

TUI Care Foundation and PUM Netherlands empower female argan oil producers in rural Morocco

- *TUI Care Foundation and PUM reach out to 15 women's argan oil cooperatives to empower them to successfully sell argan oil products to the tourism industry*
- *These women's argan oil cooperatives are offered technical assistance and training for their 600 members by renowned experts to increase the quality of products and the cooperatives' sales and marketing expertise*
- *The tourism economy will be integral to the growth of women's cooperatives by offering new business opportunities at hotels and resorts, and through excursions*

Berlin, 1 July 2019. *The TUI Care Foundation is announcing a new partnership with Dutch volunteer organisation PUM Netherlands Senior Experts for a "liquid gold initiative" which will offer technical assistance and new sales opportunities for women's cooperatives producing argan oil products in rural areas of Morocco. PUM is a volunteer organisation committed to the sustainable development of small and medium-sized enterprises in low and middle-income countries and emerging markets.*

Argan oil cooperatives in Morocco are traditionally set up and run by women. The partnership will offer support to 600 women from 15 women's cooperatives to benefit from capacity building for their argan oil products. International experts will assist them with the development, marketing, branding and launch of products and with creating new sales channels, particularly in the tourism economy, so that they can become more competitive, increase their brand recognition and build their market share. Ultimately, the aim is for small-scale producers to be able to enter higher value domestic and, if possible, international markets to boost their income.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the TUI Care Foundation explained: "Women play a major role in sustainable development not only in Morocco but also globally. Together with PUM, we believe we can help women in rural Morocco maximise their economic and social potential. This, in turn, will empower future generations and enrich the experience of international visitors who come to Morocco and are able to contribute to its future sustainable development."

In a male-dominated society, this newly created initiative aims to empower women economically and socially and help them create business relationships with tourism stakeholders to access new markets and diversify revenue streams. Therefore, regular capacity building workshops will aim to create products and services that appeal to international guests and the tourism industry. PUM's CEO, Dick Ernste said: "At PUM, we believe that female entrepreneurship is crucial for inclusive and sustainable economic development. As well as the economic benefits such as income and employment, female entrepreneurship also contributes to positive social values such as emancipation and equality. We are very happy to collaborate with the TUI Care Foundation."

As one of the rarest oils in the world, argan oil is produced from the kernels of the *Argania Spinosa*, also known as 'the tree of beauty'. Argan trees grow in southwest Morocco, in the area around Essaouira and Agadir, where the people have produced argan oil for generations. Although women in the rural areas of Souss-Massa and the Marrakesh-Safi region have been using the oil for culinary and cosmetic purposes for hundreds of years, there was little

awareness about argan oil outside Morocco until 20 years ago. More recently, demand for argan oil has been rising, particularly in Europe and North America where the oil has become popular due to its moisturizing and anti-ageing effects and high amounts of nutrients.

Led by an experienced project coordinator, the cooperatives will become more competitive by creating new value-added products, designing appealing brands as well as up-skilling in production processes, finance, and communication skills.

The project is part of the TUI CARES programme, which strives towards inclusive tourism development, economic empowerment of destinations and the protection of a destination's cultural and gastronomic heritage. Through the programme, the TUI Care Foundation aims to support 10,000 livelihoods by 2020.

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About TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects, which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving communities all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long lasting impact. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore 100% of the donations go to destination programmes with all administration costs of the foundation covered by TUI. TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world's leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

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About PUM Netherlands senior experts

PUM Netherlands senior experts is a volunteer organisation specialising in the sustainable development of the small and medium-enterprise sector in developing countries and emerging markets in nearly 40 countries across the world. Our experts offer practical knowledge to businesses and deliver a real contribution to growth, employment and improved living conditions. www.pum.nl

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