

1.1 MOROCCO

Country context and PAGE portfolio

Located in North-western Africa, Morocco is a lower to middle income country with an important service and manufacturing sector and a high share of the population engaged in agricultural activities. Situated in one of the most arid areas of the world, the country is vulnerable to climate change and recent weather patterns, with highly variable rainfall and recurrent droughts, producing severe environmental, social and economic consequences. Faced with several challenges, including increases in energy and food prices, depletion of natural resources, high youth unemployment, growing social inequality, and slowing GDP growth, Morocco recognized the importance of reframing economic policies around sustainable development.

Morocco's overall commitment to inclusive green economy transition is outlined in its 2017 National Strategy for Sustainable Development (SNDD) that aims to reconcile economic growth and promote social inclusion, protection and enhancement of the environment by 2030, as well as the New Development Model in 2021, that puts social equity and sustainability at the heart of all future government policies. Prior to PAGE, the Moroccan government had already started to roll out several green economy activities that achieved significant results in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, water and waste management, sustainable agriculture and aquaculture, and eco-tourism.

With Morocco officially joining PAGE in 2020 – initially with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy, but then with the newly formed Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development as the government focal point – the launch of the programme coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Morocco reacted quickly to the crisis, securing USD 12 billion for recovery to boost the economy with a focus on building national industry. In this context, the Economic Watch Committee (CVE) of Morocco formulated several recovery strategies with significant green potential. These include i) the industrial recovery plan 2021-2023, whose third pillar in particular aims to position Morocco as a low-carbon and circular industrial base, ii) the Pact for Economic Recovery and Employment, and iii) a set of sectoral recovery plans. These recovery plans complement other sectoral approaches with strong green economy dimensions, for example, the Industrial Acceleration Plan 2021-2025 (Plan d'Accélération Industrielle 2021-2025). PAGE's targeted green recovery efforts are in line with these policy documents and emphasize green recovery of key industries.

At the same time, the country has been undergoing a deep rethinking in its development approach. The New Development Model - a set of guiding frameworks for economic, social and environmental growth – initiated a national consultation process in 2019 that was completed in 2021. Additionally, after general elections in 2021, several ministries and agencies were reshaped to tackle new and emerging priorities, with a new Ministry for Energy Transition and Sustainable Development tasked with leading the development of green economy in Morocco and acting as the focal Ministry for PAGE. PAGE was therefore launched at an opportune time in Morocco, with

green economy among the highest priorities. As such, PAGE is benefitting from an administrative “clean slate” that will encourage further cooperation, synergies and partnerships among PAGE partners and multiple national and international stakeholders.

A National Charter and a Framework Law on the Environment and Sustainable Development have been adopted to place all public policies within the framework of a national sustainable development strategy. In 2022, the new administration has set upon developing a set of specific measures for a transition of its economy towards a green economy in the context of sustainable development and to reinforce actions to be taken at the economic, social and environmental level. The scope of the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development is transversal, thus centralizing efforts to effectively monitor and coordinate the green economy transition across all relevant sectors.

Progress in 2022

Supporting further integration of green economy into policy actions (Outcome 1):

Scoping Study on Inclusive Green Economy

PAGE supported the development of an Inclusive Green Economy scoping study (Transition du Maroc vers une économie verte: état des lieux et inventaire), which identified five key sectors for a green economic transition, including sustainable agriculture and industry, renewable energy, water and sustainable waste management, as well as governance and green finance as cross-cutting themes, and launched a debate on the green transition among national stakeholders.

As part of the PAGE Morocco Green Scoping Study, a comprehensive evaluation of fundraising for green recovery was carried out. It included an analysis of past fundraising experiences in Morocco and abroad with a benchmarking of existing green financing initiatives, a mapping of donor interests, and identification of priority areas and projects with funding opportunities. The preliminary findings of the study were discussed during a national stakeholder workshop in July 2022 and the study finalized in September 2022. It was presented during the first edition of the PAGE Green Crossroads conference in November.

Green Crossroads Conference

PAGE Morocco held the first edition of the Green Crossroads on 22-24 November in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, a 3-day national conference with over 300 participants taking part in workshops, roundtables, and presentations.

