
ENPARD SOUTH SUPPORT PROJECT II

FINAL ACTIVITIES REPORT EGYPT

FROM JULY 2015 TO JUNE 2018

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This national report is an integral part of the of the second Phase final report of the ENPARD South Support Project which was implemented from July 2015 to June 2018 in eight Mediterranean countries.

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NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

IMPLEMENTATION CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The **ENPARD South Support project (ESSP II)** was launched in 2015, in an institutional context marked by the change of Minister of Agriculture and ESSP II focal point, Mrs. Mona MEHREZ, Director of the Department of External Relations at the Ministry of Agriculture replaced by Dr. Dina EL KHISHIN. Despite these changes, good communication and smooth coordination have been established with the new focal point and the external relations department.

The *think tank* constitution was the subject of a close collaboration between the CIHEAM-IAMM represented by Dr. Tahani ABDELHAKIM, and the Ministry of Agriculture which proposed 15 high-level members representing all the public and private actors of the agricultural and rural development sectors.

Following the project launching workshop, three priority themes were identified, but over the months the project focal point requested a refocusing on the theme of **“extension and agricultural advice”**

In February 2017, a new Minister of Agriculture was appointed, His Excellency Mr. Abdelmoneim ELBANA, as well as a new focal point for the project, Mr. Hisham ALLAM (Head of the Department of External Relations, Senior Partner in the Ministry of Agriculture). Some Ministry department heads who participated in ESSP II’s activities were also replaced. These changes have impacted the activities implementation pace, but thanks to the strong support of the new Minister of Agriculture and good relations with the External Relations Department team of the Ministry of Agriculture and their motivation, the activities continued without real difficulties.

In May 2018, His Excellency Dr. ABU STEIT was appointed as Minister of Agriculture again.

After 3 years of implementation, the ESSP II in Egypt has been able to build solid relationships with the sector actors (Ministry, cooperatives, civil society organizations, etc.) that have been strongly mobilized. The project’s intervention was sustainable and continuous, with one key theme **“the extension system reform”**, which has remained a priority despite frequent changes at the head of the Agriculture Ministry.

ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

A preparatory meeting for the project second phase launch took place on September 2nd and 3rd, 2015. It brought together 20 senior staffs from the Ministry of Agriculture, researchers from the Agriculture Research Center (ARC), academics, civil society representatives and agricultural cooperatives representatives. It aimed to present the ESSP II, to propose the *think tank* constitution and to carry out a pre-identification of the work topics.

The national launching seminar was organized on October 19th 2015. It was inaugurated by His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture Dr. Issam FAYED, in the presence of Dr. Dina EL KHISHIN, ESSP II focal point, and an EU Delegation representative. It brought together 25 participants representing different categories of agricultural sector actors. The ESSP II implementation methodology was presented and validated during the workshop. This methodology was the result of collaboration between the CIHEAM-IAMM and the *Think Tank* team. It proposed three stages for national workshops pilotage:

- i. To prepare each workshop, a guidance note which summarize existing knowledge, clarify concepts and create a common language was prepared ;
- ii. Then, workshop organization was divided into two parts: an introductory presentation that outlines the main debate elements and concrete study cases. A second part devoted to group work was led by the IAMM expert, based on an analysis grid;
- iii. The third step, post-seminar, was devoted to the reports and analyzes productions, which were then submitted to decision-makers.

At the end of the seminar, three priority themes were selected:

- **Good agricultural practices** (and the environment preservation in relation with pressure on natural resources),
- **Contract farming** (in accordance to the enacted Presidential Decree about the organizational framework implementation to promote this type of agriculture),
- The extension system and agricultural advice.

GOOD FARMING PRACTICES

Following the launching workshop and regarding national context marked on the one hand by the strong pressure on natural resources, particularly water, accentuated by the climate change effects and on the other hand, by the need to reduce the Use of inputs for environmental, health (risk for consumers) and economic reasons (cost reduction), the think tank decided to deal first with the issue of good agricultural practices (GAP).

