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FINAL EVALUATION

Local Governance Program (LGP)

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FINAL EVALUATION:

Local Governance Program (LGP)

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ACRONYMS

ANAPEC	National Agency for Promoting Employment and Skills
AO	Assistance Objective
CPEC	Comité de Parité et d'Egalité des Chances (Gender and Equal Opportunity Committee)
CPF	Communal Performance Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGCL	Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales (General Directorate of Local Governance)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GOM	Government of Morocco
LGP	Local Governance Program
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAP	Plan d'Actions Prioritaires
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Local Governance Program (LGP) was designed in 2009 to achieve one of the first of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Assistance Objectives (AO) in Morocco: *“Increased Participations of Citizens, Especially Youth in Governance,”* in order to support the Government of Morocco’s (GOM) policy reforms, including ambitious plans for decentralization and improved governance.

To achieve this goal, LGP’s strategic objective was to promote “a more effective and accountable local government” and to contribute to USAID’s goal of “greater citizen involvement in local governance by young people.” In pursuit of these objectives, LGP targeted three levels of governments: national, provincial, and communal. A special focus was placed on communal government. These three main areas of interventions were implemented through a flexible buy-in mechanism formalized through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) signed with each commune and variable in scope, as determined with each “buying” commune.

Through this demand-driven mechanism, some communes signed on for one or two interventions offered by the LGP technical assistance. Others signed on for a much larger spectrum of activities. This flexibility is also reflected in the LGP interventions targeting youth and women through a mechanism by which training and small grants were provided, under the following three project components:

Component One: Increasing citizen participation, especially of youth and women, and consultation with local government (communes). Implementation of Communal Development Plans was a key activity, along with support to youth councils and women in government.

Component Two: Improved performance of the communes. LGP provided technical assistance and training to build officials’ skills and allow them to leverage more funding.

Component Three: Improved transparency and communication. LGP introduced internal auditing and citizen complaint systems, among other efforts.

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

USAID commissioned this final performance evaluation to examine LGP from its initiation in February 2010 through close-out in December 2014. In line with USAID’s Evaluation Policy, the evaluation team was asked to gather evidence with which USAID could determine whether the project achieved its intended results. The evaluation was also intended to provide recommendations for potential future activities, particularly in the context of the on-going reform. USAID/Morocco posed the following evaluation questions, which have guided this effort:

- I. How effectively did LGP’s activities targeting communes contribute to achieving the program objectives?

What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to:

- 1a. General citizen participation/consultation?
- 1b. Youth participation and consultation in local governance?
- 1c. Women’s participation and consultation in local governance?
- 1d. Improved performance, specifically local government’s ability to provide better services to citizens?
- 1e. Transparency and communication?

1f. Which activity components were most and least effective in achieving progress toward LGP's overarching objectives?

1g. What do targeted beneficiaries see as the most significant changes (positive or negative) to which the project has contributed?

- II. Which activities and results are most likely to be sustained post project completion? What were the key factors contributing to the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability for the activities above, and how could sustainability have been reinforced?
- III. How effectively did LGP adapt to changing political conditions, as well as to the learning derived from performance monitoring data and evaluation findings? What factors enabled and impeded LGP from effectively adapting its implementation approach in response to findings and/or changing conditions?
- IV. To what extent have LGP interventions contributed to and/or influenced the ongoing reform process of the main decentralization law (Communal Charter) as well as the upcoming regionalization plans and the public debate about them?

EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The five member evaluation team employed multiple methods to answer the key evaluation questions, including a desk review of all pertinent project reports and available data, key informant interviews with officials and project staff, and focus group discussions (FGDs) of beneficiaries. In addition, the Survey Expert led a survey of 208 male and female LGP beneficiaries. Data was collected during October and November of 2015.

The evaluation team focused field work in communes where a greater number of activities were implemented to allow for a substantive appreciation of the project and activities' impact. The evaluation team selected three communes in each of the regions of Fes Boulemane and Doukkala Abda and two communes in the region of Rabat-Salé-Zemmour-Zaer (as only five communes benefitted from project support in this region). Since LGP activities for women elected officials were organized through workshops and provincial networks, the Gender Expert conducted focus group discussions with beneficiaries from different provincial networks.

The evaluation was hindered by the fact that LGP ended almost a year before the evaluation began. While the timing presented an opportunity to look at the proven sustainability of the project, it also presented many challenges to contacting beneficiaries, as well as respondent recall. The survey also took place after 2015 elections: thus, many officials, as well as former LGP staff, had to be tracked down since they could not be found in their previous institutions. For this reason, several former commune officials and project beneficiaries could not be engaged as they were not re-elected.

FINDINGS

Key findings are summarized here by evaluation question.

1. LGP Results

Citizen participation and consultation in local governance: The Communal Development Plan (CDP) was particularly successful in promoting citizen participation. Several communes admitted that this activity was literally the first time the commune had “*opened up to external players*” such as local civil society and neighborhood associations. It also provided commune officials with the methodology and confidence to engage citizens. The accomplishment of CDP was undeniable, but it did not prove equally successful in all communes.

Youth participation and consultation in local governance: There was a consensus among youth respondents that LGP helped enhance their awareness and understanding of local governance issues and roles and responsibilities of their commune, and bridge the historical divide with elected officials. Of youth beneficiaries, 86% surveyed said that LGP activities improved youth participation in government and 73% said that youth knowledge about government improved as a result. However, there are limited institutionalized mechanisms for youth participation and consultation that have been sustained post-LGP, particularly as the majority of local youth councils are inactive or semi-active. According to youth beneficiaries, many local officials persist in thinking that engaging with youth is a waste of time, and this attitude remains a critical barrier.

Women's participation and consultation in local governance: There was a consensus among women interviewed that LGP had improved women's capacity to participate in commune affairs, in part due to training that improved their technical skills and knowledge, but also because of leadership training that instilled confidence and assertiveness. Of 50 women survey respondents, 60% thought that the LGP leadership training had a significant impact on their commune while 33% felt it had weaker impact. Qualitative findings revealed women's eagerness to play a greater role in local management of the commune. The results were even more pronounced for women in rural areas. In general, women respondents believed that LGP's impact is challenged by the lack of continuity of training activities, by the minimal inclusion of men officials, and by the prevailing construct of masculinity in traditional settings.

Performance, transparency and communication in local government: LGP implemented a diverse set of activities to help communes evaluate and improve their performance. In Kenitra, officials were able to increase fiscal revenue by about 50% in five years as a result of the LGP fiscal administration intervention, although that level of success wasn't found in other communes. The audit activity achieved some concrete success, as several communes carried out independent audits even after the project ended. Other activities were less successful, such as development of communication plans, introduction of a complaints management process or the Gender and Equal Opportunity Committees (Comité de Parité et d'Egalité des Chances – CPEC). One common thread amongst activities which were less effective is that they had less buy-in from commune officials, despite LGP's à la carte approach to offering support.

2. LGP Sustainability

In the context of LGP, sustainability was observed at an individual level – marked by increased awareness, acquisition of skills, and attitudinal or behavioral change – as well as at an institutional level – marked by integration of tools into regular processes, presence of necessary mechanisms and structures, and the ongoing production of tangible outcomes and deliverables. The evaluation team found that sustainability varied considerably, however, across activities and geographic areas. At the institutional level, if the activity was particularly relevant and stakeholders in the commune had interest and political will, there was more potential for sustainability, but beneficiaries also required practice, coaching, and on-going assistance from qualified project staff to be able to apply the tools. Beneficiaries of activities focused on youth and women often reported being changed as an individual. For example, several youth appear to have gone on to contest and win election as a result of LGP, while many women report that their own capacities to serve their communes were greatly improved. However, many of the youth councils were found to be inactive or semi-active. Similarly, women reported the need to continue to tackle the structural and cultural barriers to their participation, which threaten their ability to be effective in the future.

3. LGP Adaptability

LGP began at a critical time during the Arab Spring, when it was important to provide a mechanism for the population to channel frustration into participation. The introduction of the CDP at the request of the Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales (General Directorate of Local Governance – DGCL) was one important way that LGP adapted to meet the political needs. LGP engaged target communes and beneficiaries based on a demand-driven approach as an attempt to ensure commitment and ownership, and this resulted in several activities being dropped due to lack of interest. The approach didn't seem to identify other activities that also suffered from lack of commitment, however. The evaluation team found that LGP, at times, lacked a strategic approach. The pressure of implementing a large number of activities in a large number of communes, particularly toward the end of the project, was considered to be one major impeding factor.

4. LGP Contribution to the Reform Process

Most key informants agreed that LGP contributed to the efforts of the Government of Morocco to promote participation and transparency at the commune level. This contribution was recognized by many key informants, including local government technical staff and managers, some local officials, and the DGCL itself. LGP also contributed to the knowledge of how to introduce modern tools of governance, and what barriers still remain to their uptake. LGP's work with youth was considered as important in light of the ongoing national debate and policy initiatives to enhance youth political and civic participation. LGP's work with women elected officials contributed to the goals of reform by preparing them to be effective, but none of the women beneficiaries believed that LGP influenced the reform process to ensure more gender balanced participation.

However, regarding the current “advanced regionalization” policy, especially now after the September Regional and Communal Elections, there is little evidence of the role and influence of the LGP, as debates on this sensitive issue have been going on for decades now in Morocco.

CONCLUSIONS

LGP has been instrumental in introducing new concepts and mechanisms under a changing and evolving political and legal framework that the 2009 new communal charter initiated and that culminated with the adoption of the new 2011 Constitution. The project has helped communes to open up to external players, especially citizens, and provided much needed confidence, guidance and methodology for them to engage in a constructive fashion. The CDP activity was particularly successful, and seen as a breakthrough participatory approach to planning. It provided commune officials with a methodology with which to engage citizens – often for the first time. In some cases, it even helped beneficiary communes to leverage funding. The fiscal administration and audit activities were also successful interventions in some, though not all, communes.

LGP has had a significant influence on individual youth and women leaders, many of whom have gained the skills, awareness and confidence they need to play a larger role in local governance in the future. Women beneficiaries unanimously agreed that LGP supported the government's mandate to improve women's involvement by providing practical training in both leadership and technical matters. Women, particularly in rural areas, felt better equipped to participate in their commune's affairs and more empowered personally. For youth, LGP appears to have improved their awareness and understanding of local governance issues and processes, and has helped improve their communication with government officials. However, while the dialogue may have increased, many youth still feel frustrated in not having sufficient tangible results, and that frustration threatens to hinder further youth participation.

LGP's impact, though significant, has not been consistent across the set of activities, target groups and stakeholders (communes, elected officials, commune staffers, youth, women and NGO grantees), and geographic locations. In communes that received a significant number of activities and technical assistance, LGP appears to have created momentum for positive change and modernization. Communes with less support were less likely to experience the benefits as fully.

While LGP was successful in demonstrating relevant methods that communes could use to promote citizen engagement, it was less successful at ensuring these methods were institutionalized. While criteria for success may vary, it can be argued that activities that focused primarily on generating clear and tangible outcomes (such as the CDP) were the most impactful and most likely to be sustained in the future. Activities that were more process-oriented, such as activities focused on youth and women, tended to have a positive impact on an individual level, but are less likely to be sustained institutionally.

INTRODUCTION

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Through this demand-driven mechanism, some communes signed on for one or two interventions offered by the LGP technical assistance. Others signed on for a much larger spectrum of activities. This flexibility is also reflected in the LGP interventions targeting youth and women through a mechanism by which training and small grants were provided, under the following three project components:

Component One: Increasing citizen participation, especially of youth and women, and consultation with local government (communes). Implementation of Communal Development Plans was a key activity, along with support to youth councils and women in government.

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- I. How effectively did LGP's activities targeting communes contribute to achieving the program objectives?

What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to:

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- 1b. Youth participation and consultation in local governance?
- 1c. Women's participation and consultation in local governance?
- 1d. Improved performance, specifically local government's ability to provide better services to citizens?
- 1e. Transparency and communication?
- 1f. Which activity components were most and least effective in achieving progress toward LGP's overarching objectives?
- 1g. What do targeted beneficiaries see as the most significant changes (positive or negative) to which the project has contributed?

- I. Which activities and results, specifically relating to youth participation, women elected officials, audit systems, complaint management systems, and communication strategies, are most likely to be sustained post project completion? What were the key factors contributing to the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability for the activities above, and how could sustainability have been reinforced?
- II. How effectively did LGP adapt to changing political conditions, as well as to the learning derived from performance monitoring data and evaluation findings? What factors enabled and impeded LGP from effectively adapting its implementation approach in response to findings and/or changing conditions?
- III. To what extent have LGP interventions contributed to and/or influenced the ongoing reform process of the main decentralization law (Communal Charter) as well as the upcoming regionalization plans and the public debate about them?

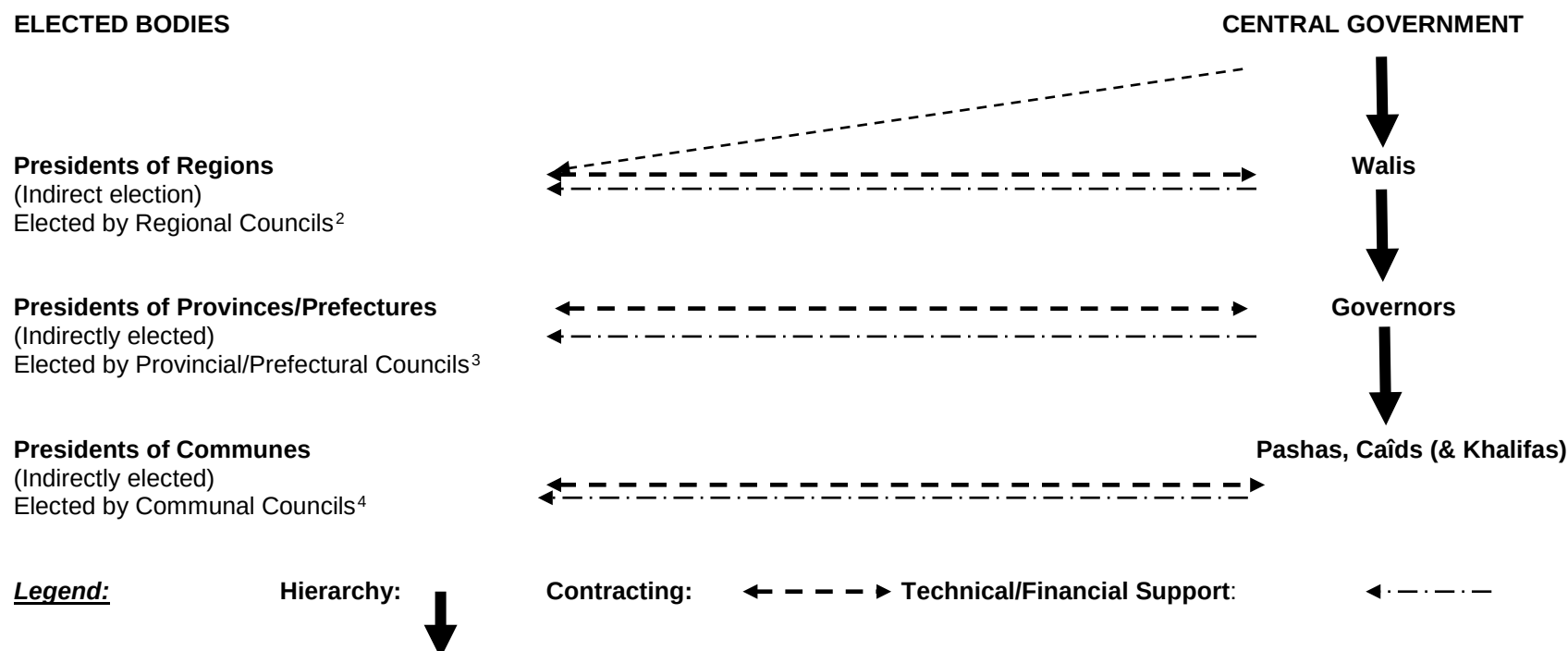
The New Territorial Governance System Context

At the request of USAID, the evaluation team also examined and produced a short brief on the new territorial governance system in Morocco since the adoption of the 2011 Constitution and the 2015 Decentralization Organic Law (see Annex C). The objective of the brief, summarized here, was to highlight for USAID the potential challenges and opportunities that this new territorial system brings for any future programming in the local governance arena in Morocco.

To summarize the description found in Annex C, while the principle of subsidiarity is strengthened, the role of the communes will remain key in the local delivery system, especially for what is called now the *services de proximité*, and the new regions are expected to play a more important role in a new legal and spatial framework. The challenge, however, is that the mandates transferred to them, are still beyond their current fiscal and human capacity.

