

# Participatory Strategic Planning and Pluriannual Budgeting

## Final Project Report and Evaluation

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## Abbreviations

<b>CTO</b>	Cognizant Technical Officer
<b>CRI</b>	Centre Régional d'Investissement (Regional Investment Center)
<b>DFCAT</b>	Direction de la Formation des Cadres de l'Administration Territoriale (Direction for training of Local Authority Managers)
<b>DGCL</b>	Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales (General Direction for Local Authorities)
<b>FEC</b>	Fonds D'Équipement Communal (Communal Infrastructure Fund)
<b>FUM</b>	Forum Urbain Maroc
<b>MIS</b>	Management Information System
<b>PDES</b>	Plan de Développement Économique et Social (Social and Economic Development Plan)
<b>PSP</b>	Planification Stratégique Participative (Participatory Strategic Planning)
<b>PSPG</b>	Participatory Strategic Planning Guide
<b>SIC</b>	Système d'Information Communale (Communal Information System)
<b>SMD</b>	Souss-Massa-Draa (region)
<b>SOW</b>	Scope of Work
<b>USAID</b>	U.S. Agency for International Development

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### **List of Reports and Documents in the CD-Rom:**

- 1- Review of Existing Investment Planning Procedures and Policies
- 2- Participatory Development Planning and Investment Policies
- 3- Guide practises PSP in the local Communities (in Arabic and French)
- 4- Training plan and modules to the PSP
- 5- Training file to the PSP (in French and Arabic)
- 6- Evaluation of the Training workshop in Agadir
- 7- Evaluation of the Training workshop in Tétouan
- 8- Data-processing application of the communal Information system
- 9- Presentation of SIC
- 10- User guide of SIC
- 11- Technical Assistance to PSP (Phase 1)
- 12- Acts of the regional Seminar
- 13- Album-photographs of the demonstrations organized within the framework of the Program

## Résumé (Français)

Le projet sur la planification stratégique et la budgétisation pluriannuelle des investissements a été développé par USAID en collaboration avec les Ministères de l'Intérieur (Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales—DGCL), du Plan et des Finances. La mise en œuvre du projet a débuté en Avril 2001 pour une durée initialement prévue de 18 mois. Cette durée a été progressivement étendue à 39 mois en réponse à des problèmes lors du lancement du projet, pour compenser les disruptions causées par des événements nationaux (élections) et internationaux et pour saisir des opportunités émergentes.

Le projet avait pour but principal de renforcer les compétence des collectivités marocaines en matière de planification afin qu'elles puissent pleinement jouer leur rôle en matière de développement économique et social. Il partait d'un constat fait par l'USAID et ses partenaires que le processus de préparation des Plans de Développement et Économiques et Sociaux (PDES) pour 2000-2004 avait été un exercice décevant, peu à même de générer une dynamique de développement local.

Conçu au départ comme un projet d'assistance aux instances régionale et provinciales dans la région du Souss-Massa-Draa, le projet a été redéfini, en accord avec la DGCL et l'USAID, pour se concentrer sur l'échelle communale et métropolitaine. Ainsi six collectivités locales—4 Communes Urbaines du Grand Agadir, la Communauté Urbaine d'Agadir et la Commune Rurale d'Aourir—ont été les principales bénéficiaires du projet. Une fois la fusion des communes du Grand Agadir réalisée—en janvier 2004—le projet s'est concentré sur la nouvelle commune d'Agadir et la commune rurale d'Aourir.

Pour la mise en œuvre de ce projet, RTI International adopta une approche fortement participative afin de s'assurer à ce que les bénéficiaires et partenaires continuent pleinement à sa mise en œuvre et s'approprient ses résultats. Cette approche a également permis aux partenaires de mieux comprendre les bénéfices de l'approche participative proposée dans le cadre du projet.

### Réalisations Principales

#### Examen des procédures et de la politique existantes pour la planification (Tâche A)

Cette tâche avait pour but de dresser le bilan des procédures et des pratiques de planification au Maroc. Elle a fait l'objet d'un examen des textes en vigueur et des documents de planifications, mais surtout d'un travail de terrain intensif au près de nombreuses collectivités territoriales du Souss-Massa-Draa, y inclut la région, deux communautés urbaines, quatre communes urbaines et rurales, deux Provinces et plusieurs directions régionales et provinciales.

#### Politiques, procédures et guide de la Planification Stratégique Participative (Tâche B)

Cette tâche avait pour objectif de produire un rapport en deux parties complémentaires : la première partie se concentrant sur les politiques nationales et orientations nécessaire pour favoriser l'application de la PSP ; la deuxième partie consistait en un guide de la PSP à l'usage des collectivités territoriales. Le processus pour l'adoption de ce document impliqua tous les partenaires au travers d'ateliers et

de groupe de travail et résulta en un rapport qui épouse de près les réalités marocaines et est adapté au niveau de qualification des élus locaux.

### **Création d'une base de données et d'information communale (Tâche C)**

Le développement du Système d'Information Communale (SIC) a été un processus long et intensif afin d'assurer que le produit final corresponde aux attentes des usagers. Il fallait également faire face à de nombreuses contraintes telles que : facilité d'utilisation et de mise à jour ; la cohérence avec la nomenclature nationale et la fiabilité des données ; et l'utilité de l'outil comme tableau de bord de la commune. Le SIC est un produit évolutif qui est amené à faire l'objet de modification dans l'avenir. Dans l'immédiat il est un outil opérationnel au service des collectivités.

### **Séminaire Régional sur la PSP et le Développement local (Tâche D)**

Organisé en juin 2004 le séminaire avait pour objectif de présenter les résultats du projet, sensibiliser les acteurs du développement local et discuter des modalités et des conditions de la généralisation de la PSP au Maroc. Le séminaire rassembla plus de 150 participants locaux et nationaux qui s'accordèrent sur la nécessité de diffuser l'approche PSP et pour cela de : mieux former employés et élus communaux ; d'apporter une assistance technique aux communes et d'améliorer le contrôle et suivi de l'action communale.

### **Evaluation des besoins en formation, développement de modules de formation et formation des formateurs (Tâche E et F)**

RTI développa un plan de formation communal sur les bases d'une identification des besoins au niveau des communes cibles. Pour mettre en œuvre ce plan, l'équipe du projet a training rassembla un dossier de formation composé de :

- 6 modules de formation
- 1 module de formation des formateurs
- 1 ensemble d'outils méthodologiques

Le projet organisa deux ateliers de formation et cinq séminaires de sensibilisation et de réflexion sur les enjeux liés à la planification stratégique. (voir tableau récapitulatif en fin de résumé).