A first national workshop on good agricultural practices was held 6th and 7th December 2015, bringing together 40 specialists. The work was introduced by a general presentation of good agricultural practices concept, the challenges of their implementation based on several European study cases like the good practices implementation at a territory level experience's in the Hérault department in France. These presentations were complemented by a testimonial on the conditional incentives Egyptian experience conducted as part of the “**Support to Rural Development**¹” project. The second day was mainly a meeting of *think tank* members.

Regarding the particular characteristics and challenges of Egyptian agriculture, despite the existence of several NGOs initiatives and projects, the think tank group agreed on the need to develop a comprehensive public policy of good agricultural practices at technical, economic and social level that cover all production and marketing stages. They must contribute not only to environmental benefits in terms of pollution reduction and public health improvement, but also to obtain economic and financial benefits for farmers through increasing their income and improving their productivity and their living and working conditions. The development of a good agricultural practices public policy and its implementation needs a collective thinking associating all the agricultural sector stakeholders which leads to draw a global framework specifying the institutional links, the functions and the responsibilities of each component and to develop a territorial approach for the diagnosis realization, techniques adaptation, and field dissemination. Two priority issues have been identified for the development and implementation of good agricultural practices in Egypt, water management and vegetable and fruit production, particularly citrus fruits (one of the main export production).

Good agricultural practices were also the sub-regional (Egypt and Lebanon) seminar's subject on 8th and 9th December 2015 in Cairo, on the one hand, in terms of trade with the European Union, on the other hand from the perspective of adaptation to the effects of climate change or their mitigation.

¹ EU-funded project between 2009 and 2015, implemented by the Federation of Horticultural Exporters with the support of several national NGOs

AGRICULTURAL ADVICE AND EXTENSION

Two national workshops of two days each, titled “Reform of the Agricultural Advisory System”, were organized on March 13th and 14th, as well as on April 18th and 19th 2016.

The first workshop allowed to the agricultural extension system review, analyzing its history and evolution, taking into account the economic and political context and determining the main issues of agricultural advice in the country. Diagnosis was based on both benchmarking document produced by the CIHEAM-IAMM presenting different European² agricultural advisory systems and an analytical grid.

Moreover, participants (45 in total, think tank members, experts and national professionals) underlined the need to develop a modern and efficient service system to farmers, especially for small farms.

Based on the diagnosis and discussions, the second workshop clarified *three possible scenarios* for extension system reforming. Such scenarios focus on three main points: the administrative and organizational set-up, the financial resources (in structural decline) and the “new” functions of extension. Large farms have, for a long time, remedied the public extension service weakness by funding their own council. The three scenarios identify small farmers, women and youth as target for the new agricultural advice system.

Based on the two workshops results, a study was carried out from May to December 2016 on “scenarios for improving or reforming the popularization in Egypt”³ with the support of the ESSP II team.

The study outcomes were presented and debated with the think tank members, farmer organizations and cooperatives representatives, extension professionals and private sector. The participants validated the **co-management scenario** between the public authorities and the private sector (including Civil Society) which assigns the strategy and policy guidelines development to the Ministry of Agriculture and the implementation to the various private sector actors mentioned above.

The final version of the study was submitted to the Minister in May 2017. At the request of the Minister, a working group composed of senior staff of the Research Institute for Rural Development and Agricultural Extension, the Institute of Agri-Economic Research and the Ministry staff was appointed and charged to write a strategic donors note, with support of ESSP II Team. The note purpose was to inform them about the Ministry's commitment to implement an agricultural advisory system reform and to explore the possibilities of support

² A speaker from the Chamber of Agriculture of Hérault (Xavier CRETE) presented the agricultural advisory system in France and its history and a concrete case of development action in the Hérault department.

³ Access to the study : <https://cloudia.iamm.fr/index.php/s/CLyHr0bidpdyDsZ> (EN)

funds mobilizing. Ultimately, the European Union accepted to finance a proposed project on the theme.

In addition, a study on the social acceptability of the of the extension system reform scenarios was conducted by a Master student.

AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

In early 2017, the ESSP II in Egypt worked on a third theme: **agricultural cooperatives**. A first national workshop was held on 8th and 9th January 2017 on the theme: “*cooperatives as an actor in agricultural and rural development*”. It aimed to present and discuss the current situation of agricultural cooperatives and the 2014’s law and the changes it brings, to then identify the main obstacles to the development of cooperatives and make proposals to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. Dr. Tahani AbdelHakim introduced agricultural cooperatives in one of the European countries in order to define the types of agricultural cooperatives in terms of their role, scope of work, services provided to farmers, the development of its functions and services to follow-up with the new needs of producers and finally the development of needs and requirements of the market and consumers.

