MID-TERM REVIEW

Project ID:	10486
Project Name:	Child Project Title: Strengthening Marrakech's sustainable development through innovative planning and financing
Countr(ies):	Morocco
Implementing Agency:	UNDP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Overview

A. Description

Project name Child Project Title: Strengthening Marrakech's sustainable development through innovative planning and financing	
Country Morocco	
GEF ID 10486	Implementing Agency UNDP
Executing Entity Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment - Department of Environment	
Trust Fund GET	Project Type FSP
Objective To foster integration and innovative urban planning and financing for Marrakech's sustainable development	

B. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval 12/18/2021	Agency Approval 12/2/2022
Implementation Start 12/2/2022	First Disbursement 5/26/2023
Expected MTR 6/2/2025	MTR Submission 3/9/2026
Actual MTR 11/16/2025	Expected Completion 12/2/2027

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Main MTR Findings

The overall objective of the project is to promote an integrated model to strengthen the necessary institutional capacities at all levels and promote the integration of sustainable development in Marrakech and its transformation into a sustainable city. This approach requires action at two levels: the management of the city's daily life; and anticipation through the implementation of local policies and strategies for long-term sustainable development.

To achieve this, all results were built at the time of project design on existing knowledge and experience for capacity building of regional institutions in the city of Marrakech and the private sector to meet the challenges of adaptation to demography, climate change, socioeconomic changes, and factors having direct or indirect effects on urban ecosystems, biodiversity and the essential ecosystem services they provide to human health and well-being in the city.

Following are key findings to note:

Finding 1: The project aligns perfectly with national priorities, those of the GEF and UNDP. Its relevance is confirmed by its objective of promoting integrated urban planning and the development of innovative financing instruments in the city of Marrakech through a multi-sectoral and inclusive approach, ensuring effective management and stimulating a paradigm shift towards anchored sustainable development.

Finding 2: The project is relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders, given the shared concern for the realization of the major “Marrakech Sustainable City” project and the infrastructure planned as part of Morocco’s preparations for organization of the football World Cup in 2030. Given the scale of the needs expressed, the project advocates a global action led by the high authority of the region.

Finding 3: The articulation of the four components of the project is relevant and underpinned through an innovative planning, investment, and financing approach for the achievement of convincing results to be generalized as a model of sustainable development of cities.

Finding 4: The relevance of the project is noted through its institutional anchoring at the level of the MTEDD as UGP in cooperation with the other institutions of the country, both at the central and regional level.

Finding 5: The choice of the city of Marrakech is relevant in view of the objectives assigned to the project to develop a pilot intervention model replicable in other cities in the country.

Finding 6: The activities carried out as of June 30, 2025, primarily concern diagnostic and feasibility studies, consultation, awareness-raising, contribution to the preparation of Action Plans, and a roadmap to unite actions. (Outcome 1.1); and the preparation of tender documents for the implementation of sustainable investments (Outcome 2.1).

Finding 7: The activities Environmental and social impact studies, scaling up of the BRT system, the new Business Plan for waste management, feasibility studies relating to the development of a network of charging stations for electric vehicles and the establishment of a pilot project for sharing electric motorcycles and the development of a digitalized monitoring and evaluation system for the Palm Groove are fully completed. (Outcome 2.1).

Finding 8: Several activities should be removed from the project action plan because they have already been initiated by the local authority, the FM6, or they depend on official validation by the SNDD (Outcome 1.1), and sometimes the activities are already carried out, such as the case of environmental and social impact studies and the scaling up of the BRT system.(Outcome 2.1).

Finding 9: All activities will see a significant increase in achievements in 2025 and 2026 because all feasibility studies and tender documents have been prepared, and contracting is underway.

Finding 10: The indicators of objective related to the creation and protection of green spaces and the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions are being implemented. Furthermore, the dissemination of improved practices and the inclusion of direct beneficiaries of both sexes have exceeded the target planned at the end of the project.

Finding 11: At the mid-term, indicators relating to the strengthening of local institutions and support for the project for the development of the Municipal Action Plan, considering sustainable development aspects, have been achieved. The preparation of the City Climate Plan is underway. However, the development of new instruments promoting the integration of sustainability into urban planning remains dependent on actions programmed at the central level. (Outcome 1.1).