### **Assistance technique aux communes (Tâche G)**

Cette tâche consista en l'apport d'assistance technique à six communes d'Agadir et sa région: Agadir, Anza, Tikiouine, Bensergao, Aourir and la Communauté Urbaine d'Agadir. L'assistance porta sur trois volets principaux:

- Institutionnalisation de l'approche PSP par la création de cellules PSP
- Développement des capacités par la formation à la PSP, la dotation en équipement informatique, et la collecte des données et la formation dans le cadre du SIC
- L'appui au développement d'une vision pour la ville d'Agadir unifiée

### **Résultats Principaux du Projet**

Les impacts du projet peuvent être classés en trois catégories principales :

- La contribution à la dissémination des concepts et méthodologie de la PSP
- Le renforcement des capacités des communes ciblées
- La pérennité des résultats

## **La dissémination des concepts et méthodologie de la PSP**

Les activités de sensibilisation conduites dans le cadre du projet ont eu un impact indéniable. Cela c'est traduit par de nombreuses demandes d'assistance d'autorités locales (Tétouan, Martil, Marrakech, Ouarzazate) auxquelles RTI s'est efforcé de répondre dans la mesure des capacités du projet. Le projet a réussi à faire accepter la démarche PSP comme étant adaptée au contexte marocain et a ainsi répondu à un besoin fort des collectivités.

## **Le renforcement des capacités des communes ciblées**

Le projet a fortement contribué au renforcement des capacités des communes d'Agadir et d'Aourir à mettre en œuvre des processus de PSP. Les membres des cellules PSP ont bien assimilé l'approche et ont acquis des qualifications critiques pour sa mise en œuvre, ils comprennent le rôle du SIC en matière de planification stratégique et la commune d'Agadir peut mobiliser les moyens nécessaires pour enclencher le processus.

Il faut cependant noter que les membres des cellules PSP ont souligné l'importance de bénéficier d'une assistance technique continue car ils ne sentent pas encore prêts pour appliquer l'approche. Un accompagnement sur le terrain apparaît donc comme étant encore nécessaire.

## **La pérennité des résultats**

Plusieurs facteurs indiquent que les résultats du projet seront probablement pérennes. Tout d'abord on peut affirmer que les partenaires et bénéficiaires du projet se sont pleinement appropriés la démarche PSP et ce aussi bien aux niveaux national que local. Ils ont désormais à leur disposition des outils (SIC, guide, modules de formation) qui leur permettront de perpétuer, répliquer et généraliser ces efforts.

Au niveau local il convient de noter l'institutionnalisation de la PSP par l'intégration de la cellule PSP à l'organigramme de la commune d'Agadir comme vecteur de durabilité du projet.

Il faut également constater que le contexte marocain favorise la généralisation des résultats : l'émergence d'une nouvelle élite locale, le développement de directives nouvelles pour l'adoption des PDES ; la réforme en cours des procédures de réalisation des plans d'urbanisme et intérêt grandissant des bailleurs de fonds. Tous ces éléments vont dans le bon sens et constituent un terrain favorable à l'émergence de pratiques innovatrices.

## **Recommandations**

Bien que le projet ait atteint des résultats tangibles, les acquis restent fragiles et il importe de capitaliser sur cette expérience. Il apparaît en effet nécessaire de :

- Généraliser l'approche PSP par la sensibilisation, la formation et l'accompagnement d'un nombre croissant d'autorités locales y compris communes, provinces et région. Le rôle de la DGCL est à cet égard crucial et lui permettra d'appliquer la nouvelle conception de son rôle de tutelle caractérisé par la facilitation et l'accompagnement des collectivités.
- Le renforcement de la collaboration intergouvernementale aussi bien verticale qu'horizontale. Il conviendrait de créer des instances de concertation et de coordination au niveau régional afin d'assurer la convergence des différents efforts de développement local.

- La mise sur pied d'un vaste programme de formation des élus des cadres communaux et de la société civile afin d'harmoniser les qualifications de tout un chacun et de créer un vocabulaire commun en matière de développement local et de gouvernance.
- La mise en place dans les collectivités des systèmes et outils nécessaires à la planification, particulièrement en ce qui concerne la gestion financière, les ressources humaines, le suivi et l'évaluation de la performance et la communication avec les citoyens.
- Continuer à soutenir le processus de réforme par la création de mécanismes de concertation qui réunissent régulièrement les acteurs principaux du développement local.

### Principales manifestations de formation, réflexion et sensibilisation

Manifestation	Lieu	Date	Objet	Participants
<b>Atelier de travail</b>	<b>Agadir</b>	4-5 Nov. 2002	Débat sur politiques et procédures PSP	DGCL + Elus et cadres communaux, services déconcentrés et société civil <b>(30 personnes)</b>
<b>Journée d'information (avec Forum urbain Maroc)</b>	<b>Martil</b>	22-Jan-03	Présentation et discussion sur le Guide pratique	Elus et cadres de la commune, universitaires et société civil <b>(45 personnes)</b>
<b>Atelier de formation (Tâche E)</b>	<b>Agadir</b>	12 au 14 Mars 2003	Formation à la PSP (6 modules)	DGCL + Elus et cadres des 5 communes pilotes et services déconcentrés de la Wilaya <b>(28 personnes)</b>
<b>Atelier de formation (avec Forum urbain Maroc)</b>	<b>Tétouan</b>	21 au 24 Mai 2003	Formation à la PSP (6 modules)	DGCL + Elus et cadres des 4 communes du Grand Tétouan et services déconcentrés de la Wilaya de Tétouan <b>(32 personnes)</b>
<b>Journées d'information</b>	<b>Marrakech</b>	20-21 octobre 2003	Sensibilisation à la PSP au profit des élus régionaux	DGCL + Elus et cadres des communes urbaines de 4 régions administratives (Tensift, Chaouia,...) <b>(36 personnes)</b>
<b>Journées d'information</b>	<b>Agadir</b>	17-18 décembre 2003	Sensibilisation à la PSP des nouveaux élus communaux de la Préfecture d'Agadir	Elus et cadres des communes de la Préfecture d'Agadir Ida Outanane <b>(47 personnes)</b>
<b>Journées d'étude</b>	<b>Nouaceur</b>	8 et 9 avril 2004	débat sur le rôle de l'élu local et la PSP	Elus et cadres des communes de la Préfecture de Nouaceur et autres de Casablanca <b>(120 personnes)</b>
<b>Séminaire régional</b>	<b>Agadir</b>	8 et 9 juin 2004	Présentation et discussion des résultats du programme PSP	Elus et cadres des communes des communes de la région SMD <b>(150 personnes)</b>

## I. Project Background

Implementation of The Participatory Strategic Planning and Pluriannual Budgeting Project started in 2001 to support the capacity of Moroccan municipalities to fulfill their responsibilities within Morocco's new decentralization framework, with a focus on the municipalities' roles in promoting local economic development.

