



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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USTDA GRANT FOR COLD CHAIN INFRASTRUCTURE COMPLEMENTS MCC COMPACT IN MOROCCO

RABAT, MOROCCO (May 5, 2009) – Today, USTDA awarded a grant to the Office National des Pêches (National Office of Fisheries) in Morocco as a continuation of the Agency's support for the development of the necessary cold storage infrastructure to complement Morocco's assistance under its Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The grant will be used to fund technical assistance in the creation of cold storage infrastructure and facilities to reduce losses in Morocco's artisanal fisheries sector. The implementation of the project is expected to create opportunities for the export of U.S. manufactured goods and services.

The \$462,970 grant was conferred during a signing ceremony held at the National Office of Fisheries. The Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, Robert P. Jackson, and the Director General of the National Office of Fisheries, Majid El Ghaib, signed the grant agreement on behalf of the U.S. and Moroccan governments, respectively.

Fishing is an important sector in Morocco, representing 60 percent of Moroccan food exports and 15 percent of total national exports. Given the sector's importance to the national economy, Morocco's \$697.5 million Compact with the MCC includes a Small-Scale Fisheries Project, which seeks to transform the small-scale fisheries sector by modernizing the means of catching, storing, and marketing fish. The grant awarded today will focus on the technologies and practices in cold chain storage and infrastructure to preserve the quality of fish production and improve the value of the catch.

Today's grant follows the award of a \$531,810 grant last year to the Ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche Maritime (Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fishing) to fund technical assistance in the creation of cold storage infrastructure and facilities to reduce losses in palm date production. Palm dates are covered within the MCC's Fruit Tree Productivity Project, which seeks to stimulate growth in the agricultural sector and reduce the volatility of agricultural production.

The opportunity to provide the USTDA-funded assistance to the National Office of Fisheries under the grant awarded today will be competed on the Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website. A link to the FBO announcement will be posted on USTDA's website at www.ustda.gov. Interested U.S. firms should submit proposals according to the instructions in the FBO announcement. The National Office of Fisheries will select the U.S. contractor that will carry out the assistance.

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The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, early investment analysis, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.

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