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EU-ZIRA3A INCEPTION WORKSHOP

EU-ZIRA3A – The EU Integrated Rural Development Programme for Egypt organized the inception workshop on 24th October 2023 in the Agriculture Research Centre (ARC), Cairo.

The workshop was held under the auspices of the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR) and aimed to identify the main priority areas of support by collecting stakeholders' feedback regarding activities to be implemented. The workshop also aimed to highlight the modality of program implementation through call for proposals and launching tenders.

About 70 participants attended the inception workshop from the EU Delegation, (MALR), Local Development (MoLD), Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI), Research Centres, NGOs, Local Communities/Associations of farmers in targeted governorates (including community-based associations) and other institutions (e.g., International Organizations, National Experts).

The opening remarks were delivered by Dr. Saad Moussa, Supervisor of Foreign Agriculture Relations (FAR) of MALR; Mr. Raphaël Demouliere, Attaché - Green and Sustainable Transition Section, Delegation of the European Union to Egypt and Mr. Nicola De Mastro, the Team Leader of EU-ZIRA3A Programme.

Dr. Moussa started the opening remarks by welcoming the participants and illustrating the coordination between MALR and EU-ZIRA3A Programme Management Unit (PMU) to organize the inception workshop.



Dr. Moussa explained the methodological approach of the workshop to the participants.

In his statement, Mr. Raphaël Demouliere focused on the long-standing partnership between the European Union and Egypt in supporting the rural development sector.

Mr. Nicola De Mastro highlighted the programme's main and specific objectives, expected results and the internal control system of the programme.

Following the opening speeches, two presentations were given by ZR3I, start-up in the Egyptian Market promoting innovation on digital agriculture and Irritec from Italy about modern irrigation systems and water saving practices. Then, the results of the baseline assessment of the programme were presented, followed by a strategic overview of sustainable agriculture in Egypt (challenges and opportunities), which delivered by FAO Representative in Egypt.



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Working groups:

After the technical presentations, the participants were divided into three working groups according to their interest and experience as follows:

WG1: Enhancement of Integrated Governance of Rural Development.

WG2: Agricultural Management and Socio-economic contribution.

WG3: The irrigation systems.

Recommendations and conclusions of the working groups:

WG1

Support integrated governance of rural development at the central and governorate levels by:

- Building the capacity for the Monitoring and Evaluation unit within MALR at central and field levels.
- Enhancing capacity of local government officials to adopt new information and communication technologies.
- Developing digital archiving system.
- Strengthening the Egyptian quarantine (Tools, training, digitalization transformation, coding system, sampling, and analysis).
- Updating of MAP Egypt.
- Supporting the National Egyptian geodatabase platform.

WG2

- Improve animal production as series of activities were discussed.
- Introduce a comprehensive program to improve agricultural waste management.
- Support small and medium enterprises.
- Develop a program to improve agriculture extension and advisory services.



WG3

Design and implement field demonstration models for modern on-farm irrigation systems under different farming systems in close cooperation between the MALR and MWRI:

- Rehabilitation of sub-canals, Meskas, Marwas according to extension guide of canal rehabilitation and results of baseline assessment.
- Using solar energy for water pumping at Meska level – piloting.
- Strengthen/ form water user associations before the rehabilitation process.
- Establishment of modern irrigation pilot according to soil characteristics with GAPs.
- Evaluation of the sustainability of improved irrigation systems (Scalability assessment).
- Evaluating on-farm irrigation system “Water, Energy, Food and Environment Nexus” as an efficient concept (Environmental, economic, social and productivity).