ACCESS TO LAND AND CREDIT IN TUNISIA

IDLO PROGRESS REPORT

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Tunisia

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The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) is pleased to submit this Progress Report to the Government of the Netherlands as a courtesy accompaniment to required IATI reporting in accordance with the Specific Arrangement for the Project "Access to Land and Credit in Tunisia" as signed by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tunisia on behalf of the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and IDLO on 24 November 2023.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFA	Agricultural Land Agency *(Agence foncière agricole)*
ALC	Access to Land and Credit
CA	Cooperation Agreement
CRDA	Regional Agricultural Development Commission *(Commission régionale de développement agricole)*
CTAMA	Tunisian Agricultural Mutual Insurance Fund *(Caisse tunisienne d'assurances mutuelles agricoles)*
DGFIOP	Directorate General for Investment Financing and Professional Organizations *(Direction générale du financement des investissements et des organismes professionnels)*
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIDAC	Agricultural Damages Compensation Fund *(Fonds d'indemnisation des dommages agricoles liés aux calamités naturelles)*
GDA	Agricultural Development Groups *(Groupements de développement agricole)*
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
Kadaster	Kadaster International
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources, and Fisheries *(Ministère de l'agriculture, des ressources hydrauliques et de la pêche)*
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSPLA	Ministry of State Property and Land Affairs
OPA	Professional Agricultural Organization *(Organisation professionnelle agricole)*
PADEO	Programmatic Approach for Sustainable Economic Development
PEAD	*Projet économie agricole durable*
PONAT	Participatory Organizational Needs Assessment Tool
Q	Quarter
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
SMSA	Mutual Society of Agricultural Services *(Société mutuelle de services agricoles)*
ToC	Theory of Change
ToRs	Terms of Reference
ULAP	Local Union of Agriculture and Fisheries *(Union locale de l'agriculture et de la pêche)*

URAP	Regional Union of Agriculture and Fisheries *(Union régionale de l'agriculture et de la pêche)*
UTAP	Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries *(Union tunisienne de l'agriculture et de la pêche)*
VAT	Value-Added Tax
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Access to Land and Credit in Tunisia" (ALC) project, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and its Embassy in Tunisia (the 'Embassy'), aims to create sustainable, innovative, and high value-added job opportunities in the Tunisian agrifood sector. The project focuses on improving access to land, production factors, proof of ownership, and enhancing business and credit opportunities for landholders and food producers.

The project is implemented by IDLO in close partnership with the Tunisian Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries (*Ministère de l'agriculture, des ressources hydrauliques et de la pêche* - MoA), the Agricultural Land Agency (*Agence foncière agricole* - AFA), and the Directorate General for Investment Financing and Professional Organizations (*Direction générale du financement des investissements et des organismes professionnels* - DGFIOP). Additionally, IDLO has entered into a Cooperation Agreement (CA) with Kadaster International (Kadaster), a Dutch organization that provides technical and advisory support to strengthen institutional capacity for land governance. IDLO is also in the process of finalizing a sub-grant agreement with the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Union tunisienne de l'agriculture et de la pêche* - UTAP), which will serve as an implementing partner for this project.

This report presents an overview of IDLO's achievements from November 2023 to December 2024. During this period, the project entered its inception phase. Originally planned to last six (6) months, this phase ultimately extended to a full year, running from April 2024 and expected to conclude in May 2025. This extension was due to delays caused by seasonal breaks, ministerial reshuffles in August 2024, and presidential elections in October 2024. These delays impacted the project timeline, delaying the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the MoA and postponing experts' interviews with governmental entities. Despite these setbacks, the project progressed steadily, with IDLO engaging with relevant stakeholders. Regular meetings with governmental entities confirmed the project's relevance in addressing challenges related to land consolidation, access to credit, and agricultural entrepreneurship, particularly for women and youth.

During this phase, IDLO also organized the official project launch event on 15 July 2024 and advanced towards its two (2) Intermediate Outcomes, as described below and in detail in Section V.

