

AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



Potential olive and argan oil production in Morocco

Context

The olive tree represents the most important part of Moroccan tree crops. Olive oil entrepreneurs in Chefchaouen produced olive oil using a traditional and old method.

The Argan tree is known as the “Tree of Life” to the Berbers for its nutritive, cosmetic and medicinal properties. It is a unique and niche product of Morocco and it is grown and processed only in the South-West of the Country.

Strategy

In order to address this poor production processes, UNIDO assisted in:

- improving the technology through a mechanical olive oil production to enable women producers to harvest olive;
- providing capacity building for producing safe and good quality oil; and
- providing control methodologies for ensuring a better level of acidity, and therefore produce safe and good quality oil that is suitable for international markets.

Argan oil represents the main source of income for the women of south-western Morocco. Many of them have established cooperatives that process and bottle the Argan oil.

Impact / Outlook

- Three hundred twenty women and fifty four men trained
- Production increased ten times and productivity doubled
- The women started production-diversification and production of more value added products from olive oil (soap, creams, etc.)

- Supporting the establishment of a system of traceability for the products of olive oil.

With UNIDO’s technical assistance near forty of these cooperatives have created four different export consortia:

- development of a corporate image and implemented joint promotional tools (websites, brochures, etc.)
- active participation in national and international trade fairs
- international certification e.g. the organic certification
- establishment of network and links with international markets
- organization of trainings and capacity building and introduction of good manufacturing practices, management, marketing, etc.

