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Newsletter

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EU-ZIRA3A



About the Programme

We are thrilled to announce the launch of EU-ZIRA3A - EU Integrated Rural Development Programme for Egypt.

The Programme has been designed to support the Egyptian Government in implementing Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy (SADS).

Egyptian agriculture faces several challenges linked to the increasing land and water scarcity in the context of high population growth and limited government resources. First, water infrastructures and irrigation methods are less and less adapted to face the challenges of climate change and need to be upgraded. Second, smallholder farmers, who own the vast majority of the agricultural land in the Nile valley, hold on average less than 1 ha per farmer. This fragmentation is increasing as the population keeps growing. Third, despite most of them (if not all) belonging to agriculture cooperatives, smallholder farmers generally lack access to sufficient technical services, agricultural machinery, inputs and credit and need support to improve their practices and increase their profits.

The Programme will address the exposed challenges in the three governorates of Assiut, Sohag, and Beni Suef. It will include a solid environmental dimension, as it will help to protect the natural resources of the Nile Valley by supporting integrated farming and pest management and agricultural practices that reduce greenhouse gases emissions and that are adapted to climate change. This integrated Programme will also focus on strengthening access to education and training in the rural areas.

Beneficiaries

The primary targeted direct beneficiaries will be the rural communities of farmers and their cooperatives (producers' groups and producers' organizations), including community -based associations and civil society organizations.

The agricultural cooperative system in Egypt plays a significant role in providing smallholder farmers with agricultural inputs and services. Even so, this role has been diminishing recently due to budget constraints and the related cuts in the subsidy programs for agricultural inputs.

EU-ZIRA3A will help farmers to face joint market challenges and strengthen their bargaining power about production and marketing, including in local markets and for export purposes.

Particular attention will be paid to women and family organizations, which play an essential role to support and improve the socio-economic situation of rural women. In that regard, in each of the targeted governorates, a mapping of the existing women's organizations and their needs will be carried out during the initial period of the project implementation, and a specific support will be provided accordingly. Additionally, small business associations of non- agricultural sectors (e.g. artisans) will also be targeted.

The indirect beneficiaries will be the rest of the Egyptian citizens living in the rural communities.

Our Partners

- Ministry of International Cooperation (MoIC) will act as the "National Coordinator" of the Programme.
 - Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR)
 - Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI)
 - Ministry of Local Development (MLD)
 - Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE).
- More generally, the Programme implementation foresees as much as possible the involvement of different stakeholders both at governmental and non-governmental level, including private, local and international organizations.



Objectives

The overall objective of the programme is to improve the living conditions and revenues of the smallholder farmers and their communities in the governorates of Assiut, Sohag, and Beni Suef through a sustainable and integrated approach to rural development while addressing the issues of increasing resource scarcity in a context of quick population growth.

- In addition, there are two specific objectives:
- The central Egyptian authorities and their representations in the three governorates of Assiut, Sohag, and Beni Suef are reinforced in their action towards sustainable rural development of the Nile valley.
 - The capacities of the rural population in the three governorates of Assiut, Sohag, and Beni Suef are reinforced with increased agricultural economic opportunities, notably for women, and increased opportunities for training and education.



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



We are excited to present the issue no. Zero of EU-ZIRA3A newsletter. In this issue, we want to introduce the Programme, share the objectives. You will be receiving issue No.1 very soon.

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