

## For Japanese ODA Loan

### Ex-Ante Evaluation

#### Middle East Division I, Middle East and Europe Department Japan International Cooperation Agency

##### 1. Basic Information

- (1) Country: Kingdom of Morocco (Morocco)
- (2) Project: Development Policy Loan for the Improvement of Learning Environment of Basic Education
- (3) Loan Agreement: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

##### 2. Background and Necessity of the Project

###### (1) Current State and Issues with education sector and the priority of this project in Morocco

In the Kingdom of Morocco (hereinafter "Morocco"), as a result of efforts to promote basic education (compulsory education from primary to lower secondary education) since the end of the 1990s, the net enrollment rate for primary education improved significantly from 56% in 1991 to 99% in 2018, and the net enrollment rate for lower secondary education improved from 40% in 2005 to 65% in 2018 (2021, World Bank Open Data). However, the country ranked low in an international academic ability assessment (e.g., 54th out of 58 participating countries in primary school math in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (2019) and 73rd out of 77 participating countries in reading comprehension for 15-year-olds in the Program for International Student Assessment (2018)), and 70% of primary education graduates lack basic reading and math skills (2021, Special Commission on the New Development Model). In addition, Morocco has a high drop-out rate, which is partly due to the economic situations of families, with drop-out rates of 3.6% in primary and 14.3% in lower secondary education in 2018 (approximately 340,000 people) (2018, Moroccan Education, Training, and Scientific Research Commission). The average number of years of schooling is approximately 5.6 years, which is lower than that of neighboring countries (6.7 years for Algeria and 7.5 years for Tunisia). Furthermore, following a constitutional amendment in 2011, decentralization has been promoted in various fields, including education. However, there is no system for newly delegated local governments and schools to practice appropriate school management (e.g., underdeveloped know-hows on school management and insufficient human resources). As a result, it has been noted that the learning environment has not been developed to improve academic skills or to promote school attendance (World Bank, 2019).

In basic education, there are no particular differences in the net enrollment rates between male and female students. In primary education enrollment, the drop-out rate for female students (3.9%) is slightly higher than that for male students (3.4%), while in lower secondary education, the drop-out rate for male students (16.6%) is higher than for female students (11.6%). In addition, the average score of female students is higher than that of male students in science in the 2015 TIMSS (International Trends in Mathematics and Science Education Survey, Grades 4 and 8) and in reading comprehension in the 2016 PIRLS (International Reading Proficiency Survey, Grade 4) (World Bank, 2019).

In 2021, the Moroccan government allocated approximately US \$8 billion, which is 16% of the national budget, for education reform. In 2015, the government developed a strategic vision for education up to 2030, known as 'The Strategy for the Promotion of Equitable and Quality Education,' with reform objectives including (i) equitable educational opportunities, (ii) higher quality education, and (iii) governance. In 2019, a law (Loi-Cadre 51-17) was enacted to facilitate the implementation of this strategy. In addition, the New Development Model, which is regarded as a long-term national development strategy, was formulated and published in May 2021. This strategy calls for urgent improvement in the quality of basic education and requires the development of appropriate teacher training, the establishment of teaching methods to reduce the ratios of students who repeat school years or drop out, and the strengthening of school management capacity in line with on-site educational needs and decentralization. Furthermore, in 2019, the conditional cash transfer (Tayssir, a condition based on a certain level of school attendance) for poor and vulnerable families was reformed as a measure to reduce the drop-out rate. The reform improved the selection of beneficiaries, yet this effort faces various difficulties, with some beneficiaries unable to receive benefits due to restrictions on the method for receiving benefits.

As Morocco's economic growth fell to -6.3% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the national budget deficit widened to -7.6% (relative to GDP) from -3.8% the previous year (IMF, 2022). With an economic growth rate of 6.3% and a fiscal balance of -6.8% in 2021, a moderate economic growth and an improved fiscal situation are expected over the medium term; thus, it is stated that there are no particular concerns with respect to debt sustainability (IMF, 2022). The budget deficit for FY2022 is approximately ¥880 billion, of which ¥480 billion is planned to be covered by foreign borrowing (Budget Act, Morocco, 2022).

