

# PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM FOR BETTER ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS



© UNESCO World Heritage site in Kairouan

This exhibition showcases the Promoting Responsible Tourism for Better Economic, Social and Cultural Integration of Migrants in Jendouba and Kairouan (2019-2022) projects that were part of the Cities Alliance Global Programme on Cities and Migration Phase I, which focused on migration management in secondary cities in low-income countries and was supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).


Kairouan and Jendouba designed projects to test approaches from the tourism sector to increase their attractiveness as places to live, work and invest in. Both projects targeted newly arriving rural-to-urban migrants as well as residents who are dissatisfied with life in a secondary city in Tunisia's marginalised hinterlands and may be tempted to move to the more attractive coastal regions.

The exhibition invites you to explore some of the challenges and opportunities secondary cities of Tunisia's interior regions face and how the projects sought to address those and leverage the cities' potential for more inclusive development.

We would like to thank our national and international partners for the trustful and meaningful collaboration, and in particular our local partners for their continued commitment and engagement to work together to make their cities better for everyone.

**Cities Alliance**  
Cities Without Slums

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# BACKGROUND ON INTERNAL LABOUR MIGRATION **IN TUNISIA**



Housing of rural-to-urban migrants that settled in the outskirts of Jendouba. Accessibility and quality of services and infrastructure are typically much lower in these non-planned neighborhoods. Many of the residents continue to work in the agricultural sector outside of town.

© Peri-urban peripheries of Jendouba

Internal labour migration is a major phenomenon in Tunisia. It is directly linked to the socio-economic disparities between lagging regions of the interior and the dynamic coastal regions. The interior regions have high levels of unemployment and poverty (both at around 30%), with lower standards of living and limited access to basic services and quality infrastructure.

Many young labour migrants from secondary cities in Tunisia's interior – especially the highly skilled, are attracted to the large metropolitan areas in search of employment and opportunities for a better life. Meanwhile, secondary cities are receiving rural migrants for the same reasons. Local authorities are trying to find ways to integrate them economically, socially, and culturally, while at the same time retaining entrepreneurial residents who would otherwise migrate to the primary cities.

# PERSISTING **GENDER INEQUALITIES** HINDER REGIONS FROM REALISING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Social norms and institutional factors often prevent women from fully participating in economic, socio-cultural, and public life. Reducing socioeconomic disparities across regions is hardly possible without reducing gender inequalities.



© Public space and street life dominated by men



*A man can easily make the decision of leaving for opportunities elsewhere, he can even be encouraged by his family. The opposite is true for a woman, this decision does not belong to her.*

— Rim from Jendouba



*Seeking a job is important but I encourage young women to realise your dreams, express your passion and live the adventure of contributing to the development of your region and change your own living conditions side by side with men (...) Let's change the traditions and social norms in favour of the equality between men and women.*

— Masrouf from Kairouan



© Female entrepreneur in Kairouan

# A RICH CULTURAL, ARCHITECTURAL AND **NATURAL HERITAGE**



Kairouan and Jendouba have great potential for inclusive and sustainable development. Both cities and their surrounding areas are rich in cultural, artisanal and natural attractions that are largely untapped, and Kairouan is classified as a UNESCO world heritage site.

# UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE



*Being a female entrepreneur is a challenge in itself, being a start-up is a challenge on another level, and being an entrepreneur in a disadvantaged city make things even more complicated and requires perseverance and extra effort with regards to networking, mobility, market access, and support services (...) but I want the local craftspeople to commercialise their products and preserve the region's artisanal heritage.*

