



PROMOTING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN IN INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE FOOD SYSTEMS IN ARID AREAS

THE ISSUE

The typical profile of someone involved in an inland fisheries and aquaculture business in North Africa is of an older, conservative male, and this has led to stagnation of the sector. There are significant opportunities for young people and for women, as well as fresh, entrepreneurial approaches. However, they are often not immediately apparent and will not develop unless they are actively promoted through innovative actions.



Young women following an FAO-GFCM¹ hands-on aquaculture training in arid lands in the south of Tunisia.

THE ACTIONS

This programme aims to:

- 1** Support the establishment of public-private partnerships and capacity-building programmes to create business opportunities for women and youth.
- 2** Promote and develop electronic marketing businesses approaches for women and youth group-based organizations to facilitate marketing and trade of freshwater species.

Banks and insurance companies will be encouraged to adapt their finance products to suit the needs of young entrepreneurs and women working in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

1. Support entrepreneurship

The programme will identify and build the capacity of local organizations [government, local Non-governmental organizations (NGO), universities] to support entrepreneurship and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). It will create business competitions in the fields of freshwater aquaculture and fisheries for young entrepreneurs, particularly for women, who will be provided with capacity-building and technical support for their businesses. The programme

will promote the exchange of experiences across sectors and between countries in the development of businesses based on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. As youth and women often find it difficult to access land, this might include offering public land or resources for development by groups of youth or women with a view to building their own businesses at a later date. Businesses might include integrated agri-aquaculture, intensive aquaculture,

¹ General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) - Program on empowering women towards sustainable aquaculture development.

aquaponics, fish processing, pescatourism or tourism-based activities linked to scenic water-bodies, including restaurants and camping grounds. Banks and insurance companies will be encouraged to adapt their finance products to suit the needs of young entrepreneurs and women working in the fisheries and aquaculture sector,

for example by providing loan grace periods of the appropriate length for their businesses. The programme will support the development of group-based organizations through which the youth and women can advocate for their specific needs from local government and other important stakeholders.

2. Promote electronic marketing (E-marketing)

The programme will help individual producers and producer organizations to implement e-marketing approaches, particularly through the employment of youth and women. Training and support will be provided to youth and women by already established e-marketing businesses, including through the development of new sales platforms or integration into existing platforms. This is likely to involve additional investment in computer equipment, mobile phone applications, web-access, website development and promotion through social media, as well as distribution services in areas where these are lacking.



Fish harvesting operation in an earthen pond in the District of Ouargla, Algeria.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More businesses opportunities for youth and women will be created, based on freshwater aquaculture and inland fisheries in the target countries, generating employment and income for these target groups. The support provided

by the programme will increase the chance of success for the start-up businesses. E-marketing approaches will help to open new market opportunities for freshwater fish products as well as improving their overall market image.



11 000 jobs

**Total direct employment
increase from freshwater
fish production**



500-1 000 new jobs

**In hatcheries
and feed mills**



2 000+ jobs

**For youth and women in
processing and distribution**

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The programme will be implemented in Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia, although the specific activities and focus will vary depending on the available opportunities. It will focus on organizations that support youth and women's development including Ministries of Youth, Ministry of Employment, Ministry/Department of Fisheries, universities and colleges and NGOs. It will be implemented by either government agencies (Ministry of Youth) or by a youth and women-focused development NGO, in collaboration with funding agencies and other entrepreneurship programmes. The programme aims to build a culture of successful, profitable businesses that can operate without a need for long-term subsidies.

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WHY INVEST?

The programme will focus on creating job opportunities for youth and women to build successful businesses based on the fisheries and aquaculture sector. This will create employment, particularly in isolated rural areas where there are few opportunities and limited access to high quality animal proteins. The creation of employment will reduce migration towards coastal cities and abroad.



Young women working in a fish processing plant in Tunisia.

The business programme is estimated at USD 1.5 million.



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