

Quarterly Activity Report: January 1st through March 31th 2008
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:

The main outcomes from this quarter’s activities are:

- ✓ Writing a journal article summarizing the results of the econometric analyses of the Mafraq survey data aimed at supporting better informed agricultural water use policy decisions and help farmers improve their irrigation water use efficiency.
- ✓ Continuing with the econometric analysis of the willingness to accept compensation for giving up their water pumping “rights” by Mafraq farmers.
- ✓ Beginning the analysis of the information for the lamb, honey, sheep, and sun-dried tomato enterprises of the Anaqeed Cooperative for the fiscal year ending on October 31, 2007, and collecting additional information that was deemed necessary. Continue collecting information for preparing a financial feasibility study, marketing plan and business plan for this Cooperative’s incipient concrete block manufacturing enterprise.
- ✓ Collecting additional information on the potential domestic and international markets for fiber art products that might be made by Bedouin women from wool from their sheep using natural traditional dyes. Preliminary results indicated that such an enterprise may have the possibility of significantly increasing income opportunities for women in rural communities.
- ✓ Continued work on the onion planting project in Al-Mudawara. To date, this project has shown that there is substantial potential for profitably growing high-quality low-pungency onions in Jordan. It also appears that there is a significant market niche for this product.
- ✓ Continued work to encourage initiation of range restoration activities throughout the Badia region of Jordan. In this regard, contacts were maintained with BRDC, Hashemite Fund for Badia Development, University of Jordan, and Royal Botanical Gardens.
- ✓ Continued with field research to evaluate the impact of control grazing and stocking rates and the economic implications of these treatments.
- ✓ Continued to monitor existing rangeland rehabilitation projects and to investigate potential future sites.
- ✓ Continued with the economic feasibility and sustainability analyses of the Wadi farming systems in the Al-Shamia/Ma’an area.
- ✓ Continued to provide advice to M.S. Ismaiel Naser Abuamoud on his doctoral program at NMSU. Progress is being made on selecting the specific topic for Ismaiel’s doctoral project.

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

Activities Planned for Next Quarter:

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

- ✓ Submitting a paper with the results of the econometric analyses of the Mafraq agricultural water use survey data for publication in a peer-reviewed water resources journal.
- ✓ Continuing with the econometric analyses of the data on the farmer's willingness to accept compensation for giving up their water rights in the Mafraq aquifer.
- ✓ Continue supporting the Anaqeed Al-Kahir and the Tal-Rimah cooperatives in the implementation of the recommended management and enterprise selection adjustments to improve their financial and economic feasibility and performance.
- ✓ Disseminate training materials using the A'naqeed Al-Kahir and the Tal-Rimah cooperatives as examples to train individuals involved in similar projects throughout Jordan on how to analyze their economic and financial feasibility and use the results from these analyses to improve a cooperatives' business performance.
- ✓ Initiating the financial feasibility study for the concrete block enterprise on the Anaqeed al-Kahir cooperative.
- ✓ On the basis of the results of the economic analysis of the community based water harvesting and range restoration activity, continue work to encourage others to initiate similar range restoration activities throughout the Badia region of Jordan.
- ✓ Continue with field research to evaluate the impact of control grazing and stocking rates on the study site, and the economic implications of these treatments. Continue to monitor existing rangeland rehabilitation project and to investigate potential future sites.
- ✓ Continue with the analysis of data collected through the agricultural water use survey in the Al-Shamia area. Work should be completed in the summer of 2008.
- ✓ Continue to provide technical support for Bedouin onion project in Disi basin via video conferencing with NMSU subject matter expert. The NMSU experts will continue to work until harvest in May 2008, when yield and quality data will be collected.

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. It is also likely that at least two trips to Jordan by NMSU team members will take place during the next quarter. The dates and specific purposes for these trips, however, have not been decided.