1. Presentation of the National Observatory for Human Development

Decree establishing the National Observatory for Human Development was published in the Official Bulletin of 11.09.2008. (Decree No. 2-08-394 of 23 October 2008). However, the NOHD began its work in December 2006 following the launching under the auspices of His Majesty the King of the National Initiative for Human Development in May 2005 and whose bodies implementation, evaluation in particular, are defined in the guidelines of the Royal speech "...... The implementation of the National Initiative for Human Development will, moreover, be an opportunity to emerge in our country, a true social engineering through innovation in the types of intervention, efficient ways and maximum impact, supported by qualified human resources and mechanisms for the vigilant and objective observation of the phenomena of poverty and social exclusion...».

By its very nature cross tracking implemented public policies in this area, the Observatory reports directly to the prime minister. It must therefore contribute to the evaluation, funding and producing advice and recommendations on the progress and the constraints to human development in the Kingdom.

For the accomplishment of this general mandate, the Observatory has, under the authority of a president nominated by His Majesty the King, a slight Administration and a council of 24 members chosen intuitu personae, among the high responsibility for Public Administration, civil society actors, academics and private sector operators. As part of its core business, Council submits annually to the appreciation of His Majesty the King an annual report on human development.

2. Content of the National Initiative for Human Development

The National Initiative for Human Development for 2005-2010 is composed of four key programs:

- The program to fight against poverty in rural areas, which are eligible for 403 rural communities, the poorest, representing 3.8 million;
- The program to fight against social exclusion in urban areas, which are eligible for 264 of the most disadvantaged, districts representing 2.5 million;
- The program to fight against the precariousness, which are eligible projects supported 50,000 people living in extreme precarity throughout the country;
- The transversal program that is flexible to answer the needs not initially planned, which are eligible projects with high impact on human development such as income-
generating activities and the strengthening of social engineering and the capacity of stakeholders.

Two evaluations have been done since the establishment in 2006 of the National Observatory for Human Development. The first evaluation (mid-term) was conducted in 2008. The second evaluation was conducted in 2011 and focused on the socio-economic impact of this initiative.

3. Evaluation of the National Initiative for Human Development: What independence?

3.1. The mid-term evaluation:

This evaluation focused on:

- The perception of this initiative by the population: The referential of this initiative has served in this study as a starting point to examine the perceptions. This referential includes a development philosophy and a mecanisme of mobilization and participation of the population. It has enabled to analyze how this referential is perceived by the population and the stakeholders;

- The development of a protocol for conducting participatory assessments as part of this initiative: The development of a protocol for conducting participatory assessments as part of this initiative: To answer this question, we chose an approach of analytical restitution of field measurements in two stages. First, we analyzed the legal and institutional framework (texts and circular, the structures established) in the framework of Initiative. Secondly, we analyzed how the process actually takes place, since targeting up to its implementation, and possibly its sustainability in order to document in situ and on a daily basis the ways of doing things that are taking place;

- Convergence the Initiative programs to those conducted by the different departments: The Convergence of the programmes of the Initiative with those carried out by different departments: This evaluation consisted of a comprehensive diagnosis of the convergence of the programmes of the Initiative and those conducted by the public sector and in the proposition of recommendations for greater convergence at the institutional and territorial levels in programmatic and operational aspects;

- The role of associations in the Initiative: The role of associations in the Initiative: With the advent of this Initiative, the vital role of the civil society is now explicitly recognized in human development programs. To this end, the study objectives were to observe and assess the situation of human development activities carried out by the civil society, their strengths and weaknesses in order to strengthen them and support their dynamics;

- The analysis of physical and financial achievements: The analysis of physical and financial achievements: It is about analyzing the data of projects nearly 20,000 projects and activities carried out under this Initiative;


The first four qualitative studies were performed by private consultants and academic researchers. The results analysis was conducted by a private consultancy.

The results of these studies were synthesized by an international consultant hired for this purpose by the Observatory.

3.2. The impact assessment

After conducting a feasibility study of the impact assessment in 2007, with the assistance of an international expert, the Observatory has decided to conduct a study to evaluate the impact on the socio-economic conditions of populations targeted by the Initiative urban and rural areas.
The methodology proposed by the expert involves, in particular, to compare the development of selected outcome indicators in targeted areas and not targeted areas, between a start date and an end date. That requires indicators on both dates for each zone.

As there has no survey to the start date of the Initiative (data base), the Observatory found himself compelled to drive as soon as possible a two passages surveys. The first passage was made in 2008 and the second, marking the end of Phase I of the Initiative was made in 2011. The total sample size of the survey is 3,570 households visited in 2008 and revisited in 2011.

A questionnaire is designed for households and their members, as well as a "rural town" and a questionnaire survey "urban area" have been designed to meet the needs of this evaluation, after consultation with all relevant departments (National Coordination Initiative, ministries of education, employment, health, social development, housing, etc.), and national and international experts.

In rural areas, 403 rural municipalities, including the poverty rate in 2004 attained 30% or more, were selected for the program targeting the fight against poverty Initiative. The rural sample was composed of 124 rural communes of similar levels of poverty (between 27% and 32%), half of which is among the targeted communes the Initiative. The impact evaluation of the Initiative for rural areas was made on the basis of Regression Discontinuity Design.

For the urban sample, the methodology exploits the fact that we have a panel survey in two periods. We can measure the various outcome variables twice for the same households. Assuming that the evolution of different outcome variables, before the implementation of the program was the same for the treated areas and non-target areas, the change of the outcome variables between the two types of areas, between 2008 and 2011, will be our measure of the impact of treatment by the Initiative.

The criteria for selection of districts, announced by the Initiative is based on the importance of inadequate housing, the lack of employment opportunities, limited access to infrastructure and to basic social services, etc.. In cities with more than 100,000 population. 264 areas were selected for targeting the Initiative program on the fight against social exclusion in urban areas.

The urban sample consists of 114 neighborhoods with levels close to the available indicators and criteria used, 75 are among the areas targeted by the initiative. For more information on methodological aspects, the reader may refer to the full report of the evaluation of the impact of the Initiative presented on the website of the National Observatory for Human Development.

The two phases of the survey was carried out by a private consultancy firm under the supervision of the international expert and a university professor at the National Institute of Statistics. Both experts also conducted the survey processing and estimation of the impact of the initiative.

4. Evaluation of the National Initiative for Human Development: What does it do?

On the mid-term, the NODH sent in a first time, the report of the evaluation to His Majesty the King and Head of Government. In a second step, two presentations of the main conclusions of this evaluation were made. The first one was made to the head of government in the presence of ministers. The second was made to the media and representatives of the departments and agencies concerned.
After that, the Observatory has transmitted the report of the mid-term to all government departments and local authorities. This report was also published on the website of the Observatory (www.ondh.ma).

On 31 July 2009, His Majesty the King, in his speech to the nation on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the celebration of the throne, has highlighted the need to submit the draft of this initiative to control and the evaluation, and to ensure give substance to recommendations of the National Observatory.

To translating these recommendations, three committees were established by the government and made up of representatives of government, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and elected officials. The first commission is responsible for the convergence projects. The second commission should produce guidelines in order to ensure the sustainability of projects. The third commission was mandated the development of tools for monitoring and evaluation.

On the evaluation of the impact of the Initiative, the Observatory sent to His Majesty the King and Head of Government, the report incorporating the findings of this evaluation, 18 May 2013.

The Observatory intends to following the same approach that was made for sharing and using the findings of this evaluation.

References