Under Intermediate Outcome 1 – *Improved access to land, production factors, and proof of ownership for landholders and food producers in Tunisia* – IDLO achieved the following results:

- Initiated the process of establishing a collaboration framework with UTAP to support awareness-raising activities on land consolidation, ensuring that landholders and food producers understand the process and its benefits. The sub-grant agreement is expected to be signed by both parties in Quarter (Q) 2 of 2025.
- Launched an assessment of land disputes and mediation mechanisms, identifying key stakeholders and common challenges affecting land consolidation disputes in the country. The findings will directly inform the development of strategies that ensure fair mediation and strong farmer representation during land consolidation...
- Initiated a review of land registration processes, analyzing institutional bottlenecks and backlog issues in parcel certification. The findings highlighted procedural delays, co-ownership complexities, and limited public engagement.
- Initiated an assessment of AFA's institutional capacity, evaluating internal coordination mechanisms to support the development of tools for community participation and land conflict mediation.
- Launched a legal framework review to assess gaps in Tunisia's land consolidation laws, with findings that will inform the development of a legislative reform road map.

Under Intermediate Outcome 2 – *Improved business climate and credit opportunities for landholders and food producers in Tunisia* – IDLO achieved the following results:

- Initiated preparatory work for future training and assistance to agricultural Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SMEs), including mapping their financial and legal support needs.
- Launched an assessment of financial and legal tools for cooperatives, Mutual Societies of Agricultural Services (*Sociétés mutuelles de services agricoles* -SMSAs), and Agricultural Development Groups (*Groupements de développement agricole* - GDAs) to identify gaps in access to finance and legal protections. Field consultations engaged over 17 key stakeholders, including farmers, representatives from regional agricultural authorities, representatives from cooperatives, professional agricultural organizations, and the private sector. The findings will inform future training and targeted support.
- Initiated engagement with DGFIOP to strengthen its capacity to manage micro-grants for women and youth food producers, laying the groundwork for improving grant selection and monitoring processes.
- Initiated a review of the Agricultural Damages Compensation Fund (*Fonds d'indemnisation des dommages agricoles causés par les calamités naturelles* - FIDAC) to improve efficiency and enhance compensation processes for farmers affected by natural calamity. However, legislative changes in December 2024 transferred its management from the Tunisian Agricultural Mutual Insurance Fund (*Caisse tunisienne d'assurances mutuelles agricoles* - CTAMA) to government oversight, requiring adjustments to the planned activities.

Progress was also made under transversal Immediate Outcome 3 – *Increased inter-agency coordination to ensure land consolidation happens in synergy with rural development initiatives*. During the reporting period, IDLO:

- Brought together key institutional partners - including the MoA, AFA, DGFIOP, and other relevant ministries, along with UTAP and Kadaster - during the project's official launch event. This helped lay the foundation for inter-agency coordination and clarified institutional roles under this project. The event also enabled the establishment of a collaborative framework to guide project implementation and stakeholder engagement.
- Initiated a mapping of governmental rural development initiatives to identify synergies between land consolidation efforts and agrifood investment programmes.

Furthermore, during the reporting period, IDLO regularly participated in the quarterly learning sessions of the Programmatic Approach for Sustainable Economic Development's (PADEO), organized by the Embassy to enhance impact by reducing fragmentation, increasing (international) coordination, and better targeting local needs.

II. PROJECT GOAL

The ALC project's goal is to create sustainable, innovative and high value-added job opportunities in the Tunisian agrifood sector.

III. RESOURCES

The ALC project's total budget is EUR 3,500,000. During the reporting period, IDLO spent EUR 322,534.84.

IV. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

During the reporting period, key political and legislative developments in Tunisia impacted the project's implementation.

- In August 2024, President Kais Saied implemented a significant government reshuffle, appointing 19 new ministers and three (3) state secretaries.

- On 6 October 2024, Tunisia held presidential elections, re-electing President Saied with over 90 percent of the vote. While the electoral process was peaceful, the campaign period and subsequent institutional transitions caused operational delays for the project, particularly due to changes in key leadership positions. These shifts significantly delayed the finalization of the MoU between IDLO and the MoA, as administrative procedures temporarily slowed down. In December 2024, Tunisia adopted a new Finance Law (Law No. 48-2024),[1] introducing important fiscal reforms, including adjustments to corporate and individual tax rates, modifications to value-added tax (VAT) policies, and structural changes to the management of the FIDAC. Significantly, the legislation shifted responsibility for managing the fund from the CTAMA to joint oversight by the MoA and the Ministry of Finance. This adjustment directly impacted project activities related to strengthening climate hazard compensation mechanisms and necessitated revisions to the project's planned support activities.

