Morocco: Municipal Solid Waste Sector

Institutional Development of the Municipal Solid Waste Sector in Morocco

Overview
In 2008, the World Bank began working with the Government of Morocco on a sweeping program to help deliver better solid waste management services, helping around 80 municipalities improve their collection services and upgrade their landfills. This joint effort has also pioneered an innovative national carbon finance program, boosted the participation of the private sector, and provided training to 1,600 local managers, improving the reach and quality of solid waste collection services and contributing to the effort to mitigate climate change effects.

Challenge
Out of a total Moroccan population of 30 million, 18 million live in urban areas. Moroccan cities are characterized by high population densities and rapid growth. These cities suffer from several forms of environmental degradation, including the effects of poor management of municipal solid waste (MSW). The cost of the environmental degradation due to solid waste was estimated at 0.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003 (among the highest in the Middle East, North Africa region).

In 2008, Morocco produced about 5 million tons of MSW per year and it is expected to reach 6.2 million in 2020. Prior to the reform initiative, only 70 percent of urban MSW was collected and less than 10 percent of collected waste was being disposed of in an environmentally and socially acceptable manner. There were 300 uncontrolled dumpsites, and about 3,500 waste-pickers, of which 10 percent were children, were living on and around these open dumpsites.

Major issues and challenges in the sector prior to formulation of the World Bank-supported reform program included:

- Poor sector policy, focused mainly on "cleanliness" with very limited attention to waste disposal and treatment;

- Government financial allowance to the sector increased by 80 percent between 2008 and 2011.

- The share of properly disposed MSW increased from 10 percent to 30 percent.
Weak legal and institutional framework, which constrained effective strategic planning and governance;

Ad-hoc fiscal transfers to municipalities and uncertain financial sustainability;

Poor cost effectiveness of public-private partnerships, mainly due to limited competition, lack of transparency, and poor accountability; and

Huge impacts on quality of life, public health, environment, and social and economic development.

Approach

The World Bank has been supporting Morocco’s efforts to improve economic, environmental, and social performance of MSW, building on a solid engagement with the Government over the past five years. World Bank support to the implementation of the sector reform has been anchored on an innovative and programmatic approach that has gone through successive stages.

A first World Bank Development Policy Loan focused on establishing a national framework to implement a national policy and securing continued engagement of all concerned ministries and national agencies. The second loan focused more closely on the policy actions needed to reach the local level, where actual implementation of the MSW policy, as well as resulting outcomes, materialize.

Results

- The program has supported about 80 Municipalities, representing more than 50% of urban population in Morocco, to improve their collection services and upgrade their landfills.

- The share of properly disposed MSW increased from 10 percent to 30 percent.

- Government financial allowance to the sector increased by 80 percent between 2008 and 2011.

- Private sector now provides cleaning and garbage collection services to about 60 percent of the urban population compared to about 15 percent before the project.

- A multi-year training plan reached more than 1,600 local managers.

- An innovative carbon finance program at the national level is being designed to help local authorities mobilize additional financial resources, with potential revenues of approximately US$90 million over the next 10 years.

In parallel, the program has promoted the early and systematic consideration of social concerns at all levels of the decision making chain for SWM modernization: Waste pickers inclusion initiatives are underway in Tangier, Casablanca Rabat and Agadir. Rabat waste pickers inclusion initiative is the most advanced one and it covers 130 pickers.

Partners

World Bank support to the MSW sector in Morocco has been implemented in close collaboration with other partners. Although there have been no co-financiers so far, the World Bank has worked very closely with other donors involved in MSW in Morocco, including the United Nations Development Programme, and Germany’s GTZ and KfW, which have provided coordinated technical support. At the national level, the World Bank has worked closely with
the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Interior, and Fonds d’Equipment Communal, a public development bank providing financial support (loans) to Municipalities’ infrastructure projects.

Bank financing
Through these two Development Policy Loans totaling US$271.3 million, the World Bank has established itself as a valued interlocutor in the MSW sector in Morocco. Close dialogue with concerned partners and stakeholders since the early stage of design and inclusive consultation with beneficiaries have been the cornerstones to ensure success of this program.

Voices

“Now it is better, trash used to be dumped everywhere, now there are rules.”

— Hanan, Oum Azza Cooperative Worker

“This waste plant respects the environment and puts no pollution in the environment, meaning that...the liquid wastes are prevented from entering the soil and are treated by inverse osmosis.”

— Gerard Prenant, Director, TEODEM

Toward the Future
Consequent to the successful support provided by the World Bank, the Government of Morocco has already requested Bank technical and financial support for further engagement to promote sector reform. Key topic for such support would include: long-term financial sustainability at municipal level; environmental supervision, monitoring and control; social dimension and waste valorization; and strengthened local project preparation and management capacity.