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

- Improved Livelihood
- Dry Land Restoration
- Policy Reform
- Access to Rights
- Develop CEMPs to foster ownership of restoration activities & their sustainability
- Economic & income generating options for rural communities
- Support dialogue among local stakeholders
- Local capacity building
- Community’s success through lessons learnt

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.

In this issue:

Land Tenure
Women as change agents
3rd Quarter 2012

Fourth Quarter Activities
SECOND QUARTER ACHIEVEMENTS

Project’s Political Support

The steering committee held its regular meeting in May 2012. Several matters concerning the rangelands and drylands project were discussed, through the methodology and participatory approach based on the approach in rangeland management in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture with the local surrounding community.

Expertise and Visit Exchange

The project went according to action plan and an exchange of expertise took place during a visit between the beneficiary communities of the project to the Royal Botanic Garden project and identifying ways and methods between the community and the Royal Garden. This visit adopted a watch and meet the beneficiaries method, which reflected positively on raising the awareness of communities of Dholeil, Halabat, Hashimiyah and Bani Hashem Villages.

Media

In the field of media and project documentation, the Ministry of Agriculture in cooperation with Jordan Television held a special TV episode within “Mawasem al Kheir” program over the project stages and the extent to which the communities and livestock owners made use of this project. Several interviews were held with decision-makers who explained their views over the project methodology.

Marketing Study

As part of capacity building and the potential of communities to participate in the understanding of the market and identifying marketing channels of solid plants that could benefit Hima’s revival, a study was conducted on the marketing channels of the original natural vegetation in Hima such as Sheih, Al Jaadeh and Al Qaysoum. The study showed the natural medicinal sellers and the local consumers’ interest in these plants as well as some medicinal factories when adequate amounts are available in the market.

Gender

To increase gender equality and gender concepts, the Arab Women Organization plans to integrate women in activities of “Restoring rangelands and drylands” project by including programs specific to women wherever possible. When AWO executes these programs, it monitors compliance with these policies and that strategy. It takes into consideration that there is a better understanding of the obstacles that prevent gender equality in various rural communities covered by the project because each community regulates the relationship between men and women differently. This requires an effective mechanism and a well-trained staff on gender. To find a driving force essential to the implementation and achievement of this strategy, gender mainstreaming has to take place in the rural agricultural development as a means of increasing resources, improving soil and water conservation, ensuring more efficient use of expensive resources and responding to local needs. Lessons learned, success stories, and gender strategies and tools mainstreaming will be documented in similar projects.

Capacity Building

The management committee of Hima in cooperation with the National Center for Agricultural Research and Guidance conducted a study on the pastoral load in order to find out how it will benefit the society and determine the appropriate grazing schedule of livestock. Experts from the National Center trained members of the committee on how to determine the pastoral load which also included technical capacity building.

As part of the capacity building, Dholeil Committee included a paragraph in the project over water and pasture management in their area. The project was approved by Mercy Corps and it will be implemented in September.
Partnership and Human Resources Management

The management committee of Natural Resources of Arid Lands in Halabat communicated with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to approve the use of land surrounding the Halabat palace which resides on more than 600 acres where varied pastoral plants live within the borders of the palace territory. This was done through a joint MoU between the Committee and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The ministry then detected the site and a Royal approval was granted through the ministry on the idea of the joint venture.

The Ministry of Agriculture formed a joint committee with the Committee of Hima Bani Hashim Villages to study the site and earthen dam area in Hima. The formed committee conducted a study on the dam’s storage capacity of 2 m 20000 so it can be monitored on the budget. The idea of its creation was to provide drinking water for livestock and enhance the natural rehabilitation of pastoral lands.

Hima Opening

Hima Bani Hashim Villages area is located in Zarqa governorate and is owned by the Forestry Department. The prime minister approved its use for grazing in the region in an area of 1000 donums which could be expanded from plot no. 4 , basin no. 4 according to the prime minister’s letter no. za-31146 dated 21-12-2011. The area was chosen due to its location within Al Hashimiya area which is prone to desertification yet is one of the promising areas which still retains its pastoral vegetation cover despite the successive attacks and overgrazing there due to inhabitants of surrounding communities in the area who number around 5 thousand people as well as many environmental pollutants such as: stone quarries and factories and their dumping. The surrounding communities have succeeded in establishing a tribal Code of Conduct for the villages of Bani Hashim which aims to manage Hima by the local community for the sustainable management of dryland grazing in their areas and reviving original plants such as Al Sheih, Al Jaadah and Al Qaysoum. During the program’s opening, the announcement was made of the formation of Hima Bani Hashim Agricultural Association in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture as an effective step in institutionalizing the Hima model and the rehabilitating pastures through the local communities’ management to curb desertification.

A number of governmental and non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions and funders took part in the opening along with the House of Representatives’ Committee on Water and Environment, represented by MP Mefleh Khazaaleh as well as local committees of Dryland management in each of Halabat, Hashimiya and Dhlail.

"We must disseminate the idea of Hima and participatory approach with local communities. The Ministry of Agriculture will review and update the Pastoral strategy to support the Hima approach in pastures management taking into account international agreements on climate change, biodiversity and combating desertification," said Dr. Radi Tarawneh Secretary-general of the Ministry of Agriculture and Chairman of the Steering Committee of the project.
A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Hashmiyeh Community Development Cooperative and the IUCN aiming at improving the livelihood conditions of the area. Through this MOU, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Arab Women Organization agreed on implementing a revolving fund project for the Hashmiyeh Area.

**Future Plans**

Through the projects strategy to support agricultural policies, the project will aim at utilizing the environmental and water management committee within the lower parliament to empower and strengthen the Hima approach within local community organizations in order to consider this approach in future strategies.

- A species study will be conducted in the Bani Hashem Community area, along with rehabilitating it through planting indigenous plants.
- Awareness workshops will be conducted about rain water harvesting techniques, rangeland rehabilitation and dairy product production.
- Updating the rangeland strategy with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and IUCN and other experts.
- Building an earth dam in the Bani Hashem Hima
- Rehabilitating all the wells in the Bani Hashem Hima
- Conflict resolution workshops.

This project is funded by the European Union

This project is implemented by IUCN - ROWA, Global Drylands Initiative

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.