At the end of the 1990s, Moroccan local authorities—at regional, provincial and communal levels—were asked for the first time to develop their own social and economic development plans (PDES) for the 2000–2004 period and to consult their populations in the process. The exercise proved, for the most part, to be a disappointment. Left to their own devices, Morocco's local authorities lacked the awareness, know-how, tools, and often, the willingness to carry out a truly participatory process to identify strategic objectives and to prioritize actions. Consequently, the planning process was often perceived as a bureaucratic constraint to be fulfilled rather than as a tool to formulate a vision for the future and mobilize the resources to achieve it. Unsurprisingly, most 2000–2004 plans consist of lists of unrelated infrastructure projects that do not fully take social and economic development into consideration.

It is in this context that the U.S. Agency for Independent Development (USAID), in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior's General Direction for Local Authorities (DGCL), the Ministry of the Plan and the Ministry of Finance, developed the pilot project to strengthen the planning capacity of Moroccan local authorities.

The project's scope of work (SOW) indicates the main objective to: “consolidate fiscal and administrative decentralization and deconcentration in the Souss-Massa-Draa (SMD) Region through improved regional and local development planning.” The SOW lists three related activity purposes to:

- Improve strategic planning, investment planning, and prioritization
- Improve coordination between the Provincial Councils, the Administrations, local governments, the private sector and civil society
- Institutionalize mechanisms of participation.

RTI International\* adopted a highly participatory approach to ensure that key stakeholders at the local and national levels fully contributed to activity implementation and would ultimately see the project outputs and results as their own. Stakeholders were involved at every step of project implementation and particularly in the development of the Participatory Strategic Planning (PSP) guide and Communal Information System (SIC). The project significantly benefited from adopting this approach, and the value of participation did in fact become increasingly obvious to all involved stakeholders. The approach especially helped to overcome initial resistance to the PSP approach from those who viewed it as a methodology coming from abroad that could not be implemented in the Moroccan context.

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\* RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.

In addition, RTI attempted to foster a true spirit of partnership with our local counterparts at the national and local levels and to be responsive to their needs and perspectives. This approach, combined with USAID-Morocco's strong support for the activity, helped overcome many obstacles that the project team faced.

This report summarizes the main activities that took place under this project and attempts to evaluate the project's impact. It presents the findings of the evaluation missions conducted by the Project Manager in February and June 2004. It also includes a few recommendations regarding USAID's future activities in support of local governance.

## **II. Project Narrative**

### **A. Project start up**

The project was launched in April 2001 with a mission to Morocco conducted by RTI Project Manager Jeff Hughes with U.S.-based consultants Rand Robinson (Team Leader) and Assia Khellaf. They, along with Moroccan consultants Rachid Talbi, Abderrhaman Chekayri, and Brahim Zyani developed the project work plan and held a series of meetings with USAID and Moroccan government officials. Three members of the team also traveled to Agadir to meet with local officials and begin collecting information on current planning procedures. The draft work plan for the delivery order was submitted to USAID for comments, revised, and resubmitted in final form for distribution to government officials and the USAID crosscutting team. Following the mission, it was agreed that RTI needed to propose a new team leader with more specialized and relevant experience.

### **B. Project Implementation**

Following the initial visit, work focused on the completion of Task A, "The Review of Existing Investment Planning Procedures and Policies." As a result of the initial mission, a first draft was submitted to USAID which asked that there be further emphasis on local planning issues. RTI hired Agadir-based consultants to complete the report. The report then went through several modifications in response to comments by USAID and DGCL, and it was approved in April 2002, one year after the launch of the activity.

In the meantime, work on Task B, "Policies, Orientations and Guide for Strategic Planning," had progressed in the field but was ultimately stalled at the national level as the DGCL refused to discuss the report until the Task A report was officially approved. It became obvious to USAID and RTI that, under such circumstances, it was not realistic to expect the project could be finalized within the initial time frame and that a no-cost extension was necessary.

To address this issue, RTI fielded a mission to Morocco in April 2002. The team included Christian Arandel and Jean Michel LeBreton, respectively the Project Manager and Team Leader for the Task B. The objectives of the visit were to

- Establish modus operandi between the RTI team and the project's principal client, the Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales (DGCL; Ministère de l'Intérieur), to improve collaboration and avoid unnecessary delays.
- Develop a revised and realistic work plan with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Discuss with USAID a no-cost contract extension.

- Hire a local team leader and reconfigure the team.

The mission was instrumental in creating a new momentum for the activity by improving relations with the DGCL and agreeing to a revised work plan with the following changes:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Revision</b>
B	Merge the two original documents (referred to as “B1” and “B2”) into one work plan.
C	Reorient and clarify the task (e.g., database to be implemented at the communal level, not the provincial level).
D	Organize a regional seminar near the end of the project and allow for international and national contributions.
G	Specify details regarding technical assistance.

A no-cost extension until the end of February 2003 was subsequently approved with a revision of the SOW that incorporated the revisions above.

Another significant output of the mission was the selection of a resident Team Leader, Mr. Driss Benjelloun, as it became apparent that the activity could not be effectively led from abroad. Thereafter, project implementation continued with a new team, and while a number of difficulties subsisted and had to be surmounted, the project steadily progressed toward meeting its principal objectives. Three additional no-cost extensions were granted to complete the project until its final date of June 30, 2004. It is important to note that these no-cost extensions resulted for the most part from factors outside the control of the project (national and local elections, international events) and reflected a common agreement between USAID and RTI that extensions were necessary to ensure the success of the project and to maximize its impact.

Following are some of the important milestones of project implementation:

November 2002	RTI organized a consultation workshop on planning procedures and policies.
January 2003	RTI team introduced the PSP guide to the commune of Martil at the invitation of the Forum Urbain Maroc (FUM), the Near East and North Africa (NENA) Urban Forum.
February 2003	DGCL approved the <i>Task B report</i> as a “living document,” and RTI subsequently translated the PSP guide into Arabic.
February 2003	RTI finalized the training needs assessment and training modules. The first training session took place March 12-14 in Agadir.
March 2003	RTI submitted the draft report for the development of the SIC to USAID.
March 2003	RTI organized a training workshop in Agadir
May 2003	RTI conducted a training workshop in Tétouan.
June 2003	RTI submitted the first version of the SIC to the Project Steering Committee.