Following the introduction, Dr. Mohammad Hassan Abed Alaal – FAO’s coordinator for the "Support to Cooperatives Reforms in Egypt" project – presented the project, which mainly seeks to achieve the following four outcomes:

- Developing an environment that suits agricultural cooperatives and supports small farmers and agricultural households in Egypt
- Assessing the needs and capabilities of stakeholders to be considered in the framework of the law’s reform
- Disseminating know-how of best practices related to the reform of agricultural cooperatives in Egypt in order to develop their efficiency, dynamicity and equality
- Formulate a proposed law to support the reform of cooperatives (in partnership with other development partners such as the International Labour Organization - ILO). During the second day, participants were divided in two groups and an analytical framework, which included a number of questions and discussion topics to be answered, was distributed. After that, findings of the groups were presented.

A second workshop was organized in Cairo on 7th and 8th May 2017 with the participation of the think tank members, Ministry of Agriculture senior staff, farmers and representatives of cooperatives from three governorates (two northern governorates and a southern governorate), Civil Society, researchers, and the FAO agricultural cooperatives project coordinator. The workshop focused on the strategic and political aspects of cooperative development and aimed at formulating proposals for a strategic vision of agricultural cooperatives and a general framework for the reform initiated by the 2014’ law

Following the seminars, the Minister of Agriculture ordered to create a high-level working group to draft a strategic document on agricultural cooperatives. Unfortunately, it was not possible until the end of the activities of the ESSP II.

IMPROVING VALUE CHAINS EFFICIENCY

Finally, ESSP II in Egypt worked, at the request of the Minister, on improving the efficiency of value chains and chose tomato as a pilot sector. A first workshop was held on January 14th and 15th, 2018, bringing together about 40 participants, (think tank members, tomato producers representatives, exporters, industrialists, specialized scientists and the Ministry of Agriculture officials), in order to; i) take stock of the tomato value chain, ii) to identify the weak points at the different links, iii) and to make concrete proposals for tomato value chain efficiency improvement.

On this basis, a study was conducted with the support of the ESSP II team on the topic⁴ and its results were presented during a workshop on 11th and 12th March 2018 in Cairo. This study recommends the adoption of an Action Plan for the Tomato Value Chain Valorization, based on a public-private partnership. The implementation of this action plan should be entrusted jointly to three ministries, namely: the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade.

KEY RESULTS

The ESSP II was part of the **agricultural national strategy 2030** which identified in its priorities; good agricultural practices, agricultural advice and extension and agricultural products valorization. It was part of the reflection framework on the 2014 law on agricultural cooperatives.

Based on a *think tank*, composed of agricultural and rural development public and private actors' representatives, ESSP II has created a new inclusive framework, by showing that consultations with all the agricultural sector actors are a relevant and effective way for developing agricultural policies. It has also enabled to initiate or strengthen the inter-ministerial dialogue.

The program intervention has led to very concrete results in terms of agricultural policy:

- An extension system reform project has been submitted for funding and accepted by the European Union.

⁴ Access to study :<https://cloudia.iamm.fr/index.php/s/HMcZ1kKi2u5hmsr>

- A Tomato Value Chain Valorization Action Plan based on a public-private partnership has been validated. Its implementation should be entrusted jointly to three ministries, namely: the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade.
- The cooperatives outcomes were taken over by the Ministry of Agriculture and should lead to a strategic document.

The ESSP II worked in consultation with the FAO especially on agricultural advice and extension system reform and agricultural cooperatives.

