

PN-ABY-781

DIS دعم المؤسسات الديمقراطية
Democratic Institutions Support Project

**STRENGTHENING NGO'S FOR DEMOCRATIZATION
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO**

AN NGO ASSESSMENT

February 1996

**GLOBAL BUREAU
CENTER FOR GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY**

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* This report was carried out and organized by the Global Bureau's Center for Governance and Democracy under the auspices of its Democratic Institutions Support project. This report was prepared by a team made up of Roberto Figueredo of USAID Global Bureau's Democracy Center, Dr. Rhys Payne (team leader), Dr. Ahmed Ghazali, Dr. Susan Davis, and Nadira Barkalil, with assistance from Dr. Will Swearingen and Dr. Guilain Denoeux.

ACRONYMS

ACAET	Association des Cadres et Anciens Elèves de Tandrara
ACDI	Agence Canadienne de Développement International
ADFM	Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc
AEB	Association des Anciens Elèves de Bouarfa
AFJEM	Association Femmes Jeunesse dan L'Environnement Maghrébin
AHE	Association Homme et Environnement
AJPK	Association des Jeunes Promoteurs de la Province de Khémisset
ALCS	Association Marocaine de Lutte Contre le Sida
AMAPPE	Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise
AMAS	Association Marocaine des Assistantes Sociales
AMDF	Association Marocaine des Droits des Femmes
AMDH	Association Marocaine des Droits Humains
AMG	Association Marocaine de Gestion
AMPF	Association Marocaine de Planification Familiale
AMREC	Association Marocaine de Recherche et d'Echange Culturel
AMSED	Association Marocaine de Solidarité et de Développement
AMSSF	Association Marocaine de Solidarité Sans Frontières
ARDOF	Association de Ranimation et Développement de l'Oasis de Figuig
ASJE	Association de Soutien aux Jeunes Entrepreneurs
ASMAPE	Association Marocaine Pour la Protection de l'Environnement
ASMAPEK	Association Marocaine Pour la Protection de l'Environnement—Khémisset
ATIL	Association Tetouani des Initiative Sociolabore
CCDH	Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l'Homme
CCIRSE	Comité de Coordination Inter-Associations Régionales et Spécialistes Pour l'Environnement
CDDH	Comité de Défense des Droits de l'Homme
CDT	Confédération Démocratique du Travail
CERASE	Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Appliquées aux Sciences de l'Eau et de l'Environnement
CFMD	Comité des Femmes Marocaines Pour le Développement
CGEM	Confédération Générale des Employeurs Marocaines
CMPE	Centre Marocain des Exportations
CNJA	Conseil de la Jeunesse et de l'Avenir
CPS	Country Program Strategy
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
ESPOD	Espace Point de Départ
FAJEM	Fédération des Associations des Jeunes Entrepreneurs du Maroc
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFS	Front des Forces Socialistes
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOM	Government of Morocco
GONG	Groupement des Organisations Non-gouvernementales
HATM	Harakat al-Islah Wal Tajdid (The Movement of Reform and Renewal in Morocco)
IAJEM	Fédération des Associations des Jeunes Entrepreneurs du Maroc
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISCAE	Institut Supérieur du Commerce et de l'Entreprise

LMDH	Ligue Marocaine Pour la Defense des Droits de l'Homme
MOI	Ministry of the Interior
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OADP	Action Démocratique et Populaire
OAT	Organisation Arabe du Travail
OCE	Office Chérifien des Exportations
OMDH	Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme
OMS	Organisation Mondiale de Santé
ONEP	Office National de l'Eau Potable
ORMVA	Offices Régionaux de Mise en Valeur Agricole
PPS	Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme
RCD	Rassemblement Pour la Culture et la Démocratie
SNESUP	Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Supérieur
SNPM	Syndicat National de la Presse
UAF	Union de l'Action Féminine
UC	Union Constitutionnelle
UGTM	Union Générale des Travailleurs Marocains
UMT	Union Marocaine du Travail
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFM	Union Nationale des Femmes Marocaines
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USFP	Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Background

Faced with a financial crisis in the mid-1980s, the government of Morocco (GOM) embarked on a wide-ranging series of structural economic reforms. The economic reforms have been accompanied by political reforms that have provided outstanding opportunities for civil society participation and empowerment. Fundamental changes in state/society relations have been recognized by the GOM as essential for both economic viability and political stability.

To better address Morocco's pressing development needs, the GOM has been relinquishing control of the economy to the private sector and encouraging greater participation by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This process has been enhanced by international factors, including the trend among development donors favoring NGOs as delivery mechanisms. As a result, a highly favorable environment has emerged for NGOs to participate in democratization and sustainable development initiatives in Morocco. In response to this favorable enabling environment, the number of NGOs has proliferated greatly. According to two recent surveys, at least 17,000 NGOs are now operating in Morocco.

Unlike older NGOs, which concentrated on social or charitable activities, newer NGOs tend to focus on urgent societal issues—including women's rights, local grassroots development, small business support, and the environment. Many are working to fill the development gap at the local level created by Morocco's growing needs and the state's limited ability to meet these needs. These NGOs are potentially attractive as development partners. However, to become effective development partners, they need to further develop their capabilities.

Another trend also favors the amelioration of state/society relations. Namely, the GOM is also seeking ways to make government more responsive to community needs in order to become more efficient in closing the development gap. One way in which they are doing this is through a tentative and incremental process of decentralization, which allocates greater responsibility to local government in meeting community needs. This greater emphasis on local government provides an excellent opportunity to enhance the access of NGOs to government.

The political reforms that the state has been implementing incrementally since the second half of the 1980s hold great promise for further democratization. The government has made room for new actors on the political scene to help improve communication between state and society. It has created the conditions not for abrupt, revolutionary democratization, but for an incremental, stable approach that promises to achieve real political change and better facilitate the country's transition toward sustainable development.

Donors can play a key role in helping Moroccan NGOs and the government develop the necessary capabilities to constructively interact with one another. Unfortunately, the profusion of Moroccan NGOs has made it difficult for donors to distinguish NGOs with real potential to serve as effective development partners. The present report is a response to this problem. The team drafting this report conducted an extensive survey of Moroccan NGOs, interviewed numerous host-country officials, and carried out an analysis of the political economy context to evaluate the

potential role of NGOs in contributing to democratization and sustainable development in Morocco. The more specific goal was to assess the capacity of selected NGOs to serve as effective development partners. The team first compiled a list of 252 NGOs that had been identified by international donors, government officials, and regional NGOs as potential development partners. From this list, 42 NGOs were selected for extensive interviews. The present report is based on this survey as well as the other background research.

The report first analyzes the evolving political and economic factors that have created a favorable enabling environment for NGO participation in Morocco. Next it provides a detailed overview of the evolution and current status of the Moroccan NGO sector. It subsequently examines government relations with NGOs, including the legal and regulatory framework that governs these organizations. Finally, it provides a conceptual framework and specific recommendations for a USAID program to strengthen NGOs to promote democratization and sustainable development in Morocco. Highlights from the report follow.

B. Highlights of the Report

Key findings that emerge from this report include the following. (1) An unprecedented window of opportunity currently exists to increase civil society participation in Morocco through strengthening the role of NGOs. (2) The concept of modern NGOs derives legitimacy from deep roots within Moroccan cultural tradition. (3) NGOs can play a key role as intermediaries in development partnerships involving the government and civil society. (4) Most Moroccan NGOs need to further develop their institutional capacities as well as their abilities to represent grassroots interests. (5) The most appropriate role for USAID is as a catalyst in facilitating development partnerships. (6) USAID-supported development partnerships involving appropriate NGOs represent a cost-effective and sustainable way to reinforce the current trend in Morocco toward democratization and greater civil society participation in development.

B1. Window of Opportunity

Economic and political reforms since the mid-1980s have opened a window of opportunity in Morocco for NGOs to play a key role in engaging civil society in development. The opening to NGOs has come directly from the top—primarily through a series of royal statements and initiatives that have welcomed constructive forms of civic activism. These signals have been recognized and acted on by key ministries as well as by certain innovative governors. Civil society and NGOs have responded with a dynamism that demonstrates the potential of Moroccan society to mobilize its human resources to confront development challenges.

The present window of opportunity for Moroccan NGOs owes its existence primarily to the state's incapacity to meet Morocco's development challenges without greater participation by the people. This opportunity is also a response to political currents in the region. Elsewhere in the region—notably in neighboring Algeria—Islamists have based much of their claim to legitimacy on their purported superiority to the state in providing for daily needs. They have been able to occupy the growing gap between state capacity and development needs and have used this strategic position to further their political agenda. In the face of this threat to the legitimacy of states in the region, non-politically threatening NGOs in Morocco represent an attractive alternative.

The state's commitment to local government reform has also enhanced NGO prospects. Local governments have been encouraged to be responsive to community concerns and,

increasingly, to forge partnerships with grassroots groups. Both the quality of local government and the capacities of NGOs can be enhanced through the synergies resulting from these partnerships. The recent trend among development donors to use NGOs as intermediaries is a final factor that has enhanced the opportunities for NGOs.

However, the door has not been thrown wide open to unbridled civic activism by NGOs. Rather, it has been cautiously and incrementally opened. The GOM's opening to NGOs is a bold experiment that is introducing a new dynamic into the Moroccan political system. This opening runs counter to the traditional mandate of government to maintain stability through control of civic activism. Long-established fears of activism will have to be reduced through a gradual process of confidence building. Donors can play a key role in this process through strengthening the positive role that NGOs can play as intermediaries between society and state in development initiatives at the grassroots level.

B2. Cultural Legitimacy

The modern concept of NGOs has deep roots in Moroccan cultural tradition—both within traditional self-help groups based on Islamic law and traditional rural associations that formed to meet the challenges of daily life. Such associations were organized around cultivation, water use, grain storage, and other rural activities. In addition, modern NGOs have many features in common with the Moroccan tradition of *twizi*—large volunteer mutual assistance groups that periodically come together to undertake major community tasks, such as maintenance of irrigation canals. The concept of mutual assistance remains deeply imbedded in Moroccan culture. This concept provides a foundation of authenticity and legitimacy for NGOs and can be drawn upon to mobilize grassroots groups for development activities. In addition, because of the state's historical encouragement of diversity in the body politic, special interest groups are not perceived as incompatible with national unity—unlike elsewhere in the region, where more unitary political traditions exist.

B3. NGOs' Key Role as Intermediaries in Development Partnerships

The most important role of NGOs in fostering democratization and sustainable development is as intermediaries between state and society. The GOM is already tentatively fostering this role. For example, at the national level, NGOs have been included in consultative councils to help establish consensus for public policy reforms. In this process, they have assumed a brokering function in the negotiation of change. Local governments and ministries have begun to work with grassroots associations that are able to mobilize local citizens to assist in meeting community needs.

Development partnerships involving NGOs will be most able to succeed if they focus on specific, concrete, non-politically threatening development problems at the local level. The opening for NGOs is most advanced at this level. Local government is being encouraged by the central government to develop partnerships with NGOs to target and resolve development challenges. In addition, municipalities and communes have demonstrated willingness to work with NGOs on concrete issues that contribute to development. NGOs thus have direct access to decision makers. As these partnerships develop, NGOs are likely to be given a greater role than before as intermediaries between government and local communities, increasing popular participation in development initiatives. This may be expected to further promote a broader favorable enabling environment, creating more opportunities for national NGOs and coalitions of NGOs to augment their influence over public policy.

B4. The Need to Further Develop NGO Capabilities

To be effective development partners, most NGOs need to further develop their capacities and skills. A key area in which they need to develop their capabilities is in learning to engage in constructive dialogue with *both* the government and their target communities. In fact, a constructive dialogue with the government and an optimal focus on community needs, concerns, and ideas are necessary to develop NGOs' capacities to be real development partners.

NGOs critically need improvement in building their capacity to incorporate citizen input. This is particularly important in the case of women. Women are usually beneficiaries rather than active participants in grassroots NGO projects. Many NGOs lack an action plan and/or a concrete set of goals that include grassroots participation. Others tend to be autocratic, with action plans coming in a one-way direction from the top leadership. Community members and beneficiaries need to be included in a more comprehensive planning process to ensure that their needs are met.

Most NGO members are professionals with specific skills in their areas of academic training. However, many lack training in areas that would help them be more effective in NGO work, such as skills in management or project identification and execution. Training in these areas could make a significant contribution to NGO effectiveness. Many NGOs do not attempt to learn from the communities they serve. Learning from end users of programs would also contribute to the training of NGO leaders and result in more effective programs.

An institutional strengthening program could help develop the capacities of Moroccan NGOs. Institutional strengthening could be achieved in two reinforcing ways: first, through working with regional or national umbrella NGOs that are capable of reaching and assisting small scale local groups; and second, through targeting for assistance individual NGOs with high potential to be effective development partners. Institutional strengthening would include both provision of material resources and capacity building through technology transfer and training activities. Assistance could also be provided to government institutions to facilitate more fruitful interactions between state and civil society.

B5. Donors as Catalysts

USAID and other donors have an outstanding opportunity to contribute to democratization and sustainable development in Morocco through strengthening the capacities of Moroccan NGOs. By contributing to a vision of state/society cooperation and coordination in confronting the challenges of development, donors can assist both NGOs and public actors in maximizing the reach of their common endeavors. The most effective and cost-efficient role for donors is to facilitate development partnerships involving government and NGOs. Donors can be most effective as catalysts of development partnerships and neutral partners in advancing the existing reform process. What is required is not a massive assistance program, but targeted interventions to help Moroccans proceed down the pathway they have already chosen of greater public participation in development.

B6. Cost-Effectiveness and Sustainability

With a cost-effective investment in NGOs, USAID has an opportunity to serve as a catalyst in advancing democratization and sustainable development in Morocco. This investment will be cost-effective, because it will leverage the substantial contributions of the government and civil society in development initiatives. For example, in a given "partnered" development project, the

society in development initiatives. For example, in a given "partnered" development project, the GOM might provide government technical specialists (such as civil engineers or forestry experts) or the use of government equipment (such as bulldozers or trucks). NGOs would serve as intermediaries and brokers, and might also provide technical assistance. Local communities would help identify and conceive of development projects and provide popular initiative in resolving these problems.

USAID, in addition to providing catalytic funding, could influence the design of projects so that they best complement the mission's other programmatic objectives. A civil society framework based on development partnerships not only engages the contributions of the Moroccan government and NGOs, but also has the advantage of maximizing the impact of the mission's existing portfolio. Community participation activities in support of other sectoral interventions have an inherent compatibility with the democracy and governance objectives of the mission's civil society program.

One of the strongest arguments for such development partnerships is that they would help ensure the sustainability of development initiatives. They would do so by fostering a strong sense of stakeholding and shared commitment in the government and civil society partners. Their cost-effectiveness and reliance on local initiative rather than "outside experts" would also contribute to the sustainability of the development initiatives.

C. Conclusion

In sum, an unprecedented window of opportunity is open for NGOs to play a key role in engaging Moroccan civil society in development. NGOs are not an imported concept in Morocco, but rather derive legitimacy and strength from indigenous cultural traditions. NGOs can play a key role as intermediaries in development partnerships between state and society. However, most Moroccan NGOs need to increase their institutional capacities as well as their abilities to represent grassroots interests. USAID can play a key role in this regard. Its most appropriate role is as a catalyst in fostering development partnerships. Development partnerships involving NGOs and government represent a highly cost-effective and sustainable way to reinforce the current trend in Morocco toward democratization and civil society participation in development.

The recommendations that result from the findings of this assessment outline an integrated and pragmatic selection of mutually reinforcing measures that complement and increase the value of the mission's existing portfolio. The vision represented by the conceptual framework of development partnerships will be introduced and refined through an interactive workshop and short term demonstration projects. The capacities of NGOs and groupings of NGOs to constructively contribute to such partnerships will be selectively enhanced. Concrete project inputs in support of other sectoral objectives of the mission's portfolio will support the development partnership initiatives in the relevant areas. The involvement of public actors from multiple levels will increase the ability of both local and national government to respond to the needs of specific communities and will be designed to contribute to the country's decentralization program. The sustainability of the development partnership framework will be enhanced through the mission's ongoing efforts at further improving the enabling environment, such as through policy dialogue and strengthening aspects of Parliament through which organizations of civil society have access to the formulation of public policy. A detailed description of the programmatic recommendations that result from this assessment are found in Section V.

SECTION I

THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR NGOS IN MOROCCO

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A. Introduction

An era of reform in Morocco was ushered in during the 1980s due to a growing gap between state capacity and the country's development needs. This gap caused the state to reexamine its relations with society and seek to reduce the financial obligations of the *état providence*, whereby the government of Morocco (GOM) complemented its extensive control of the economy with public provision of a broad array of social goods and services. Economic stabilization and structural adjustment programs were implemented in response to the crisis and succeeded in repairing Morocco's damaged credit rating in international capital markets

These economic reforms reflect the government's resilience and demonstrate its ability to adapt to unprecedented social change. During the reign of King Hassan II (1961-present), the size of the population has tripled and become much younger, with a majority of the population becoming urban. Rural exodus to the cities has led to an explosion in the demands placed on municipalities. Investment in a national public education system and the extensive inroads of modern communications have also led to a new generation of Moroccans with broader perspectives and higher expectations than those of their more parochial and rural predecessors.

State/society relations borne in different circumstances have outlived their relevance and are now undergoing redefinition. The vast public sector, which was once the motor of the economy and the accelerator of development, is no longer capable of pulling the load placed upon it. Its inherent inefficiencies have doomed many economic functions to obsolescence in an increasingly global marketplace. Fundamental change in state/society relations, rather than further expansion of the state, has been recognized by the GOM as essential for economic viability and as the key to the continuing legitimacy and stability of the Moroccan political system. The state has gradually relinquished control of the economy to the private sector and is correcting the deficit spending patterns that underpinned the *état providence*.

These economic structural reforms have had profound implications for the political dimensions of state/society relations, and have impelled meaningful reform in that domain as well. Morocco's traditional patronage system, itself dependent on heavy state economic interventionism, has become incapable of providing the basis for sustained national development. No longer can Moroccans depend on this system or on the *état providence* to accommodate their needs. Greater participation of Morocco's civic associations or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) represents a promising new means of addressing the country's development challenges and meeting the needs of its citizens. A USAID-supported civil society program that strengthened the role of NGOs would be a timely and valuable complement to the mission's portfolio.

This section examines the evolving political and economic factors that form the enabling environment for NGO participation in Morocco. Subsequent sections provide a detailed overview of Moroccan NGOs and their activities; examine Moroccan government relationships with NGOs; and provide a conceptual framework and specific recommendations for a USAID program to strengthen NGOs to promote democratization and sustainable development in Morocco.

A1. State/Society Relations and the Deterioration of the *État Providence*

The reforms that were initiated in the mid-1980s were a forced response to critical economic problems, the most pressing of which was Morocco's debt crisis. The chronic budgetary and balance of payment deficits that had become increasingly serious during the 1970s led to a heavy reliance on foreign loans. Public external debt grew from \$712 million in 1970 to \$10 billion in 1983, with the debt service ratio soaring to an unsustainable 45 percent. The GOM was unable to meet its obligations and had to reschedule more than \$1 billion in debt repayments with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, commercial creditors, and foreign governments. The conditions of the bail-out package circumscribed the government's options in economic policy and undermined the fundamental underpinnings of the *état providence*. The GOM had to retreat from its commitment to this social contract to give priority to its external obligations. Public investment plummeted as the ambitious targets of the 1981-1985 Plan were abandoned and stringent austerity measures were introduced to hold the budget deficits in check.

An explosion of civil unrest in January 1984 made it clear that the reorientation of economic policy affected more than the balance sheets. The inauguration of structural adjustment in Morocco was an acknowledgment that the public sector could no longer generate the economic growth needed to meet Morocco's development challenges. The *état providence* was based on the capacity of the state to provide for the basic needs of Moroccans, but this capacity was slipping away from the GOM's financial grasp. Instead, new ways had to be found to enable growing numbers of young Moroccans to cope with the challenges of their generation. With the economic reforms of the 1980s, the state turned to the private sector to provide needed opportunities to the rapidly increasing Moroccan population.

Moroccan demographics go a long way to explain the deterioration of the *état providence*. The total population of Morocco will have tripled during the 44 years between Independence in 1956 and the year 2000. But quantitative measures alone fail to capture the dilemma of liberalization in Morocco. The essence of this dilemma is that Morocco's transition to sustainable development depends on the growth of the private sector, but the stability required to bolster the

État Providence as Social Contract

Political legitimacy in Morocco since independence has been tied to the notion of a strong, benevolent, paternalistic state, known as the *état providence*. Society was propelled by colonialism into rapid socioeconomic transformation. When the colonial era came to a close, the independent Moroccan state took on a vanguard role in the ongoing management of change by taking control of the leading levers of the economy. The state intensified the centralization of the economy that had begun during the French Protectorate, with the expansion of the vast parastatal sector symbolizing the interventionist stance of the government.

This centralization of power was ideologically justified by the benevolent role the public sector was meant to play in terms of popular entitlement to basic goods and services. Food, water, energy, transport, and health services were all subsidized by the state to make them accessible to citizens who were pouring into the cities from the countryside. The decentralized provision of basic goods that at one time had been the responsibility of relatively independent local communities became subordinated to the public ability to provide for basic needs in a more integrated national economy.

But the costs of maintaining and expanding such an encompassing entitlement system proved to be beyond the financial capacity of the state as a result of demographic growth. As the financial crisis of the mid-1980s forced the state to introduce austerity measures that threatened the material foundations of the *état providence*, the legitimacy of the state was increasingly called into question. Episodic outbreaks of civil unrest because of threats to popular entitlements marked the undermining of the *état providence* as social contract.

development depends on the growth of the private sector, but the stability required to bolster the confidence of private investors is itself dependent on fundamental changes in the political system. These changes must accommodate the decline of the *état providence*.

The GOM has responded to the widening gap between public financial capacity and the country's development challenges in two ways. First, it has ceded some of its control of the economy to the private sector and to market forces. Second, it has attempted to transfer some of the real costs of social goods and services to end users. Both these measures could pose a threat to political consensus and legitimacy without greater popular participation in negotiating a new social contract that reflects the realities of the 1990s and beyond. The GOM needs partners in resolving the country's development challenges. Most of all, it needs to mobilize the untapped initiative and human resources of Moroccan society to take up a share of the development burden.

A2. Political Commitment to Reform

The short-term problems of liquidity that brought about Morocco's default of 1983 were resolved through the GOM's political commitment to a comprehensive series of medium- and long-term reforms that would gradually alter the nature of state/society relations. The political sensitivities of the longer-term reforms were underscored by the 1984 riots. The GOM began to back away from structural adjustment in 1985, not long after the ink was dry on the debt rescheduling accord. The 67 percent increase in the 1986 public investment's budget cast doubt on the GOM's commitment to austerity and structural adjustment. In June 1986 the IMF canceled a 1985 standby credit arrangement, expressing a lack of faith in the GOM's willingness to meet its structural adjustment targets.

In September 1986, King Hassan reaffirmed the state's political commitment to structural adjustment by reshuffling the cabinet and appointing a prime minister to head a new government pledged to undertake the needed reforms. This move restored Morocco's credibility and credit rating and enhanced the status of a younger, well educated, technocratic segment of the elite whose commitment to structural adjustment was beyond doubt. Since then, the GOM has not wavered in its incremental yet steady application of reforms that have contributed significantly to the country's transition to sustainable development.

As a result, the GOM has earned an international reputation as a regime devoted to implementing the changes needed to bring sustainable development within reach. It has been rewarded with unprecedented access to transnational capital, and by 1988 became a top borrower of the World Bank and African Development Bank. Its progress in resolving its budget and current account deficits has been remarkable. The budget deficit declined from 12 percent of GDP in 1983 to under 2 percent in 1992. During the same period, exports experienced a sustained annual growth of 9.7 percent in value and 6.1 percent in volume. Largely as a result of these trends, debt dropped from 123 percent of GDP in 1983 to 33 percent in 1992. Foreign exchange reserves grew from about three weeks' worth of imports to about six months' worth between 1983 and 1992. Inflation—which hovered around 10 percent in the early 1980s—fell to around 6 percent in the early 1990s.

These indices of success are not the most distinctive characteristic of Morocco's new era of reform. Rather, it is the regime's adaptability in the face of new challenges brought about by its population explosion and the relative decline in state capacity. The GOM has coupled its

the enabling environment for sustainable development. Interrelated political reforms have become critical elements in the ongoing redefinition of state/society relations.

The political adjustment program that has been implemented incrementally since the second half of the 1980s provides opportunities for further democratization. It has made room for new actors on the political scene to help improve communication between state and society. Thus, it has created the conditions not for abrupt, revolutionary democratization, but for an incremental, stable approach that promises to achieve real political change. Mindful of the regional context in which turmoil caused by the rise of militant Islam has endangered both order and democratization, the GOM has adopted a strategy worthy of emulation by other governments in the region.