To mitigate these challenges and improve coordination efforts, IDLO maintained continuous dialogue with the MoA and its affiliated entities, the AFA and DGFIOP. These regular meetings sustained project momentum and secured the MoA's endorsement, clarified expectations, and redefined collaboration priorities in response to institutional and legislative changes.

V. PROGRESS AGAINST PROGRAMME OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 1 - IMPROVED ACCESS TO LAND, PRODUCTION FACTORS, AND PROOF OF OWNERSHIP FOR LANDHOLDERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS IN TUNISIA

During the reporting period, significant progress was made in laying the foundation for improved access to land, production factors, and legal recognition of property rights for landholders and food producers in Tunisia.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1.1 - INCREASED WILLINGNESS BY LANDHOLDERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS TO PARTICIPATE IN AND SEIZE ADVANTAGES OF LAND CONSOLIDATION

Output 1.1.1 – Awareness of landholders and food producers raised, in areas slated for consolidation

Selection of IDLO's Implementing Partner for awareness-raising campaigns

During this reporting period, IDLO laid the groundwork for awareness-raising activities on land consolidation, which will be implemented in partnership with UTAP. As a national syndicate representing farmers and fishermen, UTAP has a strong local presence, with 220 local unions, 24 regional unions, and over 850 trade unions, making it a key partner for outreach and community engagement. With its existing collaboration with the AFA and experience in land consolidation initiatives, UTAP is well-positioned to support landholders in understanding and actively participating in the process. Its longstanding ties with financial institutions and government agencies, along with a dedicated gender department, will help ensure inclusive engagement, particularly for women and youth.

During the reporting period, IDLO's efforts focused on finalizing the sub-granting process to ensure UTAP has the necessary resources and framework to carry out full-scale awareness campaigns in the next reporting period. Once the sub-grant agreement is signed, IDLO and UTAP will work together to engage communities and deliver awareness-raising campaigns on land consolidation

[1] The new Finance Law (Law No. 48-2024) was published in Issue No. 149 of the Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia on 10 December 2024.

in targeted regions. These campaigns will provide landholders with essential information on the consolidation process, their role in decision-making, and access to financial opportunities.

Output 1.1.2 - Support provided with representation and mediation in areas undergoing land consolidation

Assessment of land disputes and mediation mechanisms

During the reporting period, IDLO initiated an assessment to examine the impact of preexisting and emerging land disputes on land consolidation. This initiative aims to identify key obstacles faced by landholders and analyse how different land tenure systems influence disputes, ensuring that IDLO and its partners can provide targeted support for representation and mediation. Between July and September 2024, IDLO developed the assessment methodology and conducted a desk review. Key findings from the initial desk review included: (i) variability in dispute resolution based on land tenure (collectively owned vs privately owned land); (ii) the role of land tenure systems in shaping dispute resolution mechanisms; and (iii) the main drivers of challenges and delays in resolving disputes. The desk review also identified key stakeholders involved in dispute resolution during land consolidation, including: (i) administrative courts; (ii) AFA's regional commissions; (iii) Ministry of Justice (MoJ): (iv) Ministry of State Property and Land Affairs (MSPLA); and (v) governorate authorities. Field visits to four (4) governorates (Mednine, Tozeur, Nabeul, and Bizerte) are scheduled in Q1 2025 to conduct stakeholder consultations and community engagement. It is expected that the assessment will be finalized in Q2 2025. Its findings will inform awareness-raising campaigns, mediation strategies, and community participation mechanisms in targeted areas.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1.2 - INCREASED PROPORTION OF LANDHOLDERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS WHOSE PROPERTY RIGHTS ARE PROPERLY REGISTERED AND DOCUMENTED

Output 1.2.1 - Special mechanisms established to work away the backlog of unregistered parcels in consolidated areas

Review of land registration processes

During the reporting period, IDLO initiated an assessment to examine the challenges affecting the registration of consolidated parcels. The assessment aims to provide a better understanding of institutional structures, their interaction with farmers, and the overall functioning of the land consolidation system, in view of supporting more effective representation and mediation mechanisms. A comprehensive desk review was conducted to map out the land consolidation process, clarify key terminology and concepts, and outline the multi-stage complexity of land consolidation.