A more direct implication of this structural change is that the Communal Development Plan (CDP), a key intervention framework for the LGP, is now replaced at the communal level by the Plan d'Actions Prioritaires (PAP). In this new context, therefore, the regions and the provinces, even if their future respective fiscal resources are still uncertain, are going to play an important role in the new sub-national governance system of Morocco, and should, therefore, be strengthened building on the LGP achievements in key governance functions. Moreover, it is important to note here that the role of the traditional *tutelle*, is being further reduced and replaced by what is called now in Morocco *accompagnement* or *contractualisation* (see Figure 1 below). In short, and when compared to other Francophone territorial governance systems, this is another important positive step, and a new opportunity in one of the key areas of the USG assistance in Morocco.

Figure 1. Morocco's New Territorial Governance System in the New Regionalization Context¹



¹ Based on the 2015 New Decentralization Organic Law;

² Regional Councils (12) are directly elected for a six-year term.

³ Provincial/Prefectural Councils (75) are elected by their respective Communal Councils.

⁴ Communal Councils (1503, 221 urban and 1282 rural) are directly elected for a six-year term. Regional and Communal Elections were held in September 2015;

METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The evaluation team was composed of four team members working in Morocco: Dr. Ezzeddine Moudoud, the Co-Team Leader/Governance Expert; Mr. Adnane Raiss, the At-risk Youth Expert; Ms. Saoussane Rifai, the Gender Expert; and Dr. Mhammed Abderebbi, the Survey Expert. The team was supervised by Ms. Aimee Rose, the Co-Team Leader/Quality Assurance Manager working in Washington, DC. Data collection took place in mid-October through mid-November of 2015 with the assistance of two research assistants (one male and one female) and six surveyors (five female and one male).

The evaluation team employed multiple methods to answer the key evaluation questions, including a desk review of all pertinent project reports and available data, key informant interviews with officials and project staff, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries. In addition, the Survey Expert led a survey of 208 male and female LGP beneficiaries in more than nine communes.

The evaluation team focused field work in communes where the most activities were implemented to allow for a substantive appreciation of the project and activities' impact, and to increase possibilities to engage with various categories of project beneficiaries that had significant exposure to the project. The evaluation team selected three communes in each of the regions of Fes Boulemane and Doukkala Abda and in two communes in the region of Rabat-Salé-Zemmour-Zaer (as only five communes benefitted from project support in this region).

Table 1: Type and Sex of Respondents

	Men	Women	Total
Interviewees	42	17	59
Focus Group Participants	40	58	98
Survey Respondents	105	103	208
All Respondent Types	187	178	365

The selection of communes guaranteed diversity in terms of commune size, capacity, level of support from the project, sophistication, and absorptive capacity for technical assistance. The urban communes of Fes, Sefrou, El Jadida, Safi, Salé and Kenitra hosted the largest number of activities, which justified their prioritization. On average, rural communes hosted one to two activities, and therefore rural communes made up a smaller percentage of evaluation team visits.

Based on the rationale above, the evaluation team selected the following locations for field work:

Fes Boulemane region:

- Urban commune of Fes (4 activities)
- Urban commune of Sefrou (9 activities)
- Rural commune of Sidi Harazem (2 activities)

Doukkala Abda region:

- Urban commune El Jadida (9 activities)
- Urban commune Safi (7 activities)
- Rural commune of Moulay Abdellah (5 activities)

Rabat-Salé-Zemmour Zaer

- Urban commune of Salé (4 activities)
- Rural commune of Ameer (1 activity)

Other areas:

- Urban commune of Kenitra (7 activities)

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

To learn more about the implementation of and results from the three main project components, interviews were conducted with commune council members in eight selected communes in three regions in addition to 16 FGDs with youth and women of local associations in each of the communes (see Annex E for a complete list). The primary objective at this level was to assess whether the approaches to local governance introduced by the LGP since 2009 had “taken root” and whether they proved to be effective.

At the national level semi-structured interviews were conducted with a key partner of the LGP, the Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales (DGCL), and some of its former senior staff. The interviews were focused on topics of the sustainability of LGP’s activities, lessons learned in the process, and the remaining policy challenges and barriers to effective local governance. A number of semi-structured interviews were also conducted through USAID with former LGP staff and consultants.

Beneficiary Survey

A survey of direct beneficiaries was included to understand the quality of implementation and acceptability of LGP interventions, and give the evaluation team a sense of whether the interventions have translated into sustained improvements on the ground. Random selection of beneficiaries was not possible due to the absence of comprehensive beneficiary lists with contact information. Given this significant constraint, the evaluation team used snowball sampling to identify and reach beneficiaries. Snowball sampling is a non-probability based technique in which a core group of eligible respondents are identified and asked to lead the research team to other eligible respondents. In each commune the survey team consulted with LGP partners to identify a small number of beneficiaries who fit the target description in each of the selected communes. For example, the team met with the Municipal Director of Sefrou commune to facilitate meetings with one or two beneficiaries from each category of beneficiaries (youth, women elected officials, government employees, and NGO workers). After being interviewed, each participant was then asked to suggest three to five other beneficiaries and to provide contact information for them.

The team originally planned to conduct 160 face-to-face interviews (20 interviews in each of eight communes), along with 100 telephone interviews in other communes. The approach was selected to balance the preference for face-to-face interviews with the desire to cover more communes in a limited amount of time. The survey team conducted a total of 208 interviews, of which 149 were face-to-face and 59 were done over the telephone. The team could not reach the target number of interviews due to several factors. First, it often took quite some time to make initial contact with the commune level officials and receive the needed information to make first introductions. Sometimes contact information was inaccurate. Furthermore, many communes only had one or two types of beneficiaries, making the target of reaching 20 beneficiaries more difficult. Finally, it was sometimes difficult to schedule a convenient time and place for a face-to-face interview; in some cases, even in communes which the team physically visited, telephone interviews were conducted to accommodate the respondents’ requests.

Once contact was initiated with beneficiaries, the response rate was high. In total the team contacted 219 beneficiaries who were eligible to participate and successfully surveyed 208, including 105 men and 103 women.⁵ Beneficiaries were selected based on their involvement in activities geared toward youth (59 respondents), elected women officials (50), government employees (53) or NGOs (48).⁶ The majority of

⁵ The 11 beneficiaries who did not want to participate included four youth, two women elected officials, and five government employees.

⁶ Two respondents reported being part of more than one type of activity.

respondents were from one of nine communes listed above, while four came from other communes in the Fes Boulemane region and five came from other communes in the Doukkala Abda region.

The survey was completed using tablets programmed with the survey instrument in the local dialect of Arabic. The type of LGP activities the respondent participated in determined the modules that were administered. Most responses were multiple choice, with only a few open response questions, to allow for ease of comparison. The survey instrument can be found in Annex D.

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation team experienced difficulties due to the fact that LGP ended almost a year before the evaluation began. On one hand, this presented an opportunity to look at proven sustainability of the project. On the other hand, it presented challenges to respondent recall and finding contacts. The survey also took place after 2015 elections: thus, many officials, as well as former LGP staff, had to be tracked down since they could not be found in their previous institutions. Also for this reason, several former commune officials and project beneficiaries could not be engaged as they were not re-elected. Similarly, a fair amount of youth beneficiaries moved to new cities to take on a job or to pursue higher education.

The beneficiary survey was limited by reliance on the non-probability sampling technique of snowball sampling and a smaller sample than planned. Both constraints were the result of not having access to complete beneficiary lists with contact information. As a result of using snowball sampling, the survey sample may have been biased towards more cooperative, well-known beneficiaries. Because the initial group of respondents were identified with the help of LGP partners, it is possible that they held a more positive-than-average view of the project. Since other respondents were recruited from the social networks of the first group, people lying outside of those networks were excluded from selection, which may have led to recruitment of respondents who were more similar to the first group than to non-selected beneficiaries. Therefore, this report places less weight on the survey results alone, and uses them mostly to triangulate other findings.

Table 2: Respondents, by Commune

Commune	# Face-to-face Interviews	# Phone Interviews	# Total Interviews
Fes	24	6	30
Sefrou	32	10	42
Sidi Harazem	4	3	7
El Jadida	26	4	30
Safi	20	8	28
Moulay Abdellah	20	2	22
Salé	13	0	13
Ameur	10	4	14
Kenitra	0	13	13
Other (Doukkala Abda region)	0	5	5
Other (Fes Boulemane region)	0	4	4
Total	208	149	59

FINDINGS

The evaluation findings are presented in order of the key evaluation questions.

LGP RESULTS & BENEFICIARY PERCEPTIONS

Evaluation Question 1a: How effectively did LGP’s activities targeting communes contribute to achieving the program objective of increased participation of citizens in governance?

Despite generally negative public perceptions about communes and elected officials,⁷ the evaluation team found that LGP has laid the groundwork for incremental transformation of the nature of the relationship, away from confrontation and distrust to constructive engagement and participation. In particular, the development of communal development plans (CDP) served as a breakthrough in introducing a new inclusive and participatory approach to planning, and was a quantum leap forward from a cultural and technical vantage point.

The Communal Development Plan: a Catalyst for Citizen Participation

The Communal Development Plan (CDP) component is an example where the impact of the LGP – especially in the long-term – was tangible, as witnessed by the evaluation team members in visits to many communes including Sefrou, Moulay Abdellah and Kenitra. The CDP was a vehicle through which innovative local planning and promoting citizen participation found fertile ground. Through the signed MOUs, the communes were urged to embrace an integrated and holistic framework while considering their needs and future vision. In this respect, the project was able to “root” a new paradigm of consulting and effectively engaging all stakeholders, particularly civil society, which is traditionally very centralized in Moroccan local governance culture.

The impact of this specific activity, in terms of fostering a new cultural mindset and methodological approach, was also evident from the enthusiasm and sense of ownership expressed by commune players. Several communes admitted that this activity was literally the first time the commune had “*opened up to external players*” such as external services of key Ministries, the private sector, and more importantly local civil society, neighborhood associations, labor unions, universities, youth-led and youth-serving organizations and women’s organizations. It also provided commune officials with the methodology and confidence to engage citizens despite the lack of prior relationships or even sustained contact, and despite concerns that initial dialogue and consultation meetings would be seized by citizens as opportunities to vent their frustrations and grievances.

According to key informants, CDP enabled commune stakeholders to move beyond the day-to-day operations mindset to a more forward-looking vision for their commune while considering the needs and aspirations of various sectors and segments of society. Moreover, it helped beneficiary communes to leverage investment funding to supplement their own fiscal revenues, such as in the case of Sefrou,

⁷ This reflects a reality that is shared and that can be noticed through exchanges with the vast majority of Moroccan citizens at the grassroots level, and that was confirmed through focus group discussions with youth and semi-structured interviews with NGO grantees.

which received an additional 30% from the DGCL for local projects investments alone, over and above the year-marked grants that all the communes receive for their operational budgets.

The accomplishment of CDP was undeniable, but it did not prove equally successful in all communes. LGP provided much needed expertise that communes lacked and resources to develop this new planning tool, and efforts to implement the plans were underway in most cases, but communes were not all provided with the same sustained support. Most communes visited by the evaluation team were not able to provide a soft copy, or even print a copy, of their CDP, let alone a report that clearly describes progress made to date. Also, as first pointed out in the mid-term evaluation report, LGP was not able to effectively address cultural and behavioral limiting factors of locally elected officials, which considerably affected sustained buy-in and institutionalization of citizen participation.⁸

Officials in Moulay Abdellah commune told the evaluation team that it was the only commune that was able to accomplish as much as 80% of the planned projects in the CDP, although they did not have documents to substantiate this claim.⁹ All the efforts responsible for the successful adoption of the participatory approach by most communes visited could have been better leveraged with ongoing technical assistance to subsequent phases in areas such as project design, proposal writing and resource mobilization. Beneficiary communes, even as rich as Moulay Abdellah, will need ongoing support to address their evolving needs and make sure the plans are translated to action.

Youth Participation and Consultation in Local Governance

Evaluation Question 1b: What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to youth participation in governance?

There was a consensus among youth interviewed and youth FGD respondents that LGP was instrumental in enhancing their awareness and understanding of local governance issues and roles and responsibilities of their commune, and in bridging the historical divide and mistrust between youth and elected officials. These achievements were unanimously agreed to by youth FGD participants as the project's most significant impact, along with the skills acquisition and self-confidence that the process facilitated.

All stakeholders unanimously agreed that LGP has created a new precedent for dialogue and consultation between youth and commune officials. Of youth beneficiaries, 86% surveyed said that LGP activities improved youth participation in government. The most commonly cited effects benefits were improvement in youth knowledge about government (73%), greater interaction with civil society (71%), and greater attendance at events (56%). For instance, several communes went as far as disclosing their accounts and budgets with youth, which was instrumental in creating a sense of transparency and dispelling the usual suspicion and distrust between local government and youth.

To the question of whether there had been progress in involving youth in consultation processes, 56% of youth respondents said there had been some progress, while 27% reported good progress and 14% reported no progress at all. While there were efforts to jumpstart a process of youth participation

⁸ LGP Mid-term Evaluation Report, page 27.

⁹ Moulay Abdellah is the second wealthiest commune in Morocco after Ain Louh, according to its Secretary General who added that it generated a MAD 8,000,000,000 (over \$ 8 million) surplus in FY 2014.

during the life of the project, LGP paid less attention to securing and optimizing outcomes that would ensure success, credibility and ownership of the process in the short and long term. As a consequence, few activities have materialized into tangible, visible, sustainable changes that affect youth expectations, daily lives and specific needs at the community level.

Moreover, there are limited institutionalized mechanisms for youth participation and consultation that have been sustained post-LGP, particularly as the majority of local youth councils are inactive or semi-active. The focus of dialogue platforms facilitated by LGP was primarily on the communes, and on external services of key Ministries and government agencies such as the National Agency for Promoting Employment and Skills (ANAPEC), which were characterized by the lack of three fundamental elements: political will, decision-making power, and funding.

There is no clear evidence that activities such as open houses on employment, which brought together communes and government entities specialized in youth employment, resulted in concrete and measurable outcomes such as job placements or internship opportunities. Similarly, there is no evidence of implementation of recommendations that were formulated as a result of the forum on the role of youth in public policy that brought together the ten local youth councils that were established. This stems from the fact that LGP implementation was driven by a process-oriented approach of dialogue and engagement and tended to overlook the need to generate concrete outcomes as a means to ensure credibility, ownership and sustainability.

A few youth participants gave credit to LGP for introducing the concept of youth participation and helping their commune develop a relevant vision in this area, but they noted a lack of continued support. The majority of elected officials still persist in perceiving this effort as a “burden” and a “waste of time,” as some youth put it.

A handful of youth leaders who participated in LGP activities have become elected officials within their communes in a few locations following the September 2015 regional and communal elections. They gave credit to LGP for enhancing their interest and skills to participate in civic life. It is too early to determine what this means in terms of advocacy for a youth agenda at the local level, but it does speak to LGP’s role as inspirational, on the personal, as well as political, level.

The evaluation team found that the outreach strategy employed by LGP to reach youth contributed to unhealthy dynamics and negative perceptions in more than a few communes. Indeed, LGP’s approach to working with the commune youth was often seen as top-down. Having communes lead the selection of CSOs who then selected candidates for local youth councils was commonly perceived to introduce bias and favoritism, with preference being given to groups that enjoy privileged status or that hold friendly political affiliations and allegiances. Several youth leaders suggested that a bottom-up grassroots effort, led by recognized groups seen as representative of various segments and neighborhoods and districts of the commune, would be a more credible and appropriate approach.

Relying exclusively on Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in this context limited youth representation and project credibility, particularly because many youth have negative perceptions about civil society and local NGOs. It seems that the project did not engage in a deliberate effort to ensure diversity of the initial roster of youth who would serve as founding members of local youth councils. Youth leaders admitted in several cases that they struggled with the issue of legitimacy with their peers from other neighborhoods and other segments of society. For instance, there had been no outreach efforts with educational institutions, youth community centers, and neighborhood associations in marginalized areas where youth are most likely to be vulnerable and disaffected, which limited the council’s reach and perceived legitimacy.

On the topic of exchange visits to the US, discussed through FGDs and interviews, there was no reference to the benefits, but rather several instances of frustration with the lack of democratic process to select representatives from local councils who were not consulted (which was said to be at odds with the spirit and values the project was meant to instill), or the fact that some communes were excluded from participation in this activity. Members of local youth councils had the impression that participants were hand-picked from project staff based on criteria that were unknown to them, and wished they had been consulted on these criteria and the selection process. Local youth councils from El Jadida and Kenitra were among the most vocal about this specific issue.

