

Population total (2009)	31 992 000
Rural population (2009)	13 961 000
Number of rural poor	3 797 000
Agriculture	
Total GDP (US\$)	90 859 129 000
Share of agriculture in GDP (US\$)	18 080 967 000
Number of people employed in agriculture	8 488 000

Source: IFAD, Rural Poverty Portal and FAOSTAT 2009

Age structure

- Almost half of the population is under the age of 24.

Age group (years)	2010	2020	2030
0–14	9 078 000	9 397 000	8 911 000
15–24	6 376 000	5 803 000	6 127 000

Source: World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision Population Database, Medium Variant

Unemployment characteristics

- Young people constitute 25 per cent of the labour force, while representing 35.7 per cent of the unemployed population as a whole. The unemployment rate among young men is 17.4 per cent and among young women 15.9 per cent.ⁱ
- Of the people in the 15-24 age group who are unemployed, 33.2 per cent live in urban areas and 50.3 per cent in rural areas.ⁱⁱ
- A higher education level corresponds to a higher likelihood of unemployment.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Sixty-five per cent of the unemployed youth are first-time jobseekers.^{iv}
- In rural areas the unemployment rate among men is three times higher than that among women.^v

Gender	Youth employed	Youth unemployed	Youth labour force	Youth population
Male	1 599 000	378 000	1 977 000	3 227 000
Female	632 000	121 000	753 000	3 214 000
Total	2 231 000	500 000	2 731 000	6 441 000

Source: Estimations based on International bench files, KILM, Key Indicators labour Market Youth, Beta version

Sectors with potential for job creation

- Young people, especially rural young people, are relegated to informal jobs and small privately-owned businesses such as street vending, repairs, maintenance and construction. The informal sector in Morocco accounts for an estimated 40-80 per cent of non-agricultural employment.^{vi}
- Morocco's integration with international markets offers new opportunities to strengthen its agricultural and agrifood enterprises and thus improve rural employment opportunities.^{vii}
- Textiles and the clothing industry absorb 93 per cent of women, who work in microenterprises and small businesses.^{viii}

- The poor try to spread the risks associated with agricultural work and complement their income generated from agricultural activities with income from other sources.^{ix}

Job creation barriers

- There is a divergence between what the labour market demands and the skills young people acquire in the course of their education.^x
- A significant preference exists for finding work in the public sector, especially among the highly educated youth.^{xi}
- Women often encounter restricted access to land and to bank loans in the local context,^{xii} and are thus excluded from the rural workforce.^{xiii}
- Only 4 per cent of farmers have access to good quality arable land and productive assets.^{xiv}
- Rural young people are relatively less educated than urban young people, and rural girls are more likely to leave school at an early age.^{xv} Only 10 per cent of rural women are literate.^{xvi}
- Morocco ranked 114th out of the 183 countries included in the World Bank ease of doing business index in 2010.

Government policies and reforms

- Several initiatives have been implemented to enhance employment opportunities for young people: (i) vocational training programmes to enhance the skills of young people in 2008; (ii) a recently adopted national strategy to support the development of very small enterprises (VSE); and (iii) *Moukawalati* (my business), which aimed to generate 90,000 jobs by 2008 through the creation of businesses.^{xvii}
- Although Morocco has the smallest share of rural borrowers in the Middle East and North Africa, it is the main contributor to the growth of microfinance in the region. Emphasis has been placed on women's access to microfinance, which has improved significantly.^{xviii}
- The Green Morocco Plan, which constitutes the national agriculture strategy, is intended to implement an agricultural policy that will bring about competitive upgrading of agricultural production and integration into the world market, while creating wealth for stakeholders along the value chain.^{xix}

ⁱ ILO (2008). "Economic Growth, Employment and Poverty in the Middle East and North Africa", Messkoub M., *Employment Working Paper No. 19*

ⁱⁱ Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government (2007). "Youth Exclusion in Morocco, Context, Consequences and Policies", Boudarbat B., and Ajbilou, A., *The Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government (2007). "Youth Exclusion in Morocco, Context, Consequences and Policies", Boudarbat B., and Ajbilou, A., *The Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*.

^{iv} Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government (2007). "Youth Exclusion in Morocco, Context, Consequences and Policies", Boudarbat B., and Ajbilou, A., *The Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*.

^v Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government (2007). "Youth Exclusion in Morocco, Context, Consequences and Policies", Boudarbat B., and Ajbilou, A., *The Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*.

^{vi} ILO and Arab Employment Forum (2009). *Sustainable Enterprise Development and Employment Creation in the Arab Region*, Thematic Paper, Beirut.

^{vii} University of Bologna (2010). *People, trade and training: the needs of Morocco agricultural enterprises facing EU markets*, Ismaili, Raggi, Viaggi, Bologna

^{viii} World Bank (2006). "Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan after the End of the Multi-Fiber Agreement, Report No. 35376 MNA.

^{ix} Agence Française de Développement (2008). *Poverty, Access to Credit and the Determinants of Participation in a New Micro-credit Program in Rural Areas of Morocco Impact Analyses Series, No. 2*.

^x Carnegie Endowment (2010) *Trading High Unemployment for Bad Jobs, Employment Challenges in the Maghreb*, Washington D.C.

^{xi} Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government (2007). "Youth Exclusion in Morocco, Context, Consequences and Policies", Boudarbat B., and Ajbilou, A., *The Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*.

^{xii} OECD, "Gender Equality and Social Institutions In Morocco", *Social Institutions and Gender Index*.

^{xiii} FAO, IFAD and ILO (2010). *Gender Dimensions of Rural and Agriculture Employment Report*, "Differentiated Pathways out of Poverty", Rome.

^{xiv} USAID (2007). *Land Tenure and Property Rights Regional Report. Near East Asia and North Africa, Volume 2.5*.

^{xv} World Bank (2007). *Moving Out Of Poverty in Morocco*, Washington D.C.

^{xvi} World Bank (1999). *Education in the Middle East & North Africa: A Strategy towards Learning for Development*, Washington D.C.

^{xvii} Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government (2007). "Youth Exclusion in Morocco, Context, Consequences and Policies", Boudarbat B., and Ajbilou, A., *The Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper*.

^{xviii} The World Bank Institute and World Bank, Middle East and North Africa Region, Brandsma, J, and Hart, L. *Making Microfinance Work Better in the Middle East and North Africa*.

^{xix} World Trade Organization (2009). *Trade Policy Review*. Report by the Kingdom of Morocco.