INCLUSIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN
MARRAKECH-SAFI (ISED-MS)

Marrakech-Safi is a major contributor to the economy and a hub of wealth creation in Morocco. Yet, more than 11 percent of its five million residents live in poverty.

The Marrakech-Safi region of Morocco is known for its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and strategic location. The region is home to a skilled and diverse workforce, which possesses a vibrant entrepreneurial spirit. It contributes to eight percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Despite this, the region faces major socio-economic challenges, with nearly 20 percent of Morocco’s poor living in the region. Its GDP per capita is 40 percent lower than the national average, and its unemployment rate is particularly high among women, of whom 11 percent are impacted. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these challenges, from which the region continues to recover.

USAID RESPONSE

USAID is partnering with local and national government counterparts as well as private sector, academic, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to support the Marrakech-Safi region’s efforts to achieve a more prosperous, resilient, and inclusive economy and society. To this end, ISED-MS has two primary objectives:

- **Improving Sub-National Participatory Governance**
- **Enhancing Economic Opportunity & Livelihood**

ISED-MS promotes the integration between these two objectives. ISED-MS aims to foster effective and sustained interaction between efforts that advance participatory governance, improved livelihoods, and business opportunities, with the end goal of achieving inclusive, accelerated, and long-term regional growth.

ISED-MS supports the people of the region by:

- Improving the local governments’ performance, transparency, and accountability.
- Empowering citizens, especially youth, women, and persons with disabilities, to get involved in the development process and express their ideas and opinions.
- Strengthening partnerships between academic institutions and the private sector to enhance workforce skills and create job opportunities.
- Mapping out high-potential value chains and supporting local public and private institutions to drive investment opportunities, create jobs, and add value for all.

To accelerate progress, ISED-MS adopts a systemic approach for converging public policies. The program facilitates multi-sectoral communication that enables government institutions, elected bodies, civil society, academia, and businesses to collaboratively develop programs, budgets, and policies toward the achievement of an overarching vision for the region.
RESULTS ACHIEVED TO DATE

- **Comprehensive Engagement and outreach:** With close to 400 activities including workshops, trainings, meetings, and presentations, there has been a wide and diverse reach, engaging a total of 2,396 individuals from government, civil society, the private sector, academia, and private citizens. There was a significant emphasis on inclusivity, with female participation at approximately 43%, youth involvement at around 30%, and concerted efforts to include Persons with Disabilities (PwD), albeit at a lower rate of about 1%.

- **Participatory Governance Strengthened:** In the wake of the earthquake, our commitment to participatory governance led to meaningful listening sessions, with the Self-Assessment and Organizational Assessment Approach mainstreamed across communes in partnership with the DGCT. These efforts supported the Regional Council and Wilaya in policy evaluations, facilitating the adoption of two Citizen and CSO-influenced policies, demonstrating significant progress towards our participatory governance goals.

- **Resilient Economic Response:** Adapting to the post-quake environment, the program completed two entrepreneurship cohorts and established communal forums for economic inclusion. These forums have become a cornerstone of our strategy, integrating local governance into economic activities and adjusting our approach to refine geographic scope and focus areas, ensuring the program’s adaptability and resilience.

- **Sub-national Government Capacity Building:** We’ve deepened our engagement with 24 communes, focusing on enhancing their management performance and responsiveness. The adoption of the Inclusive Self-Assessment Approach by these communes, DCLs, and the DGCT represents a pivotal step towards sustainable, locally led capacity strengthening. We’re also raising awareness about the crucial role of advisory bodies in maintaining transparency, not just in PAC development but throughout officials’ terms.

- **Citizen and CSO Governance Roles Amplified:** The program has made considerable strides in elevating the role of citizens and CSOs in sub-national governance, successfully conducting 14 events with 132 participants to foster interactive platforms for collaborative governance. This includes the submission of two advisory opinions by CBs to elected councils, enhancing participatory decision-making processes.

- **Employability Initiatives Enhanced:** Through our partnership with UM6P, the Impact Academy attracted 446 applicants, with 414 registrations and an impressive 70% completion rate across more than 20 modules focused on soft skills and leadership training. We’ve also trained 16 local trainers, emphasizing our dedication to geographic equality and inclusivity.

- **Innovation and Business Ecosystem Advanced:** Despite strategic challenges, the program hosted 13 bootcamps, readied 86 entrepreneurs for Demo Day, and played an integral role in conceptualizing a 20-million-dirham regional investment fund. While awaiting quantifiable data, our ongoing baseline study and early monitoring suggest a positive trend in the development of microenterprises and the entrepreneurial landscape.

- **Cross-Cutting Achievements and EG-LG Convergence:** We’ve made significant strides in aligning Economic Governance and Local Governance initiatives, embedding cross-cutting themes like gender equality and climate change adaptation into core activities. These efforts contribute to a holistic approach that promises to enhance the socio-economic fabric of the Marrakech-Safi region sustainably.

FACTS & FIGURES

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Deloitte Conseil (as Prime), Mohamed VI Polytechnic University UM6P, Enactus Morocco

HOST COUNTRY PARTNERS: The Wilaya of Marrakech-Safi Region, the Regional Council of Marrakech-Safi, select sub-national governments, Regional Investment Center, Cadi Ayyad University, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC), Regional Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services, the General Confederation of Companies of Morocco (CGEM), Civil Society Organizations

BUDGET: $18 million

DURATION: July 2022 - June 2027

KEY CONTACTS:
- Alae Eddin Serrar, Project Management Specialist, USAID/Morocco, aserrar@usaid.gov
- Ahmed Jazouli, ISED-MS Chief of Party, Deloitte Conseil, ajazouli@deloitte.com