



Middle East Water and Livelihoods Initiative (WLI)

Improving Rural Livelihoods through Sustainable Water and Land-use Management in the Middle East: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria & Yemen



Quarterly Newsletter

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The second quarter featured a number of activities including the evaluation of the Initiative in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine; the hiring of a new WLI manager Dr. Caroline King who assumed her position on June 6, 2012; and the continued progress made by the national partners in executing planned activities.

Activities at the benchmark sites: Activities under the bio-physical component focused on field experiments to improve water productivity and promote soil conservation in Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine; development of suitability maps by all partnering countries; modeling exercises in Egypt and Jordan to improve water use efficiency, and water harvesting and land rehabilitation technologies respectively.



Under the socio-economic component, the partners mainly focused on finalizing data collection and analysis. The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) proposal that was submitted by the Jordanian team to USAID received provisional acceptance during the quarter. The team hopes to receive the funding by the end of September and begin their work with selected women cooperatives in the benchmark area.



The quarter also marked an increased collaboration between the WLI and the Social, Economic, and Policy Research Program (SEPRP) in ICARDA. Dr. Boubaker Dhehibi was officially assigned as the WLI focal person from the program. Dr. Dhehibi visited the benchmark sites in Egypt and Lebanon and met with the respective socio-economic team members to assess the state of their activities and assist them in executing planned activities.

Capacity building: a number of national trainings were conducted in the reporting period with the Iraqi team training selected farmers on optimal irrigation and fertilization routines as well as best practices for protected agriculture; and the Palestinian team offering training on the role of women in food security.



Regional trainings on collecting gender disaggregated data, SWAT modeling, and writing scientific reports were also conducted during this

time. The Student Exchange Program, which also falls under capacity building involved five graduate students from the University of Florida, seven students from the region, the NARES in the respective countries where the students worked, ICARDA scientists, and experts from national universities.

Challenges in the reporting period relate to security conditions in the region, particularly in Syria and Yemen where some activities were not executed as planned, due to security concerns in and around the benchmark sites in these countries.

For more information please visit the WLI website at <http://www.icarda.org/WLI/>.