential for economic growth, wealth creation, and the sustainability of social cohesion created through economic empowerment. This narrow perception focused on commercial entrepreneurship measured through the number of businesses created. Although new businesses are key drivers of economic development, they may not optimally influence the emergence of an entrepreneurial economy. The GoM has come to this realization and, over the past few years, has launched multiple programs targeting both youth and the private sector. These programs are highlighted below and include *Moukawalati*, *Taehil*, and *Intilaka*.
- *Cultural barriers.* A key challenge faced by Morocco’s economy is its inability to quickly raise the growth rate, due in part to the attitudes of youth toward employment. Low levels of economic activity among youth and persistent unemployment lead too many young people to give up looking for a job and plunge into hopelessness that hinders their mental and psychological predisposition to become entrepreneurs<sup>72</sup>. Alaoui (2015) noted that traditional barriers still prevent youth from entering the workforce. These challenges include, “a preference of public sector employment over private sector jobs, a scarcity of “high quality” jobs that will provide positive returns on education and investment efforts, and a mismatch of skills between the kind of education graduates receive and what the job market needs.” She further noted that 80 percent of unemployed youth spend their time “hanging out” rather than engaged in productive activities. The challenge makes for a, “population at risk for isolation, frustration and potentially engaging in risky activities<sup>73</sup>.” These sentiments were also shared by the stakeholders who participated in the KII for this study.
- *Supporting systems.* Lack of support networks and systems also hinders the promotion of an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship. Besides the well-known Casablanca Technopark and the Rabat Technopark (both incubate over 200 companies, accounting for over 15,000 jobs), the dire

<sup>72</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_577306.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_577306.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/8/29/developing-youth-entrepreneurship-in-morocco/>

lack of university-based incubators, private accelerators, and investors culminates in a stifling entrepreneurship development environment.<sup>74</sup>

Also, the lack of support from the banking sector is a recurrent issue youth describe when asked about the support they need to achieve their entrepreneurial goals. State-initiated programs have failed in part due to nonaligned policies where banks' buy-in has not been secured.

### **Youth entrepreneurships and employment innovation training programs**

In the past fifteen years, the GoM has launched a multitude of activities designed to revitalize the job market and incentivize job and business creation. Programs targeting youth include:

- *Moukawalati (MyEntreprise)* (2006–present) is a government program that aims to support project leaders with an investment of MAD 250,000 (MAD 500,000 in the case of a partner). Its objectives include (1) pre- and post-creation support for projects; (2) the State guarantees (CCG) up to 85 percent of bank credit; and (3) the granting of an interest-free advance representing a maximum of 10 percent of the investment, up to a limit of MAD 15,000.
- *Taehil (preparation/training)* (2011–present) was designed to allow job seekers to improve their employability through practical training leading to recruitment (contractual *training* prior to employment and support for emerging sectors) or reorienting their specialisms to respond to identified skill needs within sector-specific companies (*formation qualifiante*).
- *Moubadara (initiative)* sets out to encourage the hiring of graduate job seekers or those with integration difficulties within the framework of neighborhood associations and social and educational services via lump-sum grants. It primarily focuses on employment within community-level organizations in the social and education sectors.
- *Taatir (coaching)* is aimed at the long-term unemployed and is intended to find jobs for 50,000 people per year. It intends to improve the employability of long-term unemployed graduates by awarding monthly grants for up to a year.
- *Istiaab (assimilation)* is designed to integrate the informal sector into the formal economy.
- *Intilaka (launch)* is the most recent program launched by the GoM in February 2020. A budget of MAD 6 billion (around \$625 million) was made possible in the 2020 Appropriation Bill to finance enterprises and encourage youth entrepreneurship. To further encourage the same in rural areas, the Hassan II Fund for Economic and Social Development pledged an extra MAD 2 billion, in addition to other incentivizing measures.

#### Programs targeting the private sector

- *Idmaj (integration)* (since January 2005) aimed to support companies in meeting their skills needs on the one hand and to support the integration of job seekers into working life on the other. It focuses on salaried employment in general, based on an initial common law contract that would end up becoming a binding and long-term integration contract.
- *Tahfiz (incentivizing)* (since 2011) was designed to incentivize companies to create more jobs. Through this program the state offers to take charge of the employer's share of social security contributions and the exemption from the revenue tax capped at 10,000 DH gross over twenty-four months, granted to ten employees.

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<sup>74</sup> Abelkader Djeflat, "Morocco's Efforts on the Knowledge Economy," Knowledge Library, CMI, updated March 11, 2015, <https://www.cmimarseille.org/fr/knowledge-library/moroccos-efforts-knowledge-economy>.

## F. Civic Engagement

Morocco's 2011 constitutional reform laid the foundation for changes in laws and practices that led to an expansion of the space for civil society organizations (CSOs) and to an increase in civic engagement and decision-making. Since 1975, Morocco has seen an increase in its civil society participation scores, which peak after 2011 outperforming the regional and global averages, according to International IDEA's Global State of Democracy Indices.<sup>75</sup> The changes in laws and practices shifted donor and government programming from simply trying to engage youth in voting activities to helping build the necessary skills to help youth civically engage and increase their own political awareness. However, the reforms have not led to adequate tangible changes, particularly for youth.

In this section, we refer to various CSOs in the context of Moroccan civil society. We use "CSO" as a broader term that refers to non-State, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere that are separate from the State and the market. CSOs can be run by youth or non-youth and work on issues that concern both youth and non-youth. Community-based organizations (CBOs) are much smaller entities that operate at the neighborhood level and work on various themes. They target various genders and age groups, but they tend to have focus on children, adolescents, youth, and women. CBOs are more concerned with community-based problems and service delivery and can be active during electoral campaigns. CBOs are embedded within communities, they work to alleviate their communities' overall living conditions, and they are typically run by a mix of youth and non-youth. Youth-led organizations are organizations that are managed by youth, even if these organizations don't have a typical CBO or CSO structure. Examples of such organizations include a political party's youth wing, a religious organization's youth faction, etc. Finally, youth councils are youth organizations where youth can engage in community decision-making.

Socioeconomic status and the national and local political environment remain determining factors for civic engagement and participation. Urban and higher-educated youth tend to be more civically active, but there have to be opportunities at the national and local level for youth to engage, and these opportunities are often missing. Youth look to CSOs as a way to be civically engaged, but many CSOs lack technical and organizational capacity, which limits their ability to advocate on behalf of youth. CSOs face challenges implementing the regulatory framework throughout Morocco, a vast country divided into twelve regions, and including the voices of disadvantaged groups, especially youth and those living in hard-to-reach rural areas.<sup>76</sup> What is increasingly seen in Morocco is a shift to social movements for broader youth segments; limited engagement of local officials in finding solutions; a lack of models that focus on trust-building between youth and local officials; and limited ongoing outreach and engagement of marginalized youth. Despite the challenges that CSOs face, they are seen as more credible than political parties, with just about a quarter of surveyed youth noting they are actively participating in government or political parties compared to about three-quarters of youth participation in CSOs.

Youth survey respondents and participants in the focus group discussions indicated that the biggest challenges to civic engagement include (1) a lack of programs and opportunities for civic engagement in their communities, particularly in the rural areas; (2) a lack of awareness and interest in participation, which leads to youth marginalization from decision-making; and (3) an increased mistrust of the government and public institutions.

When youth survey data is disaggregated by employment status, it shows that lack of civic engagement opportunities, awareness, and interest are about 10 percent higher for unemployed youth compared to employed youth (Figure F1). Lack of time to participate in civic engagement activities, however, is not mentioned as a challenge for either employed or unemployed youth. This suggests that if new engagement

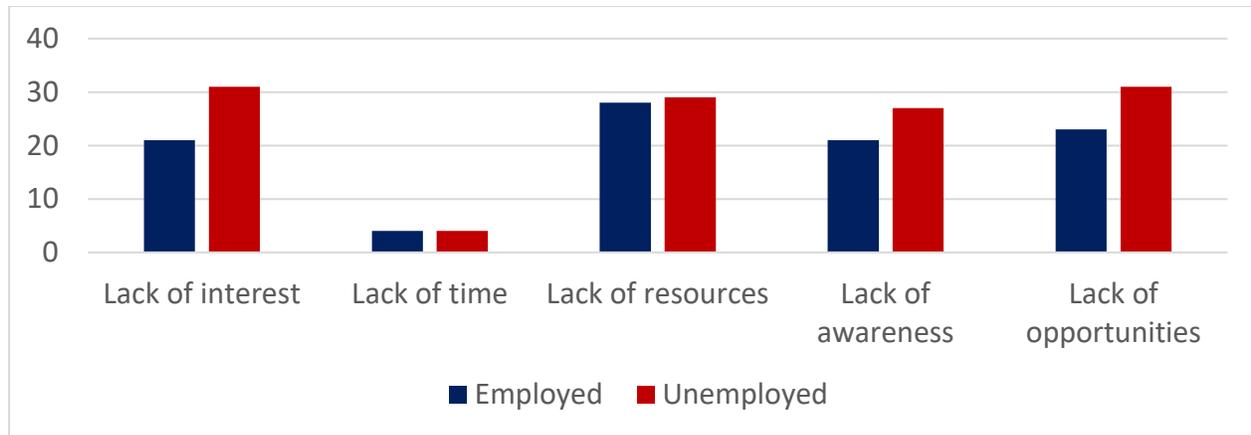
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<sup>75</sup> Brechtje Kemp, "Citizen Engagement in Morocco: Breaking Down Barriers to Political Inclusion," International IDEA, updated August 4, 2018, <https://www.idea.int/news-media/news/citizen-engagement-morocco-breaking-down-barriers-political-inclusion>; confirmed by focus group discussions with youth and development networks.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.; confirmed by focus group discussions with youth.

opportunities, designed by and focused on youth, become available, and if there is a targeted campaign to increase awareness among youth (as suggested by several key informants), both employed and unemployed youth could find time to participate in these new opportunities.

**Figure F1. Barriers to youth participation in community activities, by employment status**

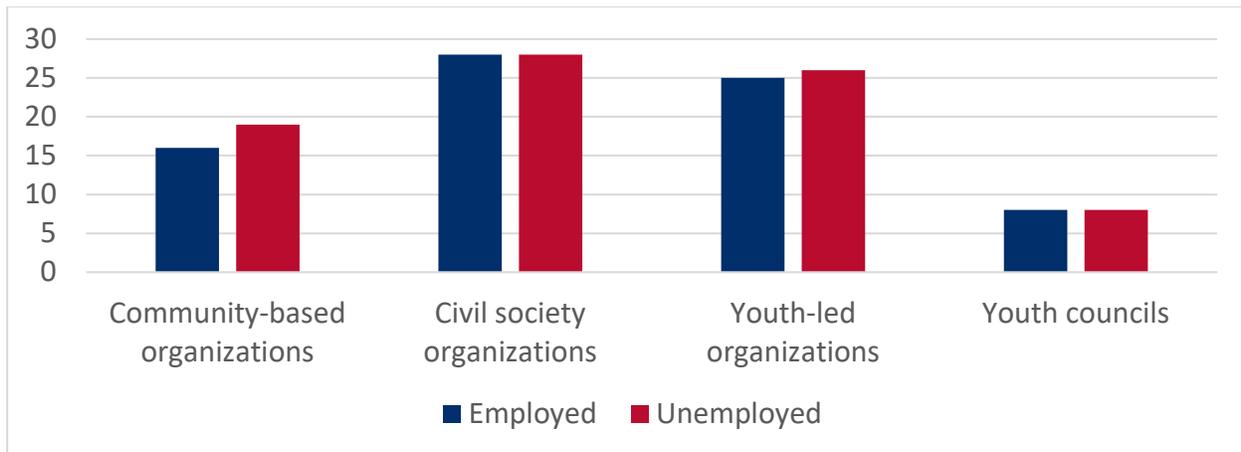


**Lack of civic engagement programs**

There is a lack of programs that support civic engagement for youth, particularly in rural areas. Thirty-one percent of surveyed youth from urban areas reported that CBOs are available in their community compared to 6 percent of youth from rural areas. CSOs are also more widespread in urban areas, with close to 50 percent of urban youth reporting that these programs are available in their community compared to 9 percent of youth from rural areas.<sup>77</sup> Youth-led organizations are similarly more common in urban areas, with 43 percent of urban youth reporting that these programs are available in their community compared to only 11 percent of youth from rural areas. Local youth councils are least common in both rural and urban areas, with only 15 percent of urban youth noting youth councils are available in their community compared to 2 percent of youth in rural areas. Given many youth focus group participants demanded the creation of more local youth engagement opportunities, youth councils can play an important role in promoting youth political participation at the local level and creating a bridge between youth and local politics.