Training workshops provided a much-needed opportunity for youth to gain an understanding of local governance, processes of consultation and participation in public policy, and to acquire foundational skills such as communication and project design. The workshops boosted youth's self-esteem, which is clearly noticeable in direct interactions with project beneficiaries. However, youth participants noted several technical shortcomings of the workshops in terms of length, a methodology that did not prioritize skills-building and implementation in daily life, and systematic targeting of the same beneficiaries to optimize benefit and impact. Also, training efforts were primarily focused on individuals, and did not factor in the need to build teams to ensure efficient group dynamics and collaborative processes, as well as formal structures that would last beyond the involvement of their founding members through robust organizational development. A National Association of Local Youth Councils was created by LGP on October 7, 2014, just two months before the project close-out, with the objective of facilitating networking, exchange of experience, and ongoing support and training. However, the founding president reported that beyond some initial office equipment (one laptop, one desktop, and two desks that are sitting at an NGO's premises, as the entity does not have an office), no funding was provided and no clear roadmap was developed for it to accomplish its mission and goals. As of November 2015 when the evaluation team met with the Association President, the association had not organized any activity and had only rough ideas of possible future activities. The President also regretted that the association was not created at an earlier stage to increase the odds of success.

Regarding gender considerations, local youth councils were initially designed to be composed of an equal number of males and females. The evaluation team did not detect specific patterns or trends that could serve as an indication of any differing interest, commitment, or engagement of male and female youth within local youth councils.

Women's Participation and Consultation in Local Governance

Evaluation Question 1c: What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to women's participation in governance?

LGP's technical assistance targeting elected women officials was aimed to strengthen their active participation through a number of activities. These activities included a diagnostic study, the implementation of a leadership development program for women elected officials, support for the creation of women elected officials networks at the provincial and regional levels, and the organization of forums.

There was a consensus among women interviewed that LGP had improved women's capacity to participate in their commune affairs in that the training improved their confidence and assertiveness. This result appeared more pronounced for women in rural areas. Specifically, participants from Sefrou, El Jadida, Safi, and Moulay Yacoub stated that LGP gender training helped them become less timid, more vocal, and better able to intervene during group meetings. Before receiving the LGP's leadership training,

these women reported feeling shy and limited during their early years of experience as commune elected officials. Rural women spoke very highly of the contribution of LGP training activities to their empowerment.

These qualitative data appear supported by the results of the beneficiary survey, with 42 out of 50 women (84%) saying they believed that women's capacity had improved as a result of participating in LGP activities. Moreover, 68% of women interviewed felt that women had gained more technical knowledge, while 80% believed that the elected women were more confident as a result of participating in LGP activities.

Except for some participants from the Fes focus group who thought that the leadership training could have been better customized to their needs and current political practice, all other FGD participants valued the leadership training, especially the workshops that introduced them to notions of development plans and those where a gender approach to development was discussed. For these women, especially in El Jadida, Moulay Yacoub, and Safi, the training introduced them to new ways of perceiving their role as commune elected officials that emphasized both leadership and ownership. The FGDs revealed an interest among all participants in training-of-trainers (TOT) and involving previous beneficiaries in training of new women elected officials, either via the networks or separately.

While there was a consensus among interviewed women regarding the difficulty that elected women face to have their voices and opinions taken into account: 68% of survey respondents believe that women officials have more opportunities to voice their opinions now. Half the respondents also believe that the government is more open to listening to women officials. Women from rural areas especially said that their image as capable leaders has improved over time thanks to the learning that they gained via the LGP gender training, which sharpened their communication skills and enabled them to have a space for introspection, but also to practice their listening and strategic thinking skills. As an example, women from Sefrou, El Jadida (Sidi Abed) and Moulay Yacoub cited the value of the LGP training in learning how to practice negotiation, build alliances, conduct citizen outreach, and even develop political campaigns during the last election.

Focus group participants in the Fes Boulemane and Doukkala Abda regions believe that LGP has raised women's interest in assuming more responsibility within the commune's affairs. This finding is more pronounced among rural women. LGP appears to have increased women's exposure to both the managerial and political practice side of communal affairs, especially in rural areas where women's visibility has increased and manifested itself through greater participation in commune consultations. While the women believe that they still suffer from some contextual issues that are hampering their access to decision making positions within the commune, 14 out of 33 (42%) FGD participants said that they have assumed or are assuming responsibilities as commune vice presidents, representatives in the provincial councils, or presidents of communal committees. The FGDs did not reveal any significant difference between rural and urban areas with respect to the women's access to decision-making positions within communes.

The beneficiary survey revealed that 54% of respondents had participated in LGP's CDP activity and 64% had participated in the Gender and Equal Opportunity Committees (*Comité de Parité et d'Égalité des Chances*, or CPEC). Although the number of women contributing to other LGP activities was much lower (only 18% of interviewees took part in anti-corruption training and 22% participated in inter-communal dialogue), the beneficiary survey found that 86% of all women elected officials who were interviewed believe that their communes have made progress in terms of the involvement of women in the consultation process.

During FGDs, women expressed belief that the new organic law for territorial communes is supporting them to assume more responsibility within the communes' executive bureaus, and that the LGP training has contributed to building their leadership capacity ahead of such developments in the broad political context. Women across all groups believe that they are now ready to take managerial responsibility within communes' bureaus, an important change compared with the past when women were not confident about their capacity to navigate the complex political environment of communal politics.

Another qualitative contribution of LGP as seen by the focus group participants was a shift in their own view of politics: across all focus groups, except in Kenitra, where women did not participate in the women leadership training, and in Fes urban commune, women agreed that the leadership training had transformed their own opinion on politics in a positive way. Through progressive learning and interactions with other women, the training and workshops had helped them put their own experience in context. Indeed, women officials of Moulay Yacoub, Sefrou and Safi said that the training made them become more practical, less fearful, and more aware of the importance of continued capacity building in improving their own performance.

Discussions with beneficiaries revealed that women are held to high standards by both the community and their male counterparts. While women respondents said that this scrutiny has pressured them to work harder, it has also made them aware of their own limitations and long-term need for capacity building in technical subjects. Women consistently expressed a need for further training to consolidate their previously acquired knowledge in communal management. They felt that LGP's training provided a necessary foundation not only for understanding their roles as elected officials, but also for progressing towards a more performance-oriented approach, which will require a sustained effort of technical capacity building and training in communal management. This finding is further corroborated by open response answers to the beneficiary survey.

FGD participants from Sefrou, Moulay Yacoub, and El Jadida, and Safi, considered LGP to be a catalyst of change and a first platform for knowledge acquisition and sharing among elected women officials. They believed that the training made them more aware of the need to share knowledge among other women officials, especially the newly elected ones. Across all FGDs, the women saw the importance of continuing the leadership training because they felt that capacity building and interactions with other women in the political domain can help newly elected women develop the confidence necessary to work with everyone at the commune and become effective elected officials. Women from Sefrou and Moulay Yacoub cited the value of networking training, and how their participation in workshops of elected women officials have contributed to their learning.

Rural women who participated in FGDs saw more value in networking with other women elected officials compared to urban participants. Sefrou, Moulay Yacoub and El Jadida all appear to have operational women's networks. Kenitra's network of elected women is newly formed and is yet to start. This evaluation detected a few challenges pertaining to these elected women's networks. While women's regional networks were designed to strengthen women's capacity at a broader level and to create mentoring as well as inter-communal linkages, the FGD participants did not appear to conceive it as such. The discussion revealed that women across all focus groups preferred the provincial structure of their current women's networks, as this enabled them to focus on inter-communality and to share experiences with women in their provinces.

Of women survey respondents, 60% thought that the leadership training had a significant impact on their commune while 33% felt it had weak impact. This is consistent with qualitative results derived from the focus group discussions, which revealed women's eagerness to advance in the commune's decision-making chain and to play a greater role in local management of the commune. Across all the FGDs,

women believed in the value of their contribution as elected officials. They cited examples such as developing advocacy material to strengthen women's participation in communal affairs, answering their phones at any time of day or night to respond to citizens' demands (mentioned in Moulay Abdellah and Sidi Abed), or voting at times against their own party members when they deemed the commune's plans were not effective. While they thought that LGP had reinforced their leadership capacity as previously cited, they also believed that LGP's impact is challenged by the lack of continuity of training activities, by the minimal inclusion of men officials as beneficiaries of technical assistance, and by the prevailing construct of masculinity in traditional settings. Nonetheless, they saw the value of LGP in helping them become role models in their communities, inspiring other women to participate as political candidates in the 2015 election.

Performance of the Communes

Evaluation Question 1d: What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to improved performance of the communes, specifically related to the government's ability to provide better services to citizens?

LGP's approach to enhancing performance of the communes consisted of a diverse set of activities that included technical assistance to evaluate their performance and develop performance improvement plans; demand-driven training programs; strengthening the communes' internal systems with a focus on implementing the new communal tax administration; and leadership development training targeting locally elected women officials in the three project regions.

New Communal Tax Administration

The tax administration activity was designed to support communes in embracing new approaches to fiscal management based on performance in specific contextual parameters: procedures, organization and method. It was supposed to involve implementing the new fiscal administration, allocating human resources to ensure that qualified staff are appointed to positions in line with their training and skills, and managing tax information in a systematic and integrated fashion in conjunction with stakeholders involved in the process of managing fees or tax revenue.

Fiscal administration is another area where tangible results and impact have been achieved by the LGP, yet not across all communes. In spite of the late start of this specific activity, the LGP helped the communes shift their focus to revenues from expenditures alone, in order to effectively implement their Communal Development Plans and their multi-year investment projects portfolio. Kenitra commune appears to have benefitted most from this activity. Based on the field interview with Kenitra's leadership and staff, the commune's fiscal revenue rose from 170 million MAD in 2009 to 250 million MAD in 2014 as a direct result of the new approach to fiscal management introduced by LGP. However, and unfortunately, Kenitra is the only commune (out of the five communes targeted by this activity)¹⁰ that achieved this impressive result. The other four did not benefit from the same sustained project effort, beyond an initial assessment, for reasons unknown to the evaluation team.

Transparency and Communication in Local Government

¹⁰ The other four are: El Jadida, Rural Commune of Mouley Abadallah, Tanger and Benguerir.

Evaluation Question 1e: What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to transparency and communication in local government?

This component included a variety of activities focused on improving the relationship between citizens and their communes through greater openness, responsiveness, and improved communication. Examples of activities include public forums aimed at promoting dialogue on local affairs; the development of communication plans to improve outreach and citizens' information on communal affairs; the introduction of internal audit mechanisms; and streamlining complaint management systems.

Communication Plans

Following assessments, capacity-building and design of communication strategies, most communes have not allocated resources to execute planned activities and products. Even in the best cases, only a marginal portion of the communications plan has been implemented, according to direct interlocutors overseeing this activity in the communication units. In Sefrou, the commune improved its signage, while the El Jadida commune still exhibits the old name of "municipality" at the main entrance. Other communications activities seem to have been executed haphazardly, and often consist of little more than printing of basic promotional material and tools or hosting a reception. Elected officials and staff still rely on traditional methods of communication, and information is still typically retained rather than shared, based on interviews with staff in communication units. Beyond the technical dimension and input, an initial assessment of communication patterns and practices, and ongoing monitoring and analysis of behavioral and cultural change with relevant measures to address them, could have considerably expanded this activity's impact, in addition to ensuring the initial commitment of communes to allocating the human and financial resources needed to translate communication plans into tangible activities.

Audit Mechanisms

LGP did succeed in setting up and supporting some successful audit departments. Where they succeeded, factors that appeared linked to their success included proper training with appropriately developed manuals, risk mapping, and piloting of audits. Following the training and technical assistance, several communes conducted audits independently, even after the project ended, which is a very good sign of ownership, support and institutionalization. Safi and Salé carried out three audits, Fes carried out four, and El Jadida carried out two, with one additional audit underway. The quality of the audit training content and methodology was very well received by all communes, with most interlocutors providing glowing reports on the professionalism of Auditas trainers and experts. Only in Safi did some key informants criticize the pedagogy and complain of a lack of follow-up.

Complaints Management

This activity consisted of supporting pilot communes to improve practices for welcoming, processing, and responding to complaints, grievances, and other claims from individuals and corporations. The activity was generally regarded as an additional burden by commune leadership and most communes the evaluation team visited struggled with lack of interest. Safi officials, for example, openly admitted to not dedicating the required attention to this activity, as there seemed to be limited political will to implement it. The commune received training and technical assistance, but still handles complaints within various divisions in a decentralized fashion. An outlier was Kenitra, where the commune managed to address 40% of the 1,000 complaints registered in the first year the complaints division was operational, and 40 – 50% in the following year.

The iPad terminal meant to be used by citizens to check on the status of their complaints has not been set up in most cases due to lack of interest in the activity, preference for a more traditional method of interacting with individual citizens, or security concerns. The one exception observed by the evaluation team was at the Sefrou commune office, where the terminal had been set up at the entrance. Even in Kenitra, where the complaints management activity performed relatively well, the terminal was not set up as per initial plans.

Most and Least Effective Activities

Evaluation Question 1f: Which activity components were most and least effective in achieving progress toward LGP's overarching objectives?

Of all LGP interventions, the evaluation team assessed the CDP technical assistance, leadership development training and audit training and as the most effective, while the complaints management, CPEC activity, and communications plan development activities were considered least effective.

The effectiveness of the audit training initiative can be attributed to a sound technical approach that combined capacity-building, hands-on training through pilot audit exercises on concrete issues and examples, and the creation of an audit entity within communes that was well supported by ongoing technical assistance and various manuals. Communes visited by the evaluation team are pursuing additional audits in the post LGP period. More importantly, DGCL has worked with 18 communes in 2015 on its own budget to introduce internal auditing, and intends to do the same in 40 communes and in 12 new regions in 2016. Despite its overall success, feedback from all staffers in charge of this activity revealed lingering misperceptions and resistance from various players within the commune, which appear to stem from a lack of proper understanding or concerns for unwanted scrutiny and disclosure of fraudulent practices.

The complaints management activity was one of the less effective activities because it had limited sustainable impact and there has been little ongoing interest to fully execute and institutionalize this practice. Except in Kenitra (and Sefrou to a limited extent), commune complaints divisions seemed to suffer from major impediments and to lack the basis prerequisites: funding, political will and sufficient interest from key players, support and buy-in from other divisions and stakeholders within communes, sufficient human resources, staff motivation and morale, and appropriate office space that is visible for citizens. Based on semi-structured interviews with commune staff, involvement in or assignment to this activity was often perceived as a form of “punishment,” given the complexity of the activity and lack of cooperation from staff.

Efforts to promote the development of communications plans received very little traction and have had little residual impact post LGP, in part because the communes were not allocated proper human and financial resources to fully implement the communication plans that were designed. Some respondents also criticized the technical approach to implementation of this activity. For instance, Safi commune stakeholders believed that the technical assistance provided by LGP was not sufficient and that support with strategy implementation and the establishment of a communications division could have leveraged initial efforts.

LGP established Gender and Equal Opportunity Committees (*Comité de Parité et d'Égalité des Chances-CPEC*) in ten communes, and developed and implemented a training kit and program to support them. The CPEC itself was introduced in the 2009 communal charter as a primary communication channel for engaging and involving civil society in communal life. This activity is clearly among LGP's less effective ones due to a variety of factors, all described in LGP's final report. These factors include a lack of clarity

over the process, absence of sufficient and proper messaging and technical assistance, lack of clarity on the specific role and process for operationalizing the committee, lack of ownership from elected officials and staff who failed to recognize the added value of this new entity compared to existing ones, the large number of members (up to 35 in some instances), challenges posed by the perceived need to ensure diversity and representation of all sectors and key stakeholders, lack of specific selection criteria for members, and instances of favoritism that drove the selection of members.

The evaluation team saw these factors in action. In Sefrou, for example, the committee has not been activated yet as the legal framework is still perceived as vague, and elected officials and staffers have not expressed ownership over the added value of this entity. In Safi, the commune struggled with finding the right profiles and the need to maintain diversity in terms of geography, talent and areas of interest, but is still keen on proceeding with this activity. In the Moulay Abdellah commune, the official in charge of this activity was not even aware that a committee had been formed and had convened a meeting. In Sidi Harazem commune, officials told the evaluation team that the concept could have been better explained, as there was little interest and understanding following the sensitization meeting that was held in the province, and as there was lack of clarity on membership, despite the presentation of the Safi and Rabat experience. Kenitra stakeholders shared the same concern as the vision and process for setting up the committee were not clear to them, despite the series of activities and workshops that they received. Cultural dimensions tied to the misunderstanding of the concept of gender equality, and attempts to politicize this activity, were also referred to as impeding factors by commune interlocutors.

