



## PROGRESS REPORT

<b>Reporting UN Organization</b>	: United Nations Development Programme
<b>Country</b>	: Lebanon
<b>Award ID</b>	: 00057771
<b>Project ID</b>	: 00071490
<b>Award Title</b>	: Hydro Agricultural Development for Marjeyoun Area (Litani)
<b>Award Timeframe</b>	: Oct 2009 – Mar 2013
<b>Reporting Period</b>	: 1 January 2012 through 31 March 2012

### I. PURPOSE

#### Project Summary:

The project will assist local communities in Marjeyoun area to benefit from a main canal supplying water to South Lebanon from West Bekaa. The project will show the advantages and efficiency of modern irrigation techniques, will propose the new cropping patterns in the region, and will support the establishment of a very much needed Water Users Association. The project will have a direct impact on the livelihood of at least 1,250 households within 5 communities affected by the July 2006 conflict through extending the areas suitable for agriculture, and will provide direct assistance to the farmers in the area. The project will produce topo-cadastral maps which are the bases for designing the irrigation distribution networks, will establish a land classification database as a prerequisite for the development of the hydrant implementation plans, and will execute land reclamation works for selected land in an area of 522 ha setting up the infrastructure for the water distribution network.

#### Project Objective:

The objective of this proposed pilot project is to prepare the infrastructure and to facilitate the implementation of the irrigation distribution network in the "Marjeyoun" North Perimeter through a participatory approach involving the farmers to ensure proper management of water use.

#### Project Linkages to National Priorities and Reconstruction Goals:

This project will be a model for the other areas which will benefit from Canal 800. It will set the infrastructure for the distribution network, will show the advantages and efficiency of modern irrigation techniques, will propose the new cropping patterns in the region with their socio-economic impact, and will support the establishment of a very much needed Water Users Association. The project will have a direct impact on the livelihood of the local communities affected by the July 2006 conflict through extending the areas suitable for agriculture and will provide direct assistance to the farmers through providing them with wheat seeds to be cultivated on their lands for two consecutive years (other field crops will be considered as well), awaiting the supply of irrigation water from the main canal.

The project is in line with the Millennium Development Goals, namely goal 7 - Ensure Environmental Sustainability. It works towards the target of proportioning total water resources used in each country.

It further meets national priorities on water resource management of the Ministry of Energy and Water and is in line with the water reform programme set by the Lebanese Government.

#### **Project Implementation Partners:**

- Litani River Authority (LRA)
- Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR)
- Communities of “Burghoz”, “Blat”, “Dibbine”, “Ibl Essaki”, and “Jdaydit Marjeyoun”.
- Association of the Friends of Ibrahim Abd El Al (AFIAL)

#### **Key Coordination:**

- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) – Green Plan (GP)
- Ministry of Energy and Water (MoE&W)
- Ministry of the Environment (MoE)

#### **Acronyms:**

- |  |   |        |
|--|---|--------|
| - Spanish Agency for international development cooperation | ≡ | AECID  |
| - Association of the Friends of Ibrahim Abd El Al          | ≡ | AFIAL  |
| - Council for Development and Reconstruction               | ≡ | CDR    |
| - Green Plan   | ≡ | GP     |
| - Invitation To Bid  | ≡ | ITB    |
| - Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute                  | ≡ | LARI   |
| - Lebanese Armed Forces                                    | ≡ | LAF    |
| - Lebanon Mine Action Center                               | ≡ | LMAC   |
| - Lebanon Recovery Fund                                    | ≡ | LRF    |
| - Litani River Authority                                   | ≡ | LRA    |
| - Ministry of Agriculture                                  | ≡ | MoA    |
| - Ministry of Energy and Water                             | ≡ | MoE&W  |
| - Ministry of the Environment                              | ≡ | MoE    |
| - Request for Proposals                                    | ≡ | RFP    |
| - Terms of Reference                                       | ≡ | ToR    |
| - United Nations Development Programme                     | ≡ | UNDP   |
| - United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon                  | ≡ | UNIFIL |
| - United Nations Mine Action Center                        | ≡ | UNMAC  |
| - Unexploded Ordnance                                      | ≡ | UXO    |
| - Water Users Association                                  | ≡ | WUA    |

## II. RESOURCES

		<b>Amount (USD)</b>
<b>Total budget approved</b>	:	2,000,000
<b>Total disbursements until 31 March 2012</b>	:	636,283.35
<b>Commitments for next quarter</b>	:	256,631
<b>Available Balance</b>	:	1,363,716.65