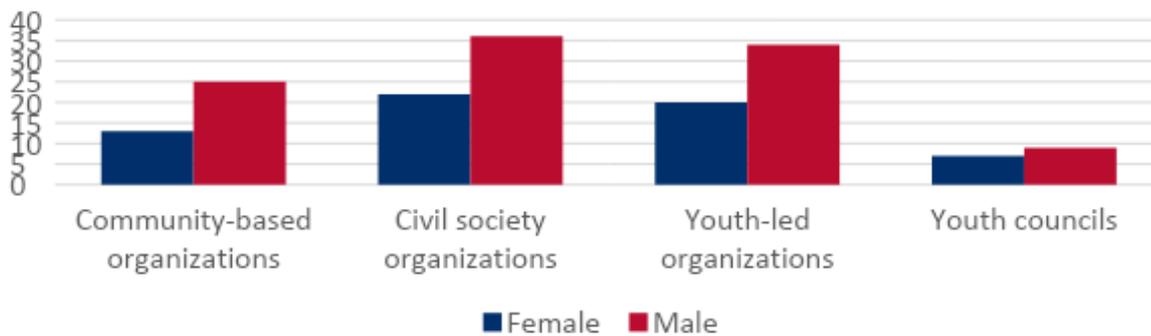
While opportunities to participate in civic activities are limited, many youth survey respondents indicated that they actively participate in activities that are available in their community. The results suggest that youth are interested in having a voice and would continue to participate with the emergence of more opportunities. One donor representative noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has given youth more time to volunteer in their communities, bringing food to neighbors and looking for additional ways to help. This perspective highlights the interest of youth in community engagement. Survey data demonstrate that there were very small differences in active civic participation between employed and unemployed youth, suggesting that being employed and having less time to devote to civic activities may not be an obstacle to youth participation in civic engagement opportunities (Figure F2).

**Figure F2. Active civic engagement of youth, by employment status**



Surveyed young men are at least 10 percent more likely to participate in CBOs, CSOs, and youth-led organizations compared to young women (Figure F3). However, they are only a few percentage points more likely to report they actively participated in youth councils in their communities compared to young women. These findings are in line with other research from the MENA region, which shows that young men are much more likely to be civically engaged than young women.<sup>78</sup> These results suggest that more needs to be done to engage girls in community-based activities. For example, community organizations can identify champions for gender equality among their participants and support them as advocates for girls’ inclusion in the organizations.

**Figure F3. Active civic engagement of youth, by gender**



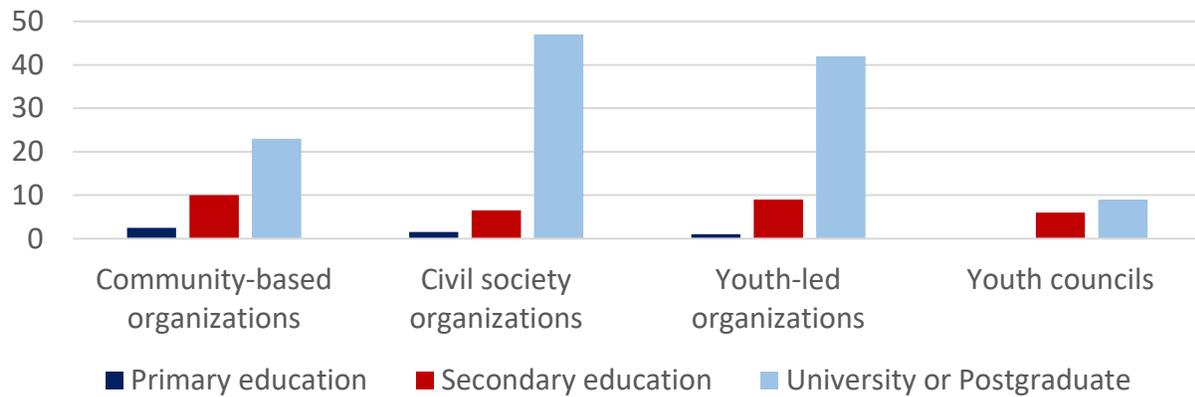
Research demonstrates that in the MENA region, the likelihood of youth being civically active generally increases with higher education levels.<sup>79</sup> Our survey results show a similar trend—youth with university or postgraduate education levels are much more likely to report being actively engaged in CSOs, CBOs, and youth-led organizations compared to youth with primary or secondary education (Figure F4). It is worth noting that our survey results may be skewed, given that approximately 75 percent of our youth respondents had completed a university degree. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to engage younger

<sup>78</sup> *Civic Engagement of Youth in the Middle East and North Africa: An Analysis of Key Drivers and Outcomes* (Portland: Mercy Corps, 2012), [https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/mena\\_youth\\_civic\\_engagement\\_study\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/mena_youth_civic_engagement_study_-_final.pdf).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

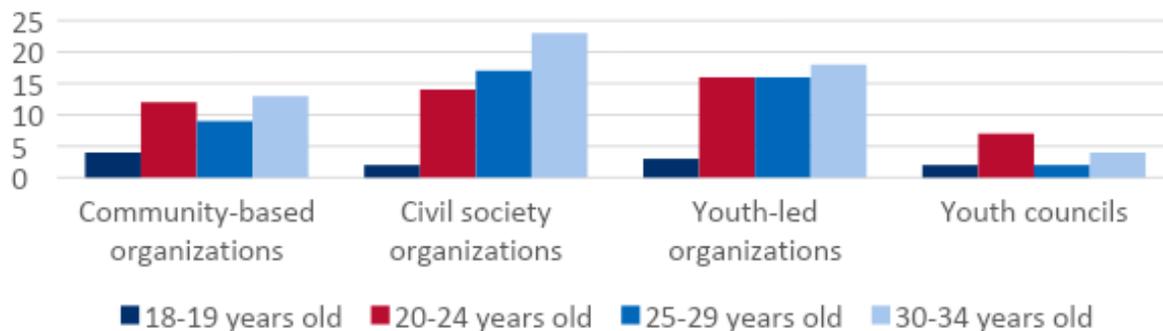
students in community activities. For example, primary or secondary school extracurricular activities focused on civic engagement can play an important role in cultivating a mindset of civic participation from an earlier age.

**Figure F4. Active civic engagement of youth, by educational attainment**



Surveyed 18-19 years old youth were least likely to actively participate in civic engagement activities. The level of participation increases with age, with youth in the 30-34 age group most likely to participate in CBOs, CSOs, and youth-led organizations (Figure F5). This trend is consistent with figures from OECD countries and the MENA region where one in four young people aged 15-29 is not at all interested in political and civic engagement opportunities. According to a survey run by the High Commissioner for Planning, a third of Moroccan youth (15-29) have no confidence in their national government, and about 60 percent of young Moroccans do not trust local authorities.<sup>80</sup> This lack of confidence creates a barrier to active engagement in public policies on the part of youth in the 15 to 29 age group. As we noted earlier, participation in youth councils is generally low, but data disaggregated by age group demonstrate that 20-24 years old youth are at least a few percentage points more likely to be actively engaged in youth councils. It is likely that the youth councils in these respondents’ communities are engaging youth from this age group. We know from focus group discussion with youth that they are more likely to participate in organizations at the local level, such as youth councils, provided these opportunities are available in their communities.

**Figure F5. Active civic engagement of youth, by age group**

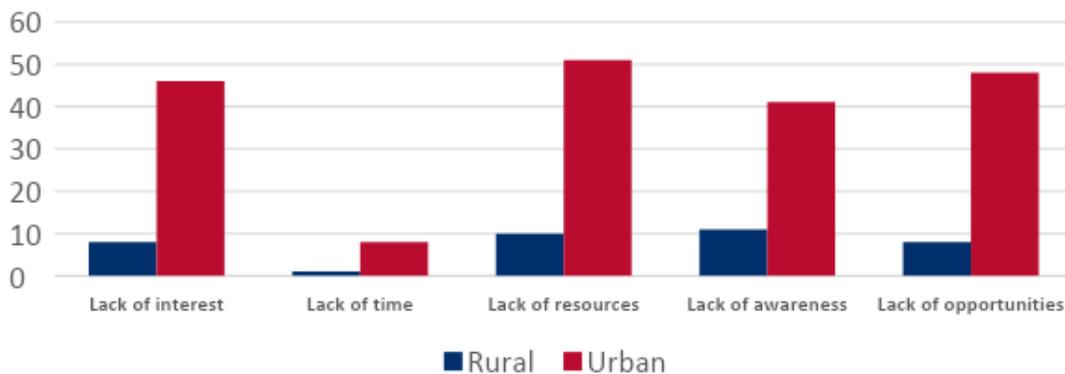


<sup>80</sup> Youth Engagement and Empowerment.

## Barriers to civic engagement

When asked about the barriers to youth participation in their community (Figure F6), almost 50 percent of urban youth reported lack of interest, resources, and lack of interesting opportunities. The lack of interest in civic participation can be partially attributed to youth’s lack of general confidence in politics and public institutions, as noted during our focus group discussions. Several youth focus group participants reported that they are less interested in organizations that are operating nationally or regionally, suggesting they would be more interested in local organizations, provided they have information about ways to get involved in these organizations. About 10 percent of youth from rural areas reported lack of awareness, resources, and interesting opportunities as barriers to their participation. Lack of time does not seem to pose an obstacle to surveyed youth’s community engagement in either rural or urban areas.

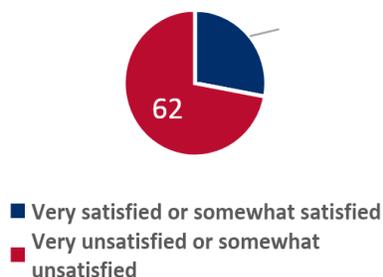
**Figure F6. Barriers to youth participation in community activities, by community type**



Young women in the survey cited the lack of resources (i.e., transportation costs for travel to and from the community organizations) as the main barrier to civic engagement, followed by a lack of interesting platforms and a lack of awareness. For men, the main barrier tended to be a lack of interest, with a lack of resources cited as the third most important barrier. When findings were disaggregated by age groups, the lack of interesting platforms and lack of resources were consistently cited as the top two barriers to civic engagement.

Nearly 70 percent of surveyed youth believed their needs and opinions are not taken into consideration when developing government programs and services targeting youth. In fact, only 2 percent of respondents believe their needs and opinions are taken into consideration. Over 60 percent of youth state they are either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the way consultative bodies represent the voice of youth (Fig. F7).