Most Significant Changes

Evaluation Question 1f: What do targeted beneficiaries (including male and female local government officials, civil society organizations, and male and female youth members) see as the most significant changes (positive or negative) to which the project has contributed?

Focus group discussants and some key informants were asked to discuss the most significant changes they observed resulting from LGP's interventions, and what they consider to be the anticipated impact of these changes in the longer-term. Below are the most common themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews.

Increased awareness and understanding of local governance. Awareness-raising workshops held on local governance, the communal charter, open houses explaining the organizational structure of communes or their budget structure were instrumental in demystifying governance processes, particularly for youth and women.

Enhanced capacity of youth and women to engage in local governance. Training workshops in leadership for women, and capacity-building efforts in skills such as communication and project design, have provided the needed skills set and confidence in these groups to engage in dialogue with commune officials.

Methodology and process to introduce new participatory approaches and concepts. Most communes did not have a track record of engaging citizens and lacked the appropriate methods and skills to introduce participatory approaches to communal affairs. They often feared that attempts to engage the community would turn into opportunities to vent their grievances and common labeling of elected officials. LGP has been able to build the confidence of communes and elected officials to engage citizens in a constructive fashion, and has set a historical precedent in many instances. However, the crowning of such efforts with concrete outcomes aligned with priorities and needs of the target groups

vary significantly (higher for activities such as the CDP, and lower for youth and women related activities).

Promotion of dialogue and consultation: All stakeholders have described LGP as having created a historical precedent for dialogue between youth and elected officials through formal meetings. Youth leaders unanimously reported that LGP played a crucial role in “breaking the ice” between them and elected officials, and in addressing the “usual suspicion”, stereotypes and historical divide and distrust that each group had cultivated in the past. Small grants were very efficient in creating fora for youth and elected officials to engage and collaborate.

Introduction of inclusive and participatory approaches to planning. LGP’s contribution in terms of providing the much needed methodology and process to introduce new and complex collaborative and participatory concepts and approaches, such as the communal development plan, was applauded across the board by all stakeholders.

Improved technical capacity of communes to institutionalize some complex tasks. LGP is perceived as having contributed to empowering communes and their staff by introducing such technical solutions as audit systems through a multi-pronged approach that included capacity-building, hands-on and on the job training, and follow-on technical assistance.

Creation of momentum for positive change and modernization. LGP is considered to have fostered a process of institutional capacity-building that enabled communes to move beyond old-fashioned methods to modern approaches likely to improve performance, such as complaints management, audit and communication mechanisms.

Improved strategic planning processes. The technical assistance provided by LGP to develop the communal development plans has been crucial in introducing the need to develop a long term vision and plan in consultation with all key stakeholders and to move beyond day to day activities and the overwhelming and constraining short term thinking and mindset.

SUSTAINABILITY OF LGP ACTIVITIES

Evaluation Question 2: Which activities and results, specifically relating to youth participation, women elected officials, audit systems, complaint management systems, and communication strategies, are most likely to be sustained post project completion?

In the context of LGP, sustainability is marked by local ownership, transfer of skills or methods, the efficient functioning of mechanisms and structures, attitudinal and behavioral change, and the ongoing production of tangible outcomes. Based on project participants’ reflections and recommendations, and patterns observed by the evaluation team, the factors contributing to the achievement and non-achievement of sustainability are described below. This section also presents “mini-case studies” in sustainability by examining the sustainability of youth-related activities, and women’s views on the sustainability of LGP activities.

Overall Factors Contributing to the Achievement of Sustainability

- Strong sense of political will and ownership over an activity from commune leadership and elected officials
- Overall level of maturity of communes (level of sophistication, openness to civic participation and consultation)

- Long-term commitment of communes to earmarking proper resources (human resources, office space, and funding)
- Organizational culture supporting ongoing change, motivation, career advancement and skills-development of staff
- Availability of qualified and motivated staff
- Existence of institutional mechanisms for sustainability (unit or division dedicated to a specific activity, local youth councils registered as a formal organization)
- Conducive political landscape that provides support for commune leadership's proposed vision and initiative
- Relevance of the technical design of an activity, particularly in the initial phases of engagement and early steps
- Presence of ongoing mentoring, hands-on training and experimentation, proper follow-up and monitoring, and technical assistance

Overall Factors Contributing to the Non-achievement of Sustainability

- Absence of a systematic and relevant design of sustainability and exit strategy customized and executed for each activity at an early stage of implementation
- Lack of a shared, compelling long-term vision and focus on the bigger picture among elected officials, staff, and other key stakeholders likely to inspire and mobilize all forces, with references to the contribution and alignment of each specific activity to the grand vision
- Lack of technical skill of project beneficiaries in stakeholder engagement and resource mobilization to develop synergies and alliances and to secure needed funding
- Lack of effective mechanisms for teamwork, collaboration, and positive reinforcement between elected officials and commune staff
- Lack of sufficient and ongoing awareness-raising and engagement of all stakeholders
- Lack of sufficient clarity over the process and a sufficient skills set to lead the activity independently
- Absence of customized and appropriate messaging and optics likely to address specific interests and motives of target groups and stakeholders and ensure buy-in and ownership
- Lack of holistic approach to capacity-building that integrates skills needed as part of the bigger and long term picture, and a parallel focus on both individual and institutional capacity-building
- Lack of a clear and shared roadmap with milestones and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for communes to sustain an activity post-LGP support
- Lack of engagement of broader stakeholders likely to provide resources and help in delivering concrete outcomes
- Process-oriented approaches and lack of attention to the need to generate concrete and tangible outcomes

Sustainability of Youth-related Programming

Evidence of the sustainability of LGP's youth activities varies significantly by commune. Some youth-led groups and local youth councils have taken the initiative to register as NGOs, and they continue to engage their commune and participate in local governance to some extent. However, the majority of local youth councils are either inactive or in semi-active mode, due to the lack of institutionalization mechanisms, legal status, and to often overlooked factors of success, such as funding, office space, mentoring, and the political will of commune officials. This observation appears to be supported by the beneficiary survey which found that 17% of youth beneficiaries reported that their commune made good

or very good progress in support of youth activities in the last five years, compared to 32% who reported “some progress” and 51% who reported “no progress.”

In addition, the National Association of Local Youth Councils, created during the last year of the project, did not receive funding to operate and was not supported with a clear roadmap and vision for its future programming. Therefore, despite the claims made in LGP’s final report, the evaluation team found no evidence of an “*emergence of a coalition for youth*”; rather, there was an absence of sustained engagement between local youth councils and young parliamentarians post-LGP to pursue dialogue and joint efforts to formalize local youth councils. Finally, with the exception of Kenitra and Sefrou communes, no permanent structures for promoting dialogue and participation with civil society and youth have been established during or post LGP implementation.

Women’s Views of Sustainability of LGP Activities

When asked which activities they felt be sustained using the commune’s own resources, 76% of elected women officials participating in the beneficiary survey chose women leadership training compared with 50% for inter-communal dialogue and 34% for anti-corruption training. Given the high rate of satisfaction with leadership training among elected women participants and women’s interest in improving their leadership capacities, this is an activity that is more likely to be sustained post-LGP. The increase in the number of newly elected women officials¹¹ in local and regional councils also offers an opportunity to sustain the leadership training, although the elected women expressed during the FGDs that these trainings should be accompanied with follow-up mechanisms that ensure that women practice the skills learned during the training.

Although the number of women who believe that some or most LGP activities could be sustained post-LGP completion is significant, the beneficiary survey did not explore whether the capacity for sustaining these activities is contingent upon existing funding and human resources, or simply on the commune’s capability to mobilize the necessary resources. The beneficiary survey, consistent with findings from the FGDs, showed that women believe that sustainability depends on continued funding and capacity building.

Indeed, 52% of women respondents felt that participating in CDP activity had a lasting impact on their community (however weak currently). This is consistent with the fact that training and exposure increases women’s awareness about development priorities within their communes. With more training and involvement of women in future forms of CDP (currently transformed into Local Action Plans: PAP), this activity is likely to be sustained.

Another activity that was seen as highly sustainable by FGD participants is coaching of women elected officials as they progress in their practice of communal affairs. They suggested this could be done either through specifically targeted technical assistance training by external experts or via support to local (provincial) elected women’s networks, which they regarded as a source of knowledge/practice sharing. Former elected women believed that they could play a role in training and preparing new women elected officials via capacity building to sustain the leadership training locally.

¹¹ UN Women reports an increase in the number of elected women to local communes from 12% (2009) to 21% (2015) <http://maghreb.unwomen.org/fr/actualites-evenements/actualites/2015/09/elections-septembre-2015>

As women still face contextual issues stemming from the limited implementation of parity laws within the communes and political parties, all FGD participants saw need for continued support as they advocate for women's participation in political life. One important finding that this evaluation revealed is the high satisfaction rate among women regarding the CPEC, even if communes were not entirely successful at establishing sustainable CPEC bodies. Women found the CPEC mechanism to offer great potential and suggested ways they could be involved in its strengthening (See Recommendations).

Finally, discussions with commune officials make it clear that they see the gender component as an important, but separate, aspect of the LGP training. Integrating activities promoting women's participation with other project efforts may have increased awareness of and changed behaviors among men officials. In terms of sustainability, the isolation of the women's component could make it difficult to secure support for future efforts, if they are not seen as an integral part of governance.

LGP ADAPTABILITY

Evaluation Question 3: How effectively did LGP adapt to changing political conditions, as well as to the learning derived from performance monitoring data and evaluation findings? What factors enabled and impeded LGP from effectively adapting its implementation approach in response to findings and/or changing conditions?

A few respondents noted that LGP implementation came at a critical time during the Arab Spring, when the February 20th movement often disrupted events in a systematic way. These communes recognized the considerable added value of the LGP in providing a methodology and platform that allowed the local population and civic groups to move away from a protest to a participatory mindset, particularly in the context of the development of the communal development plan. In this respect, LGP was often seen as setting a unique precedent of consultation and participation with civil society and a new paradigm of engaging citizens. Moreover, while this specific activity was not initially planned, LGP was able to accommodate the request of the DGCL within a set of target communes given the obligation to develop this framework and management tool as part of the new communal charter issued in 2009.

The 2011 constitutional reform process provided tremendous momentum and fertile ground for LGP to promote values and practices of participatory governance that were in harmony with the spirit and mechanisms introduced in the new constitution, and made the task of contextualizing project objectives and optics much easier. The vast majority of communes did not have the financial resources, technical expertise, and proper methodology to develop their communal development plan in a participatory fashion, and as a consequence, LGP's contribution was deemed significant by all communes that benefitted from this activity. In the difficult and changing political and institutional context of the last four years, this is not a small achievement.

LGP has engaged target communes and beneficiaries based on a demand-driven approach as an attempt to ensure commitment and ownership. Based on LGP's final report,¹² activities focusing on decentralization and the National Strategy for Urban Development were dropped, as a result of a new phase in the high-level debate on structural reforms and regionalization. Similarly, the activity that involved developing Good Governance Pacts was abandoned given the lack of interest from communes. To accommodate evolving needs from the project's main institutional partner (DGCL) and interest at

¹² Page 4, LGP Final Report, December 2014.

the commune level, LGP initiated two new activities: the development of communal plans and the introduction of a new communal fiscal administration.

According to LGP's final report, the November 2011 elections had ramifications on the pace of project implementation, but also facilitated conditions conducive for sustaining project activities. Following the mid-term evaluation, despite the claim in the final report that the workplan for 2013 had prioritized the sustainability of project achievements, there is limited evidence that sustainability was achieved in a systematic fashion across project activities, based on the evaluation team's field observations and the reflections of beneficiaries. Similarly, there is a lack of evidence in the field to support the claims made in the same section of that report with respect to broader collaboration with provinces and prefectures called to accompany the LGP in the dissemination of tools and methodologies, and stronger support for local elected officials and in all areas of their competencies.

No evidence was found in project documentation and field visits regarding the implementation, or even consideration, of recommendations in the mid-term evaluation report, such as the recommendation "to intensify work on the primary player of local governance, i.e., the local elected official". Other than the important work done to support women elected officials - who, unfortunately, still make up a very small part of the population - this was a missed opportunity, especially since lack of political will was a key barrier to success for several activities. A few communes suffered from unhealthy dynamics resulting from differing political affiliations and agendas, leaving the President with limited space to maneuver and get the needed level of political buy-in for the project to receive unanimous support and to operate in an enabling environment. This is one of the most salient impeding factors, substantiated also by the mid-term evaluation and LGP reports, which highlight the problems caused by the conflicting interests and electoral strategies of elected officials.

Finally, key informant interviews suggest that LGP was not able to embrace a leadership and strategic approach but rather a management mindset, which seems to be dictated by the pressure to deliver and roll out project activities in a very large number of target communes in various regions. This can be considered as a major impeding factor, as the ability to constantly seek and execute quality improvements and strategic adjustments that can leverage project impact, can easily be seen as "luxury" when there is pressure for a project to have a large geographical footprint.

LGP CONTRIBUTION TO REFORM PROCESS

Evaluation Question 4: To what extent have LGP interventions contributed to and/or influenced the ongoing reform process of the main decentralization law (Communal Charter) as well as the upcoming regionalization plans and the public debate about them?

In many ways, LGP served as a "laboratory" for experimentation and has demonstrated concepts of citizen participation, gender approach, youth consultation and engagement that were introduced by the revision of the communal charter in 2009 and the constitutional reform process in 2011. In fact, the project activities were considered by all stakeholders engaged by the evaluation team as forward-looking, particularly as they gave concrete and much-needed exposure and experimentation, beyond the theoretical discussions and public debate that usually pay lip service to these concepts. For instance, the CPEC activity brought together CSOs representing various sectors, experts, academics, and youth as part of a consultative process. Communes were exposed to modern processes such as internal audits and complaint managements systems. The fact that only a few of these tools have been adopted by communes in a way that ensures sustainability should not detract from the fact that LGP has contributed to a longer-term modernization process that will necessarily be slower to "take root" in some

communes compared to others. Future local governance interventions can learn by studying the results of these experiments.

As a result of LGP's work with youth to enhance understanding and interest in local governance, establish networks cultivated with key stakeholders, and improve personal and professional skills, youth gained momentum to play a leadership role at the community and governance level. This contribution is considered as important in light of the ongoing national debate and policy initiatives to enhance youth political and civic participation. The timing¹³ and focus of the evaluation did not permit the team to obtain a clear understanding of the new leaders' plans and anticipated impact in terms of advancing a youth agenda, but it would be useful to monitor this aspect in the future, and possibly to provide specific capacity-building and technical assistance to young elected officials, as part of potential future programming. Also, several key informants gave credit to LGP for setting a precedent of youth consultation and participation that paved the way for the adoption of a consultative entity for youth in the new regionalization law, particularly given advocacy efforts led by young parliamentarians that collaborated with local youth councils. Given time constraints, the evaluation team was not able to follow up with parliamentarians and other policy makers from the legislative branch to corroborate this claim.

LGP gender activities fulfilled their mandate of supporting elected women officials through leadership training and coaching for networks of elected women officials, and therefore contributed to the goals of reform, but none of the women beneficiaries believed that LGP influenced the reform process to ensure more gender balanced participation. One major factor that they saw as an impediment to women's access to politics, and that has led to a low rate of reelection, is the implementation of electoral law: the latter has combined their communes with others, forcing the women to become candidates in areas that they are not familiar with. Also, the implementation of the voting-list system means that these women will not become elected unless their party's male counterparts achieved a higher number of votes. Despite the increase in the quota to 24%, according to women beneficiaries interviewed, the ability of the political parties to exclude women from the top of their candidates' lists or from their own executive board makes their participation more challenging. Most women believe that LGP did not influence the 2015 electoral law or the political parties which despite the quota were able to exclude some competent elected officials from getting into the candidacy, leading many women to either change parties or to be excluded from the elections all together.

Most key informants emphasized the LGP contribution to further decentralization and a more participatory and transparent local good governance, goals of the reform process and the new 2015 Decentralization Organic Law specifically. This contribution was recognized by many key informants, including local government technical staff and managers, some local officials, and the DGCL itself. LGP also contributed to the knowledge of how to introduce modern tools of governance, and what barriers still remain to their uptake. However, regarding the current "advanced regionalization" policy, especially now after the September Regional and Communal Elections, there is little evidence of the role and influence of the LGP, as debates on this sensitive issue have been going on for decades now in Morocco.