The findings identified two (2) primary property types, each presenting distinct legal and procedural challenges (collectively owned land and privately owned land). The land consolidation process was divided into three (3) critical phases: (i) pre-land consolidation phase; (ii) the land consolidation phase; and (iii) the judicial phase. Each phase involves a distinct set of stakeholders, including real estate courts, agricultural land agencies, and the MSPLA.

Following the desk review, data collection tools were developed, and field visits were organized in collaboration with UTAP. During these visits, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with 12 farmers in Sfax (F: 2; M: 10), 11 in Bizerte (F: 4; M: 7), and 20 in Kasserine (all male). These FGDs, held between October and November 2024, brought together farmers who have faced challenges in the land consolidation process. Efforts were made to ensure gender balance, but engaging women farmers proved challenging due to social pressures and low female land ownership rates.

Key takeaways from these FGDs included the following:

- AFA's unilateral decision-making power in the early stages of proposing land consolidation intervention zones heightens the risk of disputes and conflicts during the implementation phase.
- The absence of a clear process for public engagement and awareness-raising has hindered and complicated the land consolidation and certification process.
- Co-ownership emerged as a significant source of disputes, due to challenges such as complex collective management and unclear regulations.

Data collection will continue after the conclusion of the MoU with the MoA, which will facilitate engagement with key governmental stakeholders, including AFA officials and real estate judges, to further analyse institutional challenges in land consolidation.

Output 1.2.2 – Backlogs of dossiers concerning immatriculation of consolidated parcels reduced

Activities under this output have not yet commenced. Implementation is expected to begin in Q3 2025.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1.3 – STRENGTHENED CAPACITY OF THE AFA TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN AND EFFECTIVENESS OF LAND CONSOLIDATION

Output 1.3.1 - Tools for community engagement and participation and land conflict mediation by the AFA, UTAP, and CSOs developed

In May 2024, IDLO signed a CA with Kadaster, the Netherlands' Cadaster, Land Registry and Mapping Agency, as a technical partner supporting AFA's institutional capacity development. Kadaster is expected to provide support under this Output by providing advisory and technical support for the development of tools for public participation and mediation in land conflicts.

Assessment of AFA's institutional capacity

Subsequently, following initial coordination meetings with Kadaster to define the scope, methodology, and alignment with project deliverables, IDLO initiated an organizational assessment of AFA to evaluate its capacity, internal processes, quality assurance, gender sensitivity, information systems, and operational tools. The assessment inception report was finalized in December 2024, outlining the methodology which integrates the 'Participatory Organizational Needs Assessment Tool' (PONAT) to assess AFA's organizational capacity. PONAT is a methodology designed to facilitate self-assessment within organizations across five (5) key areas: (i) governance; (ii) financial management; (iii) human resources; (iv) programme delivery; and (v) external relations.

A desk review, completed in December 2024, provided an overview of AFA's structure, financial resources, and strategic activities related to land consolidation. It also examined AFA's vision, mission, and operational constraints, while incorporating lessons from international experiences in the Netherlands, Spain, and South Korea. Work is currently ongoing to finalize data collection tools and define PONAT-specific assessment criteria. Once finalized, field missions will be conducted to gather further insights from AFA staff and other relevant stakeholders, ensuring that the tools developed align with institutional needs and international best practices. The findings will also support the development of effective tools for community engagement and land conflict mediation.

Output 1.3.2 - Development and implementation of a legislative reform road map for the AFA supported

Assessment of existing legislation governing land consolidation

During the reporting period, IDLO initiated an assessment of Tunisia's legal framework governing land consolidation. The assessment aims to identify obsolete, incomplete, or inconsistent provisions that hinder effective land consolidation processes, with particular focus on their impact on different stakeholders, especially women and youth.

