

Tunisia Country Report on NAIS

**Regional Workshop for
Strengthening National Information Communication Management
Focal Units in Near East and North Africa Region”
AARINENA in collaboration with GFAR, FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture of Oman
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1. Steps recently taken in establishing focal units and current activities:

At The Agricultural higher education Research Institution (IRESA) we have a whole Division in charge of ICT (DTTIC: Division of information technology and communication), which is managed by a Director who is assisted by two assistant Directors, and a group of engineers and technicians (4 engineers: 3 in computer network and 1 in computer programming, 3 analyst in computer programming), besides the secretariat administrative unit. Therefore, the NIFU is located within this Division, and is represented by MM Mohammed Bergaoui, and Mohsen Krichi, respectively Director and Assistant Director of this Division.

IRESA is an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and this division (dttic) ensures this activity (web and information system hosting, E-mail provider, security, management of the agricultural national network , development and management of RAIS).

IRESA has an internet website: (www.iresa.agrinet.tn) which is composed of these items: News, research, higher education, international cooperation, ISP, scientific events, cultural events, student space and intranet.

The intranet website is composed of these items: directory of e-mails, Assets of Agricultural research, documentary base, Experts Information base, annual research outputs and others databases related to water resources, dams, agricultural production,

All research and high education institutes have web pages under the IRESA website.

2. Current status and strategies in building information content:

Library information systems

IRESA use Horizon software for virtual library. IRESA has installed and deployed a solution with the aim to improve the library information systems such as:

- procurement ,
- cataloguing and classification,
- circulation,
- provision.

The library of the agricultural scientific resources allows reaching electronic resources with knowing: - the national and foreign collective catalogues in the agricultural field - bibliographical databases - dictionaries and thesaurus - electronic resources (thesis, memories,). This library is actually accessible from the intranet.

Tunisian Agricultural Map

In order to have powerful instruments of diagnosis, analysis and decision-making, the Ministry of the Agriculture and the Hydraulic Resources comes to equip its services with an integrated information system materialized by the regional agricultural Map.

These Maps which allow having a global vision on the agricultural space, its resources, its potentialities, its strong points and its places of vulnerability, having the following objectives:

- To know in a reliable and dynamic way inventory of fixtures as regards natural resources (ground, water, forests), basic infrastructures (hydraulic, transport) and economic (units of transformation, conditioning and collection of the agricultural produce).
- To know the inventory of fixtures of the current allowance of the grounds as a final resultant of technical-economic choice and currently systems of production,
- To spatially simulate and visualize scenarios of decision on the basis of modification concerning a certain number of parameters such as the costs inputs, the producer prices, the outputs, the incentives...

The Regional Agricultural Maps comprises approximately 50 geographical layers of information. These layers are gathered into four topics: chart "melt of charts", ground occupation chart, agronomic chart of vocation and agro-economic chart of vocation.

Completed in 2004 for all the governorships of the country, the study on the agricultural charts made it possible to set up a geographical information comprising nearly 50 layers.

For better developing and capitalizing the assets of the regional agricultural charts, a joint action to undertake permanent updates and improvement of the databases proves to be essential.

3. Available human resource capacities in ICT/M :

- 4 engineers (3 in computer network , 1 in computer programming)
- analysts (computer programming)

The IRESA technical staff has developed a distance learning system and some data bases in the agricultural research system. So they have the ability:

- To develop an ICT enabled Information Systems,
- To develop computer applications,
- To manage an ICT enabled Information System,
- To manage digital content.

4. Existing mechanisms of accessing and exchanging information:

All scientific and technical staff of the NARS has internet access from their office an an E-mail.

All institutes have electronic library subscriptions such as American Chemical Society, Blackwell, Elsevier, IEEE, Informs, Proquest and Thomson Scientific. All of their scientific staff has access to these libraries. The technical staff of IRESA support and assist the scientific staff of all institutes in using ICT. E-discussion is used by teachers and students in the distance learning system;

5. Available infrastructure and financial facilities :

All institutes are connected to the internet and intranet by the national agricultural network (AGRINET) which is managed by the IRESA (DTTIC).

- Number of computers in the NARS: 600
- Number of computers with Internet access: 600

Access to computers and Internet:

- Ratio of Number of computers with Number of Scientific Staff: 1
- Ratio of Number of computers with Internet connection with Number of Scientific Staff:1

An action of levelling the AGRINET started since 2003 with the objectives to improve the quality of service and the high availability and to reinforce security.

6. Important constraints affecting the building of their NAIS

- Limited number of technical staff specialized in ICT

7. Required support at national, regional and international

Knowledge sharing and collaboration is highly appreciated.

Training programs in these items:

- Network security
- Expert systems
- web2.0