

Quarterly Activity Report: October 1st to December 31th 2006
IALC Sustainable Development of Drylands in Asia and the Middle East Project
Jordan Component: “Business and Socioeconomic Assessment of Water and
Products for Community-Based Projects in the Badia Region”

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Quarterly Activities:

During this quarter NMSU led the processes of analyzing the data, compiling the results and preparing the technical reports for phase I of three of the four main on-going project activities:

- (1) Economic feasibility analysis and business plan development for the A’naqeed Al-Kahir diversified (crop and animal) and the Tal-Rimah milk purchasing/cheese production and marketing cooperatives;
- (2) Economic feasibility and socioeconomic impact analyses of a community based demonstration project of water harvesting techniques for range restoration and enhanced grazing capacity.
- (3) A survey to characterize and analyze typologies of agricultural water users living within the boundaries of the Disi and Maфраq aquifers according to production and resource use patterns and socio-economic status.

In addition to being an integral collaborator in the previously described efforts, BRDC initiated the data collection process for the fourth activity:

- (1) An assessment of the economic feasibility and sustainability of Wadi farming systems in the Al-Shamia/Ma’an area, based on a combined use of shallow-well and deep aquifer water sources for agricultural production.

The NMSU and the BRDC team members responsible for each of these four project activities were in frequent long-distance communication coordinating and exchanging of information through Skype phone, e-mail and e-mail document attachments.

In addition to the previously discussed on-going work at both New Mexico and Jordan, BRDC team member Ishmael Abuamoud was in Las Cruces from November 2nd to November 16th to work with Drs. Gorman and Grassberger on completing the financial accounting analyses of the A’naqeed Al-Kahir the Tal-Rimah cooperatives.

Dr. Jim Libbin will traveled to Jordan from October 27th to November 1st to a) finalize the economic analysis of the community based water harvesting and range restoration activity, and b) meet with and update USAID’s Ross Hagan on the project’s progress, discuss the plans for next year and continue exploring the possibilities of additional mission-driven IALC-NMSU work in Jordan.

Activities Planned for Next Quarter:

In accordance to the year two work plan, the fifth quarter activities will include:

- ✓ Finalizing a report that summarizes the results of the basic analysis of the agricultural water use survey data conducted in year 1.
- ✓ Initiate more in-depth econometric analyses of these data aimed at supporting better informed agricultural water use policy decisions and help farmers improve their irrigation water use efficiency.
- ✓ Finalizing a report that summarizes the financial accounting and economic analyses of the A'naqeed Al-Kahir the Tal-Rimah cooperatives that were conducted in year 1.
- ✓ Based on those analyses, begin exploring alternative business models and plans that could improve the financial and economic feasibility and performance of these two cooperatives in the future.
- ✓ Finalizing a report that summarizes the results of the economic analysis of the community based water harvesting and range restoration activity.
- ✓ Plan a series of workshops involving Bedouin livestock businesses and local government land-use agencies to educate the local livestock producers about the water harvesting and range restoration techniques used, the cost of implementing these techniques, and economic return from the enhanced biomass production.
- ✓ Begin work to encourage others to initiate similar range restoration activities throughout the Badia region of Jordan.
- ✓ Initiate field research to evaluate the impact of control grazing and stocking rates on the study site, and the economic implications of these treatments.
- ✓ Initiate the economic feasibility and sustainability analyses of the Wadi farming systems in the Al-Shamia/Ma'an area.

As in the previous quarter, the NMSU team members responsible for the different activities will be in frequent long-distance communication with their BRDC counterparts, coordinating and exchanging of information through Skype phone, e-mail and e-mail document attachments. In addition, Dr. Octavio Ramirez and Rich Phillips will travel to Jordan in mid March to: a) Present to USAID's Ross Hagan a detailed report on the results of the basic analysis of the agricultural water use survey data conducted in year 1 and discuss with him the on-going in-depth econometric analyses of these data aimed at supporting better informed agricultural water use policy decisions and help farmers improve their irrigation water use efficiency; and b) Personally update and discuss the progress in these analyses with the BRDC counterparts, and obtain their feedback to improve the quality of this work.