ROYAUME DU MAROC
MINISTÈRE DE L'INTÉRIEUR

Direction Générale des Collectivités Territoriales

الصندوق الافريقي لدعم التعاون اللامركزي الدولي
Fonds Africain d'Appui à la Coopération Décentralisée Internationale

THE AFRICAN FUND OF SUPPORT TO INTERNATIONAL DECENTRALIZED COOPERATION OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Practical Manual

Collection: Guide for elected officials



May 2025

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… My vision of South-South cooperation is clear and constant: My country shares what it has, without ostentation …

My country opts for sharing and transferring its know-how; it proposes to build a concrete future of solidarity and security …

Excerpt from the Royal Speech delivered at the 28th African Union Summit, on January 31, 2017

… Africa is at the heart of Morocco's foreign policy. This is a natural, well-thought-out, strategic decision designed to promote solidarity-based South-South and triangular cooperation, through which concrete projects are implemented for the good of several African countries …

Excerpt from the Royal Message to participants in the Elysée Summit on peace and security in Africa (Paris, December 6, 2013)

… The Kingdom of Morocco, a united and totally sovereign State… reaffirms and commits itself to the following:
… To consolidate relations of cooperation and solidarity with the peoples and countries of Africa, in particular the countries of sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel;
Strengthening South-South cooperation
…

Except from the preamble of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco of 2011

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I. INTRODUCTION

International decentralized cooperation is the set of relations, activities undertaken or entered into within a partnership framework by the Local and Regional Governments with other foreign Local and Regional Governments or with foreign organizations, whose aim is to exchange and transfer experiences, to set up technical support mechanisms, to support the implementation of decentralization processes and the strengthening of local governance and to exchange knowledge and know-how between Local and Regional Governments of different continents.

International decentralized cooperation, which can be North-South, South-North, South-South or triangular, has gained more and more weight and importance in international relations and it is with a view to developing South-South cooperation that the Interior Ministry of the Kingdom of Morocco through the Directorate General of Local and Regional Governments "DGCT" has established in 2020 « The African Fund of Support for International Decentralized Cooperation of Local and Regional Governments ».

In addition to the regulations governing the annual call for projects, the DGCT has introduced this practical handbook, intended for elected officials and local and regional executives, with the aim of ensuring better access to information and providing concrete answers to the questions and situations encountered by elected officials and actors of international decentralized cooperation in order to be able to submit applications eligible for financial support from the African Fund.

II. WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE AFRICAN FUND ?

The "African Fund of Support for International Decentralized Cooperation of Local and Regional Governments " is an initiative that comes at the right time to contribute to the sustainable and integrated development of local and regional governments that are direct beneficiaries, and pays particular attention to projects and federative actions that can directly benefit local African populations.
Les objectifs recherchés à travers la mise en place de ce Fonds Africain sont :

Direct decentralized cooperation towards a strategic partnership with African local and regional governments ;
Inclusion of cooperation in the dynamics of decentralization, local development, strengthening of local and regional governments and local democracy ;
Having the projects and actions to be carried out, through capacity building and the transfer of knowledge and know-how, lead to the improvement of the living conditions of the populations, the access to basic services and the creation of jobs ;
Including international decentralized cooperation in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals ;
Promoting the so-called "triangular" or "tripartite" cooperation by implementing a dialogue between local and regional governments in the South and cooperation partners such as international institutions, bilateral cooperation agencies and donors ;
Contributing substantially to Africa's economic and social development and increasing its capacity for socio-economic resilience.

III. WHO ARE THE ACTORS OF THE AFRICAN FUND ?

There are three main actors involved in this fund:

DGCT

The Directorate General of Local and Regional Governments

(Fund Manager in partnership with MAECA-MRE)

- Annually launches calls for projects and communicates about the African Fund
- Convenes the Technical Committee to evaluate projects or actions and measure their effectiveness and efficiency
- Gathers the Steering Committee to decide on the requests received
- Provides additional financial support and guidance on the implementation of the project or action

CTN

The Moroccan Local and Regional Government

(Pivot Community)

- Co-establishes the partnership framework by seeking partners
- Contributes to the financing of the project or action in the framework of the partnership
- Provides technical expertise
- Ensures that the activities carried out are consistent with the stated goals