**Figure F7. Youth satisfaction with level of representation in consultative bodies**





*“Social media has become the largest space for expression and participation, but this digital participation must be translated into reality.”*

–FGD participant

*“Traditional civil and political structures lost their ability to play their role as channels between youth and formal institutions, which has allowed many informal structures to appear as direct and effective channels that involve youth in civic engagement (such as the Ultras, social media groups, and initiatives).”*

–FGD participant

FGD participants supported survey findings, noting CBOs are not effective and have a limited mandate. Youth noted that CSOs typically lack work plans, clear communication channels with the regional council, and funding. This weak technical and organizational capacity of youth-led organizations and consultative bodies limits advocacy for youth. Stakeholders noted that youth are often unaware of the existence of such organizations and they are not elected as members, and therefore the organizations are unable to advocate effectively on youth’s behalf, resulting in reduced trust in public institutions. Despite issues of distrust in public institutions, as noted earlier in this section, CSOs are seen as more credible than political parties, with just about a quarter of surveyed youth noting they are actively participating in government or political parties compared to about three-quarters participating in CSOs. Youth in the survey appear to be more politically active than the national average, which indicates that less than 1 percent of youth participate in political parties. This difference could be attributed to the specific demographic characteristics of the survey participants. They had much higher educational attainment compared to the national average, with approximately 75 percent of youth respondents having completed a university degree. In addition, about 80 percent of survey participants lived in urban areas, where there are more opportunities for youth engagement in the country’s political life.

Similar findings emerged in the FGDs, with several participants noting that *“the youth lack trust in public institutions, especially political parties.”* Others noted that the organizations fail to create action plans that include youth in the process. While close to half of surveyed youth reported they are aware of consultative bodies, just over a quarter had interacted with any of these organizations at the local or national level.

### **Opportunities to improve civic engagement**

These highlighted challenges to civic engagement for youth point to several opportunities for improving civic engagement, including (1) the development of programs and organizations targeting youth needs; (2) conducting outreach to engage youth; and (3) reforming the law to include consultative bodies comprised of youth leaders in the governing process. Focus group discussions with youth suggested that new community programs and organizations must target youth’s needs (unemployment) and youth’s interests (sustainable development, green energy, water security, and consumer culture) and be inclusive of girls, rural youth, and people with disabilities to improve participation and engagement.

Key informants suggested that civic programs should be working on youth’s sense of belonging by offering opportunities to participate at the local level, since many youth are more interested in participating in local versus national activities. There is an advantage to working locally and utilizing a bottom-up approach, as it tends to develop ownership and engagement on part of youth at the grassroots level. Key informants also recommended developing an online tool for disseminating information about civic engagement activities, given many youth are unaware of the existing civic engagement opportunities in their communities. In their opinion, programs must consider the diversity of youth in terms of socioeconomic status, education, and

urban/rural environment. In fact, it was noted in many KIs that rural areas should become a priority for developing consultative bodies and engaging youth.

Key informants noted that youth must be included at all levels of program development to ensure buy-in and improve trust between youth and other local actors including the public sector, private sector, and civil society. Key informant interviews suggested that there has been limited ongoing outreach and engagement of youth, particularly marginalized youth. Traditional forms of civic engagement are now shifting toward utilizing digital spaces, which tend to be safer when it comes to youth's freedom of expression, compared to the more traditional civic engagement structures. Focus group discussions indicated that youth have recently become more involved in local government through virtual tools and that they participate in these new channels because they are direct and transparent ways to communicate youth's voice to decision-makers. Youth noted that social media has become the largest space for youth expression and participation, as it reflects the concerns and dreams of young people, unlike traditional civic organizations, which are often created and led by adults. Findings from the focus group discussion are supported by other research in the field, which shows that the new media use is one of the main factors helping increase interest in politics and public life and create a strong sense of civic engagement.<sup>81</sup> Youth are increasingly attracted by new media outlets such as social networking sites, blogs, and chat rooms. The online world offers a large number of less costly and demanding avenues to civic participation. Youth can share their knowledge, expose their viewpoints, mobilize, and foster and advocate for change. Social media, if used in an effective and positive way, has the ability to attract youth to civic engagement and facilitate a more bottom-up approach to creating local consultative bodies. Thus, youth participation in consultative bodies should be encouraged via contemporary digital and other platforms, such as social media, radio, and Ultras.

Finally, the law governing the consultative bodies must be reformed to ensure that the regional council includes the consultative bodies as equal partners rather than marginalizing them. The GoM is eager to promote more robust regionalization and understands both the need and the opportunity to use such an approach to generate greater civic engagement among youth. Key informants suggested that regional councils have a great desire to play a more effective role in local governance in the target regions but feel ill equipped to do so—whether due to lack of knowledge, skills, or resources. A wealth of capability does exist in the three regions targeted for this assessment, but it is either untapped or inadequately used, whether on the “supply” side (regional council) or “demand” side (civil society). According to key informants, regional councils and CSOs can play an instrumental role in rebuilding and strengthening trust between the government and youth through renewed opportunities for state–citizen interaction. Donors can also play an important role by investing time and resources to (1) bring consultative bodies together to discuss the challenges they face and determine the priority focus areas; (2) improve coordination, connection, and willingness to share information among consultative bodies to encourage joint work and improve their involvement in local and regional development; (3) improve trust and strengthen the relationship between the regional council and consultative bodies through a clear articulation of plans and expected achievements; and (4) build capacity of the elected regional officials and consultative bodies. The TASHAROC Project currently works with the regional council and several CSOs in the Tangier-Tétouan-Al Hoceima region to support the design and implementation of development projects and to build capacity of elected regional officials and consultative bodies. Other donors can coordinate with this project and learn about best practices in design and implementation, especially in the area of gender and social inclusion and other capacity-building activities.

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<sup>81</sup> Hanae Ait Hattani, “New Media and Civic Participation in Morocco,” *Journal of Media Research* 10, no. 3 (November 2017): 5–25, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322658720\\_New\\_Media\\_and\\_Civic\\_Participation\\_in\\_Morocco](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322658720_New_Media_and_Civic_Participation_in_Morocco).

## G. Community Resilience

Community resilience has various definitions in the research field. For example, community resilience can be described as the ability of groups or communities to cope with external stresses and disturbances as a result of social, political, and environmental change. It is the ability of communities to withstand external shocks to their social infrastructure.<sup>82</sup> USAID's definition of resilience is similar: Resilience is the positive capacity to anticipate, prepare for, and recover from shocks and stressors to prevent households and communities from suffering long-term adverse consequences.<sup>83</sup> Community resilience initiatives, led by the GoM have contributed to building trust and reducing youth engagement in conflict. For example, there are over 650 youth centers ("Dar Shabab"), women's centers, and shelters in Morocco, which play an essential role in strengthening community resilience. At least 50 percent of funding for these centers comes from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and they play a central role by facilitating social integration and constituting a resilience mechanism that helps youth avoid the harmful consequences of inactivity and civic disengagement. Some youth centers offer training on the dangers young people may face, such as drugs, violence, crime, or radicalization.<sup>84</sup> Key informants noted that many of these youth houses/centers require new infrastructure and additional staff, but there is a significant funds deficit for building renovation and staff recruitment. Donors can invest resources in funding similar successful models and scaling them up to reach more youth throughout Morocco. One example of such a model is La Casa Tomada in El Salvador, which promotes local culture, social transformation, and citizen participation to build community resilience.

### Challenges to community resilience

Insufficient capacity of local stakeholders to design, implement, and evaluate efficient programming.

Gendered and youth-led approaches are rare.

Too few evidence-based models to build community resilience.

Overwhelming top-down approach by the GoM.

Limited range of community-led approaches through CSOs/CBOs.

Limited spectrum of programming for CSOs/CBOs.

However, there is more work to do to actively engage and build the capacity of local officials and CBOs to target at-risk youth and ensure their engagement in supportive activities. Political and socioeconomic drivers continue to be the main "push" factors that move youth toward violence. Factors such as lack of economic opportunities and lack of voice in decision-making, marginalization and discrimination, and domestic radicalization and extremist religious discourse led by informal networks and cells contribute to civic disengagement and push Moroccan youth toward violence. In addition to the push factors, or structural factors within the Moroccan society, there are also "pull" factors, which are psychological ones that can render an individual more susceptible to undertaking violent extremist behavior.<sup>85</sup> Pull factors include social status and respect from peers; a sense of belonging, adventure, and self-esteem; personal relationships; and

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5201352/>

<sup>83</sup> "Resilience Measurement Practical Guidance," USAID Center for Resilience, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://spark.adobe.com/page/rSGl6sulleW7d/>.

<sup>84</sup> *Youth Engagement and Empowerment*.

<sup>85</sup> "Drivers of Violent Extremism," UNODC, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-2/key-issues/drivers-of-violent-extremism.html>.

draw of social networks.<sup>86</sup> The programmatic response to VE has had the tendency to overestimate the push factors, as they hope to reduce VE by mitigating macrolevel economic and political root causes.<sup>87</sup> By focusing on the pull factors, such as belonging, personal relationships, and social networks, and encouraging engagement of disadvantaged youth populations in their communities, donors can help youth “develop their own power base, advocate reforms, and exert leadership” in their communities.<sup>88</sup>



*“The consultative bodies remain limited; they must wait until the Council requests advice or consult them. The body is still not well activated . . . up to now, there is no concrete action in the inclusion of youth.” – KII participant*

The council of government approved a National Integrated Youth Strategy in April 2014. This strategy is meant to be integrated, ensuring synergies and complementarities with all sectors intervening in the youth sector.<sup>89</sup> Research shows that the National Youth Strategy is not implemented using effective coordination between the government and local stakeholders to adequately address the push and pull factors. In fact, a security and law enforcement approach continues to prevail rather than more PYD and resilience-relevant approaches, such as providing socioeconomic inclusion activities through the INDH and other government programs (vocational training, sports, and cultural centers) and promoting moderate religious discourse and messaging.<sup>90</sup> These activities are limited, often do not reach disenfranchised groups, and often lack professional methods of community mobilization and participation. More needs to be done to move away from a law enforcement approach toward a PYD approach. International organizations focus on building resilience and preventing violence and extremism through empowering young men and women in the MENA region to engage in peacebuilding efforts and become change-makers in their own communities. Program designers believe that nurturing youth’s resilience will prevent their involvement in violent extremism and instead transform them into agents of positive change.<sup>91</sup> Other donors can invest funds in scaling up similar projects throughout Morocco.

### **Influencers of community resilience**

Youth in Morocco confirm that social media, family, friends, government, and community and religious leaders play an important role in strengthening community resilience. However, many of these drivers can play both a positive and negative role in youth’s communities. The survey asked youth to indicate people or organizations that have negative and positive influence over youth in the community in order to assess which factors can have the greatest impact on community resilience among youth. Young men and women survey respondents in both rural and urban areas reported that social media, government, and friends have the most **negative influence** over youth in their community. Almost 50 percent of youth in urban areas reported that social media has a negative influence. About 40 percent of urban youth reported that friends and government have negative influence (Figure G1). Young men and women reported that social media, friends, and government have the most negative influence over youth in their community, with more young men reporting negative influence compared to young women (Figure G2).