July 2003	RTI begins technical assistance to the five selected communes. Computer equipment is installed in the communes, the Agadir Urban Community, and the Wilaya.
September 2003	RTI completes installation of the SIC in the communes.
October 2003	RTI organized a regional workshop in Marrakech.
December 2003	RTI completed the phase 1 of technical assistance and began phase 2.
February 2004	RTI organized a national seminar, “City’s Unity,” in Rabat. The seminar was jointly organized with the Good Governance Project.
April 2004	RTI conducted a one-day seminar in Nouaceur on the role of local elected officials in strategic planning.
June 2004	RTI organized a regional seminar, “Participatory Strategic Planning and Local Development,” in Agadir.

### C. Challenges in implementation

As indicated in the previous section, the project had to overcome numerous challenges during implementation. These challenges led to four successive no-cost extensions and a total project duration that increased from 19 months to 39 months. While some of the challenges were outside the control of the project, some could possibly have been averted, or at least mitigated. This section aims at drawing lessons from this experience.

#### 1. *Team cohesion and reliability*

The project relied on a team of (mostly overbooked) part-time consultants to carry out a complex and innovative project that required more sustained attention. It became clear that the project could not be successfully implemented with a part-time team leader, based abroad, who came on short missions to Morocco. This problem was partly resolved with the selection of a Moroccan team leader who, though not full-time, was able to coordinate the project more effectively. In particular, he effectively supervised the local consultants, demanded more accountability and results, and was able to maintain closer contact with DGCL and USAID.

RTI took the needed measures to mitigate this problem, which essentially resulted from a mismatch between the project’s ambitions and allocated resources. Having a full-time core team would have been the ideal solution but would have used up budget resources. It must be stated here that had the key consultants working on the project—including the team leader, the ICT specialist, and local consultants in Agadir—billed for the total actual number of days they dedicated to the project, we would have run out of funds months before the end of the project. Without a doubt, USAID and DGCL got tremendous value out of this project.

#### 2. *Relations with institutional partners*

The project started with a complex institutional set up with three ministries as key counterparts: Interior, Finance, and Regional Planning. Without any agreed upon modus operandi, it became clear that the project could not be effectively managed

under these circumstances. The Ministry of Interior (DGCL) rapidly became our key interlocutor.

One principal problem at the onset of the project was that it appeared that the Ministry of Interior did not fully support the project. While there is no doubt that the Ministry viewed planning as a major constraint for local governments, it is unclear whether it viewed participatory strategic planning as the answer. This would explain the tardiness in providing feedback on key documents to the team and the refusal to discuss Task B until the Ministry was satisfied with Task A, when both tasks could have proceeded in parallel.

To add to the complexity of the relationship, DGCL underwent many changes over the course of the project, including a change of director, an absence of director for a period of six months, and two new ministers.

In retrospect, one of the key achievements of the project is that we won over the DGCL, who by the end of implementation fully owned both the approach and the concrete project results and asked for the continuation of the initiative. This achievement is due in large part to the commitment of USAID to contribute to the decentralization reforms in Morocco and to the dedication of the project's cognizant technical officer (CTO), as well as the willingness of the team leader to find solutions that move the project forward.

### *3. National and international events*

Project cycles are rarely in tune with national political and planning cycles or international events (by definition unpredictable). This project was no exception. Two major elections (national and local) had a profound impact on the projects. The national elections fully mobilized our principal partner, the DGCL, before they were held and afterward shook up its leadership. Local elections led to an unprecedented renewal of Morocco's local elected elite. The positive effect was that many of these leaders came with new ideas and the willingness to change the "way things are." However, it also meant that much of the efforts conducted to sensitize and inform local elected officials on strategic planning had to resume to ensure that newcomers understood both the project objectives and the approach. In addition, the project is ending at the worst possible time: just as Moroccan communes are beginning to prepare their 2005-2009 Economic and Social Development Plan. Elected officials and communal staff in Agadir and Aourir made it clear that they would have liked to continue benefiting from the project's support during this critical period.

International events, particularly the U.S. invasion of Iraq, also had a negative impact on the project as they led to the postponement some activities and to temporarily adopting a relatively low profile. Fortunately, most activities taking place at the local level, so the impact of the war on this project was not too severe.

### III. Project Accomplishments

#### A. Task A: Review of Existing Investment Planning Procedures and Policies

***Performance requirements (excerpts of the Scope of Work)***

The contractor shall undertake a review of existing investment planning procedures and policies used in the region of SMD. This review should cover annual, five-year, and other multi-annual planning periods for all levels of subnational government. This review shall consist of a combination of interviews, meetings, or focus groups and a review of source materials and documents related to investment planning and budgeting for development purposes. The document should:

1. Provide a roadmap of the current investment planning and budgeting process.
2. Analyze information flows and data validity and use throughout the planning and budgeting process.
3. Complete an evaluation of the current system looking closely at efficiencies.

The contractor shall use this document as the basis for Task B.

#### *1. Project Accomplishments*

As described above, the main objective of the Task A report was to describe current planning process in Morocco and to evaluate the experience of local authorities in developing their first local economic and social development plans. The methodology developed by RTI to produce the report consisted of a desktop review of literature and documents regarding local planning in Morocco and of a series of interviews conducted with local government officials and staff, as well as representatives of deconcentrated agencies, in the SMD region. RTI consultants conducted in-depth interviews with representatives of the following institutions: SMD region; Agadir and Taroudant Urban Communities; Communes of Agadir, Aourir, Ait Igass, Lakhnafif; Provinces of Agadir-Ita-Ouloanane, Taroudannt; Regional SMD Hydraulic Directorate; national education delegation for the Province of Agadir Ida Ou Tanane and Taroudant; health delegation for the Province of Taroudant; and the provincial Direction for Equipment of Taroudant. The development plans of all these local authorities were then analyzed and assessed as potential tools to promote local development.

The key findings of Task A can be summarized as follows:

- The planning process was imposed from above and regarded as an administrative requirement, not as a tool for guiding local development.
- Few communal employees have the skills and qualifications needed to support elected officials in the planning process.
- Local authorities have been unable to develop their own visions but rather have proposed lists of unrelated projects.
- Information systems are inadequate.

- Civil society participation in the elaboration of the plans was haphazard.
- There is little effective vertical and horizontal collaboration in the production and implementation of the plans.

The report also offered a series of recommendations regarding:

- The amelioration of planning procedures including conducting diagnostics, involving citizens, and pluriannual budgeting.
- Strengthening communication and coordination between the actors of local and regional economic and social development.
- The introduction of participatory planning methodologies and tools.

## 2. *Analysis*

The document produced by RTI fulfills the requirements of the SOW. The Task A report constitutes an important snapshot of the state of planning in Morocco at the time it was conducted. The report has become a reference document that was widely distributed and has significantly contributed to raising awareness on the fact that existing planning practices in Morocco are wholly inadequate and must be improved if local authorities are to have an impact on their future.