Finding 12: Public and private investments mobilized to support the multidimensional sustainability of the city of Marrakech have made it possible to significantly exceed the target at the end of the project thanks to financing covering all aspects of sustainable development and allowing a significant improvement in the City biodiversity index (CBI) to 9.75/20 compared to 7/20 at the launch of the project.(Outcome 2.1).

Finding 13: The project has not started the work of innovative financing based on economic models and innovative financial mechanisms that can strengthen the sustainability and perpetuity of sustainable development investments. (Outcome 3.1).

Finding 14: The project has made a significant effort to raise awareness among local people and institutions about urban sustainability through the organization of meetings and the dissemination of lessons learned through communication tools. (Outcome 4.1).

Finding 15: The PMU and supervision by the various UNDP/GEF departments operated in accordance with the ProDoc, and no problems in this regard were identified by the MTR. Coordination of the action is carried out with all stakeholders on the ground, local communities, and direct beneficiaries.

Finding 16: The composition of the technical assistance (TA) team is in line with the project design (coordinator, junior technical advisor, administrative and financial assistant), but given the concentration of field work during the 2nd half of the project, it is necessary to strengthen the TA team with a Senior Technical Advisor.

Finding 17: The project runs from 2023 to 2027 (five years) with an initial budget of US$9,616,167 allocated by the GEF and UNDP and co-financing of USD307,972,555, knowing that during the design of the project, it was impossible to estimate the co-financing of the Municipality of Marrakech. As of June 30, 2025. THE UNDP-GEF disbursements amount to USD 840,389.44, or 8.74% of the available budget, and the amount committed by national institutions and private partners is estimated at USD 461,367,141, or 154.53%.

Finding 18: The project work is carried out in perfect cohesion, complementarity, and coordination with all stakeholders, and the outputs are communicated and shared on a real scale, which will further promote the monitoring of the achievement of indicators, effects, impacts, and the achievement of the project objectives.

Finding 19: The project document foresaw the integration of gender aspects in the implementation of activities as well as the contribution of women to the achievement of results. At mid-term, the project not only reached but exceeded the end-of-activity target regarding women's participation and gender considerations. However, the absence of a structured monitoring mechanism limits the ability to properly document and analyze these achievements. It would therefore be advisable to establish a "Gender Scan" system to collect, process, and highlight sex-disaggregated data. This would facilitate regular monitoring and better demonstrate the differentiated impacts of the project on women and men.

Findings 20: Financial risks: The prospects for sustainability appear reassuring, and the municipality and all the project partners seem to have the financial means to ensure the sustainability of the infrastructure provided.

Findings 21: Institutional risk: This is ensured through capacity building of governance structures at the regional level, and especially the high level of institutional coordination and capacities for the integration and convergence of actions at the level of long-term planning.

Findings 21: Socio-economic sustainability. The challenge of the project is to find the right balance to meet social and economic needs without straying from the line of sight of its sustainable development objectives.

Findings 22: Environmental risks: The sustainability elements of the project cannot be assessed at this stage of the project implementation. However, it should be emphasized that the risk diagnosis established during the project design remains intact, and an environmental and social impact study is envisaged.

B. Stakeholder Engagement

The project is structured around four key components and results:

1. **Sustainable and integrated urban planning and evidence-based policy reform**
   This component aims to transform existing planning procedures and ensure vertical and cross-sectoral integration of sustainability by engaging relevant stakeholders in the reinvention of urban development.
   Result 1: *Local and national governments have strengthened their institutions, processes and capacities to undertake sustainable integrated planning and evidence-based policy reforms.*
2. **Sustainable, low-carbon and resilient investments in land conservation and restoration**
   Building on ongoing initiatives, this component proposes to scale up interventions and introduce new ones inspired by adaptable international best practices, with an emphasis on low-carbon development.
   Result 2: *Local and national governments have undertaken sustainable, integrated, low-carbon and resilient investments focused on land conservation and restoration.*
3. **Innovative financing and scaling up sustainable urban investments.**
   It explores financing options for local authorities, including through private sector engagement, and proposes innovative and tailored financing mechanisms based on stakeholder consultations and the needs of the city.
   Result 3: *Local and national governments are launching innovative financing and business models to develop sustainable urban solutions.*
4. **Advocacy, knowledge sharing, capacity building and partnerships.**
   This component aims to empower all stakeholders – policymakers, technical staff, civil society and citizens – through awareness campaigns, training sessions and strategic communication to support effective implementation and large-scale adoption.
   Result 4: *Policy development and actions are influenced at local, regional and national levels to advance the urban sustainability agenda.*

The project adopted an approach of agreement and contractualization with the stakeholders, regional institutions, the private sector, and NGOs, giving partners the latitude to intervene according to their attributions and field of action. The agreements cover all activities in line with the objectives of the project, in particular for the implementation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (SNDD) in the Marrakech Municipal Action Plan 2022-2028 'Marrakech Sustainable City'; the transformation of the Sidi Ghanem industrial zone signed in January 2023 between different stakeholders (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of National Territorial Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and Urban Policy, Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Council of the Marrakech Safi Region, Municipality of Marrakech and the Autonomous Water and Electricity Distribution Authority of Marrakech).