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<sup>86</sup> Jessica Jones, “Drivers of Violent Extremism,” CIPE, updated January 18, 2017, <https://www.cipe.org/resources/drivers-violent-extremism/>.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

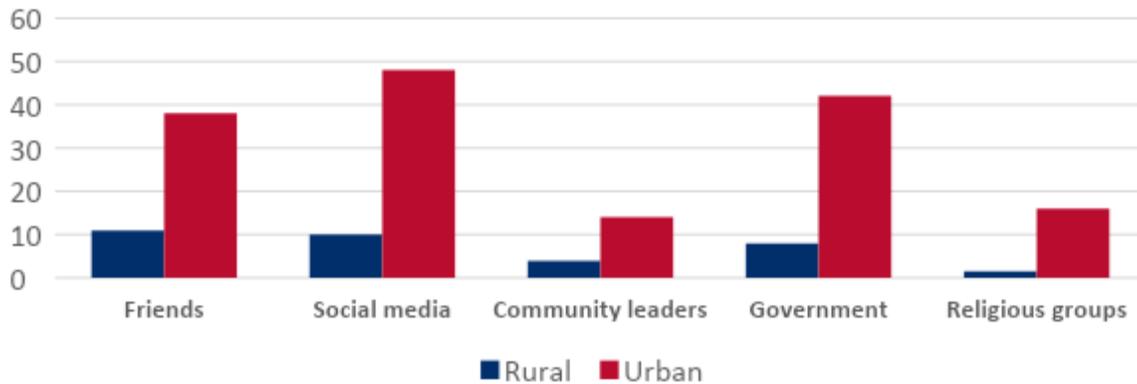
<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Karima Rhanem, *Country Sheet on Youth Policy in Morocco* (Brussels: European Commission and Council of Europe, 2015), <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262196/Morocco+country+sheet-2015.pdf/bb33a361-ce20-472c-bdb3-20096a129e9f>.

<sup>90</sup> <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/04/20/role-of-youth-engagement-in-counteracting-violent-extremism-event-5667>

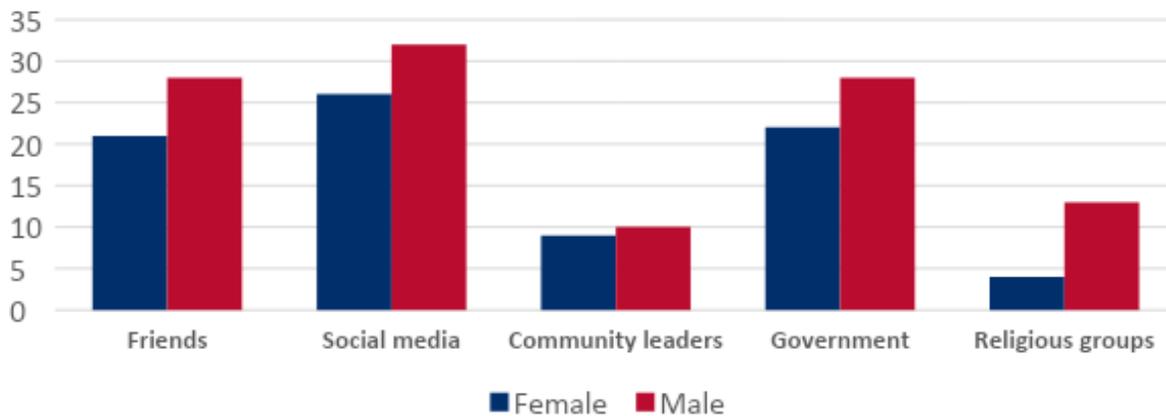
<sup>91</sup> “Prevention of Violent Extremism through Youth Empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia,” UNESCO, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://en.unesco.org/preventing-violent-extremism/youth/project/about>.

**Figure G1. People or organizations that have negative influence over young people, by community type**



When we look at survey data disaggregated by gender, we find that women are a few percentage points less likely to report negative influences over youth compared to young men. We notice a difference in perception between young men and women regarding the influence of religious groups. Young men are approximately 10 percent more likely than young women to report that religious groups can have a negative influence over youth in the community (Figure G2). This can be partially attributed to the role of young men in religious groups. They are typically more active compared to young women, and they may be more aware of the types of influence such groups have the potential to exert over youth in their community.

**Figure G2. People or organizations that have negative influence over young people, by gender**



Community and religious leaders were reported to have the least negative influence over youth compared to other organizations by both young men and young women (Figure G2), and key informants suggested that promoting moderate religious discourse, nonviolence messaging, and community cohesion can serve as an important approach to combating domestic radicalization. A study of the Fostering Peaceful Communities in Morocco Project demonstrates that if religious and community leaders gain capacity in countering VE (CVE) and work together in a multi-stakeholder approach, their community activities will be more effective in addressing the drivers of extremism. Key recommendations from this project are (1) considering engaging various community civil and religious organizations; (2) allocating considerable time and resources to building

partnerships and strengthening trust between the stakeholders; and (3) including capacity-building activities that cover variety of topics, such as communication, facilitation, and specific CVE approaches.<sup>92</sup>

*“Social media has increased youth interest and participation, as they can have . . . easy access to information and take part [in] participation and influence.”*

–Youth focus group participant

In addition to strengthening the role of community and religious leaders, FGD participants suggested it is also critical to provide youth with free-of-charge safe spaces where they can build their self-confidence and freedom of expression without fear and repression. Participants referred to the Citizens Café project as an important safe space promoting direct dialogue and communication between young people and decision-makers. The space hosts youth debates, cultural and creative activities about youth participation, and themes that interest young people. Another example of safe spaces are youth centers (mentioned earlier in this chapter), which can empower young people, provide safe environments, and promote youth participation in public life.

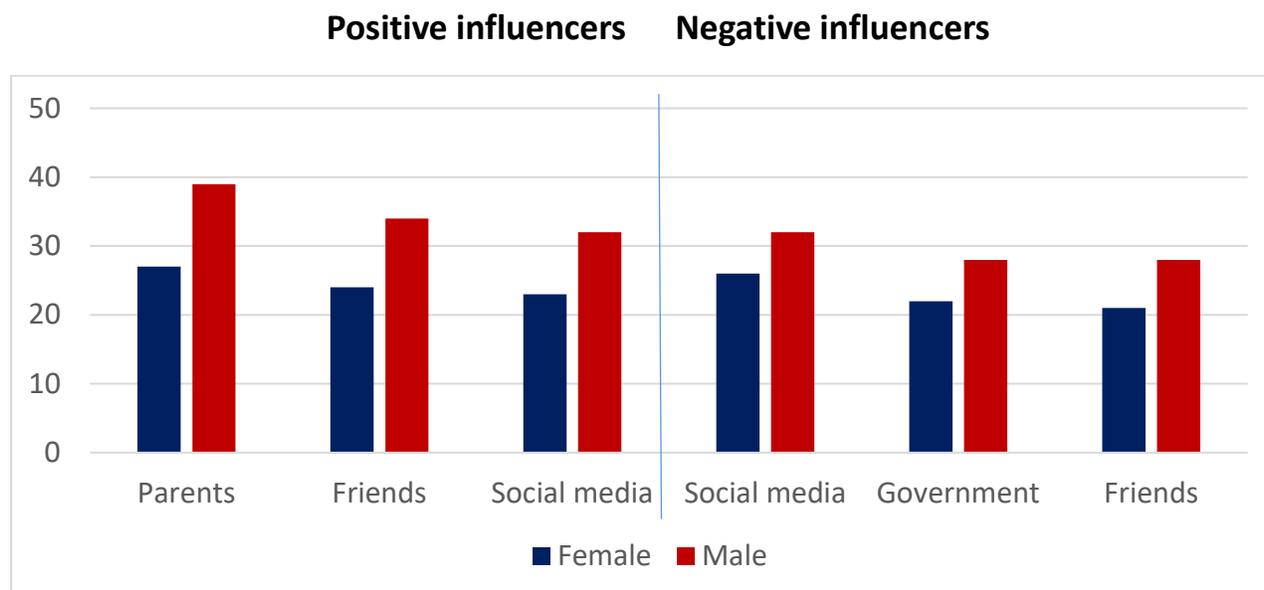
Young men and young women in both rural and urban areas reported parents as having the most **positive influence** over young people in their communities and ability to strengthen community resilience, followed by friends and social media (Figure G3). Earlier, we noted that social media and friends were also reported as having negative influence. Social media can have positive influence over youth, such as raising awareness among youth on important social or political issues and promoting positive relationships and behavior. On the other hand, social media can be used in a negative way to spread “fake news” or promote violence among youth. In addition to social media, friends and peers are an important and often more powerful influencer, as they can influence youth to volunteer for community services but can also promote negative behavior. While youth can be influenced by friends and peers, parents are likely the most influential factor in youth’s lives, and surveyed young men and women recognized parents as positive influencers over youth in their community.

Despite the importance of family and social media as positive influencers, interviews with stakeholders suggested that they remain underutilized as drivers that can strengthen community resilience among youth in Morocco. Key informants suggested that family and community members should try to support youth to use media to create positive narratives and disseminate constructive messaging. There are ongoing projects attempting to combat youth radicalization and promote tolerance online, but more needs to be done to address radicalization throughout Morocco. For example, one United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project supports the promotion of tolerance and citizenship in schools and funds positive internet programming. This is a small project, but it complements the efforts of the USAID Moroccan Community Resilience Activity to enhance community resilience in vulnerable communities in north Morocco by increasing participation and promoting responsive, effective governance. Other regions can also benefit from similar interventions, as key informants noted that most donors tend to invest in the north of Morocco.

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<sup>92</sup> *Lessons Learned from the Fostering Peaceful Communities in Morocco Project* (Rabat: Fostering Peaceful Communities in Morocco, 2018), <http://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Lessons-Learned-from-the-Fostering-Peaceful-Communities-in-Morocco-Project.pdf>.

**Figure G3. People or organizations that have positive and negative influence over young people, by gender**



In addition to parents as positive influencers, over 40 percent of urban youth and 10 percent of rural youth stated that CSOs play a positive role in the lives of youth. FGD participants expressed concern that there are limited community-led approaches for developing resilience among youth. Youth survey results indicate that strengthening civil society organizations and their role with youth could lead to increased civic engagement and improved resilience of young people. For example, government and donors can work collaboratively with civil society leaders at the local level, foster partnership among the various CSOs, and organize capacity-building activities that can help CSOs identify marginalized and at-risk youth, effectively building a network of resilience at the local level.

### III. CROSS-CUTTING PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

#### A. Donor Engagement

Donor engagement in the youth sector is high in Morocco. Donors support economic and workforce development, education, health, and other social-sector programs. KIs with key representatives of the donor community suggested a number of gaps and opportunities that USAID could support in the next five years.

1. While donors are actively engaged in Morocco, there is a lack of coordination among the work being conducted on the ground. The fragmented interventions are particularly stark among stakeholders working with economic inclusion and integration. Several stakeholders noted that USAID has the standing to lead donor coordination in the sector, an activity that would reduce some of the fragmentation that currently occurs.
2. KIs revealed the lack of effective systems for dissemination of civic engagement opportunities. One donor stated, “Youth that participated in our focus groups want to be engaged in their communities, but they don’t know how or where to engage. There is no system in place to help youth understand how they can help and where they can go to become more civically active.” USAID could substantively contribute to this gap by investing in better dissemination and knowledge-sharing systems to help youth and youth-led organizations become more civically active. USAID could also actively engage youth in the decision-making process throughout the program cycle to ensure that

their input is accounted for in the design and that programs are relevant to youth needs and interests.