### Budget and Expenditure Breakdown as per LRF Category:

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>Total Budget(USD)</b>	<b>Total Exp. to date (USD)</b>
<b>1. Personnel</b> (Incl. staff and consultants)	443,200	281,535
<b>2. Contracts</b> (Incl. companies, professional services)	1,185,959	255,306.09
<b>3. Training</b> (incl. AV printing / production)	30,000	5,038.61
<b>4. Transport</b> (local)	15,000	14,388.49
<b>5. Supplies and commodities</b> (Incl. IT equipment and rental & maintenance)	100,000	5,119.64
<b>6. Equipment</b> (including installation)	40,000	782.8
<b>7. Travel</b>	15,000	2,729.0
<b>8. Miscellaneous</b>	40,000	29,757.71
<b>9. Agency Management Support (7%)</b>	130,841	41,626.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	2,000,000	636,283.35

### III. PROGRESS

#### ▪ **Implementation of Water Users Associations**

The implementation and the establishment of the four Water Users Associations are still in process for the towns of Blat, Jdaydit Marjeyoun, & Debbine, Boughoz, and Ible Essaki. AFIAL has completed the draft law for WUAs that was submitted early July 2011 to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities for review and approval. Once approved, the WUAs can be officially registered to start its operations in accordance to the laws' articles. AFIAL are performing all necessary lobbying efforts to make the process advance faster.

The WUAs will involve farmers in the whole process of water distribution and irrigation in Canal 800 project area. The main principles of WUA are:

- Justice and Equity in the use of water.
- The rational and efficient use of resources.
- Non discrimination between farmers.
- Transparency while stimulating cooperation between all members.
- Cost Recovery and financial sustainability

The law project is still under review at the Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW). AFIAL are investing all necessary lobbying efforts to make it move forward.

The approval of this law is not within the scope or control of the project. The process is now in the hands of the Government of Lebanon and the procedure will naturally continue in line with the internal policies of the Government even after the project is completed.

#### ▪ **Land Classification Analysis**

The land classification analysis has been completed and validated by the Consultant (Bari – CIHEAM) in January 2012, thus it was adopted for the land reclamation works as a base for design of land reclamation works.

The tender documents, including the terms of reference, for the Land Reclamation were launched based on the report completed by CIHEAM. Three previously shortlisted contractors were invited to bid (South for construction, Al Bonian and ARCC); the offers received were all compliant technically; however financially the offers received were much higher than anticipated or originally budgeted. Accordingly, a second round of tendering has been launched based on terms of reference that include a more detailed description of the exact areas that need to be rehabilitated (not the entire 522 Ha given that many plots within this land area are already well developed and planted with crops or trees). The area of land in which works are currently needed is estimated to be about 80 Ha. This second round of tendering was open for international bidding. The deadline for offers submittal is 3 May 2012.

A list of land owners was prepared for the pre-selected plots and the project, in coordination with the municipalities, is undertaking stakeholder meetings to inform land owners about the general approach and work plan of the project before the rehabilitation works begin.

The land owners or their representatives are being contacted individually and the project is requesting and collecting written approvals to access their land for rehabilitation. Some land parcels are owned by several people, some of whom have passed away making it difficult to receive approval from all owners; other lands are already rehabilitated and cultivated by their owners and therefore do not require any rehabilitation works.

#### ▪ **Hydrant implementation plans and cropping patterns**

The organization of the first stakeholder meeting was held on the 24th of January 2012 in order to disseminate the first set of deliverables by CIHEAM. The meeting had very interesting discussions among stakeholders addressing issues related to the future sustainability and importance of the project as a pilot on the national level in addition to the land reclamation works and cropping pattern designs. The Land Reclamation design and the Identification of the optimal crop type and cropping pattern was completed and submitted by CIHEAM. An updated report has been prepared taking into consideration comments raised during the first stakeholder meeting.

Based on the land reclamation design and cropping pattern design, the hydrant implementation plans will be prepared and should be completed by May 2012. Interim deliverables for the hydrant design are due on 31 March and 30 April 2012.

#### ▪ **Project Management**

The new Project Manager (Eng. Marwan Rizkallah) has assumed the PM responsibilities on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2012. A site engineer (Eng. Dominique Choueiter) has been recruited and joined the team on 1 March 2012. The site Engineer is responsible for the site coordination with the different contractors and stakeholders as well as the project partners such as the LRA and AFIAL. He will undertake the coordination and supervision of the consultant undertaking the design of the hydrant plans and cropping pattern, in addition to the monitoring and follow up on the land reclamation works.