Civil society has responded to the new liberalization with a dynamism that holds great promise for the ability of Moroccan society to mobilize its reserves of human initiative and resources to confront development challenges. The political reforms undertaken so far do not yet constitute a transition to democracy, but have opened opportunities to move in that direction. With a cost-effective investment in NGOs, USAID has an opportunity to serve as a catalyst in advancing the reform process. The following assessment is intended to indicate where the greatest opportunities exist to enhance the democratizing and sustainable development potential of Moroccan civil society.

B. Civil Society and The Political Adjustment Program

King Hassan recently declared to the leaders of rural communes, "You are resting on a treasure without realizing it. It consists of local and regional associations upon which you can draw to increase the participation of the population in the development effort." Like the royal declaration of support for structural adjustment in 1986, the recent endorsement of greater participation by civil society has come from the apex of the Moroccan political system. The GOM is increasingly calling on elements of civil society, as well as on private investors, to take a more active and participatory role in the state's efforts to confront and resolve Morocco's development challenges. The financial crisis that led to the era of reform laid bare the state's inadequacy in meeting the needs of Morocco's growing population. One of the GOM's apparent solutions to this declining capacity is to encourage greater participation of citizens in identifying and resolving common concerns. The GOM has in recent years made room politically for associations to facilitate citizen participation.

B1. NGOs and the Reform of Public Policy

The GOM has opened up significant opportunities for NGOs to play a greater role as intermediaries between state and society. At the national level, NGOs have been called on to help establish a consensus for public policy reform through their inclusion in consultative councils, which have recently assumed a brokering function in the negotiation of change. At the local level, ministries and governorates have identified grassroots associations as having strong potential to augment state responses to community needs.

Broadening the scope of participation by NGOs is an innovative measure that complements other significant elements of the political adjustment program. Foremost among these is the strengthening of Parliament's role as an arena for national dialogue about the pace and nature of change. The constitutional reforms of 1992 hold promise for the gradual development of

legislative oversight of the executive Parliamentary debates have become noted for their probing tone and have given legitimacy to calls for greater accountability of executive authority The attempt to entice opposition parties into a governing coalition in the wake of the 1993 elections was a positive sign that the state increasingly appreciates the importance of credible representation in the legislature.

The civil society component of Morocco's political adjustment program is favored by two propitious circumstances. Externally, a supportive environment exists for strengthening NGOs as development partners Their increased eligibility for funding by international donors has been lost on neither the GOM nor the NGOs This has contributed to the enhanced attention accorded them in the development process. Internally, Morocco's diverse society, with its history of pluralism, has led to the inculcation of cultural values that underpin a dynamic civil society Because of the state's historical encouragement of diversity in the body politic, special interest groups are not perceived as incompatible with national unity, unlike elsewhere in the region where a more unitary political tradition exists

B2. NGOs and Local Development

The synergy between the state's commitment to the reform of local government and the dynamism of grassroots NGOs has also enhanced prospects for the empowerment of associations Local government is encouraged to be responsive to community concerns and even to forge partnerships with grassroots groups. NGOs have the opportunity to increase their influence over public policy through such partnerships Both the quality of local government and the capacities of NGOs can be enhanced through this synergy

The synergies between local government and NGOs—and the GOM's more general political adjustment program—do not originate in a philosophical embrace of liberal democratic ideology Political adjustment has been propelled by the realization that old methods, if continued, would lead to political crisis Reform has been adopted to preserve a monarchical system, not to supplant it The door to political participation by civil society has not been thrown wide open; it has been cautiously, tentatively unblocked All 17,000 of Morocco's associations will not be given the same opportunity to influence public policy. Nor can foreign donors who seek to promote both democracy and development hope to strengthen the capacity of more than a handful of NGOs Rather, the most effective role for foreign donors would be to facilitate the process already underway, which represents an integral component of the broader transition to sustainable development. Placing the enhanced role of civil society within its political economy context can help pinpoint types of activities and associations that are best-positioned to contribute to democratization

C. The Political Economy of Participation

Morocco's inability in 1983 to meet its external debt payments was a watershed in the country's modern history. It marked the abrupt abandonment of an unsustainable development strategy and the inauguration of a new era of reform that would have fundamental repercussions on state/society relations Since Independence, the state had taken the vanguard role in consolidating national unity and engineering economic growth. It did so by assuming control of the national economy. The expansion of the parastatal sector made available an abundance of resources and opportunities through the networks of patronage that bound the political system together For Moroccans who did not have access to these patronage networks, the state

subsidized virtually all basic goods and services. State control of the economy was legitimized by popular entitlement to basic goods and services. Such was the essence of the social contract represented by the *état providence*

C1. The Growing Development Gap

The default of 1983 and its aftermath clearly demonstrated that the state was no longer capable of playing such a dominant role while meeting the challenges of development. The shortcomings in state capacity were most visible in three essential areas: government expenditures, public investment, and the creation of jobs for youth. The need to reduce budget deficits was the most politically sensitive short-term aspect of the reform package. It meant that the entitlement programs, which provided a safety net for a significant proportion of Moroccans, were threatened by the ensuing austerity measures. The privatization program that sought to divest the government of costly non-essential public enterprises posed a concern for organized labor. The reduction in public investments crippled the already insufficient ability of the state to create jobs for the increasing numbers of youths pouring into the labor market. The private sector has not yet been able to absorb enough of the surplus of educated youth entering the job market to reverse the trend of growing unemployment.

While attaining financial objectives and economic competitiveness remains a priority, developing social sectors and services must receive greater emphasis. This new focus is necessary to ensure broad political support, without which courageous austerity policies cannot succeed. The King and his senior advisors appear to realize this. In a Royal Letter to the Prime Minister in September 1993, Hassan II stressed the urgency of paying greater attention to persistent social problems. Similarly, when Prime Minister Filali described his cabinet's program to Parliament on March 5, 1995, he noted that the new government would remain

A Rich Country Where the People are Poor

In 1967, while visiting the United States to request food aid in the wake of a drought, King Hassan II of Morocco described his homeland as "a rich country where the people are poor." Since then, Morocco has made great strides in reducing poverty but still confronts substantial development challenges.

Despite its improved economic prospects, Morocco remains the poorest country in the Maghreb (excluding Mauritania), and displays the widest income disparities. Job creation is unable to keep pace with demand, largely due to annual population growth of about 2.4 percent. The two most destabilizing forces in the Kingdom are generally said to be the rapid rate of urbanization and unemployment.

Rural to urban migration has been increasing rapidly since independence, with over 100,000 people estimated to migrate each year from the villages to the cities. The rural exodus is due to deteriorating conditions in the countryside and the perception of greater opportunities in the cities.

- Urban population growth rates between 1973 and 1984 were an astounding 5.5 percent. Between 1985 and 1990, the annual urban population growth rate stood at 4.12 percent, while the same figure for rural areas was 1.19 percent.
- A 1994 World Bank study noted that access to basic services remains significantly higher in the cities. It also found that illiteracy was far more pronounced in rural areas and that huge disparities in living standards remain between more prosperous urbanized coastal areas and the rest of the country.

Unemployment has been rising sharply over the last decade as a result of the baby boom during the early decades of independence and limited new job creation.

- Reliable estimates indicate that unemployment hovers around 20 percent.
- In a country where 60 percent of the population is under age 25, unemployment may be as high as 30 percent among urban residents aged 15 to 25. Nearly 20 percent of high school and university graduates were unemployed in 1993.

uncompromising on the need for financial rigor, but also would be assertive in tackling the issues of unemployment and rural development

For the first time in its history, the Moroccan population became predominantly urban in 1992, when the urban population reached 12.7 million, four times that of 1961. This has been problematic for the GOM, because city dwellers tend to be more reliant on public services and entitlement programs. The inability of the GOM to continue to provide the expected levels of goods and services has led to pent up frustration, especially among youth, whose lack of access to employment compounds their volatility.

The GOM has made committed efforts to keep up with the growing demands. But owing to financial constraints, government subsidies have continued to decline and public services are spread increasingly thin. The state's attempts to keep pace have been hampered by the limitations of macroeconomic policy, which mitigate against ever larger budgetary deficits. Even a reallocation of spending priorities has not resolved the problem. Since the introduction of structural adjustment, no other portion of the annual budget has increased as rapidly as that allocated to local authorities. Between 1987 and 1992, the percentage of total government expenditure allotted to local authorities grew from 13.8 percent to 29.6 percent, a sharper increase than in any other category. This increase is likewise reflected in the fact that the largest change in government expenditures (positive or negative) as a percentage of GDP was also in this category. Funds allocated to local authorities rose from 0.9 percent of GDP in 1987 to 2.1 percent in 1992, a gain of 1.2 percent. All other categories rose or fell by 0.2 percent or less.

C2. Local Development and Political Legitimacy

The dilemma of liberalization in Morocco is particularly evident in the impact of structural adjustment at the local level. Constraints on budgetary deficits have precluded the provision of goods and services to satisfy the needs and expectations of the population. Private investment, both foreign and domestic, has lagged behind expectations, despite significant efforts by the GOM to entice international corporations to play a more active role in the country's economic development. As a result, the public sector has not been able to transfer as much of the burden of development and growth to the private sector as hoped. If the state is to retrench and reduce its financial obligations while maintaining political stability, it must devise new ways to preserve its legitimacy despite its shortcomings in meeting the development needs of the citizens.

The Moroccan state is generally seen as more resilient than its neighbors because it is bolstered by the prestige of the monarchy. The Moroccan monarchy draws on credentials that are religious, dynastic, and nationalist. The King is a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed and bears the title of "Commander of the Faithful." He is also the latest sovereign of the Alawite dynasty, which dates back to 1664 (The Moroccan state, itself, claims an uninterrupted existence since the establishment of the Idrisis in Fez early in the ninth century A.D.) The nationalist credentials of the monarchy were firmly established during the era of national liberation by Mohammed V. Nationalist sentiments have been further tapped by King Hassan II's skillful use of the Western Sahara issue to unite political forces around the throne.

The danger for Morocco is not that the state's legitimacy is unsound, but that sustainable development remains vulnerable to the potential disruptive influence of a relatively small number of militants. Radical Islam is unlikely to capture the allegiance of the majority of Moroccans, but the regional context gives the potential actions of a few a significance they would not otherwise

have The fact that the number of tourists visiting Morocco fell by 22 percent in 1994 and 40 percent during the first quarter of 1995 is due not only to the low return rate of tourists, but also to foreign perceptions of the destabilizing impact of the spread of political Islam in the region, particularly in neighboring Algeria.

In Morocco, the Islamic movement is weak, fragmented, and carefully monitored, and not believed to pose a real threat to the regime. The regime itself is confident that it can avoid a strong Islamic challenge. However, the threat of political Islam cannot be entirely dismissed. The slums of Casablanca, Fez, and elsewhere offer fertile ground for the growth of militant Islam, particularly among unemployed youth. The urbanization of Morocco has been accompanied by a transfer in the historic flashpoints of civil unrest from the Rif and Middle Atlas regions to the cities. For the first time, the GOM is openly conceding the growing influence of political Islam among youth, with the Minister of Higher Education recently drawing attention to the susceptibility of university campuses to Islamist influences. Other sources indicate that entire departments on some campuses have become dominated by Islamists.

The new political challenges posed by rapid urbanization, the growth of a substantial urban middle class, and political and economic changes in the region and elsewhere led the King to initiate Morocco's political adjustment program. It is clear that, in an increasingly urbanized, politicized, and diverse society, the effectiveness of tactics that were used so successfully in the past will continue to diminish. The cooptation of elites, the emphasis on religious legitimacy, the stirring of nationalist fervor, and the selective use of repression and intimidation can no longer ensure political order. Significant political participation and power-sharing appear to be the regime's solution to the dilemma of liberalization.

King Hassan II no longer can draw on a vast pool of economic resources to establish new clientelist networks and maintain old ones, as he did in the past. Similarly, the political capital he was able to derive from his skillful exploitation of the Western Sahara issue may well be running short. Indeed, an international settlement of the Sahara question could cause new domestic problems for the monarchy. Most important, an increasingly urbanized society has rendered almost obsolete the old strategy of relying on rural notables' control of the countryside to serve as a counterweight to the more volatile urban population.

Most Moroccans still believe that elections, parliamentary debates, and the "democratic process" in general have only a limited impact on the way they are governed. This was evident most recently in the low turn-out in the first round of the 1993 parliamentary elections. Moroccans still display a disturbingly high degree of apathy and cynicism toward the political process. Such feelings of exclusion are destabilizing. They have contributed to the periodic spontaneous outbursts of popular anger that have shaken the country since the early 1980s. The regime is thus seeking to address more forcefully the issues of political integration of youth, the growing urban middle class, and the disaffected strata of urban society—those who live in substandard housing, hold no regular job, and often engage in crime, petty theft, or drug-dealing. Entire generations are now growing up outside the traditional networks that used to provide for social integration and political control. If they cannot tap into institutional channels to participate in public life, their exclusion is likely to adversely affect the social and political fabric of Moroccan society.

The GOM's recent moves toward political liberalization and the King's efforts to go beyond a system of organized pluralism limited to coopted elites should be interpreted in light of

these persisting challenges Hassan II appears to know he must develop political strategies that are better adapted to Morocco's changing political and socioeconomic realities. Increased freedom of expression and the regime's new attention to human rights are partially designed to appease a public that is far less tolerant of limitations in those areas than in the past. Similarly, renewed activism by labor unions, opposition parties, and NGOs has helped convince Hassan II of the need to broaden the dialogue with social forces. Although moves in that direction have taken place in a piecemeal and gradual fashion, they cumulatively indicate substantial change in the way power and authority are exercised in the Kingdom.

Political reform has taken place in part because Morocco's rulers see such reform as a precondition for the success of their economic policies. This is particularly clear in the area of human rights. At a time when Morocco is seeking a new economic partnership with Europe, and the European Community has tied the prospect of greater economic cooperation with the Kingdom to its human rights and democratic advances, the GOM has been able to demonstrate concrete progress in those areas. More generally, political reforms have become an economic necessity because the success of Morocco's economic liberalization depends on the continued cooperation of international financial institutions and investors, and such cooperation is influenced by the Kingdom's international image.

Privatization also has been motivated in part by the regime's desire to create a larger share-owning urban middle class that might become a substantial component of its power base. Indeed, such an objective was identified indirectly by Hassan II in his April 8, 1988 speech opening the spring session of Parliament, which set the guidelines for the privatization program.

Most important, the social costs of economic reform have forced the throne to yield certain political rights in exchange for stability. The first half of the 1990s witnessed renewed activism by Moroccan labor unions, the largest and most influential in North Africa and the Middle East. In December 1990, the CDT (*Confédération Démocratique du Travail*) and the UGTM (*Union Générale des Travailleurs Marocains*) organized a successful general strike. Labor unrest continued throughout 1991 and 1992 and in February 1993 trade unions sponsored major strikes among railway workers, Royal Air Maroc employees, school teachers, and university professors. More recently, in May 1995, 17,000 rail workers went on strike, and in June 1995, 32,000 phosphate workers walked off the job. Smaller strikes were also organized in 1995 by primary and secondary school teachers, dock workers, miners, bank employees, and workers in sugar production. Some CDT leaders even have gone beyond traditional labor demands to assert political claims. This new assertiveness of Moroccan unions is due primarily to mounting pressures from rank-and-file members dissatisfied with wages, social benefits, labor rights, and working conditions.

C3. The New National Dialogue

The King has sought to address the sources of this popular discontent—fueled in part by austerity measures—by engaging in regular consultation with the political parties, trade unions, and select NGOs. For example, following the December 1990 general strike, the government and representatives of business engaged for the first time in a three-way negotiation with union leaders. At that time, the King offered to raise the minimum wage by 15 per cent and to create some 40,000 to 50,000 new jobs for unemployed university graduates. He also proposed that yearly consultations be held among government, management, and union leaders to discuss salary increases and social benefits.

Since then, the government has missed few opportunities to indicate its readiness to institutionalize a dialogue with social forces. It is no coincidence that political liberalization in Morocco is temporally associated with economic structural adjustment. The onset of this national dialogue followed the imposition of economic reforms and is linked to the regime's concern about the destabilizing effects of some aspects of the structural adjustment program. In this respect, economic liberalization in Morocco has contributed to a broadening of political and social dialogue. In other words, the ruling regime has been able to pursue fairly rigorous economic reforms in part because it also has moved—albeit incrementally and tentatively—toward new political arrangements that emphasize partnership and negotiation, as opposed to patronage and allegiance. This incipient but qualitatively important change in governance will no doubt alter the nature of the regime as Morocco prepares to enter the 21st century.

Over the past year, and particularly in the wake of drought-induced hardship and the strikes that have shaken the country, calls for a more active “social dialogue” have multiplied. The opposition has expressed its disappointment with what it sees as the shortcomings of the dialogue to date. For his part, the King has urged social partners to talk directly to each other, a change from the usual two-track negotiations between the government and unions on the one hand, and government and employers on the other. The King also has been critical of the CGEM (*Confédération Générale des Employeurs Marocains*) and has invited employers to form a more representative and effective organization. Clearly in response to the King's wishes, the new head of the CGEM, Abdelrahim Lahjouji, who is close to the opposition party, Istiqlal, recently initiated direct talks with the main unions: the UMT (*Union Marocaine du Travail*), the UGTM, and the CDT. The

Drought of the Century

An aide to Hassan II once remarked, “Everything in Morocco depends on the King except the weather.” Despite the GOM's demonstrated political commitment to economic reform, growth has been restrained recently by particularly unfavorable climatic conditions.

Severe drought will dramatically reduce Morocco's agricultural output in 1995. Preliminary figures estimate that the 1995 cereal harvest may be as little as 1.6 million tons, compared with a ten-year average of 5 million tons. This is the third drought in four years, and it has affected all economic sectors. The drop in agricultural production is expected to lead to a 4 to 5 percent decline in GDP. Agriculture is a key economic sector in Morocco, employing 40-50 percent of the labor force and accounting for 16 percent of GDP and 30 percent of exports. Because of the economic importance of this sector, and because annual agricultural production fluctuates dramatically in concert with the country's highly variable rainfall, Morocco's GDP growth rates vary greatly from year to year. For example, during the last major drought of 1992, the GDP growth rate declined by 3.5 percent, while in 1994, a year marked by abundant rainfall, the growth rate reached 10 percent. Although the entire population is affected by recurrent drought, its impact is especially devastating in rural areas.

In an attempt to mobilize the people's financial support for a national drought relief effort, the King called upon Moroccans to contribute voluntarily to a special fund (*Compte 111*) set up for drought victims. Unfortunately, this appeal for donations came soon after the state had forcefully solicited “contributions” for construction of the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca, whose opulence incurred resentment among many Moroccans. As a result, responses to the appeal for contributions to the drought relief fund were less than enthusiastic.

The strain placed by the drought on the economic system has political ramifications. Economic hardship related to drought has often resulted in civil unrest, including sporadic strikes during the first half of 1995. Recurrent drought intensifies the need to fill the development gap at the local level. In this regard, drought creates a favorable environment for civil society participation, for the state is acutely aware of the need to engage the public in mitigating the socio-economic impacts of drought at the grassroots level.

creation of the consultative council known as the *Conseil Economique et Social* is expected to provide an arena where social dialogue can be institutionalized

If the state is to gain the population's support in transforming the *état providence*, it must interact with a broader base of political actors and engage society more effectively in policy making. Provincial and local-level governments historically have been characterized by a top-down implementation of central edicts. Neither elected nor appointed officials have structures that are well suited for evaluating and responding to grassroots concerns. Other channels of access to decision making have been insufficient in making the state more responsive to popular concerns. The numerous political parties have in the past provided for diversity in the competition among elites over the spoils of the patronage system, but their appeal to the wider population has been limited by the subordinate position of Parliament within the political system and by constitutional provisions regarding the formation of the government. The credibility of the parties as a means for political participation or representation has been impeded because they could not deliver much beyond what was orchestrated by the palace.

The constitutional reforms of 1992 raise the possibility that party appeal may increase as a result of the expansion of Parliament's role as a check on the executive. However, this may be expected to take place only gradually, and political parties for some time will remain linked to certain segments of the population rather than directly to the grassroots of society. Corporatist entities such as trade unions or high-profile national associations tend to reflect the multiparty splits that have been exploited so effectively in the past to divide the opposition. For example, the UGTM has close ties to the Istiqlal, and the CDT has links with another opposition party, the USFP (*Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires*).

Personal networks are another traditional mechanism of intermediation between state and society. Morocco's formal political system sits atop a pyramid of fluid informal relationships that are widely considered to be the most effective means of resolving personal concerns in the public domain. These networks draw on primordial affiliation, but rely more on personal connections than on collective roles and identities. These patron-client relationships remain potent. However, demographic changes have overloaded this means of access to public authority.

Traditional systems of representation and access to authority in Morocco are incapable of incorporating the ever-increasing numbers of Moroccans. Indeed, the shortcomings of state/society relations characteristic of the *état providence* are most acute at the grassroots level. In an era of diminishing resources, existing mechanisms no longer provide adequate links for citizens or communities to ensure that their needs will be met. To become more responsive to citizen needs, the state must interact with credible representatives of groups that aggregate individual interests.

While political parties and trade unions exist as institutionalized representative bodies, their value as partners in the state/society dialogue has been diminished by their general inability to aggregate and articulate interests at the grassroots. This tends to be the case with prominent national-level NGOs as well. Political participation, to the extent it has existed in the past, has been limited to corporatist structures. But awareness is growing among Morocco's many political actors that credibility at the grassroots level has become essential.

Attention has become focused on the grassroots level because of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. Although the emergence of political Islam as an opposition

movement has been less visible in Morocco than elsewhere, its appeal to disenfranchised youth has been amply demonstrated in the takeover of campus politics by Islamic adherents. More worrisome to Moroccan authorities, however, are the opportunities for political Islam to become established at the local community level. Effectively barred from national political arenas other than campuses, Islamic fundamentalists have concentrated on local issues. Their principal claim throughout the region is that they more effectively represent and pursue community interests than do the prevailing regimes. Their promise of greater responsiveness to the challenges of daily life represents a significant threat to the established order.

The GOM has apparently recognized the political need to expand opportunities for participation in development at the grassroots level. An example is its recent effort to mobilize public participation in a fundraising drive to aid drought victims. Interestingly, the public's response to the state's appeal for contributions was much less enthusiastic than its response to new opportunities for NGOs. The majority of new NGOs that have sprung up as a result of Morocco's political adjustment program aim to mobilize popular initiative to respond to public needs. There is widespread awareness among these organizations that the stronger role the GOM seems prepared to grant them is closely linked to the development gap at the local level.

D. Liberalization of the Enabling Environment

Like the overtures to the private sector in the economic domain, the opening to Moroccan civic associations and NGOs is primarily due to the state's incapacity to meet Morocco's development challenges without greater participation by the people. However, the pragmatic concerns behind these reforms do not diminish the commitment of the GOM to negotiate an end to the *état providence*. That new possibilities exist for individuals to participate in community affairs and influence public policy has not been lost on political entrepreneurs, local or national. The liberalization of civil society has resulted in a multiplication of political actors. The domain of civil society has become a vibrant new arena for political participation. While many of the new NGOs lack the institutional capacity and credibility to represent a wider constituency, their common weaknesses may be compared to the rash of credit applications from young entrepreneurs that followed the enhancement of opportunities for profit through private business. All applications from inexperienced businessmen could not be expected to be creditworthy, nor should it be surprising that most of the new associations are institutionally immature. Not all who respond to opportunities in the NGO domain will succeed in participating effectively in the reshaping of public policy.

A lack of institutional capacity is not the only constraint to civil society's democratization potential. The ongoing encouragement of association activity has not meant the GOM will abandon its efforts to manage the process of change it has ushered in. The GOM has not granted a *carte blanche* to all forms of civic activism. Rather, it has established certain parameters within which community activism will be allowed to flourish. However, these parameters are quite broad and are not yet codified. This form of participation is undergoing continuous redefinition.

While the scope of association activity has widened, the window of opportunity for certain types of associations and activities is much broader than for others. The most successful political entrepreneurs will be able to identify and operate within those parameters. In particular, the state has informally granted the broadest license to associations that contribute to the general welfare of communities. Groups that will benefit most from the favorable enabling environment are those that can contribute to community welfare in partnership with local government. The GOM is not

abandoning the field of local development to NGOs. Rather, it is seeking partners that will work with government authorities to mobilize popular initiative in resolving community problems

The GOM has legitimate concerns that an abrupt move toward unbridled civic activism could lead to this form of participation being usurped by those motivated by non-associational concerns or by an attraction to donor funding. Even staunch advocates of Moroccan civil society worry that the field has become saturated with associations, making it difficult to distinguish between those whose ulterior motives or incompetence might diminish the opportunity for the empowerment of communities through this form of political participation.