CTA

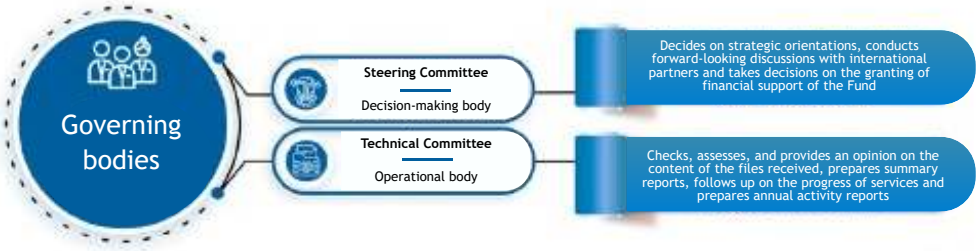
The partner African Local and Regional Government

(Direct and exclusive beneficiary)

- Formulates the partnership request
- Develops the project or action, and if necessary, requests the expertise of the CTN
- Works to achieve the project or action
- Monitors and evaluates the project or action according to relevant results indicators, means of verification and accountability

IV. WHAT ARE THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THE AFRICAN FUND ?

Two governing bodies have been established to manage the African Fund, namely :



V. WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THE AFRICAN FUND ?

In addition to the Directorate General of Local and Regional Governments, the following institutions are members of the governing bodies of the African Fund :

The African Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Residents Abroad ;
The Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation "AMCI" ;
The International Cooperation Department of the Interior Ministry ;
The National Coordination entity of the National Initiative for Human Development ;
The Association of Moroccan Regions "ARM" ;
The Moroccan Association of the Presidents of the Councils of the Prefectures and Provinces « AMPCPP » ;
The Moroccan Association of Presidents of Communal Councils « AMPCC » ;
The DGCT's specialized departments :

- The Department of Local Public Services ;
- The Department of Local Institutions ;
- The Department of Finance of the Local and Regional Governments ;
- The Department of Skills Development and Digital Transformation ;
- The Department of Local Public Networks ;
- The Department of Urban Mobility and Transport ;
- The Department of Planning and Territorial Development.

VI. HOW TO FORMALIZE A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FROM THE AFRICAN FUND? ?

Any Moroccan Local or Regional Government (CTN) wishing to benefit from the support of the African Fund for the implementation of a project or an action in partnership with an African Local and Regional Government must, in addition to being a partner of an African Local or Regional Government (CTA), formalize its request in an application made up of the following documents :



The contribution of the Local or Regional Governments, whether Moroccan or from another African country, to the implementation of the actions or projects can be in kind (mobilization of experts, trainers, logistic means, documentation, etc.). These contributions will be evaluated and converted into cash in order to be compatible with the financial arrangements of the project or action to be carried out.

01 The application form following the model attached to the regulations of the call for projects

02 A joint letter from the two presidents of the partner Local or Regional Governments clearly indicating the intention to carry out the project or action, the financial shares mobilized from their own resources as well as the financial support requested from the Fund

03 A framework document of two pages maximum relating to the project or action to be carried out (goals of the project or action, expected impact on the local population, technical and financial management capacity, etc.)

04 The partnership agreement duly signed by both partners, if it already exists

05 A brief report quantifying the experience of the Moroccan Local or Regional Government in terms of international decentralized cooperation (5 pages maximum).

06 A certificate of financial contribution from another institutional partner in the event that, despite the support of the Fund, the financial package of the project is not secured

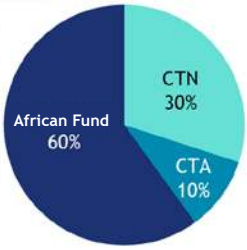
07 In the case of a triangular partnership, a commitment by the development cooperation support entity to mobilize its contribution

08 Any other document deemed useful by the partners

Applications for support from the African Fund must be sent in duplicate to the DGCT before the date mentioned in the regulations governing the call for projects, with a copy sent by e-mail to: mochakir@interieur.gov.ma.

VII. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS OF CONTRIBUTION OF THE AFRICAN FUND ?

Any application for support submitted for financing from the African Fund must meet the following financial conditions :



The Moroccan Local or Regional Government will have to mobilize from its own funds at least 30% of the total amount of the project or action to be carried out ;
The African Local or Regional Government who is the partner of the Moroccan Local Government will have to mobilize at least 10% of the total amount of the project or action to be carried out ;
The remainder will be financed by the Fund's contribution, up to a maximum of 60%, without the financing ceiling exceeding MAD 2,400,000 (Two Million Four Hundred Thousand Moroccan Dirhams), i.e. the equivalent of almost 240,000 Dollars per project or action.