### **B. Task B: Participatory Development Planning and Investment Policies and Guidelines Summary:**

#### ***Performance requirements (excerpts of Scope of Work)***

The contractor shall develop two levels of documentation that will form the basis for change in the investment and development planning process. The first document will redefine, as necessary, the policies and procedures related to planning and implementation processes. Suggested modifications or changes to procedures should be clearly laid out in the document. The contractor shall conduct a review of reforms now underway. This first policy and procedures document must be fully vetted with the relevant local and central level officials before its content can be used as the basis for the second document—the strategic planning guide.

The second document shall be a participatory strategic planning guide that provides approaches and methodologies to be used by different planning units. This guide must clearly state the overarching objectives of development planning and investment exercises, clarify roles and responsibilities of each planning and approval unit, and define expected outcomes and results sought through this exercise.

#### **1. *Project Accomplishments***

The two complementary documents to be produced under this task became known as B1 and B2. The goal of B1 was to provide concrete proposals regarding national policies and orientations to facilitate the implementation of the PSP approach at the local level. B2, the second document, was a guide designed to help local authorities and civil society organizations in the implementation of PSP processes. The process for producing both documents was highly participatory to ensure that they accurately reflected local constraints, addressed local needs, and were in accord with national orientations. As far as the PSP guide is concerned, special attention was given to

produce a document that was easy for local elected officials and personnel to understand and use. The process consisted of the following:

- One workshop that included over 35 participants representing national and subnational governmental and non-governmental actors. The workshop made recommendation regarding both the policy guidelines and the PSP guide.
- Four working group meetings held in Agadir and in Rabat to revise and adapt the PSP guide and ensure that it was adapted to the needs of Moroccan local authorities. The working group was composed of representatives of DGCL, the commune of Agadir (elected officials and staff), and of the Souss-Massa-Draa Regional Council.

## 2. *Analysis*

The process described above led to a report that was comprehensive, pertinent, and culturally appropriate and that fulfills USAID requirements. As the different stakeholders met in the workshop and working groups, they developed a greater understanding of the PSP process as well as unity of purpose that transformed into advocates for participatory strategic planning within their own institutions. The guide is understood to be a living document that will continue to be updated to meet the evolving planning needs of Moroccan local authorities. Another significant result of the process adopted to produce the guide was to demonstrate that PSP, an approach developed elsewhere for different purposes, could be adapted to the Moroccan context and could be effectively used by local authorities. The guide has thus gained a tremendous amount of credibility that it could not have achieved otherwise.

In retrospect, it may have been preferable not to link B1 and B2 and not to make progress on B2 dependent on the formal approval of B1 by our local counterparts, as indicated in the SOW. The two documents are complementary, but they fulfill two fundamentally different purposes. B1 proposes needed reforms in the planning enabling environment, while B2 provides a concrete planning tool to local authorities. It was no more necessary to conduct B1 before B2 than it is for local authorities to wait for all proposed reforms to be enacted before they can use the guide and practice PSP. Ultimately, it was agreed that both documents would be merged into a single report. This decision was needed at the time, but it ultimately resulted in weakening the policy and procedures section of Task B. The policy and orientation analysis could have been more insightful and influential had it been produced toward the end of project implementation when it could have incorporated all the lessons from our experience.

## C. Task C: Creation of a Regional Repository of Data and Information

### *Performance requirements (excerpts of Scope of Work, as amended as of 09-15-2003)*

The contractor shall develop and put in place a socioeconomic performance monitoring plan, including a repository of data and information at the communal level. Basic information for each local government such as found in current five-year plans (demographic information, infrastructure data, social services, health and education statistics, employment statistics) is required. In addition, the repository shall contain information related to the implementation of approved projects, providing the region and local governments a tool for monitoring progress and attainment of developmental objectives.

The database will be created at the communal level in four urban communes of Greater Agadir (Anza, Tikiouine, Agadir, Ben Sargou), the rural commune of Ait Ourir, and the local government division DCL at the Wilaya of Agadir. Up to six (6) communal Council or administrative staff will need to be trained by the contractor in the use of any (possibly modified) MIS software applications that will be selected and purchased by the contractor. Also, the contractor shall be responsible for developing a computer equipment procurement list, procuring the equipment and software locally (adhering to USAID source/origin requirements), installing them, and training staff on use of the system.

### *1. Project Accomplishments*

Originally conceived as a regional database, this task was fundamentally redesigned as a result of requests from local and national stakeholders to become a support tool for planning at the local level. The process of producing the SIC (Communal Information System) was a long maturation process that involved key stakeholders at the local and national levels. The development of the SIC had to deal with many constraints, including:

- Comprehensiveness—the SIC was to provide all information needed for a comprehensive and integrated planning process.
- Harmonization with national frameworks and systems—special attention was given to ensure that data categories were consistent with the national nomenclature.
- Ease of use and maintenance
- Reliability and consistency of data gathering—entailed identifying single reliable sources for each category of data.
- Interagency collaboration—spreading the source of data across several administrations was critical to ensure their collaboration.
- Usefulness—the SIC should produce easy-to-use-and-understand indicators that facilitate planning as well as monitoring and evaluation of the communal performance.

Given these constraints, it was essential to include all stakeholders in the production of the database. This was done through the following means:

- Organization of training workshops,
- Close follow up/mentoring of local partners within the PSP units, and
- Coordination with DGCL at the national level.

Once the SIC was installed, the communes continued to benefit from project support to resolve problems as they arose and to modify the software to meet customer needs.

## 2. *Analysis*

The SIC was conceived as an evolving tool, and from the time of its first introduction to the communes in July 2003 until today, it went through numerous modifications as a result of comments and suggestions from the participating communes. While the project leaves behind an operational product, it is understood that the SIC will continue to evolve as the needs of Moroccan communes change. It is worth noting that the communal staff in Aourir and Agadir have the skills necessary to use and maintain the SIC.

A consequence of the project's responsiveness to the demands of its users is that the SIC has become a more complex tool than originally envisioned: it is closer to a comprehensive communal database than a strategic planning instrument. This poses a problem for smaller communes that may find it difficult to collect and maintain all the information included in the SIC and may not necessarily know which information is most important to them. Future adaptation of the SIC may aim at simplifying and transforming it into a planning, management, and monitoring tool that can be used by smaller communes.

### D. Task D: Participatory Investment Planning and Budgeting Seminar

#### ***Performance requirements***

Based on the findings of the analysis conducted in Task A, and the design of the policy document and planning guide, the contractor shall host three seminars in the region. The contractor shall present the key findings of the analysis completed under Task A, and shall then present the guide, eliciting comments, feedback and suggestions from seminar participants.

**Seminars for Two Provincial Councils:** Participants shall include members of each Provincial Council (~75 persons for each province). There will be two seminars provided, one for each province.

