

Faris village agroforestry field day (9 November 2017)

After the seminar, ICARDA researchers headed to Faris village, where a field day facilitated by ARC colleagues took place. Farmers from Om Oushoush and Om Shoujera were invited to Faris to participate in this event, with the aim to demonstrate to them the progress made by Faris

farmers with regards to seedling/tree growth and its benefits (Fig. 10). The total number of the participants in this event was more than 50 participants (the list of participants is in Annex 3). After welcoming the participants, Dr. Ahmed Lazim (ARC colleague) and Mr. Jamal (the community leader) gave an overview about the visit's objectives of the visit to farmers from Om Oushoush and Om Shoujera. Mr. Jamal briefed the visiting farmers about the experience of planting shrubs in Faris, emphasizing how important this initiative is towards securing at least part of their animal feed. He thanked ARC and ICARDA for assistance with establishing seedlings and encouraged farmers from Om Oushoush and Om Shoujera to adopt this approach due to the high demand for feed, good performance as well as the high adaptation of the seedling species.

Mr. Jamal informed the participants about their visit to the Elobeid Research Station, the benefits of cactus as a promising feed crop that survives under harsh conditions and also requested the ARC and ICARDA researchers to urgently provide cactus pads for planting purposes. A representative farmer from Om Shoujera (Mr. Mouhamed) thanked the organizers for the opportunity to participate and learn about the activities and experience from Faris farmers. He highlighted the importance of such events in exchanging knowledge and skills and increasing the capability of farmers to adopt new technologies. A reciprocal visit of farmers from Faris to Om Shoujera was proposed in order to continue pass on more information to Om Shoujera farmers. Sawsan (ICARDA) thanked the participants for coming, explaining the advantages of shrub planting and possible ways to expand it (Fig. 10).

A discussion among the participants took place and most of the farmers were interested in getting more seedlings, as the numbers distributed last year were not adequate. The second activity of the visit to Faris was a follow-up tour to assess seedling growth in some places where farmers planted shrubs previously distributed to them. Shrubs appeared to be growing well and the farmers were quite happy about them. Most of the farmers in Faris have employed the use of fences to protect the trees from any form of browsing, so as to ensure maximum establishment. Most farmers in Faris requested their keen interest to receive cactus from the ARC so as to plant and use it as a livestock feed. Farmers from Om Oushoush and Om Shoujera mentioned that they were impressed by what farmers in Faris were doing, and they are keen to have similar activities

in their villages. The last activity was to prepare a list of the shrubs that farmers are interested in planting in the new season.



Figure 10: A visit to Faris by Om Oushoush and Om Shoujera farmers/villagers, ARC and ICARDA researchers as a follow-up on shrub growth and establishment of previously distributed seedlings. Farmers have used fencing to prevent browsing of seedlings during the establishment phase.