The implementation of the African Fund's financial contribution will only be effective once the financial arrangement for the project is fully completed.

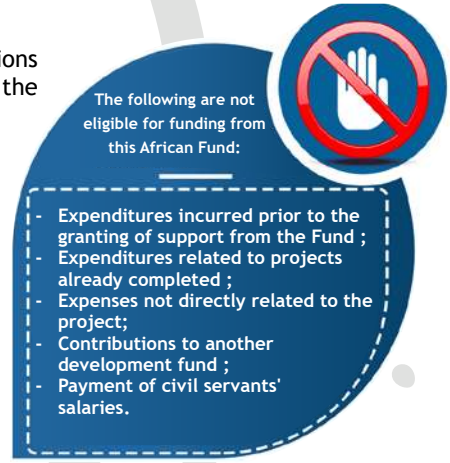
In the case where the partnership to be entered into is said to be "triangular", i.e. supported by a Local or Regional Government of a country of the Global North or by an international body or organization or a donor, the conditions of contribution of the African Fund are applied to the remaining amount of the project or action to be carried out.

VIII. WHAT AREAS SHOULD BE COVERED BY PARTNERSHIPS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE AFRICAN FUND ?

All projects or actions carried out by Moroccan Local or Regional Governments (Regions, Prefectures/Provinces or Communes) and which fall within their own or shared competences as defined by the relevant Organic Laws are eligible for financing from this fund.

Particular priority will be given to projects or actions submitted in support of this Fund which fall within the following themes (non-comprehensive list) :

Land use planning and development (preparation of development plans and land use schemes) ;
Support for basic services to citizens ;
Institutional strengthening of local and regional governments ;
Transfer of knowledge, know-how and expertise in the management of local and regional governments ;
Sustainable development (household waste management, liquid sanitation, natural resource management, renewable energy, adaptation to climate change) ;
Training and capacity building of elected officials and territorial managers ;
Improving the quality of services provided to citizens ;
Technical assistance by improving the capacity of local and regional governments to manage their own projects ;
Feasibility studies to build equipment or infrastructures ;
Granting of scholarships for diploma and advanced training in Morocco ;
Youth employability.



IX. HOW TO FIND A PARTNER ?

The support structures for international decentralized cooperation are multiple and of very different horizons. In the case of the African Fund, several institutional actors can help Moroccan and African Local and Regional Governments find partners.

a. The Directorate General of Local and Regional Governments : Given the missions it is called upon to shoulder, the DGCT can, through the "Cooperation and Documentation" Division, assist Local and Regional Governments in finding a partner in order to establish partnership relations ;

b. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Residents Abroad : This Ministry (through the Department of African Affairs) can contribute to this mission of searching for partners through the different Embassies of the Kingdom ;

c. The Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation "AMCI" : This Agency, which is also a member of the governing bodies of the African Fund, can help and assist Local and Regional Governments to establish cooperation relations in accordance with its prerogatives ;

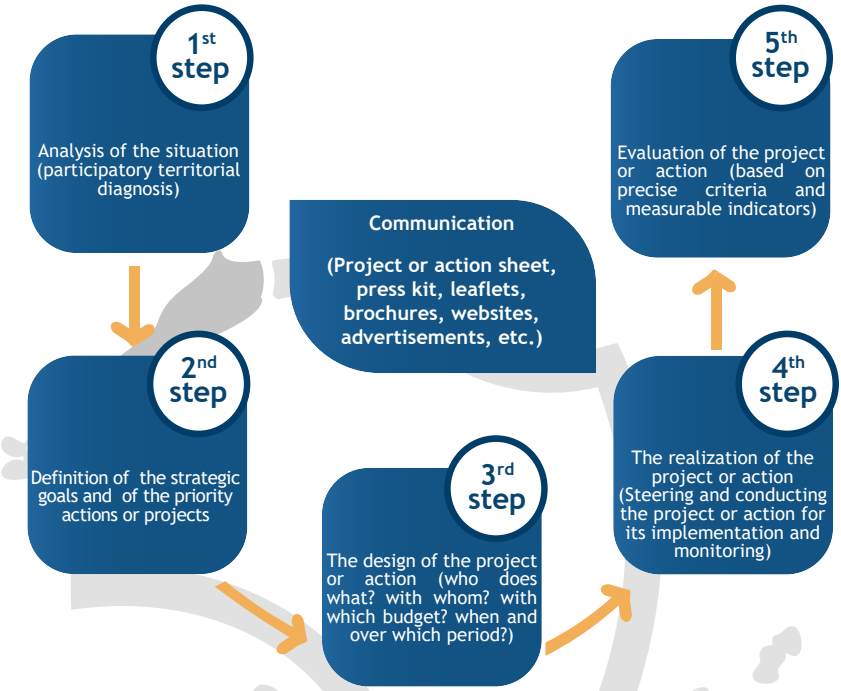
d. The Moroccan Associations of Presidents of Local and Regional Governments : The three Associations of Presidents of Local and Regional Governments (Regions "ARM", Prefectures/Provinces "AMPCPP" and Communes "AMPCC") can play this networking role between Local and Regional Governments and other partners ;

