

# **Higher Education Finance and Cost-Sharing in Morocco**

## **I. A Brief Description of the Higher Education System in Morocco**

Higher education in Morocco is mainly public. The private higher education sector absorbs less than 5 percent of total student enrollment and is comprised of one non-profit university and about 116 small institutions (as of 2006) concentrated mainly in big cities such as Casablanca and Rabat.

Public higher education is constituted of two subsystems: the university system, and the non-university one. The university system is comprised of 14 universities (Sciences institutes, Human sciences and Arts institutes, Economics and Law institutes, Original institutes related to religion, Institutes of Technology, Trade and Management institutes, Medicine and dental institutes, Grandes écoles, and translation institute, Science of education institute) under the supervision of the Department of Higher Education. The non-university system, which enrolls approximately 15 percent of all students, is under the direct control of ministerial departments that provide specialized training for high level personnel in science and technology, law, economics, administration, social sciences and teachers training. The non-university system includes vocational, educational and training institutions, and engineering schools (Etablissements de Formation des cadres).

All Baccalauréat holders (i.e. secondary school graduates) are eligible to enter universities. No applications are required, but students may not necessarily be enrolled in their chosen field of study due to space limitations and entrance examinations in some faculties. University institutions are divided into (1) limited access institutions, which offer courses in medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, trade and management, technology, translation and interpreting, and engineering) and (2) free access institutions, which offer courses in law, economics, humanities and social sciences. In 2004-05, 91 percent of university students were in open access institutions and 9 percent were in limited access institutions (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Formation des Cadres et de la Recherche scientifique 2005). Foreign students from Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Algeria and other countries in Africa must hold a Baccalauréat or an equivalent qualification from their own countries and demonstrate a thorough knowledge of French.

A broad description of the reform at the higher education level is outlined in the National Charter for Education and Formation; however, Law 01-00 on the Organization of Tertiary Education passed in 2000 constitutes a more detailed description of the reform effort. The Law 01-00 is an ambitious effort to transform the sector pedagogically, financially and organizationally (at the governance level). At the pedagogical level, the principle change that was introduced in 2003 as a global reform is the establishment of a modularized degree system. In terms of financial reforms, there is a strategy to promote alternative sources of finance. The Law 01-00 clarifies and highly recognizes the utility of private sector to be accredited and join the public sector in promoting quality of higher education. As far as the sector of reorganization and governance are concerned, the charter identifies two areas: First, universities will gain more autonomy and will thus have greater discretion in terms of budgets, administration and pedagogy. Second,

strategic plans of coordination, regulation and evaluation between the Ministry and universities are being substantially promoted.

Reform of the higher education sector began in the late 1990s and its principles were adopted by all universities in 2003-04. The reform aimed to modernize Moroccan higher education at the institutional and the national levels via pedagogical reform and improvements in higher education governance. The higher education pedagogical system was moved from the continental (European) system to a modularized degree system that offers three main cycles: the undergraduate cycle leading to a Licence in 3 years; the Master's cycle leading to a degree in two years; and a Doctoral cycle leading to a doctorate in three to five years. University curricula were enhanced based on directives of the new reform. In terms of governance, central government control was replaced with new management procedures based on the autonomy of the universities. The relationship between Department of Higher Education and universities, developed since 2003, is based on mutual responsibilities and joint planning initiatives.

**Table 1 – Higher Education System in Morocco**

Institution	undergraduate Cycle (3 years)		Graduate Cycles	
	2 years	1 year	2 years	3 years
University	Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales (DEUG).	Licence d'Etudes Fondamentales (LF).	Master	Doctorate
	Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Professionnelles (DEUP).	Licence Professionnelle (LP).	Master Spécialisé	Doctorate
	Medecine Doctorate (in 7 years)			
	Diplôme Universitaire Technique (DUT)	Diplôme Universitaire Technique Spécialisé		
Grandes écoles	Preparatory program in Engineering	Diplome <sup>1</sup> d'Ingenieur d'Etat		

### **Finance**

Public higher education is free. Universities are open to all students who graduate from high schools regardless of social class. Since 1957 with the creation of the first modern university, Morocco has had a student allowance plan in place that allows students to attend universities with minimal private cost. These allowances were created to encourage attendance in higher education following the end of French colonization in 1956. Needy students who are not able to live at home while attending university receive allowances of approximately \$450/year (computed using official 2006 exchange rate of \$1= 8.77 Dirham) to help cover living expenses, transportation, and school supplies<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Diplôme d'Ingenieurs d'etat after five years; Diplôme in business after five years and a Diplôme d'architecte after five years.

<sup>2</sup> Needy students who live at home while studying are generally awarded half that amount.