3. The donor community in Morocco is active. Donors such as the World Bank, UNICEF, MCC, AFD, UNDP, the Dutch government, Spanish Cooperation, and others are implementing more than fifteen separate youth programs in education, workforce, water, and governance. However, KII interviews suggest that there is very limited outreach to truly marginalized populations. Interviewees suggest that donor programs tend to target interventions to urban and peri-urban areas, specifically in the north of the country. The focus of the programs limits outreach to extremely rural and hard-to-reach populations. Key informants suggested collaborating with smaller organizations/NGOs and extending youth programs to other areas, such as the south, east, and oriental regions. USAID programming should focus on identifying the populations/regions that are not currently being reached by donors and target education and workforce activities to those populations/regions.
4. There is a lack of effective public–private dialogue and coordination on regional and local economic development and job creation among national, regional and local governments, Wilaya, the private sector, universities, and civil society. KII results show that a number of donors see USAID as a leader in the donor community given the number of years that the organization has been in Morocco as well as USAID’s global standing. Several donors noted areas that USAID could substantively contribute to in the coming years: “[USAID’s] work in education and employment has been really good, and they should continue to support these areas. But there are a lot of donors already working in economic integration/workforce and no one working in civic engagement. If they could take a lead in improving civic engagement for youth, it would be a big contribution to Morocco.” The KIIs with donors also suggested that USAID would be well-positioned to lead donor coordination groups in Morocco.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this youth assessment support a range of recommendations for USAID to consider as part of its new CDCS. The following recommendations are listed by sector and by short-term wins and longer-term investments.

### Education

#### Short-Term Wins

- Continue to promote quality education for youth by supporting continued learning and innovation with stronger standards for teacher professional development.<sup>93</sup> USAID should build off the current Higher Education Partnership Program in Morocco (HEP-M), where Arizona State University’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, working with universities and teacher-training institutions (CRMEFs), could develop a strategy to integrate more robust professional standards into the teacher recruitment and training system.
- Promote minimum accessibility standards for people with disabilities that allow youth and others with disabilities to have better access to schools, businesses, offices, and movement in public spaces. Accessibility standards must take into account and cater to the diversity of people with disabilities (mobility, intellectual, deafness, hard of hearing, blindness, and low vision). For example, the promotion of the use of assistive devices would increase accessibility to educational content, while the establishment of access ramps and disability-friendly sanitary facilities in schools would most

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<sup>93</sup> While HEP-M will assist the MOE in the implementation of the newly adopted law (loi cadre 51.17), which aims to improve preservice teacher training, USAID should also target programs that promote and strengthen in-service training for current teachers.

likely increase attendance rates among children and youth with disabilities. Standards could be based on best practices elsewhere, shared with relevant authorities, and accompanied by a public awareness campaign to spur widespread adoption.

- Scale up existing programs that link HEIs and TVET institutions to the job market through work study activities, apprenticeships, and internships and by supporting workshops and seminars for key stakeholders to increase both the number of youth beneficiaries and the scale of engagement between TVETs and the private sector. The World Bank is financing a new program called Supporting the Economic Inclusion of Youth (SEIY), which will focus on an innovative approach that combines training for lower-skilled youth and support for entrepreneurs and will draw on lessons learned from past programs aimed at developing the capacity of local authorities.<sup>94</sup> This new project may offer opportunities for collaboration and lessons learned—sharing in the area of youth economic inclusion. Research demonstrates that generally, skills training, apprenticeships, and job search support are in high demand in Morocco, but these programs have limited coverage, especially among disadvantaged youth. The review of a wide range of institutions and programs reveals common constraints such as inadequate staffing and facilities, little focus on poor and disadvantaged youth, funds deficit, and lack of coordination among service providers.<sup>95</sup> However, there are several examples of innovative experiences targeting different categories of disadvantaged youth. For instance, the EFE-Morocco Foundation partnered with the private sector to enable the labor market entry of graduates as well as with several universities to offer the Workplace Success Program (behavioral and marketing training, employability skills, etc.) to students in their last year of study for a bachelor’s or master’s degree. This program has achieved placement rates above average in the Moroccan context. Another promising innovative program that has targeted disadvantaged youth is implemented by NGO Heure Joyeuse. It has a limited coverage, but one of its strengths has been the customization of training and placement programs based on gender. Unfortunately, the number of young beneficiaries of these programs is very small, and this suggests that more resources are needed to scale up the impact of these interventions.<sup>96</sup> The MCC Morocco Secondary Education and Workforce programs are targeting secondary education and TVET institutions. These programs are discussed in more detail in Annex G.
- Support MOE efforts as may be needed to adopt nationally the Career Centers’ Project model that invited private-sector players into schools, HEIs, and TVET institutions to help them better understand the educational context and learn how to interact with, support, and benefit more from engagement with educational institutions. USAID should consider linking ongoing support for the Career Centers to the work the World Bank is funding under SEIY and FISSIP (below). USAID can support the Ministry of Education to adopt the Career Center nationally or extend it to urban or rural areas in the south of Morocco, where there is a lack of ISED activities.
- Scale up in-school communications programs (e.g., video presentations, job fairs that feature successful TVET graduates—especially youth with disabilities and women—and career days at TVETs by adapting the university-level model developed with USAID support so that professionals can present possible career paths and discuss networking and follow-up strategies. USAID public – private partnerships (PPPs) with UNIDO, EON Reality, FESTO Didactic, the H2O Maghreb project, the Office de la Formation Professionnelle et de Promotion du Travail (OFPPT), and the MOE provide successful models for such activities.

## Long-Term Investments

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<sup>94</sup> “New Program to Support Youth Employment in Morocco focusing on Building Skills, Promoting Entrepreneurship and Expanding the Private Sector,” World Bank, updated May 10, 2019, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2019/05/09/new-program-to-support-youth-employment-in-morocco>.

<sup>95</sup> *Kingdom of Morocco*.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

- Continue to strengthen preservice and in-service teacher-training programs (as being done via the HEP-M project) for primary and secondary school teachers with emphasis on effective pedagogy and support to the MOE to scale up training at the national level. Teachers can apply their new knowledge with pedagogical support from inspectors and supervisors.
- Design and/or scale up flexible out-of-school accelerated learning programs for youth, especially for NEETs and particularly in rural areas, that promote literacy and numeracy and offer certificates of achievement recognized by the MOE that are linked to income-generating activities (e.g., as done by FORSATY<sup>97</sup>) that incentivize youth participation. In some cases, youth could move into or back into TVET programs or continue directly with their livelihood activities.
- The current USAID-funded Reading for Success-National Program for Reading (RFS-NPR) is instituting and promoting a new methodology for teaching reading in Arabic in all Moroccan primary schools. However, data from both the KIIs and focus groups with stakeholders noted that additional support is needed for these curriculum reforms that use student-centered learning (SCL) approaches.<sup>98</sup> USAID should continue to capitalize on current Mission programs such as the National Program for Reading, focus on relevance and quality of education, and use information and communication technology (ICT) tools and methodologies to ensure blended and tailored learning approaches. One of the key barriers relayed through the KIIs is that teaching and learning are still heavily reliant on the teacher, where students are only recipients of learning and not creators of it. Even in language teacher-training courses, SCL approaches are now the norm (e.g., TKT, CELTA & DELTA). More needs to be done to shift the social norm and empower students to be creators of their own learning. Curriculum reform should begin with teacher and community working groups that develop strategies for increased inclusion of women and youth with disabilities and engage the private sector to link learning to job market needs.
- Increase support for curriculum design that emphasizes a) language acquisition at primary through tertiary levels through exposure and practice, b) soft skills, and c) entrepreneurship education to better prepare students for continuous education, enhance training outcomes and work prospects.
- Scale up programs (such as those undertaken via USAID's PPPs) to strengthen a TVET environment via using SCL to teach skills and inclusion of updated industry knowledge and expertise by (1) piloting SCL approaches in the TVET environment; (2) supporting enhanced professional development programs for TVET teachers such as study tours, exchange visits, thematic seminars, and practical workshops; and (3) continuing to strengthen private-sector engagement with TVET institutions to build and deliver demand-driven programs and curricula. Promote local working groups of businesses and instructors to expand opportunities for the private sector to share experiences with students and create practical classes linked to job market needs.

## Economic Growth

### Short-Term Wins

- Promote youth entrepreneurship by supporting business development services to increase the chances for youth business start-up survival and the growth of youth-led micro-, small- and medium-size (MSM) businesses. These services can include providing tools that explain the business start-up process, facilitating the application process for youth, improving access to grants to offset barriers related to accessing credit, and organizing innovation seminars that help youth develop strategic

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<sup>97</sup> FORSATY (Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today's Youth) helps strengthen bonds between youth and their communities in northern Morocco.

<sup>98</sup> Student-centered learning moves students from passive receivers of information to active participants in their own discovery process. What students learn, how they learn it, and how their learning is assessed are all driven by each individual student's needs and abilities. Source: International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

business ideas. Robust mentorship and “accompaniment” for skills capacity-building is also vital. The Career Center, Small Enterprise Assistance Fund, and the planned GiveDirectly interventions offer models for these activities.

- Focus on entrepreneurial inclusiveness by setting aside a portion of funds to support business start-ups and expansions led by young women and youth with disabilities as well as providing the additional support described in the above bullet. Consider the SEAF approach, which has already supported creation of several start-ups, and GiveDirectly, which will provide funding for marginalized micro-entrepreneurs.
- Fund local (regional, provincial and communal levels) labor market surveys (building on those already undertaken by the Career Center and USAID PPPs through UNIDO) that are sector-, subsector-, and firm-specific, pointing to value chain gaps, niche opportunities, and opportunities for subcontracting and joint ventures between small and larger firms.
- Capitalize on USAID global and local best practices in private-sector engagement, training, job placement, and youth economic inclusion by sharing experiences during capacity-building activities. These activities might include training workshops, exchange visits, and study tours.
- Apply USAID’s strategic framework for youth-friendly, private-sector engagement for entrepreneurship development (funding, testing youth-focused ideas, technical support, networking, youth-focused market access, mentoring, etc.).
- Help uncover underexploited or unexploited and youth-friendly income-generating and entrepreneurship activities via labor market and value chain assessments and community youth mapping (such as the one completed by FORSATY) that can help identify gaps viewed as opportunities and then help youth to understand the promise of these opportunities and generate excitement about new prospects.
- Develop digital content such as training modules, how-to guides, and videos in local language(s). Provide motivational and skills-building tools and disseminate these through those social and other media platforms such as the AR/VR training platform with EON Reality<sup>99</sup>.

### Long-Term Investments

- Continue supporting Morocco’s Ministry of Labor and other relevant ministries (e.g., Ministry of Industry, where a PPP with UNIDO operates) to strengthen labor market information systems based on results of labor market surveys. Ensure that the labor market information system includes up-to-date job information for both the formal and informal sectors and is accessible online to all youth with internet access.
- Work with USAID partners to ensure that relevant development partners and stakeholders focus on the issue of finance for start-ups and for micro and small enterprise growth, possibly by sponsoring business plan competitions and using small grants and/or very low-interest loans earmarked for growth sectors as indicated by market surveys, supported by mentoring and capacity development.
- Continue support for employability training linked to apprenticeships, internships, or near-term employment prospects and ensure that such training is designed to enhance performance and ensure better outcomes with performance indicators built into the process (i.e., training is a means not an end).
- Support opportunities for rural youth business training and enterprise development by organizing entrepreneurship caravans and rural, ecosystem, and value-chain development. Caravans involve mobile trucks that stop in villages and organize community activities such as contests, games, and

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<sup>99</sup> See the VCC/virtual career center website/platform

coaching sessions for students. The activities are coordinated with local authorities. Similar activities have in the past been carried out by the OCP Foundation, BMCE Bank, and Attijariwafa Bank, as well as OFPPT.<sup>100</sup>

- Continue to support systemic and holistic approaches that include youth leadership training and help ensure youth access to youth-friendly services, inputs, credit, etc., to build youth capacity to enter high-growth sectors and value chains. Increase the effectiveness of such approaches by continuing to facilitate multiple stakeholder engagement and collaboration for policy, training, funding, and workforce development.