This event was built around the results of the Inclusive Green Economy scoping study to launch a debate with national stakeholders on the green transition. Under the theme “Green Economy in Morocco: Challenges and Opportunities”, the event brought together the main national partners, including members of the PAGE steering committee in Morocco, green economy actors from the institutional fields, the private sector, civil society, academia, as well as international technical and financial partners. The three-day event allowed to collect the suggestions of the different actors,

disseminate the available data and analysis and foster synergies with other initiatives active in Morocco.

The conference included different thematic sessions focused on policy priorities (energy transition, waste and water management, plastic pollution, biodiversity and taxation and finance; further information see outcome 2). The event succeeded in establishing a cross-sectoral platform for a national dialogue on green economy, the PAGE steering committee indicated that the conference was to be an annual event held by PAGE, that would gradually be taken over by the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development as part of PAGE's sustainability plan.

As part of the event, PAGE organized two roundtables:

- **Roundtable on Sustainable Waste Management at Green Crossroads Conference:**
PAGE (UNITAR together with UNIDO) organized a roundtable discussion on sustainable waste management on the development of a waste management capacity building programme, which is expected to commence in 2023. The session was attended by 66 participants and resulted in public, private and civil society stakeholders identifying priority sub-sectors for PAGE engagement and related capacity-building needs. The main recommendations focus on:
 - Creating a steering entity to support the development of the waste sector by conducting a study presenting its potential functions, business model and financial structure, and a review of the institutional, regulatory and legal impacts.;
 - Conducting a study on the declination of the “Stratégie Nationale de Réduction et de Valorisation des Déchets” at the level of the principal regions of Morocco.
 - Providing technical assistance to local authorities in terms of training and developing waste recovery projects;
 - Supporting the analysis of the regulatory and normative framework (standardization of recycled products and waste recovery approaches);
 - Supporting waste recovery projects through a study on the optimization of waste collection and treatment logistics in Morocco; and
 - Supporting the establishment of an open dialogue with key stakeholders to identify barriers, opportunities and mechanisms for structuring and reducing informal activity in the waste sector, facilitated by PAGE.

- **Roundtable on Sustainable Water Management at Green Crossroads Conference:**
PAGE (UNIDO) hosted a roundtable with the Morocco Coalition for Water and the Ministry of Equipment and Water on the importance of water governance, presenting the framework of a study to conduct a sectoral diagnostic and policy analysis on the improvement of inland waters and coastline governance for sustainable water resource management. The main recommendations are:
 - To support the development of the water sector in Morocco by strengthening its governance;
 - Support the revision of the texts governing the water sector to strengthen the position of the State in terms of control and supervision;

- Supporting the water sector through a feasibility study on the establishment of sectoral quotas and the design of new mechanisms for the valuation and pricing of water resources;
- Provide technical assistance and support for projects to strengthen sector transparency; and
- Support the Water Department staff in the definition and deployment of key training curricula.

Supporting implementation of sectoral and thematic IGE policies (Outcome 2):

Benchmarking Study on Clean Energy Production

In collaboration with the Moroccan Agency for Solar Renewable Energies (MASEN), PAGE (UNDP) conducted stakeholder consultations and initiated a benchmarking study to support the institutionalization and operationalization of the Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access (CSEA), an initiative that aims to facilitate exchange of models and best practices on clean energy production and access, co-chaired by Morocco and Ethiopia and announced at UNFCCC COP26. The coalition will focus capacity building through an Expertise Programme and South-South Cooperation, by assisting in the development of bankable projects and of local industry, as well as by increasing exchanges between countries and different institutions/initiatives through matchmaking events. The approach for the establishment of CSEA was presented by MASEN during the PAGE supported Green Crossroads Conference in November 2022, alongside other new government strategies on renewable energy.

Support for Green Fiscal Reform

As part of the series of inter-agency training workshops on green finance and fiscal reform, a presentation on green fiscal reform was delivered by PAGE (UNEP) in Morocco on 18-19 January 2022. The presentation provided an overview of the role and tools of fiscal policies in the transition to the green economy (e.g., green budgeting, reform of harmful subsidies), which served as a base for discussion during a working group session. In addition, during the Green Crossroads Conference in November 2022, a half-day session was dedicated to green fiscal policies with a particular focus on sustainable budgeting.