D1. Informal Liberalization of the Enabling Environment

The liberalization of civil society that has coincided with economic liberalization in Morocco has been most visible at the informal level. The GOM has not matched its enhanced appreciation of civil society with modifications to the body of law that governs association activity. Rather, it has chosen to be increasingly flexible in interpreting that law. Formal legal stipulations are applied selectively according to informal realities of power in Morocco. Thus, the opening has been through a series of royal statements and initiatives that have welcomed constructive forms of civic activism.

These signals from the top have been recognized and acted on by certain innovative provincial governors, who are representatives of the crown, as well as by some ministries. The vigor with which civil society has responded to these government promptings indicates that the message has been clearly received. In addition, the recent trend among development donors to favor NGOs as delivery mechanisms has provided an added incentive that has been clearly recognized by both the GOM and NGOs.

D2. Constraints to an Abrupt Reform of the Legal Code: The Example of the Islamist Associations

Formal amendments to laws regulating associations are lacking because the state is wary of dismantling too rapidly its juridical checks on collective action. Prior experiences with associations have made the GOM cautious. In particular, political parties and movements have tended to use civic associations to further their political agendas, creating a climate of suspicion regarding the ultimate objectives of these associations. For example, advocates of political Islam have sought to use the association rubric to widen the foundations of their movement. Elsewhere in the region, most notably in Algeria, the Islamists managed to penetrate the grassroots of society through community-based religious organizations. Islamic groups were in fact the first to seize the opportunity presented by the growing gap between state capacity and development needs at the local level. Because of their ability to mobilize communities to address social needs left unattended by the state, Islamist leaders claimed they presented a more capable and caring alternative to those in power. As in Algeria, political Islam in Morocco has sought to grow within the juridical framework of associations based on community service.

The use of association status by Islamic fundamentalists in Morocco dates back to the founding of *al-Shabiba Islamiya* (Islamic Youth) by Abd al-Kareem Mottai in 1972. The agenda of this association was presented to the authorities as primarily social in nature, and included summer camps, literacy programs, public health campaigns, and a range of artistic and sports activities targeting youth. *Al-Shabiba* was seen as non-threatening because political Islam had not

yet emerged as a destabilizing force in the region and was perceived by many regimes as a potential counterweight to the leftist influence that pervaded opposition forces at that time. *Al-Shabiba* was thus granted legal status and began implementing its wide-ranging social program with some financial support from Saudi Arabia.

But Mottai's *al-Shabiba* had a shadowy side. Active cells of militants were formed from the association's most committed cadre to undertake clandestine political action in anticipation of the regime collapse predicted by Mottai. In 1975, the GOM arrested several members of *al-Shabiba* for the assassination in Casablanca of Omar Ben Jelloun, a prominent editor of the USFP newspaper, and outlawed the association. The Islamist militants implicated in this violence are among those not eligible for the amnesty that recently led to the release of numerous political detainees. Mottai fled into exile, where he issued statements harshly critical of the GOM and called for its violent overthrow.

The GOM has since maintained a stance of considerable suspicion regarding the objectives of Islamist associations, and has become less willing to grant them legal status under the *Dahir* of 1958. This change in attitude became evident with the establishment of *al-Jama'a al Islamiyya* (The Islamic Group Association) in 1982. This group was founded by Abdallah Benkiran, who split from *al-Shabiba* after denouncing the militant tactics promoted by Mottai. The expressed objectives of *al-Jama'a al Islamiyya* centered around charity, culture, and improving the daily lives of citizens within an Islamic framework.

Although *al-Jama'a al Islamiyya* applied for legal status in 1983, it still awaits a decision by the authorities. In the meantime, the GOM has tolerated the existence and activities of the association, but within unspecified limits. The lack of formal recognition of the association has encouraged its leaders to steer away from the militancy associated with *al-Shabiba*. The limits of the state's tolerance have been breached occasionally, such as in 1990 when the authorities stepped in to ban the association's publication, *al-Islah*. Since then, *al-Jama'a al Islamiyya* has been allowed to circulate another weekly, *al-Raya*, though the government occasionally has confiscated editions of this publication. In 1992, *al-Jama'a al Islamiyya* changed its name to *Harakat al-Islah wal Tajdid bel-Maghreb* (HATM: The Movement of Reform and Renewal in Morocco) to distance itself from the more extremist Islamist groups that were seen as the principal threat to stability across the region. HATM has attempted to enter the political arena under a moderate banner but has been rebuffed by the authorities.

The largest and most prominent Islamist movement also attempted to use the association framework to gain legal recognition. The founder and leader of that movement, Abd al Salam Yassin, has submitted applications for legal status under several different names. In 1982, his association applied for a permit under the name of *al-Jama'a* (The Group), which was rejected. In 1983, the association reapplied under the name of *Jam'iyat al-Jama'a al Khairiya* (The Philanthropic Group Association). Once again, it was denied legal status but began to recruit members anyway, especially among high school and university students. Several years later, the association changed its name yet again to *Al Adl wal Ihsan* (Justice and Charity), by which it is known today. It was formally banned in 1990, and Yassin has been under house arrest since then.

The GOM was initially willing to tolerate such activism because it began during an era when the greatest threat to stability was thought to come primarily from leftists. However, it soon found that the aspirations of many leaders of the Islamist movement went beyond spiritual

devotion to social activism. The turning point in the GOM's attitude toward Islamist groups came with the Ben Jelloun assassination and was further hardened by events in the region. The willingness of the Algerian Islamists to embrace both violence and civic duty and the extremist national ambitions of some Islamist leaders convinced Moroccan authorities of the threatening nature of certain efforts to mobilize communities around social needs.

Since the GOM adopted a more cautious approach, the state's interaction with Islamic associations has been characterized by a combination of formal application of the law and an informal exercise of authority. Certain groups such as *Al Adl wal Ihsan* have been banned outright and others, such as HATM, have been unable to obtain legal status. However, the GOM continues to tacitly tolerate some Islamic association activities that address community needs. In a fashion typical of the uncodified rules of the game, the state encourages such associations to practice self-censorship by not straying into a radicalism that goes beyond social benevolence.

D3. The Gradualist Approach of the Berber Associations

The modern evolution of Berber associations demonstrates that the GOM's application of the *Dahir* of 1958 is judicious rather than absolute. Since the early years of the French Protectorate, the ethnic distinction between Moroccan Berbers and Arabs has been considered one of the greatest potential threats to national unity. The French in fact sought to exploit this distinction in its Berber *Dahir* of 1930, perhaps the most infamous piece of legislation in Morocco's history. In implementing a policy of divide and rule, the colonialists sought to play on the Arab/Berber distinction by enacting different juridical frameworks for each group. The urban nationalists, who were at the vanguard of the anti-colonial movement, turned the Berber *Dahir* into a slogan against the French and instead emphasized religion as the basis of Moroccan national unity, with the "Commander of the Faithful" status of the sultan symbolizing this unity.

After Independence, the Berber question became off limits in political forums in the interest of national unity. Attempts to use Berber cultural identity for political mobilization or as the basis of political parties were not tolerated. Even the size of the Moroccan Berber population is considered too sensitive to be made public in the population censuses conducted since Independence, although estimates range from a low of 30 percent to over 50 percent. This numerical uncertainty is partly because the distinctions between Berbers and Arabs are primarily linguistic and cultural, and have therefore become somewhat blurred with urbanization and internal migration.

Despite the sensitivity of the Berber issue, the GOM permitted use of the association framework for preserving and advancing Berber culture, providing a constructive safety valve for those who felt a strong emotive attachment to this part of the country's heritage. The accomplishments of the first major Berber association, AMREC (*Association Marocaine de Recherche et d'Echange Culturel*), even prior to the new liberalization are a testament to the power of association activity. AMREC was founded in 1967 for the purpose of studying, preserving, and promoting Berber culture through the collection and preservation of its oral traditions. Its leadership was comprised of members of the first generation of independent Moroccan Berberphones, and its origins were in part a reaction to the prevalent pan-Arabism of the time. Keenly aware of the sensitive nature of their issue, the leaders of the association resolutely refrained from any hint of political activism. As a result, the association was granted leeway to engage in an active program. AMREC has contributed to renewed interest in Berber songs by promoting a singing group whose fame now extends beyond Morocco's borders. It has

published several works on Berber culture and participated in the organization of the summer university of Agadir, whose activities center on Moroccan popular culture.

As with most major political reforms in Morocco, the recent state sanction of Berberism came from the top. A commission was set up to establish consensus for the reform of the educational system by giving Berber languages a greater role in education. This has for years been considered the flashpoint of Berber nationalism since language is the key element distinguishing Berbers from Arabs. The fact that teaching in Berber is increasing represents a remarkable shift in public policy. Similarly, five weekly newspapers are now published in Berber dialects, although the transliteration of Berber is in Arabic, which some suggest is partly to make these weeklies more politically palatable. Paralleling this change is a new trend among political parties and their respective presses to include a higher proportion of Berber language material, with both the PPS press (*Al Bayan*) and the USFP paper (*Libération*) now devoting two pages a week to Berber issues.

It may seem ironic that in recent years the injection of religion in politics has become more controversial than the promotion of Berberism. The Moroccan state perhaps has given more leeway to proponents of Berberism to establish a potential cultural counterweight to political Islam. The potential of the Berbers as a bulwark against the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in North Africa has been demonstrated in Algeria, where the Kabyle region has remained relatively impervious to Islamic attempts at domination. Berbers tend to be wary of the threat political Islam may pose to their own cultural identity. The Berber issue has been approached quite differently in Algeria and Morocco, however, with some Algerian political parties using the Berber cultural identity for political mobilization, such as the FFS (*Front des Forces Socialistes*) and the RCD (*Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie*). In Morocco, on the other hand, associations and not political parties have provided the most effective intermediary link between the state and Berber society.

AMREC was able to gain the confidence of the Moroccan regime because it respected the informal rules of the game regarding the sensitive Berber question. As its influence and prestige grew, there were attempts at cooptation by political parties, which the association resisted. By adopting a politically non-threatening approach, AMREC was able to establish itself as a credible representative of the Berber perspective. Other associations focusing on the preservation and promotion of the Berber culture have since sprung up in the wake of AMREC's success. Now a total of 12 associations focus on the Berber culture, and it is noteworthy that unlike other types of associations, they have remained autonomous from partisan politics.

The lessons to be drawn from the successes of the Berber associations are instructive for the current liberalization, even though their genesis preceded the era of reform. The Berber NGOs predicated their strategy on an avoidance of overtly political approaches that might be interpreted by the regime as a threat to national unity and stability. By showing a clear respect for the rules of the game, the Berber associations gained the confidence of the regime and were thus able to preserve the freedom granted them while building a committed and credible cadre that has established an international reputation at the Faculté des Lettres of the Université Mohammed V in Rabat. Unlike the Islamic associations, the Berber NGOs have played a critical role in allowing further pluralization to take place. They have clearly done so by focusing on "culture" rather than by overt advocacy. Yet in the end, this approach has been an effective means of fostering greater acceptance of Berber associations as part of the political process. Their

institutionalized inclusion into the educational system is a clear signal that the palace values the ability of Berber NGOs to serve as a credible intermediary link with the Berber community

D4. Political Parties and the Aggregation of Interests

The experiences of the political parties are also relevant to the evaluation of the new liberalization in the association domain. One of the distinctive characteristics of Moroccan politics is the large number of organizational actors in comparison with other countries of the region. Morocco has more than 15 political parties, 11 of which hold seats in Parliament. Since the 1950s Morocco has been lauded for its commitment to multipartyism, with the parties sufficiently distinguishable in their ideologies and platforms to represent genuine alternatives. The limitations of Moroccan political parties in aggregating and articulating interests at the national level since Independence have been primarily due to the institutional arenas in which they have operated. The state has not only tolerated the range of political perspectives represented by these parties, but has encouraged competition among them through manipulation. While two thirds of parliamentary seats are distributed through direct election, the ministers that make up the government are appointed by the King. Analysts observe that an orchestrated rivalry between the parties has helped impede the consolidation of a national opposition to government policies, and has encouraged the loyalist parties to adhere more closely to the official line in the hopes of being granted greater patronage opportunities. The result of the top down distribution of ministerial portfolios not only diminished the importance of legislative elections for many years, but contributed to the further fracturing of national coalitions, as leaders within parties vied to achieve royal favoritism.

Yet political parties have begun to change their strategies. The formal reforms to the Constitution in 1992 were a sign that the regime was prepared to grant a more significant role to Parliament. Even more important was the informal commitment from above that future governments would better "reflect the balance of forces in Parliament." While the formation and composition of the cabinet will continue to reflect royal prerogative, the palace is placing increasing importance on representation. The formal reform of the Constitution in 1992, however, did not mean that the state was ready to relinquish power to a Parliament dominated by elites engaged in personalistic aggrandizement of their position within the patronage system or by parties with little appeal at the grassroots. Instead, informal signals that accompanied reforms made it clear that the state was attaching increasing value to credible partners in the negotiations over the dismantling of the *état providence* and the construction of a new social contract. The GOM's political adjustment program relies on the development of more effective intermediaries between state and society. Credibility at the base has thus become essential.

Unusual importance was attached to the legislative elections of 1993 by the legions of international observers who flocked to Morocco to scrutinize the casting of ballots. The opposition parties did well despite allegations of tampering in the second round, but this was seen more as a reflection of a general discontent with state policy than as a surge in the popular appeal of the principal opposition parties. The low turnout for the elections and the manifest apathy of most Moroccans were as meaningful as the results. Although the elections showed that the GOM's policies did not command the full confidence of the people, the opposition parties succeeded by default rather than by aggregating and articulating popular opinion. The protests that followed the alleged manipulation of the second round were filed in courts of law by party elites rather than in the streets by crowds of disappointed voters.

The most pronounced indication that the arenas of national intermediation were undergoing meaningful change was not the results or process of the elections themselves but what occurred in their aftermath. The opposition's performance in the last elections helped to establish its credibility, but did not give it enough seats to control the government. The greatest indication that the parties are taking their representative role more seriously in the wake of the recent constitutional reforms was the refusal of the Istiqlal and the USFP to accept the state's invitation to join the government despite the urgings of the palace. What occurred stunned the nation. The opposition coalition held steadfast in its refusal to join the government under what in previous years would have been considered quite favorable circumstances. Negotiations between the palace and the parties dragged out for months, with the King lending his prestige to the search for a positive solution. A "caretaker" interim government was established under Prime Minister Mohamed Karim Lammrani that broke new ground in the human rights domain and became known for its technocratic rather than partisan priorities. The palace eventually gave up on its attempts to entice the opposition and replaced the caretaker government with one that rewarded loyalist parties more willing to continue playing the patronage game.

The refusal of the opposition parties to join the government may be interpreted as a sign of the declining power of patronage. Control of the ministries offered these parties some access to resources for distribution among their upper strata, but not enough to command a sufficiently wide allegiance to make them viable partners in negotiations for further democratization. More priority was placed on popular perceptions than on access to patronage resources. Had the opposition parties accepted the offer of the palace, they might have been tainted by a popular perception of complicity in a ruling apparatus that was insensitive to public interests and needs.

Cynics would argue that the state's extensive efforts to court the opposition were motivated by its weakness in the face of the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. But the GOM's political adjustment program is better understood as premised on strength and confidence rather than on weakness. The state has called on both national and local elements of civil society to better represent the people so that the state may better negotiate and respond. It has counted on the fact that the growing influence of the Islamists is best countered by opening up the political sphere to those willing to work within the existing system.

The ability of NGOs to represent the grassroots of Moroccan society is thus of growing value to the wider political system. Political parties have for some time used NGOs as instruments for extending their influence. But the parties are having increasing difficulty in controlling the profusion of new NGOs because these NGOs have found their credibility with the people and government enhanced if they maintain their autonomy and focus on more narrowly defined objectives than those of the political parties.

D5. Trade Unions and Competition for Credibility

The political parties have also attempted to use trade unions to better reach the grassroots of society. But the competition between the three principal trade unions and their weaknesses in aggregating interests also damage their credibility. While recent efforts at coalition building suggest that change may be underway, the unions are still considered by most Moroccans to give more priority to partisan politics than to representing the interests of their members.

The UMT is the largest trade union active in the private sector. This organization bases its strategy on the personalistic principles of patronage that held sway in national politics for so

long, although it has at times formed alliances with the Istiqlal, USFP, and PPS (*Parti du Progrès et du Socialisme*) UMT's Secretary General, Mahjoub Ben Seddiq, started the union in 1956 and is seen by many as grooming his nephew to take over. This union has been rewarded by the state with preferential access to decision makers because it has avoided linking labor issues with party politics. While critics complain that the UMT has been coopted by the state, it still has some credibility at the grassroots because it is seen as able to gain the ear of the government. Access to decision makers is important to popular perceptions of the capacity of such organizations.

The CDT primarily organizes public sector workers. It is closely tied to the USFP and also has links to other parties on the left, such as the OADP (*Action Démocratique et Populaire*). The CDT maintains that since most of its members are in the public sector, it must associate its agenda with a larger partisan platform. Critics complain that the union has become dominated by the USFP agenda and lacks the autonomy necessary to separate worker interests from those of the party.

The other major union, the UGTM, is also closely linked to a party, the Istiqlal, and its perspective reflects that of the party. The UGTM seeks to offer an alternative to the leftist perspective of the CDT. UGTM argues that the leftist opposition lacks appeal to the average Moroccan worker and that a more centrist opposition is needed for those who might otherwise be drawn to the Islamists to effect change.

Despite their differing perspectives and partisan affiliations, the unions have recently shown a new interest in coalition building. This was particularly evident in the common front they presented in working out a resolution to the train strike in June 1995. Should this ability to work as a coalition persist, the government will have a more capable partner with which to negotiate such issues as strikes and the pace and nature of privatization. But to be effective interlocutors between state and society, the unions must also do better in gaining the confidence of those whose interests they claim to represent.

D6. Human Rights Associations and Partisan Politics

Human rights associations are also linked to national political arenas through political parties. As with the other civil society actors at the national level, Morocco's human rights associations emerged as affiliates of political parties. This has had both positive and negative consequences in terms of the ability of the associations to advocate human rights. On the positive side, these associations have used their links with parties to influence national dialogue. On the negative side, the domination of the human rights field by the parties has led to a splintering of the human rights movement that reflects the schisms in the wider body politic. Perhaps more importantly, the instrumentalization of human rights associations by the parties has decreased their credibility in the eyes of the people, who tend to see them as mouthpieces of partisan platforms that subordinate human rights to interparty competition.

The creation of the first two human rights associations preceded the liberalization of civil society and was linked to the broader era of reform that began in the mid-1980s. These associations were formed by the two main opposition parties, with the Istiqlal forming the LMDH (*Ligue Marocaine pour les Droits de l'Homme*) and the USFP establishing the AMDH (*Association Marocaine des Droits Humains*). These were instrumentalist NGOs (see Section II for typology) that were used by the parties in their interplay with the state. Key decisions over

the strategies and agendas of these associations reflected the will of the respective party leaderships. The financial crisis of the mid-1980s opened Morocco to greater influence from abroad and motivated the state to place higher priority on its international image in the hope of creating a more favorable investment environment. Since the issue of human rights had become prominent in international discourse, the LMDH and the OMDH were given a higher profile on the national political scene and became more active.

However, more autonomous elements of civil society began to question the credibility of these associations and their role as party instruments. Leading intellectuals began to question the grip of the opposition parties on the human rights domain, viewing this grip as part of the stagnation of the political system that was blocking more rapid and fundamental reform. The credibility of the LMDH and the AMDH as politically neutral advocates of human rights was thus tainted by the very party affiliations that enhanced their access to the arenas of national dialogue.

This dilemma prompted the creation of a new national human rights association, the *Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme* (OMDH). In 1987, the formation of a new human rights league was contemplated at a national conference of Morocco's bar association held in Oujda. The bar association is heavily influenced by supporters of the USFP, who were anxious to see the creation of a new human rights NGO with links to their party. In a display of political maneuvering typical of Moroccan party politics, the AMDH had split from the USFP due to a conflict over party strategies between those who favored confrontation and those who favored moderation. When the latter won out, those in the more confrontational camp defected from the party, taking the AMDH with them. The key question at the Oujda conference was how closely the new human rights association should be affiliated with the political parties. Some wanted it to be dominated by the USFP, others wanted it to reflect a coalition between the USFP, OADP, and PPS, and others argued for an independent association. The compromise allocated half the control of the executive bureau of the resulting OMDH to the USFP and the other half to independents. This arrangement proved untenable, however, as the USFP found the temptation to control the OMDH irresistible. The independents eventually quit the leadership of the OMDH while continuing to lend their support as members.

Lessons learned from the evolution of the human rights associations include the primacy accorded to party politics at the national level. The Moroccan human rights movement has to a large extent been captured by party activists and split accordingly, thereby muting its criticisms of state policy. Another lesson learned was the importance of autonomy to maintaining credibility with the government and people. Those who resigned from the executive bureau of the OMDH made a clear statement that subordination to a political party compromised the association's pursuit of its objectives.

The GOM itself acknowledged the credibility of the non-aligned faction of the OMDH that sacrificed its position of leadership in the association to the principles of autonomy. In a remarkable move that significantly helped to improve its own reputation in the human rights arena, the GOM recruited key individuals who had resigned from the association to head a newly created ministry of human rights. This took place during the period in which the palace was unsuccessfully trying to woo the opposition to join the government. Although the ministry has since returned to business as usual in the patronage system with the granting of the human rights portfolio to the UC (*Union Constitutionnelle*), attention has focused on the dilemma facing

advocacy groups at the national level. Namely, if an association seeks to enhance its credibility by maintaining autonomy from party politics, it risks sacrificing access to the key national arenas

D7. Women's Organizations and the Balance Between External and Internal Orientation

Like the human rights organizations, the national women's NGOs have also played a valuable and instructive role in the country's movement toward democratization. These women's NGOs were from the outset dominated by established actors in the Moroccan political system, namely the government through the UNFM (*Union Nationale des Femmes Marocaines*) or the political parties through such associations as the ADFM (*Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc*), which many see as a proxy for the PPS.

The enthusiasm with which women's NGOs were embraced by both the parties and government reflected not only rising worldwide consciousness regarding the gender issue, but also new opportunities to access resources provided by the donor community. In recognition of these opportunities, the GOM established a special unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assist women's NGOs in developing their capacities. Their proliferation, acceptance by the regime, and ability to access resources have begun to have an impact on the Moroccan public consciousness. While considerable cultural impediments continue to constrain the full participation of women in public affairs, they have begun to find a voice through the association movement.

While these associations cannot yet claim that they represent the grassroots of society, they have succeeded in legitimizing women's rights as a political issue. The recent modest reform of family law in the *Moudawana* (personal statute code) represents an acknowledgment of the growing importance of women in the political arena. The *Union Action Féminine* (UAF) launched a five-month campaign to collect one million signatures on a petition to change the *Moudawana*. The groups initiated various activities to involve different segments of society in collecting the signatures, including going door to door, establishing neighborhood committees, organizing regional meetings of men and women, and holding press conferences with national and international media. This political activism was tolerated by the GOM, with the result that the *Moudawana* became a subject of public debate and some changes were made.

Advocates for the rights of women have found that the most effective channel for their collective expression has been Morocco's association framework rather than political parties, trade unions, or informal networks of patronage. For women, NGOs have been the mechanism through which they could effectively voice their frustration at the discrimination that perpetuates their subordinate status in society. This expression has thus far been limited to the articulate elite and cannot be said to have penetrated the grassroots of society. But it has been heard and acknowledged by both the international community and the GOM.

Opportunities available to Moroccan women's organizations as a result of the favorable international environment have stimulated intense competition to represent and mobilize Moroccan women. This competition has become so intense that the rival groups of women's advocates are trying to develop ways to reach the grassroots to distinguish themselves from their competitors. However, while women are frequent beneficiaries of NGO activities at the local level, they have rarely been brought into the process as partners. The national profile of the women's rights issue has been elevated, but progress at the local level is only now becoming

apparent. It will be much harder for these NGOs to mobilize women at the local level than among the educated elite at the national level. Given some of the limitations facing women, a different strategy will have to be devised, based less on the confrontational strategy favored in national and international fora and more on an attempt to highlight the potential value of women's contributions to solving the concrete problems of development.