¹³ The latest local governance elections were held in September 2015, while the field work was carried out in October and November 2015.

CONCLUSIONS

The previous sections presented key findings under each of the three components and category of beneficiaries: communes, youth and women. This final section of the report presents overall conclusions.

LGP has been instrumental in introducing new concepts and mechanisms under a changing and evolving political and legal framework that the 2009 new communal charter initiated and that culminated with the adoption of the new 2011 Constitution. The project has helped communes to open up to external players, especially citizens, and provided much needed confidence, guidance and methodology for them to engage in a constructive fashion. The CDP activity was particularly successful and seen as a breakthrough participatory approach to planning. It provided commune officials with a methodology with which to engage citizens – often for the first time. In some cases, it even helped beneficiary communes to leverage funding.

LGP has also had strong influence on many individual youth and women leaders, who have gained the skills, awareness and confidence they need to play a larger role in local governance in the future. Women beneficiaries unanimously agreed that LGP supported the government's mandate to improve women's involvement by providing practical training in both leadership and technical matters. This impact was seen as particularly valuable for rural women, but in all cases, women felt better equipped to participate in their commune's affairs and more empowered personally. While women believed they were ready to take managerial responsibility as a result of LGP, they suggested that future projects could take a great role in advocating to strengthen the electoral law to continue to lesson barriers to women's candidacy or parties' upper ranks.

For youth in particular, LGP appears to have improved their awareness and understanding of local governance issues and processes, and has helped improve their communication with government officials. While the dialogue may have increased, many youth still feel frustrated at not seeing tangible results, and that frustration threatens to hinder further youth participation.

LGP's impact has not been consistent, however, across the set of activities, target groups and stakeholders (communes, elected officials, commune staffers, youth, women and NGO grantees), and geographic locations. In communes that received a significant number of activities and technical assistance, LGP created a momentum for positive change and modernization that helped the communes' stakeholders overcome the old-fashioned methods and day-to-day mode of approaching local governance. In the same vein, by introducing concepts such as citizen participation, and practices such as internal audits, LGP planted the seed of systemic change from a cultural standpoint and promoted democratic values such as participation, inclusion, transparency, and accountability.

While LGP was successful in demonstrating relevant methods that communes could use to promote citizen engagement, it was less successful at ensuring these methods were institutionalized. While criteria for success may vary, it can be argued that activities that focused primarily on generating clear outcomes (such as the CDP) were the most impactful and most likely to be sustained in the future, as they created a greater sense of ownership. Activities that were more process-oriented, such as activities focused on youth and women, tended to have an impact on an individual level, but are less likely to be sustained institutionally without further support because of the lack of continued engagement of both commune officials and beneficiaries, and the lack of mechanisms set in place. The fact that the activities are seen as separate from the mainstream activities – particularly the women's activities – further place their sustainability in jeopardy.

The fundamental factor behind the success of the CDP activity is that communes and citizens had a clear task that represented a shared priority and vested interest, and resulted in concrete outcomes and deliverables. While youth-related activities were instrumental in jumpstarting a critical process of improving the relationships between communes and youth, and laying the groundwork for a new paradigm of dialogue and positive engagement, the focus was more on process at the expense of ensuring that participation and consultation materialized into noticeable and tangible change for youth.

LGP was successful in improving citizen participation and consultation when certain factors were in place: consistent technical assistance, ongoing engagement and sensitization of key stakeholders by LGP staff, and political will of project counterparts. When those elements were in place, LGP had an opportunity to build on vested interests of both commune officials and citizens by introducing new processes for consultation and participation, which promoted attitude and behavioral change – even through demonstration of concepts relevant to current political reform. These interventions were further strengthened when consultation processes were adopted by stakeholders and when LGP helped communes mobilize resources and translate outputs of the consultation process into real action.

The institutional sustainability of LGP was uneven across activities and communes, often due to the different degrees of local elected officials' willingness to engage with the innovative concepts and participatory mechanisms introduced by the project. Some of these activities, such as the CDP and internal audits, did “take root” and are even replicated in some communes, a good sign of their long term institutional anchoring one year after the project close-out. But for other activities such as complaints management, development of communication plans, or the CPEC activity, the context was not yet conducive; thus, they were not accepted and integrated and therefore will not be sustained. As one elected official, who was involved with the project since its beginning in 2010, put it: “*Le Programme de Gouvernance Locale (CDP) est venu avant son temps.*”¹⁴ This statement reflects both the relevance of the project objectives, and the fact that the enabling environment, marked by leadership and commitment to modernization and positive change, wasn't always in place.

There are other important reasons for LGP's “uneven” impact which relate more directly to shortcomings in the implementation process. Most important of these shortcomings is that the approach to project implementation at times lacked focus on the big picture, probably a result of the project's ambitious reach to over 140 communes. The push for a large number of activities and beneficiaries in various regions appears to have overshadowed the importance of strategic engagement. Only a limited number of communes received a large number of activities, with the bulk of communes receiving one or two activities, which represents a diluted effort given the significant need for follow-up, ongoing technical assistance, monitoring and intensive relationship building that an intervention such as LGP required to optimize institutional anchoring.

The demand-driven and “à la carte” approach proposing a menu of options to communes (versus the traditional “supply driven” TA) was in many respects innovative and successful. It would have been even more effective if paired with an assessment of the maturity and readiness of those communes for the activities requested, allowing the project to focus on a smaller number of entities and activities that showed greatest promise for success.

¹⁴ “The LGP is ahead of its time”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings and key lessons learned, and considering the new “advanced regionalization” policy context, the evaluation team recommends the following key strategic programmatic areas to be considered for future local governance interventions. These recommendations are organized by the themes of each evaluation question.

LGP Results and Beneficiary Perceptions (Evaluation Question I)

- **Include regional and provincial levels of government.** Future projects must include the region and the province levels of government, although not to the neglect of the communes. Communes are, and will remain, the front line for the "services de proximité" and they are still in need of additional technical support in a number of key local government functions.
- **Place greater emphasis on technical interventions.** Future projects should focus more on key local government functions (at the three levels), including fiscal administration to improve the fiscal base and revenues (such as in Kenitra), a prerequisite for improving the service delivery system; regional and local development planning (and their translation into concrete investment projects); and the budgeting and expenditures process linked to procurement and *maîtrise d'ouvrage*,¹⁵ the audit activity.
- **Use criteria to target beneficiaries.** Target a smaller number of local government stakeholders and beneficiaries, based on criteria related to success (outlined in this report), and offer more comprehensive support to ensure greater focus, better understanding of the micro and macro environment, closer working relationships, more frequent opportunities for engagement, and ultimately greater impact. Commune selection should be at least in part based on the commune's willingness to put resources into future activities.
- **Encourage concrete outcomes linked to participation activities.** Activities aimed at promoting participation and consultation with citizens should ensure that there are concrete results. The design should also aim to secure quick-wins as well as medium and long term deliverables. This involves identifying a larger set of stakeholders that have vested interests in the targeted segments of the population, such as the private sector for youth engagement activities.
- **Adopt an inclusive process for selecting members of any local councils or committees.** Avoid “top-down” selection in order to ensure that members are representative, and that their work will be considered legitimate.
- **Consider offering training and coaching to young elected officials.** This evaluation pointed to the fact that some youth are newly elected to office and that they may have special training needs to help them best fulfill their mandate.

¹⁵ “*Maitrise d’Ouvrage*” refers in French, to the ownership of a project, and the “*Maître d’Ouvrage*” refers to its owner with the authority to issue “payments orders” for services and goods providers. In the case of a commune, for example, it is the Mayor, who is by Law the only *Ordonnateur du budget* of the commune.

- **Conduct an updated gender analysis prior to future project design.** The analysis should build on learning from the previous baseline study conducted by LGP and DGCL where activities and characteristics of elected women were mapped. This will ensure any future programming for women will be adjusted, and will perhaps influence contextual factors still hampering women's effective participation in communal affairs.
- **Programming aimed at improving women's participation should be targeted to different types of women participants and should include men.** This evaluation shows that the needs of urban and rural elected women are often substantially different and should be considered; differences in experience and educational background should also be considered. Men elected officials should be included in similar topics.
- **Consider involving women elected officials as facilitators.** Women beneficiaries suggested that involving women elected officials as facilitators and enablers could help improve relations between NGOs and communes. Future projects should investigate this approach as an option to strengthen CPEC sustainability.

Sustainability of LGP Activities (Evaluation Question 2)

- **Simplify grant mechanisms.** The requirements of any future grants mechanisms should be re-thought to consider the needs and capacity of local associations, especially disbursement procedures. The project should ensure beneficiary organizations fully understand the requirements, processes and criteria to promote transparency and prevent potential misunderstanding. In terms of design, the grants should be large enough to ensure that they will have more visible effects and strengthen local organizations.
- **Partner with Moroccan NGOs (national, regional and local).** The delivery of TA should be redesigned to work through Moroccan organizations (Auditas for the audit activity is an example) wherever possible. The LGP planted the seeds, but the coaching and continuous nurturing could be done by national local NGOs, especially if sustainability, ownership and cost-effectiveness are the goals. This is even more important when it comes to youth and women local associations, in view of their large number and geographical dispersion. The other advantage of this recommendation is that it offers a better link to and synergies with any future local governance intervention with USAID's existing Civil Society Program, as no single project can address alone all the needs of local civil society.
- **Foster stronger linkages between associations and all levels of government.** Under the new political context, associations (particularly youth and women's associations) should be encouraged to explore new entry points in all levels of governments: the region, the province and the commune. Special attention should be paid to local youth and women's associations from rural communes that have been relatively neglected in the past. The mechanisms to achieve this goal might look different depending on the interest group. Youth beneficiaries suggested strengthening the national council and creation of regional councils. Elected women beneficiaries preferred their provincial-level organization and suggested that there may be other ways to link to other levels of organizations (they suggest that the members themselves are a bridge to the communes, for example).

LGP Adaptability (Evaluation Question 3)

- **Enhance monitoring efforts.** LGP would have benefitted from greater monitoring, follow up and follow through with key local stakeholders (local youth councils, complaints management committees, to mention a few), to detect problems in their relations with their respective local governments. Monitoring relationships, through Regional Coordinators or local Steering Committees, for example, should be part of any future local governance project.
- **Provide “coaching” to more beneficiaries.** Beneficiaries would have benefitted from more regular contact with project staff in between activities, preferably through a “coaching” modality, such as that provided to elected women officials. This, along with enhanced monitoring, could have helped LGP tailor programming to beneficiary needs and help beneficiaries apply skills to changing situations.
- **Incorporate management processes that promote strategic planning, and project learning and adaptation.** Local government projects such as LGP must be able to respond to changing political contexts at the macro and micro level, incorporating new information and encouraging change when needed. Periodic management reviews that draw on monitoring data and results of external evaluations are one way to give project managers a structured opportunity to change course based on emerging information.

LGP Contribution to Reform Process (Evaluation Question 4)

- **Monitor the implications of the political context.** Future projects should actively track the political context in search of opportunities and potential barriers to achieving project objectives. With regards to women’s participation, context monitoring would seek to document changes in the electoral law or enforcement of party laws that require communes to devote a portion of their budget to further develop elected women’s capacity. Context monitoring would not only promote adaptability for the sake of the project, but will point to opportunities for the project to contribute to a wider reform agenda.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

**Final performance Evaluation of USAID/Morocco Local Governance Program (LGP)
EPP-I-08-04-00037**

Implementer: Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

USAID/Morocco Assistance Objective 1: Increased Participation of Citizens, Especially Youth, in Governance

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Activity Information

Title: Local Governance Program (LGP)

Award Number: EPP-I-08-04-00037

Award Dates: February 2010 – December 2014

Funding: \$14.7 million

Implementing Partner: Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

Contracting Officer Representative: Alae Eddin Serrar

Development Context

The Local Governance *Jamaat Al Ghad* Program (LGP) was designed to support interaction between citizens and their local governments (communes) by promoting participative practices and encouraging increased transparency and accountability of locally elected officials. The purpose of the activity is to make communes more responsive to citizens' needs and expectations.

One-year into implementation, the political climate took a drastic turn as Moroccan youth took to the streets on February 20, 2011 calling for wide-ranging political and socio-economic reforms. King Mohammed VI's response to protesters' grievances came through constitutional reform and early parliamentary elections in November of 2011. Although occasional protests continue to highlight political marginalization as a key source of tension, the new Government of Morocco appears committed to the implementation of the new constitution (which includes greater input from civil society in governance) as well as ambitious plans for decentralization, good governance, and improved socio-economic opportunities for all citizens.

It remains to be seen whether these reforms will translate into tangible and meaningful change in practice. The U.S. Government (USG) is working within the framework of the new constitution to support the reform process through LGP. Although Morocco has made remarkable progress in decentralization since 1976, in terms of holding regular elections and increasingly devolving powers to the elected councils at the communal and regional levels, the capacity of local governments to engage with their citizens remains weak. As a result, LGP was designed to strengthen the capacity of communes to respond to their citizens' needs and promote principles of good governance.

Target Area and Target Population

LGP is a \$14.7 million activity (February 10, 2010 to September 30, 2014), working primarily in three target regions: Rabat- Salé, Fès-Boulemane, Doukkala-Abda, and the city of Kenitra (which was added later). The activity targets primarily rural and peripheral urban communes, where local governments are confronted with greater challenges and more significant management incapacities¹⁶. As part of a larger portfolio of democracy and governance activities, LGP supports efforts to make communes more responsive to citizen needs, especially for youth and women in three key areas: participation and coordination; commune performance; and communication and transparency.

Intended Results

USAID's overarching country goal in Morocco for the five-year period 2009-2013 is "a well-governed, democratic and prosperous Morocco meeting the needs of its people, especially youth". Three Assistance Objectives (AOs) contribute to the attainment of the country goal:

- 1) Increased Participation of Citizens, Especially Youth, in Governance;
- 2) More Relevant Education and Opportunities for Youth; and
- 3) Reduced Barriers to Trade and Investment.

USAID/Morocco's Democracy and Governance program, which supports AO 1, is built around citizen participation in civil society, in political parties, and in local governance. Each of these areas offers opportunities to engage youth, as well as other segments of society, in order to bring a broader array of groups into public life: a more effective representation of citizens' concerns (IR 1), combined with a more effective and accountable local government (IR 2), will lead to more democratic and participatory governance See Results Framework for AO1 in the annex.

Activity Approach

The strategic objective of LGP is to promote "more effective and accountable local government" (IR 2),¹⁷ to contribute to the ultimate goal of USAID in Morocco for a "greater citizen involvement in local governance, especially by young people."

To achieve this objective, the program works with the various DGCL departments and local officials (elected officials, authorities and others) within the LGP target provinces and communes to achieve Sub-Intermediate Results (SIR) as follows:

- Participatory practices spread and institutionalized within elected bodies
- More efficient local authorities, to serve populations
- More transparent and accountable local authorities
- Greater collaboration between communes, public services and others.

Based on the objective and the SIRs, LGP has focused on three main areas of intervention:

1) Increasing citizen, especially youth participation and consultation in local governance

¹⁶ According to a recent report by the Ministry of Habitat, more than 65% of Moroccan city-residents are concentrated in sub-urban and peripheral areas.

¹⁷ USAID Intermediary Result n°2

LGP promotes participative practices for greater input in local governance by citizens at the commune level. Activities in this area include support in developing and implementing Communal Development Plans, establishing Equity and Equal Opportunities Commissions, supporting local youth councils and programs, and encouraging the active participation of elected women officials.

2) Improved performance of the communes, specifically local government's ability to provide better services to citizens

LGP improves the performance of targeted communes by building technical skills of commune officials (including direct training/technical assistance), mobilizing financial resources, and monitoring commune performance.

3) Transparency and communication in local governance

LGP works with targeted communes in making local governance more transparent and accountable by communicating with citizens, improving complaints management systems, and implementing internal audit structures.

See Results Framework for LGP attached (Attachment 1). Also, see program reports and work plans for descriptions of activities and attached Performance Management Plan (Attachment 1) for results, sub-results and indicators. Also attached is a chart laying out the project target communes and number of beneficiary per province and thematic focus.

II. RATIONALE

Evaluation Purpose, Scope and Audience

USAID/Morocco intends to conduct a final performance evaluation of the Local Governance Program to serve the following purposes:

1. To provide the Mission with concrete evidence regarding to what extent LGP achieved (or not) its goals at all levels of the results framework.
2. To help the DG team – and the mission in general - learn about the strengths and weaknesses of working in the local governance field.
3. Inform USAID's continued engagement in local governance in its new DG programming, within the parameters of the new Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), especially DO 2.