## Civic Engagement and Participatory Governance

### Short-Term Wins

- USAID could support implementing partners' efforts to leverage social media for awareness, mobilization, outreach, advocacy, leadership training, and learning by creating youth-led thematic groups and supporting longitudinal research on impact conducted by local researchers and universities with optimal youth participation.
- Promote policy reform for subnational consultative bodies to build their capacity to generate more concrete outcomes as a result of more actionable plans and improved processes (e.g., via community scorecards for a more iterative process with broader community participation).
- Continue to engage youth and local communities in cocreation processes around the design of USAID programs for youth engagement and include training to foster intergenerational cooperation.

### Long-Term Investments

- Include a mechanism in projects to provide grants to youth-led organizations (where relevant and when not already being done) to strengthen their capacity to grow. This can have an immediate positive impact on the receiving organizations and lay the groundwork for longer term change while also allowing projects to demonstrate short-term responsiveness to youth needs, motivating youth to participate more in such youth groups. (e.g., through small grants to equip youth groups with computers and internet connectivity, to organize leadership, computer skills, and other workshops and provide services).
- Strengthen existing programs (e.g., Civil Society Strengthening Program (CSSP), Local Works, FORSATY, and planned regional activities) and, when indicated, build new pathways for youth individually and via youth-led organizations to participate more actively in their societies through subnational institutions and mechanisms at the regional, provincial, and community levels (e.g., by training local officials on principles of PYD and how to use local mechanisms to enhance inclusion).
- Continue to strengthen the capacity of entities that engage youth (CBOs, CSOs, youth-led groups), especially those that have been marginalized, so they become active participants in local governance activities in ways that facilitate scaling up of local initiatives (e.g., securing youth inclusion on local committees, holding youth workshops to train youth on organizing, advocacy and communication). CSSP and Local Works can provide guidance here.

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<sup>100</sup> Given the lack of information on the success of these caravans, there is a need to first evaluate past experiences with entrepreneurship caravans and, if positive, then pilot these to promote rural, ecosystem, and value-chain development. A recent experience was launched in July 2019 by the Danish-Arab Partnership Programme (<https://www.dapp.dk/en/growth-and-entrepreneurship/entrepreneurship-takes-hold-among-women-and-young-people-in-morocco/>).

- Enable youth-led and youth-serving organizations to promote community-led initiatives to proactively engage government institutions on specific issues of direct concern to those communities (e.g., by building their capacity to advocate for and help achieve enhanced sports facilities, trash collection, support for community day care, outdoor market hygiene).
- Support training for youth-led and youth-serving organizations in how to find, access, and use government data, data from development partners and the private sector, and their own internally generated data to strengthen their capacity to develop strategies and design activities that support their own priorities.
- Boost the participation in civil society of female youth (especially those in rural areas and with disabilities) to help address acute gender disparities by (1) including benchmarks and quotas for female youth participation in relevant USAID activities, (2) incentivizing local and regional governments to increase youth participation in governance, and (3) supporting communication advocacy efforts by youth and women’s groups.

## Community Resilience

- Support communication campaigns such as those being undertaken by FORSATY/COPA (vigorously inclusive of young women) and led by local governments, CSOs, and youth-led organizations that emphasize the values of peace, tolerance, diversity, and youth participation in local governance to help at-risk youth find new pathways for their own journey to self-reliance.
- As being done by FORSATY, coordinate community resilience activities with civic engagement and economic growth efforts since this will help address key drivers that lead youth to high levels of frustration and risk for antisocial behavior (e.g., more responsive regional councils and strengthened CSOs can help rebuild trust between the government and youth).
- As being done by FORSATY, continue and enhance (1) the engagement of family units by designing ways to strengthen family-based social networks and empowering parents as prevention advocates to build greater youth resilience; (2) the role of communities, through technical assistance to youth-serving organizations (YSOs), CSOs, and CBOs to play a wider role in resilience program design, implementation, and monitoring; and (3) create and/or support safe spaces for youth where they can participate in youth activities and gain access to youth-relevant health, nutrition, and other information.
- Continue to apply best practices in gendered approaches to resilience-building through gender mainstreaming in the program cycle by involving women-led groups as critical stakeholders and engaging young women and girls as sources of influence to build resilience. The FORSATY example and USAID work funded by the Women Peace and Security Funds provide a strong foundation for scale up.

## PYD and Youth Coordination

- Continue and enhance donor coordination initiatives (such as those ongoing with the UK, GIZ, World Bank, the Netherlands, and others) that go beyond information-sharing and prioritize closer alignment of complementary projects while documenting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned using a learning agenda to build synergies and improve effectiveness of activities funded by USAID and others.
- Conduct capacity building with regional and local actors on the PYD framework and the importance of youth inclusion in decision-making. Once trained, these youth “champions” can take the lead to promote a PYD agenda in their organizations.

- Develop a community of practice amongst YSOs so they can share lessons learned and increase coordination on ways to build youth resiliency by strengthening assets and agency and promoting youth participation in civil society.

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## **B. USAID/Morocco Youth Learning Agenda**

### **Stakeholder engagement and coordination**

- What is the effectiveness of multiple stakeholder engagement coordination and collaboration mechanisms on youth-related issues?
- What are the best practices to promote stakeholder coordination and collaboration on youth issues?

### **Private-sector engagement**

- What are the best practices for private-sector engagement in youth programming in Morocco?
- How can the private sector be leveraged for more impactful youth programming in Morocco?
- What are the motives and incentives of the private sector to be engaged in positive youth development?

### **Impact of climate change**

- What is the evolving socioeconomic impact of climate change on rural youth populations in Morocco?

### **Youth policy reform**

- What are the priority youth policy issues that require pressing long-term reforms?
- What are the most effective advocacy methods and campaigns that can be leveraged to plan youth policy reform?

### **Entrepreneurship development**

- What are the social, economic and psychological impacts of “necessity” entrepreneurship development programs targeting marginalized groups?
- What are the best models for developing youth entrepreneurs in Morocco?

### **Education—teacher training**

- How can primary and secondary teacher training programs become more effective?
- What are the most effective ways to incentivize teachers to engage in further professional development?

### **Education—inclusive education**

- What inclusive education models work best in Morocco?
- What are the psychological and economic effects of strengthening inclusive education across youth segments in Morocco?

### **Education—language, communication, and soft skills**

- How can the Moroccan education system better integrate use of English and soft-skills training beyond the upcoming bachelor reform?
- What best practices in language learning can be implemented across different levels of education in Morocco?

### **Education—vocational training**

- What best practices can be promoted for stakeholder coordination and collaboration on vocational training?
- How can TVET be promoted positively across different youth segments?
- How can the private sector be further engaged in the TVET ecosystem in order to gain a better understanding of market needs and skill demands?

## **Positive youth development (PYD)**

- What PYD programming features are most important to success in Morocco?
- How well does a cross-sectoral PYD programming model work in Morocco? Do PYD models see significant positive effects?
- How can Morocco best measure the implementation of PYD approaches at the program, system, or agency level?
- How effective are tailored PYD programs at serving the needs of vulnerable or marginalized populations (e.g., young women, youth with disabilities, rural/mountain youth, etc.)?
- What strategies are effective in enabling meaningful youth engagement in Morocco?

## C. Key Informant List

Institution	Title
Ministry of Higher Education.	Head of the CC Central Committee
Institute for Leadership and Communication Studies	IAV Hassan II Faculty member and Vice-President
USAID/Morocco	Programme Management Specialist (Democracy and Governance)
USAID/Morocco	Programme Management Specialist (Education)
Peace Corps	Director of Programming and Training
MCC	Deputy Country Director
US Embassy Public Affairs Section	Cultural Affairs Attache
USAID/Morocco	Peace and Security Regional Advisor
Marruecos Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo AECID	Coordinador General en Funciones Oficina Técnica de Cooperación
MENTOR	CEO-Entrepreneurship Expert
Dutch Embassy	Officer
US Embassy Political Affairs Section	Political Officer
Tangier OFPPT Career Center (CC)	Head
OFPPT.	Management and expansion of the CC network
USAID/Morocco	Education Specialist
	Former Secretary of State in charge of Vocational Training
National Agency for Quality and Quality in Higher Education	Director
USAID/Morocco	Senior Development Specialist
USAID/Morocco	Programme Management Specialist (Democracy and Governance)
Foundation Zakoura	Executive Director
USAID/Morocco	Project Management Specialist
Mohamed V University	Former Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Humanities
ICESCO	Head of Resource Development
UNICEF	Adolescent and Youth Participation Officer

## D. Focus Group Participant List

Focus Group	Organization/Attendees
<b>Focus Group with Citizens Network for Youth and Development (5 representatives)</b>	
<b>Focus Group with CSOs, Béni-Mellal Khénifra (10 representatives):</b>	
Tissu Associatif de Développement de la Province d'Azilal TADA	
Carrefour pour le développement (CARDEV)	
Association Qualification des Jeunes	
Collectif pour la justice des femmes (THEMIS)	
Mouvement Jeunesse pour le Développement local (AMOUJ)	
Troupe ORCHID	
BAYT BAHYA	
Al Intilaka Pour Le Développement, L'Environnement Et La Culture (AIDECA)	
Observatoire Régional de la migration et le Développement (ORMID)	
Mouvement Jeunesse pour le Développement local (AMOUJ)	
<b>Focus Group with Experts (4 representatives)</b>	
<b>Focus Group with YOUTH CB Béni- Mellal Khénifra (3 representatives)</b>	

## E. Youth Perspectives on Vocational Training Programs

The youth survey respondents did not believe that vocational training programs are very successful in linking youth to job opportunities; only 8 percent indicated that training programs are very successful in linking youth to jobs, while 40 percent believed the programs were somewhat successful, 31 percent said TVET was somewhat unsuccessful, and 10 percent believed that these programs are very unsuccessful. Rural respondents were 13 percent more likely to believe that vocational training programs are successful in linking youth to jobs, while young women were less likely than young men to believe this by 7 percentage points.

Table EI. Youth's views on vocational training programs, by gender and community type

Measure	Mean	Mean (females)	Mean (males)	Difference	Mean (rural)	Mean (urban)	Difference
School and vocational training programs help youth choose career path	0.43	0.42	0.44	-0.02	0.42	0.43	-0.01
There a difference in opportunities for education between urban and rural	0.83	0.88	0.79	0.08	0.85	0.82	0.03
Has benefited from any career counseling	0.16	0.12	0.18	-0.06	0.14	0.16	-0.02
Aware of any VT programs	0.44	0.35	0.50	-0.15	0.39	0.45	-0.06
Has access to VT programs	0.57	0.66	0.53	0.13	0.44	0.61	-0.18
Barriers to accessing VT programs: Lack of awareness	0.26	0.24	0.28	-0.03	0.29	0.26	0.03
Barriers to accessing VT programs: Lack of interest	0.20	0.26	0.16	0.10	0.17	0.21	-0.04
Barriers to accessing VT programs: Lack of program availability	0.20	0.11	0.26	-0.15**	0.33	0.17	0.16*
Barriers to accessing VT programs: Lack of resources	0.34	0.39	0.31	0.08	0.58	0.29	0.29***
Barriers to accessing VT programs: Lack of decent job prospects following VT	0.48	0.43	0.51	-0.09	0.38	0.50	-0.13
Barriers to accessing VT programs: Other	0.08	0.02	0.13	-0.11**	0.04	0.09	-0.05
VT is very successful in linking youth to jobs	0.06	0.02	0.09	-0.07*	0.17	0.04	0.13**
VT is somewhat successful in linking youth to jobs	0.40	0.50	0.34	0.16*	0.54	0.38	0.17
VT is somewhat unsuccessful in linking youth to jobs	0.31	0.22	0.38	-0.15*	0.17	0.35	-0.18*
VT is very unsuccessful in linking youth to jobs	0.10	0.06	0.13	-0.07	0.08	0.09	-0.01

Note:

Sample size is 134 respondents total

\* indicates significance at the 10 percent level.