D8. The Representative Capacity of National NGOs

National NGOs in Morocco were tolerated by the regime even before the new era of opportunity, in part because they did not show much potential for developing a mass base. To a certain extent, they have played a corporatist role by providing the state with easy access to specific segments of society. The capacity of associations to serve as intermediaries between state and society was limited by the fact that they were almost never based on a broad constituency. Many associations stayed out of politics altogether, including benevolent organizations, sports or youth groups, and cultural associations. Ironically, by seeming to avoid politics, the Berber associations were ultimately to be accorded a more consultative role with the state; however, they are not necessarily democratic representatives of the Berber population. Professional associations tend to be more interested in public policy, but only as it affects relatively narrow issues. These groups generally represent a weak corporatist link between state and society.

Groups oriented toward public policy issues, such as human rights organizations and women's associations, have attempted to represent the grassroots through articulating ideas rather than through incorporating grassroots representatives. The human rights groups were created or captured by the political parties, as were several women's groups, and are seen by the government as representing their parties rather than providing a non-partisan channel for popular expression. Women's groups, in particular, have proliferated in response to the availability of donor funds, and competition among them has become more fierce than in any other NGO sector. The success of these groups is judged primarily by their ability to attract foreign grants. The priority given to this quest for donor funding has commonly eclipsed whatever ground-up orientation they may have had. However, as success in competing for foreign funds has become more contingent on the ability of these groups to penetrate the grassroots, they have increasingly turned to developing this capacity.

National NGOs in Morocco should not be mistaken for nascent political parties in the process of democratization. The existing political parties already provide such mechanisms, and their credibility will increase as the regime incrementally allows Parliament to become a more meaningful arena. As with the labor unions, NGOs that compete for political influence at the national level are likely to do so through interparty competition. National advocacy associations can supplement the parties by serving as special interest groups that lobby for narrow goals, and they may be useful in terms of national mediation over specific issues. While national NGOs may contribute to the credibility of the parties to which they are affiliated, an increase in the importance of Parliament, which is already gradually occurring, remains the critical factor in the emergence of a more dynamic multipartyism. National advocacy associations thus have an intrinsic interest in developing the role of Parliament.

In general, the primary shortcoming of the national Moroccan NGOs in contributing to democratization is their weakness in representing interests at the grassroots. To become representative, they need to mobilize participation at the grassroots end of their state/society intermediary function.

D9. Grassroots Groups and Development Partnerships

The most promising opportunities for strengthening Moroccan civil society are at the local level, precisely where liberalization by the GOM is most advanced. These opportunities are promising for two principal reasons:

- Local government is being encouraged by the central government to develop partnerships with NGOs to target and resolve development challenges. In addition, municipalities and communes desire to extend their reach by working with NGOs on concrete issues that contribute to development. NGOs thus have direct access to decision makers. As these partnerships develop, NGOs are likely to be given an opportunity to have greater influence than before in managing community affairs and in identifying community problems, resulting in an empowerment of grassroots groups.
- NGOs have been given unprecedented license to engage in community activities at the grassroots level. The bounds of community activism, which historically have been restricted by the state, have been significantly widened through the GOM's new strategy of drawing on the enhanced capacities of civil society to resolve concrete community problems. Thus new opportunities exist for greater citizen participation at the local level through NGOs.

The current situation affords NGOs that contribute to local development an excellent opportunity to strengthen their potential as intermediaries between state and society. Their access to decision makers will increase as they demonstrate their value in working with local government to respond effectively to the needs and demands of communities. Their ability to channel grassroots concerns into constructive dialogue with the authorities in developing plans of action will provide Moroccans with an invigorated means of public expression that is acceptable to the GOM.

There are, however, obstacles to the empowerment of NGOs as intermediary links. The GOM's new initiative toward civil society is a bold experiment that is introducing a new dynamic in local politics. This has implications for the traditional mandate of local government to maintain stability through the control and limitation of civic activism. Long-established perceptions will have to be altered through an incremental process of confidence building. Local governments have traditionally been suspicious of novel forms of collective action. They continue to closely monitor the leadership of such groups to ensure that they are not serving as proxy for partisan or more threatening political agendas, such as those of radical Islam. In addition, the prioritization and resolution of community problems was until recently the exclusive domain of the state. Some local officials will initially resent NGOs encroaching on what they may perceive to be their turf. Local Moroccan associations that are autonomous from the government will also tend to be dubious about a partnership with the authorities. They have a habit of viewing government interest in their activities as a check on their freedom.

Yet it is the promise of partnership that gives the new liberalization in Morocco its most significant potential for strengthening civil society's role in the democratization process. The most successful NGOs will be those that can gain access to and develop the trust of high-level decision makers while maintaining their credibility at the grassroots. Similarly, the GOM will benefit more from partners that are credible representatives of popular expression than from those that are viewed as appendages of the state.

The lesson from past experience, which is reinforced by Algeria's unfortunate example, is that national economic structural adjustment must be accompanied by a search for new solutions in confronting the development gap at the local level, where it is felt most acutely in everyday life. In Algeria, the Islamists based their claim to legitimacy on their purported effectiveness in filling this gap. Similarly, in Morocco, the Islamists initially sought to exploit the state's weakness in providing for needs at the grassroots level. But a key difference between the two countries is that the Moroccan regime still has enough confidence in Morocco's political system to unleash civil society within a framework of constructive dialogue and cooperation with the authorities. Should its experiment in mobilizing popular initiative and enterprise at the local level prove successful, the GOM will have reduced its vulnerability to a potentially potent threat. While it cannot be said that the concern over the political Islamist threat has motivated the GOM's new opening, sustained encouragement of civil society initiative in addressing the local development gap could do much to preempt more radical alternatives.

D10. Possibilities for Enhancement of the Enabling Environment

As the value of successful partnerships between state and civil society is demonstrated, the GOM may be expected to further liberalize the environment within which associations operate. This in fact has already begun, as is manifested by the example of the *Fédération des Associations des Jeunes Entrepreneurs du Maroc* (FAJEM), a federation of local associations of young unemployed college graduates seeking to establish small and medium-sized enterprises. This association addresses one of Morocco's primary national development concerns. Large numbers of unemployed college graduates represent a potential source of political unrest. Because the public sector cannot absorb these skilled graduates, the state must rely on an expansion of the private sector to generate employment opportunities for them. The GOM has encouraged and facilitated FAJEM's efforts to develop private remedies to the lack of economic opportunity. It recently gave FAJEM royal sanction by according its representatives an audience with the royal cabinet.

Due to their focus on non-threatening and concrete local development issues and their success in forming partnerships with local government, FAJEM's numerous associations of young entrepreneurs now have a voice at the national level. Through an incremental process of confidence building, FAJEM has been allowed to advocate on behalf of its constituents. Even more remarkable is the fact that FAJEM has entered into dialogue with the GOM on a potential reform of the 1958 *Dahir*, which regulates civic associations. Although this proposed reform would be limited to FAJEM's narrow domain of activities, the mere fact that this dialogue has been opened represents a victory for civil society. Under the auspices of its DYNA-PME project, USAID is currently providing technical assistance to FAJEM that will allow it to put forward specific legislative proposals for this reform.

The enhanced opportunities available to local associations that focus on non-threatening development issues have not been lost on other national actors. Several months ago, a resolution was introduced in Parliament calling for revision of the 1958 *Dahir*. Although this initiative went nowhere, it indicates the growing interest of the political parties in the increased dynamism of civil society in general.

Furthermore, an attempt to establish a national coalition of NGOs through an informal grouping known as GONG has been tolerated by the authorities. Thus far, this group has not been formalized and remains hamstrung by the internecine rivalries that have accompanied the

Potential for Partnerships and Synergies

Reaching Out to NGOs. Government Innovation in Khemisset

Abderrahim Ben Draoui, governor of Khemisset Province, is an example of the new generation of young, well-educated members of the political elite who are actively fostering links with civil society. Draoui came to the governorship from the Faculty of Law in Rabat, which has a growing reputation as a forging ground for Morocco's new generation of political elites. The approach toward civil society taken by this charismatic and innovative governor is representative of a growing trend among local authorities to provide NGOs with the opportunity to enter into the local development process. He has actively supported developmental associations in his province, and has encouraged NGOs to form partnerships with local government to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

- The governor lent his prestige to the **Association Marocaine pour la Protection de l'Environnement Khémisset (ASMAPEK)** in its public relations campaign to build a sewage treatment plant. ASMAPEK is a grassroots environmental NGO that captured the Governor's attention with its efforts to organize neighborhood cleanup committees. With Draoui's encouragement, an effective partnership was formed between the association, municipal officials, and donor organizations to achieve the goal of better sanitation, with each contributing complementary elements of the development project.
- In 1994, Draoui took part in a joint initiative with young unemployed college graduates of Khemisset that resulted in the formation of the **Association des Jeunes Promoteurs de la Province de Khémisset (AJPK)**, an NGO founded to improve economic opportunities available to unemployed youth in the region. The Governor, in addition to encouraging links between the association and the local Chamber of Commerce, worked out an arrangement with AJPK whereby the association took over the management of several public installations such as the bus station, vegetable market, and swimming pool. After paying rent to the municipality, the association keeps income generated to help fund its activities.

The efforts of this dynamic Governor are often cited as examples of the potential synergies between state and citizen groups in resolving local challenges. The joining of the efforts by local authorities to meet public needs with the participatory initiatives of civil society extend the reach of each partner. FAJEM, the umbrella organization for young entrepreneurs' associations, has published a press release lauding the degree of public/private cooperation in Khemisset made possible as a result of Draoui's initiatives. Under his vision, development partnerships are based upon a common identification of the development priorities of the province so as to ensure maximum coordination among the actors involved.

Triumph in Tetouan The Participatory Power of Civil Society

The city of Tetouan provides an excellent example of what citizens can accomplish through grassroots activities. Tetouan confronts many of the same difficulties faced by other urban centers in Morocco. Indeed, unemployed youths are even more evident here than in other cities, drawn to Tetouan by the smuggling trade through the nearby free port of Ceuta. In 1990, riots erupted in Tetouan that the government quickly quelled.

But in the last few years the citizens of Tetouan have seized the initiative to better conditions in their community. They have formed numerous NGOs, the most notable of which are:

- **Association "Hanane" de Protection des Handicapés Physiques et Mentaux**, an NGO that provides assistance and schooling for the physically and mentally challenged. This NGO was founded by a local man whose daughter (Hanane) was handicapped. Realizing that public institutions were not capable of providing the special services needed by the disabled, Hanane's father mobilized the community to fill that gap. The association's school now attracts students from around the nation. The association is funded primarily by community donations, but local officials show their support by attending its functions and graduations.
- **Association de Bienfaisance "Al Birr ou l'Ihsane"** was founded when austerity measures and a reduction in subsidies on basic goods made subsistence difficult for the poorer residents of the medina. The association feeds approximately 400 needy families (1,700 individuals) every day and is funded exclusively by private donations.
- **Association Tetouani d'Initiative Sociolabore (ATIL)** was recently founded by Tetouan citizens of Spanish and Moroccan extraction who wished to serve as intermediaries between the town and international donors. Their objective is to attract the foreign funding that would allow them to undertake concrete development activities aimed at increasing economic opportunities for the youth.

Citizens' groups in Tetouan may have been given such a high degree of autonomy by the government because the city, given its large Spanish and Berber populations, is not as susceptible as elsewhere to any widespread implantation of Islamist tendencies. Tetouan also has a long history of decentralized management because of its relatively inaccessible location on the coast, surrounded by the rugged Rif mountains. The result of this hands-off government approach has been an impressive unleashing of community initiative.

rampant proliferation of NGOs in recent years. However, this example of coalition building by numerous civil society actors reflects an expanded awareness of the opportunities that are emerging from the national and international environments in which they operate. Comparable efforts at coalition building are occurring with increasing frequency.

Another manifestation of the potential of Morocco's increasingly dynamic civil society is the success attained by AMSED (*Association Marocaine pour la Solidarité et le Développement*) in its intermediary role between the international donor community and grassroots NGOs. AMSED was formed by Catholic Relief Services to serve as a mechanism through which international donors can effectively strengthen grassroots groups. It has helped train regional associations, which in turn train and monitor grassroots groups, resulting in a pyramidal strengthening of NGOs that integrates national and local level organizations.

E. Conclusion

Since the mid-1980s, a highly favorable environment has emerged in Morocco for NGO participation in democratization and sustainable development initiatives. Fundamental changes in state/society relations have been recognized by the GOM as essential for economic viability and political stability. In order to better meet Morocco's growing needs, the GOM has been relinquishing control of the economy to the private sector and encouraging greater NGO participation in addressing development gaps. Political and economic reforms during the past decade have created an unprecedented opportunity for greater NGO participation in Morocco, particularly by NGOs focusing on politically non-threatening development issues at the local level. This opportunity is enhanced by the recent trend among international development donors that favors NGOs as delivery mechanisms.

USAID has an outstanding opportunity to contribute to democratization and sustainable development in Morocco by establishing a program to strengthen the capacities of Moroccan NGOs. Such a program would target selected NGOs with outstanding potential to engage in successful development partnerships with the GOM and grassroots communities. Successes emerging from this USAID-sponsored program would further instill confidence within the GOM that NGOs can engage constructively in the development process and help open the door to widespread grassroots participation in development.

NGOs in Morocco, however, are so varied and numerous that USAID would need to be highly selective. Not all NGOs can contribute significantly to democratization or sustainable development, and not all would be considered acceptable development partners by the GOM or legitimate intermediaries by grassroots communities. The following section provides a detailed overview of NGOs in Morocco. It is intended to provide a foundation for selection of NGOs with the greatest potential for inclusion in a USAID-sponsored NGO capacity building program.

SECTION II

OVERVIEW OF THE MOROCCAN NGO SECTOR

SECTION II OVERVIEW OF THE MOROCCAN NGO SECTOR

A. Introduction

This section examines Morocco's flourishing NGO sector—comprised of up to 30,000 organizations—and provides a foundation for identifying NGOs with the greatest potential to contribute to democratization and sustainable development in Morocco. It begins with an overview of the NGO sector's roots in Moroccan cultural tradition and summarizes the sector's historical evolution. It then presents a typology of Moroccan NGOs, discusses differences between first and second generation NGOs, and provides brief profiles of the major types of NGOs. Next, it reviews the results of a survey conducted in June 1995 to obtain detailed information about 42 Moroccan NGOs that reflect the diversity of the NGO sector and demonstrate potential as development partners. Generalizations drawn from these data are presented. The section concludes with observations about areas in which Moroccan NGOs need strengthening to become more capable development partners.

B. Evolution of the Moroccan NGO Sector

B1. The Cultural Roots of NGOs in Morocco

Associations are an old cultural phenomenon in Moroccan society. Prior to the 19th century, indigenous associations, such as tribal groups or conglomerations of extended families, were prominent in the Moroccan social structure. They played an important role in daily life. Collective harvesting, social conflict resolution, practice of Islam, organizations of trade fairs were all organized on a communal basis to ensure that the shared needs of community were met. These associations were based on Islamic law or Berber custom. They were supported by private donations and religious endowments in urban and rural areas. Organizations of this traditional type still exist and continue to function as they did years ago. Modern NGOs in Morocco have deep roots in Moroccan cultural tradition. The Islamic spirit of community easily accommodates the modern concept of NGOs. Indeed, traditional relief and self-help groups based on Islamic law (*schirka*) have many parallels to modern NGOs. Long before Morocco became a French protectorate, people of similar socioeconomic backgrounds formed associations and worked together to meet the challenges of daily life. Cultivation, livestock rearing, water use, grain storage, and education were all organized on a communal basis to ensure that the shared needs of community members were met. In rural Morocco, organizations of this type continue to function as they did years ago, though they have adapted to the changing times.

One of the best known traditional organizations is the *agadir*, which evolved around the fortified collective granaries that existed in precolonial Morocco. The first *agadirs* date back to when the tribes of southern Morocco were becoming more sedentary and began to practice rainfed cereal cultivation. *Agadirs* provided refuge for both tribal groups and their stored grain when warring tribes attacked. While the *agadirs* tended to lose their importance in times of peace, they reemerged during periods of insecurity. Another rural Moroccan tradition is *tiwizi*, which is the most prominent form of mutual relief in rural Morocco. *Tiwizi* are large volunteer mutual assistance groups that form periodically to undertake major tasks, such as construction or maintenance of irrigation canals.

These traditional community assistance organizations have been losing their primacy due to the profound socioeconomic transformation of Moroccan society. However, the *concept* of mutual assistance behind these traditional organizations remains deeply imbedded in Moroccan culture and could provide a solid framework for the formation of modern development partnerships. The tradition of mutual assistance represents an important cultural reference point that modern Moroccan NGOs could draw on to mobilize grassroots groups for development activities.

B2. The Origin and Evolution of Modern NGOs

The modern notion of an association or NGO was introduced to Morocco during the French protectorate period (1912-1956) through a *dahir*, or decree, in 1941. This *dahir* placed the creation of associations under the jurisdiction of the governing powers of the French protectorate. Only the French and other foreigners were allowed to form organizations juridically. Cultural associations, sport associations, college and students parent associations, etc., are typical examples of these organizations. However, traditional organizations continued to operate in traditional domains. Since Independence, Moroccan NGOs have evolved through three distinct periods.

A period of liberalization, 1958-1973. The right of association was first instituted in the Royal Charter of 1958 and continues to be guaranteed by the Moroccan constitution. The *Dahir* of 15 November 1958 specifies how this constitutional right may be exercised. The *dahir* drew on both modern concepts and longstanding Moroccan traditions and was influenced by the liberal participatory political climate that prevailed immediately following Independence. This *dahir* represented a major loosening of the legal restraints established by the protectorate authorities. It is much less strict than laws governing associations in many other Middle East and North African nations. Nevertheless, the 1958 *dahir* reflects government distrust of non-profit civic organizations. This distrust has since lessened, but legislation has not yet been passed to liberalize financial controls placed on NGOs. In sum, the provisions of the 1958 *dahir* provide a juridical framework for association activity and specify how collective action in support of a wide array of social activities can be institutionalized. Only associations that would undertake actions that are illegal, immoral, or that threaten the nation or the monarchy are prohibited.

A period of renewed restraint, 1973-1984. In 1973, significant limitations were placed on the liberty of associations in a 10 April *dahir* that undermined the liberal spirit of the 1958 *dahir*. Provisions in the 1973 *dahir* address three key areas: granting of legal recognition to NGOs, dissolution of NGOs; and sanctions against NGO founders and leaders.

The 1973 *dahir*'s principal provisions relate to legal status for NGOs. They give the authorities greater discretion in deciding which NGOs to legalize. Instead of simply stating their intention to form an NGO, prospective associations were required to provide detailed information about their group's objectives and the identity and motivation of their founders and leaders. In addition, the 1973 provisions do not require authorities to process applications within a set period of time. Thus, authorities can deny legal status to an NGO simply by not acting on its application. Although in principle the authorities are required to issue a receipt when they process an application, in practice receipts are not always issued. The receipt can serve as a provisional permit of operation; however, an NGO is legally prohibited from functioning without such a receipt. Provisions in the 1958 *dahir* allowed an association to be dissolved through a judicial process initiated at the discretion of the authorities. Since 1973, not only can government authorities suspend the activities of an NGO indefinitely, they can also dissolve NGOs by simple decree—for example, for not satisfactorily adhering to their charter. Founders, directors, or

administrators of an NGO functioning in violation of the charter are subject to imprisonment for three months to two years and a fine of Dh 10,000 to 50,000

Despite the legal restrictions placed on NGOs in 1973, associations continued to play an important role in the country's social and cultural movements. NGOs for amateur theater, scouts, singers, women, and the care of children with disabilities emerged during this period. Youth associations in particular played an important social role.

The renaissance period, 1984-present. In the mid-1980s, the NGO movement entered a third phase, a renaissance period, that continues today. Because of changes both in Morocco and internationally, NGOs began to be perceived as important players in regaining the country's economic, political, and cultural equilibrium. As a result, the enabling environment for Moroccan NGOs has steadily improved and become quite favorable. NGOs in Morocco are proliferating.

Significant changes in Morocco contributing to the emergence of NGOs include the financial crisis of the mid-1980s, which prevented government development programs from keeping pace with the basic needs of Morocco's growing population. In fact, the GOM's structural adjustment program precipitated a temporary decline in the quality of life for many Moroccans. As a result, the GOM turned to private sector initiative to play a key role in economic rejuvenation. Likewise, in the political sphere, the GOM has opened up opportunities for greater participation by established political parties as well as by NGOs. Political reform has led to a resurgence of interest in the democratic movement. This has been reflected in a number of developments, beginning with the participation of the opposition parties in the 1984 elections. The movement toward democracy was reinforced by subsequent communal elections, the reform of the Constitution in 1992, and the legislative elections of 1993. This democratic movement has been accompanied by increased national interest in human rights and greater popular participation in the political process and in the country's economic, social, and cultural progress. A final domestic factor that has contributed to the development of NGOs is a relaxation of the laws constraining these organizations. Although NGOs are still governed by the 1958 and 1973 legislation, the rules have been interpreted much more loosely than previously or enforced only to curtail NGOs engaging in overtly political activism.

Changes in the international climate have also benefited the Moroccan NGO movement. These changes have included the collapse of socialist ideologies that favored a more interventionist and centralized state role, conditional clauses in international aid packages regarding democratization and human rights, and the growing influence of international NGOs working for human rights and international development. Particularly important has been the earmarking of significant donor funds for NGOs that actively contribute to development.

As a result of these changes, the Moroccan NGO sector has undergone significant growth and development in the last decade. To track this growth, two recent unpublished studies have attempted a quantitative analysis of the Moroccan NGO sector. These studies did not attempt to assess how active any of these myriad of NGOs actually are, or their impact on Moroccan society.

According to a study by Hassan Rifki,¹ at any given time there are 30,000 associations in Morocco. Data in this study reveal that most associations are located in the major cities of Morocco. In fact, Rabat and Casablanca are home to 37 percent of these associations. They and the next three largest cities, Marrakech, Fez, and Tangier, account for 54.5 percent of associations. Rifki's study also reveals that most members of Moroccan associations are young, educated, and middle class. Their leaders tend to be elite city dwellers. Furthermore, associations are as diverse in Morocco as they are elsewhere. People unite for sports, leisure activities, cultural activities, and charitable projects, and to share religious, professional, moral, and material interests. Of the 449 associations for cultural enhancement mentioned by the Rifki study, 16.7 percent are involved in theater, 13.6 percent in music, 10.5 percent in education, 6.9 percent in religion, 5.4 percent with youth, and 1.3 percent in the arts. The other 45.4 percent include primarily professional associations and newer types of advocate organizations, including those in the areas of human rights, consumer protection, environmental protection, and development.

A second study, conducted for the Ministry of the Interior in 1987, counted 17,698 associations in the country.² According to the report, the largest number are educational (3,405) and sports organizations (3,236), followed by social (2,164) and professional and cultural organizations (2,047). These are followed in number by arts (878), theater (729), political (180), and scientific groups (179). The study did not consider political parties to be associations.

Some authorities, including the author of the first study cited above, consider the flourishing of NGOs in Morocco to represent a "movement." It should be noted, however, that Moroccan NGOs do not yet satisfy the conditions of a true movement, such as the labor or cooperative movements. The concept of a movement involves the key characteristics of mass, dynamism, and a commonality of values, interests, and objectives—that is, large numbers of participants who are animated by a dynamism that ensures their strength, pursue common objectives, and draw their motivations from a common and firmly held set of beliefs. At present, the principal common feature of NGOs in Morocco is simply that they are civil and not government organizations. There is little commonality of mission, values, or objectives within this sector.

The concept of NGOs, in the modern sense, has been given currency in Morocco only in the last ten years. The term itself does not reflect any juridical category in Moroccan law, but was imported through the language of United Nations agencies and international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and USAID. "NGO" is used within these institutions to distinguish between private and public organizations. In Morocco, the term carries this distinction, but is also used to distinguish non-profit organizations that originate in civil society from entities created by the state. This means that juridically, Moroccan NGOs include not only associations, but also cooperatives and, to a lesser extent, trade unions.

¹cf Hassan Rifki, "Analysis of the Moroccan Association Movement." Presentation at the Seminar on Social Economy, U C I Rabat, 20-26 April 1987.

²Z Ben Mimoun, "Associations in Morocco," Ministry of the Interior. Quoted by Abdellah Ouazzani, "The Urban question in Morocco," thesis, public policy, Rabat Faculty of Law, 1987.

C. Typology of NGOs in Morocco

Given the current profusion of NGOs in Morocco, their extreme diversity, and the relative dearth of information about them, a typology of NGOs will be useful in identifying Moroccan NGOs that could play a significant role in fostering democratization and sustainable development. This typology categorizes NGOs in Morocco according to their key characteristics. In certain cases, these characteristics are closely tied to the NGO's principal activities (for example, leisure and cultural, political, and development NGOs). In other cases, the key characteristics stem from the nature of the relationship of the NGO vis-à-vis the government (for example, advocacy or dialogue organizations). Finally, trade unions and cooperatives represent distinctive forms of non-government groups in Morocco. Beyond these broad generalizations, each category has its own unique set of characteristics and encompasses a diverse collection of NGOs.

