

ICARDA News
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IN THE DRY AREAS

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Afghanistan Needs Assessment Workshop on Livestock



Participants in the "Wrap-up Workshop for the Needs Assessments on Feeds, Livestock and Rangelands in Afghanistan," held at ICARDA, 14-17 July.

Aleppo, Syria (1 August): Afghan agriculturists and international experts met at ICARDA headquarters on 14-17 July for a Wrap-up Workshop for the Needs Assessment on Feeds, Livestock and Rangelands in Afghanistan.

The group came up with six "project ideas" with potential for short- and long-term impact in war-torn, drought-stricken Afghanistan. The ideas include work in institutional strengthening/human capacity building; improved dairy production; integrated small-ruminant production; integrated animal health management; animal power for tillage and transport; and village women's poultry production.

The workshop was the third step in the needs assessment process, which began with the collection of information mostly from agencies at work in Afghanistan, followed by a "rapid diagnostic survey" in 183 villages in five provinces. The survey found massive reductions in farm animals, reaching 70-75% for small ruminants and 80-85% for horses and camels.

At the workshop's opening session, ICARDA Director General Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy said "the process is more than an assess-



Dr Abdul Kader Raufi (left), President, Veterinary Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (MAAH), Afghanistan; Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy (center), Director General, ICARDA; and Dr Willie Erskine, ADG (Research), ICARDA, opened the workshop.

ment of needs; it should also identify the critical elements that need to be addressed in future project action plans."

The report from the needs assessment workshop will be used by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to select "quick-impact" and longer-term projects worthy of funding. USAID is the principal supporter of the ICARDA-led Future Harvest Consortium to Rebuild Agriculture in Afghanistan. In addition to arranging emergency shipments of seed in time for last spring's planting, the Consortium is carrying out four needs assessments, and facilitating in-country production of seed for fall planting.

More than 20 years of devastating war and three years of drought have left Afghanistan's agriculture sector close to ruin. About 80% of the Afghan population lives in rural areas.

The Afghanistan team included Dr Abdul Kader Raufi, President, Veterinary Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (MAAH), Mr Hanif Pader, President, Department of Animal Production, MAAH, Professor Rashid, Kabul University and Dr Wazir, ICARDA's focal point on livestock, based in Kabul.

The workshop also benefited from consultants in genetics, animal power, gender, and rangeland. Four United States Land Grant universities were part of the assessment team: University of California at Davis, Purdue University, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Texas A&M University. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Afghanistan Project fielded two experts for the assessment; one from the International Livestock Research Institute, and the other representing the Department for International Development and the Macaulay Institute in the UK.

The ICARDA team included Drs Luis Iñiguez; Abdul Bari Salkini; Richard Thomas; and William Erskine. The needs assessment team was led by Dr Euan Thomson, former small-ruminant scientist at ICARDA..