Morocco’s agriculture sector was one of the fast-growing economic sectors over the past decade. Yet, while agricultural production has substantially increased, the growth of agroindustry has not kept pace with the positive sector growth trend. While exports from agroindustry have increased in value, volumes have remained constant over the past decade and investments in the agri-food sector have remained limited.

World Bank’s Strengthening agri-food value chains program

To develop agri-food value-chains and increase private sector’s role in agribusiness growth, the World Bank Board of Executive directors approved in December 2017 a $200 million loan to support the Ministry of Agriculture, fisheries, rural development, water and forestry’s effort to boost sector’s performance and productivity, as part of the Plan Maroc Vert, Morocco’s strategy for the agriculture sector.

Program objectives:

The Strengthening agri-food value chains Program aims to support the broader transformation of the agri-food sector into a productive and competitive sector and to develop value chains by:

1. INCREASING MARKET EFFICIENCY AND INTEGRATION:
   - By strengthening the Business associations of two sub-sectors with a high value addition potential, the citrus and olive value chains (Maroc Citrus and Interprolive business associations, commonly called “Interprofessions”). Through technical and financial support, the program will strengthen the capacity of those interprofessions to become inclusive platforms for intra-branch coordination and public-private dialogue for the development of their value chain.
   - By supporting the integration of small and medium producers within markets: through facilitated access to direct market sales for aggregation projects and greater investments in agro-processing facilities, in coordination with the Agriculture Development Fund.
   - By modernizing the management of new wholesale markets and improving access to information on market prices through ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) tools with a view to improving market efficiency and transparency in the fruit and vegetables sector.

2. IMPROVING ADDED-VALUE OF AGRI-FOOD PRODUCTS:
   - By improving food safety: ONSSA (National food security agency) will have greater capacity to implement the national food safety law (Law 28-07) and provide technical assistance to private operators in complying with food safety requirements, while raising awareness on food safety.
   - By promoting quality standards and certification systems: the program will help certify new products under the label “Distinctive Signs of Origin” and Quality schemes, helping producers adopt good management practices and increasing financial support to farmers to access certification.
   - By supporting innovation in the agri-food sector, through the establishment of two Agri-food innovation centers to provide technical and business development services for SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) willing to move into agro-processing and the creation of grant mechanisms for innovative agri-food projects.
The World Bank program, using the Program for Results (PforR) lending instrument, disburses against the attainment of key development outcomes measured by indicators. These are as follows:

**Indicator 1:** Number of Interprofessions with business plans approved and intra-branch agreements (Accords Interprofessionnels) adopted to ensure sustainability

**Indicator 2:** Amended Law no. 4-12 on Agricultural Aggregation dated 2012 is under implementation

**Indicator 3:** Number of new/upgraded conditioning, cold storage and/or processing units in selected agri-food value chains under operation

**Indicator 4:** At least one wholesale market operating and applying the new management model

**Indicator 5:** Number of small and/or medium size agri-food enterprises authorized by ONSSA

**Indicator 6:** The Borrower’s center for the production of sterile ceratitis males providing farm treatment services to citrus producers

**Indicator 7:** Number of small and medium size producers and/or enterprises assisted by the Agri-food Innovation Centers (CIAs)

**Indicator 8:** Establishment of an integrated financial management system to improve Program management

Direct Program beneficiaries include small and medium producers (including women and youth) and enterprises engaged in the agri-food sector. It is estimated that approximately 200,000 agri-food producers and enterprises would benefit from one or more of the Program activities in the nine regions included in the Program area. These are: Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima, l’Oriental, Fès-Meknès, Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, Béni-Mellal-Khénifra, Casablanca-Settat, Marrakech-Safi, Draâ-Tafilalet, and Souss-Massa. The program will be executed by the Ministry of Agriculture, fisheries, rural development, water and forestry, in close coordination with relevant public agencies.

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