The central value of the typology is that it provides insights into NGOs that groupings by common categories fail to capture. For example, in the case of "women's groups," political parties have established certain groups to further their political agendas. Other groups are non-aligned advocates for general improvement of women's rights. Still others have a strong focus on development or health issues, or represent specific professions. And many women's groups in Morocco are primarily cultural organizations—some essentially "tea salons" for the elite. In certain cases, however, the following categories overlap, with a given NGO able to fit equally well within two different categories.

Leisure and cultural associations. A large number of NGOs in Morocco, including many of the oldest, provide educational, cultural, sports, artistic, and other leisure opportunities to the Moroccan people. Though valuable as an expression of the people and for the enrichment of their daily lives, these associations do not result in a significant change in the political, socioeconomic, or development arenas.

Cooperatives. Cooperatives, like trade unions, may not normally be considered NGOs. However, they are juridically considered as such by Moroccan law. The *Dahir* of 5 October 1984 contains regulations defining and governing cooperatives. It defines a cooperative as a group of people who come together for the sole purpose of providing a needed product or service. The group must manage and regulate its activities according to the principles outlined by the 1958 *dahir*, which means they must be organized and managed in a democratic fashion and operated on a non-profit basis. Cooperatives can be involved in humanitarian as well as economic activities and are subject to the approval and audit of public officials. According to available statistics, there are nearly 3,800 cooperatives in Morocco. Agriculture and agrarian reform cooperatives account for nearly 78 percent of the total, with housing and craft cooperatives each accounting for another 10 percent. There are also small numbers of cooperatives in the forestry, food, fishing, retail, and mining sectors.

Trade unions. The Moroccan Constitution grants unions the right to represent the interests of citizens, along with political parties, communal councils, and chambers of commerce. Trade unions are allowed a broader range of activity under Moroccan law than are other associations, including promoting the economic, industrial, commercial, and agricultural interests of their constituents. Unlike other non-government associations, they are given many financial prerogatives. They can receive donations of real estate and real property, establish mutual relief and retirement funds for their members, provide low-income housing and acquire land for community gardens, and create, administer, and subsidize insurance funds. In addition, they are allowed to provide a large variety of other services and activities for their members. Although

no official statistics on union membership are available, the total number of union members is estimated at 600,000, representing 7 percent of Morocco's approximately four million salaried workers.

The three largest unions, the *Union Marocaine du Travail* (UMT), the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Marocains* (UGTM), and the *Confédération Démocratique du Travail* (CDT), represent approximately 60 percent of Morocco's union members. All three are politically active, and the union leadership is committed to working with the political parties to strengthen the government's adherence to democratic processes. The three principal unions are currently closely tied to several of the opposition parties (USFP, Istiqlal, PPS, OADP) and often act in concert. For example, they organized the rail-workers' strike in June 1995, the public health workers' strike in June 1995, and the phosphate production workers' strike in June 1995. These strikes took place within a political context that is currently concerned with negotiations on institutional reforms and genuine political participation. Union leaders clearly hope to contribute to the current reform process.

Political instrument organizations. Many NGOs in Morocco function as political instruments in the service of political parties. These political organizations are characterized by close relationships to other elements of political society, especially opposition parties. Political parties have long used youth, women's, and human rights associations to reach a larger audience, test new ideas, and exert pressure on government. Only in recent years have the political parties acknowledged the potential role of an *autonomous* civil society in the political process.

The government has also used associations to augment the ability of the state to provide public services and ensure that basic needs are met. This explains the growing number of associations involved with delivery of public services and community welfare. Most are subsidized by the particular ministry with which they work. The ministries of Youth, Social Affairs, Health, and Moroccans Living Abroad all have associations that play a key role in implementing their projects. Certain regional associations also belong in this category because they are initiated, promoted, and favored by public institutions for regional political purposes and as incubators of government workers.

Advocacy organizations. Advocacy organizations seek to pressure the government on behalf of special interests. They include women's organizations, youth associations, human rights associations, and business, professional, and consumer associations. Some, particularly in the first three categories, are instruments of political entities. In response to Morocco's high unemployment rates, unemployed college graduates have recently formed advocacy groups to present their problems to Parliament and the public. In general, all of these NGOs advocate the modification of existing laws, the creation of new laws to address the needs of members, or greater economic opportunity for members.

Dialogue organizations. Like advocacy groups that lobby the government, another type of NGO plays also a direct role in decision-making through negotiation and dialogue. The key distinction between advocacy and dialogue organizations is that the government solicits the participation of the latter in decision-making to improve the links between state and society and to facilitate consensus over public policy. For example, associations of young entrepreneurs and unemployed college graduates participate in the CNJA (*Conseil de la Jeunesse et de l'Avenir*), two of the major human rights associations (OMDH and LMDH) are represented in the CCDH (*Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l'Homme*); and several environmental and development

associations participate in the CNE (*Conseil National de l'Environnement*) The most active women's associations have been involved in legislative reform regarding family law

Other dialogue organizations are regularly involved in decision-making on a more restricted sectoral level They include associations that represent modern industrial and commercial sectors of the economy, such as textiles, leather, mechanical industries, tourism, and exports Agricultural associations that represent the interests of farmers specializing in certain crops (for example, citrus, sugarbeets, rice, and flowers) also fall into this group These associations maintain close ties with the public administrations that regulate their sectors

Of particular note within the development context is the *Confédération Générale des Employeurs Marocaines* (CGEM), which represents primarily medium and large Moroccan enterprises in the commercial, industrial, and financial sectors In response to encouragement in 1995 from the King,³ this confederation enlarged its membership by admitting five new federations, increasing the number of represented businesses to 1,400⁴ The objectives of this reform are to ensure the representation of the private sector, including small and medium enterprises, to allow the confederation to become a viable partner in the process of social dialogue, and to represent business owners in the economic and social consultative councils

Development organizations. Many NGOs in the previous categories have been long established By contrast, virtually all NGOs in Morocco focusing on development have been established recently Many new NGOs have been created to tackle specific development problems, including youth unemployment, lack of financing for new small business enterprises, the need for technical training, and environmental deterioration Many other new development NGOs have a much broader development mission but a relatively narrow regional or municipal focus Most aspire to mobilize communities at the grassroots level for sustainable development

This new category of NGO is emerging in Morocco largely because of the disengagement of government from its former *état providence* role and a growing awareness by the local leaders that other means must be found to resolve pressing development problems These NGOs and local and regional authorities are recognizing their mutual interests International donor organizations and development agencies have an important role to play in supporting this type of association, which provides the most appropriate and least sensitive way for foreigners to support democratization and sustainable development in Morocco through assistance to civil society

D. First and Second Generation NGOs

It is also useful to view Moroccan NGOs from the perspective of their period of origin In general, Moroccan NGOs can be classified into two distinct groups, each with certain common traits (1) older NGOs created under the French protectorate or in the postcolonial period ending around 1980, and (2) newer NGOs created in response to the structural adjustment and liberalization of civil society that began in the 1980s Differences between these two groups are based on several factors, including the socioeconomic environment in which they were created, their relationship to the government, and their chosen areas of activity

³Speech of 16 May 1995

⁴General Assembly 29 May 1995

Older NGOs can be referred to as “first generation.” These NGOs include social, charitable, and professional associations. They constitute the majority of Moroccan NGOs. Most were established during the 1960s and 1970s, though a few date back to the colonial era. These organizations bear the stamp of the period in which they were created, a period characterized by highly interventionist governments and generally tight reins on civil society expression. Nevertheless, some of these organizations have been evolving and adapting to changes in the enabling environment.

The “second generation” of NGOs in Morocco began to emerge around 1980, but particularly in the mid-1980s. They have been strongly influenced by the environment in which they were created, including social and political reforms that accompanied the country’s structural adjustment program; the international post-Cold War context that fostered a less interventionist and centralized state role, and the growing influence of international organizations working for human rights and development. Unlike the older associations, second generation NGOs see themselves as part of a wider international movement that works for the empowerment of national civil society. Unlike their predecessors, this second generation often cultivates links with outside organizations. The fact that Morocco has become a favored field of activity for many international development organizations has contributed to the establishment of NGOs in Morocco.

Another key difference between first and second generation NGOs is their relationship with the state. While older associations commonly request physical and financial support from the government, younger NGOs attempt to maintain a greater degree of autonomy so they can retain legitimacy with the communities they represent and serve as more effective advocates for these communities. Indeed, certain second generation NGOs (such as human rights or women’s rights groups) often challenge the government within undefined but tolerated limits. Interestingly, most second generation NGOs prefer to be called NGOs, while the first generation organizations prefer other terms. Most older associations do not engage in activities that complement government services. By contrast, many second generation NGOs are consciously attempting to meet needs unmet by government or to fill development gaps within society. The level of social activism is much higher in second generation NGOs. These newer NGOs commonly view the state as responsible for the country’s social and economic problems and lobby the government to address these problems.

Most older associations represent certain occupational groups. Most newer NGOs represent traditionally underrepresented segments of society. Such NGOs convey community concerns to the government within the limits of their realm of operation. In this respect, NGOs have become key vehicles to communicate civil society concerns to the government. However, they are not so much supplanting traditional vehicles—for example, trade unions and political parties—as representing new constituencies. The profusion of second generation NGOs in part represents a multiplication of political actors.

The two generations also differ in their activities. The first generation tends to engage in narrowly focused social and charitable activities. The second generation commonly engages in new types of activities, such as community development, health, women’s issues, grassroots development, environmental protection, and promotion of small enterprise. Together, they are a dynamic sector that is enriching the lives of Morocco’s citizens, providing significant contributions in the socioeconomic and political arenas, and engaging civil society in democratization and sustainable development. The following subsection provides brief profiles of the major types of NGOs in Morocco today.

E. Profiles of Major Types of Moroccan NGOs

Youth associations. Most youth associations organize leisure activities for the young. The Ministry of Youth and Sports makes available for their use municipal youth centers throughout the country. These centers generally are managed by volunteers. Apart from ministry subsidies, financial resources are usually quite limited. The majority are older, first generation NGOs. However, some newer youth associations engage in development-related activities that have focused on environmental problems, hygiene, micro-credit, recycling, and other such issues.

Sports associations. Most sports associations are run by volunteers, though a few are managed by professionals. Virtually all receive subsidies from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, but many also generate substantial financial resources from their activities and some are sponsored by commercial firms. Together with youth associations, they attract the highest number of members within the NGO sector, and like youth associations, the majority are older, first generation NGOs.

Professional associations. Professional associations are comprised of independent professionals who have the means to promote and defend their interests vis-à-vis the public authorities and to foster professional exchanges. The major professional associations consist of physicians, pharmacists, accountants, economists, and engineers. Other professional associations represent industry and commerce. Resources of professional associations usually come exclusively from member fees, though some receive government subsidies. Most receive support from partner private companies. Some have access to considerable resources, but many have neither permanent offices nor administrative staff. Most are older, first generation NGOs.

Cultural associations. Cultural and artistic associations constitute an important segment of older, first generation NGOs in Morocco. These associations are principally located in the major urban areas and bring together devotees, students, teachers, and practicing professionals of the arts, theater, television, and cinema.

Charitable associations. Morocco has numerous benevolent or charitable associations, especially in large and medium-sized cities, which offer assistance to the poor. In general, two types of charitable organization can be distinguished: those created by private individuals or groups and those created by the government to assist groups with special needs, such as orphans or children with disabilities. While most charitable associations have volunteer members, many also have staff made available by the Ministry of Social Affairs. They often possess substantial resources provided by religious groups, individual benefactors, ministries, and local governments. However, a significant number are operated by one or a few persons or families, and many are supported primarily by modest contributions from small benefactors. Charitable associations have ancient roots in Morocco, and are inspired by the obligation in Islam to extend charity to the less fortunate. Most of these associations are older, first generation NGOs.

Association Al Birr ou l'hsane

Association Al Birr ou l'hsane, or Restaurant of the Heart, is a Moroccan charitable organization in Tetouan. Founded in 1988 by concerned local professionals, this group provides a hot meal a day for around 400 poor families. It has only 60 members, but up to 700 people donate food or funds to support its activities. It has a paid staff of 12. Such benevolent organizations in Morocco are contributing a sense of civic responsibility by demonstrating that ordinary citizens can be effective in providing services that the government cannot afford to provide.

La Ligue Marocaine Pour la Protection de L'Enfance

The Moroccan League for the Protection of Children (the *Ligue*) is a social service NGO founded in 1956. It is one of Morocco's oldest NGOs. As a parastatal organization—one of two included in the survey (see page II-14)—the *Ligue* is what many Moroccans would consider a "classic" NGO: a group with state approval and financial support that operates non-controversial projects to aid the general population. It was part of *Entraide Nationale* but became independent when that organization became a government agency. At that time Mme Hassar, the first Moroccan woman to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree, was named director, a position she still holds. The *Ligue's* administration is not elected but chosen based on skills and availability. The formal head is Princess Lalla Amina, a reflection of the organization's closeness to the government. Its 400 members, 70 percent of whom are female, are working to provide material and institutional support to needy children in many parts of Morocco. They are supported by a staff of over 350 who are paid through government subsidies, grants from international donors, and proceeds from fundraisers.

A recent *Ligue* project involved setting up two emergency rooms in working class Rabat neighborhoods. This project is a cooperative effort. Local government donated the sites, Canadian development assistance provided the equipment, and the Ministry of Public Health helps staff these emergency rooms. Users of the emergency rooms pay a modest co-payment of 10 Dh (currently about \$1.25) per visit.

Social service NGOs. Social service NGOs exist to provide assistance to the disadvantaged. They differ from the charitable organizations previously described in two key ways: first, most are national organizations; and second, most are sponsored by the government. For example, *Entraide Nationale* was founded after Independence in 1956 at the initiative of the King to serve as a conduit for social welfare activities, including the distribution of food aid. This organization was subsequently integrated into the Ministry of Social Affairs. A spin-off NGO was *La Ligue Marocaine pour la Protection de L'Enfance*, which continues to function with government support under the leadership of Princess Lalla Amina. Another government-sponsored social service NGO is the *Union Nationale des Femmes Marocaines* (UNFM), founded in 1969 by Princess Lalla Fatima Zohra, which has received substantial government support to help women through charitable activities. A final example is the *Association Marocaine de Planification Familiale* (AMPF), founded in 1971 with the support of the Ministry of

Health to promote family planning. AMPF is affiliated with International Planned Parenthood Federation and has been supported with donor assistance. The social service NGOs are good examples of older, first generation NGOs that attempt to address the development gap in partnership with government and have successfully changed with the changing times.

Human rights NGOs. The human rights movement in Morocco started in 1972, when the opposition Istiqlal Party created the *Ligue Marocaine Pour les Droits de l'Homme* (LMDH). In 1979, the opposition party, the *Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires* (USFP), established the *Association Marocaine des Droits Humains* (AMDH). International human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International, also began to monitor human rights in Morocco, particularly during the 1980s, when the financial crisis opened Morocco up to greater influence from abroad. Until 1988, however, the human rights movement was not particularly active in Morocco. Since 1988, however, two new human rights associations have been created—the *Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme* (OMDH) in 1988, and the *Comité de Défense des Droits de l'Homme* (CDDH) in 1992—and the human rights movement has gained a high profile in the country. The experience of human rights NGOs in Morocco shows they have difficulty maintaining autonomy from political parties. As discussed in Section I, the OMDH was created to breathe more dynamism into Morocco's human rights movement. It remained closely tied to the USFP, however. The CDDH was created by former activists of the AMDH, who sought greater autonomy from national partisan politics. Human rights NGOs in Morocco tend not to receive any governmental support. They rely on member fees and volunteers, who often fund their own research and travel. They seek to develop projects as a possible means of receiving donor funding for seminars and other activities.

Women's NGOs For a long time, the *Union Nationale des Femmes Marocaines*, created in 1969 to provide charity to women, was the sole women's organization in Morocco. In recent years, more women's associations have emerged in diverse areas such as defense of women's rights, economic promotion of women, sectoral and grassroots development, charity, and research. Simultaneously, most of the large political parties formed women's organizations. Of approximately 30 women's organizations, 5 are women's rights NGOs. Under the direction of women's NGOs, the issue of inequality between the sexes, previously considered taboo due to its religious sensitivity, reached center stage. This issue became a central theme in the mobilization of women and contributed to the partial reform of the personal statute code (*Moudawana*) in 1993. The role of women in NGOs in general, including those focusing on human rights, the environment, health, and charity, has become much stronger during the past decade. The role of women in these organizations is generally stronger than in political parties and trade unions.

Union de l'Action Féminine

The *Union de l'Action Féminine* (UAF) is primarily a women's advocacy group, although it is also involved in community programs such as literacy classes for women. Growing almost spontaneously out of a women's newspaper founded in 1983, this group became an NGO in 1987. Its objective is to achieve sexual equality at all levels and in all domains of Moroccan society. A prime example of this group's activities was the well-publicized campaign to change the personal statute code (*Moudawana*). In the early 1990s, UAF coordinated a nationwide effort involving 23 other NGOs to obtain a million signatures on a petition requesting reform of this code to give women greater rights. The resultant grassroots mobilization pressured the government to partially reform the law and contributed to the empowerment of Moroccan women and the civic education of the Moroccan public. UAF's mass petition campaign and effective use of mass media to publicize this campaign illustrate tools available to NGOs to effect change.

Local community development NGOs. Most Moroccan local community development NGOs were founded during the last ten years in response to economic crisis, structural adjustment, and the GOM's encouragement of NGOs. They include some of the best examples of second generation NGOs in Morocco. Several dozen in number, they are scattered throughout Morocco, including in remote places. Local community development NGOs are managed by educated people who are aware that local development relies on local grassroots efforts. Their purpose is to fill the development gap and to improve living conditions in specific communities. Due to the scarcity of local resources, the support they may receive from international development NGOs (for example, Catholic Relief Services or *Terre des Hommes*) is critical to their activities. Other important sources of funding include member fees, community contributions, subsidies from local authorities, and sometimes technical and budgetary assistance from the central government. The primary resource that they draw on, however, is local community effort.

Association des Cadres et Anciens Elèves de Tendirara

The *Association des Cadres et Anciens Elèves de Tendirara* (ACAET) is a development NGO in Tendirara, a town of around 6,000 in the eastern Moroccan desert. ACAET was founded in 1992 by an all-male group of teachers and civil servants who had long been concerned with problems of local development. None had previously belonged to an association. Initial funding came from Catholic Relief Services. Since then ACAET has received funds from 10 international donors, both for its own projects and to help other NGOs get started. Projects include building reservoirs and piping water to latrines in three schools, providing micro-credit to the needy and people with disabilities, and setting up a spinning and weaving cooperative for poor women. A good example of an ACAET-coordinated effort was a project to purchase and install a new sewer system for a part of town that frequently flooded. Japanese development donors provided \$29,000 for materials, the governor provided the engineering plan and manpower, and the local government provided fuel for the digging equipment. Citizens participated by contributing two person-days of labor or 70 Dh per household. A citizens' committee managed the project. Thus, the NGO, municipal and provincial government officials, citizens, and international donors are working together toward the region's development.

One of the greatest strengths of such NGOs is that their managers are usually local people who have the confidence of their communities, facilitating community participation in

development projects such as well digging, reforestation, electrification, installation of rural sanitation facilities, and literacy campaigns. These projects revive the tradition of *twiza*, which declined during the *état providence* era, when communities came to rely on state assistance rather than local community initiative. Examples of local community development NGOs include the *Association des Cadres et Anciens Elèves de Tendirara* or ACAET (see inset box), the *Association Igh* in the Agadir region, founded in 1986, which focuses primarily on promoting literacy; and the *Association de Ranimation et Développement de l'Oasis de Figuig* (ARDOF), in Figuig near the Algerian border, founded in 1994, which has undertaken local road construction projects and provided supplementary courses for school children.

NGOs for small enterprise support.

Like local community development NGOs, NGOs for small enterprise support have been established during the past decade in response to Morocco's economic crisis and structural adjustment reforms. The specific development need addressed by small enterprise support NGOs is unemployment, particularly for lycée and university graduates, which has been exacerbated by reductions in the government payroll as the state disengages from its *état providence* role. The *Association Marocaine d'Appui et de Promotion de la Petite Entreprise*, or AMAPPE (see inset box), is

Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise

The *Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise* (AMAPPE) is one of the pioneer NGOs for small enterprise support in Morocco. AMAPPE was created in 1991 by business professionals who decided to make their expertise available to young people with ideas or projects. AMAPPE has played a key role in promoting small enterprise by guiding young entrepreneurs through all steps of small business creation, including market and feasibility studies, financing, contacting potential partners, and business management. AMAPPE's work has had a snowball effect in the small enterprise sector. Around 30 similar young entrepreneurs' associations have been created in Morocco.

one of the pioneering new NGOs. Another is *Espace Point de Départ* (ESPOD), founded in Casablanca in 1991, which provides business support to women. To ensure coordination of efforts, a larger impact, and better communication with partners (including the government, donors, and international NGOs), over 20 small enterprise support NGOs founded the *Fédération des Associations des Jeunes Entrepreneurs du Maroc* (FAJEM), previously discussed in Section I. Most small enterprise support NGOs operate with funding provided by various partners and do not collect member fees or receive government subsidies.

Environmental NGOs. In the recent years, an increasing number of environmental defense organizations have developed, generally in Morocco's major cities. Like most second generation NGOs, such associations have been formed by well-educated, socially conscious people. However, unlike other new NGOs, most environmental NGOs in Morocco have so far restricted their activities to seminars and workshops, rather than concrete projects in the field. A notable exception is the *Association Marocaine Pour la Protection de l'Environnement Khémisset* (ASMAPEK), a grassroots environmental NGO that has worked to improve waste treatment in the Khemisset region. All environmental NGOs are managed by volunteers and none has yet established a professional structure. As yet, they have few resources available, despite the pressing environmental problems facing Morocco and the potential of environmental NGOs to mobilize community participation in addressing these problems.

Population and health NGOs Few first generation NGOs operated in the population/health sector. An exception was the *Association Marocaine de Planification Familiale* (AMPF), previously mentioned under social service NGOs. During the past decade, however, a number of new NGOs focusing on population and health have emerged, partly as a consequence of cuts in the public social budget that left some disadvantaged groups without health coverage. Over 30 such NGOs now exist. Their primary purpose is to address health and family planning needs totally or partially ignored by the Ministry of Public Health due to budgetary constraints. Most have tightly focused activities, such as providing support to poor families with children who have cancer, providing psychological and educational support to families with mentally challenged children; providing support to AIDS victims and their families; and providing support to victims of specialized illnesses, such as diabetes, epilepsy, and hemophilia.

Association Pour la Lutte Contre le SIDA

ALCS works to prevent the spread of AIDS and to provide support to HIV-positive people. It is a good example of a thoroughly contemporary NGO—both in topic and approach. ALCS was founded in 1988 by a woman doctor who diagnosed the first Moroccan case of AIDS and who felt that AIDS was too sensitive a topic for the government to address effectively. In recognition of its important mission, ALCS has been granted public utility (AUP) status, which gives it access to government subsidies and a range of other financial resources.

ALCS's efforts include extensive dissemination of AIDS-related information through channels that include tents on popular beaches and a bus equipped with educational videos. It also conducts studies on AIDS awareness among Moroccan high school students and dispenses AIDS-prevention information and condoms to male prostitutes in Casablanca. Its members receive intensive training. The group uses a participatory approach, consulting its target group before providing services. ALCS's participatory approach, innovative use of media, special training for members, and AUP status are important factors behind its effectiveness.

NGOs for the promotion of civic/democratic political culture. Recently, the NGO sector has been enriched by a new type of association activity to promote the values of civic responsibility and constructive citizenship for a modern society. These NGOs generally have been founded by government officials or former officials in the administration or education establishment. Their founders have been motivated by a conviction that there is a critical need within Moroccan society for new cultural values for societal progress. These NGOs seek to promote the values of responsibility, transparency, and efficiency—both in individual and institutional relations. Examples of such NGOs include the *Association Afak*, *Civisme et Développement*, *Alternative*, and the *Association Progrès et Développement*. Their activities include dissemination of their message through mass mailings and placement of essays in newspapers (generally with contributed space).

Regional organizations To respond to the boom of NGOs during the past decade and influence their activities, the GOM initiated the development of regional NGOs. Regional NGOs are now found in most major urban areas and provincial centers. Their purpose is to engage educated members of local communities in civic actions to counterbalance the influence of other NGOs. Established with substantial government support, they conduct various types of activities. There are now 15 regional NGOs. Examples of prominent regional NGOs are *Ribat Al Fath* in Rabat, the *Association Bou Regreg* in Salé, and the *Association Grand Atlas* in Marrakech.