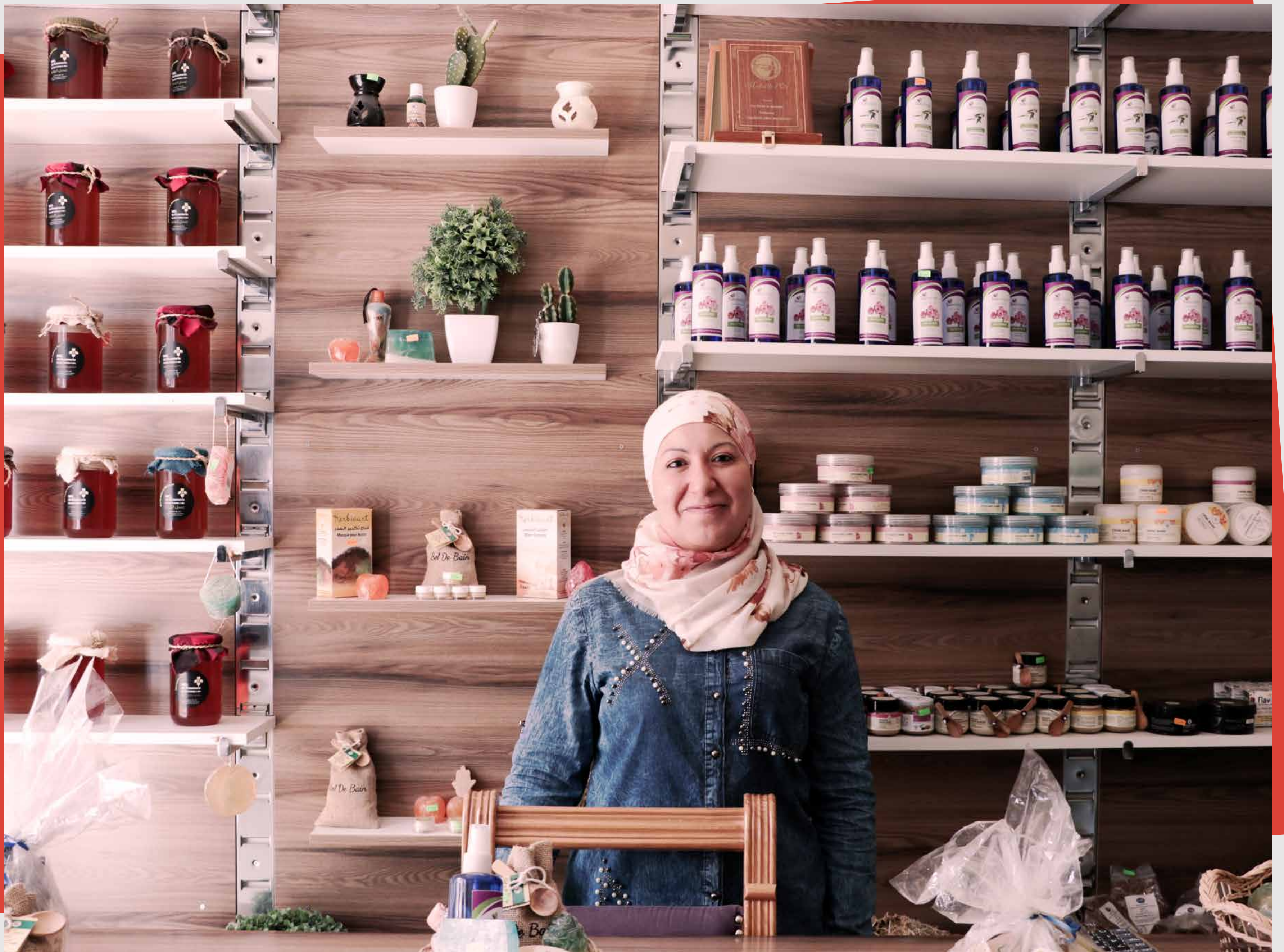
— Ibithel, founder of the e-commerce platform 'Machmoom'



*Being a women entrepreneur means independence, without someone imposing orders on me; it means cultivating the fruits of my work. I know it's not easy, but I will bring value to myself and my beautiful Tunisia.*

— Sonia, entrepreneur from Kairouan

This can-do culture, paired with a strong will and feelings of responsibility towards the region and the next generations, are the essence of an entrepreneurial mindset that is shared by this new generation of women entrepreneurs across the country's interior regions.



© Founder of Tunaroma in Jendouba

Amal Marzouki – founder of Jendouba-based organic cosmetics enterprise “Tunaroma”. For the ingredients of her cosmetic products she works with rural women who collect herbs like thyme and orange flowers for essential oils.

