

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO  
COURT OF ACCOUNTS



**Thematic Report on :**

**Morocco's preparedness for the implementation of the sustainable development goals 2015-2030**

January 2019

## **Deliberation**

In accordance with the provisions of Act n° 62-99 constituting the Code of Financial Jurisdictions, as amended and supplemented;

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**Rabat, January 17, 2019**

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## List of Acronyms

ANRT	National Telecommunications Regulatory Agency
AfDB	African Development Bank
CDC	Morocco's Court of Accounts
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ESEC	Economic, Social and Environmental Council
CGEM	General Confederation of Moroccan Companies
CNC	National Coordination Committee
CNDH	National Human Rights Council
CNS	National Statistics Council
COCOES	Statistical Survey Coordination Committee
CSEFRS	The Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division
ESISE	Statistical Information System for Education
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
Eurostat	European Statistical Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
FMPS	Moroccan Foundation for the Promotion of Pre-School Education
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
HCP	High Commission for Planning
INDH	National Initiative for Human Development
INTOSAI	International Organization of Supreme Audit Institution
SAI	Supreme Audit Institutions
NCA	The Netherlands Court of Audit
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard
UN	United Nations
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable development Goals
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
WHO	World Health Organization
ONDH	National Observatory for Human Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
RAMED	Medical Assistance schema for the economically disadvantaged
GIS	Geographic information system
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategies
NHIS	National Health Information System
NSS	National Statistical System
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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## Introduction: Context of the review's mission

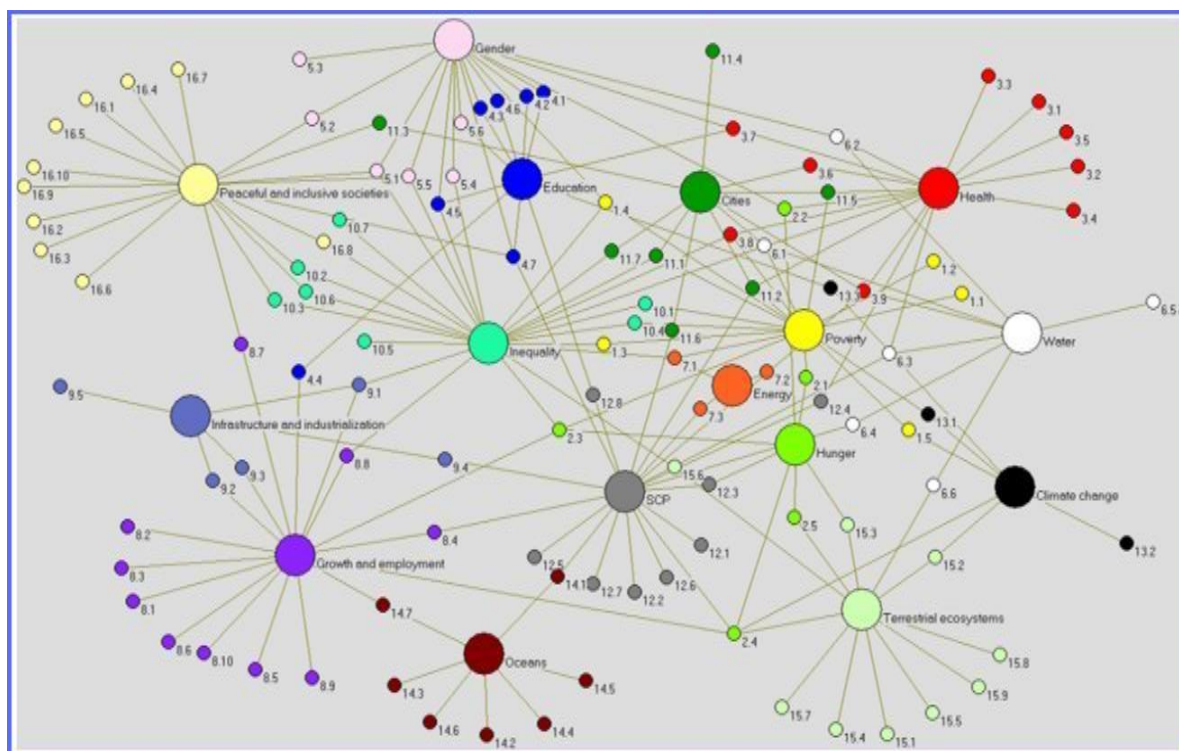
1. During its seventieth session held on 25 September 2015, devoted to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the United Nations General Assembly adopted an agenda (2015-2030) on the global framework for work based on the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) broken down into 169 targets (Resolution 70/1).
2. This global program entitled "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", builds on the impetus generated by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and is founded on an comprehensive approach that takes into account the economic, social and environmental components.
3. The 2030 Agenda has been recognized by all countries, which, according to the terms of resolution 70/1, will have to adapt it to their specific needs while ensuring international comparison between countries. The aforementioned resolution considered that the 17 development goals are interdependent and interlinked.

Figure 1 : The sustainable development goals



4. These goals cover all areas of development and are of interest to both developed and developing countries. This diversity of the goals and their targets has given rise to several interconnections requiring the establishment of a coherent and comprehensive approach at the national level, together with the definition of priorities.

**Figure 2 : The interconnections across the 17 goals and their targets.**



Source : HCP, 2018

5. The United Nations has highlighted the need for the involvement of the Supreme Audit Institutions in the process of implementing the SDGs repeatedly, particularly during the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

6. In this respect, the INTOSAI has placed the contribution of its members to the follow-up and review of the SDGs in the second crosscutting priority among the five priorities identified in the framework of its 2017-2022 strategic plan.

7. According to INTOSAI, the contribution of SAIs in this process can be achieved in various ways, notably through undertaking performance audits, or through assessing the preparedness of national governments to implement, monitor, and report on progress of the SDGs, and subsequently to audit the operations and the reliability of the data they produce.

8. In this context, the Court of Accounts has carried out a review on the preparedness of the Moroccan government for the implementation, monitoring and follow-up of the SDGs.

9. The observations report was submitted to the Head of Government on 11 October 2018. The response was received on 7 December 2018. The general comments on the response are included in full at the end of this report, and the specific responses are inserted after the relevant paragraphs.

## Methodological Approach

### 1- Purpose and framework of the review

**10.** This review aims at evaluating the measures taken by the various parties involved at the strategic and institutional level in order to provide an adequate framework for the prioritization, ownership, coordination, follow-up and monitoring of the 17 goals and their targets.

**11.** Additionally, the review on the government's preparedness for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda falls within the framework for the realization of SDG 16 "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions", which aims to build effective, accountable and transparent institutions that are capable of planning the implementation of the SDGs and reporting on the progress and targets achieved by the year 2030.

### 2- Objectives and scope of the review

**12.** The review aims to determine if the Government of Morocco is prepared for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**13.** For this purpose, the mission selected two main questions that have been broken down into the following sub-questions:

**Figure 3: Questions raised by the mission**

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Has the Government taken the necessary measures for the implementation of the SDGs?</b>
	1. Is there a formal political commitment?
	2. Have the Government and parties involved adopted a coordination and monitoring system?
	3. Have the parties involved taken ownership of the SDGs?
	4. Is there a clear definition of the obligations and means of the parties involved?
	5. Have the sustainable development goals been the subject of detailed action plans?
<b>Question 2</b>	6. Has the territorial dimension been taken into account?
	<b>Is the national statistical system capable of producing the data needed for monitoring and reporting on the SDGs?</b>
	7. Does the national statistical system enable the adaptation and measuring of the indicators?
	8. Does the national statistical system enable the definition of benchmarks for each indicator?
	9. Are there mechanisms for reporting and data quality assurance?

**14.** The review focused mainly on seven ministries and bodies. The choice was based on their involvement in the process of coordinating and monitoring the preparatory activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and / or the contribution of their statistical information systems to the generation of SDG indicators. The selected ministries and bodies are:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation;
- The Ministry of General Affairs and Governance
- The Ministry of Health;
- The Ministry of National Education;
- The Junior Ministry for Sustainable Development;
- The High Commission for Planning;
- The National Observatory for Human Development

**15.** In order to answer the questions of the review, the mission used an approach based on the following elements:

- The document and bibliographic review through the analysis of documents, information and experiences related to the 2030 Agenda at the international and national levels;
- The organization, in July and September 2017, of two seminars in collaboration with the ministries and bodies targeted by the mission, on the post-MDG challenges and the preparedness for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- The organization, within the framework of the Sharaka cooperative program, of two experience exchanging workshops with the Netherlands Court of Audit (NCA) in September 2017 and March 2018 in Rabat; and with the SAIs of other Arab countries and the NCA (Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine and Tunisia) in March 2017 and June 2018 in The Hague, and in December 2017 in Rabat;
- Collection of information on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by sending questionnaires to selected ministries and bodies;
- The conduct of investigations and interviews with the heads of the above-mentioned ministries and bodies and with an association involved in the health and social sectors, as well as with the chair of the commission in charge of sustainable development at the CGEM (private sector).

**16.** The mission has made the choice to work on SDG 3 (Health) and SDG 4 (Education) as examples in order to illustrate the preparedness of government departments for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**17.** The review covered the period from 25 September 2015 to 31 May 2018. This is the period to which the review findings apply.



# Major conclusions and recommendations

## 1. Major conclusions

**18.** The review on the preparedness for the implementation of the sustainable development goals revealed that Morocco is clearly committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and has a favorable constitutional and legislative framework to achieve these goals.

**19.** The organization of a national consultation on the contextualization of the 2030 Agenda in 2016 has initiated debate among several actors involved in the implementation of the sustainable development goals. However, this consultation was not followed by concrete measures to implement its recommendations.

**20.** In this respect, the level of ownership of the goals by the citizens and the parties involved remains unsatisfactory. This situation results from the absence of both a coordinating and monitoring framework that brings the actions undertaken by the various parties involved into line, and a communication and awareness raising strategy on the sustainable development goals, adapted to all levels and targets.

**21.** The delay in setting up a coordination and monitoring framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has also resulted in limited involvement and lack of stakeholder consultation on the sustainable development goals. This has led to an unclear delineation of roles and responsibilities, and to the absence of a national plan that sets national priorities for sustainable development goals, and detailed action plans that define the terms, deadlines, stakeholders and funding methods for these goals.

**22.** The mission also noted the slow pace of convergence, alignment and coherence of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSSD) and sector-specific strategies with the sustainable development goals. Furthermore, the implementation of the NSSD raises inadequacies related to its ownership and the existence of disagreements between the parties involved on the appropriate framework for identifying its priority projects and actions and for bringing it into line with the sustainable development goals.

**23.** In terms of the collection of measuring data of indicators, the mission noted that the national statistical system is quite efficient. It adheres to the major international standards, and is capable of generating the indicators for the implementation of the sustainable development goals. However, this system is called upon to overcome certain inadequacies related to the lack of coordination and harmonization of actions and statistical operations carried out by its various components. To that end, enabling the Statistical Survey Coordination Committee (COCOES) is necessary, pending the creation of the national statistical council, as well as the development of the cooperation with the institutional suppliers of statistics, particularly at the local level.

**24.** In regard to the coverage of indicators and targets, the mission noted that the final list of indicators that might be produced by the national statistical system has not yet been finalized. Only a preliminary diagnosis has been conducted by the HCP and some components of the system, which concluded that it can produce 48% of the indicators selected by the 2030 Agenda. However, the list of benchmarks for the indicators has not been drawn up yet.

**25.** The HCP has been designated, pursuant to its new decree on its reorganization, to report on the sustainable development goals. However, no express mention was made of the monitoring and reporting mission.