e. Cities and Local Governments of Africa "UCLG Africa" : Is the umbrella organization of all African local governments that can, through its various networks, contribute to building partnerships between Local and Regional Governments. Its **African Local Government Academy "ALGA"**, is the Centre of Excellence for the training and capacity building of Local and Regional Government executives. It can, through its contacts and its network of African territorial managers, contribute to establishing partnership relations between Local and Regional Governments.

X. HOW TO SET UP A PROJECT WITH THE PARTNER ?

The African Local or Regional Government, may submit to the Fund for financing, in accordance with the procedures described above, a project or an action that has already been developed as part of a development plan or program drawn up on the basis of a participatory planning process clearly explaining the territorial diagnosis, the strategic goals, the priority needs and the potential sources of funding.

Otherwise, the two partners will have to mobilize their respective teams to set up a project according to the classic approach, as an indication, explained in the diagram below:



XI. WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR APPLICATION IS DECLARED ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING BY THE AFRICAN FUND ?

In accordance with the regulations governing the call for projects, the DGCT undertakes to inform the National Local and Regional Government (no later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the meeting of the Steering Committee, the decision-making body) of the results of the examination of the application submitted to the African Fund.

The Moroccan Local or Regional Government is required to take the following urgent steps and keep the DGCT informed thereof:

Informing the partner African National or Regional Government of the eligibility of the project or action for financing by the African Fund ;

Holding an initial meeting with the partner, either face-to-face or remotely, in order to agree on a precise action plan ;

Setting up the steering bodies of the project or action by specifying the missions, tasks, and roles of each member ;

Developing, in close consultation with the partner, a planning of actions to be undertaken for the implementation of the action or project financed by the African Fund ;

Starting the administrative and technical steps necessary for the start of the planned services.

XII. HOW TO STEER AN ACTION OR PROJECT FINANCED BY THE AFRICAN FUND ?

The partner Local or Regional Governments must set up governing bodies to steer and monitor closely the actions or projects financed by the African Fund.

Generally, two governing bodies are established for this purpose. These are :

1. A Steering Committee : made up of the two Presidents of the partner Local or Regional Governments and including the close collaborators of the two elected officials and, if necessary, the partners involved in the implementation of the project or action. This Steering Committee is in charge of deciding on the strategic orientations related to the implementation of the project or action financed by the African Fund, of examining the progress reports of the services provided, and of finding solutions to the possible problems that could hinder the good implementation of the project or action. This Steering Committee shall hold its first meeting as soon as the selection of the project or action by the African Fund Steering Committee is announced. This committee should also hold semi-annual coordination and monitoring meetings.

2. A Monitoring Committee : made up of the heads of the technical services of the two Local and Regional Governments and of any other persons whose presence is deemed useful by the two parties. Its main mission is, in particular, to draw up a precise schedule for the execution of the action or project, to elaborate, if need be, the Terms of Reference of the studies to be launched, to closely follow the realization of the services on the field, to elaborate, for the attention of the Steering Committee, periodical reports on the implementation of the project or action until their completion. This committee will have to hold quarterly meetings to closely follow up on the programmed services.

XIII. HOW TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT PROJECTS OR ACTIONS SUPPORTED BY THE AFRICAN FUND ?

Each Moroccan or its partner African Local or Regional Government that has benefited from a project or action financed by the African Fund must organize a communication campaign around the said actions or projects.

The communication document should focus on the African Fund, its goals, its financial contribution to projects or actions as well as the project or action itself, by mentioning its impact on the local target population, and also focus on the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the Beneficiary Local or Regional Government. This document shall be translated, if necessary, into the working language of the partners and shall bear the logo of the African Fund.