**Regional Seminar:** Participants shall include local government officials, local delegates from central line ministries, civil society representatives and national-level observers (~150 persons). The contractor shall also document in written format all discussions that take place during the seminars, as it will form the basis for following Tasks.

## 1. *Project Accomplishments*

The RTI team organized two major manifestations as part of this project. The first was the seminar on "City Unity and the Challenge of Local Development" which took place in February 2004 in Rabat, and the second was a regional seminar on "Strategic Planning and Local Development," organized in Agadir in June 2004. While the first seminar was organized under the good governance project, it received significant support from this project and will therefore be briefly discussed as one of the outputs.

Approximately 300 persons attended the Rabat seminar on city unity, including the principal leaders of the 14 unified cities, General Secretaries, District Presidents, and international experts. Participation remained strong throughout the seminar. A working group was created within the seminar to assess how the PSP process could be used in support of the process of unification of cities.

The regional seminar was organized toward the end of the project's implementation, in June 2004. It pursued several interrelated objectives:

- Presenting the results of the project to a large audience at the regional level.
- The continued sensitization of local elected leaders, employees of local authorities, and civil society representative to the importance of using the PSP methodology for the development of the 2004-2009 Economic and Social Development Plan.
- Discussing the modalities and conditions for the generalization of the PSP approach in Morocco.

The seminar brought together over 150 participants representing the Ministry of Interior, local authorities, specialized agencies, civil society, the private sector and universities. While some participants expressed doubts that Moroccan communes had the capacity to implement PSP processes, a consensus emerged that PSP was an important tool to improve the communes' capacity to plan and manage local development. Specific recommendations of the seminar include:

- Develop the capacity of the staff of local authorities to implement/accompany PSP processes.
- Provide direct technical assistance to help the communes implement the PSP process, further developing and generalizing the SIC to make it available to all communes.
- Improve performance monitoring and evaluation at the communal level.
- Involve all local actors in awareness raising and training activities to improve participation.

The large majority of participants indicated, in response to a short questionnaire, that they were determined to participate in the elaboration of the PDES in their respective communes.

## *2. Analysis*

This task took a different shape than anticipated as a result of the change in focus of the project from the region and provinces to the communes. In this context, the provincial seminars were no longer seen as being necessary, and the project instead supported one national level event and organized one regional seminar. Furthermore, it turns out that the sensitization objectives of these seminars were more effectively reached when incorporated as part of the project's training strategy, as described under the next tasks. The training reached a wider audience than originally anticipated and equipped participants with the basic tools needed to participate in the implementation of PSP processes.

## E. Task E&F: Training Needs Assessment Skills Training Modules with a Training of Trainers Component

### *Performance requirements (excerpts of Scope of Work)*

The contractor shall assess the skills required to effectively manage strategic development and investment planning responsibilities at the subnational level. The contractor shall design a training needs matrix that clearly and concisely provides skill areas and training needs for different levels of elected and appointed officials and technicians at the subnational level.

In addition, the contractor shall provide a training plan that defines the content, the methodology to be used to deliver the training, and a monitoring system to observe the impact of training activities.

The contractor shall organize and deliver a series of training courses/modules based on the top priorities highlighted during the completion of Task E. Selection of course modules shall be justified by the contractor and approved by USAID. Up to 75 persons from the region will attend each of these courses.

A minimum of four different training courses/modules is required. The training modules shall include the development of case studies from the region and international experiences, as applicable.

A “Training of Trainers” component shall be developed and implemented by the contractor. The Regional or Provincial Councils concerned shall nominate a group of trainers for inclusion in this component.

### *1. Project Accomplishments*

RTI focused the training needs assessment on the communes that benefited from the technical assistance and identified the profiles that needed assistance and the type of training needed. Based on the needs assessment, the project team developed a training plan and then put together a training kit consisting of

- 6 training modules,
- 1 training of trainers modules, and
- 1 set of PSP-related methodological tools.

The training plan consisted of two types of events: Introductory workshops and full-fledged training courses covering all six modules. The project disseminated the PSP methodology through a series of five workshops and seminars to introduce the PSP approach to local elected officials and municipal staff. These workshops took place in Martil (February 2003), Marrakech (October 2003), Tétouan (February 2004), Agadir (March 2004), and Nouaceur (April 2004). Over 500 participants, 80 percent of them elected officials, took part in these workshops. While they were not officially called training workshops so as not to put off officials, these events consisted of working sessions that focused on introducing the PSP concepts and approach and on teaching participants how to use the guide. Only the Tétouan workshop was a more traditional information session.

In addition, two full-fledged PSP training workshops were organized in Tétouan for communal staff and local elected officials (May 2003) and Agadir (December 2003), providing training in PSP tools and methodologies to over 50 participants representing local authorities, civil society, as well as DGCL and DFCAT.

All training events received very high marks from the participants as documented in the reports included in the enclosed CD-ROM. For example, 27 of 29 participants at the Tétouan workshop judged that the workshop was either relevant or very relevant and fruitful or very fruitful; and 24 thought that the pedagogic approach was either good or very good.

## 2. *Analysis*

The marked differences between the SOW and the actual achievements of the project under this task implementation is a result of several factors:

- The “communalization” of the project—it was no longer necessary to conduct a comprehensive training needs assessment at the regional and provincial levels.
- The difficulty in identifying potential trainers of a common accord between the project team, the DGCL, USAID, and the local partners—most candidates proposed were either not deemed qualified or would not have been able to actually serve as trainers.
- The strong demand for information on the PSP approach from inside and outside the target regions—Responding to the demands from Marrakech, Martil, Tétouan, and Agadir was seen as unique opportunities to disseminate the approach beyond the SMD region and to capitalize on synergies with other initiatives.
- The fact that for training to be effectively carried out, there was a dire need for increased sensitization and information on the PSP approach and tools—this is why the RTI team implemented a program to effectively introduce the PSP approach to the principal actors in Agadir.

In addition, the RTI team was encouraged by USAID to seek synergies with and support other local governance initiatives such as the Cities Alliance’s City Development Strategy (Tétouan) and the USAID-sponsored good governance project which explains why the project organized meetings outside of the SMD region. This helped expand the outreach of the project beyond its original geographic zone focus.

### **F. Task G: Technical Assistance to Target Provinces**

#### ***Performance requirements (excerpt of scope of work)***

The contractor shall provide, on a priority and time-available basis, technical assistance to the Provincial Councils and the two target provinces during this assignment. This technical assistance may be hands-on or remote (e-mail/telephone) in nature and shall focus on implementation of the guidelines and specific issues that evolve out of putting into practice what was taught during the training modules. The contractor may find that the best way to use this level of effort is to choose one priority issue of the local government unit and provide technical assistance for one information collection, analysis, planning, and budgeting cycle. In this way, specific cases can be documented during this assignment which will be of use to other local governments outside of the target group.