## A customisable, replicable approach piloted in two cities

Cities Alliance piloted a similar approach in two partner cities, Jendouba and Kairouan, so that they could compare experiences and foster learning, exchange, and cooperation. Although Jendouba and Kairouan face similar challenges, there are some differences in terms of composition of assets, potential, and stakeholders, and the project was adapted to the specific needs of each city. It is a solidly replicable and scalable approach that stays adaptive to the context and potential of different types of secondary cities.

## RESULTS

The projects were based on three areas of interventions that work together to integrate labour migrants into the city: developing tourism products to provide livelihood opportunities for young migrants; developing strategies to promote these products and raise the profile of Jendouba's and Kairouan's assets; and building capacity among the local authorities to improve their approaches to integrating and managing labour migrants. In the process, the interventions built strong multi-stakeholder partnerships and an evidence base to support inclusive local policies.

### Result 1: Responsible Tourism Products to Provide Livelihood Opportunities for Youth

Kairouan and Jendouba have great potential for inclusive and sustainable development. Both cities and their surrounding areas are rich in cultural, artisanal and natural attractions that are largely untapped, and Kairouan is classified as a UNESCO world heritage site. As a result, both designed projects to test approaches from the tourism sector to increase their attractiveness as places to live, work and invest.

The projects analysed the economic and social potential associated with responsible tourism in the cities and their surroundings, including how to integrate youth into the labour market and social life. The cities then used this information to develop tourism products, including supporting youth to develop proposals for their own tourism agencies and educational tours.

#### *Youth-run tourist agencies*

118 youth (65% of them women) submitted proposals. The project provided onsite support to selected proposals, guiding the youth through creating their own tourism agency and learning how to manage it independently as a social enterprise. Youth entrepreneurs established a virtual network to share questions and best practices, providing an example for others to follow. The first educational tour (eductour) of the cities' attractions reached a wide audience, with several thousand people following the trip online.

In parallel, the entrepreneurs featured in promotional videos of the region produced by Tunisia's best-known travel blogger and influencer. The videos sparked great interest on social media in the regions as travel destinations and in the entrepreneurs, who received numerous requests and enquiries from potential clients. Complementary to other promotional activities, tourism stakeholders in the region reported a significant increase in the number of weekend visitors in autumn and winter 2021.

### Result 2: Strategy and Products to Promote Cultural and Natural Heritage in Both Cities

The project analysed the economic and social potential associated with responsible tourism for both Jendouba and Kairouan and their surroundings, with a focus on how rural-urban migrants can be better integrated into the economic and social life of the cities. The analysis highlighted several opportunities for valorising the region's cultural, architectural, and patrimonial heritage, as well as its agricultural and artisanal goods.

#### *Tourism circuits*

The project identified four underexploited sites with high potential and mapped out eco-tourist circuits in close alignment with the Regional Office for Tourism in Kairouan (CRTK). Thanks to this collaboration, the Tunisian National Office for Tourism decided to fully develop the identified tourism circuits in the three communes of Ain Jeloula, Haffouz, and Oueslatia as part of a new programme worth TDN 20 million (ca. \$7.5 million) and expressed strong interest in cooperating with the project's young entrepreneurs. The central government also provided Oueslatia with \$107,000 to improve and construct roads and pathways to develop the circuit in its area.

#### *Artisanal markets*

Kairouan built a women-run artisanal market to strengthen the local economy and protect its craft heritage. Five artisanal wooden market stalls were constructed that provide 25 local artisanal entrepreneurs space to market their art and products. The project's implementation partner, the National Union of Tunisian Women, envisions scaling-up the market with more stalls and promoting it across Tunisia for different regional festivities to provide a regular source of income for the artisans and showcase Kairouanese heritage and crafts around the country. Jendouba plans to build a similar market.

### **Result 3: Local Authorities Develop Inclusive Approaches to Migration Governance and Management**

Local and regional authorities play a key role in successful project implementation and ensuring a sustained impact in the long run. Diagnostics helped Jendouba and Kairouan identify their existing capacities and needs for strengthening their approaches to migration governance and management, as well as for integrating migrants economically, socially and culturally.

Both cities established steering committees that generated strong interest among city stakeholders. Considering Tunisia's efforts to promote decentralisation, platforms such as local steering committees can serve as micro-laboratories for city authorities to experience their new role as facilitators of local development in coordination and agreement with the various city, regional, and state actors.