As part of this assessment, a comprehensive desk review was conducted to analyse relevant laws, policies, and land tenure principles as well as to better understand administrative practices, institutional structures, and policy implementation mechanisms. The review also assessed the alignment of Tunisian legislation with international standards, particularly the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT).[2] This comparative analysis helps identify areas where reforms and improvements could strengthen the land consolidation process. Additionally, the review examined the extent to which the current legal framework protects the rights of all stakeholders, particularly women and youth, and assesses stakeholder participation and consultation in the land consolidation process.

The final assessment report will be completed in Q2 2025. The findings of this assessment will contribute to the development of a legislative reform road map that will guide AFA and relevant institutions in strengthening Tunisia's land consolidation legal framework.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 2 - IMPROVED BUSINESS CLIMATE AND CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LANDHOLDERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS IN TUNISIA

During the reporting period, efforts under Intermediate Outcome 2 focused on laying the groundwork for expanding access to financial and legal services, strengthening institutional support for financial inclusion, and identifying gaps in existing tools available to landholders and food producers.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2.1 - ENHANCED ECONOMIC AND LEGAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH LANDHOLDERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS

Output 2.1.1 – Awareness of landholders and food producers raised, in areas having undergone consolidation, about a wide array of financial and legal services and how to make use of them

Utilizing the same approach detailed under Output 1.1.1, IDLO will be conducting awareness-raising activities in partnership with UTAP. During the reporting period, IDLO focused on establishing the necessary partnership framework for effective outreach (for more details, refer to Output 1.1.1). IDLO and UTAP are set to launch outreach efforts in Q3 2025. Awareness-raising campaigns under this Output will target areas where land consolidation has already been completed, providing landholders and food producers with information on available financial and legal services.

[2] FAO, VGGT, 2012. Available at: https://www.fao.org/tenure/voluntary-guidelines/en/

Output 2.1.2 – Training and assistance provided to selected women- and youth-led food producing SMEs in areas having undergone consolidation about financial and legal services and how to make use of them

Mapping of agricultural SMEs' financial and legal support needs

During the reporting period, IDLO, in coordination with the MoA, conducted preparatory work to support training and guidance on financial and legal services for cooperatives, SMSAs, other SMEs, and GDAs in regions where land consolidation has taken place. The first step in this process involves mapping their specific needs. Between September and December 2024, IDLO and the MoA held a series of meetings to establish the selection criteria for the targeted cooperatives, SMSAs, other SMEs and GDA. While the MoU with the MoA remains under review, progress was made in defining the objectives and scope of the mapping exercise.

In October 2024, IDLO met with the Director of Professional Agricultural Organizations (*Organisations professionnelles agricoles* - OPA) under DGFIOP. As the entity responsible for promoting and supporting professional structures such as GDAs and SMSAs, OPA monitors and evaluates their activities and oversees their management to ensure compliance with legal regulations. OPA also collects data related to these organisms and encourages farmers and fishermen to organize within professional structures to enhance coordination and complementarity in their interventions.

As a result of the meeting, IDLO and OPA jointly developed Terms of Reference (ToRs) to guide the mapping exercise. This initiative will build on awareness-raising campaigns under Output 2.1.1 and facilitate access to financial tools. The mapping will inform training and assistance efforts for selected organizations, helping to strengthen their organizational and business models in alignment with the Ministry's priorities.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2.2 – INCREASED CAPACITY OF UTAP TO PROVIDE QUALITY ECONOMIC AND LEGAL SERVICES TO ITS MEMBERS AND TO FEED INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR NEEDS INTO NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUES

Output 2.2.1 – UTAP capacity to raise awareness, train, and provide assistance to its members on financial and legal services strengthened

Assessment of financial and legal tools for cooperatives, SMSAs, and GDAs

During the reporting period, IDLO initiated an assessment to identify gaps in the availability of financial and legal tools for cooperatives, SMSAs, other SMEs, and GDAs. The assessment aims to determine what resources are needed to improve access to financial and legal services for these organizations. Between September and November 2024, FGDs and interviews were conducted in collaboration with UTAP in key agricultural regions, including Tunis, Korba, Gabès, Kairouan, and Sidi Bouzid. These engagements involved farmers, representatives from regional agricultural authorities - including Regional Agricultural Development Commissions (*Commissions régionales de développement agricole* - CRDA), Regional Unions of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Unions regionales de l'agriculture et de la pêche* - URAP), Local Unions of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Unions locales de l'agriculture et de la pêche* ULAP), AFA's regional administrations – as well as representatives from cooperatives, professional agricultural organizations, SMSAs and GDAs. In Gabès and Kairouan, IDLO also met with the MoA regional administrations to discuss their regional development plans and progress.