## **2. Recommendations**

**26.** While stressing Morocco's commitment to sustainable development that is clearly displayed by the public authorities, the review has identified certain inadequacies and suggests areas for improvement that the government is called upon to enhance in order to enable a better implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the goals set. It is in this light that the Court of Accounts recommends the following:

1. Establish an institution and a system involving and bringing together the various stakeholders, to ensure the coordination, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on the sustainable development goals;
2. Broaden the scope of consultations with all the parties involved at national, regional and local levels; and ensure the setting up of a national awareness raising and communication strategy adapted to all levels to ensure the effective involvement and ownership of the SDGs by all the parties involved;
3. Make official and disseminate the results of the contextualization and prioritization of the sustainable development goals and ensure a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities at the national and local levels to achieve these goals;
4. Enhance the convergence and coherence of the national strategy for sustainable development, the sector-specific strategies and the national plan to be adopted for the implementation of the sustainable development goals;
5. Establish and validate detailed action plans defining the ways and means, deadlines, parties involved and funding methods required for the implementation of the sustainable development goals; and ensure, in this context, that the initiatives undertaken by certain ministerial departments and other partners are taken into account;
6. Activate the process of updating, upgrading or reforming the legal, regulatory and institutional framework of the national statistical system;
7. Foster the role of the Statistical Survey Coordination Committee (COCOES) and incite the stakeholders to respect the prerogatives assigned to this Committee in order to go beyond the compartmentalized sector-specific approaches for the collection and production of statistics, particularly those related to the sustainable development goals.

8. Activate the process of establishing, adjusting to the national context and improving the targets and indicators related to the sustainable development goals and their benchmark values, and ensure getting the most out of the efforts of certain stakeholders operating in this field.

# **Section I: General framework for the implementation of the sustainable development goals**

## **I. The adopted measures for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

### **A. Political Commitment: a clearly stated will to implement the 2030 Agenda**

**27.** Morocco has made a clear commitment in 2015 at the highest levels of the Government and other institutions to implement the 2030 Agenda.

#### **1- King's Speech at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly**

**28.** In His speech at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly held on September 30, 2015, His Majesty the King Mohammed VI stated that the said session "is particularly important as it will see the adoption of the "post-2015 sustainable development agenda. It is an opportunity to reiterate our collective commitment to achieving the lofty objectives called for by the United Nations' Charter and fulfill the aspirations of peoples around the world"

#### **2- Government Program**

**29.** In its program submitted to Parliament in April 2017 for the 2017-2021<sup>1</sup> legislative mandate, the government was committed to the application of the National Charter on the Environment and Sustainable Development, to the design and implementation of the national strategy for sustainable development, to the strengthening of the institutional framework for sustainable development and to the support and implementation of the national environmental and sustainable development fund. According to the terms of this government program, this commitment is made "in accordance with the high royal directives regarding the recognition of Morocco's voluntary support of the global efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals".

#### **3- Initiatives of some constitutional institutions**

**30.** Many constitutional institutions have taken initiatives to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This is particularly the case of the Parliament, the National Human Rights Council (CNDH) and the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (ESEC). These institutions have taken their places in a series of activities that reflect their commitment to the national efforts to achieve the successful implementation of the SDGs.

**31.** At the parliamentary level, the House of Councillors organized, on 19 January 2017, an awareness-raising day for its members on the theme of "Sustainable Development Goals 2030, what is the role of the Parliament? ». Similarly, the House of Representatives held a retreat on 4 September 2018 about the 2030 Agenda's sections on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

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<sup>1</sup> In pursuance of the provisions of article 88 of the constitution.

**32.** At the CNDH level, several trainings, awareness raising and mobilization events were launched in collaboration with local civil society and international organizations. These events focused on the SDGs and their targets related to the issue of human rights protection and the gender perspective.

**33.** At the ESEC level, two workshops related to the SDGs have been organized. The first was under the theme of "Transition from MDGs to SDGs" and the second focused on the necessary conditions for the alignment of the basic services of the current and future cities with the SDGs.

#### **4- Voluntary presentation of the report on the SDGs at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**

**34.** The Government of Morocco has volunteered to present a report on the first steps undertaken for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on July 2016 during the HLPF session, under the auspices of the ECOSOC / UN. This voluntary act reflects the importance accorded by the government to the 2030 Agenda.

### **B. Constitutional and legislative framework: a frame reference supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

**35.** Morocco's commitment to sustainable development is reflected in many reference documents mainly the Constitution, the framework law of the National Charter for the Environment and Sustainable Development, the results of the MDG program, as well as the adoption of sector-specific policies in line with a sustainable development approach.

#### **1- Constitutional commitment supporting sustainable development**

**36.** The 2011 Constitution demonstrates Morocco's commitment to embedding its development policies in the context of sustainable development. This commitment is reflected in the recognition of sustainable development as a fundamental right and the responsibility of the state for its implementation.

**37.** Article 31 of the Constitution considers sustainable development as one of the fundamental rights of citizens. It supplements the list of other rights to access health care, social protection, medical coverage and solidarity, modern, accessible and quality education, vocational training, physical and artistic education, decent housing, employment, access to water and a healthy environment.

**38.** To this end, the Constitution calls on the State, public institutions and local authorities to work for the mobilization of all available means to facilitate the equal access of citizens to these rights. Similarly, Article 35 of the Constitution states that "the State works towards achieving human and sustainable development, reinforcing social justice and preserving national natural resources and rights of future generations".

**39.** To better define and elucidate the priority accorded to sustainable development, and although the Moroccan Constitution recognized in Article 35 the primary responsibility of the State, it advocated the participation and involvement of citizens in the elaboration of development programs.

**40.** In fact, the citizen must play a crucial role in the implementation of sustainable development. In this regard, Article 136 of the Constitution emphasizes the principles of administrative freedom, cooperation and solidarity, ensures the participation of the populations concerned in the management

of their affairs and promotes their contribution to comprehensive and sustainable human development.

## **2- Legal framework supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

**41.** In 2014, Morocco adopted the framework law No. 99.12 on the National Charter for Environment and Sustainable Development. This law demonstrates the willingness to have an advanced legal arsenal that takes account of both concerns for environmental protection and sustainable development as Morocco's international commitments.

**42.** This law has highlighted the need to take account of the sustainable development component in the development policies, to unify the strategic vision of public action and to involve all the parties involved in the development policies.

## **3- A review of the MDGs and post-2015 challenges**

**43.** Morocco adopted the Millennium Declaration in 2000. It translated its commitment into societal reforms and strategies in line with the MDGs, the most important of which were: the launch of the INDH in 2005, the revision of the Family Code in 2004, the development of new strategies of education and health, the updating of rural development programs, water, electricity and rural roads, social housing programs and slum-clearance, as well as the introduction of other sector-specific strategies.

**44.** At the same time, the government has mobilized more budget resources for the achievement of the MDGs. In this respect, more than 50% of the state budget was allocated to social sectors in 2014 according to the August 2015 HCP national report on "Morocco between Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals: Achievements and Challenges".

**45.** In terms of ownership and contextualization, the 2015 MDG Agenda has been revised in order to grow from 22 to 31 targets and from 59 to 79 indicators, as demonstrated in the figure below:

**Figure 4: Taking ownership of the MDGs: Enriching targets and indicators**

Goals	Number of targets		Number of indicators	
	UN	MA	UN	MA
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all.)	3	7	10	21
Goal 2 : Achieve universal primary education	1	4	3	6
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	1	4	4	10
Goal 4 : Reduce child mortality	1	1	3	7
Goal 5: Improve maternal health (Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health.)	2	3	5	9
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it )	3	3	8	6
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability (Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss.)	4	4	10	10
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development	7	5	16	10
Total	22	31	59	79

### 3.1. Positive results of the 2015 program

**46.** According to data from the HCP, Morocco has achieved positive results in implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It has been able to eradicate hunger and reduce poverty, vulnerability and inequality. It has made significant progress in the health sector by reducing child and maternal mortality and eradicating certain diseases. It has also succeeded in making tangible progress in terms of universal primary education. Similarly, it has taken important initiatives to ensure a sustainable environment, including widespread access to water and electricity. However, there are new post-MDG challenges, particularly related to the consolidation of progress made and the reduction of the disparities in unmet targets.

### 3.2. Post-MDG challenges to be addressed

**47.** The evaluation of Morocco's achievements in terms of MDGs was the subject of a national report prepared by the HCP in 2015<sup>2</sup>. The report, which included an institutional, economic and social assessment, drew on data from the General Census of population and housing, the National Household Consumption Survey (2014) and the National Multiround Demographic Survey (2010).

**48.** Thus, and although positive results have been recorded, Morocco is called upon to address new post-2015 challenges. First, it needs to consolidate the progress made, particularly in terms of:

- The eradication of hunger and the reduction of poverty and vulnerability;
- The reduction of inequalities;
- The generalization of primary education;

<sup>2</sup> Morocco between Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals: Achievements and Challenges, HCP, 2015.

- The reduction of infant and maternal mortality;
- The eradication of certain diseases such as malaria;
- The achievement of quasi-general access to water and electricity.

**49.** Then, it must adopt the necessary measures to reduce the disparities in the unmet targets, particularly in terms of:

- The generalization of secondary school education;
- The promotion of girls' schooling, particularly in rural areas;
- The enhancement of education quality;
- The improvement of access to health services, particularly in rural areas;
- The elimination of communicable and non-communicable diseases;
- The promotion of gender equality.
- The reduction of spatial and territorial inequalities.

### **C. Awareness-raising and dialogue promotion between the relevant parties concerned with the SDGs**

**50.** The 2030 Agenda relies upon a bottom-up approach involving a number of stakeholders from government, local and regional authorities, the private sector and civil society. The challenge is to enhance synergies and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships that can lead to an inclusive, coherent growth for a successful and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**51.** Awareness raising and ownership of the SDGs have been the subject of some initiatives from some parties involved. In this regard, although a survey conducted by the HCP revealed the existence of an appropriate level of citizen's confidence in the country's ability to implement the 2030 Agenda, there are still a number of constraints due of the lack of a unifying framework for the preparation and monitoring of the implementation of this Agenda.

#### **1. An appropriate level of citizen's confidence in the country's ability to implement the 2030 Agenda**

**52.** The national survey conducted by the HCP in 2016 on the perception of the measures of sustainable development helped measure the degree of confidence that the Moroccan population has in the country's capacity to implement the 2030 Agenda, particularly through questions directly related to the principal dimensions of the SDGs.

**53.** The results showed that the majority of citizens are confident that Morocco has every asset to achieve the goals with confidence rates varying between 70% and 91%.

**54.** The conducted survey helped identify the main actions to be taken according to citizens in order to achieve the SDGs. The expressed expectations accord more importance to administrative reform in the broad sense and a true, equal access to education and health.



**55.** Notwithstanding this public confidence, taking ownership of the 2030 Agenda entails some inadequacies in the involvement of all the parties involved and the increase of awareness of national challenges related to the SDGs.

## **2. The need for broader communication on the SDGs among citizens**

**56.** According to the results of the above-mentioned survey, almost 84% of the interviewed citizens stated that they were unaware of the international community and Morocco's commitment to achieve the 2030 SDGs. This demonstrates that public ownership remains insufficient and that communication and awareness-raising efforts are required as the SDGs have just been adopted.

**57.** Furthermore, the data obtained from the health and national education departments revealed that no initiative has been taken in these two departments to enhance citizens' knowledge of the goals and targets that fall within their intervention framework.

## **3. The lack of a framework unifying the different parties involved**

**58.** The Court of Accounts noted that the government has not developed a formal approach for implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. In addition, no entity has been designated to lead the preparation for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Despite some specific measures taken by some ministries and bodies, such as the Ministries of Health, National Education and the HCP, there was no national governance structure founded on a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved.

**59.** Moreover, the government has not yet adopted a communication plan or mobilization strategy explaining how it intends to involve all ministerial departments and other levels of government and the Moroccan population in a broad dialogue on the 2030 Agenda.

**60.** Achieving the SDGs requires a clear national leadership and governance structure in order to manage governmental action and coordinate a national approach with other levels of government and the Moroccan population about the 2030 Agenda and the definition of national priorities.

## **4. The absence of a national plan to ensure proper ownership of the SDGs**

**61.** In regard to expanding the SDG ownership process at the level of ministerial departments and other government entities (public bodies and local and regional authorities), the adopted measures are sporadic and do not fit into a long-term vision. The analysis of the questionnaires<sup>3</sup> responses showed that the actions undertaken are limited and involve the central authority. The level of ownership in the public sector can be deemed adequate in the ministerial departments, particularly in the bodies responsible for planning. While at the regional and local levels, it seems to be quite low due to the virtual absence of actions in this respect.