The project has enabled to:

- Set up a think tank bringing together different categories of actors (Ministry, private sector, cooperatives, civil society, scientists ...),
- Organize a launching workshop and 8 national workshops,
- Produce 9 guidance notes, 9 workshop reports, and distribute 4 presentations mainly on good agricultural practices and agricultural advice,
- Produce a concept note on good agricultural practices in Egypt, an introductory note on agricultural advice and a summary note on the extension system reform in Egypt,
- Carry out a study on "Scenarios for improvement or reform of the extension system in Egypt" and a study "Analysis and assessment of the tomato value chain and its efficiency and effectiveness improving means ",
- Develop a strategy note on extension reform,
- Involve 2 European experts,

SUB REGIONAL ACTIVITIES (EGYPT AND LEBANON)

One of the main objectives of the ESSP II was to build and coordinate a framework for regional dialogue on agricultural and rural development policies.

At the time of project launching there was no cooperation instrument, or special institution or organization dealing with agricultural and rural development issues at the Mediterranean level that ESSP II could have strengthened. Thus, ESSP II has tried to fill this gap and appears today as the only regional project dealing explicitly and directly with agricultural and rural policies at regional level in the Mediterranean.

For that reason, ESSP had no other choice than to lean on the animation of a dialogue at the national level which allows informing a sub-regional and regional dialogue, by bringing out common themes concerning the agricultural and rural development in the Mediterranean.

The Machrek sub-region activities brought together experts, researchers and officials from both Egypt and Lebanon.

SUB REGIONAL SEMINAR ON “GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES”, CAIRO, DECEMBER 8TH AND 9TH, 2015

The first sub-regional seminar, which brought together some forty participants from Egypt and Lebanon, focused on “good agricultural practices (GAP)”. The seminar started with GAP concept definition. Then, discussions were focused on 4 main points introduced by a summary note⁵:

- Good agricultural practice and access to the European market
- Good Agricultural Practices and Climate Change
- Good agricultural practices and free trade
- Research role in defining and implementing good agricultural practices.

Many ideas were shared from both countries concerning GAP on a regional level. To support ARABGAP and small farmers, and ensure innovative tailored actions, activities should be based on research and exchange of information. Both parties insisted on the necessity to:

- Establish GAP in the agriculture national strategy

⁵ Access to summary note : <https://cloudia.iamm.fr/index.php/s/8PV1VhSV3kf6aMW>

- Provide incentives to farmers through conditional support
- Support agriculture cooperatives
- Support research on GAP through research centers and universities
- Introduce GAP as part of the educational system

A working plan could start by defining the necessary GAP for every crop; it should be risk based and not preventive and should be established in the national policy to ensure its sustainability and large diffusion of the information. Conditional support has proved to be effective in enticing farmers to adopt new techniques. Future activities in agriculture should involve conditional support as part of their national agriculture strategy.

SUB REGIONAL SEMINAR ON “SHORT DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL AND MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS”, BEIRUT 2ND 3RD JUNE, 2016

Egypt and Lebanon have noted the same difficulties in accessing international markets due to the increase of standards number (sanitary, phytosanitary, technical, etc.), a highly competitive environment and a complex and unstable geopolitical context requiring adaptation of national productive systems which involves farms modernization, cost reduction and adapted and flexible marketing strategies development .

Moreover, due to a disorganized local market affected by brokers’ intervention agrifood products prices tend to increase and the incomes of the farmers to decrease.

Work in the national and sub-regional workshops on Good Agricultural Practices on the one hand, and on extension, on the other hand, and discussions on incentives facilitating the adoption of good practices, have leads to questions about the relevance of short-circuited marketing methods. They appear as an example of innovation able to improve the marketing conditions of small producers and disseminate good practices necessary for sustainable agriculture.

This seminar involved the Egyptian and Lebanese think tanks members, which are mainly composed of Ministries of Agriculture staff, private sectors, NGOs, syndicates and Farms unions, researchers and professors, making a total of 46 participants.

Each of the two countries presented examples of short channel distribution actions implemented on a national scale. The discussions focused on the limits and levers of promoting short channel distribution.

The participants have underlined the sub-regional discussions and exchanges benefits and came up with a series of propositions:

1. Develop a "knowledge bank" of good experiences and examples on extension system, good agricultural practices and short channel distribution topics.

2. Write and submit a summary note on ESSP II results and methodology to the Egyptian –Lebanese Inter-ministerial Committee, in order to inspire them with the project collaborative dynamic between different Mediterranean countries.
3. Invite the Inter-ministerial Committee to support Maghreb and Machrek experiences and knowledge exchanges.