All available communication media must be used for this purpose (website, when it exists, internet, local, regional or national newspapers, press release, creation of specific events, brochures, advertising spots, social networks, etc.).

XIV. HOW TO EVALUATE THE ACTIONS OR PROJECTS FINANCED BY THE AFRICAN FUND ?

Overall, there are six main evaluation criteria to be used throughout the cycle of an African Fund-supported project or action :

1. Relevance : This involves analyzing the adequacy between the goals set by the partnership and the reasons that led to the actions (problems identified, needs expressed, etc.) with regard to the specificities of the context.

2. Consistency : "internal" consistency makes it possible to examine the extent to which the means and activities undertaken are sufficient and consistent with each other to achieve the goals set.

3. Effectiveness : this is the comparison between the goals set at the start and the results achieved (number of people trained, etc.); hence the importance of having clear goals at the start. The interest is to measure differences and to be able to analyze them.

4. Efficiency : measuring efficiency means comparing the results obtained with the means used. Efficiency is the assessment of the result and the chosen approach in relation to the resources used: material, human and financial resources.

5. Sustainability : this is the analysis of the chances that the projects or actions implemented will be able to continue over time. Sustainability does not only involve technical, economic and financial aspects: institutional aspects are often of primary importance.

6. Impact and effects : Analyzing the impact of an action or project means assessing all its effects (changes made, positive or negative, direct or indirect) on its environment in the broadest sense (institutional, technical, social, economic, political, ecological... in the medium and long term).

XV. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP ?

In addition to the basic principles governing international decentralized cooperation, which are solidarity, equality, reciprocity, and subsidiarity, in order to be able to enter into a sustainable partnership, the following conditions must, as far as possible, be met :

Being prepared to develop an equal partnership with reciprocity and mutual respect ;
Being prepared to meet all commitments made with partners that are the subject of an agreement ;
Having a strong and shared political will to commit to the project ;
Designating an elected official and a responsible executive to be the "contact persons" for the partnership ;
Being prepared to carry out a project that will take place over time, with specific deadlines and stages ;
Being prepared to adopt a shared work culture with your partner by overcoming differences in organization, operation, language, administrative and political culture ;

Being prepared to accept discrepancies between your expectations and the responses of your foreign partners ;
Being ready to associate and mobilize your technical teams around the project ;
Being ready to involve, from the very beginning of the project, all the local development actors present in the territory within the framework of a participatory approach ;
Being prepared to communicate regularly on the status of your partnership ;
Being prepared to meet regularly with your partner to review progress ;
Being prepared to have your partnership evaluated on a regular basis to check the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of the actions undertaken.

XVI. QUI CONTACTER EN CAS DE BESOIN ?

The Local and Regional Governments, whether Moroccan or African, can contact several institutional partners who intervene in the operating process of the African Fund and partner search. These are :

01
The Interior Ministry - Directorate General of Local and Regional Governments / Cooperation and Documentation Division
+212 (0) 6 61473327
+212 (0) 5 37286225
mochakir@interieur.gov.ma

02
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Residents Abroad - African Affairs Department
+212 (0) 7 05 06 25 39
loubna.bassidi@gmail.com

03
The Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation "AMCI"
+212 (0) 6 61 44 95 97
+212 (0) 6 61 19 70 69
zaidiamal@gmail.com
laila.aboulaich@gmail.com

04
The Association of Moroccan Regions "ARM"
+212 (0) 6 661 90 99 53
arm@regions-maroc.ma

05
The Moroccan Association of the Presidents of the Councils of Prefectures and Provinces "AMPCPP"
+212 (0) 6 63 47 24 34
direxampcpp@gmail.com

06
The Moroccan Association of Presidents of Communal Councils "AMPCC"
+212 (0) 6 61 50 33 73
+212 (0) 6 61 12 92 36
nejjarimh@gmail.com
tahassant@gmail.com

07
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa "UCLG Africa" and its African Local Government Academy "ALGA"
+212 (0) 5 37 26 00 62/63
+212 (0) 6 661 12 05 52
infos@uclga.org
nzarrouk@uclga.org

XVII. CONCLUSION

The African Fund team hopes that this practical and methodological guide will help promote international decentralized cooperation in Africa and strengthen the quality of the actions or projects presented within the framework of the African Fund.

The African Fund also hopes that this guide will help elected officials and technicians in the definition, implementation, promotion, and evaluation of international decentralized cooperation actions or projects supported by the Fund.



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