



MENA's permanent cropland – currently at less than 6% of the total land area – is shrinking due to serious land degradation and recurrent droughts.

The region faces the most severe water shortage in the world with annual renewable water resources per capita estimated to decline from 1,045 m³/yr in 1997 to 740 m³/yr in 2015.

MENARID Gateway

Strengthening and Scaling-up Integrated Natural Resource Management across MENA



ICARDA

International Center
for Agricultural Research
in the Dry Areas



GEF



IFAD
Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

What is MENARID Program

Benefiting global environment and local livelihoods

The Middle East and North Africa Regional Program for Promoting Integrated Sustainable Land Development (MENARID) is an initiative of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to catalyze coherent strategies for management and restoration of the degraded ecosystems across the MENA region, while supporting rural development. The MENARID umbrella brings a range of integrated environment and development projects in six countries – Algeria, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen – to address critical challenges faced in these countries, such as land degradation, preserving biodiversity, managing international waters, and climate change.

The MENARID Gateway Project

Linking lone interventions to programmatic goals

Harnessing synergies across sectors and countries for large-scale, system-wide impacts

While several environmental initiatives exist at the national and regional levels, these are often stand-alone projects not aligned with the broader planning and development sectors. Further, effective knowledge capturing and sharing across the projects and beyond is a missing link in transitioning from localized to system-wide operations – the overarching programmatic goal.

The MENARID Gateway is a strategic extension of the MENARID program that underpins the long-term objectives of MENARID of achieving area-wide environmental benefits through the implementation of multi-focal area projects. The Gateway aims to harmonize restoration of ecosystem functions and productivity with the economic and social



Goals of MENARID Gateway

- Promoting INRM in the production landscapes of the MENA region;
- Improving the economic and social well-being of the targeted communities; and
- Identifying practical solutions for scaling-up to address natural resource degradation across dryland systems.

Project executed by:

The International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas

well-being of local communities by promoting Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) across the MENA region.

How is MENARID Gateway Implemented

The MENARID Gateway is an information and knowledge-sharing framework providing strategic tools to catalyze the successful integration of land and water resource management practices on an area-wide basis. Besides its direct application to the projects under the MENARID umbrella, the framework contributes to the growing global knowledge on INRM, and land degradation and desertification processes. In particular, it reports on the costs of effectiveness of the institutional model for INRM, desertification control, and

the requirements for up-scaling these procedures to other countries not only in the MENA region but to other arid and semi-arid parts of the world.

Our Activities

Integrating MENARID projects into the larger framework of INRM

The MENARID Gateway is creating new synergies amongst ongoing projects and identifying scalable practical solutions by implementing a two-fold approach:

1 CAPTURING AND SHARING EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNT FOR GREATER TECHNOLOGY UPTAKE

Through online portal: A harmonized knowledge sharing framework, designed and facilitated by ICARDA together with project leaders, is helping MENARID projects capture and share practical experiences in INRM from across the intervention sites in six countries. Implemented online as an innovation platform, MENARID Gateway (menarid.icarda.org) is enabling stakeholders of national rural development grants to exchange information on land degradation, and the successes and failures of their approaches to land and water management. The tool also encourages broader learning by providing practical solutions and best practices from MENARID to anyone, stimulating replication to similar agro-ecosystems.

In live participatory sessions: Each MENARID national project offers a wealth of practical examples that have locally demonstrated the potential in increasing farm productivity, shielding from climate change uncertainties, and improving livelihoods for rural communities and their overall food security. Many of these approaches have the potential to be scaled up to benefit larger swathes of population in their countries and those living in similar agro-ecosystems



Innovative learning through 'writeshops'

Experimental writeshops are helping in capturing and disseminating the wealth of information hidden in national rural development projects. The face-to-face forum uses a three-part process: SWOT self-analysis of each project presented by the project leader, followed by live review and finally, an information synthesis session.

Example: A three-day long writeshop in Tunisia in March 2013 resulted in 17 intervention summaries now accessible online and reaching users in other parts of MENA and beyond.

across the world. Aiming to mine the rich but hidden knowledge in these national rural development projects, the MENARID Gateway team is honing the process for "writeshops" to build the capacity of project leaders to present on their natural resource management projects, capture and synthesize information in a manner that is ready for wider dissemination and application.

At training workshops: Learning workshops organized in partnership with the UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme are educating MENARID stakeholders about managed aquifer recharge, traditional practices in water management, and the economics of groundwater.

2 HARMONIZING MONITORING AND EVALUATION FUNCTIONS ACROSS PORTFOLIO FOR CONSOLIDATED IMPACTS

Projects commonly use weak and fragmented environmental monitoring systems generating scattered data, which is also often inadequately updated. The MENARID Gateway project has engaged MENARID stakeholders across all projects to put in place the basic requirements for a functional Results Based Management (RBM) and Results Based Budgeting (RBB) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system. Along with stakeholders, the project developed a series

of the most relevant cross-cutting indicators that could be used as a cornerstone for evaluating the natural resource management projects. These cross-cutting indicators are a basis for harmonizing and aligning M&E systems across MENARID portfolio for consolidated impacts. Further, a systematic M&E data aggregation and analysis system is being designed to allow stakeholders to gather, analyze, and report on their activities. This database is being integrated into the MENARID Gateway to provide timely, useful information on progress being made across MENARID.



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