IN FOCUS

Securing Rights and Restoring Lands for Improved Livelihood

A project aimed at conservation, restoration and the sustainable management of ecosystem services. Improved livelihoods are achieved through securing rights, better management and enhanced income generation opportunities.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Long term Outcomes
• Improved Livelihood
• Dry Land Restoration

Intermediate Outcomes
• Policy Reform
• Access to Rights

Early Outcomes
• Develop CEMPAs to foster ownership of restoration activities & their sustainability
• Economic & income generating options for rural communities

Interventions
• Support dialogue among local stakeholders
• Local capacity building
• Community’s success through lessons learnt

In this issue:
The Status of Rangeland Tenure
The Zarqa River Basin
Gender Equity in Rangeland Management

1st Quarter Project Activities & Achievements 2012

Second Quarter Project Plans

The theory of change in this project includes better integration between the local community and decision makers and has proven to bring about better tangible results on the ground. Shifting towards systems that engage local communities in the decision making process, was found to be better than solving acute problems on the ground immediately without any local community intervention. For that reason, this project aims to fill that gap between stakeholders and document that change to allow better project up scaling in the future.
THE STATUS OF LAND TENURE

The Amman & Zarqa Basin

With its safe yield of 88 MCM per annum, Amman-Zarqa Basin is the critical renewable ground water basin in Jordan. This basin is situated in the most urbanized part of the Jordan where Amman and Zarqa cities are located and is hosting 54% of the total population. One of the first agricultural expansions in Jordan started in this basin in the area of Dhuleil and Hallabat, and resulted in over-pumping that reached 157% of the safe yield. The intensive urbanization where sewage infiltration from septic tanks and broken sewer networks were combined with over pumping and resulted in the fast depletion in water quantity and quality in the aquifer contributing to rapid desertification in this part of the country. On the other hand, the basin hosts about 70% of the small to medium size scale industries.

Reference: National strategy and action plan to combat desertification 2006

Grazing in Jordan

For a long period in the past, Jordan’s grazing lands were characterized by effective traditional land tenure systems and grazing rights which were associated with tribal institutions. This protected resources in these lands and organized their use in a way that assisted in conservation and continued productivity under prevailing environmental and social conditions. With the elimination of these systems, rights and declaration of grazing lands as state-owned land, open for everybody’s use. Many of these areas were over-used without consideration to their resource requirements or productivity. The above change in land tenure, also led to the lack of incentives that encourage pastoralists and Bedouins to maintain and conserve their resources and lands to control their grazing. Therefore, the identification and definition of ownership of these lands would greatly assist in setting plans for their development and improvement. According to the Agricultural Law No. (20) of 1973, all natural grazing lands are owned by the state; but in practice and reality, the case is the opposite. The area of these lands is estimated to be around 80,000 km², or 90% of the Kingdom’s total area.

Reference: Land Tenure baseline study conducted by the Badia Research Program - RSS

The number of livestock is totally out of balance with the available grazing ground, which has suffered serious mismanagement. The impact of overgrazing on the vegetation is evident from the excessive uprooting of the plants (grass and bushes), leading to reduced seeding, reduced regeneration, and the consequent loss of plant production in the following year. This has also changed the floristic composition, the decline in volume and frequency of plants. Despite the increasing numbers of the animals, the poor herders’ income and prosperity are declining. The causes include lack of sown fodder, decline in traditional management, extending the lambing season to unsuitable months and the dependence on complementary feeds.

Reference: Land Tenure baseline study conducted by the Badia Research Program - RSS

The drylands program is in its infancy, but this project is a good example of the kind of work that we must focus on: strengthening local governance over natural resources; building capacity for sustainable management; enabling people to derive sustainable income from natural resource management. This project will contribute to learning locally and globally on sustainable land management and combating desertification as well as improving our understanding of how to conserve biodiversity in the unique and challenging conditions of the drylands.

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The rangeland strategy at the Ministry of Agriculture ensures the development and implementation of policies that address existing problems about land use, its management and socio-economic statuses. It also targets institutional development which is important to policy implementation encouraging the participation of beneficiaries in rangeland management. This will therefore aim at decreasing rangeland degradation and desertification, to increase the sustainable production of livestock and maintain and improve the socio-economic conditions of the local community. The Ministry has therefore reconsidered its strategy through this project with IUCN, and has already adopted a participatory approach with local NGOs in the community to promote their effective role in managing and improving grazing in their area. The application of this policy will manage rangelands and drylands in a way that involves local community teamwork to revive the nature plant cover available.

**Women as Change Agents**

Women are key players in both the agricultural and pastoral production processes. They are the primary natural resource managers, providers of food security, and repositories of knowledge and expertise on indigenous plants, medicines, food and water. These are crucial roles when dealing with soil fertility and crop failure in degraded and drought-prone areas. Women in areas affected by drought and desertification, however, are generally engaged in subsistence and small economies and are therefore more vulnerable than men to the negative impacts of global economic, technological and cultural transformation processes.