## **5. The inadequacy of efforts to ensure the involvement and ownership of the SDGs by the local and regional authorities**

**62.** Morocco's adoption of the 2030 Agenda coincides with the process of implementing advanced regionalization, which provides an opportunity for local and regional authorities to actively engage in the process of territorializing the SDGs.

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<sup>3</sup> Responses to the questionnaires sent by the Court of Accounts to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Health, General Affairs and Governance, and National Education, as well as to the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development, the HCP and the ONDH.

**63.** This regionalization regards the territorial collectivity as the best suited and closest institution to meet the needs of the citizens. In this respect, local territorial actors (regions, provinces and municipalities) play a pivotal role in the elaboration and implementation of development plans and participation in the implementation of public policies.

**64.** The State has made remarkable efforts to enable these entities to become highly involved in the implementation of public policies, particularly through institutional and legal reforms, the provision of financial resources and the development of partnerships in developing countries in various fields.

**65.** However, notwithstanding this favorable environment for the consideration of the SDGs at the territorial level, the mission of the Court of Accounts has noted that local and regional authorities remain, due to limited awareness-raising activities, the weakest link in the ownership and mobilization process for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**66.** Certain local and regional authorities have admittedly participated in the national consultation on the contextualization of the SDGs. Nevertheless, no similar initiative was taken at the regional and local levels. Thus, no similar activity was undertaken with the exception of the regional awareness raising workshop on social SDGs organized for the elected representatives and local actors, on May 23, 2017, by the region of Tangier-Tetouan Al- Hoceima, in partnership with the HCP and with the support of the United Nations Population Fund.

## **6. The need for an expanded involvement scope of the private sector**

**67.** The 2030 Agenda has entrusted the private sector with a well-defined role in the achievement of SDG 12. The measures included in Target 12.6 incite the private sector to adopt sustainable and responsible development strategies through the conversion of profits into sustainable economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.

**68.** The Moroccan private sector is an important partner for the government. In this respect, both parties have forged partnerships to ensure proper participation of the sector in the implementation of the sector-specific policies developed by the country and the existence of a framework for ongoing dialogue between the two parties. Employer's representatives play a crucial role in facilitating SDG ownership and corporate involvement. For instance, through signing a partnership agreement for the establishment of a Moroccan network for the "Global Compact Network<sup>4</sup>", the CGEM committed to involving the national productive fabric in the implementation of the SDGs.

**69.** However, the involvement of the private sector is not as broad as expected due to the limited actions undertaken to ensure implementation of the SDGs. It becomes important to involve and raise the awareness of the entire economic fabric (large and small companies) and open it up to other actors, including local authorities and associations.

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<sup>4</sup> Established in 2000 by the United Nations, the Global Compact is a voluntary initiative based on companies, associations or non-governmental organizations commitments to implement universal sustainability principles related to human rights, labor, environment and fight against corruption.

## **7. The inadequate involvement of civil society in the implementation of the SDGs**

**70.** The involvement of civil society in development efforts has been enshrined in the 2011 Constitution. To this end, several sector-specific policies and strategies demonstrate the State's will to involve the associative fabric in the achievement of the outlined goals and expected targets. These strategies are related to health, national education, human development, environment and sustainable development, family and solidarity, etc.

**71.** Morocco has an associative fabric composed of over 150,000 associations working in various fields, which represents a significant potential and source of reflection and action. Nevertheless, this participation has to be framed and organized according to a system of fair decision based on the disposition, the level of organization and the capacity to reflect and make proposals.

**72.** Nonetheless, in the absence of a comprehensive approach to involve civil society, and considering its scattering and lack of organization in formally structured representations, its involvement in the preparation for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda can hardly be achieved. In fact, coordinating with associations is often regarded by government actors as an extremely demanding and risky task in the absence of pre-established criteria for selecting associations that can take seats in steering bodies.

**73.** The Ministry for Relations with Parliament and Civil Society has undertaken several initiatives since its establishment to improve the framework for civil society involvement in public policies. However, the investigations conducted in this department revealed that there was no action seeking awareness raising or the ownership and involvement of civil society in the implementation of the SDGs.

### **D. Contextualization of the SDGs: the organization of a national consultation not followed by any practical effects**

**74.** The 2030 Agenda encourages governments to determine how specific targets should be integrated into their strategies, planning processes and policies. The first step is to determine how to put their priorities, policies and programs in line with the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. Governments should also conduct consultations and scrutinize the extent to which their policies and programs could foster or undermine the achievement of the 2030 Agenda targets and goals. The disparities in policies and programs can then be identified, and decisions can be made to shift, improve or refine these policies or programs to achieve the targets and goals.

**75.** In this respect, the Government of Morocco has confined its work to the organization of one national consultation during the drafting of the report submitted to the HLPF in 2016, an effort that was not followed by any tangible or concerted actions to adapt policies and programs to the 2030 Agenda and to incorporate Morocco's priority targets in it.

#### **1- The conducting of a national consultation on the achievement of the SDGs**

**76.** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in partnership with the HCP, launched a national consultation on the contextualization of the 2030 Agenda under the slogan "Leave No-one Behind".

**77.** This event took place in Rabat from 3 to 5 May 2016 and brought together different stakeholders, including ministries, local authorities, the General Confederation of Moroccan Companies (CGEM),

associations, as well as representations of UN organizations.

**78.** The organized panels discussed issues related to humanity, the planet, peace, and partnerships, as well as a session held for children and young people. The work focused on the challenges identified and the mechanisms that can lead to proper ownership and sound implementation of the goals.

**79.** The investigations conducted by the Court of Accounts revealed that the national consultation has had a positive impact on the perception of the SDGs, the determination of the opportunities and challenges that are represented nationally and internationally and the identification of the steps taken at the global level.

**80.** The national consultation also raised awareness among stakeholders on the need to identify national SDG priorities as part of an comprehensive and concerted approach and the importance of their ownership and implementation by the public and private sectors, civil society and citizens.

## **2- Delay in implementing the recommendations stemming from the national consultation**

**81.** The national consultation led to the adoption of the following recommendations:

- Broadening the SDG ownership process through larger involvement of the public and private sectors, civil society and the citizens;
- The alignment of national priorities with the SDGs and through the adaptation of the institutional, economic and social model to the new requirements of the 2030 Agenda;
- The coordination of public policies through their convergence and incorporation in order to mitigate their sectoral nature and enhance their synergy;
- The improvement of the statistical information system which requires the involvement of the different partners and an adaptation of the working methods in order to produce the requested data and indicators;
- Ensure the follow-up and assessment of the implementation of the goals and prevent or address the effects of inadequately tackled financial or institutional constraints;
- Ensure fund-raising for the implementation of the SDGs including mobilizing resources other than public financing and accountability.

**82.** Nevertheless, these recommendations have not been put into effect, primarily due to the absence of an institutional framework responsible for determining priorities, coordinating actions, ensuring consultation for the follow-up and implementation of the recommendations.

## **E. Prioritization: the slow pace of convergence of the current strategies with the 2030 Agenda**

**83.** The government designed various strategies and programs at national and sectoral levels. In addition, the actions taken to align its strategies and programs with the 2030 Agenda, according to the national priorities and preferences, remain limited. This is notably the case of the national strategy for sustainable development (NSSD) and the sector-specific strategies of the ministerial departments.

### **1- The non-establishment of measures at the national level for the prioritization and planning of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

**84.** Since the conduction of the national consultation in May 2016, no national measures involving all stakeholders have been taken. The absence of these measures did not enable the consultation of the various stakeholders on the national priorities as provided by the terms of the resolution and, consequently, the planning of actions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**85.** In this respect, ministerial departments have continued to work on their own strategies. The design of these strategies often dates back to before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. The degree of awareness about the new challenges and the involvement in the implementation of the SDGs differs from one department to another.

**86.** For instance, the Ministry of Health conducted a preliminary diagnosis in 2016 on the prioritization, planning and implementation of the goals. However, the efforts undertaken have not been followed by any concrete effects due to the lack of a comprehensive national framework. The Ministry's commitments with the WHO have enabled the identification of several aspects of the SDGs in the 2017-2021 ministry strategy, but these measures have not been discussed with all stakeholders to determine priorities, ensure ownership, funding and involvement in the implementation.

**87.** In regard to the Ministry of National Education, no review of the strategic vision relating to the 2030 Agenda has been carried out. In fact, the department still adopts the same priorities considering that the existing vision coincides with the 2030 Agenda.

**88.** As for the HCP, several efforts have been made to define the indicators and the development of capacities, but the coordination activities with the ministerial departments concerning the collection of data on the SDGs are not yet put into action due to the lack of prioritization and of a clear delineation of responsibilities.

### **2- The NSSD as a framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

**89.** Under the framework law 99.12 on the national charter for the environment and sustainable development, the Government has developed a national strategy for sustainable development to cover the period 2017-2030. This strategy represents the general framework for developing a global sustainable development policy and the general principles to be respected in order to achieve the general and specific goals set (Article 15 of the aforementioned Framework Law).

**90.** The NSSD can be regarded as a first response to Morocco's commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda. In fact, the UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 on SDGs provides in paragraph 63: "Cohesive nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks, will be at the heart of our efforts. »

**91.** It is therefore evident that the NSSD is the appropriate framework for prioritizing the SDGs and planning the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, the Court of Accounts' investigations on the various stakeholders revealed several inadequacies in the adoption process of the NSSD. As a result, the process of adaptation and convergence towards the SDGs has slowed down.

### **2.1. Delay in the adoption of the NSSD**

**92.** The National Charter for Sustainable Development mandated the Government to develop the NSSD within one year from the date of entry into force, namely on 20 March 2014 the date of publication in the Official Gazette. However, the adoption of the NSSD did not come into effect until June 2017, more than two years later than the legal deadline.

**93.** Thus, given the period of its preparation, different goals set by the adopted version of the NSSD have been overlooked or shifted by the ministerial departments concerned. In this regard, officials from the HCP and the Ministries of Health and National Education stated that their departments did not take into account the NSSD while developing their strategies.

### **2.2. Inadequacy of the ownership of the NSSD by the ministerial departments**

**94.** The NSSD was designed under the coordination and guidance of the former State Secretariat for the Environment (currently the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development). Consequently, other ministerial departments regard the NSSD as reflecting only environmental concerns without taking sufficient account of the other components of sustainable development, including the economic and social aspects.

**95.** The coordination actions carried out by the former State Secretariat for the Environment did not make it possible to go beyond the sector-specific approach and to ensure proper involvement of stakeholders and subsequently ownership of the strategy's outputs. In addition, the conducted consultations in the framework of the development of the strategy did not enable the proper involvement of the ministerial departments. As a result, the commitments made to develop the strategy could not be taken into account for the implementation of the sector-specific strategies of the various ministerial departments. Furthermore, the current position of the ministerial departments on the NSSD reveals a certain disagreement in terms of the ensuing commitments, notably the financial aspects and the degree of their ownership.

**96.** The Ministry of Health, for instance, considers that ensuring consistency is necessary for the strategy to be in perfect harmony with the 2017-2021 health sector program, even though this program is developed during the discussion of NSSD terms. In fact, the strategy comprises commitments that are considered outdated by the ministry or are no longer regarded as priorities. This is the case of the generalization of RAMED, which has reached 99% of the target since February 2015, and which still exists among the targets of the NSSD.

**97.** This same observation was raised by the Ministry of National Education, which calls for a review of the goals in order to adapt them to the department's strategic vision.

### **2.3. The SDGs are not taken into account in the NSSD despite its adoption after the 2030 Agenda**

**98.** Although the NSSD was not adopted until June 2017, almost two years after the approval of the 2030 Agenda by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, no action has been taken to adapt the content of the NSSD to the said Agenda. Moreover, this situation goes against the first principle put forward by the NSSD, which is to respect the strategy's compliance with international law, notably the



conventions signed and ratified by the Kingdom of Morocco on environmental protection and sustainable development.

**99.** The NSSD analysis reveals elements that overlap with the 2030 Agenda. These are aspects related to Goals 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. This overlap does not reflect the adoption of national priorities related to these sustainable development goals at the level of the strategy or the adoption of the corresponding targets and indicators.