The primary task of the evaluation team will be to analyze the performance of LGP since its start in February 2010, and make recommendations for improvements in future programming. This evaluation will cover the period from the award date through December 2014. The USAID/Morocco Mission, specifically the Democracy and Governance Office, will use the analysis of this evaluation to learn and inform implementation of the new Democracy and Governance activities in the 2013 – 2018 CDCS.

Evaluation Questions

The following questions shall guide the evaluation in order of importance. It is noteworthy here that these questions may be tweaked after discussions with the evaluators and implementing partner once the award is made.

1. How effectively did LGP's activities targeting communes contribute to achieving the program objective of increased participation of citizens, especially youth, in governance?
 - a) What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to each of the following program objectives?
 - i. Increasing citizen, especially youth, participation and consultation in local governance.
 - ii. Improved performance of the communes, specifically local government's ability to provide better services to citizens.
 - iii. Transparency and communication in local government.
 - b) Which activity components were most and least effective in achieving progress toward LGP's overarching objectives?
 - c) What do targeted beneficiaries (including male and female local government officials, civil society organizations, and male and female youth members) see as the most significant changes (positive or negative) to which the project has contributed?
2. Which activities and results, specifically relating to youth participation, women elected officials, audit systems, complaint management systems, and communication strategies, are most likely to be sustained post project completion?
 - a) What were the key factors contributing to the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability for the activities above, and how could sustainability have been reinforced?
3. To what extent have LGP interventions contributed to and/or influenced the ongoing reform process of the main decentralization law (Communal Charter) as well as the upcoming regionalization plans and the public debate about them?
4. How effectively did LGP adapt to changing political conditions, as well as to the learning derived from performance monitoring data and evaluation findings? What factors enabled and impeded LGP from effectively adapting its implementation approach in response to findings and/or changing conditions?

In the final evaluation report, the evaluation team should:

- Identify the key lessons learned from the implementation of the LGP that should be used to inform USAID/Morocco's future activities on local governance and the integration of local governance in the new CDCS.
- Provide specific recommendations for each activity component.
- Include an examination of overall program coherence in the findings and recommendations for question 1.

Proposed Background Materials:

- LGP mid-term Evaluation Report and RTI responses document
- 2013 Annual Report

III. General Methodological Guidelines

USAID/Morocco seeks a mixed methodological approach to effectively address this final performance evaluation and effectively answer the evaluation questions. This scope of work requires that the team develop and submit for approval a work plan with proposed evaluation methodology and data analysis plan within the first 7 days of the evaluation schedule.

The following approaches should be included in the team’s methodology:

The evaluation should be structured using an **evaluation design matrix**. The matrix should include research questions, methods, data sources, and data analysis plan for each question. An illustrative and abbreviated design matrix (Attachment 2) has been developed. Evaluation teams are encouraged to refine and expand on this design matrix (see Attachment 3 ‘Design Matrix Template 2’). The evaluation team should propose a methodological approach that will generate the highest quality and most credible evidence for the evaluation questions being asked, taking into consideration time, budget, and other practical considerations. It is fully expected that this evaluation will draw on the multiple data collection methods outlined below (e.g. desk review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, beneficiary survey, and replication of Household survey conducted at the midterm), as well as the existing performance monitoring and evaluation data.

Proposed methods to be used in this evaluation include:

- Completion of **desk review** (see proposed information sources). The desk study is intended to prepare the evaluation team for fieldwork. In this period, the team will analyze available program documentation, performance monitoring and evaluation documentation (including the data generated during the mid-term evaluation), as well as identify, obtain, and analyze relevant non-program data sources.
- Replicate the **household survey** conducted for the mid-term evaluation to provide quantitative evidence relating to the second half of implementation. This survey will replicate the methodology used at the mid-term; including sampling methodologies (sampling methodologies and the instrument used are contained in the mid-term Performance Evaluation Report).
- A **survey** of a random stratified sample of beneficiary individuals (people who have taken part in project trainings and other activities (including men and women local government officials, civil society organizations and male and female youth group members)).
- **Focus group discussions** with a representative sample of beneficiaries (including men and women local government officials, civil society organizations and male and female youth group members), to explore the most significant changes (positive or negative) they perceive resulting from the LGP; how it has changed (or not) their own capacities, participation in, and expectations for local governance; and any barriers they identify to increased participation of citizens, especially youth, in governance.

- Evaluators shall work with USAID to determine an appropriate number of beneficiaries and partner communes to include in the representative sample for the beneficiary survey and FGDs.
- **Semi-structured interviews** with a convenience sample of Government-linked stakeholder individuals including, at a minimum, the Direction de la Formation des Cadres Administratifs et Techniques (DFCAT), Direction des Affaires Juridiques, des Etudes, de la Documentation et de la Coopération (DAJEDC) and Direction de la Planification et de l'Équipement (DPE) and a sample of walis/governors, and other key informants identified by the evaluation team will be included in key informant interviews.

In designing the evaluation, the evaluation team should recognize that some communes participated in one or two components of the LGP program while others participated in all components. The evaluation team should take this into consideration during the design of the evaluation and the analysis of evaluation findings, to the extent that comparative analysis can be incorporated into the evaluation design and analysis.

The evaluation design matrix should include a data analysis plan for each evaluation question. The data analysis plan should clearly describe how the evaluation team's approach for analyzing quantitative and qualitative data. It is expected that quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical analysis software (e.g. SPSS, SAS, STATA). The evaluation team may use qualitative data analysis software (e.g. NVivo) to analyze qualitative data. While the use of qualitative data analysis software is optional, qualitative data should be coded as part of the analysis approach, and the coding used should be included in the appendix of the final report. Gender, geographic, and role (beneficiary, implementer, government official) disaggregation must be included in the data analysis where applicable.

****All conclusions made by the evaluation team must be supported by clear, verified evidence. ****

The evaluation team should avoid generalities that are not supported by specific evidence. The evidence cited should include, for instance, interview data (for example, "x number of x said ..."), secondary evidence, respondent's quotes for key informants and focus group interviews, tables, graphs, and charts where needed, etc. The report must let data speak for itself in order to minimize, as much as possible, subjective judgments or at least the impression of judgments being subjective. Data sources must also be cited. The more data sources are used to provide evidence on a particular finding, the better.

Limitations in Methodology

Internal reliability and external reliability limitations must be considered during the evaluation process. Due to internal reliability issues, it is not certain that specific project interventions are the cause of changes which may be observed over the course of the evaluation. Not unrelated, researchers and readers must be mindful of external reliability limitations and the fact that findings of this study may not be entirely generalizable. While these limitations exist, the mixed-methods approach suggested in this section should help boost confidence in internal reliability by establishing and comparing separate findings. It is important to note, therefore, that the data must be analyzed separately but conclusions should be based on the results of all the findings in

total. Specifically, the researchers and the readers must not rely too heavily on any one method but consider how they fit together to inform our understanding of the project. The final evaluation report should clearly document limitations and how the evaluation team addressed these limitations in its methodological and/or analysis approach. Any limitations that have potentially significant bearing on the validity of the evaluation findings should be clearly identified.

IV. Team composition

USAID/Morocco anticipates the evaluation team to be comprised of an external team leader, three subject-matter experts, and two research/logistic assistants. USAID/Morocco highly recommends that at least one evaluation team member be an experienced evaluation expert.

The Team Leader should be an evaluation expert combining academic credentials, demonstrable local governance experience, knowledge of the Moroccan political environment and local governance scene, and USG foreign policy and foreign assistance programming. S/he should have considerable experience working as a part of, as well as leading, democracy and governance evaluation teams and writing analytic but actionable reports in a clear, coherent and compelling way. The ability to speak and write in English is required.

The evaluation team together should have expertise in the following areas: local governance, youth development, and gender. Two of the three experts shall have a solid knowledge of English and either French, Darija, or Arabic. These languages are preferred as a skill for the other team members. At least one member should have extensive experience in facilitating interviews and/or group discussions in the targeted languages. Gender analysis skills are desirable. The local governance expert should preferably be Moroccan.

It is recommended that the research assistants be young Moroccan researchers or university students with a mixed set of skills and backgrounds in local governance, civil society, youth development, evaluation, gender equity and related areas.

Other personnel and skill mixes may be proposed.

Written disclosures of conflicts of interest are required from all evaluation team members. The Program Management Office will work with the technical team to ensure the quality and objectivity of the evaluation process and report.

V. Deliverables, Reporting and Dissemination requirements

The following reports and deliverables are required:

- 1. Detailed Evaluation Design and Work Plan:** A research design and evaluation work plan shall be submitted for approval to the USAID/Morocco Office of Democracy and Governance on day 7 (from start of evaluation). The design must include:

- 1.1. A detailed evaluation design matrix (including the key questions, methods and data sources to address each question and the data analysis plan for each question);
- 1.2. Draft data collection instruments or their main features including illustrative questions;
- 1.3. Known limitations to the evaluation design; and
- 1.4. A detailed workplan. The work plan must include the anticipated schedule and logistical arrangements and delineate the roles and responsibilities of members of the evaluation team.

The design, data collection instruments, and workplan will be discussed with and approved by USAID prior to implementation.

2. **Interim Briefing:** An interim briefing on the assessment team's overall progress and preliminary findings shall be presented to USAID/Morocco after 3 full weeks of fieldwork in country. A short briefer with preliminary observations shall be presented to USAID in advance of this briefing.
3. **Debriefing with USAID:** Prior to departure, the contractor must present an outline (in bullets, possibly in power point or as a handout) of the evaluation report with general findings, conclusions, and anticipated recommendations. During this briefing, the team leader, as well as key members of the evaluation team shall be present. At this debrief the evaluation team shall submit a suggested table of contents for the final report to USAID for approval.
4. **Presentation of results to Implementing partners and stakeholders:** The evaluation team shall make an oral presentation on evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations to project partners and stakeholders before departure of expat team member(s) from Morocco.
5. **Draft Report:** A draft evaluation report, with executive summary and major findings and recommendations, shall be presented in writing to USAID during week 6. This document should explicitly respond to the requirements of the Scope of Work, should answer the evaluation questions, be logically structured, and adhere to the standards of the USAID Evaluation Policy of January 2011. USAID will provide comments on the draft evaluation report during the 5 business days following submission of the draft. A second, revised draft shall be submitted for USAID comments before the final evaluation report is completed.
6. **Final Report in English:** A final report shall be submitted that incorporates and adequately addresses all Mission comments. The final report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding executive summary and annexes.
7. **Thorough Executive Summary in Arabic:** An executive summary (10-15 pages) in Arabic will be provided as part of the final report.
8. **One Page Report Summary in French and Arabic:** A one page overview of evaluation findings in French, Arabic and English shall be provided as part of the final report.
9. **Raw data sets,** in Excel (in English), plus any pictures/graphics, or audio/visual recordings generated through the evaluation.
10. The contractor will make the final evaluation reports publicly available through the **Development Experience Clearinghouse** at <http://dec.usaid.gov> within 30 calendar days of final approval of the formatted report with USAID consent. In case it is determined

that the full report includes sensitive information, a revised/sanitized version will be produced and submitted to the DEC.

The final report is subject to approval by USAID and should clearly address each of the research questions and their supporting issues. The table of contents should take USAID Evaluation Policy into consideration. The evaluation report will include the following appendices:

- A copy of the scope of work;
- Team composition (1 page maximum);
- Full description of evaluation methods, including Evaluation design matrix;
- All evaluation tools (questionnaires, checklists, discussion guides. Surveys etc);
- USAID/Morocco DG results framework;
- A list of sources of information (key informant, documents reviewed, other data sources).

The Team Leader shall be responsible for providing the final report to USAID in electronic format (in Microsoft Word, Excel, maps in PDF and hard copies). Maps, graphs, charts, etc. should also be used appropriately throughout the report. The Executive Summary, and main report without appendices, should also be presented as separate electronic documents for easier internal USG dissemination. Language of the final report is to be English.

The Team Leader is expected to keep close communication with USAID/Morocco activity manager throughout the evaluation (at minimum, 3x per week – via email or phone).

All data and records in their raw form (i.e. questionnaires, surveys, observation notes etc.) shall be provided to the COR in an organized, electronic format.

To help ensure the quality of the evaluation report, the evaluation team is asked to adhere to the following criteria:

USAID Evaluation Policy: Criteria to Ensure the Quality of the Evaluation Report

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology, or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists, discussion guides as well raw data collected will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.

- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical, and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.
- Recommendations should be detailed separate from findings and conclusions.

For further guidance on USAID quality evaluation policies, please visit <http://www.usaid.gov/evaluation>.

VI. Timeline for Deliverables and Logistics

USAID/Morocco expects that the overall length of this evaluation is about 8 weeks, including 3 weeks of fieldwork. The expected start date for this evaluation is **February 2015**.

Illustrative schedule

Week 1

- Day one: Post Award Conference/Meeting: A post-award conference will be held to review the Statement of Work, clarify any questions that may arise, and address any concerns related to methodology, and implementation timetable.
- Logistical preparations, including hiring of research assistants.
- Desk review of literature.
- Develop and submit evaluation design and work plan with detailed methodology and design matrix for USAID approval.

Week 2:

- Meet with USAID/Morocco to discuss proposed schedule and meetings list.
- Submit final evaluation instruments to USAID for approval. To the extent possible, test and refine all evaluation instruments.
- Team consultations/meetings, including early consultation with stakeholders (including country-level) on evaluation approach and instruments.
- Work plan and instruments approved. Data collection process starts.

Weeks 3 through 5:

- Interviews with stakeholders and staff in Morocco.
- Meetings, interviews and field visits.
- Debrief with USAID.
- Presentation of results to implementing partners and stakeholders.

Week 6 through 8:

- Tabulate and Analyze data.
- Submit draft report 1.
- Incorporate USAID feedback into second draft.
- Submission of draft report 2.
- Incorporate any further USAID feedback before submission of final report.
- Prepare PPT presentations and one-pagers for dissemination of results. Submit to USAID for approval.
- Presentations of results to stakeholders: USAID, GOM counterparts, communes, CSOs, other donors.
- Insert feedback from Mission in Report. Submit final report in English as well as a thorough summary in Arabic and a one pager in Arabic, French and English before expat team member(s) depart Morocco.

End of Week 8

- Expats, if any hired, depart Morocco

Logistics

Travel: In general, in-country travel will be the responsibility of the evaluation team. Taxis are readily available in Morocco and there is good train to the project's target areas. Most interviews and other meetings are anticipated to occur in the region of Fes Boulemane, Rabat/Salé, and Doukala Abda, in addition to the city of Kenitra.

Support: The evaluation team will be responsible for providing the workspace, office supplies, computers, communications (cell phone rental), and administrative services it may require. USAID will provide contact information for key informants and, in agreed cases, provide support in securing appointments, but in general the evaluation team will also be responsible for setting up and managing most of its meetings

ANNEX B: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Questions	Data Collection Methods and Sources
1-What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to each of the following program objectives and what are the associated factors that explain achievement? i. Increasing citizen, especially youth, participation and consultation in local governance. ii. Improved performance of the communes, specifically local government's ability to provide better services to citizens. iii. Transparency and communication in local government.	▪ Survey of a random stratified sample of project beneficiaries (stratified by age group and sex); ▪ Focus group discussions with targeted groups of project beneficiaries; ▪ Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders including: ➢ DGCL, DFCAT, DAJEDC and DPEA ➢ Purposive sample of walis/governors, ➢ Project implementers, ➢ Other key informants; ▪ Desk review, including existing performance monitoring and evaluation data, both from USAID and project sources. <i>All data will be disaggregated where possible to allow the team to examine results affecting women and youth.</i> <i>Differences among communes will also be explored.</i>
2-Which activities and results, specifically relating to youth participation, women elected officials, audit systems, complaint management systems, and communication strategies, are most likely to be sustained post project completion and why?	▪ Survey of a random stratified sample of project beneficiaries; ▪ Focus group discussions with targeted groups of project beneficiaries; ▪ Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders: ▪ Government linked including: ➢ DGCL, DFCAT, DAJEDC and DPEA, ➢ Purposive sample of walis/governors, ➢ Project implementers, ➢ Other key informants; ▪ Desk review of existing performance monitoring and evaluation data. <i>The team will articulate criteria for results that are more likely to be sustained. For example: the degree to which activities are carried out now, the usefulness stakeholders ascribe to them, the administration's commitment to the efforts, and the plans in place to continue to fund and technically support activities.</i>

3-To what extent have LGP interventions contributed to and/or influenced the ongoing reform process of the main decentralization law (Communal Charter) as well as the upcoming regionalization plans and the public debate about them?	▪ Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, including: ➤ DGCL, DFCAT, DAJEDC and DPEA, ➤ Purposive sample of walis/governors, ➤ Project implementers, ➤ Other key informants; ▪ Evaluators' analysis and expertise; ▪ Review of current charter, related public documents, and project documentation.
4. How effectively did LGP adapt to changing political conditions, as well as to the learning derived from performance monitoring data and evaluation findings? What factors enabled and impeded LGP from effectively adapting its implementation approach in response to findings and/or changing conditions?	▪ Semi-structured interviews including: ➤ DGCL, DFCAT, DAJEDC and DPEA. ➤ Purposive sample of walis/governors, ➤ Project implementers, ➤ Other key informants; ▪ Desk review, including existing performance monitoring and evaluation data. <i>The evaluation team will look for specific examples to highlight in the report.</i>

ANNEX C: THE NEW TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW RÉGIONALISATION AVANCÉE POLICY¹⁸

Objectives of the Advanced Regionalization Policy

With the adoption of the new Constitution in 2011 and the Decentralization Organic Law in 2015, the Moroccan territorial governance structures have been significantly reshaped. A number of recent decrees further detail the three layers of the new decentralized structures, their numbers at each level, denominations, their administrative centers, mandates and new resources.¹⁹

This report focuses on the regions in view of the enhanced role they are going to play in the advanced regionalization policy (*regionalization avancée*), which has established a new spatial framework that integrates the economic and social dimensions of regional and local development. The foundations of the policy are:

1. The consolidation of local democracy and inter and intra-regional solidarity,
2. The coordination between the various actors composing the Region, to achieve an integrated and diversified regional development, and
3. A new decentralization framework.