## *1. Project Accomplishments*

Originally conceived to provide assistance at the provincial level, this task was changed to focus on providing technical assistance to six communes in Agadir and its region: Agadir, Anza, Tikiouine, Bensergao, Aourir, and the greater Agadir urban community. The technical assistance consisted of several interrelated components:

- The institutionalization of the PSP approach within the targeted communes,
- Equipping communal staff and elected officials with skills and tools to conduct PSP approaches, and
- Supporting the process of developing a vision for the unified commune of Agadir.

The institutionalization of the PSP approach within the target communes was achieved via the creation of PSP units within each participating commune. The PSP units were composed of communal staff and elected officials. They received a room in each commune where the equipment was located. When the Commune of Agadir was unified, the PSP units of the communes Agadir, Anza, Tikiouine, Bensergao, and the urban community were also merged into one unified PSP unit.

The PSP units were equipped with computers, software, and computer equipment needed to run and maintain the SIC. All PSP unit members were trained in PSP tools and methodology and in the use and maintenance of the SIC. The project also assisted unit members in data collection and entry. In prevision of the merger of Agadir, the project helped the units consolidate five SICs into one comprehensive tool for the new unified commune.

The Agadir 2020 initiative was conceived as an exercise to help communes of the Greater Agadir region develop a vision for a unified city using a survey methodology. A short questionnaire was designed asking respondents to assess the state of the city, propose a vision for what Agadir would be like in 2020, and identify strategic objectives to reach this vision. The survey was distributed to 500 persons (elected officials, communal employees, and other local leaders), 105 of which responded. The results of the survey were discussed with the PSP units and shared with the new communal team of Agadir.

## *2. Analysis*

The technical assistance component of the project served to operationalize the other aspects of the project through direct assistance to several communes. In this way, most project outputs were pilot-tested and greatly improved through the process. The PSP units benefited from the training component, received appropriate computer equipment, were trained on how to use and maintain the SIC, and received hands-on experience in selected PSP methodologies.

A major achievement under this task was the creation of a PSP unit within the municipality of Agadir that is officially included in the communes' organizational and that comprises both elected officials and communal staff. A related achievement is that there is now within the communes of Agadir and, to a lesser extent, Aourir, a nucleus of staff and elected officials who have embraced the PSP approach, have decided to use it to prepare the next PDES, and have acquired the basic skills to do so.

## G. Task H: End of Task and Final Evaluation of Results

### *Performance requirements*

Based on stated objectives and the monitoring plan developed at the beginning of this activity, the contractor shall complete an analysis and evaluation of progress made and results achieved to date. The contractor should review specific progress made by target local governments, as well as how well the methodologies selected by the contractor have enabled the activity achieve objectives. Quantitative and qualitative information is sought. The report shall be reviewed by the USAID activity manager, the Crosscutting Theme (CCT) Team, and counterparts to be selected by USAID. The contractor shall present the draft performance reports orally and in written format at a meeting, to be hosted by the contractor, at which all reviewers shall be present. The final performance reports shall be submitted to USAID within 10 days of receipt of comments from USAID.

### *1. Project Accomplishments*

The Project Manager conducted the evaluation of the project during two missions to Agadir in February and June 2004. During those missions, he met with: the Presidents of Agadir and Aourir Councils; members of the PSP units individually and as a team; the head of the DCL and his team at the Wilaya of Agadir; the regional directors of the Regional Investment Center (CRI) and the Communal Infrastructure Fund (FEC); the regional representative of the High Commissary for Planning; and he held several work sessions with local and national consultants working on the team.

Given the numerous changes that took place in the geographic scope and technical focus of the project over three years of implementation, it was no longer possible to use the original project framework as a basis to conduct the evaluation. Instead the evaluation process attempted to answer the following questions:

- To what extent did the project contribute to disseminating the concepts and methodology that underpin the PSP approach?
- Are the targeted communes sufficiently equipped to implement the PSP process on their own?
- Are project results sustainable?
- What future activities can be supported by USAID to capitalize on the project's achievements and mitigate its shortcomings?

Many elements of response to these questions have already been provided as part of the description of the achievement of each project task. They are consolidated and elaborated upon in the next section.

## IV. Project Impact Evaluation: A Forward-Looking Assessment

### A. Impact Evaluation

#### 1. *Project contribution to disseminating the PSP concepts and methodology*

From a quantitative perspective, the PSP activities workshop seminar undertaken as part of this activity reached well over 600 persons,<sup>1</sup> the vast majority of whom were local elected officials and local government employees, in addition to civil society leaders and national government representatives. During those events, the RTI team distributed project documents helping to reach a wider audience. The feedback received during the different events organized by the project is overwhelmingly positive and shows a strong demand for the tools and approaches developed by the project. In addition, all events organized by the project benefited from wide local and national media coverage.

While RTI did not conduct pre- and post-surveys to measure the attitudes and knowledge of local actors regarding participatory planning, there is tremendous evidence that shows the interest that the project generated. As indicated under task F, the RTI team has organized training and information workshops outside the SMD region in response to requests for support. There were other requests to which the project could not respond because of lack of resources or time. For example, local elected officials from Ouarzazate requested our support to help implement their own PSP process, but the request came too late. Also, the President and Vice-President of Agadir's Communal Council requested RTI's support in designing and implementing a communal performance monitoring system. An interesting example is the University of Agadir. Its president decided to implement an internal PSP process after attending one of our workshops and asked our local consultants (both professors at the university) to help implement it.

Finally, some of the more active members of the PSP units and local leaders became advocates for the approach and helped further disseminate it with or without project support. For example, the President of the Aourir Council asked the RTI team to present the PSP approach to the entire Council during one of its sessions. As a result of the session, the Council officially adopted the PSP approach for the preparation of the next PDES. The President of Aourir seems to be taking every opportunity to disseminate PSP concepts. During an informal meeting he narrated a recent encounter he had with farmers who wanted to create a cooperative. He asked the farmers, most of whom were over 60 years old, how many trees they had planted during their lifetimes. As no one was responding, he asked how many trees they had cut during their lifetimes. Most farmers answered they had cut so many trees that they could not count them. The President followed this question-and-answer session with a "sermon" on the need to plan for the long-term and to preserve resources for future generations.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a conservative estimate. A cumulative total would be over 800 persons but that would include double-counting some individuals.