#### **2.4. Launch of a study to converge the NSSD with the 2030 Agenda in the absence of effective stakeholder involvement**

**100.** The State Secretariat for Sustainable Development has commissioned an external consultant to conduct a study on the implementation and monitoring of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Morocco. This study, to be completed within one year, aims to broaden the ownership process, align development goals with national priorities, redirect the NSSD action plan in order to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and evaluate the budget needed to finance the actions to be undertaken.

**101.** Nevertheless, the interviews carried out by the Court of Accounts have demonstrated that the approach taken to conduct this study raises disagreements between the ministerial departments and does not reflect the concern for the implementation of the SDGs, particularly the need to involve all stakeholders.

**102.** Although the study has been launched since 3 October 2017, it should be noted that discrepancies persist in the department responsible for monitoring, coordinating and supervising the implementation of the SDGs. These discrepancies were notably noted between the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development, the HCP (whose involvement in the monitoring of the study was not mentioned), The Ministry of General Affairs and Governance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

**103.** On the other hand, according to the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development, the implementation of the study's findings will not be effective until 2021, meaning after the completion and evaluation of the study's phase on the transition to a green and inclusive economy (2017-2020). This situation risks severely damaging the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by delaying the incorporation of the SDGs into national policies until 2021.

#### **2.5. The establishment of a Strategic Committee for Sustainable Development Committee that does not cover the 2030 Agenda**

**104.** In 2018, a Strategic Committee for Sustainable Development was set up under the authority of the Head of Government. It is responsible for the implementation of the NSSD (Decree No. 2.17.655 of 14 March 2018 on the Strategic Committee for Sustainable Development).

**105.** The assignment of this committee is to set the priorities and launch the work of each NSSD project, to resolve conflicts and to validate and report on the progress of the various projects. The committee should meet once a year and whenever an exceptional event requiring its consultation occurs.

**106.** Nevertheless, the Decree No. 2.17.655 did not mention the SDGs and the role of the Strategic Committee in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This caused confusion among stakeholders on the implementation of the entity responsible for the coordination of the 2030 Agenda implementation, in the knowledge that the Strategic Committee does not include certain key stakeholders such as the HCP.

**107.** In this respect, Article 3 of the aforementioned decree specifies that the strategic committee is composed of representatives of 19 priority ministerial departments. The president may convene, on an advisory basis, any other governmental authority, institution, association or person whose presence is considered beneficial.

### **3- Sector-specific strategies as plans for achieving certain SDGs**

**108.** Morocco has initiated several nationwide programs that overlap in terms of general objectives and targets with the SDGs. However, in the absence of a mapping between the 2030 Agenda and these national programs, it is difficult to make a clear statement about national priorities related to the SDGs, in the knowledge that each of these programs has its own action plans with quantified objectives and financing plans.

**109.** These are the Green Morocco Plan, the Halieutis Plan, the Strategic Vision for Vocational Training, the 2020 Vision for Tourism, the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH) and the National Energy Strategy. These last two are used for illustrative purposes.

**110.** Thus, the INDH covers several targets of the 2015-2030 agenda, including some of the targets of SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9. The INDH has contributed to the reduction of poverty rate through the financing of 44,477 projects, 8,800 income-generating actions that benefited 10 million inhabitants between 2005-2016<sup>5</sup>.

**111.** Similarly, the National Energy Strategy, launched in 2009, also contributes to the implementation of the SDGs, including SDG 7 "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all" and the targets 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.a and 7.b.

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<sup>5</sup> National Initiative for Human Development, Origin and Evolution, National Coordination of INDH, May 2017



## **F. Planning and financing the SDGs: the inadequacy of the adopted measures pending the alignment of the NSSD with the 2030 Agenda**

**112.** By adopting a strategic plan and detailed plans for the implementation of the SDGs, the Government can give itself a mandate and a procedure to follow that will enable it to evaluate its successes and resolve its inadequacies. However, in the absence of a strategic plan for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the NSSD and Sectional Strategies remain the only planning framework currently available. As such, the following findings should be taken account of:

### **1- The diverging planning approaches between NSSD and sector-specific strategies**

**113.** The NSSD has planned to elaborate action plans for sustainable development. In this regard, the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development has, at its level, issued 21 proposals outlining the commitments of 21 priority ministerial departments for sustainable development.

**114.** However, the responsiveness of the 21 ministerial departments to its proposals was poor. In fact, the only Ministries that responded were the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Interior.

**115.** It was also noted that the proposals made to the departments concerned do not necessarily overlap with their sector-specific strategies and have for the most part become outdated.

**116.** This situation indicates the inadequacy of the approach adopted by the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development in drawing up its action plans, in which each department is called upon to make an individual commitment to implement the goals without consultation with other departments. In addition, the position of other stakeholders and their commitments are not well developed in the absence of an action that is similar to their destination.

**117.** In this respect, it is worth recalling the orientations of the King's Speech of July 30, 2012 on the Throne Day, which reiterated His Majesty's call on the Government "to make sure sector-specific strategies complement each other. I also invite government officials to adopt vigilance, monitoring and assessment mechanisms in order to enhance coordination, measure efficiency and ensure the optimal use of budget appropriations."

### **2- The lack of cost estimates for financing the NSSD**

**118.** The strategy did not provide any formal estimate of its implementation cost. The State Secretariat for Sustainable Development has estimated that 95% of the measures would not require additional budget and that the recommended measures will be carried out in the framework of planned or ongoing projects. In addition, some of the measures are of an institutional or legal nature.

**119.** As for financing sector-specific strategies and programs, no consolidation work has been done to provide general data on the earmarked amounts and their deployment according to each SDG and target. Moreover, this consolidation is rather difficult in the absence of a mapping between the sector-specific strategies and the SDGs, and requires the involvement of all departments including the one responsible for the finances.

## II. Review of the measures taken for the implementation of health-and education- related goals

### A. The Ministry of Health: Significant measures for the implementation of health-related goals

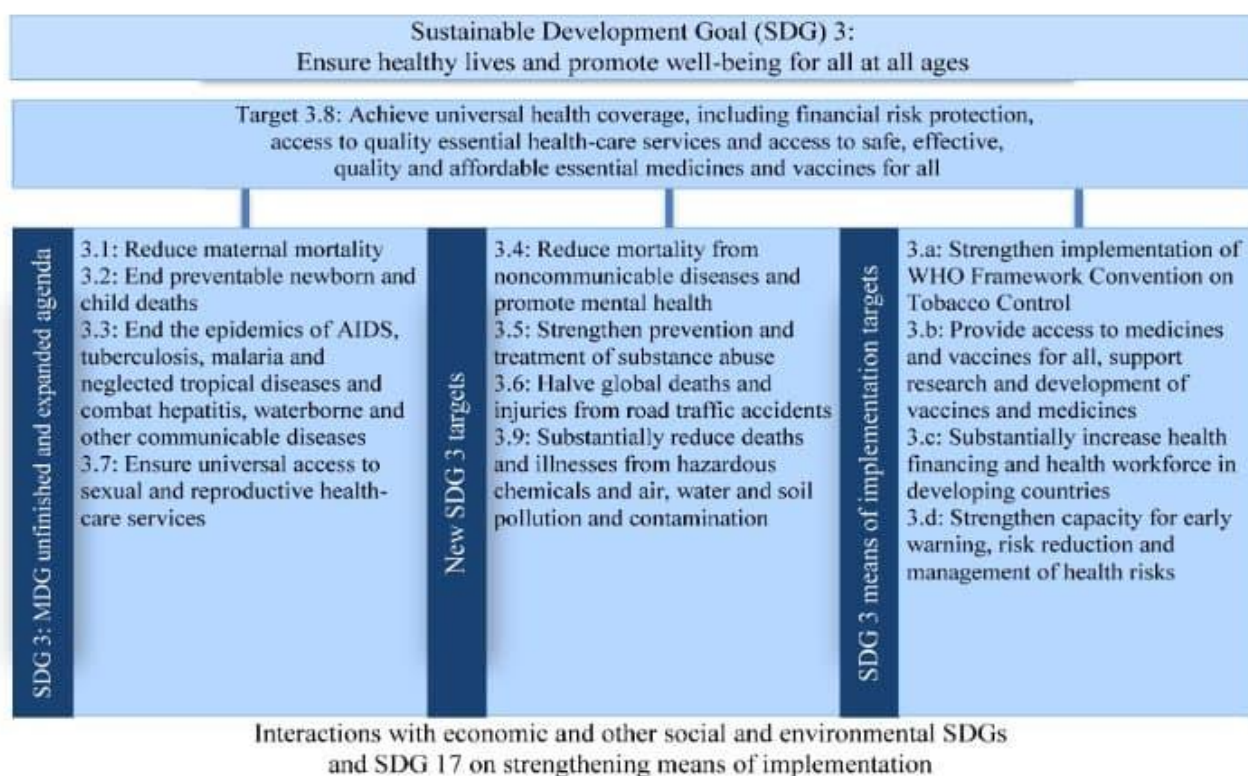
120. For the 2030 Agenda, health means ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. It also recognizes that health and its determinants influence and are influenced by other goals and targets that are inherent parts of sustainable development.

121. A number of health-related targets in the SDGs follow the unfinished MDG agenda and many more stems from the World Health Assembly resolutions and the related action plans.

122. At the national level, although there is no national plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Ministry of Health has initiated a process of contextualization and ownership of health-related goals, particularly the SDG 3.

123. As recognized by the WHO, the Ministry of Health has considered that the targets within its area of action can be divided into two categories: (1) health targets and (2) health-related targets. The ministry therefore considers itself directly involved in the implementation of the SDG 3 targets and some of the targets of SDGs 1, 2, 6, 11, 13, 16 and 17.

**Figure 5: Interactions of SDG 3 with other SDGs**



Source: *Health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Report by the Secretariat*

## **1- An attempt to break goals and targets down at the national level in the absence of a national prioritization**

**124.** Breaking health-related goals and targets down at the national level is based on the assumption that national priorities for the 2030 Agenda are already known. In fact, for the Ministry of Health, these goals have been the subject of reflection within its bodies and with its partners. This has enabled the development of a framework that includes the set of goals and targets to be achieved with an identification of ministerial departments and other institutions that can or should be involved in this process. This work was combined with a reflection on the indicators and the optimal way to adapt and measure them, and collect the related data.

**125.** However, in the absence of an effective breaking down of goals and targets at the national level, the efforts of the Ministry of Health have ceased at this stage. Nevertheless, the Ministry has stated that it has taken the necessary steps to consider the health SDGs and their targets in the development and implementation of its 2017-2021 strategy.

## **2- An approach to developing the SDG action plan at the level of the Ministry of Health**

**126.** The development of the action plan was made according to a consultation process coordinated by the Directorate of Financial Affairs and involving the central directorates of the Ministry through the designation of a focal point and some partners.

**127.** The action plan of the Ministry of Health for the implementation of the health-related goals has been developed on the basis of a categorization of targets and goals. It takes into account the issue as a whole depending on the consistency of the actions to be undertaken and the partners involved.

**128.** According to the Ministry of Health, this plan provided for measures that help, on the one hand, correct inadequacies noted in the implementation of the MDGs, particularly those related to maternal and child health<sup>6</sup>, and on the other hand, reinforce learning and open up to new programs. The measures covered by the plan have been divided into broad categories of actions as follows:

- Carry forward the work towards achieving the MDGs related to maternal and child health;
- Prevent and combat communicable diseases, and build capacity for early warning, reduction and management of health risks;
- Address the challenge of non-communicable diseases, mental health, trauma (road safety), and disabilities;
- Work on environmental health determinants;
- Strengthen research and development, and achieve universal access to medicines;
- Modernize human resources management;
- Ensure universal health coverage.

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<sup>6</sup> Concern expressed in the resolution on the implementation of the SDGs, particularly in paragraph 16, which reiterated that the goals set for maternal, neonatal and child health, and reproductive health have not been achieved.

### 3- Presentation of actions: an imperative of a multi-sector approach

**129.** The Ministry of Health presented for each identified part the country's context, the institutional and legal framework, the progress achieved and the inadequacies identified with statistics resulting from the HCP surveys and data, the international framework and actions undertaken in collaboration with the WHO, the results achieved, the difficulties encountered and the ongoing actions carried out by the Ministry.

**130.** For each objective, the action plan specifies the national targets for 2030, the strategic areas of action, the actions to be undertaken, the responsible entity or department in the Ministry, the ongoing programs related to this aspect and the national and international partners.

