

MASHROU3I

Fostering Youth Employment through Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development in Tunisia

CONTEXT

The Tunisian revolution brought into focus the need for governance and employment creation. However, in the four years following the revolution, the economic and social situation has only marginally improved and general unemployment remains high, reaching over 30% among young university graduates.

Unemployment rates and the duration of unemployment are even higher in the South, Central and North West regions, especially among women. These regions remain highly dependent on agriculture, which provides mostly seasonal, low-skilled and low-paid employment, which is unattractive to highly-educated young people. Combating unemployment in these regions requires the development of new opportunities for youth through the creation and growth of enterprises.

STRATEGY

In 2013, UNIDO launched a new initiative in Tunisia that encourages youth employment through entrepreneurship and enterprise development in four vulnerable governorates: Kairouan, Kasserine, Le Kef and Sidi Bouzid. The project provides direct support to entrepreneurs and enterprises through technical assistance, trainings and business coaching and enhances the knowledge and delivery capacity of local business support institutions. At the end of 2015, with an additional funding from Italy, the project expanded to Southern Tunisia to create employment opportunities in Gafsa, Kebili, Medenine and Tataouine. The US\$ 3.8 million project is financed and supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Government of Italy, HP Inc. and UNIDO.

In the governorates of Kairouan, Kasserine, Kef and Sidi Bouzid the project has provided direct technical assistance to 70 small and medium-sized enterprises that demonstrate growth and employment potential, coached 36 start-ups and assisted 157 aspiring entrepreneurs in the preparation of bankable business plans. Through face-to-face trainings 1,380 entrepreneurs have learned how to apply the innovative IT tools and concepts of HP's Learning Initiative for Entrepreneurs (HP LIFE e-Learning)

to their own business projects. More than 50 educators and 2,000 students have been trained through HP LIFE e-Learning workshops and entrepreneurial thematic sessions in collaboration with the Higher Institutes of Technological Studies (ISETs), universities and business support institutions.

AT A GLANCE

Impact:

More jobs for young men and women are created in the private sector of the governorates of Gafsa, Kairouan, Kasserine, Kebili, Le Kef, Medenine, Sidi Bouzid and Tataouine

Sustainable Development Goals:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Donors:

US Agency for International Development (USAID), Government of Italy, HP Inc. and UNIDO

National Partners: Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mines, Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment, Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Budget: Total US\$ 3.8 million

Project duration: January 2013 – June 2017

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UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Thanks to additional funding from the Italian Ministry of Environment, the project is strengthening business support institutions and entrepreneurs in the field of environmental management.

During the first phase, the project has resulted in the creation of 1,079 jobs in Kairouan, Kasserine, Le Kef and Sidi Bouzid. An additional 500 jobs are in the process of being created in these four governorates. By expanding activities to Southern Tunisia, the second phase of the project aims to generate more than 300 jobs in Gafsa, Kebili, Medenine and Tataouine by 2017.

The project approach is in line with the strategy of the Government of Tunisia to promote private sector development through enterprise creation and growth in the regions of Tunisia where youth unemployment is particularly high.



RESULTS - PHASE 1

- **1,079 jobs** have been created in Kairouan, Kasserine, Le Kef and Sidi Bouzid : **137 self-employed** and **942 employed**.
- In the scope of the HP LIFE e-Learning programme **25 online entrepreneurship training courses in French and Arabic** were launched including an “energy efficiency” course for entrepreneurs that has been developed.
- **16 local trainers were certified on HP LIFE e-Learning**.
- **55 educators of ISETs and other universities** were trained to enrich their courses with **HP LIFE e-Learning**.
- More than **11,000 Tunisians** took HP LIFE online courses of which **1,380 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs** have participated in face-to-face HP LIFE e-Learning trainings.
- About **2,000 students and aspiring entrepreneurs** took part in HP LIFE e-Learning workshops and thematic sessions.
- **36 start-ups and 70 SMEs have been supported** and some of them continue to be supported with **technical assistance** and **business coaching**.
- A further **157 HP LIFE e-Learning beneficiaries** have received assistance by business coaches to help them convert their project ideas into bankable business plans.
- **IT equipment** have been provided to **local partners** to support HP LIFE e-Learning workshops.
- A **manual for guiding young entrepreneurs** in their enterprise creation journey has been developed in French and Arabic and has been distributed in the regions.
- **76 local trainers** have been trained on “Greening your Business – start a sustainable enterprise”.
- Given its innovative and regional dimension approach, the project was showcased at several **entrepreneurship conferences** and **events** in Tunisia.
- In Tunisia, the project has been branded **“Mashrou3i”** (“My project” in Arabic) and a website **www.mashrou3i.tn** as well as a project Facebook page have been developed **www.facebook.com/Mashrou3i.tn** (+12,000 likes) that provide detailed project information and regular updates .

