



PRESS RELEASE

Cairo, 30th November 2015

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE EU'S SUPPORT TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The European Union Delegation to Egypt and the Ministry of Agriculture & Land Reclamation (MoALR) are organising a conference to share the achievements of the Support to Rural Development Programme (SRDP) on Monday 30th November in Cairo. The Ministers of Agriculture, Water Resources & Irrigation, International Cooperation, Local Development, and the EU Ambassador to Egypt, will participate in this event. The Governors of Fayoum and Menia will also join with some small scale farmers (SSF) and the seven grant beneficiaries of the pilot SRDP.

The SRDP is a pilot project funded by the European Union. The Union of Producers & Exporters of Horticultural Crops (UPEHC) is entrusted by the MoALR to implement it. The SRDP contributes to the Ministry of Agriculture's commitment towards a National Strategy for Rural Development that includes a conditional incentives-based rural development (CIBRD) approach targeting SSF. The seven pilot projects have introduced a set of interventions to improve the income and the quality of life of SSF holding less than three feddans in six target villages of the Fayoum and Menia Governorates.

The implementation of these interventions required the commitment from SSF to adopt newly introduced agriculture practices (conditions) against which they received incentives to enable them to sustain these newly acquired practices contributing to Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and to better Natural Resource Management (NRM). The conditions are specific to each community and negotiated with SSF. They cover soil amelioration, rational use of water quantity and quality, respect for biodiversity and others. The incentives range from lining mesqa canals, levelling land, providing greenhouse and/or compost units, sorting, grading and packaging of harvested crops, introducing new crops, creating jobs and investing in appropriate modern technology for agriculture.

The CIBRD is being implemented for the first time in Egypt by seven grants beneficiaries (GBs) working with local communities over an initial period of 24 months which started in June 2013. This duration has been extended for all GBs for up to 16 additional months to allow the completion and assessment of the activities. The implementation of the pilot shows that SSF are willing to establish water users associations (WUA) and to contribute to mesqa rehabilitation to ensure an adequate distribution of irrigation water. Moreover, SSF also adopted the production of compost to reduce chemical fertiliser usage, improved seeds for better income, and they are experimenting ways towards better post-harvest management and group marketing.

The overall budget for the SRDP pilot is 10 million Euros, funded by the European Union through the European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

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“The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.