The Regions' New Mandates

Today there are 12 regions in Morocco (reduced from 18).²⁰ Their regional councils are directly elected and the regions' executives and presidents are elected by the councils (see Fig. 1, for more details).²¹

Further to the 2011 Constitution and the 2015 Decentralization Organic Law, which confirmed the principles of subsidiarity, Decree 1-15-83 of July 7, 2015 specifically details the scope of the new mandates transferred to the regions.²² These are:

- Strengthening of its economic development and competitiveness;
- Creating and insuring job opportunities and professional/in-service training;
- Working towards rural development;
- Enhancing transportation;
- Preserving the local cultural heritage and organize cultural festivals; and
- Enhancing infrastructure.

Specifically, and in terms of sectors, mandates to be transferred by the State to the regions (Article 94 of Decree 1-5-83), lists the following key sectors:

¹⁸ The author of this annex wishes to express particular thanks to Mohamed Odour, fiscal specialist and former LGP lead consultant for the new fiscal administration activity, for his invaluable insights and updates, in the preparation of the annex.

¹⁹ Decree n° 2-15-40, February 20, 2015 in Bulletin Official, N. 6340, March 5, 2015.

²⁰ Below the regions, there are 75 Prefectures and Provinces (13 and 62 respectively), 1503 communes, 221 urban and 1282 rural.

²¹ Regional and Communal Elections were held in September 2015.

²² Bulletin Official, N. 6380, July 23, 2015.

- Infrastructure
- Industry
- Health
- Commerce
- Education
- Culture
- Sports
- Water, energy and natural resources

Current Sources of Regional Revenue

To provide the regions with the necessary financial means to carry out their new mandates properly, Article 66 of the 47-96 law (Title VII, Chapter One), stipulates that the Region:

"benefits from taxes, charges and fees imposed by the 30-89 law to local authorities and their group as well as taxes or tax shares allocated to it by finance laws, including tax companies, general income tax and an additional tax on the special annual tax on motor vehicles."

Thus, the region now has its fiscal base composed of its own resources, in addition to a tiny share of two state taxes (the *Impôt sur les Sociétés*, or IS, and the *Impôt Général sur le Revenu*, or IGR) consisting of taxes or tax share instituted originally for the communes, but without a direct link to the Region mandates.

Moreover, Article 68 of the 47-96 Law states that the new taxes specifically created for the Region are:

1. An additional 5% to 10% over the municipal administration of tax,
2. An additional 20% on the tax on insurance contracts,
3. A tax on hunting licenses,
4. A tax on mining, sitting on the quantities extracted by dealers and operators of mines in the territory of the Region,
5. An additional tax from the tax collected from ports services rendered in the ports located in the territory of the Region and
6. A proportion of the tax on mining products destined originally to the communes within the Region jurisdiction.

However, while the 2008 Local Taxes Reform, the objective of the 47-06 Law, did help restructure and simplify local taxation by substantially reducing the number of taxes and fees established by law 30- 89 for the communes, it missed the opportunity to develop a regional fiscal base commensurate with the new important mandates assigned to the regions. This opportunity was lost in spite of the fact that the *tutelle* (the DGCL) had ten years of experimentation to determine the relevance of a new regional fiscal system, over which the Region had no authority in terms of fiscal assessments, rates settings or actual taxes recovery.

The Constitution of July 1, 2011, however, stipulates that a region (along with the other territorial authorities, the provinces and the communes) is a "legal entity of public law" ("*personne morale de droit public*," Article 135) and its organization is based on "the principles of free administration, cooperation and solidarity"(Article 136).

Article 3 of the Organic Decentralization Law 111-14 of 7 July 2015 on the organization of the region goes even further and states that "the region is a person corporation under public law, endowed with administrative and financial autonomy." To ensure this financial autonomy, Article

141 of the Constitution stipulates that the "regions and other local authorities have their own financial resources and other financial resources transferred by the State."

Moreover, Article 146 of the Constitution states that "an organic law shall include (i) the financial regime of the regions and other local authorities, and (ii) the origin of the financial resources of the regions and other local authorities under section 141."

However, the 2015 Organic Law did not innovate in terms of resource allocation to the new region. Indeed Articles 186-191 on the nature of the new resources available to the region brought no significant innovation in either the structures or in the origins of the region's fiscal resources.

These resources, laid down by Article 189 of the Organic Law, remain the same as those established by the 47-96 Law establishing the region (now repealed) and by the 49-06 Law on Local Fiscal Revenues. These are:

1. The state taxes transferred to the regions (the income tax - IR)
2. The corporate income tax (IS)
3. The tax on insurance contracts,
4. The allocations of the general budget of the State to the regions,
5. The proceeds of taxes introduced by the Law 49-06 to the regions.

In addition to the above resources, Law 111-14, pursuant to the provisions of Article 141 of the Constitution, established (Articles 229-236) the creation of:

1. an equalization social fund for the reversal of human development, infrastructure and equipment deficits between regions; and
2. an interregional and a solidarity fund for an equitable distribution of resources, in order to reduce disparities between regions.

Available fiscal resources are still insufficient to meet the regions' needs to fund its activities or economic development. Resources from taxes now represent less than a third of the Region's resources and offer no possibility for expansion because the nature of the current tax system and its management, over which the new regions has no control from assessment to actual tax recovery. The 49-06 Law on local taxation gives local authorities real powers in controlling, auditing and fixing rates and tariffs, like the state. Unfortunately these powers have not yet been extended to the region.

In addition, and as noted by a Moroccan fiscal expert interviewed by the author, the needs for regional technical capacity needs are huge, and are even more so today in the context of the operationalization of the concept of the advanced regionalization.²³ This operationalization is already facing a number of challenges and financial constraints. To meet these challenges and overcome these constraints, several interventions will needed simultaneously with the following priorities:

1. Reform of the current local and regional fiscal base. At the heart of this strategic project is the control of the region, and other *collectivités territoriales*, over fiscal revenues and their recovery;

²³ Interview with Mohamed Odour, on Saturday, October 31

2. The means of governance, particularly human resources, are equally important to establish the authority and autonomy of the Region.
3. The implementation of the cooperation mechanisms provided by the texts so as to give a concrete content to inter-communality.

This will be a challenging task for the GOM for years to come, as well as an opportunity for USAID to provide a new type of assistance to further promote more effective regional and local governance.

ANNEX D: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

LGP Beneficiary Survey

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is [NAME]. I am an interviewer for Checchi Consulting. I am conducting research about your participation in LGP programs.

You have been selected for an interview by random sampling. It is really important to us to hear about your experiences and opinions during this interview. We are using these tablets to make it easier to record your responses clearly. All your responses and all your other information will be treated completely anonymously and confidentially – no names or phone numbers will be written down. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes. Do you agree to participate? [Interviewer: Proceed only if participant gives full consent.]

Refer to Arabic name of the project

A: Demographic questions:

1. Interviewer, record the location of Interview:

(Face-to-face locations)

- Fes
- Sefrou
- SidiHarazem
- El Jadida
- Safi
- Moulay Abdallah
- Salé
- Ameer

(Other locations)

2. Interviewer, record the gender of the participant:

- Male
- Female

3. Interviewer, record whether the participant is in the “youth” age group. Ask age if conducting the survey by phone and unsure.

- Youth (35 and younger)
- Other (36 and older)

4. In what capacity did you participate in LGP? [Mark all that apply].

- Youth
- Elected woman official
- Government employee
- NGO member
- Other (Specify: _____)

5. Now I'm going to read out a list of groups that people join or attend. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an official leader, active member, inactive member, or not a member?

	Official Leader	Active Member	Inactive Member	Not a Member	Don't Know [DNR]
A. A voluntary association	3	2	1	0	9
B. A professional association/trade union	3	2	1	0	9
C. A youth / cultural / sports organization	3	2	1	0	9
D. A political party					
E. A community group	3	2	1	0	9

6. During the past 5 years how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views?

	Never	Only once	A few times	Often	Don't know [DNR]
A. A local government councilor	0	1	2	3	9
B. An official of a government agency	0	1	2	3	9
C A political party official	0	1	2	3	9
D A voluntary association	0	1	2	3	9
E Traditional Leaders	0	1	2	3	9

7. What is your level of obtained education?

- Illiterate/Literate
- Elementary
- Preparatory/Basic.
- Secondary
- Mid-level diploma/professional or technical
- BA
- MA and above

8. How long have you lived in this commune?

- Less than one year
- 1 – 2 years
- 3 – 4 years
- 5 – 6 years
- 7 years or more
- I've moved and no longer live in the same commune as during LGP

Based on the answer to question 4 - If the respondent is a youth beneficiary, they will be asked Section B questions. If a woman elected official, Section C. If a government employee, Section D. If an NGO worker, Section E.

B: Questions for youthbeneficiaries:

9. Which activities did you participate in? [Mark all that apply]

- CDP
- CPECs
- CPFs
- Youth Councils

- Youth study tours
- Youth training
- Youth and community dialogue
- National youth consultations

10. During which years did you participate? [Mark all that apply]

- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014

11. Do you believe the participation of youth in local governance has changed as a result of the activities? If yes, how [worse, same, improved]

- Improve
- Same
- Worse

If same, skip to question 14

If worse, skip to question 13

12. How did participation improve as a result? [Mark all that apply]

- More youth are knowledgeable about local governance
- More youth attend community events
- More youth interact with civil society
- The government listens to youth more
- Other (Specify: _____)

Skip to 14

13. Why do you say “worse”? [Open]

14. What progress has your commune made in the past five years in the following governance aspects? Please rank your answers on a scale of 1 to 5: 1: No progress; 2: Some progress; 3: Good progress; 4 Very good progress; 5. I don't know

- Involvement of youth in consultation processes
- Involvement of women in consultation processes
- Implementation of internal financial audit measures
- Response to citizens' issues
- Community development plans
- Coordination with other governmental offices
- Inter-communal coordination
- Support of youth projects
- Support of local business initiatives
- Transparency and information dissemination
- Ease of outreach between citizens and their elected representatives

15. How satisfied are you with the following activities? [1. Not satisfied; 2. Somewhat satisfied; 3. Satisfied; 4 Very satisfied]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPECs
- CPFs
- Youth Councils
- Youth study tours
- Youth training
- Youth and community dialogue
- National youth consultations

16. Would you say that these activities have had a lasting impact on the community? [1. No, there is no longer an impact; 2. Yes, there is a weak impact; 3. Yes, there is a significant impact]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPECs
- CPFs
- Youth Councils
- Youth study tours
- Youth training
- Youth and community dialogue
- National youth consultations

17. Why do think so? [Open response]

18. Which of these LGP activities, if any, do you believe could be sustained using the current resources of the commune? [Mark all that apply]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- None
- CDP
- CPECs
- CPFs
- Youth Councils
- Youth study tours
- Youth training
- Youth and community dialogue
- National youth consultations

19. How could LGP have been improved? [Open Response]

20. What type of activities are needed to continue to encourage youth participation in government? [Open Response]

C: Questions for woman elected officials:

21. Which activities did you participate in? [Mark all that apply]

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations

22. During which years did you participate? [Mark all that apply]

- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014

23. Do you believe that the capacity of women elected officials to participate fully in local governance has changed as a result of the activities? If yes, how [worse, same, improved]

- Improved
- Same
- Worse

If same, skip to question 26

If worse, skip to question 25

24. How did capacity improve as a result? [Mark all that apply]

- Women officials have more technical knowledge
- Women officials gained confidence
- Women officials had more opportunities to voice their opinion
- Government is more open to listening to women officials
- Other (Specify: _____)

Skip to 26

25. Why do you say “worse”? [Open]

26. What progress has your commune made in the past five years in the following governance aspects? Please rank your answers on a scale of 1 to 5: 1: No progress; 2: Some progress; 3: Good progress; 4 Very good progress; 5. I don't know

- Involvement of youth in consultation processes
- Involvement of women in consultation processes
- Implementation of internal financial audit measures
- Response to citizens' issues
- Community development plans
- Coordination with other governmental offices
- Inter-communal coordination
- Support of youth projects
- Support of local business initiatives

- Transparency and information dissemination
- Ease of outreach between citizens and their elected representatives

27. How satisfied are you with the following activities? [1. Not satisfied; 2. Somewhat satisfied; 3. Satisfied; 4 Very satisfied]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations

28. Would you say that these activities have had a lasting impact on the community? [1. No, there is no longer an impact; 2. Yes, there is a weak impact; 3. Yes, there is a significant impact]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations

29. Why do think so? [Open response]

30. Which of these LGP activities, if any, do you believe could be sustained using the current resources of the commune? [Mark all that apply]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- None
- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations

31. How could LGP have been improved? [Open Response]

32. What type of activities are needed to continue to encourage women elected officials to participate fully in government? [Open Response]

D: Questions for government employee beneficiaries:

33. Which activities did you participate in? [Mark all that apply]

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National gender consultations

34. During which years did you participate? [Mark all that apply]

- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014

35. Do you believe the performance of the commune has changed as a result of the activities? If yes, how [worse, same, improved]

- Improved
- Same
- Worse

If same, skip to question 38

If worse, skip to question 27

36. How did the performance of the commune improve as a result? Mark all that apply?

- Better systems
- More transparent or accountable
- Better engagement with community
- Other (Specify: _____)

Skip to 38.

