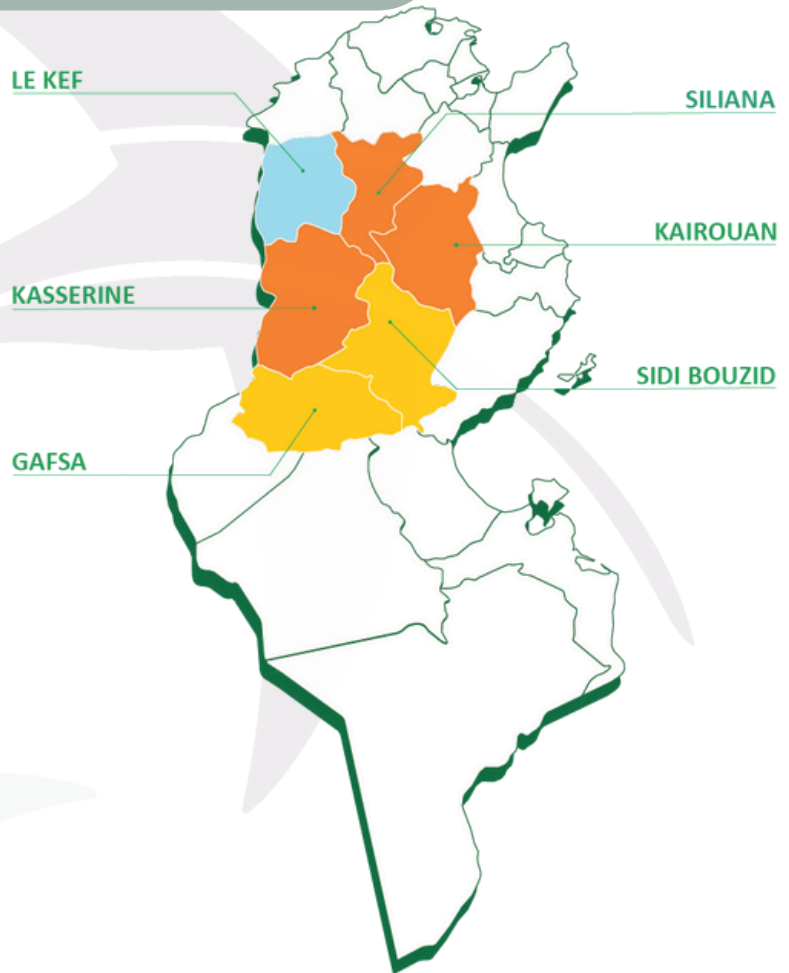


Tunisia

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF TUNISIAN CITIZENS

Since 2020, Fondation Hironnelle has been implementing the media component of the PACT (Participation Active des Citoyennes et Citoyens Tunisiens) programme, in consortium with the Danish organisation NIRAS. The aim of the project is to expand civic space and encourage dialogue between governments and citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, so that public action can be genuinely co-constructed in the high steppes region (governorates of Gafsa, Kairouan, Kasserine, Kef, Sidi Bouzid and Siliana).

Phase 2 of the project started in May 2023. Fondation Hironnelle is pursuing its commitment by continuing to support local media as players in good governance and sustainable development at local level.



Map of the regions covered by the second phase of the PACT project.

FINANCIAL VOLUME 2023

115,636 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- Switzerland (SDC mandate) via NIRAS

Key figures for 2023



14 media partners



6 governorates



19 media professionals trained



5,500 users on social networks



2 broadcast languages



4.5 hours of video production

Context

The political transformation that Tunisia has undergone since 2011 continues to present the country with structural difficulties. In response to this crisis, the President of the Republic took drastic measures that have given rise to controversy, including the introduction of a new constitution in 2023. On the economic front, the country's financial situation has deteriorated sharply. Against this tense backdrop, the number of illegal immigrants seeking to reach Europe has reached record levels, social unrest has grown and human rights abuses have risen sharply.

Opening up public space and encouraging dialogue

Faced with this reality, Fondation Hironnelle has supported the creation of a network of 19 journalists, almost 80% of whom are women, with an average age of between 25 and 35. This network, trained and coached in local governance issues, represents 14 local and regional media. Since 2021, these journalists have produced more than 270 pieces of journalistic content, including 232 video reports. This content has not only covered the issues addressed by the projects supported by the PACT programme, but has also highlighted public policy issues such as the difficulties of accessing local governance structures and the lack of employment opportunities for young people.

By 2023, the network's journalists will have benefited from ongoing training in mobile journalism, and elected representatives and local authorities will have benefited from media training to speak clearly to the media and organise press conferences.

In 2023, the journalistic content was disseminated by the network's media, on their airwaves and online platforms, as well as on a dedicated Facebook page, which gave them greater visibility.



A Friga FM journalist conducts interviews in the streets of Kef, Tunisia in 2023.
© Lotfi Rahmouni

OUR IMPACT

The active journalistic coverage provided by the local media and their ongoing information on municipal actions and the challenges faced by citizens have greatly contributed to the dynamic of dialogue. They have also helped to establish a culture of accountability and transparency in municipal work, as well as providing citizens with access to reliable and useful information, thereby fostering a strong demand for accountability.

TESTIMONIAL

"Thanks to this training, our journalist has acquired many new journalistic techniques, which we will use in our radio station and our programmes."

Tarek Benhmissi, Director of Radio Sufetula in Sbeitla.

Sustaining the action of civil society players and the media at local level is one of the essential conditions for the advent of democratic, inclusive and accountable local governance. To achieve this, Fondation Hironnelle, alongside NIRAS, is supporting citizens' initiatives and those of local civil society in the six governorates covered by the project, while at the same time supporting the media, which are helping to strengthen this community dynamic.

The network of journalists and media partners is being expanded, with a target of 20 to 25 new media by the end of 2024, including web radio stations, citizen journalists and bloggers. The digital presence is being strengthened through the production of video formats. In terms of subject matter, journalists will focus on the issues facing the target communities, but will also include a fact-checking component.

The capacity-building programme is aimed at both the communities, to improve their ability to communicate about their issues, and the network's media, in terms of conducting debates, mobile journalism and investigative journalism.

PRIORITIES

- ▶ Encouraging participatory democratic local governance
- ▶ Support the role of the media and civil society as local development players

ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Production of radio content focused on local issues
- ▶ Capacity-building for the network's communities and media

BENEFICIARIES

In the project's 6 governorates, the local population, particularly young people, women and people with disabilities, as well as civil society organisations, benefit directly from the project, by improving their living conditions and making local public authorities more accountable.

The media, through the support programme, are also strengthened and improve their capacity for media coverage and involvement in the development of their localities.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

- Local media and information as catalysts for public debate
- Citizens are more active in public debate

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