

Read the text and answer the questions that follow.

THE WOMEN'S CO-OPERATIVES OF MOROCCO

- I Argan oil comes from the nut of the Argan tree, which is found only in Morocco. The leaves of the tree are inedible, but the oil has considerable health benefits when used in cooking, salads or for skin or hair care. Although its benefits have been known amongst the people of Morocco for many centuries, it has only become popular abroad in the last 50 years.
- II Before the 1970s, the trees were vanishing due to deforestation, which was disastrous for the environment. The trees' deep roots allow them to find water in dry areas, keeping land fertile. Moreover, their branches and leaves provide shade for smaller plants and their leaves provide food for the herds of goats kept by nomadic tribes in the area. Now, with argan oil becoming an important source of income, the trees are protected and the government is planning to plant a further 200,000 hectares of them.
- III Today, the argan oil industry provides employment for thousands of people in southern Morocco, many of whom are women. The people of southern Morocco are mainly Berbers and, traditionally, men went out to work whilst women stayed at home and looked after the children. High levels of unemployment amongst men has meant that changes in lifestyle have been forced upon them. At first, there was considerable opposition to the idea of women becoming the breadwinners. However, today, most men are proud of the work done by the women, although the gender roles haven't been completely reversed. Most of the women not only work full-time but are also still solely responsible for bringing up the children and doing the housework.
- IV One problem the co-operatives face is that they are competing with big businesses which can produce much greater quantities of oil at a much lower cost. Fortunately, many customers are willing to pay higher prices for the superior, traditionally made oil produced by the women. International organisations such as Fairtrade also make sure that they buy from the co-operatives.
- V The future is bright for the women's co-operatives of southern Morocco and their communities.

1 Choose the correct answer.

- 1 Argan oil
 - a can't be eaten
 - b has been used for about 50 years
 - c was known hundreds of years ago
- 2 Argan trees
 - a can grow where other trees would die
 - b are grown by nomadic tribes in Morocco
 - c don't need water to grow
- 3 The women's co-operatives
 - a have caused a rise in male unemployment
 - b produce a better quality of oil than big businesses
 - c have affected women's duties in the home

2 Decide if the following sentences are true (T) or false (F). Find evidence in the text to support your answers.

- 1 Until the 1970s, the Argan trees were dying because there wasn't enough water.
.....
- 2 The men of the villages were not initially positive when the women set up the co-operatives.
.....

3 Rewrite the sentence without changing the original meaning.

Most of the women not only work full-time but are responsible for bringing up the children.

In addition to

4 Answer the question.

Why does the government protect Argan trees?

.....

5 Find words or expressions in the text that mean:

1 disappearing (paragraph II)

2 income earners (paragraph III)

3 raising (paragraph III)

4 optimistic (paragraph V)