

Inception Phase Countries

Morocco

Overview

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 Sustainable Development Plan \(SNDD\)](#) that aims to reconcile economic growth, social inclusion, protection and enhancement of the environment by 2030. The Moroccan government had already started to roll out several green economy initiatives prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. These initiatives achieved significant results in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, water and waste management, sustainable agriculture and aquaculture, and eco-tourism.

Since 2019, Morocco has now engaged in a national consultation process to design the Model for Development, a set of guiding frameworks for economic, social and environmental growth. In June 2020, the King agreed to offer an additional six months to the Commission in order to allow the members to deepen the different aspects of the projected development model and to integrate into its work the implications and transformations engendered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The consultation process ended in September and is now followed by a period of consolidation before the recommendations are presented in early 2021.

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Economic Watch Committee (CVE) of Morocco has been formulating and implementing a number of recovery strategies with significant green potential, such as the industrial recovery plan 2021-2023, whose third pillar in particular aims to position Morocco as a low-carbon and circular industrial base, the Pact for Economic Recovery and Employment, and 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*). The government took also the decision in 2020 to expand the mandate of the [Moroccan Agency for Energy Efficiency \(AMEE\)](#) to green economy and to attach it to the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy.

Timeline of Events

A brief timeline of events for PAGE in Morocco is presented below, highlighting progress aimed to provide a strong foundation for PAGE support in the country:

2017	National Sustainable Development Plan (SNDD) adopted
2019	Morocco joined PAGE
2020	Preparation of inception phase partial work plan initiated (February) Green recovery needs assessment survey to identify the needs and priorities of the Moroccan government and economy conducted (April) Consultations of the AMEE on the potential needs in terms of green recovery (June) Government focal point for PAGE from Ministry of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy of Morocco appointed (September)
2021	Inception meeting with key ministries, UN country team, private sector, and civil society stakeholders. Implementation of the green recovery and regular work plan identified in the inception phase

Progress in 2020: A Snapshot

Establishing the foundation for PAGE support: The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed progress with the inception phase and the development of a programme for PAGE in Morocco. In September 2020, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy nominated a focal point for PAGE. PAGE is also proceeding with the recruitment of the national coordinator and the initial arrangements for a virtual inception phase due to travel restrictions.

The inception activities will include bilateral meetings with key ministries, national focal points and other key stakeholders including the private sector, the trade unions and civil society (NGOs). It also includes meetings with relevant UN agencies and PAGE donors. The mission will feature a high-level event where PAGE will be presented to all key stakeholders, which may be accompanied by a media

event. The inception activities will aim to define a governance structure for PAGE in Morocco and achieve a clear common understanding on the scope of PAGE and activities to be undertaken through the partnership, in particular in the inception workplan. It is also expected that the inception activities will deepen the knowledge of PAGE partners about national inclusive green economy initiatives and actors and establish communication channels in view of future collaboration partnership.

Green Recovery Support: Following a needs assessment on green economic recovery supported by PAGE in May, in September, UNIDO organized a meeting with the UNRC to Morocco, the PAGE Secretariat, and other PAGE agencies to discuss the potential of green economy to support the country response to the COVID-19 crisis. The commitment of Morocco to a green economy transition, as proved by the ambitious NDC targets, the fast development of renewable energies, and the country engagements in favour of improved energy efficiency and waste and water management, among others, was recalled. It was also noted that Morocco has strong interest in South-South cooperation, both for sharing of experiences and learning from others. Based on these initial consultations, the country started to develop a green recovery proposal, which PAGE received and started to review in 2021.

PAGE aims undertake a policy analysis in the country to support its recovery response to the COVID-19 crisis and identify effective policy measures for greening the recovery. This exercise, in addition to the inception activities, will inform the scope of PAGE support in the coming years to engage in the green transition.

Foundational training on IGE and a green recovery: In 2020, PAGE developed a draft concept note and agenda for a virtual IGE training. The overall objective of the training is to achieve a common understanding of how inclusive green economy tools and approaches can support a post-COVID-19 economic recovery. During the training, participants will familiarize themselves with relevant policy measures and case examples and discuss the benefits of an IGE approach for economic recovery and resilience, especially in priority sectors. Participants will also be able to benefit from experience-sharing with other PAGE countries. The training is expected to take place after the virtual inception workshop and initial engagement with stakeholders.