SUB-REGIONAL SEMINAR ON “AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AND ADVISORY SERVICES ROLE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY COMPETITIVENESS”, CAIRO 11TH AND 12TH JANUARY 2017

The 3rd sub regional seminar was held in Cairo on January 11th and 12th, 2017, on the theme “agricultural extension and advisory services role in agricultural commodity competitiveness: Lessons learned from the ESSP II and recommendations based on stakeholders testimonies”.

Overall, both countries have many similarities and dissimilarities in their agriculture sector when dealing with competitiveness challenges such as fragmentation of lands, weak advisory and extension services, the high presence of non-controlled private sector, etc. The objective of the workshop was to understand the reasons of non-competitiveness of agriculture products for each country by offering an insight on the previous work done by the think tank in each country whether on GAP or advisory & extension services and their role in reinforcing the competitiveness of agriculture products with a specific focus on quality and production cost.

Several consensuses emerged on the role of extension system and cooperatives, including:

- Regarding the low budget allocated to agriculture in Egypt and Lebanon and limited support for farmers, good extension system and cooperatives are two relevant tools for maintaining and promoting a sustainable, operational and competitive agricultural sector ;
- Both of these tools need to be strengthened and reformed to better meet farmers' expectations through increased collaboration with research centers to provide more operational results ;
- Good agricultural practices development appears as a solution to increase the competitiveness of agriculture and to respond to the agricultural challenges facing these countries (land fragmentation, pesticides excessive use, high production costs, quality of agricultural products). Good agricultural practices should be supported by extension and cooperatives ;
- Extension, agricultural advice and the cooperative system can also be adequate tools to support producers in their export effort by improving their knowledge of target markets (products quality, regulations and standards, etc.).

A number of recommendations were made by the participants:

- There are many individual initiatives undertaken, and so the creation of common companies between Lebanon and Egypt should be supported, which

will present a common and strong front facing other exporting countries such as the Maghreb and Turkey.

- Coordinate between the Egyptian and Lebanese agricultural exporter's enterprises and exchange of expertise and knowledge, through the creation of a common network.
- Reduce the gap between the governmental sector, the private sector and research institutions: through the establishment of a legal framework that will allow the creation of a joint council representing all three sectors.
- Open horizons towards new markets such as the Maghrebi countries (Morocco, Tunisia, and others African or Asian countries) and the creation of a partnership between the two countries.
- Ensure that the following themes become a priority in each country; i) engage in encouraging the producing unit i.e. farmers, to have a more business oriented mindset, ii) Set investment incentives to revive the agriculture sector, and iii) Prioritize agricultural curriculum in universities and making them more market oriented.

Particular interest was shown to conducting study tours and visiting cooperatives in France to learn about their history, foundation and functioning, as part of the expertise and knowledge exchange.

The participants also insisted on the great opportunities that ESSP II has created since its beginning for both countries. Through the multiple reunions and workshops, communication increased and the exchange of knowledge was greatly reinforced, which helped in creating stronger links and shed light on common issues and potential of improvement in the agriculture sector.

SUB REGIONAL SEMINAR ON" PESTICIDES USE AND MANAGEMENT FOR MORE INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION", CAIRO 14TH AND 15TH MARCH, 2018

This last sub-regional workshop, held in Cairo on March 14th and 15th 2018, was an opportunity to present ESSP II activities and results summary. It also allowed presenting pesticides use and traceability local experiences. The Sanine cooperative, Lebanese cooperative, was invited to present the certification system that it has put in place. This certification has enabled export the cooperators apple production. Then, the Egyptian Agricultural Export Council presented its export difficulties related to pesticide residues and the solutions put in place. A field visit to a private Egyptian company concluded the workshop.

The problem of pesticide residues is a major obstacle to agricultural products export from both countries and has a negative impact on populations' health and the environment.

In Lebanon, a national charter and a phytosanitary guide applied to the apple sector were established with collaboration with different sector stakeholders. The Lebanese Minister of Agriculture signed this charter and it was adopted so far by nine agricultural cooperatives.

In Egypt, farmers support and pesticides use control were addressed as part of agricultural extension system reform.

An idea to create a charter and a logo on the products origin associating the two countries was greatly appreciated by the participants.