37. Why do you say “worse”? [Open]

38. What progress has your commune made in the past five years in the following governance aspects? Please rank your answers on a scale of 1 to 5: 1: No progress; 2: Some progress; 3: Good progress; 4 Very good progress; 5. I don't know

- Involvement of youth in consultation processes
- Involvement of women in consultation processes
- Implementation of internal financial audit measures
- Mediation and community dispute resolution
- Response to citizens requests
- Integrated development plans

- Coordination with other governmental offices
- Inter-communal coordination
- Support of youth projects
- Support of local business initiatives
- Support of women projects
- Transparency and information dissemination

39. How satisfied are you with the following activities? [1. Not satisfied; 2. Somewhat satisfied; 3. Satisfied; 4 Very satisfied]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National gender consultations

40. Would you say that these activities have had a lasting impact on the community? [1. No, there is no longer an impact; 2. Yes, there is a weak impact; 3. Yes, there is a significant impact]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National gender consultations

41. Why did you think so? [Open Response]

42. Which of these LGP activities, if any, do you believe could be sustained using the current resources of the commune? [Mark all that apply]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- None
- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training

- Communication Strategy development
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National gender consultations

43. How could LGP have been improved? [Open Response]

44. What type of activities are needed to continue to improve communal performance? [Open Response]

E: Questions for NGO beneficiaries:

45. Which activities did you participate in? [Mark all that apply]

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Youth and community dialogue
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations
- National gender consultations

46. During which years did you participate? [Mark all that apply]

- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014

47. Do you believe your NGO's effectiveness has changed as a result of the activities? If yes, how [worse, same, improved]

- Improved
- Same
- Worse

If same, skip to question 50

If worse, skip to question 49

48. How did the engagement with the government improve as a result? Mark all that apply?

- More opportunities to engage
- Government more willing to listen
- NGO has greater skill
- Other (Specify: _____)

Skip to 50

49. Why do you say "worse"? [Open]

50. What progress has your commune made in the past five years in the following governance aspects?? Please rank your answers on a scale of 1 to 5: 1: No progress; 2: Some progress; 3: Good progress; 4 Very good progress; 5. I don't know

- Involvement of youth in consultation processes
- Involvement of women in consultation processes
- Implementation of internal financial audit measures
- Mediation and community dispute resolution
- Response to citizens requests
- Integrated development plans
- Inter-communal coordination
- Support of youth projects
- Support of women projects
- Transparency and information dissemination
- Ease of outreach between citizens and their elected representatives

51. How satisfied are you with the following activities? [1. Not satisfied; 2. Somewhat satisfied; 3. Satisfied; 4 Very satisfied]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Youth and community dialogue
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations
- National gender consultations

52. Would you say that these activities have had a lasting impact on the community? [1. No, there is no longer an impact; 2. Yes, there is a weak impact; 3. Yes, there is a significant impact]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Youth and community dialogue
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations
- National gender consultations

53. Why do you say that? [Open response]

54. Which of these LGP activities, if any, do you believe could be sustained using the current resources of the commune? [Mark all that apply]

Note: the tablet will only display options that the participant mentioned participating in in the earlier question

- CDP
- CPEs
- CPFs
- Women Leadership training
- Management and Audit training
- Anti-corruption related training
- Communication Strategy development
- Youth and community dialogue
- Inter-communal dialogue
- National youth consultations
- National gender consultations

55. How could LGP have been improved? [Open Response]

56. What type of activities are needed to continue to encourage transparency and accountability in government?
[Open Response]

ANNEX E: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Participant names and contact information were provided to USAID only to protect the confidentiality of participants.

ANNEX F: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Saoussane Rifai
Title	Consultant
Organization	Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Evaluation Position?	☐ Team Leader ☒ Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	RFQ No. SOL-608-15-000003
USAID Project to be Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	USAID/Morocco Local Governance Program (LGP) # EPP-I-08-04-00037 Implementer: Research Triangle Institute (RTI)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	Saoussane Rifai
Date	17 Jan 2015

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	ADNANE RAÏSS
Title	Consultant
Organization	Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Evaluation Position?	☐ Team Leader ☒ Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	RFQ No. SOL-608-15-000003
USAID Project to be Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	USAID/Morocco Local Governance Program (LGP) # EPP-I-08-04-00037 Implementer: Research Triangle Institute (RTI)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to: 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	<i>Adnane Raïss</i>
Date	05/19/2015

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Ezzeddine Moudoud
Title	Consultant
Organization	Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Evaluation Position?	☒ Team Leader ☐ Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	RFQ No. S01-808-LS-000003
USAID Project to be Evaluated (include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	USAID/Morocco Local Governance Program (LGP) # EPP-F-08-04-00037 Implementor: Research Triangle Institute (RTI)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: (Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to: 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct or is significant through interest in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant through indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or working arrangement with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience within organization(s) that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconception/bias toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the partner(s) project(s) and organization(s) being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.	Under a direct task order with USAID/Morocco, in 2009 I worked as a short-term Senior Decentralization Expert on a team to help the DG office develop a new approach on a number of technical issues and review and comment on the SOW of LGP. I have not participated in the implementation of LGP in any way.
I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.	
Signature	<i>Ezzeddine Moudoud</i>
Date	01/05/2015

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Mhammed ABDEREBBI
Title	Consultant
Organization	Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Evaluation Position?	☒ Team Leader ☐ Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)	RFQ No. SOL-608-15-000003
USAID Project to be Evaluated (include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)	USAID/Morocco Local Governance Program (LGP) # EPP-I-08-04-00037 Implementer: Research Triangle Institute (RTI)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> 1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant through indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. 3. Current or previous direct or significant through indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous activities of the project. 4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. 6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.	
I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.	
Signature	
Date	September 11, 2011

ANNEX G: STATEMENT OF DIFFERENCES

RTI International

We would like to thank the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for providing us with this opportunity to express our comments and include them in the final evaluation report of the Morocco Local Governance Program (2010–2014). We have both general observations and specific comments on the evaluation team's findings.

General Comments:

1. We agree with the evaluators that the evaluation faced limitations resulting from the fact that the evaluation field work was conducted nearly one year after the project's end date. We particularly regret that the evaluators did not meet with the project's former Chief of Party (COP) nor with RTI's home office technical manager. Such meetings could have helped the evaluation team to better understand some of the challenges faced by the LGP and the strategies developed by the RTI team to address them.
2. We find that the evaluators have not sufficiently taken into consideration the broad institutional and political context in which the LGP was implemented. This omission seriously undermines the validity of a number of findings. We note in particular that there is no analysis of how the LGP's main counterpart, the Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales (DGCL, General Directorate for Local Authorities), shaped the LGP's implementation and that it served as an essential factor in ensuring the sustainability of the LGP's interventions. Instead, the evaluators appear to have focused almost exclusively on the sustainability of specific activities within specific communes without taking into consideration the broader impact of these activities on the broader institutional level. For example:
 - It does not appear that the evaluators assessed how the numerous approaches, tools, and guides developed by the LGP are currently used or promoted by the DGCL across the country to promote good governance and local innovation.
 - The evaluators have missed a critical impact of the internal audit activity. The fact that the activity was adopted by the Inspection Générale de l'Administration Territoriale (IGAT, General Inspection of Local Administration) and the Direction de la Formation des Cadres de l'Administration Territoriale (DFCAT, Directorate for Training Territorial Administration Officers) is an essential factor in ensuring the long-term sustainability and replicability of the approach.
 - When looking at the communal level, the evaluators find that youth activities are not sustainable; however, when they examine the broader influence on reform, they provide several examples of the long-term impact of youth activities.

Specific Comments:

Executive summary/Findings/4. LGP contribution to the reform process

1. **Evaluators' Statement:** *"However, regarding the current 'advanced regionalization' policy, especially now after the September Regional and Communal Elections, there is little evidence of the role and influence of the LGP, as debates on this sensitive issue have been going on for decades now in Morocco."*

RTI response: The LGP was never tasked with influencing the regionalization reform process. As noted by the evaluators, regionalization in Morocco is very sensitive as it encompasses the status of the disputed Western Sahara region, and Moroccan authorities would not allow a US government-funded program to play a notable role in this process. We also note that the statement is contradicted by the evaluation team's finding *"that several key informants gave credit to LGP for setting a*

precedent of youth consultation and participation that paved the way for the adoption of a consultative entity for youth in the new regionalization law, particularly given advocacy efforts led by young parliamentarians that collaborated with local youth councils."

Evaluation Question 1b: What results were achieved within the targeted communes relating to youth participation in governance?

1. **Evaluators' statement:** *"While there were efforts to jumpstart a process of youth participation during the life of the project, LGP paid less attention to securing and optimizing outcomes that would ensure success, credibility and ownership of the process in the short and long term. As a consequence, few activities have materialized into tangible, visible, sustainable changes that affect youth expectations, daily lives and specific needs at the community level."*

RTI response: RTI's approach to youth engagement was based on a three-pronged strategy, specifically designed to optimize outcomes and promote ownership and credibility of the process, as follows:

- Short term: At the local level, ensure that Youth Councils successfully carry out planned leadership transitions to instill the process of a dynamic and evolving council.
- Medium term: Support the operating Youth Councils to create a national representative body to participate in the ongoing youth consultative process, to ensure that youth-related local government issues are introduced.
- Long term: Nurture the creation of an ad-hoc group of young members of Parliament to advocate within their own political parties and in the general assembly for youth inclusion in legislative actions.

2. **Evaluators' statement:** *"Having communes lead the selection of CSOs who then selected candidates for local youth councils was commonly perceived to introduce bias and favoritism, with preference being given to groups that enjoy privileged status or that hold friendly political affiliations and allegiances. Several youth leaders suggested that a bottom-up grassroots effort, led by recognized groups seen as representative of various segments and neighborhoods and districts of the commune, would be a more credible and appropriate approach."*

RTI response: The evaluators do not appear to consider that the LGP's core mission was to work with communes to introduce new and innovative approaches and support them in their efforts to reach to a broad constituency. This means that nearly all LGP interventions were commune led, including activities focusing on youth. The "preferred" bottom-up process described by the evaluator is therefore not consistent with the goals of the LGP and of this specific activity, which was to help communes open up to youth participation. The LGP had no mandate to support/initiate grass-roots efforts. Further, we also note that the idea that there are "representative" neighborhood youth groups that could easily lead without being contested is not supported by the reality on the ground.

RTI's approach in creating the local Youth Councils was very clear and transparent. To avoid the very perceptions mentioned by the evaluators, the first criteria mandated that youth associations must be registered associations recognized by the commune. This tactic provided a broader degree of representation and legitimacy in the eyes of the youth participants and in interaction with the commune representatives. As Youth Councils gained experience and credibility, the councils themselves undertook outreach to nonparticipating youth-related associations, particularly those in marginalized neighborhoods such as in Séfrou and Kénitra.

While we acknowledge the criticisms made concerning the selection process, these comments tended to emanate from local associations that were excluded from participation because of their stated political party affiliation or because their members or representatives exceeded the maximum age threshold.

3. **Evaluators' statement:** *"For instance, there had been no outreach efforts with educational institutions, youth community centers, and neighborhood associations in marginalized areas where*

youth are most likely to be vulnerable and disaffected, which limited the council's reach and perceived legitimacy.”

RTI response: This statement is partly addressed by our previous response. There are numerous instances in which Youth Councils reached out to neighborhood associations in marginalized areas. These examples are documented in the LGP Final Report.

We also note that this finding relies on an erroneous understanding of the local political and socioeconomic reality underpinning youth engagement. Youth centers (Dar Shababs) are managed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and are seen as extensions of the central government, not as community-based institutions. While many members of the Youth Councils were members of their local Dar Shabab, they were clear in their intent to remain independent from the youth centers.

4. **Evaluators’ statement:** Regarding the selection of participants to the study tour, the evaluators state that *“Members of local youth councils had the impression that participants were hand-picked from program staff based on criteria that were unknown to them, and wished they had been consulted on these criteria and the selection process. Local youth councils from El Jadida and Kenitra were among the most vocal about this specific issue.”*

RTI Response: The study tour was initially intended for members of Parliament participating in the Youth Inclusion Working Group. Given the limited number (4) of spaces allotted to members of Youth Councils, LGP sought to ensure gender and regional balance. Within the selected Youth Councils, the decision to designate participants was left to the respective Youth Councils.

5. **Evaluator’s statement:** *“A National Association of Local Youth Councils was created by LGP on October 7, 2014, just two months before the program close-out, with the objective of facilitating networking, exchange of experience, and ongoing support and training. However, the founding president reported that beyond some initial office equipment [...] no funding was provided and no clear roadmap was developed for it to accomplish its mission and goals. As of November 2015 when the evaluation team met with the Association President, the association had not organized any activity and had only rough ideas of possible future activities. The President also regretted that the association was not created at an earlier stage to increase the odds of success.”*

RTI Response: We agree with the evaluators that it would have been preferable to help create the association at an earlier stage in the program’s implementation. However, the prerequisite for instituting a national association was the creation of functioning and effective Youth Councils at the local level, which could not have been done in the early stages of LGP implementation. We note that in the LGP Final Report, we stressed the fact that the association needed further support to be sustainable.

Evaluation Question 1f: Which activity components were most and least effective in achieving progress toward LGP’s overarching objectives?

1. **Evaluators’ statement:** *“LGP established Gender and Equal Opportunity Committees (Comité de Parité et d’Egalité des Chances-CPEC) in ten communes, and developed and implemented a training kit and program to support them. The CPEC itself was introduced in the 2009 communal charter as a primary communication channel for engaging and involving civil society in communal life. This activity is clearly among LGP’s less effective ones due to a variety of factors, all described in LGP’s final report.”*

RTI response: While we agree with this overall assessment, we note that the evaluators neglected to mention one key factor explaining why this activity was not successful: The lack of commitment and willingness of the central authority (DGCL) to promote the CPEC created an atmosphere of no perceived benefits among locally elected officials to put the mechanism into effect.

Sustainability of LGP Activities/Evaluation Question 2: Which activities and results, specifically relating to youth participation, women elected officials, audit systems, complaint management systems, and communication strategies, are most likely to be sustained post project completion?/Overall Factors contributing to achievement of sustainability.

1. **RTI Comment:** As noted under our general comments, we were surprised by the total absence of broader institutional/enabling environment factors in the evaluators' analysis of the sustainability of LGP interventions. Specifically, there is no discussion of the DGCL's role as the program's main partner and as an indispensable factor in sustainability. By uniquely focusing on citizens and elected officials, the evaluator missed critical dimensions of the program, which seriously erodes the validity of the findings in this section.

LGP Adaptability

1. **Evaluators' statement:** *"Following the mid-term evaluation, despite the claim in the final report that the workplan for 2013 had prioritized the sustainability of program achievements, there is limited evidence that sustainability was achieved in a systematic fashion across program activities, based on the evaluation team's field observations and the reflections of beneficiaries. Similarly, there is a lack of evidence in the field to support the claims made in the same section of that report with respect to broader collaboration with provinces and prefectures called to accompany the LGP in the dissemination of tools and methodologies, and stronger support for local elected officials and in all areas of their competencies."*

RTI Comment: We strongly disagree with this statement. The final planning phase of the program focused on completion of planned activities and the delivery of tools and methodologies (e.g., guides, training manuals, and trainer of trainer products) that were the result of each LGP activity. These resources were validated by and submitted to DFCAT, the training division the DGCL. From the outset, the LGP and DGCL agreed upon an approach in which the LGP developed and tested program initiatives with partner communes in the specific project zones; following implementation of pilot activities, LGP generated training kits, which then served as dissemination tools for the DGCL. This is another example of how the evaluators' decision to exclude the DGCL from its assessment of sustainability seriously undermines the evaluation's findings.

Sustainability of the program was never defined as the sustainability of specific activities in the partner communes. The evaluation therefore should have assessed the extent to which LGP modules are currently used by the DGCL/DFCAT in their effort to strengthen the capacity of communes in all of Morocco.

We also disagree on the comment regarding involving the provinces in the program following the mid-term evaluation. Based on the recommendation of the mid-term report, the LGP intentionally integrated the provincial agents into all training and workshop activities, using them whenever possible as trainers and coaches, especially for monitoring and evaluation support to communes for the Communal Development Plans (CDPs).

2. **Evaluators' statement:** *"Finally, key informant interviews suggest that LGP was not been able to embrace a leadership and strategic approach but rather a management mindset, which seems to be dictated by the pressure to deliver and roll out program activities in a very large number of target communes in various regions."*

RTI Response: We strongly disagree with this statement. We first note that it contradicts some of the evaluation's findings. The LGP's broad geographic scope concerned mostly one activity: providing support to the communes in developing, implementing, and monitoring their CDPs. As noted by the evaluators, this was one of the LGP's most successful and groundbreaking activities. In this light, expanding support to a large number of communes should be assessed as being highly strategic. The LGP's approach responded to a clear demand from our main counterpart (DGCL) and supported its strategic vision to mainstream strategic planning in all of Moroccan communes. While this certainly

put a strain on LGP resources, the evaluation's finding clearly confirms that this was a strategic use of these resources.

Recommendations

3. **Evaluators' recommendation:** *"Place greater emphasis on technical interventions. Future programs should focus more on key local government functions (at the three levels), including fiscal administration to improve the fiscal base and revenues (such as in Kenitra), a prerequisite for improving the service delivery system."*

RTI Comment: We disagree with this recommendation and do not find that it is supported by the evaluation's findings. We caution against taking too strong of a technical approach to strengthening local governance. The default approach of Moroccan authorities is to view governance through a technocratic lens; a main added value of USAID's governance programs over the past 15 years has been to introduce new concepts regarding citizen engagement in local affairs. This approach has led to groundbreaking successes such as the implementation of CDP (USAID began working on participatory planning in 2002) and increased participation of women in local affairs. We note here that the evaluators concur on the strategic importance of the LGP's achievements in this regard. We also note that there is strong technical capacity within the DGCL and the private sector and that it is unclear how much value USAID could add in this area.

We find that LGP's balance between more technical activities and activities promoting new governance concepts was adapted to the context in which it was implemented. Looking forward, we believe that USAID should focus on technical activities only if they can generate strong governance dividends, promote greater accountability or have a direct impact on service delivery.

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