Federations. A viable federation that includes all NGOs does not yet exist in Morocco. The relative youth of most members of the country's NGO sector helps explain this absence. However, there is a growing awareness among both the government and NGOs of the need for coalition building. There are three general types of federative structures that may be identified

The first type includes groupings of NGOs in functional areas, such as a sporting federation that groups together associations in specific athletic disciplines. This type is especially prevalent among first generation associations. Youth associations were also grouped together in federations, such as with scout and public works groups. Another functional aggregation that has already been mentioned involves the *Confédération Générale des Employeurs Marocaines* (CGEM), which now represents some 1,400 medium and large commercial, industrial, and financial enterprises. CGEM was recently called on by the King to enlarge its base by integrating into its membership seven new federations, bringing its total number of federations to 14. Among CGEM's new members was FAJEM, which itself groups together 27 associations.

The second type includes groupings of associations that have emerged in response to the needs of donors for well-organized intermediate structures through which support for local NGOs and grassroots development efforts can be funneled. This has led to new informal opportunities for dialogue, as with the *Groupement ONG* (GONG), which is now attempting to formalize its status. Most of the NGO coalitions in this category are essentially developmental in nature. The maturation and formalization of such structures will facilitate donor interaction, familiarity, and access to Moroccan NGOs. Informal and temporary structures are occasionally put in place to coordinate Moroccan NGO participation in international meetings, such as *Forum ONG*, created to prepare for the UN Conference on Population in Cairo, and *Collectif 95*, to prepare for the UN Conference on Women in Beijing.

This emphasis on the advantages of aggregation has helped second generation NGOs to recognize the advantages of coalition building, and informal structures of dialogue and coordination have begun to emerge among NGOs that seek to influence public policy, representing a third type of federative structure. For example, an informal coordinating commission in the human rights domain groups together the LMDH and the AMDH. Similarly, a committee to coordinate among regional and specialized associations in the environmental sector also exists, known as the *Comité de Coordination Inter-Associations Régionales et Spécialisées pour l'Environnement* (CCIRSE).

F. The NGO Assessment Survey

F1. Methodology

Members of the report research team conducted an extensive survey of Moroccan NGOs in June 1995. The survey's purpose was to assist USAID/Morocco in evaluating the potential of NGOs to contribute to democratization and sustainable development within the context of the mission's overall programmatic objectives.

The survey team consisted of six members. This team first compiled a list of 252 NGOs that had been identified by international donors, government officials, and regional NGOs as potential development partners for USAID/Morocco. The list of identified NGOs is attached as Annex A. From this list, 42 NGOs were selected for in-depth interviews on the basis of criteria established by USAID/Morocco and the survey team. These criteria included the following: (1) *Sector of activity*. NGOs were selected to reflect the diversity of activities in the NGO sector as well as areas of interest to USAID. The majority were development-related NGOs. However, the sample also included human rights and women's groups. (2) *Ability to succeed*. While a formal evaluation of NGO effectiveness was beyond the scope of this research, the selected organizations were generally reputed to be viable and effective. (3) *Relationship with the state*. The sample was intended to reflect a range of NGO relationships, from close affiliation with the GOM or political

parties to fully autonomous (4) *Other characteristics*. NGOs were selected to capture the diversity of NGOs now operating in Morocco, including large versus small, old versus new, and urban versus rural

The 42 NGOs interviewed have been organized into 11 categories that occasionally overlap. For example, *Solidarité Féminine*, a group that provides jobs to single mothers so they can raise their children instead of giving them up, is classified as a benevolent NGO, but could also have been counted among women's NGOs. To resolve the problem of overlap, an attempt was made to classify groups by their primary function. The NGOs interviewed belong to the following categories:

Development	9
Environment	6
Business	6
Women	4
Benevolent	4
Youth	3
Human Rights	4
Health	2
Arts	2
Professional	1
Think Tank	1
TOTAL	<u>42</u>

Interviews were usually conducted by a single member of the team, although sometimes two interviewers were present. These interviews were held with the leader(s) of the organization using the questionnaire that appears at the beginning of Annex B. However, the interviews were conducted informally, and did not attempt to follow the survey instrument with scientific precision. Most interviews lasted around two hours. The interviewees were asked a series of questions to elicit information on the key characteristics of their organizations. What resulted were more or less standardized profiles of the individual NGOs in the target group as well as key insights into the NGO sector. Interviews were conducted both in French and Arabic. Profiles of the 42 NGOs resulting from these semi-structured interviews are presented in Annex B. They appear either in English or French, according to the preferred language of the interviewer.

F2. Organizational Characteristics

General observations drawn from the interviews follow. These observations address the following organizational characteristics: goals and scope of activity, age of organization, characteristics of the leaders; organizational structure, end users, evaluation of effectiveness, financial resources; material resources, human resources, external relationships, perceptions of strengths and weaknesses, and contributions to civil society. The observations are followed by a set of conclusions with programmatic implications.

Goals and scope of activity The overall purpose of most NGOs interviewed was to address problems of poverty, unemployment, development, health, or environmental degradation that were not being adequately met by government services. Yet in spite of having the same basic *raison d'être*, these groups varied greatly in their approaches, goals, and activities. Human rights, women's, and some environmental groups preferred an advocacy approach. Most of the

other groups preferred to work directly with their chosen communities. A majority (26) of the groups interviewed said they wanted to fight poverty and promote development. A few groups, especially the newer ones, had unrealistically numerous and diffuse goals. Nine NGOs lacked an action plan and 13 lacked a charter. However, the majority seemed clear about their goals, and most of their activities were consistent with these goals. The fact that many groups were attempting to address problems in limited geographic areas reflected their grounding in and responsiveness to local communities. Some of the advocacy-oriented groups tended to be less in touch with grassroots populations, but they worked with more prosperous urban populations that are potentially a powerful force for democratization and sustainable development.

The NGOs interviewed varied greatly in their geographical focus. Some were national in scope, while others confined their activities to a small geographic area. For example, one national NGO think tank, which consists of around 200 economists, organizes public discussions and publishes information on topics such as structural adjustment to educate the Moroccan public and provide recommendations to national decision-makers. By contrast, several of the NGOs worked exclusively with small local communities or neighborhoods. Some NGOs attempted to mobilize the general population within their chosen geographic area, others focused on very small segments of society, such as AIDS victims. The NGOs also varied greatly in their impact. For example, one professional NGO of social workers has only 72 members but has successfully lobbied the government for changes in social worker training. By contrast, some groups appear to have limited impact or relevance. For example, a neighborhood-based NGO in southeastern Morocco spends much of its energy providing sewing or embroidery lessons to a few women whose products are of uncertain marketability, and a major goal of one arts NGO is to instill "good taste" in local children.

Age of organization. Most NGOs interviewed were young, reflecting the recent rapid expansion of the NGO sector. Of the 42 groups included in the interviews, 23 were founded between 1990 and 1995, nine between 1985 and 1990, and one between 1980 and 1984. In short, nearly 80 percent were founded after 1980. Only one was founded before 1958, with the remainder (9) founded between 1958 and 1980.

Characteristics of leaders. The often dynamic leaders of the NGOs were asked about their motivations. They were frequently the founders of the organization or had joined soon after the organization's founding. In most cases they had a strong personal reason for joining that has kept them involved and central to their groups. For example, an association for people with disabilities was founded by a man whose daughter has a disability; a physical science teacher had founded an environmental NGO because he was concerned about environmental degradation, several leaders of human rights groups had been in prison, unemployed youth formed business associations, and women's group leaders had felt the need to change women's position in society. Strong personal involvement was not always present, however. For example, the leader of a very effective development group had never been involved in NGOs or development and initially stepped into the leadership role because she couldn't find a job in her chosen field. Now she loves the work.

Most leaders were previously involved in other associations, giving them some experience and an idea of how associations work. Six of the seven who had no previous association experience were women (while only about one-third of the interviewees were women). It is not clear whether women's limited role in leadership positions is caused by this lack of experience, or whether both their limited role and lack of experience are caused by other factors such as lack of spare time, constraints on mobility, or gender bias.

Organizational structure. The leadership structure of all NGOs in the survey consisted of a governing council or bureau or both. While all groups have these structures, they vary in effectiveness. The council was typically larger and sometimes elected the bureau, which usually included a president and other officers. Councils were democratically elected by the general assembly in all but four cases. They ranged in size from 6 to 71 members and the average size was 20.6 members. The average bureau consisted of 10.2 members, ranging from two to 19. The gender composition of both bodies varied widely, from 0 to 100 percent female. NGOs whose officers were all females included three women's groups (all having only female members), and three other groups focusing on women. Interestingly, the *Association Marocaine de Lutte Contre le SIDA* (ALCS), which works to prevent the spread of AIDS, was founded and is run by a woman physician, though it works primarily with males.

All groups without women in their administrations were located outside Rabat, except one group that required an advanced degree in economics or previous high-level business or government experience. Few women were thus qualified to join. ACAET and four of the development groups it has fostered in eastern Morocco have no female leaders, nor does another group in Bouarfa or a benevolent association in Tetouan. These groups explained that women in their areas have limited mobility, it is difficult for them to attend evening meetings at members' homes or cafes. Yet it is worth noting that one of these eastern NGOs had a female staff member who was single, 25 years old, and had just gone alone to Germany for training. Her mobility was explained by the fact she was paid rather than volunteer, allowances could be made. Thus, it should not be concluded that females in certain locations in Morocco cannot participate in the leadership of NGOs. Within business NGOs, female leaders ranged from 8 to 100 percent, the latter in an ESPOD group, more than half of whose members are male. Several women's groups include and work with men.

In about half the organizations surveyed the president has not changed, despite formalized procedures for regular elections. The longest continuous term was 29 years. Little turnover in top leadership was not seen as inconsistent with the group's internal democratic functioning, perhaps reflecting the value placed on good leadership in Moroccan culture. Most presidents appeared to be highly motivated, and gave significant amounts of time and money to their organizations. Many NGOs in Morocco are known to the general public by the president's name rather than the organizational name. This personalization was not cited as a problem in the interviews, and there were other indications that the council or bureau collectively operated the NGOs, rather than a single person. As NGOs develop, they may broaden their institutional structures to reflect greater rotation of leadership roles, which will help to assure their sustainability.

Conflict resolution and decision-making procedures were also addressed in the interviews. Many interviewees claimed there was no controversy within their organizations. However, when pressed, they were able to provide examples of contentious issues. Most groups identifying such issues said they were settled by the administration, either by consensus or vote after much discussion. Only three groups involved the entire membership in final decisions. One group was a small women's group. In the other two NGOs, the issues involved financial irregularities and an illegal attempt to change the president.

End users. Women seem best represented as end users of certain specific NGO activities, perhaps because of the current donor climate in which projects benefiting women are likely to be funded. Interviewees were asked to describe specific projects in detail. Judging from their descriptions, women are the targeted beneficiaries of NGO activity more often than men, though the work of some organizations benefits both sexes equally. The family planning group, AMFP,

said its projects had benefited 71,000 women. In general, much lower numbers of beneficiaries were cited. For example, often fewer than 100 women had been trained in craft and literacy projects. Several projects target only men, including ALCS projects to prevent the spread of AIDS and a *Je Recycle* project that gives interest-free loans to garbage collectors to buy carts.

Evaluation of effectiveness. Most of the NGOs interviewed do not regularly evaluate their activities or measure their effectiveness. Only ten consistently evaluate overall activities. Another seven said general evaluations were included in their periodic reports to the general assembly. Most said they discussed the effectiveness of their activities and drew general conclusions, but did not do so systematically or use outside evaluators. Eight of the 42 said they evaluate specific projects. Many had completed tangible projects such as repaving roads or installing sewers, or had carried out cooperative work with grassroots groups and/or the government. However, these accomplishments and outcomes were not generally quantified as indices of success. Only three groups reported employing both general and project-specific evaluations of their organizations. Two women's groups, UAF (*Union de l'Action Féminine*) and ADFM (*Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc*), and the family planning parastatal, AMFP. Thus, a majority do not formally evaluate their effectiveness.

Financial resources. Financial resources available for NGO administration include membership dues, donations in cash or kind, proceeds from fundraisers, government subsidies, and funding from international donors. Six groups reported income from donations, seven receive government subsidies, and 13 are provided funds by international donors, either governments or NGOs. For most NGOs in the sample, dues are only a minor source of funds. Dues range from Dh 5 to Dh 1200 a year. However, most dues fall within the range of Dh 20 to Dh 100 per year. While revenues from dues are too small to be very helpful for most NGOs, some groups with higher dues or large memberships generate substantial revenues from dues.

NGO financial resources are controlled by the *dahir* of 1958 governing association life. NGOs with "declared association" (AD) status are allowed to collect money from dues and donations in kind, while those with public utility or AUP status are given a wider range of means to acquire funds. However, very few of those interviewed named the law as a serious constraint for Moroccan NGOs; in fact, interviewees from eight groups did not seem to know the law's contents. Several mentioned that the law did not seriously constrain their organization's activities, but they expressed dissatisfaction about the section governing finances. Fourteen NGOs thought the law should be modified, especially to minimize paperwork. Three thought it was good in general. Several NGOs in the sample noted that they raised funds in ways they legally should not, yet claimed the government often knew and looked the other way. Several respondents said groups that benefit society should be given a financial break with easier access to AUP status.

Material resources. The organizations' material resources, including permanent office space, staff, telephone, fax, and computer equipment appear to be directly related to group income. Two thirds of the groups (27) have a permanent office. The remainder use the offices or homes of their officers. Only four NGOs own their offices, including the two parastatals (AMFP and the *Ligue Marocaine Pour la Protection de L'Enfance*) and the *Association "Hanane"* for people with disabilities in Tetouan. Others rent their offices or use offices provided by members or sometimes government officials. Only eight groups—seven of which were new—had no phone, fax, or computer.

Human resources. A wide variety of paid staff resources were available to the groups surveyed, ranging from 13 recently founded groups with no staff to the two parastatals, AMFP

and the *Ligue*, which each had more than 300 staff. The average staff size was 3.2 persons, but half of the groups with staff had just one person, a secretary. Nine groups pay their staff using association funds, including dues, seven pay staff from project funds, four have staff loaned by the government, while three have staff borrowed from members. One group has staff loaned by the French Cooperation program.

The number of members varies widely, from 12 for *Solidarité Féminine* to 10,000 for *Association Iligh*. Some human rights and women's groups also have memberships in the thousands. Since numbers vary so widely, an average is not useful. The percentage of women members varies enormously. While almost all groups have some women members, many are simply beneficiaries, especially in eastern Morocco. Excluding the groups dealing mainly with women and those in eastern Morocco, around 39 percent of the members in the NGOs interviewed were women, illustrating that they participate more at the member than leadership level.

Member skills are another resource. Nearly all groups are made up of professionals or middle class citizens, except for some of the development groups, which include needy beneficiaries as members. Typical members of most NGOs are professors, doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, civil servants, or business owners. Few have specific skills in development or project planning. Some groups train their member/beneficiaries in craft skills. A few NGOs offer training to support their work, including three business groups, ALCS, two development groups, the two parastatals (AMFP and the *Ligue*), and the *Association "Hanane"*. ALCS is unique in offering training to all potential members on how to deal with AIDS and HIV carriers. The *Association Marocaine Pour la Solidarité et le Développement* (AMSED) offers training to its own staff as well as to other NGOs on administration, management, and fundraising.

Many groups reported non-member participation in their activities, most often through public talks. Many noted a trend of involving non-members in action rather than discussion. For example, they involved community members in local cleanup drives or in improving the community through construction of roads or new sewers. These neighborhood activities are instrumental in sensitizing the less-educated majority to the value of greater citizen participation.

F3. External Relationships

Media use. Use of mass media to publicize NGO goals or activities varies. Fifteen groups said they use mass media. Five said that they use the media very little and seven said they never use it. The non-users were either very small or very new groups. Of media users, 12 use the press, radio, and television, and six use only radio and/or the press. The press seems most accessible and television the least accessible. Some groups are very sophisticated in their use of media resources. For example, the women's group, UAF, scheduled national and international press conferences to publicize its work to reform Islamic customary law. The president also appeared on television and reported a deluge of membership requests during the following week. Conferences and seminars are held by many groups and serve as a common means of publicizing their activities, however, only the largest NGOs are able to get media coverage of these events. Some groups also have newsletters, but at least one NGO had discontinued publishing a newsletter because it was too time-consuming. Another reported difficulty in eliciting enough volunteer assistance to publish its newsletter on time.

Relationships with external organizations and government. NGO interactions with outside groups offer access to information and mutual support. Twenty-eight of the organizations

surveyed have relationships with international NGOs; only six reported having none. Of these, five are only a year old and have had little time to establish contacts. Thirty-two groups have relationships with the government and four do not. Only six reported a relationship with political parties, while 20 said they have none. Eighteen said they have some relationship with businesses and seven reported none. Thus many NGOs have external relationships with other organizations.

Relationships with other NGOs. Responses to questions about the climate of cooperation within the NGO community indicated a recognition that groups can learn from each other. However, responses also reflected a wariness about being controlled by larger NGOs and, in certain cases, an awareness of competition for the same resources. Thirty-five groups said they have relationships with other Moroccan NGOs. Of the three that do not, one is very new, and two are specific-purpose groups that prefer functioning independently. When asked if they interact most often with groups from the same sector, 29 said yes and only four said no. When asked if they thought it would be useful to have a coalition of Moroccan NGOs working in the same sector, 18 responded positively while four said no. Only eight NGOs were in favor of a large coalition that would include NGOs from several sectors.

F4. NGO Perceptions of Strengths and Weaknesses

NGO members were asked to evaluate their organizations in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. Many leaders mentioned member motivation and skills as strengths. Other strengths noted were their group's credibility with the local population or authorities, transparency, ties with grassroots groups and/or the government, or accomplishments in tangible projects.

The most common weakness mentioned was a lack of financial means. This constraint was mentioned by 25 interviewees, 11 of whom cited it as the reason they had no permanent staff. Many of the NGOs that have secretaries said they needed a higher-level person with administrative skills to increase their effectiveness. Two mentioned a lack of training, and five a lack of time for members to fulfill all their roles. The five citing lack of time were women's groups, suggesting a constraint on women's involvement in NGOs. When asked what they would need to overcome these constraints, the majority said they would need funding from international donors. A few mentioned obtaining AUP status from the Moroccan government, which would enhance their ability to raise funds. Several respondents offered creative suggestions for meeting funding and staffing needs. One suggested firing 1 percent of civil servants and giving the money to NGOs. A few suggested assigning underemployed civil servants to NGOs as staff.

F5. Contributions to Civil Society

All NGOs stated that they contributed to civil society. However, their responses reflected different visions of the role of NGOs, from very pragmatic to highly idealistic. For example, one group cited its contribution to civil society as raising consciousness about the importance of recycling. A newly formed youth group said its contribution was to show local people that they had the ability to improve their own condition and provide for needs that the government could not because of its limited resources. The *Association "Hanane,"* which supports people with disabilities, had a similar response: that people can complement the state in providing needed services. A few interviewees mentioned that a void exists at the local level, and that if NGOs don't fill it, other groups will—perhaps radical elements as in Algeria. ACAET said it felt it was the conscience of civil society, encouraging the population to participate and to focus on developing human potential.

ALCS was one of the most articulate about its contribution to civil society, saying its work offers a new social dynamic that empowers people to find their own solutions. A similar vision was presented less articulately by many other NGOs. The UAF leader was of the opinion that the women's movement in Morocco is one of the most important components of civil society, citing its own large membership and wide-reaching campaign to change Islamic family law. The leader of the *Ligue Marocaine Pour la Protection de L'Enfance* said her group contributes to civil society by raising awareness of children's problems through its many pilot projects and its work with government decision-makers and NGOs. This statement from the head of a respected parastatal organization, stressing advocacy, field projects, and the coordination of different actors, gives a clear indication of the state's hopes for civil society.

The most likely contributors to civil society, at least initially, are the leaders and more sophisticated members who initiate non-governmental action. Many end-user or beneficiary groups interviewed, particularly those in rural areas, seemed to have no clear idea of what the association even was, though many were members. One group of women in a literacy program said that the program was identical to one at the government women's center, but their husbands allowed them to attend this one because it was closer. Group activities such as road repair or sewer installation, which have obvious benefits, are likely to impress less sophisticated members, showing them that they can often fulfill their needs through their own actions. This is an important aspect of civil society, one uncommon in a country that has become accustomed to depending on the state. It will come with repeated experience, experience that NGO leaders can mobilize people to provide, learning their own power in the process. Given the high level of motivation and activity in the Moroccan NGO sector, and the readiness of the state for such activity, supporting Moroccan NGOs at this point can play a crucial role in increasing democratization and sustainable development through expanding the participation of civil society.

G. Concluding Observations

The general goal of this survey was to evaluate the potential role of Moroccan NGOs in contributing to democratization and sustainable development in Morocco. The more specific goal was to assess the capacity of NGOs to serve as effective development partners. Results of the survey reveal that associations in Morocco are highly diverse. Many are clearly highly effective. However, many do not focus on tangible projects, and many are too new to have a track record to evaluate. It is therefore difficult to generalize about the practical value of Moroccan NGOs to Moroccan civil society. However, the survey does allow for observations of relevance from a programmatic perspective.

In general, the recent increase in NGOs and their high levels of motivation, greater outreach to grassroots groups, more participatory approaches, and coordination with the state are highly positive factors with regard to civic participation and democratization. In the contemporary international donor environment, NGOs are often favored as a means to channel funds to grassroots projects. Donor agencies sometimes choose to target civil society as the recipient of aid because NGOs are often perceived as inherently democratic, in contrast to government agencies. However, the components of civil society are not necessarily democratic in nature. The survey revealed that many NGOs are elite groups, with restrictive membership requirements and limited input from their beneficiaries. Consequently, an association's purported ability to effectively deliver services at the community level may not reflect its actual ability or its capacity to incorporate citizen input.

In assessing NGO capacity for fostering public participation, two key considerations have emerged as crucial to NGO effectiveness. The first is the organization's capacity to genuinely represent the interests of its members and constituents. This involves both awareness of and responsiveness to the needs of the target community. The second is the association's capacity to engage in a meaningful dialogue with key decision-makers on both the local and national level. The ability to access and influence leaders is crucial to enabling the organization to implement activities that benefit its members and further its goals. Both considerations are essential in establishing an association's credibility and allowing it to effectively encourage participation within its target community.

This survey leads to several conclusions about the capacity of Moroccan associations to aggregate and articulate constituent interest. NGOs are not political parties, they tend to target not a broad base of constituents but rather a specific group with specific needs. Their primary means of encouraging participation of the target group is to provide effective, genuine representation. Important to the organization's representative ability are its internal dynamics. These include the leadership's adherence to the rules of the organization; the existence of mechanisms to elect leaders; the transparency of its procedures and accounting priorities, and its capacity to incorporate constituent input into the association's goals and strategies. Most associations surveyed share a commitment to the formal procedures outlined in their charters, and increasingly recognize financial transparency as important to their credibility. However, the survey found little turnover in the leadership of the associations.

Lack of turnover in leadership was not considered a problem by most of those interviewed, and did not necessarily reflect the lack of formal mechanisms for replacing leaders. The fact that leaders are often reelected numerous times is said to indicate their effectiveness in managing the needs of the association. They are also often valued for their ability to work with government officials, and may be the only members of the organization with the necessary time and skills. The continuous changing of leaders in the upper ranks of an association is claimed to have the potential to harm rather than build its effective capacity. The survey team observed that many leaders were very dynamic and effective, lending support to the idea that continuity in leadership has its merits. However, in at least a few cases, arguments for continuity in leadership had a hollow ring, and seemed to mask a lack of genuine representation and democratic participation in the NGOs.

The area in which NGOs most often need improvement is in building their capacity to incorporate citizen input. This is especially important in the case of women. Women tend to be beneficiaries rather than active participants in grassroots NGO projects. Often NGO projects are designed in a reactive, ad hoc manner as funds become available for grassroots participation. Many NGOs lack an action plan and/or a concrete set of goals that include grassroots participation. Community members and beneficiaries need to be included in a more comprehensive planning process to ensure that their needs are met.

It was noted that while most NGO members are professionals with specific skills in their areas of academic training, many lack skills that would help them be more effective in NGO work, such as skills in management or project identification and execution. Training in these areas, such as AMSSED provides, could make a significant contribution to NGO effectiveness. The project team also noted that many NGOs do not attempt to learn from the communities they serve. Learning from end users of programs would also contribute to the training of NGO leaders and result in more effective activities.