Study on Green Employment Creation and Entrepreneurship in the Organics and Agroecology Sectors

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Employment, bio-professionals, and the association of biological agriculture of the Rabat-Salé-Kenitra region, PAGE (ILO) developed [a study on green employment creation and entrepreneurship in the organics and agroecology sectors](#). The study analyses the economic growth and job creation potential of the sectors and the engagement of women and youth and helped define the required skills and gaps. The expert team provided the common characteristics and differences between both sectors, including the impact on working conditions and companies, following an international benchmark. It also identified the needs for strengthening the skills of sector actors and provided practical recommendations for supporting the technical and vocational education and training system (TVET). The study, completed in May 2022, assists the government and the private

sector in building individual and institutional capacities and reforming the sectors in line with national inclusive green economy priorities.

Inception Workshop on Green Hydrogen

In 2022, PAGE (UNIDO) contributed to an inception workshop, hosted by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, to frame an upcoming green hydrogen feasibility study for Morocco supported by PAGE and assess the capacity and production needs of Green Hydrogen in the industrial sector. This follows the signing of a framework agreement between the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and UNIDO in November 2022.

Building institutional and individual capacity (Outcome 3):

Foundational Training on Green Economy Response to COVID-19

PAGE (UNITAR and UNIDO) conducted a two-day foundational training on Inclusive Green Economy (IGE) in January 2022, with a focus on effective green economy responses to COVID-19. The training targeted representatives from the government, civil society and key industries, and provided participants with an understanding of the fundamental principles of IGE through discussions on the opportunities and challenges for a green economic recovery in Morocco and examples from other PAGE countries. 35 participants from national institutions participated in the training. PAGE is currently exploring partnerships with major training institutions to organize further training and policy dialogues.

Promotion of Green Business Skills in Entrepreneurship Training Networks

In line with Morocco's Generation Green 2020-2030 Strategy, which aims to create jobs through the promotion of sustainable agriculture and ecotourism, PAGE partnered with the ILO ProAgro project to promote green business skills in entrepreneurship training networks. A [training of trainers](#) (ToT) applying ILO's Start and Improve Your Business Programme (SIYB) took place from 14 to 25 February in Rabat and from 28 February to 11 March in Kenitra, targeting 35 participants from the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills and the Regional Center for Young Agricultural and Agro-Food Entrepreneurs. Since then, the newly trained SIYB trainers supported over 700 entrepreneurs and students in the Rabat-Sale-Kénitra region to develop their business ideas, to write create a business plan and to start a business, as well as in improving their skills in marketing, accounting, inventory management and human resources. The main beneficiaries were from the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC) and the Regional Center for Young Agricultural and Food Entrepreneurs (CRJEA) of RSK.

https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Projects/proagro/WCMS_837819/lang--en/index.htm

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTPattIMR2o>

Improving Access and Application of Knowledge for Advancing IGE (Outcome 4):

Sensitization for the Decarbonization of Agriculture and Agribusiness

A 12-month programme on decarbonization of agriculture and agribusiness was launched in October 2022 by the ILO supported project 'ProAgro', co-funded by PAGE and Morocco's University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P). The programme combines a series of interventions on sensitization (seminars, workshops, podcasts), entrepreneurship and innovation, skills development (executive training and MOOC) and support to enterprises (development of a digital tool to assist enterprises in CO2 estimation and reduction). The first event, called "Agri Carbon Day", was organized on 22 November 2022 in Rabat, where 12 experts and companies shared their technical expertise and experiences with over 150 participants from policymakers, companies, researchers, think tanks and international organizations. This event was the first one of its kind in Morocco, focusing the discussion on the challenges and opportunities of decarbonization for the agriculture and agribusiness sector. A podcast on "Carbon et Agro-industrie" will be published on YouTube in early 2023.

https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Projects/proagro/WCMS_861564/lang--fr/index.htm

Communication strategy

PAGE (UNIDO and UNDP) developed a communication strategy and plan for PAGE in Morocco. The strategy will help to ensure that PAGE Morocco meets and maintains a good audience at the national level, while also systematically informing stakeholders and the public on IGE concepts. A communication consultant was hired, and a communication company was subcontracted to develop specific communication products that are aligned with PAGE's communication strategy. One of the main outcomes of the communication strategy, that identified poor communication between key institutions and lack of cross-sectoral platforms discussing green economy issues at a macro level, was to develop the PAGE Green Crossroads conference concept, which proved successful in its first deployment.