The cities also established multi-stakeholder city forums to ensure an inclusive migration governance regime that builds upon effective partnerships and learning.

I'm excited to develop my business plan and commercialise local organic artisanal food products.

— Khadija, a young graduate and trainee in the project activities



# CREATING LOCAL JOBS AND FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP **IN KAIROUAN**



CitiesAlliance supported creating better livelihood opportunities for young entrepreneurs through the development of tourism products and concomitant training and financial support for tourism-related entrepreneurship. Out of 118 youth (65% of them women), 30 youth were selected to participate in a training cycle and individual mentoring, guiding them through improving their business and creating their own tourism agency and learning how to manage it independently as a social enterprise. Youth entrepreneurs established a virtual network to share questions and best practices, providing an example for others to follow.

# PROMOTING HERITAGE THROUGH A CRAFTSMARKET FOR LOCAL ARTISANS



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*Protecting the heritage and leveraging its potential needs to start by educating and raising awareness among the local population, and through that sparking interest in its conservation and promotion.*

— Sheyla Belgacem, craftswoman and university lecturer from Kairouan

*The Orient Bazar was inaugurated by the mayor of Kairouan, Radhouen Bouden and the director of the Swiss development cooperation in Tunisia, Willi Graf.*



The market is the first of its kind in Tunisia and its design inspired from traditional Kairouanese architecture. The opening of the new market was an excellent opportunity for artisans to showcase their work since it coincided with the biggest national holiday: one million visitors from Tunisia and across the Arab world celebrate Mouled (the birth of the prophet Mohamed) in Kairouan. Artisans gained an entrepreneurial space in the most strategic location – a public space next to one of the ancient entry doors to the Medina of Kairouan.

# THE STORY BEHIND THE CRAFTS MARKET



Afef Hallous, a young Tunisian architect raised in Germany who returned to her hometown of Kairouan in 2012 after the Jasmine Revolution, shared how the idea for the Orient Bazar came about. Feeling a strong sense of responsibility and activism to make Kairouan more inclusive, she began an exchange with craftworkers on their needs and challenges. Through these discussions, the idea for the market was born. It is part of Ms Hallous' vision for translating the needs and ideas of young people into architecture that serves them.

# RAISING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF KAIROUAN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS THROUGH **NEW TOURISM CIRCUITS**

The development of tourism products along with trainings in the tourism sector have raised the profile of the territorial assets of Kairouan and the surroundings. The project identified four underexploited sites with high potential and mapped out eco-tourist circuits in close alignment with the Regional Office for Tourism in Kairouan (CRTK). Thanks to this collaboration, the Tunisian National Office for Tourism decided to fully develop the identified tourism circuits in the three communes of Ain Jeloula, Haffouz, and Oueslatia as part of a new programme worth TDN 20 million (ca. \$7.5 million) and expressed strong interest in cooperating with the project's young entrepreneurs. The central government also provided Oueslatia with \$107,000 to improve and construct roads and pathways to develop the circuit in its area.



The educational tours (eductours) of the developed circuits helped to finetune the tourism products. They reached a wide audience, with several thousand people following the trip online. In parallel, the entrepreneurs featured in promotional videos of the region produced by Tunisia's best-known travel blogger and influencer. The videos sparked great interest on social media in the regions as travel destinations and in the entrepreneurs, who received numerous requests and enquiries from potential clients. Complementary to other promotional activities, tourism stakeholders in the region reported a significant increase in the number of weekend visitors in autumn and winter 2021.

# FOSTERING DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATION FOR **MORE INCLUSIVE CITY MANAGEMENT**



Ms. Badra Jlassi, project manager of the National Union of Tunisian Women, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kairouan City Inclusion Forum which brought together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss opportunities and actions for making the city and its surroundings more attractive for their residents and visitors alike.



*Hidden gems and local traditions can turn into exciting and decent work opportunities for young labour migrants in the region. Promoting the region's assets can also help break with the stereotypical images of inland areas like Kairouan and stimulate the sense of belonging of its inhabitants.*

— Ms. Badra Jlassi, project manager of the National Union of Tunisian Women