**131.** The Ministry has identified 19 targets in six different sustainable development goals. The implementation of these targets enabled the identification of 114 strategic tasks divided into 300 actions. These elements give a flavor of the complexity of this project and the role of the multi-sector approach.

**Figure 6: Recapitulation of the data related to the number of targets, strategic lines and actions to be implemented**

Theme	Goals	Targets	Strategic axes	Actions
Maternal and child health	2, 3 et 5	2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.7 et 5.5	28	77
Preventing and fighting communicable diseases	3	3.3 et 3.d	25	58
Non-communicable diseases, mental health, trauma (road safety), and disabilities	3 et 10	3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.a et 10.2	13	46
Environmental health determinants	3, 11 et 13	3.9, 11.5, 13.1, 13.2 et 13.3	18	39
Medicines	3	3.b	8	17
Human resources management	3	3.c	11	43
Universal health coverage	3	3.8	11	20
<b>Recapitulation</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>300</b>

*Source : The Ministry of Health*

### 4- Financing the Ministry of Health's action plan: The lack of a need's assessment

**132.** It should be noted that the Ministry of Health has not made any assessment to close the gap between available national resources and the financing needed to meet the 2030 commitments related to the SDG 3. Such an assessment would correct the health-related inadequacies and catalyze the mobilization of additional funding resources from other public and private sources and at the international level.

**133.** At this time, national resources included in the Ministry's budget are the source of funding for health programs through which sustainable development targets would be implemented.

## **5- Identification of stakeholders without setting up a coordination framework**

**134.** Based on the goals and targets, the Ministry of Health has identified several partners, namely ministerial departments, public institutions, civil society and the private sector. However, this identification of stakeholders has not been followed by setting up a coordination and meetings framework seeking adoption of work plans and identification of priorities on which synergy approaches can be developed.

**135.** The absence of an operational commitment on this subject, particularly from other ministerial departments and levels of government, did not enable the Ministry to make significant progress in the implementation of the goals, particularly regarding actions that require the contribution of several departments. Consequently, the involvement of stakeholders in activating the action plan is ineffective.

## **6-Incomplete consideration of the SDGs and their targets in the 2017-2021 strategy**

**136.** Given that the process initiated by the implementation of the action plan has not been completed, the Ministry of Health has included some commitments related to the implementation of the SDGs in its strategy (2017-2021). These goals were considered according to his own vision and in knowledge of the post 2015 challenges.

**137.** The current strategy of the Ministry aims at consolidating the achievements and introducing new programs in the light of the evolution of the country's health indicators. Thus, according to the Ministry, the strategy plans to attach particular importance to the reinforcement of maternal and child health programs, the promotion of the health of some categories with specific needs, the strengthening of the programs on fighting communicable and non-communicable diseases and the launch of new health programs. These include the management of hepatitis C, cardiovascular diseases and the fight against deafness and obesity among children.

**138.** These programs overlap with the different targets identified in the action plan. However, the delivery will be carried out according to the thematic vision of the department and without wide freedom of action on the environmental health determinants in the lack of a coordination framework and a clear delineation of roles.

## B. The Ministry of National Education: the establishment of a national coordinating committee for the SDG 4

139. SDG 4 seeks to «ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all». It encompasses seven (7) targets and three (3) means of implementation or accompanying measures.

140. This goal ensures that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary school education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to technical and vocational education and to eliminate gender and income disparities in order to ensure equal access to higher education.

**Figure 7: Goal 4 targets and means of implementation**

<b>Goal 4: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."</b>	
<b>Seven (7) targets</b>	<p>4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes</p> <p>4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education</p> <p>4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university</p> <p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship</p> <p>4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations</p> <p>4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy</p> <p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development</p>
<b>Three (3) means of implementation</b>	<p>4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all</p> <p>4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries</p> <p>4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States</p>

141. The preparedness of the Ministry of National Education for the implementation of SDG 4 is marked by the establishment of a consultation process through the creation of a national coordinating committee. Nevertheless, some inadequacies have been noted in terms of ownership and alignment of the strategic vision.



## 1- Establishment of a national coordination committee for the SDG 4 (CNC)

**142.** In response to the recommendations of the UNESCO's SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee<sup>7</sup>, the Ministry of National Education has taken the initiative to set up a National Coordinating Committee for the SDG 4 (CNC). This committee is composed of representatives of the Ministry of National Education and other ministerial departments, public bodies and support and coordination entities concerned by the SDG 4 as well as the UNESCO Office in Rabat and the National Commission for UNESCO. Nevertheless, the initiatives taken by the CNC since its establishment have had an impact for it lacks an institutional framework.

### 1.1. Failure to institutionalize the CNC

**143.** The CNC does not have an institutional framework that defines its prerogatives and composition. In order to fill this gap, the Ministry has established terms of reference to define its role. It has been devolved the following missions:

- Highlighting the Ministry's efforts through a methodological and regular follow-up of the progress of the sectoral indicators;
- Implementing activities of awareness-raising and mobilizing national stakeholders around SDG-Education 2030 for better ownership;
- Institutionalizing a follow-up database for SDG 4 targets;
- Societal mobilizing around educational issues;
- Contributing to the consolidation of education planning;
- Developing a roadmap for SDG 4 actions and monitoring of the implementation of these actions;
- Regular and continuous monitoring and evaluating of the progress made towards achieving the SDG 4 targets;
- Ensuring the overall technical coordination of the SDG 4, and the mobilization of the different actors
- Ensuring data collection and share and disseminating information on SDG 4. and a local mobilization of all the school actors to develop a socio-educational reflection and broaden the bases of partnership and cooperation between the actors, partners and beneficiaries;
- Ensuring close coordination with all partners;
- Preparing the national report on the SDG 4 by the end of 2018.

**144.** In this respect, the CNC has held several meetings. However, its initiatives are undermined by the fact that it does not have monitoring prerogatives, particularly to ensure the alignment of sector-specific policies with the SDG 4 targets, give effect to this alignment through the design of action plans comprising the measures to be undertaken by each actor, and follow-up the achieved progress. Moreover, the CNC finds it difficult to meet regularly (every three months according to the terms of reference), in the absence of legal provisions obliging stakeholders to comply with the previously defined framework.

Similarly, and according to the minutes of this committee's meetings, the number and quality of

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<sup>7</sup> In order to ensure more coordinated international support, the UNESCO is responsible for establishing a multi-stakeholder steering committee for the SDG-Education 2030. This will be the global multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism for education in the 2030 Agenda

the members differ from one department to another and from one meeting to another for they were not formally designated.

## **1.2. First conclusions of the CNC on the implementation of SDG 4**

**145.** The work of the CNC has provided important information on the implementation of sector-specific policies related to the education goal. It has also made it possible to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the national approach related to this matter. In its note on the implementation of SDG 4, the CNC shed light on the main opportunities and challenges surrounding the implementation of this goal.

**146.** The identified opportunities include, inter alia, the existence of a governmental and societal commitment to achieving the SDG 4 targets, the adoption of the 2015-2030 strategic vision that incorporates the SDG 4 targets and the diversity of stakeholders that ensures mutual efforts.

**147.** As for the identified challenges, they include the need for an information system capable of producing reliable and quality data covering all SDG 4 target indicators; the need to ensure greater ownership of the indicators for monitoring the SDG 4 targets and their adaptation to the national context and the capacity building of the national teams responsible for monitoring and implementing the SDG 4 in terms of planning, collection of the data needed to calculate monitoring indicators as well as in terms of preparing follow-up reports; the need for coordination of the SDG 4 at the national level given the diversity of the departments involved in the field of education and training; and mobilizing financing for the implementation of the SDG 4 and sector-specific policies, and involving partners in the financing and capacity building aspects.

### **2- Limited ownership of the SDG4**

**148.** In regard to ownership of the goals, the actions carried out by the Ministry of National Education remain limited in scope. In fact, awareness-raising and ownership actions have been limited to meetings held by the CNC.

**149.** In this regard, the Ministry organized three events: the first was devoted to raising awareness among the various partners members of the national coordination committee for the SDG 4, the second concerned the members of the Committee with presentation of sector-specific policies related to the SDG4, and the third focused on the study on the overlap of sector-specific policies with the SDG 4 and the presentation of indicators.

**150.** However, the Ministry has not undertaken any awareness-raising actions targeting its staff and other partners, including local authorities, the private sector, associations and citizens who are considered as key players.



### 3. Lack of effective action to align the projects carried out by other ministerial departments with the SDG 4 targets

151. The TNC has identified a set of sector-specific policies and public partners that need to be involved in the implementation of the SDG 4 targets. However, this mapping was a mere diagnostic and has not been translated into effective convergence measures. For instance, Target 4.2 is the subject of several projects with no existence of an obligation for consistency of strategies as presented in the following figure:

**Figure 8: Mapping of the main partners with sector-specific strategies related to the SDG 4**

Partners	Targets									
	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.a	4.b	4.c
National Education	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow		Yellow
Vocational Training	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Higher Education			Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue		Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	
Islamic Affairs	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange	Light Orange		Light Orange
Culture and communication	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Family and solidarity			Light Blue		Light Blue			Light Blue		
Health		Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow		
Employment				Brown						
Youth and sport		Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue		
Fight against illiteracy						Light Orange				
National aid		Purple		Purple	Purple	Purple				
FMPS		Cyan						Cyan		
DGCL								Dark Blue		
INDH		Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

*Source: the Ministry of National Education*

### 4- The need to align the strategic vision related to education with the SDG4

152. Pursuant to the High Royal Directives calling on the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research (CSEFRS) to develop a roadmap for school reform, and upon a broad consultation process including different actors and partners on the state of play and perspectives of the Moroccan school, a strategic vision of the reform covering the period 2015-2030 was elaborated. This vision aims to set up an equity and quality school. It consists of 23 levers of change articulated based on four foundations, namely: (1) equity and equality of opportunities; (2) quality for all; (3) promotion of individuals and society; and (4) governance and management of change.

153. Admittedly, many aspects of the strategic vision align with the sustainable development goals and in particular the SDG 4. Nevertheless, it was developed prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, which makes it necessary to align the planning of the strategic vision's projects with the SDG 4 targets.

#### **4.1. Lack of alignment in terms of planning**

**154.** In order to implement the portfolio of projects resulting from the levers of the strategic vision, the Ministry of Education has developed a 2017-2021 executive plan comprising 24 priority measures to be implemented within this timescale. However, this plan has not been developed in the perspective of implementing the SDG 4 and its interconnections with the other SDGs. Moreover, no mention is made of targets and indicators and their benchmarks. Additionally, the consistency of the executive plan raises observations regarding the delay in the implementation, the involvement of other stakeholders and the consideration of other SDGs, the total budget to be mobilized and the financing sources, as well as the nature of the monitoring and evaluation system.

#### **4.2. Poor alignment of cross-cutting actions involving other stakeholders**

**155.** The Ministry of National Education has defined the terms of the 2015-2030 strategic vision into 16 integrated projects in three areas namely (1) equity and equality of opportunities, (2) the promotion of quality education and training as well as (3) governance and mobilization.

**156.** These projects developed under the 2015-2030 strategy align with the SDG 4 targets, but are limited to actions to be taken by the Ministry of National Education as the main stakeholder in the implementation of the SDG 4. Other sector-specific policies and strategies related to education were not addressed, particularly in terms of cross-cutting actions involving other stakeholders with the definition of their roles.

### **5- Financing framework for the SDG 4**

**157.** The executive plan does not address this aspect. Similarly, the CNC has not yet developed a joint action plan to estimate the global cost of each sector-specific policy level. In the absence of an appropriate financing framework, the state budget remains the main financial source.