The project saw the adoption of a framework agreement relating to the implementation of the "Marrakech, sustainable city" program, co-signed by the Department of Sustainable Development, the Ministry of the Interior, the Wilaya, and the Municipality of Marrakech.
Agreements are still being established, particularly to support the 'Eco-school' school and 'Eco-neighborhood' greening program. Halfway through and by examining all the projects already underway, it appears that the 'Marrakech, Sustainable City' project is playing a lever in terms of developing green investments in Marrakech by promoting high-impact multi-stakeholder partnerships.

The project has made commendable efforts to raise awareness and ensure sufficient understanding of the strategic objectives of the project and its intervention logic by all stakeholders in the city of Marrakech.

To support the work carried out, it is recommended to develop, beyond the information disseminated on the UNDP website in Morocco, a communication strategy based on proven expertise in the field. This strategy should serve to inform all stakeholders at the national, regional, and local levels of the integrated approach adopted by the project so that the various current or future stakeholders gradually end up using it and referring to it at each level of their planning and action. It is also a major step towards launching political dialogue for the improvement of the territorial urban planning framework.
Communication itself can be achieved through social media, a website to provide a kind of guarantee of professionalism in the eyes of the public, the press, the media, and events. The project is currently preparing a platform for this purpose.

The mid-term review notes that the start-up phase of the project was decisive for the operationalization of the Project Steering Committee (COPIL), the establishment of the thematic committees, the mobilization of the TA, the rapid and effective launch of actions, appropriate phasing and sequencing of activities, the establishment of good cooperation and appropriate management mechanisms to facilitate effective execution and shared ownership of the needs, priorities and specificities of the beneficiaries by the stakeholders.
To maintain the benefits of the program, it is recommended to put in place an exit strategy now and ensure its ownership by beneficiaries beyond 2030.

C. Gender Equality

During the design of the project, particular attention was paid to taking into account the objective of an Action Plan for Gender Equality in Morocco to integrate the gender dimension into all project activities with specific indicators on how the project contributes to equity and the empowerment of women.

As part of the implementation of the 'Marrakech Sustainable City' project, a Gender Action Plan (GAP) was recently developed by external expertise covering all components of the project. It sets out, for each planned activity, concrete ways of integrating equality between women and men, in line with national standards, Morocco's international commitments, and the territorial realities specific to the city of Marrakech.

The project has paid particular attention to the gender issue. The intensive participation of women in activities, as the gender integration objective indicators, at the mid-term, exceeded the forecasts at the end of the project (Indicator 1: The figure reached in 2004 is 1,002,697 beneficiaries, 50% of whom are women. However, the work done so far must be reinforced by the implementation of a 'Gender Scan' system to provide the necessary data on this aspect, even beyond the duration of the project.

The project planned in the ProDoc to massively involve women in all activities and to this end developed a gender strategy which proposed to put in place a very large number of monitoring indicators per activity whereas the project in its initial design did not plan to put in place a specific “Gender Scan” monitoring system nor the necessary human resources dedicated to this activity at the TA level.

To this end, to correct these shortcomings in the project design, it is recommended to reduce the number of monitoring indicators proposed by the gender strategy and to develop a computer application for gender-specific analysis, first, for the specific needs of the project to ensure the monitoring of the involvement of women from the design to the closure of the project, and then this tool can be popularized at the national level. This application can be enriched by the monitoring of interventions of specific activities for women and young people for their development and empowerment, in particular, for the animation planned in the gardens.

D. Knowledge Management

The ProDoc provides for the development of a communication strategy to promote the visibility of the project, knowledge sharing and communication for sustainable development. At the mid-term, the project uses all the classic means of institutional communication (workshops, awareness meetings, reporting, etc.) focused on partners. The project has also set up a digital communication platform intended for large-scale knowledge sharing, but it is not finalized at the mid-term.