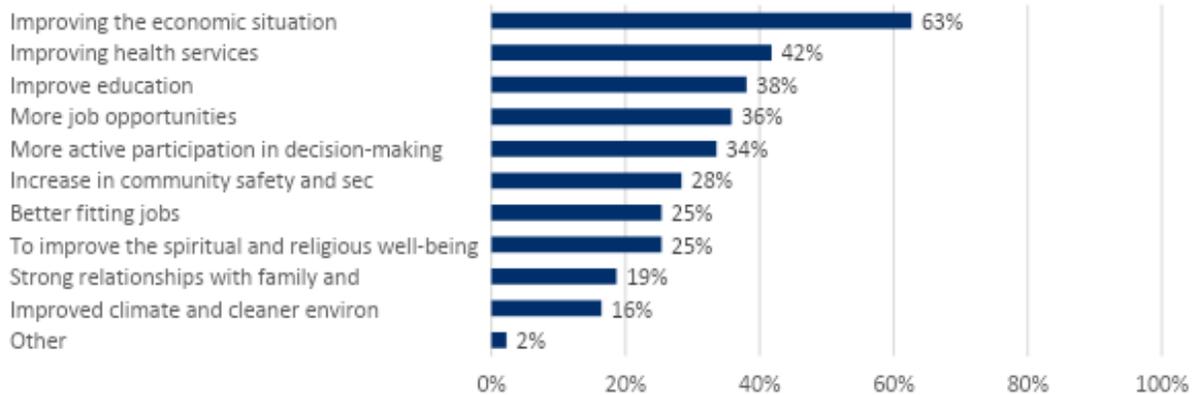
\*\* indicates significance at the 5 percent level.

\*\*\* indicates significance at the 1 percent level.

## F. Factors That Improve Youth Livelihoods

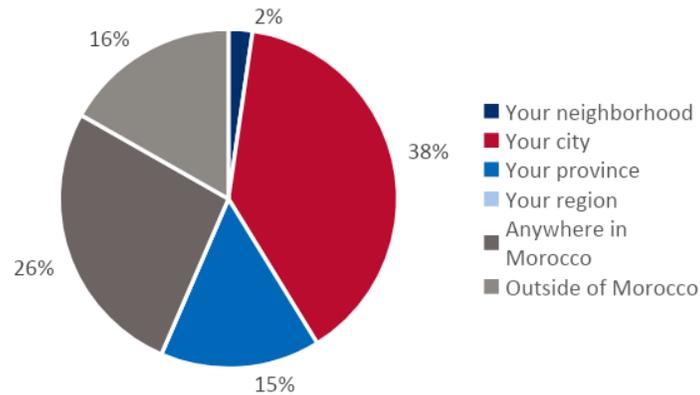
Youth believe that improving their economic situation is the most important factor for improving their lives (63% of respondents chose this choice among the top 3 most important factors) (See Figure F1). However, only 36% of respondents said that more job opportunities would improve their lives and only 19 percent felt that strong relationships with their families improved their lives.

Figure F1. Top factors that would improve life for youth



Another barrier to employment is a lack of jobs in the cities that youth are from, particularly in the rural areas. If given the opportunity, most youth prefer to work in their city (38%); youth do not wish to relocate abroad for work (see Figure F2). However, due to a lack of local job opportunities, many youth have to locate to larger cities or abroad to find economic opportunities.

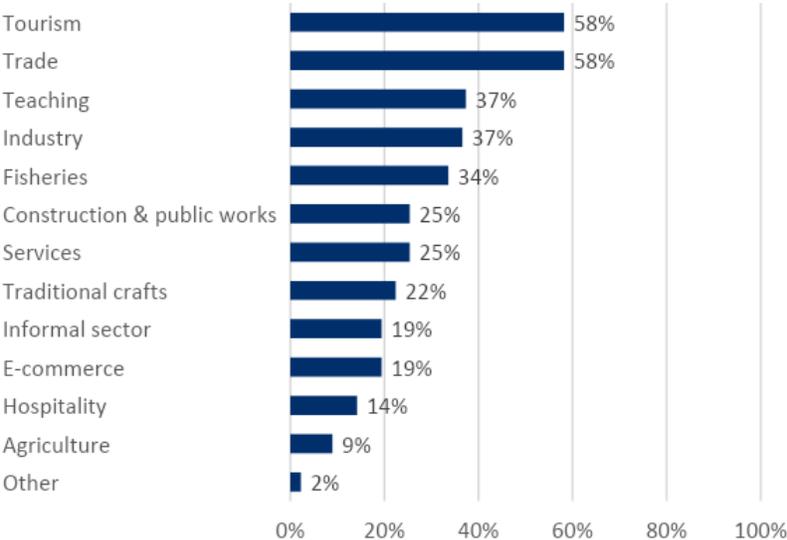
Figure F2. Work location preference



There is a disconnect between the types of jobs that youth desire, and the jobs that are available to them. Most youth survey participants (51%) would prefer working in business and management, or the IT sector (37%) (see Figure F3). Qualitative respondents similarly report that high-skilled jobs are the most desirable jobs for youth, such as jobs in civil society and tourism, and internet related jobs such as audiovisual jobs and content-

creation. However, the top five industries to seek employment in Morocco include: agriculture, fishing, industry, manufacturing, and tourism<sup>101</sup>.

F3. Sectors that youth survey respondents believe provide the most job opportunities



<sup>101</sup> <https://www.globaltenders.com/economy-of-morocco.php/>

## **G. Synergies and Complementarities with Other Donors**

This annex focuses on synergies and complementarities that USAID has with other donors and recommendations and lessons learned from recent or current USAID youth-focused projects in Morocco. We address the cross-cutting programmatic issues in section III of this report. The table is not comprehensive since hundreds of projects and many public, non-profit, and private actors exist in Morocco. The projects presented below are limited to recent or current projects of significant size supported by major donors, including USAID, that target youth, women, and marginalized groups.

Table G.1: Selected youth-focused donor projects in Morocco

Project Title, Funder, Funding Levels and Duration	Location	Partners/ Implementing Agencies	Essential Components and Target Beneficiaries	Recommendation and Potential Areas for New or Improved Synergies
			<b>Inclusive Socio-</b>	<b>Economic Development (ISED) Activities.</b>
<b>Career Centers' Project</b> <b>USAID/Morocco</b> <b>2015-2020</b>	\$24 million Casablanca, Marrakech, Tangiers	FHI 360, International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), Education for Employment (EFE), Golden Resources (G.R.)	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project established six career development centers linked to universities and the vocational training system. It also incorporates workforce readiness training into the Moroccan tertiary education system, vocational training system, and workplaces.</li> <li>The project established a Virtual Career Center, which offers online services for young Moroccans who cannot visit the physical centers.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 200,000 youth have benefitted from Career Center services.</li> <li>Over 1,283,000 users have visited the Virtual Career Center.</li> <li>Over 120 staff from partner institutions received training to prepare them to staff future Career Centers.</li> </ul>	<p>This project helped establish a foundation for career centers in Morocco and incorporated work readiness training. USAID should consider linking ongoing support for the Career Centers to the work the World Bank is funding under SEIY and FISSIP (below). USAID can support the Ministry of Education to adopt the Career Center nationally or extend it to urban or rural areas in the south of Morocco, where there is a lack of ISED activities.</p>
<b>ISED</b> <b>USAID/Morocco</b> <b>To be awarded</b>	TBD Marrakech-Safi, Beni Mellal-Khénifra	N/A	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An integrated local development program that will encompass the economic growth and governance sector.</li> <li>Will include the creation of public-private partnerships (PPP)s.</li> <li>Will provide support to activities that reinforce community resilience by strengthening key institutions and civil society organizations' capacity in providing services to at-risk youth in vulnerable communities.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marginalized populations, particularly women, youth, and people with disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p>This project bears some similarities with the World Bank SEIY program, and USAID can look for synergies and opportunities for mutual learning through these integrated PPP and workforce-related programs.</p>

<b>Supporting the Economic Inclusion of Youth (SEIY)</b>  <b>World Bank</b>  <b>Effective June 2019</b>	\$55 million	Marrakech-Safi	MTIP, CRI, ANAPEC, INDH, Secretariat of Vocational Training and its regional department (SEFP/DRFP)	<u>Components</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes youth employability and economic inclusion.</li> <li>Fosters entrepreneurial ecosystem and supports entrepreneurship opportunities for youth.</li> <li>Institutional capacity building and program implementation support.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-skill females and males, long-term unemployed and inactive youth, urban and rural informal sector workers.</li> <li>Aspiring youth entrepreneurs ages 18-34.</li> <li>MSMEs and cooperatives in high job creation value chains.</li> </ul>	<p>These goals are similar to those of the economic growth component of ISED-BMK. The program resides in an adjacent region (Marrakech-Safi), where USAID is considering designing another ISED initiative. With 15 months of implementation now completed, its strategies, experiences, indicators, challenges, and successes should be of great interest to USAID. The design of an M.S. Region ISED should complement the SEIY and try to identify points of synergy. Simultaneously, the soon to be launched ISED in BMK should reach out to the SEIY implementing partners for lessons learned and ensure coherence since some of them will also be involved with the ISED-BMK.</p>
<b>Financing Innovative Start-Ups and SMEs Project (FISSP)</b>  <b>World Bank</b>  <b>June 2017-December 2023</b>	\$50 million	Nationwide	N/A	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance program for SMEs.</li> <li>Ecosystem support for SMEs.</li> <li>Management, coordination, and M&amp;E related to SMEs.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-income households; micro, small, and young firms; youth and women. The project is part of the planned National Financial Inclusion Strategy</li> <li>The project works to "change mindsets, especially among youth, who are conditioned to seek public sector employment" and will develop relevant skills and behaviors for youth.</li> </ul>	<p>This project is active in all 12 Moroccan regions and offers a significant source of financing for MSMEs, especially those owned by or promoting youth, women, and marginalized groups. As such, there are substantial complementarities with the economic growth component of USAID ISED activities. Both ISED and the FISSP focus on enhancing business and livelihood activities and are focused on the business "ecosystem" to promote sustainability. FISSP initiatives can help facilitate ISED approaches' scalability by strengthening the enabling environment and increasing access to business capital. Also, FISSP is relevant to the MENA II activity that works with "incubators, angel funds, and venture capital funds."</p>
<b>FORSA for all II</b>  <b>UNICEF, U.K. Foreign &amp; Commonwealth Office</b>  <b>2019-2022</b>	N/A	Souss Massa, Marrakech- Safi, l'Oriental region, and Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima	N/A	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project aims to facilitate a positive transition to working life for millions of adolescents and young Moroccans.</li> <li>The project revolves around three axes: 1) strengthening of the quality of education at the secondary level, 2) integration of citizenship education and life skills in the secondary curriculum, and 3) strengthening the career counseling system.</li> </ul>	<p>Among UNICEF's recommendations to other donors and implementers from the first FORSA project were to promote and adopt inclusive and participatory approaches in developing and planning similar projects to encourage better ownership by stakeholders and ensure greater coordination and consultation.</p>