Overview of Stakeholder Consultations

Date	Location	No of Participants
19 September 2024	Gabès	5
20 September 2024	Kairouan	3
17 October 2024	Sidi Bouzid	N/A[3]
01 November 2024	Tunis	2
13 November 2024	Korba	15
25 November 2024	Tunis	4

The findings of these meetings were summarized in a data collection and analysis report, which identified and analysed several tools, including contract farming, model statutes, guidelines for business plan development, financial reporting, and governance guidelines for cooperatives, SMSAs, other SMEs, and GDAs. Initial findings revealed a lack of accessible tools for farmers and food-producing cooperatives, SMSAs and GDAs, with existing tools - such as contract farming - often containing terms unfavorable to producers. The report also examines contract farming as a legal tool for empowering farmers (both individuals and structures) in their distribution contracts. While recognized under Tunisian law,[4] contract farming remains underutilized and often structured in ways that do not benefit producers.

The assessment will be finalized by the end of Q1 2025, and its findings will inform the development of targeted financial and legal empowerment tools specifically designed for cooperatives, SMSAs, SMEs, and GDAs.

Output 2.2.2 – UTAP App developed with information about financial and legal services for business development

Activities have not yet commenced. Implementation is expected to begin in Q4 2025.

Output 2.2.3 – UTAP plan to advocate for its members' access to finance developed and implemented

Activities have not yet commenced. Implementation is expected to begin in Q3 2025.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2.3 - INCREASED CAPACITY OF DGFIOP TO EFFECTIVELY SELECT, SUPPORT, AND FOLLOW MICROGRANTS TO WOMEN AND YOUTH FOR INCOME GENERATION AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Output 2.3.1 – DGFIOP capacity to ensure effectiveness of micro-grants for women and youth land holders and food producers strengthened

Engagement with DGFIOP to strengthen its capacity to manage micro-grants for women and youth food producers

Activities under this Output have not yet commenced and will begin following the signing of the MoU with the MoA. The first step will be to conduct an assessment of the existing procedures for

[3] IDLO attended a one-day session on cooperative networking and credit for SMSAs/OPAs in the Centre-West region, organized by the German Agency for International Cooperation (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* – GIZ) and the Ministry of Agriculture's "*Projet économie agricole durable* (PEAD). Through this session, IDLO gained valuable insights into current development initiatives.

[4] Law No. 2004-60, Article 6, Tunisia. Available at: https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/tun80900.pdf

selecting, supporting, and monitoring micro-grants. Between May and November 2024, IDLO organized a series of preparatory meetings with different units within DGFIOP to clarify the objectives and scope of the assessment. On 11 November 2024, a joint working session at the MoA took place, during which DGFIOP representatives presented their approach and identified specific needs for technical expertise. Follow-up working sessions will be organized to advance the implementation of the assessment.

Findings from this assessment will guide the development of practical guidelines and tools for DGFIOP staff to strengthen their management of micro-grants. These resources will help improve the administration of grants, enhance access to finance for women and youth food producers, and strengthen climate hazard compensation mechanisms.

Output 2.3.2 – DGFIOP capacity to ensure effectiveness of climate hazard compensation to affected land holders and food producers strengthened

Review of the FIDAC operations and processes

Under this Output, IDLO will assess the existing procedures related to the operations of FIDAC. On 18 October 2024, IDLO, together with representatives from DGFIOP and CTAMA, held a working session to discuss the current functioning of FIDAC. The discussions focused on enhancing operational effectiveness, streamlining decision-making, ensuring timely compensation for affected farmers, improving coordination with technical bodies, potential digitization efforts, and exploring avenues for additional financial support. The agreed next steps included compiling recommendations to refine FIDAC's procedures, sharing relevant documentation, and drafting ToRs to recruit experts who will conduct a review of FIDAC's operations and processes.

