

Morocco is a North African country with a major Arabic influence to its culture, languages, and religions. The total population is 35,561,654 with a high poverty rate and low literacy rate of 52.3% (Demographics of Morocco, 2018). Morocco is a country with one of the highest poverty rates in Africa but the Governing bodies in place have put into place programs that will work with 2030 SDG goal 3 to improve the country's health and well being, that will in turn benefit the countries literacy rate/education, health initiatives to lower their sufferings from non communicable and communicable disease, and most importantly boost their economy.

The United Nations has put into place 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that every country should meet or attempt to meet to improve overall health World-Wide. The issues with these goals is that low-income countries and middle-income countries are at a disadvantage to achieve these goals whether it's politically, economically, etc. The 17 goals are no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace justice and strong institutions, and lastly partnerships for the goals. Many of the countries have already achieved the goals as every country needs different goals to be attended to. After researching the background of Morocco, I learned that the most important goals that would allow SDG 3: good health and well-being to be achieved were SDG 8: decent work and economic growth, SDG 1: No poverty, SDG 5: gender equality, SDG 4: Quality

education, and SDG 2: zero hunger as these all affect the overall health of the country (Sustainable development report 2022, 2022).

The biggest threat to Morocco achieving SDG 3 is their poverty rate primarily, economy, education system, and lack of job opportunities. I believe that with more help from the government to make access to education easier, job opportunities a greater focus, and access to food resources will allow SDG 3 to be achieved to overall benefit the health of the nation so that Morocco can and will accomplish SDG 3 by 2030.

Morocco is a starving nation full of poverty and struggling economic growth. Based on research and prior knowledge from Moroccans' I know personally, many Moroccans migrate to other neighboring countries such as Spain and France to escape poverty and find better opportunities to work. According to the GIZ article mentioning programs the nation is taking to positively impact this is by using a 2017 implementation to encourage its inhabitants to reduce waste, petroleum usage in diesel cars, and targeting the younger generation to learn the importance of making efforts to make the country's climate healthier for resources and the environment to prosper (Giz, 2022).

The population of Moroccans' living below the extreme poverty line declined from 3% in 1990 to 1% in 2023 (Morocco's experience with poverty reduction, 2023). In 2014, 0.7% of the country's workforce and their families were living on less than 1.90 per day (Morocco poverty rate 1984-2023, 2023). While this SDG 1 has steadily improved and they are now at the rate of zero, it isn't true for the rural population in Morocco. This is a major threat to the improvement of SDG 3 as the Pandemic and higher inflation added an additional 3.2 million people into poverty in Morocco in 2022 (Un expert to visit Morocco to assess the impact of poverty on human rights, 2022). As

of 2023, 30.2% of the population is living on less than \$5.50 a day, so things are improving but not great. This directly impacts the improvement and success of SDG 3 because it increases communicable diseases such as malnutrition, neonatal health, and health of a vulnerable population such as the elderly.

The three main factors that keep Morocco from developing and improving health are illiteracy, financial inequality and economic volatility. It is extremely difficult for Moroccans to transition out of poverty with over ¼ Moroccan adults being unable to read or write (SDG Country Profiles, 2023). Gender equality plays a role in the extreme poverty throughout the nation as the woman's job is to take care of the home while the man leaves the house to provide for his family. The proportion of time spent by 15 to 24 year old women on unpaid domestic work was 20.8% in 2012. The proportion of women aged 20 to 24 who were married or unioned before 18 years of age was 13.7% in 2018. About 78% of young girls between the ages of 12 and 14 are no longer in school in Morocco's rural areas, but since 2013, policies were put into place with the International Monetary Fund to promote increased access to education for females to encourage their long-term success (Anta Ndoeye and Vincent Dadam, 2017).

Policies that integrate women into the economy have the potential to improve the country's growth, if there were as many women working as men, income per capita could be around 50% higher than it is now (Anta Ndoeye and Vincent Dadam, 2017). USAID is working diligently to improve women's rights as Morocco ranked 141 out of 149 in the 2018 World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report in women's economic participation and opportunity (Closing Morocco's gender gap, 2023). The USAID is also working to address underlying causes of instability in Morocco by

providing positive opportunities for the young with a strong focus on young women who make up around 23% of the labor force (Closing Morocco's Gender gap, 2023). The policies and organizations being implemented will directly correlate with helping the economic health, educational health, and poverty health that will directly impact Sustainable Development Goal 3 to over-all better the health of Morocco. I believe if more organizations get on board to help Morocco with its poverty rates, literacy rates, and low economic growth. The social determinants that are stopping gender equality from reaching its full potential are that women are the only ones on charge to advocate for change especially in regards to access to education and sexual harassment. While the men are aware of the impacts gender equality places on women, more advocating needs to be done for things such as modernized contraceptives, better hospitals to reduce maternal and infant mortality, and life expectancy at birth that directly correlate/confound with women.