				<u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millions of youth aged 10 to 24.</li> </ul>	
<b>Morocco Workforce Development Project</b>  <b>Millennium Challenge Corporation</b>  <b>June 2017-June 2022</b>	\$107 million	Nationwide	Instiglio, CIDE,  GOPA  Worldwide Consultants	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the quality and relevance of TVET programs that respond to private sector needs.</li> <li>Provide technical assistance to develop and implement a demand-driven TVET sector policy.</li> <li>Provide effective employment services to help unemployed or economically inactive women and unemployed, at-risk urban and peri-urban youth obtain quality jobs.</li> <li>Support the operationalization of a Labor Market Observatory to provide a broad range of stakeholders with dynamic labor market information to improve public policy and private investment decision-making.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millions of youth, including marginalized youth.</li> </ul>	Synergies here include ensuring effective employment services to help at-risk urban and peri-urban youth obtain quality jobs and supporting the operationalization of the "Labor Market Observatory."
<b>Education</b>					
<b>Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today's Youth (FORSATY) and MCRA/Morocco Community Resilience Activity</b>  <b>USAID/Morocco</b>  <b>2012-2019; 2019-2024</b>	\$12.77 million; \$9.3 million	Tangier, Tetouan, Fnideq, Al Hoceima	International Organization for Migration  Other partners: Government of the Netherlands and the Government of the U.K.	<u>Components:</u> By establishing and strengthening bonds between youth and community actors, the project seeks to prevent youth delinquency and reduce recidivism among at-risk youth through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A PYD approach provides education, life skills, and other youth-friendly services to curb drop-out rates and increase employability.</li> <li>Stronger bonds with the community by involving families and the broader neighborhood while also building linkages to community-based social service providers.</li> <li>Local capacity building of youth-serving institutions.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 25,000 at-risk youth have benefitted from</li> </ul>	This project began to address community engagement approaches that moved away from a "law and order" approach. It is unique in its approach. USAID is building on the work conducted by FORSATY through the follow on Morocco Community Resilience Activity (MCRA/FORSATY) and should consider similarly, building upon other existing and planned regional activities to create new pathways for youth individually and via youth-led organizations to participate more actively in their societies.

				<p>FORSATY's service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eighty-eight percent of youth participants are either successfully reintegrated into the community or continue to participate in activities.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reading for Success-National Program for Reading (RFS-NPR)</b></p> <p><b>USAID/Morocco</b></p> <p><b>2017-2022</b></p>	\$19.3 million	Nationwide	<p>Creative Associates, Management Sciences International, Oregon State University, Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research in Morocco</p>	<p><u>Components:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a new Arabic language curriculum for grades 1-4 based on the phonics-based approach and highly interactive activities.</li> <li>Training teachers on proven best practices and teaching methods.</li> <li>Creating remedial and extra-curricular reading activities to be implemented in schools and community centers.</li> <li>Increasing family awareness of the importance of reading for their children's future.</li> </ul> <p><u>Beneficiaries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaches approximately 690,000 students in grades one through four with the new reading instruction method.</li> <li>More children in grades one through four are reading at grade level with comprehension.</li> </ul>	<p>Teaching and learning in Morocco are still teacher-centered, heavily reliant on the teacher, where students are learning. Thus, the teacher training design could focus on student-centered learning methods and greater use of ICT tools and classroom methodologies. This project could also link to similar programs currently underway with the European Union, discussed below. UNICEF is a close partner of USAID, and their expertise and background analyses contribute to the knowledge base necessary for effective programming for youth and children.</p>
<p><b>USAID's Higher Education Partnership Program in Morocco (HEP-M)</b></p> <p><b>USAID/Morocco</b></p> <p><b>2020-2024</b></p>	\$5 million	Nationwide	<p>Arizona State University's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College</p>	<p><u>Components:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project will support the Moroccan universities in enhancing their institutional and human capacity to deliver the new undergraduate primary teacher pre-service program at teacher training institutions (CRMEFs). The program will equip new teachers with the skills necessary to improve their teaching practices and meet primary school students' learning needs.</li> </ul> <p><u>Beneficiaries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary school teachers and students across Morocco.</li> </ul>	<p>USAID continues to strengthen pre-service teacher training programs for primary school teachers, emphasizing effective student-centered pedagogy and greater use of ICT tools and methodologies. USAID can also support to Ministry of Education to develop training for teachers at the secondary level and scale them up at the national level.</p>
<p><b>Support for the National Literacy Strategy</b></p>	€45 million	Four regions	N/A	<p><u>Components:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance literacy in local languages and French, improve pedagogy and government capacity.</li> </ul>	<p>The E.U. program complements the USAID-funded Reading for Success initiative (2017-22), and both the E.U. and USAID literacy</p>

<b>European Union</b> <b>2019-2022</b>				<u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Agency for the Fight against Illiteracy in Morocco.</li> </ul>	activities support the GOM's literacy strategy. USAID and E.U. can share lessons learned and recommendations for improving programming.
<b>Support to Education Sector</b> <b>Agence française de Développement (AFD)</b> <b>2017-2020</b>	€80.5 million	Nationwide		<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project supports the GOM's 2015-2030 Education Sector Strategy. It focuses on "equitable access, quality of education (curriculum, remediation, teacher training, the language of instruction), and governance in selected AREFs (Regional Academies for Education and Training).</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millions of Moroccan youth.</li> </ul>	USAID's Higher Education Partnership (HEP-M) aims to improve pre-service teacher training, which is also an essential component of the AFD-funded program. USAID and AFD can share lessons learned and recommendations for strengthening programming.
<b>Support to Secondary Education</b> <b>MCC</b> <b>2017-2021</b>	\$112.6 million	Tanger-Tetouan-Al Hoceima, Marrakech-Safi, Fes-Meknes	C2D, Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research in Morocco	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase access, equity, and quality in secondary education (school-based management, assessment of students learning outcomes, enhanced management information systems, and care and maintenance of infrastructure).</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One hundred secondary schools in each region.</li> </ul>	Support for secondary education by MCC improves secondary school graduates' quality, making the USAID's HEP-M program recruit better-prepared students for pre-service teacher training. Synergies here include ensuring that at the secondary level as an attractive career path and not the choice of last resort.
<b>Community Resilience</b>					
<b>Combating youth radicalization online and promoting tolerance</b> <b>UNDP</b> <b>2020</b>	\$550,000	TBD	N/A	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project supports the promotion of tolerance and citizenship in schools. It works to prevent risky behaviors and funds positive internet programming that offers an alternative to radical appeals to violence.</li> </ul>	Though small in scale, these UNDP-funded projects directly target youth at risk of being influenced by violent extremism via schools and on the internet. This program complements the efforts of the USAID MCRA project in the north of Morocco. If not already being done, coordination of messaging and sharing lessons learned could be beneficial.
<b>Je suis Migrant Progetto Mondo Mial</b> <b>Agence Italien de la Coopération et Développement</b> <b>2017-2020</b>	€1.65 million	Beni Méral-Khénifra, Salé, Oujda	N/A	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes the economic, social, and cultural integration of vulnerable returning Moroccan migrants and sub-Saharan migrants in their new communities.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub-Saharan migrants, many of whom are youth.</li> </ul>	Building resilience among migrants is vital because they are an especially vulnerable group. Most sub-Saharans are undocumented, many are homeless, and some are victims of racism and exploitation. As this project is ending in 2020, there may be lessons to be learned about how to be inclusive of sub-Saharan migrants and Moroccan returnees (some involuntary) to help them integrate into their communities.

<b>Building economic and social self-reliance for marginalized youth in Morocco</b>  <b>CARE</b>  <b>January 2019-February 2021</b>	\$600,000	Regions of Oriental (Guersif), Fès Meknès (El Hajeb), Beni Mellal-Khénifra (Beni Mellal), Rabat-Salé-Kénitra (Sidi Slimane)		<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project objective is to promote resilience through the economic and social integration of vulnerable youth in the target provinces, mostly young at-risk women.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The focus is on vulnerable youth.</li> </ul>	Although this is a small project, its goal parallels USAID's emphasis on a "Journey to Self-Reliance." USAID should review this program for its approach, challenges, and lessons learned as USAID designs new activities targeting marginalized youth and young women.
<b>Governance and Civic Participation</b>					
<b>Civil society strengthening (CSSP) program</b>  <b>USAID/Morocco</b>  <b>2015-2019</b>	\$16.4 million	Marrakech-Safi, Fez-Meknes, Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima, Rabat-Kenitra-Sale, Fes-Meknes	Counterpart International, Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL)	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program supported Moroccan CSOs in their policy advocacy efforts, accompanied by technical assistance in developing their constituent networks, forming effective coalitions, and developing sound policy recommendations.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over 200 civil society organizations and networks.</li> <li>Women, youth, and other marginalized groups.</li> </ul>	USAID can apply some of the lessons learned and recommendations for future efforts involving support for youth-serving CSOs such as in the ISED projects in the BMK and M.S. Regions.
<b>Local Works</b>  <b>USAID/Morocco</b>  <b>2015-2019</b>	N/A	Nationwide	USAID has partnered with five respected local CSOs	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USAID invested in five local organizations to advocate for Moroccan citizens, including women, youth, and disabled populations.</li> <li>The local organizations collaborate with and mentor hundreds of other organizations, associations, and local officials to deliver results long after donor funding ends.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USAID supported over 200 Moroccan CSOs in their policy advocacy efforts through tailored T.A., forming effective coalitions, and developing sound policy recommendations.</li> </ul>	USAID can apply some of the lessons learned and recommendations for future efforts involving partnering with local CSOs, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working collaboratively with local partner organizations to manage activities and develop strong, trust-based relationships</li> <li>Building greater budget flexibility in awards to local organizations</li> <li>Applying creativity in capacity building, as there is no one-size-fits-all approach</li> </ul>
<b>TASHAROC Project</b>  <b>U.K. Foreign &amp; Commonwealth Office</b>  <b>2018-2021</b>	N/A	Tanger-Tétouan Al-Hoceima (TTAH)	DAI International	<u>Components:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project goal is to strengthen the political representation and citizen engagement in the TTAH region.</li> </ul> <u>Beneficiaries:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project works with the TTAH Regional Council, several consultative bodies, and CSOs</li> </ul>	TASHAROC developed a gender and social inclusion strategy and operations manual for the TTAH Regional Council, a MEL Plan, and training modules for local officials. These should be reviewed by the planned USAID ISED projects in the BMK and M.S. Regions to understand lessons learned and use

				by supporting the design, implementation, and M & E of development projects defined by the TTAH Regional Development Plan and building capacity of elected regional officials, consultative bodies, and CSOs.	elements of their manual and other materials that may be adaptable to work with youth in the BMK and later the M.S. region.
<b>Strengthening the Moroccan Municipalities Program (SMMP)</b>  <b>World Bank</b>  <b>2019-2023</b>	\$300 million	78 municipalities	N/A	<p><u>Components:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program targets key performance gaps to promote a transparent, efficient, and accountable urban management system. It supports the Ministry of Interior to prepare annual municipal performance assessments to provide real-time information on capacity gaps and address them through T.A. and training while focusing on enhanced participation of women in decision-making, providing more efficient urban services, especially for marginalized groups.</li> </ul> <p><u>Beneficiaries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eighty percent of the urban population and half of the country's total population, with specific attention to women, youth, and marginalized groups.</li> </ul>	The SMMP needs to be examined in depth to determine how it interacts with specific municipal government entities and their relationship with provincial and regional governing bodies to determine, for example, how the planned ISED activities in the BMK and M.S. regions may be impacted by or benefit from SMMP activities and where there may be synergies and complementarities, especially regarding the shared goal of increased participation in civil society by women and marginalized groups and the link between such involvement and how more efficient delivery of municipal services may impact livelihood and entrepreneurship opportunities.