While dryland ecosystem services meet the basic needs and contribute to well-being for most rural dryland dwellers, trade-offs between biodiversity conservation efforts and development activities in drylands are widely evident. Recurrent droughts in drylands and global climate change are expected to increase the urgency to resolve and agree on such trade-offs. This will require closely linking conservation and development interventions with local management, knowledge, evidence-based expertise on sustainable drylands management, and socio-economic and institutional factors, such as governance and rights. These issues are compounded by access to land, markets and transport. Responses are needed at local, national and international scales, and in both management and policy.

**Did You Know**

In most countries, women are among the least able to adapt to the impacts of change because they: are more likely to be poor than men; are often responsible for natural resource- and household-management; and lack access to resources, opportunities for improving and diversifying livelihoods and have low participation in decision-making. Development achievements & progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including gender equality (MDG 3), are threatened by desertification and climate change, which could deepen gender inequalities and worsen poverty.
The Hima Approach
The project initiated a partnership between Bani Hashem Village community that established the Hima approach in their area. This has therefore aided in proper rangeland management & the revival of the indigenous plant cover. This was made possible through tribal community meetings with the presence of the Deputy Governor of Zarqa, several Directors of government departments and the representative of the Environment & Water Committee in Parliament. This community meeting has led for the formation of the committee that represents the entire community at Bani Hashem called: the Hima Committee. The committee has there after created a Tribal Charter that calls for proper rangeland management and the revival of the indigenous plant cover in the area.

Exchange Visits
Exchange visits where conducted in reference to the projects action plan. These visits included the local community and NGOs to visit similar projects in Jordan and learn how they are managed & supported. Accomplishments, lessons learnt and challenges were shared in these visits and have reflected positively on the participation of the local community in the project.

Halabat Palace
Within the project area, a palace called Halabat is situated. This area refers back to the ministry of tourism and Antiques. A local community initiative has allowed the use of the surrounding area for rangeland management between the local communities and tribes in the area. Meetings between the ministry and the local tribes will allow a few women to benefit from the grazing land available for them. Awareness and capacity building meetings were also held to allow the adoption of rangeland management.

Duleil Hima
The local committee in Duleil has started this initiative themselves to create a rangeland reserve that could be used by everyone in the area. Proper rangeland management and the revival of the natural plant cover is a key goal that this committee hopes for.

Capacity Building
Within the methodology of the project which is built on a participatory approach, the community committees have been able to increase the capacity of the locals in the area through different facilitation processes that allow data collection and analysis of natural resources to identify the true problems that face their community today. These problems will be therefore solved through piloting projects that take income generation and living conditions into consideration, through creating local strategies that help in environmental management, increasing the capacity of the locals and finally gaining skills for project sustainability.

Indigenous Plant Studies For Hima Site
The ministry of agriculture has trained the local community to conduct a plant study in their area. This has allowed them to gain knowledge about the indigenous plants found in their land and how economically beneficial they could be. Possible marketing channels where discussed that could be a way to increase their livelihood conditions.
Participatory Video

Proper preparation was put into studying what messages should be communicated to decision makers and the community that portray project accomplishments and problem solutions within their community context.

The Awareness Kit

The Ministry of Agriculture and the National Center for Research and Extension have conducted two national workshops based on Community Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) in local communities. They targeted pastoralists, farmers and women concentrating on marketing medicinal plants in their areas, manufacturing dairy products, animal health, reusing agricultural waste and sustainable land management.

Partnering with CARE international, they have conducted several national workshops targeting water harvesting, drip irrigation, reusing agricultural waste and dealing soil erosion. As for the National Center for Research, they have filmed and documented these workshops creating an awareness kit DVD that will make communicating with the local community easier and faster.

What's Next?

- The Hima location will be launched in the Zarqa Governorate, after a decision was taken from the cabinet with the approval of the Ministry of Agriculture. This location will contribute to an area of 1000 dunums which will be managed by the local community in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, IUCN and funded by the European Union. This will allow the participatory approach implemented in this project to help local communities manage this project & hopefully up-scale this project principle elsewhere.

- An exchange visit will be conducted to the Royal Botanical Garden, to allow the local communities exchange knowledge and experience. This will help them in their project management and aid in knowing all project potential weaknesses and learn from the past.

- This project is founded on the principle of facilitating different points of view and building communication skills that will bridge all project stakeholders that include the local community, governmental institutions and all targeted groups. Accordingly national workshops will be conducted that allow networking and facilitation skills to increase, reaching to better project results.

- It is expected that a pilot model will be established in Halabat Palace and an MOU will be signed between the Management Committee of Natural Resources – Halabat Charity Society and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, determining a partnership between them for the management of the site, which will allow the local community to take advantage of pastoral plants on the site.

- A memorandum of understanding will be signed with MercyCorps to support some of the initiatives that will emerge from Natural Resources local community plan, which aims to improve living conditions & increase income that will reflect positively on the region, especially for women through integrated water management.

- A study will be completed that focuses on the most important marketing channels for indigenous plants in the area like Sheeh and Al Kaysoon.

- Conducting an awareness and training workshop on grazing rights and the rights of rural women, that will help in evaluating the performance of the project, its mechanism and effectiveness on project activities in regards to securing rights.

For more information, please contact
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