However, as mentioned above, in December 2024, Tunisia adopted a new Finance Law (Law No. 48-2024), which shifted management responsibility for FIDAC from CTAMA to the joint supervision of the MoA and the Ministry of Finance. IDLO is currently assessing with the MoA the impact of this change to eventually align project activities with the new management structure. IDLO will continue to coordinate closely with DGFIOP to define their new needs and adapt planned interventions accordingly.

IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 3.1 [TRANSVERSAL] – INCREASED INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION TO ENSURE LAND CONSOLIDATION HAPPENS IN SYNERGY WITH RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Output 3.1.1 [TRANSVERSAL] - Interagency coordination mechanism established to facilitate integrated planning and implementation of land consolidation and rural development projects

Project launch event

On 15 July 2024, IDLO organized the official launch event of the project, gathering 22 participants (F: 9; M: 13) from various government ministries and partner organizations, including representatives from the MoA (AFA, DGFIOP), MSPLA, Ministry of Family, Women, Children and the Elderly, and the MoJ. UTAP and Kadaster were also in attendance. Opening statements were delivered by Her Excellency Josephine Frantzen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Tunisia.

The launch aimed at: (i) presenting the project's vision, objectives, and planned activities; (ii) introducing the PADEO initiative and its linkages with the project; (iii) presenting key project partners; and (iv) discussing the composition, role, and next steps related to the project's Steering Committee. Discussions focused particularly on the respective roles and responsibilities of institutions involved in land consolidation and agricultural finance initiatives, with participants

underscoring the need for clear communication, joint planning, and effective inter-ministerial collaboration to ensure coherent implementation.

Mapping of governmental rural development initiatives

IDLO initiated a mapping of governmental stakeholders' development initiatives targeting the agrifood sector. The mapping aims to identify key governmental actors, clarify their mandates, and assess existing coordination mechanisms to determine strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improved collaboration. Between June and December 2024, IDLO conducted a comprehensive desk review of governmental institutions engaged in rural development and land consolidation. This review included an analysis of the national legal framework, comparative assessments, relevant studies, reports, case studies, outcomes from field visits, and other relevant primary and secondary data. The mapping specifically examines potential synergies across areas such as land and agriculture investments, agrifood business development, support for cooperatives, SMSAs, SMEs, and GDAs, access to finance and insurance, governance of water resources, soil conservation, and rural infrastructure improvements. The data collection and analysis report identified the governmental institutions and actors involved, categorizing them based on their level of participation, importance, or influence, and determining the best approach to further engage them in the project

Once the MoU with the MoA is finalized, IDLO will conduct a series of key informant interviews with governmental actors identified during the desk review to analyse their current relationships and coordination mechanisms. The final mapping report will be finalized in Q2 2025. Findings from this report will guide future project activities aimed at enhancing inter-agency coordination.

VI. PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATION

PADEO Initiative

The project falls under PADEO, a programmatic approach piloted by the Netherlands to increase impact by reducing fragmentation, increasing (international) coordination, and better targeting local needs. In Tunisia, PADEO focuses on creating youth employment, particularly in the agrifood sector, by engaging local stakeholders and applying a systematic, learning-focused approach to development. This approach focuses and builds on learning and adaptation, ensuring that both donors and implementing partners engage in a reciprocal process of reflection.

As part of this collaborative approach, IDLO actively participated in PADEO's quarterly learning sessions, which serve as a platform for exchanging experiences, aligning strategies, and fostering cross-sector coordination among PADEO implementing partners. During the reporting period, IDLO participated in three (3) sessions:

Date	Focus of the meeting
6 February 2024	PADEO Programme launch and implementing partners' introductions
15 May 2024	Challenges and action points
24 September 2024	Project synergies and action plans

These sessions provided valuable opportunities to exchange insights into challenges, refine project strategies, and align activities with the overarching PADEO framework. They also fostered greater coordination among implementing partners, ensuring that projects remain responsive to both local needs and programmatic objectives. Going forward, IDLO will continue to participate in these learning exchanges, integrating key takeaways into the project to enhance its impact and effectiveness.