Furthermore, the project has established a Grievance and Complaint Management Mechanism (GRM) to address concerns and complaints fairly and expeditiously, ensuring adequate follow-up and proposing satisfactory resolutions. In the absence of an internet-based IT platform, the mission was unable to assess the operationalization of such a mechanism to strengthen stakeholder confidence and improve governance.

Activity 4.1.2.1 focused on the development of a specific communication plan for the dissemination of project results, while **Activity 4.1.2.2** covered the development of communication and knowledge-sharing tools, including a website and social networks. Achievements under these activities include the development of a communication plan, the establishment of a visual charter, the creation of model templates, and the creation of the project website and social media channels.

The project has made commendable efforts to raise awareness and ensure sufficient understanding of the strategic objectives of the project and its intervention logic by all stakeholders in the city of Marrakech. The project has also made a significant effort to raise awareness among local people and institutions about urban sustainability through the organization of meetings and the dissemination of lessons learned through traditional communication tools

To support the work carried out, it is recommended to develop, beyond the information disseminated on the UNDP website in Morocco, a communication strategy based on proven expertise in the field. This strategy should serve to inform all stakeholders at the national, regional, and local levels of the integrated approach adopted by the project so that the various current or future stakeholders gradually end up using it and referring to it at each level of their planning and action. It is also a major step towards launching political dialogue for the improvement of the territorial urban planning framework.

III. Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	12000	497	

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	280		

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
Marsh site North Ouest of the Palm grove				280.00	0.00	

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
	11720	497	

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Palm grove				11,720.00	497.00				

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	460.5	497	

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	460.50	497.00	

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)		5543580		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)		5404605		

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)		817,911	0	
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)		104,295	0	
Anticipated start year of accounting		2022		
Duration of accounting		25	20	

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)		4,725,669	0	
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)		5,300,310	0	
Anticipated start year of accounting		2022		
Duration of accounting		20	20	

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)		10,834,907,153	0	

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)
Solar Photovoltaic		61.46	0.00	

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female		464,425	506,379	
Male		464,425	496,318	
Total	**0**	**928,850**	1,002,697	**0**

IV: Co Financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Anticipated at CEO($)	Materialized at MTR($)
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Investment mobilized	200,000.00	133,000.00
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	300,000.00	
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Energy, Mines and Environment – Morocco	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	8,933,888.00	6,895,000.00
Private Sector	SDL Hadirat Al Anwar	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	30,720,000.00	22,000,000.00

Recipient Country Government	SDL Bus City Motajadida	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	164,282,500.00	181,400,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Autonomous Water and Electricity Distribution Authority of Marrakech (RADEEMA)	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	92,120,000.00	92,120,000.00
Private Sector	EMOB	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00	
Other	Professionnal Association of Sidi Ghanem Industrial Zone	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00	2,000,000.00
Beneficiaries	Municipality of Marrakech	Public Investment	Investment mobilized		156,819,141.00
Total Co-financing				**298,556,388.00**	**158,819,141.00**

Comments

The co-financing committed by national institutions and private partners amounts to USD 298,556,388, which is committed as grants and in-kind. As of June 30, 2025, the amount committed is estimated at USD 461,367,141, or 154.53%. The level of co-financing committed is well above forecasts due to the launch of several restructuring projects for the city and especially the difficulties in estimating the contribution of the municipality of Marrakech, which alone provided 34% of the cofinancing (Appendix 7: Detailed statement of co-financing).

V: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
	High or Substantial	High or Substantial	

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

The project is about appointing an external consultant to carry out an environmental and social impact study. However, given the DRE's sovereign powers, the project already exercises a priori control and continues before the implementation of activities.
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In the short and medium term, there are no financial and institutional risks and there is still the possibility of achieving the project objective, achieving most indicators, and taking additional measures to carry out

all planned investments, in particular, by trying to consume all the GEF budget still available and the possibility of extending the project.

In the long term, the idea and approach developed during the project design and the implementation experience accumulated at this stage will remain highly relevant to avoid social and environmental risk, on the one hand, and to initiate national dialogue to generalize the development model being finalized, on the other hand.

VI. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category	Prefix	Title
M and E Document	Mid-term Review (MTR)	GEF10486_UNDP6411_FY25_UNDP_Morocco_Mitigation_FSP
Project Supporting Document	ESS Supporting Document	6411_SESP_Morocco_reviewed 09