The Policy Loan for the Improvement of Learning Environment of Basic Education (hereinafter the "Project") is positioned as a high priority project for the government of Morocco, which aims to improve the learning environment for children by reducing educational disparities among children within classrooms, among schools, and among households in consideration of the situation in the basic education sector.

## **(2) Japan's and JICA's Cooperation Policy and Operations regarding the Basic Education Sector**

'Promotion of social development with the consideration of inclusiveness and sustainability' has been defined as one of the priority areas in Japan's Development Cooperation Policy for the Kingdom of Morocco (2020) and the Project aligns with the Program for 'Improvement of Access and Quality of Basic Education'. It also aligns with the 'Utilization of Japan's Knowledge on Reduction of Regional and Social Disparities' in the JICA's Country Analysis Paper for the Kingdom of Morocco (2014). In addition, the Project also contributes to one of the indicators of JICA's Thematic Project Strategy on Education Area (Global Agenda): "By 2030, 20 million children will benefit from the support for improving the quality of education, and more than 40 million children will benefit from cooperation with external organizations."

## **(3) Other Donors' Activities**

In the area of basic education, several donors are providing support through mutual partnerships in line with the Moroccan government's strategy for the 'Promotion of Equitable and Quality Education.'

In May 2019, the World Bank agreed to the 'Education Support Program' (hereinafter "ESP") ("Program For Results" type financing; program amount of US\$ 500 million), which supports the Moroccan government's efforts to reinforce the foundation for learning in pre-school and basic education. The three main pillars of their initiatives are (1) to realize the provision of high-quality pre-school education, (2) to improve educational practices (teacher training) in primary and lower secondary education programs, and (3) to support the management and initiatives of educational institutions. With regards to (3), the World Bank is engaged in the formulation of implementation manuals related to the 'School Improvement Project' and the establishment of a monitoring system. In November 2020, the World Bank also agreed to the COVID-19 Social Protection Emergency Response Project (US\$ 400 million) to support the revision, improvement, and expansion of social security programs, including Tayssir.

Additionally, in coordination with the World Bank's (3) pillar, USA's Millennium Challenge Corporation ("MCC") is currently providing training to people involved in the 'School Improvement Project' (hereinafter "SIP") by conducting a pilot program across 90 secondary schools in three northern provinces. Meanwhile, the United States Agency for International Development ("USAID") is providing technical cooperation for curriculum revision in the subjects of Arabic, English and Science, Technology, and Engineering in primary and lower secondary education.

The EU provided technical cooperation for improving the system for teacher training programs that was conducted until 2019. Furthermore, in 2020, the EU started a technical cooperation, a continuation from the previous program, to improve the in-service teacher training system.

### **3. Project Description**

#### **(1) Project Objective**

The Project aims to improve the learning environment for children by supporting the implementation of priority policies in this area through development policy support, which will lead to the improvement of the basic education system, thereby contributing to social development and the promotion of economic stability in Morocco.

**(2) Project Site/Target Area:** Throughout all of Morocco (however, for some of the policy actions as well as performance and impact indicators, the target areas shall be the same as those of the World Bank's ESP and technical cooperation project PEEQ2<sup>1</sup>)

#### **(3) Project Beneficiaries (Target Group)**

- Direct beneficiaries: Lower secondary math teachers who attended the training on the pedagogic model to improve the learning outcome (approximately 5,700 people); male and female students in schools where SIP were implemented (approximately 3,500 children); and households that received a cash benefit under the conditional cash transfer program (Tayssir) (approximately 1.5 million people)
- Final beneficiaries: Male and female students enrolled in primary education (approximately 4.5 million children) and lower secondary education (approximately 1.6 million children)

#### **(4) Project Components**

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<sup>1</sup> The target areas covered by the World Bank's ESP are 1) L'Oriental, 2) Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, 3) Drâa-Tafilalet, 4) Beni Mellal-Khénifra, 5) Souss-Massa, and 6) Casablanca-Settat. Regarding the two provinces to be covered by PEEQ2, one has been determined (Rabat-Salé-Kénitra), but the other will be determined by consultation after the start of PEEQ2.