The effectiveness of NGOs is also dependent on their interaction with government leadership. NGOs in Morocco are still weak, and their input is not always valued by the government. The representative capacity of an NGO is dependent on its leaders' ability to accurately portray citizen needs and concerns to local government officials. To do so, associations must develop their capacity to translate member input into technically proficient plans and projects. As trust is built between local government and NGOs, they will be granted a greater role in helping to resolve development challenges and greater access to donor funds.

Financial constraints remain a major problem for many NGOs. The desire for funding from international organizations is widespread and, unfortunately, is a motivating factor for some NGOs. Most groups, however, genuinely need more funding so that they can better help their constituents. International donors should be more selective in their choice of NGO partners to ensure that they are working with legitimate organizations that have a high likelihood of success. Changes in the 1958 *dahir* could enhance the ability of Moroccan NGOs to generate funds within Morocco, thereby increasing their effectiveness, decreasing their dependence on international donors, and helping to ensure the sustainability of their efforts.

The most important role of NGOs in fostering democratization and sustainable development is as intermediaries between the government and civil society. Therefore, NGOs must develop the capacity to engage in constructive dialogue with *both* the government and their target communities. They are unlikely to be effective intermediaries if they are either too close to the government or political parties, or antagonistic toward government. If too closely affiliated with the government or a political party, they lose credibility with the citizenry. If unable to work constructively with the government, their value to the community will be limited. They will also not be effective intermediaries if they do not genuinely represent the needs, concerns, and ideas of their communities. To be effective catalysts for civic participation and development, NGOs need to be independent but genuine partners—with government, donor agencies, and target communities.

SECTION III

THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR NGOS

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A. Introduction

The evolution of the NGO sector since Independence has taken place more rapidly than has the reform of juridical texts. This section examines the legal framework within which this evolution has taken place. The different types of associations permitted under the law are reviewed, and the advantages and disadvantages of the legal framework for future progress in the NGO sector are considered. Although the informal practices that exist alongside formal regulations have allowed for a certain flexibility in the evolution of NGOs, a more formal updating of the law will permit greater sustainability in enhancing the institutional capacities of Moroccan associations.

B. The NGO Legal Framework

B1. Summary of Current Legal Texts

As already noted in the preceding section, Moroccan NGOs are regulated by the *Dahir* of 15 November 1958, amended in 1973. The 1973 version lays the foundation for the rules and regulations that currently govern association law.

The 1958 *Dahir* was designed above all to consolidate public liberty, namely the right of association and freedom of assembly. These freedoms were further reiterated in the Royal Charter of 1958 and are currently guaranteed by Article 9 of the 1992 Constitution. The liberal intent of the 1958 *Dahir* is evident in contrast to the corresponding laws of the protectorate and other North African legislation of the same era.

Article 1 of the *Dahir* of November 15, 1958, conceives of an association as an agreement by which two or more people combine their knowledge and efforts to pursue a common interest on a non-profit basis. According to the *dahir*, an association is first and foremost a contract, although it is generally not formalized as such. The founders often set forth a charter that expresses the spirit, goal, and principles around which future members of the association unite. The statutes and legal formalities of this charter furnish the contractual character of the agreement.

Three criteria formally distinguish an association from other groups: the goal or intent of the members, the permanent nature of the organization, and equality among members.

- **Goal/intent** An association must have an objective other than the generation of profits. Simply put, the association itself can have money-making interests and activities, but profit is not to be the motivation of individuals joining the association. This clearly differentiates an association from a business or union, although legally nothing hinders an association from pursuing monetary gain. Indeed, it is this difference in individual motivation as well as the sharing of profits among members that distinguishes an association from a business.

- **Permanence.** Article 1 of the *Dahir* of 1958 requires that the agreement to pursue a common interest, i.e. form an association, be “permanent.” The long-term nature of an association distinguishes it from a one-time meeting or service agreement.
- **Equality.** All members of an association are equal in the sense that any legal or economic hierarchy is forbidden. This distinguishes an association from a social or labor contract.

Separate texts are devoted to the regulation of specific kinds of NGOs, their functioning, and their legal capacity. The *Dahir* of 1958 and these special legal texts distinguish among the following categories of NGOs.

Foreign NGOs and Moroccan NGOs. Article 21 of the 1958 *Dahir* stipulates that an organization is considered foreign if it has foreign headquarters, headquarters in Morocco led by foreigners, foreign administrators, or a membership of at least 50 percent foreigners.

Foreign and Moroccan NGOs are subject to the same body of legislation. However, the legislative texts make slight distinctions between them in the filing of the preamble, as required by Article 5 of the 1958 *Dahir*, and in the granting of NGO status.

The 1958 *Dahir* gives local authorities with whom the preamble is filed the authority to investigate whether the applying NGO meets any conditions of a foreign association (Article 22). In the three months after a preamble is filed, the government can object to the constitution of a foreign association, to changes in the association’s charter, leadership, or administration, or to the creation of branches, subsidiaries, or other establishments related to the association (Article 24). The specification of a three-month waiting period is the only legal difference between a foreign association and a Moroccan association. Once the three months have passed, a foreign association is able to operate under the same conditions as a Moroccan association.

Declared associations and associations of public utility. A legal distinction is made between NGOs that serve the general needs of the community (associations of public utility, AUP status) and those determined by the state to serve the needs of their members (declared associations). This distinction has implications for the ability of associations to establish a sound and self-sustainable financial footing. In short, the public utility status accords NGOs advantages regarding fundraising capabilities, taxes, and various fiscal exemptions. The public utility status is thus quite significant in terms of developing the capacities of organizations. The political and social climate is currently favorable to easing the criteria for granting public utility status, and numerous NGOs and coalitions of NGOs are exploring the possibility of liberalizing access to AUP status.

NGOs with special legal status. Because of the important role that they play in sectoral development policy, certain associations are granted special juridical status by separate texts. They are

- Associations of agricultural water users (Decree of May 13, 1992)
- Sports associations (Law No. 06 87, as promulgated by the *Dahir* of May 19, 1989)
- Associations of credit and financial institutions (Banking Law of July 6, 1993)

B2. Informal Practices

Informal practices and regulations also have an important impact on the NGO sector. At the internal level, associations do not rigorously observe the formal rules concerning their functioning. As a result, association leaders familiar with the laws are rare, and legal research is rarely undertaken to find possible solutions to problems such as the need to develop capacity. In addition, few association leaders currently attach much importance to establishing an institutional memory through written records such as minutes of meetings or detailed bookkeeping procedures.

At the external level, public officials allow a certain amount of informality to exist among the NGOs, with many practices tolerated that do not conform with the laws. For example, changes in association leadership and management are not always reported as required by law. Associations that do not have public utility status often receive donations and subsidies even though they are not legally entitled to do so. Oral agreements are common among local NGOs, although foreign NGOs and aid organizations are pushing local NGOs toward more formal agreements.

At times, however, tolerance can turn into strict enforcement, which can result in dissolving associations that have gotten too far out of line. Pressure is sometimes put on associations to calm their members or cease certain activities. This somewhat arbitrary application of the laws gives the authorities a certain discretion in managing the growth of the association movement.

B3. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Legal Framework

Advantages

- **Protection of rights.** Notwithstanding the restrictive modifications made to the 1958 *Dahir* in 1973, the *Dahir* still remains quite liberal concerning freedom of assembly.
- **Flexibility regarding internal structures.** The 1958 *Dahir* does not dictate the structure and function of NGOs, but allows each to formulate structure and function through its own internal organization, according to its individual needs.
- **Room for growth.** The stipulations of the 1958 *Dahir* are flexible enough to permit the building of a wide range of NGO institutional capacities, as long as their activities do not contradict Moroccan law as specified in Article 3.
- **Procedural guarantees.** With regard to internal governance, the economic and social activities of associations are regulated by the same principles that govern contracts and obligations, as outlined in Article 1 of the 1958 *Dahir*. An association is in essence a contract, it is therefore subject to civil regulations and statutes, and even commercial law if applicable.

Disadvantages

- **An underdeveloped legal code.** Moroccan jurisprudence regarding NGOs has not kept pace with the recent profusion of NGOs and broadening of their activities. For example,

only NGOs granted public utility status are allowed to accept donations and gifts. Other NGOs sometimes do so as well while the authorities look the other way, but cannot base future plans on funds obtained in this way. As a result, the vast majority of NGOs—those without public utility status—have found their growth and impact restrained by uncertainty about their futures and their inability to plan.

- **Minimal body of case law.** The Moroccan courts, unlike those in other countries, have not enhanced the capacities of associations by establishing precedents that would enlarge the interpretation of existing legal texts. French jurisprudence, for example, allows associations to participate in commercial activity. Associations in France may therefore be financed by means other than those explicitly outlined in the law. This is not the case in Morocco.
- **Susceptibility to political influence.** Certain ambiguities exist in the interpretation of the 1958 *Dahir* that leave the enabling environment for NGOs subject to political considerations. Hence, an association that wishes to develop its financial autonomy can do so only by avoiding politically sensitive issues. The ambiguity inherent in the 1958 *Dahir* has led to a certain degree of self-censorship on the part of associations who want to maintain their legal status.
- **Limitations on financial sustainability.** Moroccan law still limits NGOs to activities that are not profit-oriented or financially self-sustaining. Therefore, associations can only undertake activities that do not require a lot of capital obtained through self-financing.
- **A tradition of suspicion.** The government tends to be wary of NGO claims that they are not for profit or motivated by material gain or purposes other than those stated in their preamble. Government suspicion in part reflects the historic tendency of Moroccan NGOs to function as partisan instruments rather than in pursuit of their own autonomous ideals. However, the GOM's recent opening up of NGO activity has led to an increase in the number of NGOs pursuing autonomous development goals. The government has considered liberalizing the regulatory context, but has yet to take concrete action to allow NGOs greater freedom in developing their legal capacity.
- **Lack of knowledge among associations about the law.** Even though Moroccan NGO jurisprudence is not well developed, the 1958 *Dahir* contains elements that would allow associations to develop a more solid financial base than they have now. Associations have not explored these elements of the law to their fullest advantage. In fact, associations' lack of sophistication and knowledge about the law has led to a widespread but mistaken belief that the law is more restrictive than in fact it is.

B4. Prospects for Reform

Several social and political indicators reflect the need for legislative reform concerning NGOs. NGOs are assigning increasing importance to their legal status and calling public attention to the limits of the current legislation. Efforts to advocate change have focused on regulations that govern NGO resources and financial status. At present, the vast majority of NGOs cannot legally receive gifts or subsidies and are not exempt from taxes.

In the Moroccan parliament, several groups have proposed laws to enhance the legal capacity of NGOs and clarify certain provisions of the 1958 *Dahir*. Within the government itself, a movement for legislative reform is underway to benefit NGOs that undertake development activities in collaboration with the government.

C. The NGO Regulatory Framework

The Ministry of the Interior is the government body charged with regulating and overseeing individual NGOs. This ministry is designated by the 1958 *Dahir* to receive and review the preamble of all associations that seek legal status in Morocco. As part of this process, the MOI is responsible for determining whether or not the coveted AUP status will be granted to individual associations. Once legal status is granted, the MOI has the role of ensuring continued adherence to the law as the NGOs evolve.

Much of the MOI's oversight function is carried out by local authorities who represent the ministry. Applications for legal status are filed with *caids* or *pashas*. There is an office for associations in each prefecture. The Secretary General of the Governorate is responsible for centralizing and maintaining the data. The MOI is the body that not only determines whether legal status will be granted to would-be associations but, through the local authorities, also monitors the evolution of each association with particular attention to its leadership.

In addition to the MOI's local representatives, several offices in the central ministry concern themselves with associations to varying degrees. The *Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales* is the unit within the MOI that interacts with the local authorities who deal directly with NGOs. The *Direction des Affaires Rurales* oversees rural development and thus has an interest in the activities of NGOs working in rural development. The *Direction des Libertés Publiques* is the principal unit concerned with advocacy groups, which tend to operate at the national level.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports also has some oversight functions under the law regarding associations. In particular, that ministry is responsible for overseeing high school, university, and amateur sports associations.

To fully appreciate the regulatory environment in which NGOs operate, it is important to note the broader range of ministries with which associations increasingly interact. While these more varied relationships are largely *de facto* rather than *de jure*, they are having a strong impact on the NGO enabling environment. This broader range of relationships between NGOs and the state is the subject of the next section.

SECTION IV

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS WITH NGOS

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A. Introduction

Once NGOs have been granted legal status by the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), they are generally not required by law to work under the supervision of the ministries. However, the informal reality is that NGOs are generally in direct contact with public actors other than the MOI and local authorities. This section examines the multiple points at which the state comes into contact with civil society. Eschewing theoretical abstraction, the focus is on identifying public actors that have active relations with NGOs. In part designed as a guide to implementation, the following section evaluates the potential of the various ministries to form development partnerships with NGOs. It also examines the interface between state and civil society at the local level and the ways in which the mission's civil society program could contribute not only to the strengthening of NGOs, but also to decentralization and the enhancement of the responsiveness of local elected officials.

B. The Government's Institutional Structures for Working with NGOs

Several government ministries have specific interests in relating to NGOs apart from the regulatory role of the MOI. As the role of the *état providence* has diminished, interest has grown on the part of the government in developing productive and collaborative relationships with NGOs that can help achieve the social and development objectives of the various ministries. The nature of the ministry/NGO relationships vary, ranging from control to partnership. But there is a marked tendency on the part of both parties to seek out their mutual interest.

NGOs seek to associate with relevant ministries for several reasons. First, by demonstrating the development advantages they offer to the relevant ministries, the NGOs increase their potential access to public subsidies, either monetary or in kind (office space, personnel, telephones). Secondly, association with public actors increases the ability of the NGOs to access donor funds, which are often channeled through the public administration. Many international donors such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, and the World Health Organization require that their assistance be funneled through public entities. Third, the ability of NGOs to function at the grassroots level is significantly enhanced if they have the accord of the local authorities, and even more so if they have won their support.

But NGOs must balance capacity with credibility. The most successful tend to maintain supple relations with the authorities, adapting the extent of their collaboration with public entities to the receptivity of the individual civil servants concerned. In addition, the nature of relations between public actors and NGOs varies according to the nature of the specific sector involved. The role for NGOs to play differs from sector to sector, with the potential for partnership reflecting the receptivity of the public actors concerned.

B1. National Public Actors that Interact with NGOs

Ministry of the Interior. The mechanisms of the regulatory role of the MOI have been reviewed in the preceding section. The MOI should be kept abreast of all substantive relations between NGOs and donors due to the oversight function performed by this ministry. The MOI

exercises its vigilance through the medium of regional and local authorities who will necessarily figure in the government's endorsement of civil society assistance programs. The oversight functions of the ministry's territorial administration must be accommodated in efforts to enhance the responsiveness of local elected officials (see below under local relations with government)

Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs This ministry used to oversee many NGO activities when government relations with civil society were more tutorial than collaborative. However, the former *de facto* role of this ministry has no *de jure* basis, and the ministry is changing its orientation towards working with NGOs. It has established a unit to define and structure the more participatory relations emerging between state and civil society. At the central level, the *Direction des Affaires Sociales* is charged with this function, and at the regional level, the *délégués* are charged with maintaining relations with local or regional NGOs. This ministry, which traditionally played a collaborative and supportive role in regard to charitable, women's, social welfare, and children's NGOs, is likely to feel somewhat threatened by the new interest of other ministries—particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—in cooperating with NGOs, which used to lie primarily in its domain. It has expressed to the mission an interest in reform of the legislation governing NGOs and is anxious to take a lead role in establishing a data base for NGOs.

Ministry of Population. This is a new ministry with many functions previously held by the Ministry of Plan. This ministry is especially interested in playing a coordinating role in devising ways to meet the needs of the population at the local level. It is anxious to develop and test innovative participatory models that link government and civil society efforts in meeting community needs. Representatives of this ministry stress the importance of contributing to a systematic approach rather than providing sporadic and ad hoc support to a handful of NGOs. One of its special interests is a literacy campaign in rural areas that draws upon complementary contributions of NGOs. The ministry is also particularly interested in centralizing statistics on the NGO sectors and in coordinating a data base that could be disseminated among different public actors

Ministry of Youth and Sports. This ministry has been assigned legal oversight of certain sports associations and federations as mentioned in the preceding section. In practice, its mandate extends to the oversight and support of many other association activities of youth groups, such as those that engage in public works. It has also developed a *de facto* relationship of support with the scouts, the cineclubs, and groups targeted on women who benefit from social welfare. At the national level, the ministry interacts with NGOs through the *Direction des Sports* and the *Direction des Femmes*. At the regional and local levels, the *délégués* of the ministry represent the contact point of this ministry with citizen groups.

Ministry of Human Rights. This is a relatively new public actor, created in 1993. It monitors and coordinates the activities of human rights associations and associations that deal more specifically with the rights of women, children, veterans, the unemployed, and college graduates. It has two units that are concerned with NGO activity. The role of the *Direction de la Promotion et des Etudes* is to promote a civic culture throughout the social fabric. The objective of the *Direction de la Concertation et de la Défense des Droits de l'Homme* is to resolve the concerns of NGOs in regards to the defense of human rights. The ministry has been working with UNDP on how to better cooperate with NGOs. It has expressed an interest in creating an information center that would reinforce government cooperation with civil society. While this ministry appreciates the contributions of human rights NGOs to the national dialogue, it is seeking to expand its definition of human rights to include women's and children's rights. While

the ministry currently only operates at the national level, its formal mandate foresees an eventual establishment of local presence as well

The Ministry of Culture This ministry is primarily concerned with cultural and artistic associations such as amateur theater, the Association of Moroccan Authors, and associations devoted to the arts. As with most of the other ministries, there is a unit at the central level devoted to cooperation with NGOs as well as *délégués* in local and regional settings.

The Ministry of Public Health This ministry maintains regular contact with professional medical associations, health education associations, and preventative health associations, such as those working in family planning, AIDs prevention, and sanitation. Ministerial representatives indicated to the assessment team that they are considering establishing a new unit to coordinate their interactions with NGOs. This vision is based on the considerable potential advantages that are available through cooperation with NGOs, but officials stress the need for coordination of NGO and government initiatives. The ministry favors as a first step conceptualizing a model of NGO and ministry partnership that would help define their respective roles and distinguish more promising NGOs from those that lack capacity or credibility.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Although lacking in legal attributes, this ministry has been seeking a *de facto* role as an intermediary between donors and Moroccan NGOs. As part of this pursuit, the ministry has worked with NGOs for several years, particularly women's NGOs. In 1990, a Women in Development (IFD) Cell was created within the *Direction Générale de la Coopération Internationale* with the collaboration of the United Nations Development Program. The IFD objectives consist of promoting women's participation and integration into the social and economic development process through women's NGO projects, and mobilizing donors' funds and expertise for the implementation of these projects. It has recently benefited from UNDP support to initiate the publication of a newsletter for women's activities. Its representatives expressed to the assessment team the need to distinguish NGOs with real potential to contribute to community needs from those simply seeking to take advantage of the favorable international environment for such activities.

The Ministry of Agriculture This ministry has a special interest in professional associations in the agricultural domain, such as growers of citrus, beets, flowers, and in other associations of rural development, such as irrigation users. At the central level, a division is charged with overseeing professional associations. At the local level, the ministry has two relevant structures. The first is the *Direction Provinciale de l'Agriculture*, which has an office in each province. Also under the ministry's broader auspices are the semi-autonomous offices of the ORMVA (*Offices Régionaux de Mise en Valeur Agricole*). There are nine ORMVAs, which correspond to the nine irrigated perimeters associated with Morocco's nine great dams. The ORMVA units are charged with working with the water user associations and ongoing relations other development associations as well. The ORMVAs are similar in structure to the ONEP (*Office National de l'Eau Potable*), and the ONE (*Office National des Exportations*), in that they are semi-autonomous government units that all coordinate with development and business associations.

Ministry of Economic Incentives This ministry has *de jure* responsibility for oversight of the cooperative sector, which falls under the same legal framework as the NGOs being considered in this assessment. To fulfill this responsibility the ministry works through the Office de Développement des Coopératives, which is a semi-autonomous office similar to ORMVA. Although thus far its interests have focused mainly on cooperatives, this ministry could

potentially play a broader role in the general conception of how NGOs could better contribute to economic development.

Ministry of Information. As with most of the other ministries, this one also has an office charged with liaisons with NGOs in the sector of information and communications. In particular, it has relations with professional associations of cinematographers, journalists, audiovisual technicians, etc.

Ministry of Finance and Foreign Investment and Ministry of Internal Commerce These government bodies also have institutionalized relations with professional associations in the industrial sector, commercial sector, and financial sector. These relations have a legal basis. For example, a banking law of 1993 obliges all the credit institutions to regroup in professional associations, with whom the Ministry of Finance is legally charged with working.

High Commission for the Handicapped. This body was created at the end of 1994 to address the needs of physically and mentally handicapped Moroccans and provide assistance to them. As part of its mandate, this body works with associations of the handicapped and associations that assist the handicapped. Such associations are among the most numerous in the NGO sector, numbering about 48.

The Office of the Under Secretary of State for Moroccans Living Abroad. This public body works with associations formed by migrant workers

B2. Coordination through Consultative Councils

A key innovation by the Moroccan state at the national level has been the creation of consultative councils whose purpose is to lay the groundwork for consensus on pending public policy decisions. The state has created these councils with a view towards reconciling differing views on public policy and has institutionalized the participation of NGOs in the consultative process. The inclusion of NGOs in these bodies is illustrative of the political space that has been opened for civil society in regards to the formulation of public policy. The fact that the NGOs have been included in these forums is a clear sign that they are increasingly seen as responsible partners with valuable input in achieving consensus and establishing the legitimacy of public decisions. But it must also be noted that the councils themselves lack permanency, since they are merely consultative and meet only on an *ad hoc* basis when they are called upon by the King. The NGOs represented in the councils tend to be the most active and representative in their own sub-sector of operation. As NGOs develop their capacities and become more representative of their constituencies, they may be expected to gain increasing access to the consultative councils.

Since 1990, five councils have been created:

- The CNJA (*Conseil de la Jeunesse et de l'Avenir*) was created by the King in July 1990 to mobilize the principal economic actors in a campaign against youth unemployment and to improve coordination among public and private employers, unions, youth associations, and public institutions. In recent years, the CNJA has broadened its membership to include associations of youth entrepreneurs and unemployed college graduates.
- The CCDH (*Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l'Homme*) was created by the King in 1990 to address human rights issues requiring high-level government action. This

council is composed of politicians, ministers, and two human rights associations that agreed to participate in the council, the OMDH (*Organisation Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme*) and the LMDH (*Ligue Marocaine Pour les Droits de l'Homme*)

- The CNSDS (*Conseil National de Suivi et du Dialogue Social*) was created by the King in 1995 to facilitate consensus on labor-related public policy issues. This council is composed of representatives of employers, unions, and public administrations concerned with economic affairs.
- The CNE (*Conseil National de l'Environnement*) was created in 1995 to facilitate dialogue and consensus among a range of actors concerned with environmental issues. In the first session, held in June 1995, environmental protection associations collaborated with key government ministries, including technical ministries, in the framework of this consultative council, to formulate recommendations.
- The CRC (*Conseils Régionaux de la Culture*) and CNC (*Conseil National de la Culture*) were created in 1995 and include Moroccan cultural associations. The goal of these councils is to assist the Ministry of Culture in developing and implementing a national cultural policy that has the support of the leading national and regional actors in the cultural domain.

B3. The National Public Actors and the Mission's Civil Society Program

Several considerations might be of use to the mission in setting up a civil society program based on the concept of development partnerships between government and NGOs. First, since most of the ministries are actively seeking ways to work with NGOs, it would be appropriate to include relevant national public actors as well as local government in the partnership with NGOs. The Ministry of Interior should be kept informed of activities, but other ministries are more likely to be interested in forming development partnerships. While the consultative councils represent arenas in which NGOs have increasing access and influence, the *ad hoc* nature of these forums means that they lack permanency, so it is better to work with the ministries. As the NGOs become more capable and representative, they may be expected to have continued access to consultative councils without donors having to promote their inclusion.

The mission could engage the ministries in its civil society program of development partnerships in two principal ways:

- (1) Reach an overall accord with a single ministry that will play a coordinating role for activities generated under the program. The most appropriate ministries for this function would be those that have a general rather than sectoral interest in cooperating with NGOs.
- (2) Make contact with a number of ministries and evaluate their interest and receptiveness to cooperation with NGOs. Since their desire to work with NGOs varies over time depending on the personnel involved, it is important to remain flexible in the implementation phase. It would also be most fruitful for the mission to try to establish direct relations with the operational structures of the relevant ministries to work out the conceptualization of partnerships with NGOs. Details would be best worked out at this level before submitting them to the political appointees higher up.

