



TUNISIA:

Fostering youth employment through entrepreneurship and enterprise development

Context

The Tunisian revolution brought into focus the need for governance and employment creation. However, in the three years following the revolution, the economic and social situation has only marginally improved. General unemployment remains high, including among university graduates and especially women. Unemployment rates and the duration of unemployment are even higher in the south, central and north-west regions, especially among women.

Main approach

In 2013, UNIDO launched a new initiative to encourage youth employment through entrepreneurship and enterprise development in four vulnerable regions: Kairouan, Kasserine, Le Kef and Sidi Bouzid. The project aims at enhancing the knowledge and delivery capacity of local business support institutions and provides direct support to entrepreneurs and enterprises through technical assistance, training and business coaching.

The project will provide direct technical assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises that demonstrate growth and employment potential. It will also provide a business coaching programme for start-ups, and assist aspiring entrepreneurs in preparing their business plans. Entrepreneurs will learn how to apply the innovative IT tools and business concepts of HP's Learning Initiative for Entrepreneurs (HP LIFE) to their projects. Educators and students will be trained through HP LIFE e-Learning workshops that will be organized at the Higher Institute of Technological Studies (ISET) and in universities in the four regions.

The project is expected to strengthen business support institutions and entrepreneurs in the field of environmental management through the provision of a green business plan, an HP LIFE e-Learning energy efficiency course and the Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technology (TEST) methodology. Ultimately, the project aims to generate at least 1,600 direct and indirect jobs.

The project is in line with the strategy of the Government of Tunisia to promote private sector development through

enterprise creation and growth in regions where youth unemployment is particularly high.

Interim results

- 25 online entrepreneurship training courses on HP LIFE e-Learning programme launched and conducted in French and Arabic
- Local support institutions strengthened with IT equipments
- 44 start-ups and 86 high growth SMEs are being supported with technical assistance
- More than 740 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs and 500 students received HP LIFE e-Learning training
- More than 7,000 Tunisians accessed the HP LIFE e-Learning online courses
- Coaching helped young entrepreneurs convert project ideas into business plans
- Training conducted on "Greening your business"
- Manual for young entrepreneurs developed
- Digital Entrepreneurship Platform www.dep-youth.org has active involvement and participation of 8,500 young people
- The project has been branded "Mashrouzi" ("My project" in Arabic) and a website as well as a project facebook page are up and running providing information and regular updates

At a glance

Donors: US Agency for International Development (USAID), Government of Italy, Hewlett Packard (HP)

National partners: Ministère de l'Industrie, de l'Énergie et des Mines, Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Formation, Secrétariat d'État pour le Développement et de la Coopération Internationale, Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche scientifique

Budget: USD 2,930,565

Project duration: January 2013 – June 2015

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