Based on the Moroccan government's strategy and various measures for basic education, several policy actions with an achievement deadline of the end of 2023 will be prepared, the achievement status of such actions will be evaluated, and funding will be provided in the form of general budget support based on evaluation.

The policy matrix consists of 18 policy actions aimed at "reducing disparities in the learning environment for children" in three fields in line with the priority cited in Morocco's Strategy for the 'Promotion of Equitable and Quality Education'. Since the policy actions related to the first tranche were already achieved by January 2022, the loan will be disbursed soon after the loan agreement is signed and comes into effect.

#### (i) Reducing the Disparity of the Learning Environment within Classrooms

Policy action: Introduce a pedagogic model to improve the learning outcome designed to analyze learning disincentives (a model for correcting academic skill gaps that focuses on the analysis of incorrect answers, etc.) into the primary math education curriculum and then develop a model for lower secondary math. Actions include development of strategies and implementation plans for in-service teacher training for teachers engaged in primary and lower secondary education, as well as the establishment of a system that enables in-service teachers to acquire the aforementioned pedagogic model during such training.

#### (ii) Reducing the Disparity of the Learning Environment among Schools

Policy action: Develop the SIP implementation manual, which aims to enhance school management capacity; develop the model for the learning environment; and secure budget allocation for the steady implementation of this Project.

#### (iii) Reducing the Disparity of the Learning Environment among Households

Policy action: Ensure continued access to basic education for children from poor and vulnerable households by improving the method for receiving the conditional cash transfer (Tayssir), and prevent the drop-out rates from increasing due to economic reasons.

**(5) Estimated Project Cost (Loan Amount):** ¥22 billion (three tranches to be expected; the disbursement amounts for the first to third tranches are as follows: 60% (¥13.2 billion), 20% (¥4.4 billion), and 20% (¥4.4 billion) of the total amount)

#### **(6) Schedule**

The planned schedule is from July 2022 to July 2024 (36 months). The achievement of the policy action for the first tranche, a requirement for the yen loan disbursement, has been confirmed as of January 2022. The achievement of

policy actions for the second and third tranches will be confirmed in December 2022 and December 2023, respectively. The Project will be considered completed when the third tranche is achieved (expected to be in July 2024).

#### **(7) Project Implementation Structure**

i) Borrower: The Government of the Kingdom of Morocco

ii) Executing Agencies: Ministry of Economy and Finance (Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances; hereinafter referred to as "MEF") and the Ministry of National Education, Pre-school, and Sports (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports; hereinafter referred to as the "MEN"). The monitoring of the achievement for each policy action, as well as the related performance and impact indicators, will be conducted by the cooperation of relevant regional and provincial governments' education institutions with the following departments of MEN: the Direction of Curriculum of MEN and Central Management Training Unit of MEN for "Reduction of disparities of the learning environment for children in the classroom"; the Direction of Evaluation and Organization of School Life and Inter-academia Education for "Reduction of disparities of the learning environment for children among schools"; and the Direction of Social Support for "Reduction of disparities of the learning environment for children among households." In addition, both stakeholders at MEF and MEN will coordinate with the relevant agencies and organize a steering committee once every six months. The submission of the monitoring sheet signed by both stakeholders (MEF and MEN) to JICA will be regarded as the official report.

