



Secrétariat général de  
l'Union du Maghreb Arabe



Commission économique  
pour l'Afrique



Banque Islamique de  
Développement

## COLLOQUIUM

# THE ROLE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MAGHREB ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1-2 March 2010, Marrakech (Morocco)

### Context and Justification

The North Africa Bureau of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (SRO/NA) is organising a Colloquium on the role of the women entrepreneurs in the economic development of the Maghreb region. The Colloquium, which is organised in collaboration with the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the principal Regional Economic Community in North Africa, will be held in Morocco (Marrakech) on 17 -18 February 2010.

The event is organised in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the AMU and SRO/NA and the implementation of the corresponding MYP. Mention should be made to the fact that this event will take place in the context of the celebration of the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Maghreb Arab Union.

Studies on women entrepreneurs in the Maghreb countries have shown that impressive progress has been made, but general and gender-specific challenges still impede their full contribution to Maghreb economic development. In fact, their share in cross - border trade and investments are still very low and lagging behind men and their needs and perspectives are seldom taken into account in the regional integration process led by the AMU. It is recognised also that the Maghreb economic area could offer opportunities for women entrepreneurs in terms of trade and investments. It is thus in this context that the SRO/NA and AMU have decided to organise a Colloquium with the main objective to strengthen the contribution of women entrepreneurs in the economic development of the Maghreb.

### Objectives

The Colloquium will address the following issues:

- What can be done to strengthen trade and investment linkages among Maghreb women entrepreneurs?
- What can be done to better integrate women entrepreneurs' needs and perspectives in the regional integration process?

### Expected results

- Women entrepreneurs' organisations strengthen their linkages
- Women entrepreneurs increase their share of cross-border trade and investments in the Maghreb area
- Regional integration institutions integrate women entrepreneurs' needs and perspectives
- Enhanced capacities of women entrepreneurs to better assess the business opportunities in the Maghreb area.

### Partners

## Methodology

The Event will include plenary sessions, working groups, and two training sessions: the first will address the linkages between regional integration, trade and gender and the second will look at the role played by knowledge management in business and institutional strengthening.

## Date and Place

1-2 March 2010, Marrakech (Morocco)

## Participants

The Colloquium is expected to gather around 100 persons. Will be invited to attend the colloquium representatives of: women entrepreneurs' organisations, women entrepreneurs with regional scope, private sector, financial institutions, trade institutions, young entrepreneurs (CJD), universities, United Nations system, bilateral and multilateral organisations...

## Language

Arabic and french

## Contacts

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