

Editorial – 2016, consolidation and development of SFOAP programme in North Africa

The main phase of the support to farmers' organizations in Africa programme (SFOAP) starts its fourth year of implementation. In order to evolve into more stable, performing and accountable organizations, and to effectively represent their members and advise them on farming enterprises, the farmers organizations that are partners of the programme in North Africa will, in 2016, focus more on strengthening their participation in value chains and improve the service to their members in this end.

Fert team also wishes you all the best in your enterprises for 2016!

INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING OF FARMERS ORGANIZATIONS

MOROCCO AND ALGERIA – Exchanges between Algerian and Moroccan beekeepers

In December 2015, seven Algerian beekeepers (Beekeeping development association in Mitidja Blida (ADAMB), Professional beekeepers national association (ANAP) and Algerian cooperative in specialized beekeeping services (CASSA)) visited Morocco to understand the organization that their Moroccan counterparts settled.

They met with the Moroccan interprofessional federation of beekeeping (FIMAP) and, at locally, the regional branch of FIMAP in El Hoceima, the Beekeepers union of Taza and the group of economic interest (GIE) of Sidi Slimane.



The discussions highlighted the diversity of functions that farmers must support themselves, through their organizations.

Moreover, Algerian beekeepers remember the central role to be played by farmers associations, cooperatives or GIE in terms of:

- Supporting the improvement of products quality
- Pooling in productive investments
- Adding value to products and developing market
- Information and professional representation

Furthermore, farmers' support through these several functions cannot be conducted without clear and appropriate regulations, built in favor of production and marketing performance improvement.



Meanwhile, technical exchanges and recommendations from Algerian counterparts have been beneficial to Moroccan beekeepers too. Their considerations led to the agreement in principle to move ahead on the protection of the regional heritage that is the "Saharan bee" and to improve the value of the products of the hive, particularly through labelling. These options will be explored during the next exchange that will be organized in Algeria.

BUILDING ENTREPRENEURIAL CAPACITIES OF FARMERS ORGANIZATIONS AND SUPPORTING THEIR INTEGRATION INTO VALUE CHAINS

TUNISIA – Sheep wool producers and key stakeholders enhancing its value work together to development the sector

On 23 December 2015, several stakeholders of the sheep wool sector discussed in Beja the intermediate results of the value chain analysis, carried out by CIFAD office.

Based on a mapping and an initial diagnosis, breeders and UTAP representatives, the Livestock and pasture office (OEP), several government agriculture departments, in cooperation with the national handicrafts office (ONA) and the national carpet center, deepened the analysis of the value chain challenges. They also reflected on the priority actions to be implemented to address key bottlenecks of the value chain and to promote its development. The creation of a wool collection structure, an interprofessional group working on improving value in sheep products and a certification label of “North sheep wool” were among the main recommendations discussed that day.



The event also helped building bridges between the various segments of the value chain: the speeches of the national carpet center made it possible to address the aspects of value added and commercialization and reinforced farmers in the appreciation of their product.

AGENDA



- ⇒ **10 – 11 February**, SFOAP steering committee and knowledge management event (Italy, Rome)
- ⇒ **2 – 3 February**, Workshop on lessons learned from 2015 (Algeria)
- ⇒ **End of February**, Fert supporting mission in Egypt

This newsletter is produced by Fert Association (www.fert.fr) and its national facilitator partners.

SFOAP is financed by



EGYPT – Good agricultural practices to improve herbs production, processing and export

On 21 November 2015, twelve members of farmers associations and cooperatives from Fayum region visited, in Sharkeya, the organic herbs drying factory “Lotus” managed by Sekem society and the Ebda association (Egyptian Bio Dynamic Association).

Sekem society cultivates its own biodynamic farms, but also collects products in 150 other farms throughout Egypt. Thanks to the creation of Ebda association and its actions to promote biodynamic agriculture, Sekem helped more than 700 Egyptian farmers to shift to organic farming.



In addition to strengthening their technical skills in terms of the implementation of good agriculture practices in herbs production and processing, farmers joining the visit became more aware of the quality standards required by international markets (quality for products, packaging etc.)

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