#### **(8) Cooperation and Sharing of Roles with Other Donors**

The institutionalization of in-service teacher training and SIP, which is supported within World Bank's 'ESP,' are to be included as part of the policy actions for the Project. In addition, as MCC is implementing a pilot project in lower secondary schools under SIP in certain areas (until 2022), the progress of this pilot project will be monitored and utilized as the lessons learnt in implementing the policy actions for this Project. JICA intends to collaborate with donors to jointly support the improvement of the quality in basic education, as well as to approach the relevant ministries and agencies while sharing information on the progress of mutual projects and challenges using various opportunities, including regular donor meetings in the education sector.

#### **(9) Environmental and Social Considerations/Cross-Cutting Issues/Gender Category**

1) Environmental and Social Considerations

i) Category: C

ii) Reason for Categorization: The Project is a financial assistance loan and is deemed to have no undesirable impacts on the environment based on the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations (promulgated in April 2020)

2) Cross-Cutting Issues: None

3) Gender Category: [N/A] ■ GI (Gender mainstreaming needs assessment and analysis project)

<Reason for Categorization>

The Project underwent a gender mainstreaming needs assessment and identified its needs. However, it did not plan to include specific initiatives that would contribute to the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment. Nonetheless, the Project will monitor whether it impacts all pupils and students regardless of gender. The Project will confirm whether it contributes to gender equality by monitoring the ratios of male and female students who earned a score exceeding the certified level of acquisition of basic academic skills on the prefectural test (mathematics) during the final year of primary education (6th grade) and lower secondary education (9th grade) as reference values.

**(10) Other Important Issues:** None

#### 4. Targeted Outcomes

##### (1) Quantitative Effects

(i) Performance Indicators (Operation and Effect Indicators)

| Indicator  | Baseline<br>(Actual value in 2022) | Target (2026)<br>[2 years after project<br>completion] |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 1) Proportion of early secondary school teacher of mathematics who received training on the pedagogic model to improve the learning outcome (6 provinces) (Note) | 0%                                 | 90%  |
| 2) Number of schools in 6 AREFs that implement the School Improvement Project (6 provinces) (Note)   | 100                                | 500  |
| 3) Proportion of Tayssir beneficiaries using payment account or bank account to receive Tayssir cash   | 2.7%                               | 80%  |

|          |  |  |
|----------|--|--|
| transfer |  |  |
|----------|--|--|

(Note) Six Target Areas: 1) L'Oriental, 2) Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, 3) Drâa-Tafilalet, 4) Beni Mellal-Khénifra, 5) Souss-Massa, and 6) Casablanca-Settat.

In addition, the ratios of male and female students who earned a score exceeding the certified level of acquisition of basic academic skills on the prefectural test (mathematics) during the final year of primary education (6th grade) and lower secondary education (9th grade) will be monitored as reference values.

(ii) Internal Rate of Return: No IRR will be calculated as this Project is a development program loan.

**(2) Qualitative Effects:** Improvement in the capacity of teachers to teach students and conduct classes, improvement in school management capacity in schools, improvement in organizational capacity in educational administration, and contribution towards economic and social stability

**5. External Factors and Risk Control**

(1) **Preconditions:** N/A

(2) **External Factors:** N/A

**6. Lessons Learned from Past Programs**

As found in the ex-post evaluation of the program loans for Pakistan (Power Sector Reform Program and Power Sector Reform Program II) and Indonesia (Indonesia Development Policy Loans I to IV), it concluded that combining JICA's technical cooperation projects to support the policy actions along with the provision of development policy loans in the field can further deliver effective policy improvement and reforms.

The Project is expected to be implemented in coordination with the technical cooperation project PEEQ2, which is scheduled to start during 2022. Specifically, JICA and its technical cooperation project experts will facilitate the implementation of the Project's policy actions by providing indirect support to the Steering Committee of the Project. It will also ensure opportunities for a timely confirmation of the progress of the Moroccan government's actions and related programs concerning children's basic academic skills and learning environment.

