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Nutrient-rich algae can boost Chadian women's incomes and tackle malnutrition – UN



Dihé, from Chad

29 July 2010 – A local variety of the nutrient-rich, blue-green algae known as spirulina could boost incomes for women in Chad who harvest the product as well as help fight nutrition, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)) reported today.

The agency is running a \$1.4 million project in which women are gathering and processing the product, known locally as dihé, from the shallow pools of water on the edges of Lake Chad where it forms at certain times of the year.

Launched in 2007, the project showed them how to do the job more efficiently and hygienically, and how to process, package and market the product, which is traditionally dried into a thin biscuit and later made into a bitter-tasting sauce.

So far 10 tons of dihé have been produced and sold through pharmacies and groceries in the country, generating 50 million CFA Francs (€75,000) of profits for 500 women, according to the project's coordinator, Mahamat Sorto.

Mr. Sorto claims that the naturally-produced dihé has better nutritional value than the commercially-produced spirulina and is 100 times cheaper than the product retailed in developed countries.

“However, prior to broader promotion and marketing further tests on the product may be needed and international certification obtained,” FAO stated.

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