## **Section II: Data collection and measuring system for SDG indicators**

### **I. Organizational and institutional framework of the national statistical system**

#### **A. Composition and organization of the national statistical system**

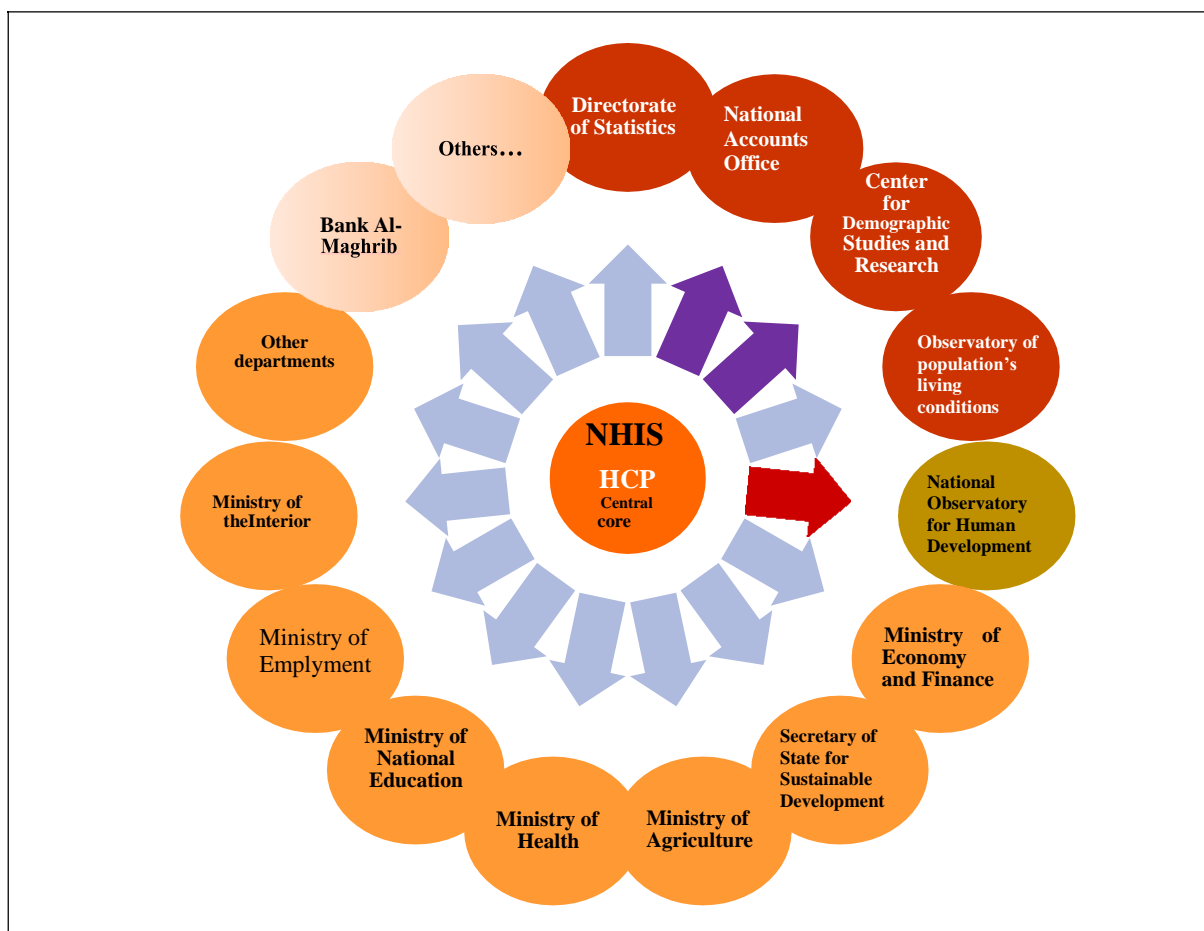
##### **1- National Statistical System (NSS): Main source of information for the SDGs**

**158.** The national statistical system represents all statistical bodies and units that, together, collect, produce and disseminate official statistics on behalf of the Government.

**159.** The national statistical system aim is to provide relevant, comprehensive, accurate and objective data and statistical information to shed light on the country's major social, economic and environmental concerns and issues, namely the sustainable development goals.

**160.** This system is highly decentralized and has diverse and scattered data sources. In addition to the HCP that represents its central core, other bodies collect, analyze, and release statistical information that essentially covers their areas of expertise. The main producers of statistical data on the SDGs can be schematized as follows:

**Figure 9: Components of the national statistical system**



### 1.1. The High Commission for Planning: The central core of the national statistical system for the production of SDG Statistics

**161.** Established as a delegated ministry in April 1998 and then as the ministry of economic forecasting and planning in July 2002, then as the High Commission for Planning (HCP) since 2003, this task administration constitutes the central core of the national statistical system. It is the main producer of economic, demographic and social statistical information and is responsible for drawing up the nation's accounts. The HCP enjoys institutional independence in the design of its programs and the conduct of its investigations and studies. It carries out studies in the areas of conjuncture, macroeconomic frameworks and prospective.

**162.** The HCP is currently being reorganized after the publication of the new decree n ° 2.17.670 defining its missions and organization (BO n ° 6670 of May 3rd, 2018). This decree aims at updating the legal framework which governs the missions and structure of the administrative units of the HCP. It also aims at its adaptation to the changes and new strategic orientations of the HCP. Similarly, it provides for the preparation of a report on the sustainable development goals by the planning directorate.

## **1.2. Government Departments: Statistical services producing data related to the SDGs**

**163.** There are statistical services in each of the major ministries, which collect, analyze and publish data covering their fields of expertise. In terms of the SDGs, the main producers of statistical information are Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Forests; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of National Education; the Ministry of Employment, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Tourism, and the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development.

**164.** As for the Treasury and External Finance Department that is part of the Ministry of Finance, it is responsible for centralizing data sources and producing statistics on public finances (taxation, external debt, etc.).

## **1.3. Other public bodies producing statistical data related to the SDGs**

**165.** The mission of the National Observatory for Human Development (ONDH) is to analyze and evaluate the impact of the human development programs implemented and to suggest measures and actions that help improve the development and the implementation of a national human development strategy, particularly in the framework of the National Human Development Initiative (NHRI) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**166.** Similarly, Bank Al-Maghrib is in charge of the collection and dissemination of banking, monetary and exchange rate statistics.

**167.** As for the Foreign Exchange Office, it is dealing with collecting and producing statistical data on Morocco's foreign trade, balance of payments, and international investment position.

## **2- The national statistical system: Reforms that have not yet been introduced**

**168.** With a prospect of reforming the national statistical system, the Moroccan Government had prepared a draft law on the establishment of a National Statistics Council (NSC), which is to replace the COCOES. This draft text submitted to the General Secretariat of the Government since 2003 has not yet seen the light of day.

**169.** During its meeting on May 27, 2015, the Government Council reviewed the draft law No. 109-14 on the national statistical system. This draft law aims to bring up the legal framework of this system to date as it no longer meets present-day requirements in the production structures of official statistical information.

**170.** The project envisions the improvement of the governance of the statistical system through the creation of a National Statistical Council and provides for binding provisions and principles for all components of the national statistical system, ensuring the quality of official statistics, namely scientific and professional independence, neutrality and respect of the current criteria, terms, charters and classifications at the national and international levels during the different phases of statistical operations. The draft law also provides for provisions obliging the parties involved in the national statistics system to respect professional secrecy and give users access to the official statistics collected.

**171.** The Government Council had decided to set up a ministerial commission to examine the provisions of the draft law No. 109-14 on the national statistical system. However, this project has not been adopted, and the National Council of Statistics has not yet seen the light of day.

## **B. Operating and coordination of the national statistical system**

### **1- Components of the national statistical system: poor coordination**

**172.** The Royal Decree-Law No. 370-67 of 10 Jomada-I, 1388 (August 5, 1968) relating to statistical survey provides in its first article that "a Statistical Survey Coordination Committee (COCOES) was established under the Prime Minister. This Committee is responsible for coordinating and promoting statistical studies, whether these studies result from surveys, day-to-day or exceptional management work that may give rise to statistical information".

**173.** The COCOES should basically be responsible for monitoring and coordinating the work of the various bodies of the NSS in order to facilitate the exchange of data between them and ensure the consistency of methodologies and results. However, this committee does not fully play its role. Its operation is almost limited to its secretariat provided by the Directorate of Statistics at the HCP, which further entrenches the separation between the different bodies of the national statistical system. In fact, some departments producing statistics prepare their strategies in a completely independent way, without adequate guarantees of respect of the statistical standards. Statistical operations are conducted without necessarily having the COCOES visa and without coordinating with the HCP or respecting official definitions, classifications and common concepts.

**174.** In terms of monitoring the implementation of the SDGs, this lack of coordination may lead, according to the HCP, to difficulties as to the quality of the indicators produced by the other departments, which must comply with the United Nations guidelines and meet the standards, manuals and methodologies used for the production of data and indicators to measure the progress towards achieving the SDGs, in consultation with the HCP. They are also supposed to systematically submit to the HCP, for examination, the methodological files, concepts and standards used in the context of statistical surveys in accordance with the provisions of the statistical law in force.

**175.** Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the HCP uses the conventions signed with the main producers of statistical data in order to overcome these coordination inadequacies. Similarly, coordination efforts are carried out through direct contacts as well as through exchanges and participation in sectoral committees.

## **2- At the territorial level: Limited cooperation in a context marked by a huge demand for information**

**176.** Morocco has given territorial actors more responsibility for economic and social development. In fact, the country's commitment to the advanced regionalization process addresses the territorial development challenges, namely the reduction of regional disparities, the fight against social exclusion, and the reduction of environmental damage and its adverse impact on the sustainable development and territorial competitiveness of Moroccan cities.

**177.** For this project that converges with the sustainable development goals to be successful, providing local decision-makers with up-to-date and reliable statistical data is crucial. In fact, statistics underpin almost all aspects of the budgets and programs of the territorial administration and all other local actors.

**178.** The HCP has a regional office in each region, in accordance with the provisions of Decree No. 1343-02 of 22 July 2002 establishing the remit and organization of the external services of the ministry of economic forecasting and planning.

**179.** These regional offices must therefore meet the needs of local authorities and other local actors in order to provide up-to-date and reliable statistical information resulting from the collection and processing of administrative data or field surveys.

**180.** However, in its October 2013 special report on the management audit of the HCP's regional offices in Casablanca, Fez and Agadir, the Court of Accounts had noted the limited cooperation between the regional offices and some administrations providing data.

**181.** This includes the General Tax Administration, the Moroccan Industrial and Commercial Property Office (OMPIC) and the regional investment centers which possess files and substantial information relating to companies. This is also the case for employment surveys, with scant recourse made to the services of the CNSS (National Social Security Fund), pension funds and data from the Ministry of the Interior (notably the municipality inventory).

## **3- Functioning of the national statistical system: Budgetary constraints to be surmounted**

### **3.1. Shortage of human resources**

**182.** Shortage of skilled statisticians in sectoral and regional structures continues to be an impediment to the improvement of the statistical production of these structures. Similarly, continuing training afflicted by the lack of organization for both statisticians and non-statisticians in the national statistical system.

**183.** On the other hand, it is evident that most users are not able to clearly express their demand for statistical data.

### **3.2 Scarcity of funding resources**

**184.** The investigations carried out revealed a scarcity in terms of the allocation of material resources, particularly information technology and financial resources for the day-to-day functioning of the national statistical system's structures. In fact, the archiving and securing of data remains insufficient in several organizations. This situation stems in part from inadequacies in the overall policy of procurement and use of statistical software. In addition, the data produced often lacks in-depth analyses.

**185.** In this respect, it should be noted that the main problem of the sustainability of large-scale statistical operations is the lack of earmarked funds.

### **3.3. Lack of dissemination and communication**

**186.** The statistical data produced by the HCP are disseminated largely on electronic media (Internet, CD, statistical yearbook, census and poverty map, online catalog of publications, a library, etc.), which gives a large number of users access to information. However, for other producers of statistical information, dissemination is not always adapted to an effective communication policy by using dispersed sources of information and dissemination in printed forms.

**187.** Moreover, according to the conducted interviews, the lack of coordination between the components of the national statistical system means that some departments have expressed a certain reluctance to exchange statistical information, particularly with the HCP.

## **4- Sectoral statistical information systems: Lack of harmonization of data collection and convergence methodologies**

### **4.1. Data reliability and comparability problems**

**188.** The development, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable development goals require reliable and timely statistics. These needs for reliable statistics, constantly expressed by public and private actors and civil society, have increased with the development of statistical information systems, at national and / or regional level, of each ministerial department. This is the case, for instance, for the Ministries of Finance, Health, National Education, Agriculture, Trade and Employment.