## ***2. Capacity of the targeted communes to conduct the PSP process on their own***

As Moroccan communes are getting ready to begin the process of preparing their PDES without project support, it is useful to reflect on the capability of the targeted communes to effectively use the PSP approach. The result of the evaluation mission does not provide a clear-cut answer to this fundamental question. On the positive side it can be stated that

- The members of the PSP units, as well as key local officials, are convinced of the necessity to use the PSP approach.
- PSP unit members have received a significant amount of training and technical assistance. They fully understand the PSP process and have acquired the basic skills needed to implement it.
- They ready are able to use the SIC as a planning tool.
- The Commune of Agadir has the resources to implement the process and, if needed, to call on external expertise to help guide the process.

Nonetheless, members of the PSP units and other leaders articulated their deep concerns about the fact that the project was to end before they would begin the process of preparing their PDES. They most certainly felt they needed more support to be able to use the PSP approach for developing their plans. Much of their concern was related to going from theory to practice, and while their lack of confidence may or may not be justified, it is real and may in itself be an obstacle to the implementation of the approach. It must also be noted that there are great disparities in levels of qualifications between Agadir and Aourir staff. The Aourir staff has significantly lower skills and qualifications. It is indeed regrettable that the project had to stop at this important juncture before it could accompany the beneficiaries through at least part of the PSP process.

In addition, the PSP process does not stop with the adoption of a plan. No matter how good the plan, the communes must have the systems and human and financial resources in place to implement it. The SIC and PSP units contribute to equipping the communes with this capacity, but they are not sufficient. All communal staffs will need to be better trained, more motivated, and have a new understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The communes must be able to track and measure their performance, mobilize additional resources, manage their finances in an open and transparent way, and communicate more effectively with their citizens. This is the real challenge of participatory strategic planning, and while the Presidents of Agadir and Aourir understand this, it will take additional time and support for their communes to gradually acquire the capabilities to meet it.

Our conclusion is therefore that while the local stakeholders, especially in Agadir, have acquired the tools and skills to use the PSP approach, they need additional support to effectively and confidently implement it.

## ***3. Sustainability of project results***

Anticipating the long-term sustainability of project results is always a risky endeavor, so we will limit ourselves here to looking at whether the conditions for sustainability are met. Before proceeding, we must note that we are not looking at the sole sustainability of specific project activities but rather at the broader sustainability of

project efforts and the continued momentum toward using PSP as a tool for local planning.

We can identify three essential factors that will affect the long-term sustainability of the project:

- (1) Ownership of project results,
- (2) The eagerness of key stakeholders to use the approach, and
- (3) The presence of an enabling environment.

One of the main results of the project, as described above, is indeed that it has succeeded in creating a strong sense of **ownership and eagerness** among stakeholders. Greater awareness of the need for a new way to do things combined with a good understanding of the concepts underlying the PSP approach have led to this result. The institutionalization of the PSP approach in the Agadir Commune and the vote by the Aourir Council to use the PSP approach are concrete examples of this sense of ownership and of the determination of these stakeholders to use the approach.

We also note that at the national level the DGCL has gradually appropriated the results of the project. The initial attitude of mistrust has largely given way to open and frank collaboration. Key officials at the DGCL now fully endorse the PSP approach and are determined to have it become the process used by local authorities when preparing their PDES.

The **enabling environment** also seems to favor sustainability of long-term efforts. With the recent elections, a new crop of elected officials appear determined to leave their mark and change the way things are done. It is to be expected that some of them will transform their cities into laboratories for new approaches and that these approaches will at the very least be inspired by the PSP. New leaders are also in charge of new and old administrations such as the FEC and the CRIs. Directors of these two institutions in Agadir have indicated that they view PSP as a critical tool to conduct their missions. The director of the FEC even indicated that the institution could demand that projects they finance result from PSP processes.

The Ministry of the Plan has begun a process of thinking through the modalities, procedures, and approaches for the preparation of the 2004-2009 PDES. This process is very informed by the results of this project and includes a focus on how to introduce the PSP principles and tools into the directives that will be issued to local authorities for the preparation of the PDES. In addition, it is worth noting that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning is in the process of reforming the framework for the preparation of Urban Master Plans. The new guidelines will incorporate elements of the PSP approach and will seek to ensure that citizens actively participate in the process.

USAID has been a leader in advocating for these issues in Morocco and other donors are now joining the effort and developing local governance projects that incorporate PSP dimensions. This will also certainly contribute to sustaining the interest in participatory approaches.

## **B. The Way Forward**

While the project has achieved significant success in promoting the PSP process and building the capacity of participating communes, gains remain fragile, and it is important to capitalize the current momentum to consolidate achievements. Future

USAID programs could further contribute to this process by focusing on a few strategic initiatives.

This project has demonstrated that the PSP approach can be adapted to the Moroccan context and that, once it is, there is a strong demand from local authorities for support in using the approach. It is therefore essential **to generalize the PSP approach and tools** by sensitizing, training, and assisting an increasing number of subnational authorities, including communes, provinces, and regions. The DGCL should play an essential part in this effort by capitalizing on project results, disseminating PSP tools, and acting as a catalyst and mentor for local authorities. This is a complex and ambitious role that would embody a new conception of “*la tutelle*.” DGCL representatives have expressed on many occasions that they adhere to this new conception of their roles. They will, however, need support to carry it through.

The project has revealed the chronic lack of coordination between agencies and institutions at all levels that are charged with promoting local development. Thus, supporting **efforts to promote cross-sectoral and intergovernmental coordination** to ensure the coherence of local economic development plans and their insertion into a broader framework should be a priority for future action. While coordination must take place at the national level, it appears that the regional level is particularly suited for this purpose: It is large enough to involve a broad range of actors and issues and small enough to stay close to the realities of the different communities that compose the region. USAID could therefore support efforts to create regional coordination and consultation mechanisms that would help bring more coherence into a region’s development efforts.

The project also indicates the need to develop a **nationwide training program for elected officials and local staff**, and where appropriate, for civil society leaders, to increase and harmonize the qualifications and capacities of local officials. This is another obvious priority as municipal staff and local elected officials are ill equipped to implement participatory planning and guide local development. Such a program implemented by DFCAT and DGCL would also be instrumental in harmonizing the planning techniques used by local authorities.

It will also be important to **equip the local authorities with tools and systems** necessary to conduct PSP processes and implement local development plans. These include systems for monitoring performance and effectively managing and mobilizing financial and human resources. The SIC was an important addition to the local authorities tool kit, but it alone is not sufficient and also should be adapted to suit the needs of smaller communes.

Finally, while future efforts should focus on the local level, it is important to **sustain a national level policy dialogue** involving all actors of local development in support of the reform process and ensuring that future reforms are informed by local experiences and realities. For this purpose, it is important to move beyond holding occasional policy dialogue events toward creating mechanisms that allow for regular national consultation of all actors of local development. These mechanisms should aim at building a consensus that will guide future reforms.