

## UN and European Bank boost support for private investment in agriculture



Laurent Thomas, FAO Assistant Director-General for Technical Cooperation. Photo: FAO/Giulio Napolitano

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The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organizations ([FAO](#)) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) today announced they are increasing their efforts to promote private investments in agricultural businesses in the southern and eastern Mediterranean region.

The support will come through a series of new technical assistance projects that seek to develop policies and legal frameworks that create a favourable investment climate and foster private sector involvement in agribusiness in countries like Jordan, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

The projects, produced by FAO in conjunction with EBRD, will include policy discussions between government and private agricultural businesses and will address issues such as improvement of rural infrastructure, increasing food safety standards and developing local skills through adequate training.

“FAO welcomes the expansion of its cooperation with EBRD to promote private sector investment,” [said](#) Laurent Thomas, FAO Assistant Director-General for Technical Cooperation. “Most of the investments needed to tackle food insecurity around the world will come from the private sector, in cooperation with governments and civil society,” he added.

“Governments in our region of operation have sometimes reacted to the food crisis through short-term policy measures that discouraged private investment in agriculture,” said Gilles Mettetal, EBRD Director for Agribusiness. “Together with FAO, we can help countries respond in a way that better balances the interests of consumers and producers,” he said.

FAO and EBRD began working together in 1994 and since then have implemented over 80 technical assistance projects for a total value of about \$9.4 million.

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