UTAP

During the reporting period, IDLO and UTAP made progress in finalizing the sub-grant agreement, which is expected to be concluded by the beginning of Q2 2025. The framework for cooperation with UTAP will lead awareness-raising campaigns among landowners and food producers in the regions that are undergoing or have already undergone land consolidation. It will also facilitate community representation and mediation and provide training and support to selected food sector SMEs on accessing financial and legal services. Notably, UTAP provided steadfast support to IDLO through the coordination with its regional and local branches and facilitation of FGDs in six (6) regions. This collaboration enabled the efficient mobilization of farmers and productive field visits.

Kadaster

In May 2024, IDLO signed a CA with Kadaster International. Beginning in July 2024, Kadaster collaborated with IDLO by providing feedback and insights on the deliverables developed by the experts. In doing so, Kadaster significantly contributed to revising the desk review findings of two (2) project assessments on: (i) the impact of preexisting and emerging disputes on land consolidation; and (ii) the obstacles to swift registration of consolidated parcels.

Project Steering Committee

During the project launch event, IDLO initiated discussions with project stakeholders on the establishment of a Steering Committee. Upon confirmation of the key ministries' willingness to participate in the work of the Steering Committee, IDLO received a letter from the Tunisian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 5 May 2024, nominating focal points from the relevant ministries to participate in the Steering Committee.

The frequency of the Steering Committee meetings, along with its schedule, discussion topics, and other related matters, will be determined by IDLO and the relevant stakeholders during the meeting scheduled for Q3 2025.

IDLO Monitoring System

During the reporting period, IDLO developed a robust monitoring system to facilitate ongoing project monitoring, evaluation, and learning. By the end of the inception phase in May 2025, IDLO will be in a position to inform decisions regarding the readaptation of the project scope. As a result, the revised project documents - including a realigned budget, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan, and Theory of Change (ToC)- are expected to be finalized by the end of Q2 2025.

VII. CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

During the reporting period, IDLO made significant strides in laying the groundwork for improved access to land, enhanced business climate and credit opportunities for landholders and food producers, while also strengthening inter-agency coordination. This progress was achieved despite institutional transitions and administrative delays due to political and legislative developments in Tunisia. Key achievements included: (i) strengthened engagement with key institutional partners, including the MoA, AFA, and DGFIOP; (ii) establishment of collaboration frameworks with Kadaster and the prospective implementing partner UTAP; and (iii) initiation of critical assessments to inform legal, financial, and institutional improvements in land governance and rural development, along with key findings providing a foundation for targeted interventions.

During the year 2025, IDLO will focus on:

- Signing the sub-grant agreement with UTAP.
- Finalizing key assessments on land disputes, registration processes, and financial and legal tools, using the findings to adapt and refine project activities.

- Defining intervention regions in collaboration with AFA and UTAP, ensuring that activities align with assessment findings and regional priorities.
- Adapting planned activities related to FIDAC in response to the newly enacted Finance Law, ensuring alignment with the revised institutional framework.
- Launching awareness-raising campaigns in partnership with UTAP to improve landholders' understanding of land consolidation and available financial and legal services.
- Convening the inaugural meeting of the Project Steering Committee following the signing of the MoU with the MoA, formalizing engagement with key governmental entities, including DGFIOP, AFA, and representatives from the MoJ, MSPLA and MFFEP.

ACCESS TO LAND AND CREDIT IN TUNISIA

IATI PROGRAMME RESULTS

NOVEMBER 2023-DECEMBER 2024

Result 1: [TRANSVERSAL] Increased inter-agency coordination to ensure land consolidation happens in synergy with rural development initiatives	
Type	2 - Output
Aggregation status	No
Title	[TRANSVERSAL] Interagency coordination mechanism established to facilitate integrated planning and implementation of land consolidation and rural development projects
Indicator	Stakeholder mapping to identify MoA departments and activities that hold potential for generating synergies with land consolidation efforts is developed
Baseline	0
Period	November 2023 – December 2024
Target	1
Actual	1