Last but not least, the most prominent threat to Morocco and its achievement of SDG 3 is its education system. Education is a top priority for the Moroccan government as it has committed to pursuing education reforms to improve the SDG on education performance in its 2015 to 2030 education vision plan and New Education Act passed in 2019 (World Bank Group, 2020). Geographics and poverty are the two main factors that negatively affect education equality across Morocco. Research has found that children in Morocco's rural areas are less likely to have early access to schools in comparison to their urban counterparts as 70% of pre-schools are clustered in urban areas while 20% are situated in rural areas (Oliver, 2017). Children belonging to families with a father with a higher educational attainment are 2.9 times more likely to have access to school

and reports also show that parents' with better professions are more likely to provide better access to health care and health education to their children. It has been proven that rural and lower income areas often suffer from distinguishable shortages of primary care providers and health care facilities (Why education matters to health, 2023). To address the impacts education has on poverty and health, education needs to be kept as an ongoing priority to teach young adults and adults better lifestyle choices, health beliefs and knowledge, and develop effective ways to improve literacy so health can be better understood.

The biggest threat to Morocco achieving SDG 3 is their poverty rate, economy, education system, and lack of job opportunities. I believe that with more help from the government to make access to education easier, job opportunities a greater focus, and access to food resources will allow SDG 3 to be achieved to overall benefit the health of the nation so that Morocco can and will accomplish SDG 3 by 2030. Morocco is a starving nation full of poverty and struggling economic growth. If more educational implementations are strategically put into access, the overall health of the nation will improve, allowing SDG 3 to be achieved by or even before 2030. Overall, Morocco is very likely to achieve SDG 3 by 2030 as the country has already accomplished six SDGs already such as SDG 1, SDG 7, SDG 12, and SDG 13. Some of the biggest challenges towards reaching SDG 3 in my country are communicable diseases such as Cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses. Although Morocco has achieved many goals in decreasing negative numbers in regards to SDG 3, promotion is a lacking factor with a lack of focus towards it. While infant mortality rates have fallen drastically from 41.7 deaths per 1,000 in 2000 to 19.2 per 1,000 in

2018, HIV incidence rates are at 0.0, and maternal mortality has significantly declines, other targets on the SDG 3.12 such as universal health coverage, life expectancy at birth, occurrence of Tuberculosis (TB), and more incommunicable components face challenges due to access to health care, preventative medications, coverage and governmental expansion, and social determinants such as education and poverty. Morocco has made an effort to directly better mortality rates as prior, leading causes of infant mortality were due to preventable and vaccinatable deaths. Morocco is working on the implementation of the National Program on Immunization that drastically increased immunization coverage. I wholeheartedly believe Morocco's government is capable of making SDG 3 obtainable with a bigger push from higher parties and from groups like USAID, the UN, and relief organizations to give them a boost.

References

- Anta Ndoye and Vincent Dadam, M. E. & C. A. D. L. K. (2017, March 1). Morocco: Reducing gender inequality can boost growth. IMF. Retrieved April 25, 2023, from <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2017/03/01/NA030117-Morocco-Reducing-Gender-Inequality-Can-Boost-Growth>
- Closing Morocco's gender gap: Fact sheet: Morocco. U.S. Agency for International Development. (2023, January 23). Retrieved April 25, 2023, from <https://www.usaid.gov/morocco/fact-sheets/closing-moroccos-gender-gap>
- Demographics of Morocco. Morocco.com. (2018, December 17). Retrieved April 25, 2023, from <https://www.morocco.com/business/demographics/>
- Giz. (2022, March 2). Implementing the 2030 agenda in Morocco. Startseite. Retrieved April 25, 2023, from <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/96658.html>
- Morocco demographics. CountryReports. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2023, from <https://www.countryreports.org/country/Morocco/population.htm>
- Morocco's experience with poverty reduction: Lessons for the arab world. (n.d.). Retrieved April 26, 2023, from https://carnegieendowment.org/files/morocco_poverty1.pdf
- Morocco poverty rate 1984-2023. MacroTrends. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2023, from <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/MAR/morocco/poverty-rate>
- Olivier. (2017, November 1). Morocco: Children deprived of an education. Humanium. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from <https://www.humanium.org/en/morocco-children-deprived-education/>

SDG Country Profiles. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2023, from

<https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/mar>

Sustainable development report 2022. Sustainable Development Report 2022. (n.d.).

Retrieved April 25, 2023, from

<https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/morocco/indicators>

Un expert to visit Morocco to assess the impact of poverty on human rights. OHCHR.

(2022, November 29). Retrieved April 25, 2023, from

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/11/un-expert-visit-morocco-assess-impact-poverty-human-rights>

Why education matters to health: Exploring the causes. Center on Society and Health.

(n.d.). Retrieved April 26, 2023, from

<https://societyhealth.vcu.edu/work/the-projects/why-education-matters-to-health-exploring-the-causes.html#gsc.tab=0>

World Bank Group. (2020, October 27). Morocco: A case for building a stronger

education system in the post covid-19 ERA. World Bank. Retrieved April 25, 2023, from

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/10/27/a-case-for-building-a-stronger-education-system-in-the-post-covid-19-era>