

# Addressing the MENA Climate Challenges A Market-Based Approach

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# Basic Principles



- Sustainability can either happen through profitability or continued external support.
- The GCF Strategic Plan 2024-2027 calls for boosting climate investments and programs by providing accessible risk-inclined financing and climate capacity-building, with focus including:
  - Smallholder farmers' adaptation through RE and climate-resilient practices and food system reconfiguration.
  - Easier access to adaptation funding.
  - Providing capital for innovative climate solutions, business models and technologies to local private sector early-stage ventures.
- Repeatability and scalability are essential for mass implementations of successful models.



# The Smart Desert Innovation



- Fully aligned with the GCF Strategic Plan.
- Focusing on WEFEnexus to design repeatable, climate-resilient interventions.
- Creating a profitable, private-sector led, social enterprise that re-invests profits to increase value.
- The intervention included:
  - Using harvested rainwater and other unconventional water resources for climate-smart agriculture.
  - Establishing hydroponic greenhouse farming clusters with up to 70% irrigation efficiency.
  - Women and youth empowerment through a balanced beneficiary selection criteria for farming the clusters.
  - Using solar PVto pump water and irrigate.
  - Crop selection based on market demand with focus on innovative high-value crops that require less resources (e.g., dragon fruit).
  - Capacity building for farmer beneficiaries.
  - Public-private partnerships to ensure local government support.
  - Continuous value through off-take contracts with beneficiaries.





# Case Study: The Sama AlSarhan Cluster



[Click image to access video](#)

# Repeatability and Scalability



- The Smart Desert model has been labelled by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) as a repeatable and scalable model for the Mediterranean basin.
- The Smart Desert Company (SDC) has been established as a social enterprise that re-invests generated profits to add more clusters and improve the value chain.
- The SDC established and operates a processing facility that sorts, packages, and processes beneficiaries' output to maximize their economic value. The facility is operated using solar PV and efficient recycled water resources.
- Several financing partners are interested in the model, with the Dutch Government already investing in doubling the AFD-funded part of the Sama Al-Sarhan cluster.



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



The Smart DESERT Company  
شركة الصحراء الذكية



Government of the Netherlands





# Thank you!

Questions??