**189.** Nevertheless, due to failure to update the legal and regulatory texts relating to the national statistical system combined with the suspension of coordination and collaboration mechanisms (particularly the COCOES), these statistical information systems are often non-institutionalized, cumbersome, disintegrated and inconsistent. Furthermore, the data generated by these systems are under-exploited due to the quality of the data collected, or delays in their collection, as well as their incompleteness. For instance, the national health information system does not include data on the private sector.



**190.** In addition, with the almost widespread use of new information and communication technologies, it became critical to resolve problems related to the reliability and comparability of the statistics produced and the harmonization of methodologies for the collection and processing of data. In fact, the dissemination of raw statistics and reports resulting from the work of statistical processing analyzes is considered as a prerequisite for the performance and efficiency for these departments. However, given the limited role of the COCOES, the risk of disseminating statistics with comprising discrepancies is increasing (e.g. employment statistics, growth rate statistics, etc.).

**191.** with the absence of a clear policy to harmonize methodologies for the collection and convergence of sectoral statistical systems, the role of the departments concerned and the HCP is restricted to the organization of a few consultation meetings to respond to certain indicators. Similarly, the HCP proceeds, whenever requested, to the examination of the methodological files of the statistical surveys carried out by other departments. It provides its technical opinion on the adopted statistical standards and methods (survey plan, questionnaires, nomenclatures, etc.). It also provides assistance (when requested) to other institutions for conducting surveys or censuses.

#### **4.2. National Health Information System (NHIS)**

**192.** The production of health statistical information is entrusted to the Ministry of Health. To this end, the Ministry has set up an important information system. The master plan of the national health information system defines this system as being "The set of mechanisms and procedures aimed primarily at acquiring, analyzing and providing the information required by all health planners and managers; and by all health professionals including medical and paramedical staff. »

**193.** The NHIS is founded on three pillars: a routine information system, studies and surveys and an extra-health information system.

**194.** Although the NHIS has significant capacity to generate SDG 3 indicators, it has not yet attained the required level of development in terms of integration, automation (computerization), responsiveness, flexibility and interoperability, generalization at all levels and its centralization on the individuals. Difficulties are also noted in the collection of health data at the private sector as well as the rural levels.

**195.** In order to overcome these inadequacies, the Ministry of Health has stated that the generalization of the process of computerization of health facilities and the strengthening of the role of the region in the information system is being implemented in order to create "regional health observatories" and a central office for the information system. In addition, the upgrade of the NHIS cannot achieve its objectives before the establishment of this system, as provided for by Article 17 of the framework law No. 34-09 on health system and health care.

### 4.3. Statistical Information System of the Ministry of National Education

**196.** Similarly to the Ministry of Health, the Department of National Education has set up a fairly advanced system for the collection and production of statistical information.

**197.** The system of data collection and production of education statistics encompasses four components: the statistical information system, the school planning system, the staff movement system and the system for the management of schooling in public and private schools.

**198.** Several directorates are responsible for monitoring this statistical collection and production system, the most important of which is the Directorate of Strategy, Statistics and Planning. This directorate is mainly responsible for conducting surveys and statistical analyzes, implementing classification lists and monitoring databases, carrying out economic and social studies, following-up school plans, and tracking indicators related to general access to education.

**199.** In terms of supervising the implementation of the SDGs, it should be emphasized that the national education system has significant capacities that can enable the recovery and generation of several SDG 4 monitoring indicators, as well as indicators pertaining to education in relation to other SDGs. The Ministry of Education has initiated some actions for the integration of these indicators into the ESISE census system, through the development of frameworks focusing on data measurement methods, their sources, implementation, and frequency, as well as on the stakeholders and the difficulties encountered.

**200.** Nevertheless, some inadequacies still persist, notably those concerning the integration of the system's components, the lack of a quality information control approach as a basis for calculating indicators, and the need for specific surveys for the integration of the missing information.

### 4.4. Agricultural statistics system

**201.** The production of agricultural statistics is entrusted to the Ministry of Agriculture. In fact, the collection, processing and refinement of data on the agricultural sector to make them exploitable, is assigned by decree to the directorate of strategy and statistics of this Ministry. The production of agricultural statistical information is carried out mainly through sampling and surveys.

**202.** In terms of the quality of the statistics produced, according to interviews conducted with the HCP officials, the methodologies used by the statistics division of the Ministry of Agriculture are sound and in line with international standards. Similarly, the digitization of the territory, the updating of the sample, and the use of geographic information system (GIS) in carrying out the censuses of fruit plantations enabled the enhancement of the quality of the information collected and the development of a geo-referenced database. Also, the Ministry has manuals for each survey defining the main concepts used and clarifying the questions raised.

**203.** However, in spite of the increasingly advanced capacity of this system, some inadequacies have been noted, particularly in regard to the staff whose number is decreasing from one year to the next, the insufficiency of the statistics produced in relation to the needs of users, and the lack of users' satisfaction surveys.

#### **4.5. Information system of the National Observatory for Human Development (ONDH)**

**204.** In order to fulfill its primary mission of evaluating public policies for human development, the ONDH has set up a system enabling it to have timely data for the monitoring of human development indicators in the country, including those provided by the 2030 Agenda on the SDGs. In this respect, the ONDH has designed an information system called "Al Bacharia", supplemented by a "household monitoring panel" survey.

**205.** The "Al Bacharia" information system centralizes and provides decision-makers, academics and partners of the ONDH with structured, standardized and documented information related to human development. This system consists of a database, a dashboard, a virtual documentation center, surveys conducted by the ONDH and a geographic information system. It allows the presentation of valuable information, organized in explicit, visual reading grids and illustrated by thematic maps to monitor the situation of human development and the progress achieved by Morocco compared to other countries.

**206.** The general themes addressed by the Al Bacharia system are: environment and natural resources, business climate, population and demography, economy, activity and employment, well-being and poverty, access to basic services and infrastructure, synthetic indicators of human development, health and social welfare, education and knowledge, and governance.

**207.** Similarly, the ONDH has set up a "Household Panel" to collect data from representative probability samples of all households in the country, in order to meet the need for analyses based on data from these longitudinal surveys and cross-sectional surveys. The main objective of the design and implementation of this panel of households is to enable the monitoring and analysis of the human development dynamics.

## **II- The capacity of the national statistical system to produce indicators for measuring and monitoring progress towards achieving the SDGs**

### **A. Compliance of the HCP statistical system with the global statistical standards**

#### **1. HCP statistical information system: a system consistent with international standards**

**208.** At the normative and methodological level, the HCP as the central core of the national statistical system is able to assess the progress made in implementing the SDGs. In fact, it is acknowledged in the best practices database of the United Nations that the Moroccan system of statistics production is compatible with the principles of relevance, impartiality and equal access to all. Similarly, the laws and regulations governing its operation are made available to the public.

**209.** Similarly, the HCP has taken several measures to preserve the confidentiality of data and the privacy of individuals. For instance, it has published a charter for the use of its information system which defines the rules of use and security of the information system that every user has to respect, whether he is an HCP agent, a provider having a contract with the HCP, or a data user in a professional or personal setting.

**210.** In addition, since 2005, the HCP has adhered to the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS), and has developed privileged relations of exchange and scientific and technical cooperation with United Nations bodies, namely the UNDP, the UNFPA, the UNICEF and the ECA.

**211.** Also, the HCP is a member of several working groups and specialized committees including the United Nations Statistical Commission, the MEDSTAT III cooperation project, the OECD Statistics Committee, the ADB, the World Bank, Eurostat, the Steering Committee for the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), etc.

**212.** In 2018, Morocco, represented by the HCP, was elected co-chair of the High Level Group on Partnership, Coordination and Statistical Capacity Building together with Hungary for the period 2018-2019, at the 49th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC).<sup>8</sup>

#### **2- National statistical system: quality control measures to be developed and formalized**

**213.** The quality control procedures set by the HCP are aimed at producing and disseminating quality, reliable statistical information. As such, the HCP organizes seminars to raise awareness among its staff on the importance of qualitative aspects.

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<sup>8</sup> The UNSC is the highest body of the global statistical system and is responsible for the examination and adoption of global statistical methodologies and standards.

**214.** Furthermore, the HCP has established a number of procedures to examine the quality of statistics and data collection. It has created technical committees to carry out quality statistical surveys. Other committees were set up to ensure the quality of a specified transaction. Additionally, the National Accounts Directorate plays an important role in detecting quality problems.

**215.** The Statistics Directorate is in charge of the publication of the statistics produced. In the case of joint publication with other bodies, procedures have been established for the delineation of responsibilities and workload with the partner body. Moreover, these procedures emphasize the obligation to notify changes in methodologies, sources and statistical techniques prior to their application.

**216.** Despite the efforts made, the Statistics Directorate recognizes that it is often called upon to arbitrate between different aspects of quality, such as the respect of deadlines and the accuracy and reliability of data. However, there is no formal mechanism to inform users about the importance of these compromises or to consider their opinions. In addition, the HCP has not yet developed a formal and standardized quality control system for its staff, partners and users.

## **B. Planning the operations of the national statistical system and measuring the SDGs**

### **1- The HCP: upgrading the statistical production system**

**217.** The investigations carried out with the HCP have shown that it has taken several steps to upgrade its statistical production system and to carry out statistical operations that enabled the provision of information on the progress made in achieving the SDG goals and targets with a breakdown according to the main dimensions required, namely the geographical level, gender, age, the socio-economic level, etc.

**218.** In this respect, the HCP upgraded the system of national accounts (according to the 2008 UN standards) through the change of the national accounts base from 1998 to 2007. It started since 2012 a project for the change of the base year of the national accounts from 2007 to 2014 through updating its structural statistical operations that particularly involves carrying out several structural surveys.

**219.** In 2014, the HCP also conducted the sixth General Census of population and housing to update the population databases. The data in this census enabled the HCP to have a battery of indicators on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population, multidimensional poverty, as well as population and household projections for the period 2015-2050 at the national, regional, provincial and communal levels.

**220.** In the same respect, the HCP has established a new master sample frame based on the map and statistical data drawn from the 2014 census. This system constitutes a frame of reference serving the needs, in terms of representative samples of the Moroccan population and households, of the various statistical surveys included in the framework of the national intercensal survey program 2015-2024, to be carried out by the HCP and other public or private bodies.

**221.** However, some inadequacies have been noted in the capacity of the national statistical system to produce all indicators for measuring and monitoring the SDGs.

## **2- Administrative data exploitation: efforts to be made by the partners**

**222.** The use of administrative data for statistical purposes, particularly for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs, provides access to up-to-date information already available in order to replace certain parts of surveys, and thus reduce response burden for the involved bodies.

**223.** In this context, the HCP has developed cooperation links with the departments and public institutions in the area of producing administrative data and statistical analysis. This cooperation involves the establishment of partnership agreements with certain data providers, such as Bank-Al-Maghrib, the Ministry of Tourism, the Moroccan Industrial and Commercial Property Office (OMPIC), the National Social Security Fund (CNSS), the National Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (ANRT), the General Directorate of National Security, the Ministry of Transport, etc.

**224.** However, one of the major challenges that the national statistical system faces is to increase the use of administrative data that appears to be underutilized, especially in the implementation of the SDGs. In this respect, there is a lack of consultation between sectoral partners in order to establish rules of administrative information conversion into statistics and to develop, regulate and organize the transmission of administrative files in a reliable manner. In this context, several measures have to be taken:

- Preliminary analysis of administrative sources and the identification of one or more reference sources;
- Establishment of a validation process for the information contained in the metadata and documentation dissemination sources in order to update, integrating and / or replacing the data collected;
- Ensuring close collaboration between experts from the data provider body and the HCP in order to harmonize the different definitions and classifications of units and variables, or else to come up with reconciliation rules;
- The presence of the HCP (as the central core of the national statistical system) in the process of producing administrative data in order to mitigate the risk of lack of control at the source of the output and thus missing values, outliers and potential data errors.

### **3- Samples adopted at the national level: corrections to be made in order to obtain detailed results at the local level**

**225.** The 2013 report of the Court of Accounts on the management audit of the regional courts of accounts of the HCP in Casablanca, Fez and Agadir states that the national studies commissioned by the Statistics Directorate do not generally meet the expectations of the local authorities and do not enable them to strengthen their specific data.