B4. NGO Relations with Local Government and Potential Contributions to Decentralization

The regulatory environment at the local level has already been described in the preceding section. The Ministry of the Interior exercises its vigilance over grassroots activity through a structure of territorial administration, which is illustrated in Exhibit IV-1. Some members of this administrative structure, such as some governors, have taken a keen interest in establishing development partnerships with NGOs. In other instances, the territorial administration is breaking with old habits less rapidly and continues to view the recent dynamism in civil society with some skepticism. In either event, development partnerships with local government will be most likely to succeed if they involve the relevant appointed officials.

However, it is not necessary for NGOs form their development partnerships exclusively with appointed officials. Indeed, the mission has an opportunity to construct its civil society program in a fashion that contributes to decentralization and increases the responsiveness of local government to community needs and concerns at no additional cost by encouraging the partnerships to include members of the elected bodies as well.

Exhibit 2 on page IV-7 illustrates the administrative levels at which the elected bodies operate. At the most local levels are the rural and urban communal councils, which essentially operate at the same administrative levels as the *caids*. The elected provincial assemblies, which are composed of members of the communal councils operate at the same administrative level as the provincial governors. Hence, if partnerships are formed with the communal council, it would be advantageous to have the *caid* involved. If the partnerships are formed at the level of the provincial assemblies, it would be equally advantageous for the governor to have a key role as well.

The elected bodies have a special incentive for seeking development partnerships with NGOs. The essence of the GOM's decentralization program is to increasingly channel to these bodies responsibility for basic services, such as electrification, street lighting, garbage pickup, road paving, etc. However, these responsibilities must still be considered at a tutorial stage, since the elected bodies lack the authority to raise the necessary revenues themselves. Instead, the funds are provided to them through the Ministry of Interior. The source of the funds is a value added tax. In theory, the value added tax collected from each administrative unit is proportionately returned as revenues for the basic services. In practice, there is some progressive redistribution that takes place.

Through establishing partnerships with NGOs, the elected bodies have the potential to expand their reach and capacity to carry out tangible projects. This is not only because the NGOs have greater direct access to donor project funds, but also because the NGOs have a unique capacity to mobilize the grassroots for development purposes. In addition, partnerships with elected bodies have the best potential to increase the responsiveness of local government, since elected officials are most likely to pay attention to organized constituents.

Exhibit 1. Regional and Local Government: Territorial Administration and Elected Bodies

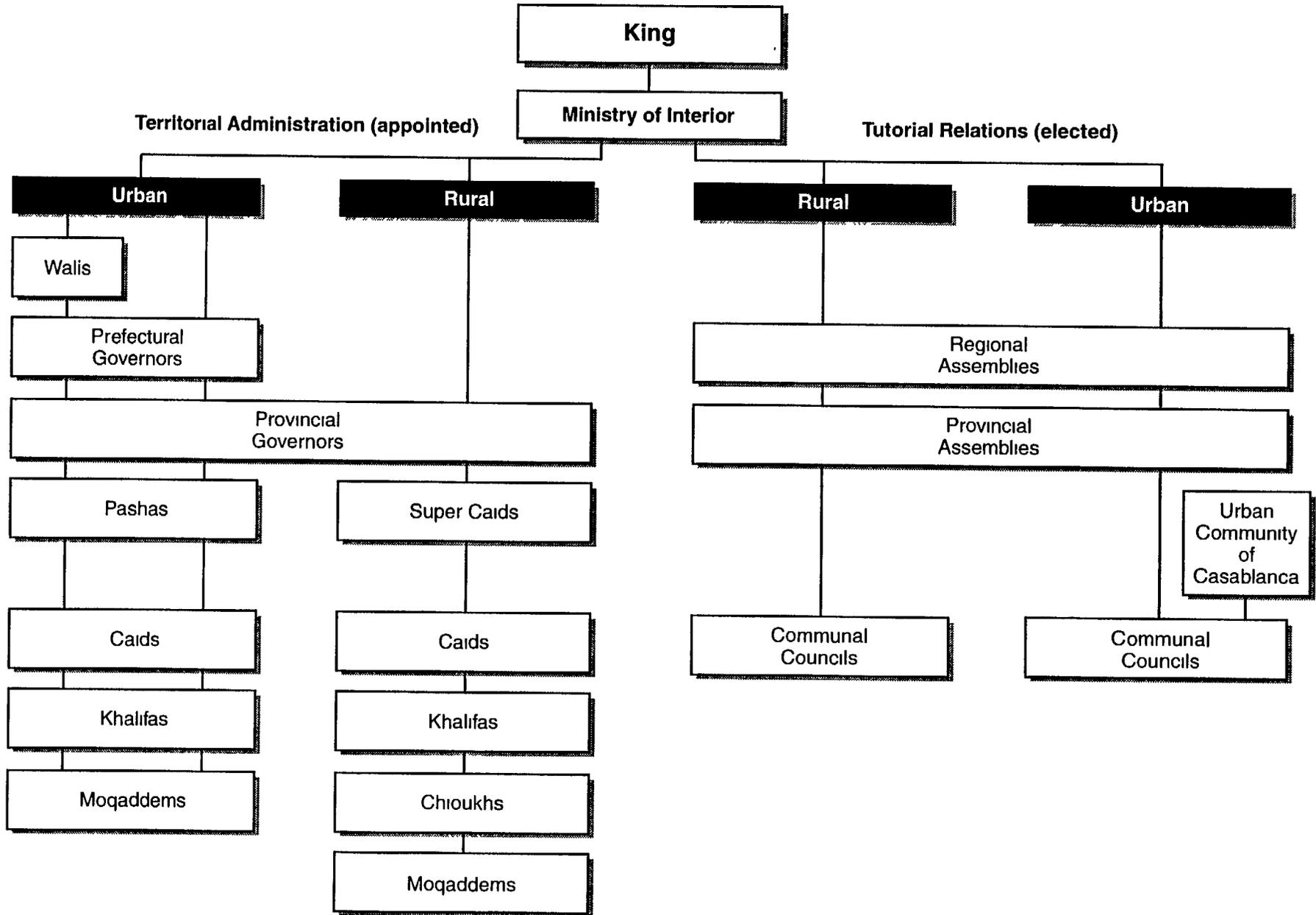
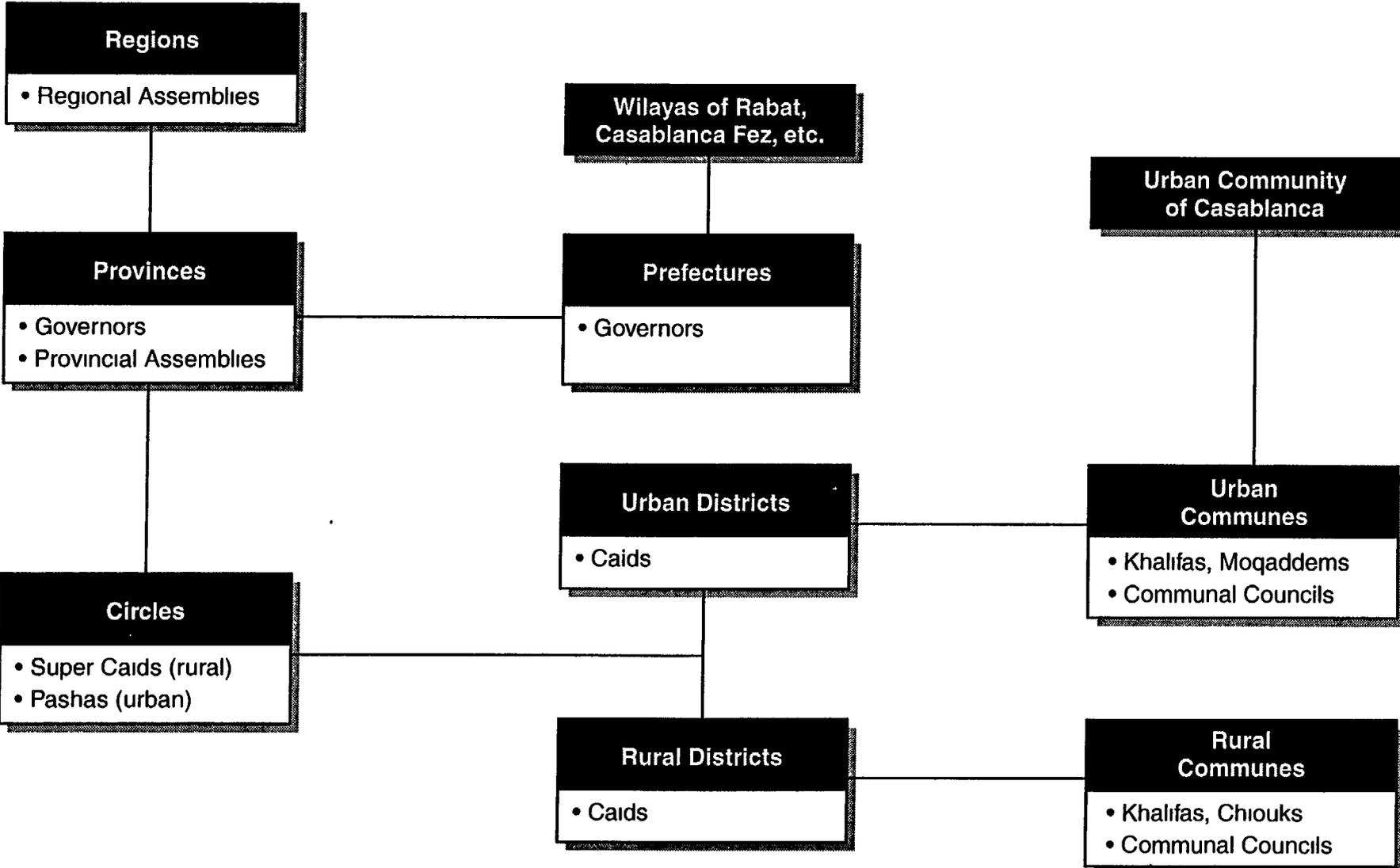


Exhibit 2. Administrative Divisions of Morocco



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SECTION V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION V CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Introduction

A window of opportunity is open in Morocco for USAID to act as a catalyst in strengthening NGOs for democratization and sustainable development. This section identifies actionable guidelines to facilitate the implementation phase. First, summary conclusions will be drawn from the findings of preceding sections of this assessment. Secondly, a conceptual framework will be elaborated for development partnerships among NGOs, the government, and donors that takes full advantage of the window of opportunity. Finally, this section advances a set of programmatic recommendations that draw on the strengths of the mission, which is well poised to implement a program of this nature.

B. Summary Conclusions

B1. The Political Economy Context

Especially favorable conditions prevail in Morocco for the participation of NGOs in the transition to sustainable development. A gradual but real and progressive evolution towards political and economic liberalization is in progress and has opened the field to the organized participation of people in development. By building on their inherent value in filling development gaps, NGOs offer a mechanism by which citizens now have an unprecedented opportunity to influence public policy.

The time is also favorable for interventions by donors who seek to reinforce the efforts of NGOs to contribute to development and democratization. Through a varied but cost effective program in support of civil society, the mission could promote both grassroots participation and a broader civic culture. Both Moroccan NGOs and public actors are highly receptive to the idea of seeing foreign partners contribute to this evolution.

B2. A Favorable Evolution of the NGO Sector

With classic association activity in Morocco has evolved a new generation of NGO actors with the potential to offer concrete contributions to democratization and sustainable development in Morocco. A growing consciousness of the imperatives of development has taken hold in the country's civil society. By linking democratization with development, Moroccan civil society is taking advantage of the unprecedented new opportunities extended to NGOs for participation in social, economic, and political issues which touch the broad populace.

The NGO sector presents both the advantages and disadvantages of being a young movement. The new opportunities in this sector have led to a profusion of organizations in Morocco that are not all capable of making a positive contribution to civil society through their participation in the decision-making process, although many are making useful contributions to civil society without participation in public decision making. With guidance and support, elements within this sector can emerge as credible leaders with whom the GOM can interact constructively. The strengthening of select NGOs can thus be a positive factor in widening the political window of opportunity that has opened to civil society for determining public policy.

B3. The Juridical Context for NGOs

The legal context for association activity remains a constraint to the emergence of genuine NGOs that are efficient, well-structured, and self-sustainable. The new liberalization has been most evident at the informal level, with the reform of formal legislative codes lagging behind actual practice. NGOs themselves are giving increasing attention to their juridical status and chafe at the limits of the current legislation, especially in regards to material resources.

The government is also cognizant of the limits of the current legislation that regulates association activity. Discussions are in progress within the government regarding the eventual reform of the juridical context for NGOs. Various legal propositions have also been put forward in the legislature, with parliamentary groups seeking to enhance the legal provisions regarding NGOs and clarify certain dispositions of the 1958 *Dahir*. The key to progress in this domain is the ability of civil society to demonstrate its potential contribution to the development process.

B4. NGO Relations with their Institutional Environment

Despite certain reservations by some NGOs close to parties on the left, a marked tendency has emerged among civil society actors in favor of greater collaboration with public development agencies. The state has responded by granting mature and responsible NGOs consultative roles in public decision-making. Actions by international donors in support of the NGO sector thus dovetail in many instances with domestic advances already underway.

B5. Prospects for Progress

Three considerations in the current interaction between associations and their institutional environment favor NGOs as a positive force in advancing democratic reform:

- The attitudes of associations, NGOs, the government, political parties, and consultative councils are gradually changing. They are evolving from a tendency towards mutual distrust to a search for common ground and recognition of the synergy possible with cooperation.
- Increasing importance is being given to concrete, verifiable accomplishments rather than the elaboration of abstract positions and strategies.
- The general public is becoming increasingly interested in both the invigoration of civil society and the multiple goals pursued by individual NGOs. Morocco's multi-party tradition and tolerance of diversity have provided the cultural foundations for a pluralistic democracy that are particularly conducive to a vibrant civil society.

Some confusion nevertheless persists among NGOs and the GOM regarding the ongoing mobilization of civil society. This is in part due to the emerging role of civil society in the political process, with the exact modalities of its greater participation still to be worked out. Given this uncertainty and the ongoing experimentation with different forms of state/civil society interaction, it is useful to distinguish among the various types of associations to identify those with the most potential for positive impact in the current context.

Associations that advocate human rights, women's rights, children's rights, and the promotion of the Berber culture, for example, intervene in areas where the stakes are high for both the government and political parties. On this delicate and risky ground, all foreign intervention and support must be planned with a great deal of precaution. The potential is great for unanticipated consequences resulting from donor assistance. For instance, foreign support to a particular human rights organization may actually undermine the group's credibility in the eyes of both the GOM and the Moroccan people.

Other types of associations present less risk and offer greater opportunities. These associations work in the economic domain and promote participation of citizens in the consensual management of community affairs. Examples are professional associations, associations of young entrepreneurs, support groups for small and medium enterprises, and groups that address grassroots development issues.

To guarantee continuity and success in supporting the role of NGOs in democratization and sustainable development, several things will be necessary. It will be important for USAID to carefully research each NGO to choose the least controversial, the most enterprising, and the most efficient. It will also be necessary to analyze each administration or public institution involved to find those most able to pursue the goal of strengthening democracy through a partnership between civil society and the public authorities. One of the keys to a successful program will be the ability to remain responsive to opportunities for partnerships as they develop on the side of both civil society and the state.

C. Conceptual Framework for Engaging NGOs in Democratization and Sustainable Development Initiatives

Non-government organizations in Morocco are so profuse that donors cannot realistically hope to strengthen the institutional capacity of all or even a substantial number of them. Some NGOs, for example, exist primarily to provide employment for small numbers of elites or to promote particularistic views. Thus, it is essential to establish guidelines for the productive engagement of NGOs in democratization and sustainable development. This section provides a conceptual framework for such engagement. The essential feature of this framework is the **promotion of development partnerships involving government and civil society**. This partnership framework is intended to take full advantage of the existing opportunities presented by the GOM for greater civil society participation in public affairs and development.

C1. Definition of Development Partnerships involving NGOs

Development partnerships, as the term is used here, are joint initiatives involving the GOM and civil society actors to resolve community problems or address public needs at the local level. These partnerships will be most likely to succeed if they focus on specific, concrete, politically non-threatening development initiatives and enlist grassroots participation in identifying and resolving these problems. A key feature of the framework is that each partner makes tangible and complementary contributions.

C2. Purposes of Development Partnerships

The *principal purposes* of development partnerships would be to:

- Develop the confidence of the GOM in the benefits of civil society participation. This would serve to enhance the informal enabling environment for greater participation of NGOs in democratization and sustainable development initiatives
- Provide a framework for grassroots groups to engage in constructive dialogue with local authorities and NGOs that would enhance their influence over public policy while increasing the responsiveness of the state to community concerns.
- Enhance the ability of local and national government to respond to community needs.
- Build NGO capacity to incorporate citizen input and ensure greater public participation, thereby contributing to democratization and sustainable development.
- Allow different public actors to build on a coherent global vision of the potential role of civil society in development through partnership with government.
- Serve as a unifying mechanism for USAID/Morocco to engage local community participation in achieving its other strategic objectives.

C3. Defining Characteristics of Development Partnerships

Development partnerships to resolve local problems in Morocco would have the following *defining characteristics*:

- **Interactive dialogue between government and NGOs to address development gaps at the local level.** The partnerships would be premised on interactive dialogue between state and civil society actors that would provide civil society with access to decision-making arenas. This access would empower grassroots groups while enabling local and national government to become more responsive to community needs. NGOs would help the government address development gaps at the local level and mobilize grassroots participation, including elements of society whose voices, needs, and potential contributions to development have been undervalued, such as women. To be effective intermediaries, these NGOs should neither be too close to the government or political parties nor antagonistic towards government.
- **Cost-effectiveness and stake holding through mutual contributions.** To ensure cost-effectiveness and provide a sense of shared ownership in development undertakings, the partners—the GOM, NGOs, grassroots groups, and donors—would each provide pre-specified contributions. For example, the GOM could provide government technical specialists (such as civil engineers or forestry experts) or the use of government equipment (such as bulldozers or trucks). The technical contributions of NGOs would vary according to their focus and the nature of the project. Grassroots groups would help NGOs and government identify and prioritize development problems and actively participate in resolving these problems. Donors, in addition to providing funding, would influence project design to better meet their programmatic objectives.

- **Multi-level involvement.** The development partnerships would involve government and civil society actors from multiple levels. Government actors would include technical experts or representatives from the national ministries in Rabat (for example, Public Works, Agriculture, or Health), regional or provincial authorities, and municipal or rural commune functionaries. Similarly, the civil society side of the venture might include national NGOs or NGO federations as well as more locally focused NGOs. The essential requirement is that each partner have something of concrete value to offer to the partnership.
- **Sustainability.** One of the strongest arguments for development partnerships is that they will help ensure the sustainability of the associated development initiatives. They will do so through fostering the sense of stake holding and shared commitment noted above. Their cost-effectiveness will also contribute to their sustainability. Finally, the participation of NGOs and grassroots groups in development undertakings is increasingly favored by the international donors. As a result, projects initiated by development partnerships with USAID support will be well-positioned to attract follow-on funding from donors.

C4. Support to Civil Society

To ensure the success of the development partnerships involving NGOs, it will be critically important to minimize key constraints to civil society participation. These include the following: (1) A lack of confidence on the part of the GOM in NGOs and their capacity and willingness to engage constructively in the development process in a way that complements rather than undermines the contributions of the public sector. (2) Weaknesses in the institutional capacities of NGOs, particularly at the grassroots level. (3) An enabling environment with legal and political legacies and uncertainties that restrict the institutional maturation of NGOs. To minimize these constraints, the framework for development partnerships should include the following areas of support to civil society:

- **An institutional strengthening program** that would develop the capacities of Moroccan NGOs to become self-sustaining and to engage in grassroots activities. Due to the large numbers of grassroots NGOs, this institutional strengthening component would probably best be achieved in two ways: (1) through working with regional or national umbrella NGOs that are capable of reaching and assisting small-scale local groups, and through targeted assistance to specific NGOs that have high potential to help USAID fulfill its civil society programmatic objectives. Institutional strengthening would include both provision of material resources and capacity building through technical assistance.
- **Support for further enhancement of the enabling environment.** This could be provided in several ways, such as through a policy dialogue with the GOM, civil society actors, and donors. Assistance could also be provided to government institutions to facilitate more fruitful interactions between state and civil society, such as through training of local officials in incorporating community input into decision making.

D. Recommended Activities for Strengthening Civil Society

Although considerable potential exists for the sustainability of the development partnership framework, all parties need, as a catalyst, a shared and coherent vision of the role NGOs could

play in the democratic development process and the relations they could have with the state. The following recommendations are designed to help promote the realization of such a vision:

- **Workshop.** It is recommended that the mission hold a workshop to present the results of this assessment and to obtain input to craft a broader civil society program. The mission has requested technical assistance from G/DG in designing and implementing the workshop, which is intended to accomplish the following:
 - Bring together representatives of the GOM, civil society, and donors to present the results of the NGO assessment.
 - Initiate a dialogue among potential development partners that may lead to the endorsement of subsequent activities. While USAID's civil society assessment can provide the starting point for discussions, genuine consensus can be achieved only through consideration and incorporation of input from the various concerned parties.
- **NGO database.** It is recommended that at the workshop the mission introduce a proposal for creating a database/information center for donors, the GOM, and the NGO community. Information available through this center could include a list of NGOs eligible for donor assistance and guidelines regarding the priorities and types of activities favored by various ministries. The specified purpose, nature, and operation of the center should reflect the input of the parties represented at the workshop if it is to receive their endorsement and support.
- **Demonstration projects.** It is further recommended that the results of the workshop be followed immediately by two or more demonstration projects aimed at refining and implementing the framework for development partnerships. The purpose of these projects would be:
 - To maintain the interest, momentum, and consensus already generated by the assessment and the workshop.
 - To provide a point of departure for the design of subsequent activities that will constitute the bulk of the mission's civil society program.

The demonstration projects should be designed to address concrete needs of grassroots communities and encourage genuine and equal participation of both genders. Demonstration projects should be situated in locales where a favorable environment for such partnerships is known to exist, since the purpose of these projects is to explore and demonstrate their potential. It is recommended that these projects be modest in scope, expense, and time. The impact of the conceptual framework will be greatest if other donors are encouraged to participate in the demonstrative projects in a collaborative fashion.

- **Resource identification.** Identification of mission resources devoted to community participation in the other strategic objectives of the mission's Country Program Strategy is recommended along with the identification of other donor resources that might be drawn into a collaborative effort. The more substantial portion of the civil society

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Democracy and Governance Program (DG) should be built around the existing mission portfolio, with other donors also encouraged to participate. Resources already programmed for community participation could provide concrete project inputs in support of development partnership initiatives in the relevant areas.

- **Institutional strengthening of civil society actors.** Due to the multitude of Moroccan NGOs at the local level, this assistance should aim to develop the capacity of umbrella organizations that could in turn impart relevant skills to grassroots groups. These skills would include financial accounting, project identification and planning, and participatory techniques. Operating through umbrella groups at a regional or national level would also contribute to vertical integration of the association movement, and would preserve USAID's status as a neutral arbiter. AMSED, ATIL, AMAPPE, and FAJEM all provide useful examples of the type of intermediary umbrella groups that might be created or supported.
- **Technical coordination.** A technical coordinator should be engaged for the design and implementation of the mission's civil society program. The selected entity/individual should be capable of encouraging a more meaningful interaction between state and civil society by being able to articulate the conceptual framework to potentially promising partners that the technical coordinator identifies. This would provide a key element of continuity among the various development projects, increasing the coherence of the program.
- **Strengthening of local government.** Within the parameters of the civil society activity, support should be provided to local government to better enable it to contribute to the development partnerships. This support could then take the form of training or technical assistance to address the specific needs of the project in question. As discussed in Section IV, considerable potential exists to enhance Morocco's decentralization process and the responsiveness of local government by engaging elected bodies in the partnerships as well as appointed officials.
- **Improvement of the enabling environment.** The enabling environment continues to constrain the evolution of NGOs, and efforts could be made to encourage the GOM to make it more hospitable. A major effort should be devoted to facilitating the approval of "Association d'Utilité Publique" status (AUP) of NGOs, or to removing the constraints posed by this requirement. In addition, NGO access to decision-making arenas should be encouraged, facilitated, and monitored. For example, coordination with local authorities and with select Ministries could enhance the work of select NGOs. Furthermore, Parliament is emerging as a representative institution through which civil society could have access to the formulation of public policy. For NGOs to have input on issues of national interest, they must have access to government institutions that influence public policy. Consideration may also be given to strengthening the institutional capacities of Parliament to address the enabling environment for civil society development, to debate issues of public concern with civil society representatives as well as government, and to improve constituency participation and services. The strengthening of local government as recommended above should also help create a more hospitable environment for NGOs.