

## Morocco's Regional Integration in Africa: Toward a strategy for sustainable development with Africa



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The advanced regionalization reforms implemented to date have moved in a progressive direction and reflect the public authorities' will to provide the country with a territorial governance that meets the new challenges of regional development and effectively fulfils citizens' expectations.

Four years after the entry into force of the three organic laws on territorial collectivities, along with the publication of 68 implementation decrees thereto pertaining, in addition to the adoption of the national administrative decentralization charter, the current territorial governance model seems – in the light of analysis and drawing on the insights gathered from the experts interviewed – it still falls far from the ambition initially sought.

Examining how the various players operate and the relationship between them and with the stakeholders has revealed several shortcomings. These are mainly related to ownership, implementation and operationalization of steering and coordination mechanisms at national and territorial levels. This situation can be explained by many factors:

- Legislative and regulatory texts lack precision, particularly in areas relating to the powers of local and regional authorities.
- There are inadequate financial resources dedicated to local and regional authorities that are heavily subordinate to the State authority.
- The human resources system lacks appeal at territorial level.
- Participatory democracy and citizen participation mechanisms are ineffective.
- The lack of a unified territorial information system that is accessible to all the stakeholders.
- The inexistence, at the territorial level, of an independent follow-up and monitoring mechanism.
- Based on the above findings, the CESE hereby recommends speeding up Morocco's ongoing process of advanced regionalization, by putting in place a series of operational measures that could be structured along the following lines:
- The priority area is to clearly define the powers of local and regional authorities. Emphasis should be placed on:

