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TRANSITIONING FROM CRISES

# Reinforcing Local Capacities for Stability

Strengthening natural-resource management capacity to restore agriculture in fragile contexts

## The issue

Conflict has a debilitating impact on any development effort. It severely affects a country's economy, diminishing food security and nutrition, which can, in turn, exacerbate tensions and increase the risk of further violence. While environmental factors are rarely, if ever, the sole cause of conflict, the exploitation of natural resources and related environmental stresses can feature in all phases of the conflict cycle, from contributing to the outbreak and perpetuation of violence to undermining the prospects for peace.

Land and water management, in particular, becomes a critical challenge in conflict or post-conflict situations and it is widely acknowledged that strengthening natural-resource management systems is key to the wider process of peace-building and sustainable development.

In post-conflict countries, the loss of human capital, as well as the out-migration of skilled professionals, is a critical factor. Without the contribution of knowledgeable professionals, the recovery process becomes even more complex.

This loss of human capital increases the challenges of operating and rebuilding sound land and water management systems and compromises governments' ability to address challenges related to natural resource planning.

## The action

The programme will focus on training in areas related to natural resource management in six countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence. It will provide training opportunities to national government experts and professionals, as well as to farmers, to upgrade their skills and knowledge. Training areas, target audiences, and scheduling will all be defined based on a consultation process to be conducted at country level.

In the long term, the project aims to lay the foundations for a system that, with the active participation of local government and non-government stakeholders, research centres and universities, guarantees the retention of the knowledge acquired. It aims to both preserve knowledge and equip people with new knowledge and innovations.

Training activities will not be limited to single training events, but be conceived as a comprehensive suite of learning opportunities for different types of trainee at different levels, including long-term knowledge exchanges, university-level curricula, access to cutting-edge technologies and expert networks.

## The issue in numbers



**24 million**

people forcibly displaced in Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and Afghanistan as of 2017



**14 million**

food-insecure people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen



**USD 7.2 billion**

of damage and loss to crop production in the Syrian Arab Republic as of 2017

## Programme targets



At least **1 200**

professionals trained in six countries



More than **30**

training courses organized each year



**4 500**

professionals, technicians and university students reached through e-learning courses

## The budget



**USD 9 million**



**3 years**



**6 countries**

## Expected results

- Key capacity gaps and opportunities are identified in the area of natural resource management and planning for sustainable agriculture;
- Natural resource management skills are upgraded through dedicated, tailor-made training in key post-crisis reconstruction areas (executive education and training in modern tools and approaches, e-learning courses, demonstration/study tours, South-South exchanges/pairing);
- An early recovery network of experts and technicians is set up and equipped with the necessary technology for assessing, planning and piloting natural resource management, investment and development projects.

## Geographic focus

The programme will focus on six countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence: Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

## In partnership with

**At national level:** national ministries of water, irrigation, agriculture and environment, and national water authorities and entities

**At global level:** the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas and the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

**National and regional implementing partners:** The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization–Middle East Desalination Research Center, the Shuhada Organization, the European Technology and Training Centre, the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, the Somali Natural Resource Research Center (Mogadishu, Somalia), in addition to universities, such as the University of Baghdad (Iraq), University of Tripoli (Libya), Kabul University (Afghanistan), University of Damascus (the Syrian Arab Republic), Benadir University (Somalia) and University of Sana'a (Yemen)



### SDG contribution



## Rebuilding Syrian natural-resource expertise

As a result of the seven-year Syrian crisis, most natural-resource management experts have either left the country or not been able to keep pace with or gain access to new technologies and innovations. To close this gap, FAO and its partners have engaged in a comprehensive effort to maintain and improve Syrian human capital by providing multi-sectoral training opportunities.

From 3 to 14 September 2018, experts from various Syrian ministries and organizations came together at FAO headquarters to learn about tools and methodologies to enhance the monitoring and reconstruction of natural resources in the Syrian Arab Republic. The feedback of participants was overwhelming, affirming that it is vital to reinforce and update skills and expertise and to transfer this knowledge to a wide pool of experts nationally.



## Why invest?

The programme has strong potential for scalability and sustainability, as it will partner with and embed training activities in national research centres and institutions. The different learning options proposed mean the programme can flexibly respond to different capacity needs and specific country contexts. Using well-established training modules and materials (including e-learning tools), FAO will ensure that training is readily available and scalable for different audiences and organizations. Beyond the initial set of six countries in focus, there is also the possibility to expand the programme to other countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence.

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