Two main issues were faced by the project:

1. The land reclamation tendering and the high prices received from the bidders.
2. The communication with the land owners that is consuming significant amount of time to get their feedback and approval for the
3. Landownership is very complicated due to the multiplicity of owners

In general, the land owners show a positive attitude towards the project when we get in contact with them and explain the project specifically when we mention that their land is selected for reclamation. However, getting the necessary paper for accessing their land is quite

The main expenditures in the project are related to the land reclamation works, accordingly most payments are expected to be disbursed in Q3 and Q4 of 2012 which is after contract signature and implementation start.

Activity Results	Activity Actions	Progress up to 31 March 2012	Targets for March 2013
<b>1 Establishment of Water Users Association (WUA)</b>	1.1 Draft the required legislation to establish the WUA Financial Management; 1.2 Lobby with policy makers to pass the required legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Creation of 4 WUAs</li> <li>✓ Finalized the draft law</li> <li>✓ Initiated the lobbying efforts</li> <li>✓ Building farmers capacity</li> <li>✓ Registration of 4 WUAs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue capacity building trainings</li> <li>✓ Implementation of WUA on the ground</li> <li>✓ Continue lobbying efforts to pass the law</li> <li>✓ Official registration and approval of the WUAs</li> </ul>
<b>2 Development of land database and hydrant plans</b>	2.1 Processing of topo-cadastral maps, using GIS; 2.2 Conduct physical & chemical laboratory analysis for soil and infiltration measurements (every 4 ha); 2.3 Obtain data on the geology, slopes, percentage and nature of rocks, stones and gravel on surface, and current land use for the project area; 2.4 Determine cropping pattern and water needs at farm level; 2.5 Finalise the hydrant plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Contract signed with the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari – CIHEAM to develop an integrated hydro-agricultural development plan</li> <li>✓ Receive the final land classification maps and report</li> <li>✓ Physical and chemical analysis for 145 soil samples</li> <li>✓ First Stakeholder Meeting was conducted in January 2012</li> <li>✓ Received the final guidelines for the reclamation designs</li> <li>✓ Received of the optimal crop type and cropping pattern</li> <li>✓ Updated cropping pattern designs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Finalize hydrant plans design, analysis of alternatives and justification for selected design</li> </ul>
<b>3 Execution of land reclamation works</b>	3.1 Develop guideline basis for land reclamation works; 3.2 Prepare land reclamation designs for uniform geographical region 3.3 Execution of the base works; 3.4 Support complementary works (Terraces, walls, stone and gravel removal) to be done by farmers; 3.5 Provide the farmers with wheat seeds for cultivating their land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Finalised the first tender for land reclamation works however given that higher than expected offers were received, a retendering process was launched.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sign the contract for land reclamation works</li> <li>✓ Stakeholders meeting in the targeted villages</li> <li>✓ Execution of the works</li> </ul>
<b>4 Project Management</b>	4.1 Establish PMU; 4.2 Establish coordination and linkages between all project partners; 4.3 Ensure timely implementation and reporting on project activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ LRF Approval for an 18 months extension (until March 2013)</li> <li>✓ Replacement of the Administrative Assistant</li> <li>✓ Recruitment of a new Project Manager</li> <li>✓ Recruitment of a site Engineer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Recruitment of the necessary Consultants</li> <li>✓ Timely reporting on all project activities</li> </ul>

#### IV. WORK PLAN PER ACTIVITY FOR THE SECOND QUARTER IN 2012 (April – June 2012)

Key Milestones Wks	April				May				June			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
<b>1. Establishment of Water Users Associations</b>												
1.1 Lobbying Efforts to Disseminate the Law												
1.2 Capacity Building Trainings												
1.3 WUA Implementation												
1.4 Official Registration of the 4 WUAs Created												
<b>2. Development of Land Database &amp; Hydrant Plans</b>												
2.2 Developing the Hydro Agricultural Development Plan												
<b>3. Execution of Land Reclamation Works</b>												
3.1 Sign the contract for land reclamation works												
3.2 Stakeholders Meeting												
3.3 Execution of the works												
<b>4. Project Management</b>												
4.1 Technical, Financial and operational mgt.												
4.2 Promotion of synergies with other projects												
4.3 Information exchange and coordination												

### **Implementation Constraints and Lessons Learnt during this Quarter:**

**Political & security situation south of the Litani:** Given that the project location is south of the Litani river, access to the sites remains a high security risk and authorization is required from local authorities as well as UNIFIL. Accordingly, security clearance requests are required to be submitted to the UN Security Information and Operation Centre one day prior to any scheduled visit to the project area. During some periods of heightened security, access to the field is denied which delays some of the project activities.

**Weather conditions:** During the rainy season, work on site has to be halted, whether it were during the phase of studies and field visits or during the WUA implementation.