



Tunisia and FAO

Supporting agriculture as a driver of sustainable and inclusive development

The partnership between FAO and Tunisia began in 1955 when Tunisia joined FAO, and it was strengthened with the establishment of the country office in 1986, followed by the creation of the Tunis-based Subregional Office for North Africa in 1993. FAO has implemented several projects and programmes in a variety of agriculture-related areas, with cooperation involving institutional support and capacity building for government partners, professional organizations and civil society, as well as a significant transfer of FAO expertise at the field level.

Promoting forest micro-enterprises

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) offer significant potential for increasing incomes among forest communities who are often the poorest and most vulnerable of Tunisia's population groups. Responding to a request from the national forestry administration (DGF), FAO has supported the promotion of NTFPs and the creation of forest micro-enterprises as a means to improving local incomes while also safeguarding the forest resources. Achievements include:

- Increased awareness and understanding of NTFPs, following a series of studies on the forest household living conditions and NTFP value chains and marketing opportunities.
- An analysis of the Forest Code in relation to local communities' right of access to NTFPs, aimed at increasing public involvement in forest management and conservation.
- For the first time in Tunisia, practical application of the "Market Analysis and Development" approach, to help local people develop income-generating activities while conserving forest resources.

Matching FAO's expertise to Tunisia's development priorities

FAO assistance in Tunisia is shaped by the 2013-2015 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which identifies three priority areas:

- Providing support for improved performance of the agricultural sector, through a better organization of the sector, integrating small producers and promoting the region's potential in general
- Sustainable management of natural resources, through the introduction of good agricultural practices, the protection of genetic resources for food and agriculture, and climate change adaptation
- Strengthening the political and institutional framework in support of the agriculture sector and rural population, helping the country to elaborate policies and strategies, improve coordination of agricultural statistics; and strengthen institutional capacity, including international integration

The CPF is fully aligned with the UN Development Assistance Framework for Tunisia (2015-2019), which contains the following three pillars:

- Democratic governance
- An inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic model
- Social protection and equitable access to quality social services

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Agriculture-related employment opportunities for the young

FAO is helping to build agricultural employment opportunities for young Tunisians, a key priority for the Tunisian Government. The Organization has implemented three projects designed to increase job creation in the agriculture sector, specifically targeting the country's poor internal areas with high levels of unemployment. Based on previous experience, six priorities have been proposed as the basis of a national strategy for decent youth employment in rural areas:

- **Strengthening young people's competencies**, through improved access to training, particularly for women; and the implementation of training programmes and methods suited to young people's needs, to the employment market and to the realities of the regional economy.
- **Promoting business development, including cooperatives, for small and medium-sized agri-businesses**, by way of value chain development, sustainable intensification and revival of family farming, and adaptation of advisory and business financial services to the rural sector and youth.
- **Improving physical infrastructure and services as drivers of employment and economic diversification**: the creation of infrastructure (public works, water supply, secondary trades and forestry works) generates jobs and promotes diversification of income sources in rural areas.
- **Involving young people in local governance and social dialogue**: through the development of institutions and channels for public consultation so as to ensure representation of young men and women, at all decision-making levels concerning local rural development.
- **Improving social protection for vulnerable young population groups**, by creating an integrated and inclusive national social protection system that provides for alternative solutions for those unable to set up a business activity or to secure paid employment, i.e. the poorest and unqualified young people.
- **Strengthening regulations for rural and seasonal migration**, through increased information on the labour market, migration opportunities and the rights of young migrants and workers.

Major FAO field presence

The FAO office in Tunis hosts: i) the Subregional Office for North Africa (SNE), established in 1993 and covering Algeria, Libya, Mauritania and Morocco; (ii) FAO's Representation for Tunisia, established in 1986; and (iii) since 2007, the FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Disease Operations (ECTAD).

Strengthening cooperation in the Near East and North Africa

Tunisia is currently a focus country for two FAO Regional Initiatives:

- **Small-scale agriculture for inclusive development**
In Tunisia, this regional initiative is being implemented through a project supporting small-scale agricultural and rural development; strengthening capacities for monitoring the different types of and changes in farms; and a project on the mobility of youth, food security and rural poverty. A programme to strengthen professional organizations has also been implemented with the aim of achieving relevant national objectives, namely an increase in the number of agricultural cooperatives from 165 to 500 and a 20 percent participation rate (by farmers and others from the sector). Support has been provided for improving national capacities for estimating production costs. This last activity has been carried out in collaboration with agricultural unions, agricultural planning and statistics services and research institutions.
- **Combating water scarcity**
Under this critical regional initiative, in Tunisia an evaluation of food supply policies has been carried out, while other activities focusing on water governance, drought control and management and water productivity are currently under way.

"In the discussion on youth and inclusion, Tunisia has much to share with other countries."

José Graziano da Silva
FAO Director-General