**7. Evaluation Results**

This Project is in line with Morocco's development issues and policies as well as the cooperation policy and analysis of Japan and JICA. It will promote quality improvement in primary and lower secondary education through financial support. This Project is also considered to contribute to Goal 4 (Quality Education) and



Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) of the SDGs. Therefore, the necessity for JICA to provide its support is high.

## **8. Plan for Future Evaluation**

### **(1) Indicators to be used for future evaluation**

As described in 4.

### **(2) Future Evaluation Schedule**

Ex-post evaluation: two years after project completion

END

[Annex] Policy Development Matrix: Development Policy Loan for the Improvement of Learning Environment of Basic Education

**Policy Development Matrix: Development Policy Loan for the Improvement of Learning Environment of Basic Education**

|  | 1 <sup>st</sup> Tranche<br>Achieve by January 2022   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tranche<br>Achieve by December 2022   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tranche<br>Achieve by December 2023   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>1. Reducing the Disparity of the Learning Environment within Classrooms</b>   |  |   |   |
| 1-1. Scale up of the pedagogic model to improve learning outcome.  | (1) To incorporate the pedagogic model to improve the learning outcome in the mathematics curriculum for primary school education.   | (7) To conduct an assessment of the implementation status of the revised curriculum in (1).   | (14) Based on the outcome of (1) and (7), develop a pedagogic model to improve learning outcome of the mathematics curriculum for early secondary school education.                   |
| 1-2. Improvement of teacher training   | (2) To formulate and to publish the strategy for in-service teacher training in the primary and early secondary school education.  | (8) Based on the strategy announced in (2), formulate an operational plan for the in-service teacher training in the AREF.  |   |
|  | (3) To incorporate the in-service teaching training on the model to improve learning outcome in the action plan of 2 AREFs for the 2021/2022 academic year (primary and early secondary school education). | (9) To conduct the in-service teaching training described in (3) in the 2 AREFs as well as to incorporate same training in 4 AREFs action plan for the academic year 2022/2023. | (15) To conduct the in-service teaching training described in (9) in the 4 AREFs as well as to incorporate same training in 6 AREFs (※1) action plan for the academic year 2023/2024. |
| <b>2 Reducing the Disparity of the Learning Environment among Schools</b>  |  |   |   |
| 2-1. Improvement in the disparity of the learning environment among schools through the implementation of the School Improvement Project (SIP) | (4) To organize a conference for AREF to promote the understanding of the SIP and its implementation manual, which aim to improve the school management capacity.  | (10) To validate the implementation manual of the SIP, and to notify it to AREFs.   |   |
|  | (5) To allocate budget for implementation of the SIP for primary and early secondary school in 100 schools of the 6 regions (※1) for the 2021/2022 academic year.  | (11) To implement the SIP budgeted in (5) as well as to allocate budget for implementation of the SIP in 200 schools of the 6 regions for the 2022/2023.                        | (16) To implement the SIP budgeted in (11) as well as to allocate budget for implementation of the SIP in 300 schools of the 6 regions for the 2023/2024.                             |
|  |  | (12) To conduct an assessment on the implementation status of the SIP for primary and early secondary school education.   | (17) Based on the outcome of (12), develop a SIP model for primary and early secondary school education.  |
| <b>3 Reducing the Disparity of the Learning Environment among Households</b>   |  |   |   |
| 3-1. Improvement in the disparity of the learning environment within households through improvement of the Cash Transfer Program               | (6) To confirm the results of the pilot projects in 4 provinces (※2) to improve Tayssir cash transfer method.  | (13) To confirm expansion of beneficiary households using payment account or bank account to receive Tayssir cash transfer to 20%.  | (18) To confirm expansion of beneficiary households using payment account or bank account to receive Tayssir cash transfer to 50%.  |

(※1) L'Oriental, Rabat - Salé – Kénitra, Drâa – Tafilalet, Beni Mellal – Khénifra, Souss – Massa, Casablanca – Settat

(※2) Fès, Meknès, Azilal, Ben Guerir