**226.** In fact, the regional courts only provide results at the regional level, whereas local partners demand more precise and specific statistical data covering the provincial and municipal levels. This is due to the non-representativeness of the sampling of the statistical surveys as the size for the sample should be significantly enlarged.

**227.** In addition, the regional courts do not possess a regional database capable of meeting the ever-increasing demand for statistical information essential for planning the regional and local economic and social development.

### **C. Generation of SDG indicators**

The contextualization of the 244 indicators related to the SDGs at the national level gives rise to the following observations.

#### **1- Coverage of indicators and SDG targets: increased efforts are ought to be made**

**228.** The final list of SDG indicators likely to be produced by the national statistical system has not yet been finalized. Only a preliminary diagnosis has been conducted separately by some actors in the system.

**229.** According to the data provided by the HCP during this review, the national statistical system is able to produce 48% of the SDG indicators, half of which can be produced by the HCP and the rest by the other relevant stakeholders of the national statistical system (ministerial departments, public bodies, etc.).

**230.** The national statistical system can produce more than 63% of tier I indicators, 40% of tier II indicators and 30% of tier III indicators<sup>9</sup>. It should be noted that the data on the indicators to be produced have not changed compared to the data provided in 2016 in Morocco's report on the first steps in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development presented during the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

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<sup>9</sup> The United Nations Statistical Commission established in March 2017 a list of 244 indicators related to the Sustainable Development Goals. These indicators have been classified into three tiers based on their level of methodological development and the availability of data at the global level:

Tier I: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available;

Tier II: indicators are conceptually clear and have an established methodology, but standards are not available;

Tier III: No internationally established methodology or standards are available.



**231.** The generation of other SDG indicators not yet covered by the available statistics will require the completion of new statistical operations and the revision of statistical operations of both a permanent and structural nature, particularly of the HCP.

**232.** Among the indicators which pose particular difficulties, according to the HCP, those relating to the environmental dimension, given the scarcity of environmental statistics and also the periodicity of the collection of this type of data. Several indicators are still classified in the tier III category with no established methodology. Even for the indicators that already exist, the problems of periodicity and disaggregation according to the requirements of the United Nations could pose additional challenges in terms of breakdown (according to the geographical level, gender, income level, disability, migration status, etc.).

**233.** Although the different components of the national statistical system are aware of the urgency of capacity building, monitoring the design of methodologies and approaches to indicators with difficulties, the lack of coordination mechanisms are impediments to this process. In fact, the treatment of these indicators requires close coordination at the national level to better target these indicators and agree on the relevance of some of them for the monitoring of the SDGs.

## **2- Ministerial departments: the implemented actions need to be coordinated and synchronized**

### **✓ Ministry of Health**

**234.** The action plan, developed by the Ministry of Health for the implementation of the SDGs, has developed a framework for the implementation of SDG 3 and health-related targets at the national level, and the implementation of intersectorality. In this respect, a preliminary diagnosis of the monitoring indicators for health-related SDGs has been conducted.

**235.** The Ministry has identified thirty-seven (37) health-related indicators, including 26 indicators related to SDG 3 and eleven (11) other indicators related to other SDGs. The Ministry has classified these indicators into five categories based on the availability of the data required to determine them:

- Indicators that can be determined through national surveys;
- Indicators that can be estimated through routine data from the Ministry of Health's information systems;
- Indicators that can be estimated through the information systems of other departments;
- Indicators for which data are not available (7 indicators);
- Indicators that have no definition or clear methodology (3 indicators).

### **✓ Ministry of National Education**

**236.** According to the preliminary diagnosis conducted by the Ministry of National Education, of the forty (43) SDG 4 indicators, twenty-five (25) fall within the responsibility of the Ministry's information system, of which nineteen (19) indicators are available and six (6) indicators require specific surveys.

237. As for other indicators that do not fall within the responsibility of the Ministry: seven (7) indicators are the responsibility of the HCP's planning directorate, two (2) indicators are the responsibility of international systems, six (6) indicators are the responsibility of other ministerial departments and three (3) indicators whose methodologies should be established.

✓ **State Secretariat for Sustainable Development**

238. As part of the development of the national strategy for sustainable development, the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development has prepared a list of 342 indicators covering the 7 identified issues, and then broken down into 31 strategic action lines and 132 goals.

239. However, no diagnosis has been conducted to confirm the availability of data and the capacity of the national statistical system to generate them. Consequently, no convergence has been established between the indicators selected for the NSSD and the SDGs.

✓ **National Observatory for Human Development (ONDH)**

240. According to the assertions of its officials, the ONDH information system can provide thirty (30) indicators focusing on people classified according to the following goals: six (6) indicators out of six (6) for SDG 1; four (4) indicators out of eleven (11) for SDG 2; six (6) indicators out of twenty-five (25) for SDG 3; four (4) out of eight (8) indicators for SDG 4; four (4) out of fourteen (14) indicators for SDG 5; three (3) out of ten indicators (10) for SDG 6 and three (3) out of ten indicators (10) for SDG 10.

241. Similarly, the ONDH suggests, as part of the measure contextualization for SDGs 1, 2 and 10, the addition of thirteen (13) indicators that are more appropriate to the national context: five (5) indicators in SDG 1 and eight (8) indicators in SDG 10.

## **D. Determination of benchmarks**

242. The United Nations SDG resolution called for the establishment of national and global baselines, so that progress can be measured more accurately, especially for targets lacking clear numerical goals.

243. In this respect, the investigations conducted with the relevant ministerial departments and the HCP revealed the lack of even a preliminary diagnosis concerning the available reference data. In fact, apart from the Ministry of Health, which has launched data collection operations (surveys) for the definition of benchmarks for certain SDG monitoring indicators, the other departments do not have insight on the actions to be undertaken for the establishment of this list of reference data.

## **E. Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the sustainable development goals: a system to be established**

244. The departments or the body to be responsible for monitoring and reporting, both for all the sustainable development goals and for each goal, have not yet been selected. In contrast, the new decree on the reorganization of the HCP has conferred the planning department the power to report on the sustainable development goals. However, no express mention was made of the monitoring and reporting mission.

**245.** Additionally, the Court of Accounts noted that the issue of monitoring and reporting is a matter of disagreement between the various departments, particularly the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development, which chairs the steering committee for monitoring and the Sustainable Development Strategy Committee, the HCP, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance.

## **Section III: Response of the Head of Government**

In response to the observations included in the Court of Accounts' report on the assessment of the Government's implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), I submit a summary of the comments made by the different ministerial departments affected by this evaluation, the HCP and the ONDH. The comments emphasize the Government's ownership and implementation of the SDGs, as well as some specific remarks to be taken into account in drafting the final version of this report.

### **1- General observations**

The review of the Court of Accounts' report suggests that the conducted analyzes consider the SDGs as a standard framework that takes precedence over national strategies and policies, which must be integrated, regardless of national specificities. The SDGs are a reference framework to be considered by member countries in the development and implementation of their national strategies and policies. In fact, UN Resolution A / RES / 70/1 states that the SDGs are "universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities" .

This vision is in line with the position of Morocco expressed in the Royal Speech delivered at the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2014, which emphasized that "sustainable development is not something which can be achieved through decisions and ready-made prescriptions. Nor is there a single model in this area. Each country follows a path of its own, having taken into consideration its historical development, cultural heritage, human and natural resources, specific political circumstances, as well as its economic choices and the obstacles and challenges facing it. "

Regarding the implementation of the SDGs, it must be recalled that Morocco has adopted these commitments, as have the UN member states, and the Government has reiterated the country's willingness to achieve them, on the occasion of the submission of the Government Program to Parliament. Morocco's interest in the SDGs has been translated into mobilization at the international and national levels for their implementation.

At the international level, Morocco attended the various meetings on the SDGs at the time of their conception and the subsequent debates on their implementation by the countries. In this respect, Morocco presented, on July 19, 2016 in New York, the first steps taken to achieve the SDGs in the framework of a first voluntary report to the High-Level Political Forum of the economic and social program of the United Nations.

At the national level, a first meeting, held in Rabat on May 2016, brought together stakeholders to raise awareness of the significant importance of the implementation of the SDGs and the need to integrate them into national strategies and sectoral policies.

Consequently, the different ministries and public bodies involved have engaged in a participatory and collaborative approach with the stakeholders in order to plan and prioritize the SDGs and their targets, and to integrate them into their action plans. In this respect, several coordination meetings were organized to strengthen the dialogue on the implementation of the SDGs, in particular, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher

Education and Scientific Research, the High Commission for Planning, etc.

Nevertheless, the process of implementing the SDGs requires the establishment of a coordination structure for the definition of priorities, as well as for monitoring and evaluating their implementation. To this end, the Government is currently considering the institutionalization of a mechanism and the definition of its missions to improve the effectiveness of our country's efforts to fulfill its commitments.

As for the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs, the departments responsible for the production of statistical information carried out a review on the state of the available information. This diagnosis enabled the measurement of the importance of the statistical data needed in quantity and quality to produce or improve. In this respect, it should be noted that the objective is not to monitor all the SDG targets, but to monitor those selected within the framework of priorities that Morocco has referenced while optimizing resources.

In connection with improving the quality and diversity of statistical information, the Court of Accounts recommends the reform of the national statistical system, through the activation and strengthening of the Statistical Survey Coordination Committee (COCOES). However, this mechanism no longer reflects the basic principles of official statistics as recommended by the United Nations Statistical Commission. To this end, the Government is in the process of reviewing the legal texts aimed in particular at upgrading the statistical law and establishing a National Statistical Council (CNS).

## 2- Specific Observations

In addition to the remarks made above, I should be grateful if you could take account, in the final version of this report, of the following observations:

- In regard to SDG3, the Ministry of Health has included in its "Health 2025" Plan, the 9 targets of SDG 3, which must be achieved by 2030. In this respect, it is necessary to replace, in the report, any reference to the sector-specific strategy or program of the Ministry of Health 2017-2021 by the "Health 2025" Plan;
- The 2017-2021 National Health Strategy is formalized in the "Health 2025" Plan and the 2021 Ministry of Health Plan. (Paragraphs 86 and 96). This plan is founded on three pillars broken down into 25 integrated axes, organized around 125 actions. (Item 6, page 30);
- The legal framework referred to in the Court of Accounts' report should be complemented by the implementing decree n ° 214-562 (24 July 2015). (Paragraph 177<sup>10</sup>);
- In regard to sustainable development, since the adoption of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) by the Council of Ministers on 25 June 2017, the process of its implementation has been initiated and accelerated, notably through the establishment of a governance framework (Decree No. 2.17.655 establishing the Strategic Committee for the implementation of the NSDS, BO n ° 6660, 29 March 2018). Two committees have been set up: the Strategic Committee, chaired by the Head of Government, and the Steering Committee, chaired by the Secretary of State responsible for Sustainable Development;

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<sup>10</sup> This paragraph has been omitted from the final report

- To implement the NSSD, the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development (SEDD) conducted the multi-stakeholder consultations that led to the development of the 2019-2021 action plan, specifying the objectives and the measures to be taken. This first phase will be used to consolidate the NSSD-SDG convergence. (Paragraph 94);
- The SEDD has established a multi-stakeholder consultation process to identify major issues, strategic priorities and objectives in terms of sustainable development. (Paragraph 95). The consolidation of the NSDS-SDG convergence is achieved within the framework of the Sustainable Development Action Plans that are developed upon adoption of the NSSD. (Paragraph 99);
- Over twenty Sectoral Action Plans for Sustainable Development (PADD) have been proposed to determine the contribution of each sector in the implementation of this strategy, with an integrated Sustainable Development Action Plan, relating to the implementation of the Exemplarity of Administration aspect (PADD-EA). (Paragraph 114);
- The HCP, in accordance with the decree that establishes its powers, is responsible for the preparation of reports on the SDGs. However, no entity was designated for the reporting and monitoring mission, pending the establishment of the previously reported coordination mechanism. The HCP employment survey does not resort to the services of the CNSS and the pension funds (Paragraph 181);
- Actions aiming at having certain SDGs at the regional level taken into account are undertaken through the development of territorial plans to fight against global warming, etc. (Paragraph 61).