Most of the students who receive the full student allowance also receive highly subsidized food and lodging in the university housing system. Although the allowances cover many of the costs of attending university, the remaining costs remain prohibitive for many students since the average head of household salary in Morocco is \$200 USD/month for a family of six.

Until 1997, almost all students who registered in higher education received allowances. Since then, its award is based on family income, family assets, student gender (to favor women), distance that the student must travel to university and other criteria that are not always clear. Selection criteria tend to be regional. As a consequence of these changes, the number of supported scholars as a percentage of total students has fallen from approximately 80 percent in the late 1980s to 37.8 percent in 2005. Student allowances as a percentage of the operating budget is also falling dramatically. It has decreased from 40 percent during the 1980s to 12 percent in 2005. The reduction in financial aid has increased the private cost of higher education and made covering higher education expenses more of a student responsibility. This shift has led to an increase in "cost-sharing" in the Moroccan Higher Education system.

His Majesty King Mohamed VI in the fall of 2000 stated that tuition fees for higher income families would be implemented following the then recently proposed higher educational quality reforms and additional reforms in the system of grants and bourse that would recognize both financial need and merit in order to maintain access. Explorations of loan schemes were begun in 2006, but as of early 2008 no scheme had been implemented or made public.

**Table 2: Categories of Students Entitled to Financial Assistance, 2003-04**

Full allowance with food and lodging subsidy	57,700 full allowance recipients (56 percent of total recipients)
Full allowance with food subsidy only	
Full allowance with no food or lodging subsidy	
Half allowance with food and lodging subsidy	45,335 half allowance recipients (44 percent of total recipients)
Half allowance with food subsidy only	
Half allowance with no food or lodging subsidy	

**Note:** A total of 34,116 students are accommodated in the university residence halls.

**Sources:** Département de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Formation des Cadres et de la Recherche scientifique, Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Formation des Cadres et de la Recherche scientifique (2005) *Information pour l'appréciation de l'ampleur de la demande potentielle en crédits d'études*. p. 31.

### ***Higher Education Market***

Currently, the state university system in Morocco receives around of 80 percent of students, but fails to offer job opportunities to its graduates. Retention at these universities has gradually decreased with only 40 percent completing a degree. However, the new reform aims to enhance university quality and to create a favorable environment for a strong relationship between the business sector and universities. To this end,

universities are currently offering professional training in most of their undergraduate as well as graduate programs.

Changes in the economic and educational systems have opened the market for private universities in Morocco. The inability of the current system to fill social and economic needs coupled with growing unemployment rates among university graduates has increased the importance of this new market. Previously, the development of private schools of higher education was limited by the rather poor reputation of these schools. Despite this reputation, large numbers of students (40,000 to 50,000) study abroad at private universities and recently there has been growing favor among Baccalauréat holders for the creation of private universities.

By 2010 the current number of Baccalauréat holders will triple from the current 90,000 to 208,000, thereby increasing pressure on the higher education system. There is growing interest in establishing a private university system among the higher social classes in Morocco.

## II. Estimates of higher education expenses in Morocco

### Kingdom of Morocco

### Higher Education Expenses Borne by Parents and Students

### First Degree, 2006-07

National currency (Dirhams) converted to \$US by 2006 purchasing Power parity estimate \$1 = 3.33Dh

		<i>Public Sector</i>		<i>Private Sector</i>
		<i>Low Public</i>	<i>High Public</i>	<i>High Private</i>
	Special “One-Time” or “Up-Front” Fees	50 Dh \$15	50 Dh \$15	200Dh \$60
<i>Instructional Expenses</i>	Tuition	none	none	96,000Dh \$28,828
	Other Fees	none	none	none
	Books & Other Educational Expenses	1000 Dh \$300	1000Dh \$300	3000 Dh \$900
	Subtotal Costs of Instruction	Dh1050 \$315	Dh1050 \$315	Dh99,200 \$29,790
<i>Student Living Expenses</i>	Lodging	0Dh \$0	400Dh \$120	Included in tuition fee
	Food	1,000Dh \$300	4000 Dh \$1200	
	Transportation	2000Dh \$600	1000Dh \$300	6,000 Dh \$1,800
	Other Personal Expenses	1,500 Dh \$450	2,400Dh \$720	6,000 Dh \$1,800
	Subtotal Cost of student living	Dh4,500 \$1,350	Dh7,800 \$2,340	Dh12,000 \$3,600
	<b>Total</b>	Dh5,550 \$1,666	Dh8,850 \$2,658	Dh111,200 \$33,393

*Low Public*: living at home.

*High public*: living in subsidized university housing.

*High Private*: high private tuition, living in shared apartment.

Updated by Dr. Redouane ASSAD (October 2007)

**References:**

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**Websites:**

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