



Title of Proposed Project/Programme:

Emergency support to food insecure rural households through establishing home gardens in Iraq

Programme Description:

The project aims to improve food security and nutrition of the vulnerable rural households in Iraq with increased domestic production of vegetables that will be brought about by provision of necessary inputs, capacity building and technical support. The recent UN report has estimated a high level of food security and the Iraqi population. The impact Iraq has further aggravated the security and nutrition in Iraq. implementation of a quick impact will be done by assisting the production of fresh vegetables in for improved nutrition within a



has estimated a malnutrition among of the drought in situation of food There is need for porgramme. This rural households in their home gardens short span of time.

The production cycle of vegetables is short, leading to multiple crop production in a year. High quality vegetable seeds and other necessary agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and tools will be distributed and training of beneficiaries on best practices in the utilization of the provided inputs for year-round fresh production in readily available small space will be organized. The project will target food insecure rural households including marginal farmers, agricultural wage earners and those households who could also utilize available space for home-gardens. The total targeted beneficiaries are 5,000 rural households (comprised approximately of 32,000 individuals). The project activities will be concentrated in the Governorates of Erbil, Baghdad, Meysan, Thiqr and Basrah. The implementing partners of the project will be the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the international non-governmental organization, Mercy Hands.

Programme Costs:

Total Cost: US\$ 3, 000,000

Programme Location:

Governorate(s): Erbil, Baghdad, Meysan, Thiqr and Basrah

Programme Duration: 18 months

1. Situation Analysis :

Iraqi citizens depend largely for their basic food items on the public distribution system, but this excludes fresh food such as vegetables. Both the 2004 WFP Baseline and the 2006 Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis in Iraq stated that poor households lacked the purchasing power to supplement the ration with fresh vegetables. Decades of conflict had serious effect on Iraqis which consequently resulted in elevated unemployment and loss of wage earning powers. Recent UN WFP Comprehensive Food Security and Vulenerability Analysis of 2008 estimates that 3.1% of Iraq's population is food insecure with further 9.4% could slip to vulnerable to food insecurity. The national average malnutrition of Iraq is estimated at 4.7% acute malnutrition, 21.8% chronic malnutrition and 9.1% underweight (CFSVA 2008). The recent drought conditions experienced in the North, central as well as the marshlands in the South of Iraq has further lowered the production level of the food

crops including the vegetables. These situations have seriously impacted nutritional level of food insecure vulnerable rural households, and in particular children and women. .

Vegetables are good sources of vitamins and mineral for improved nutrition of the vulnerable people. In Iraq's crop production and food system, vegetables occupy important place with estimated 9.7% of the cropped area being under vegetable cultivation. The Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) estimated that in the year 2007, the major vegetables (tomato, eggplant, watermelon, okra, lettuce, onion, cauliflower, cucumber and gourd) were planted in an area of 230,000 ha with fresh produce amounting to 3,000,000 metric tons. ***It is estimated that the domestic production of vegetables meets only one-third of the national demand and the short-fall of two-third of the national requirement being met by imports from the neighbouring countries.*** This situation provides a ready market for the surplus vegetables production from the proposed project intervention.

In Iraq, it is estimated that the prices of vegetable seeds have increased by 30-40%, fertilizer prices by nearly 100%. Vegetable seeds and associated inputs need to be provided so that vulnerable households can quickly start the crop production cycle by setting up home gardens.

2. The Proposed Programme:

The project strategy is to focus its activities targeting the most vulnerable rural households to establish home vegetable gardens in order to improve food security and nutrition. Vegetable will be for both the summer and winter seasons leading to year-round production and enhanced labour productivity. The geographical areas most affected by recent drought conditions will be primarily targeted in addition to taking into consideration the findings of the UN WFP CFSVA (2008), which are:



- 3.1% of Iraq's population is food insecure and further 9.4% could slip to vulnerable to food insecurity;
- The national average malnutrition of Iraq is estimated at 4.7% acute malnutrition;
- 21.8% chronic malnutrition and 9.1% underweight.

Therefore the Governorates for the project implementations will be Erbil in the north, Baghdad in the centre and Meysan, Thiqr and Basrah in the southern marshlands.



Map of Iraq with project sites indicator

The concept of home gardening or kitchen gardening connotes undertaking activities in cultivation of common vegetable crops in a small parcel of land in the vicinity of the family dwelling utilizing the family labour in order to augment the nutrition levels. Primarily the aim is for meeting the family needs throughout the year; however surplus production could be sold in the market or to neighbours for additional income generation.

For home gardens cultivation, the seeds to be procured and distributed will comprise of tomato, eggplant, okra, cucumber, green bean, onion, lettuce, etc. which are suitable to Iraq's agro-ecology and cropping system. Both open-pollinated and hybrid seeds will be distributed. Other necessary inputs and tools required during nursery management and production phases will be distributed to the beneficiary households. Training will be provided to the beneficiaries in use of supplied inputs. Techniques of organic farming and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) will be part of capacity building.

The beneficiary selection criteria will be as follows:

- Rural farming households who are food insecure and vulnerable;
- Labour availability;
- Farming households with parcel of land and available water sources;

Project activities will primarily concentrate on:

- Preparation of technical specifications for seeds, fertilizers, tools and their procurement;
- Distribution of vegetable seeds and other inputs;
- Capacity building for establishing home gardens including utilization of seeds and other inputs with emphasis on GAP;
- Conduct training on drying of vegetables for preservation and use in non-productive seasons;

3. Anticipated Outcomes:

The major outcomes of this intervention are:

- Malnutrition level reduced;
- Employment generated;
- Rural income enhanced;
- Food security improved;

4. Implementation and Management:

The MoA technical staff in different levels will be involved in selection of beneficiaries and monitoring activities. The FAO would be responsible for appropriate utilization of the donor contributed fund. The FAO Special Emergency Program Services (TCES) will operate the project activities. To undertake project management and oversee the activities in the country, the FAO will provide the service of a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA). The overall technical supervision and necessary back-stopping for this project implementation will be provided by the FAO Crop Production and Protection Division (AGP). FAO will technically assess the requirements of necessary inputs and arrange procurement for the support of the home garden activities.

Letters of Agreement (LoA) and necessary contracts will be made with implementing partners the participating NGOs to undertake the project activities (e.g. inputs distribution) and to prepare monitoring reports.

5. Feasibility, risk management and sustainability of results:

This project provides agricultural inputs and skill development programme as an emergency assistant to improve food security and nutrition of vulnerable food insecure household in the rural areas of Iraq. The main activities consist of distribution of vegetable seeds and other inputs for home garden. As there is inadequacy of the improved vegetable seeds, the inputs provided by the project will be utilized by the targeted beneficiaries who will also be trained on the inputs use. A ready availability of the surplus fresh vegetables produced will encourage the beneficiaries to continue production beyond the project with the techniques and skills learnt through training.

The geographical targeting, beneficiary selection and inputs distribution will be executed with the involvement of implementing partners the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the INGO with their presence in Iraq and ability to be in contact with the beneficiaries. This situation will make the programme implementation need-based and feasible.

The involvement of the MoA during the implementation of the project will ensure the sustainability of the programme beyond the project period. Training component of the project will transfer technology to the farming households in improved techniques of vegetable production even during off-season period. The opportunity for use of labour and extra income will benefit the sustainability of the programme.

Procurement of open-pollinated seeds will encourage the local traders for supply seeds of indigenous varieties thus helping to conserve the local germplasm. Moreover, use of locally adapted open pollinated types allows for the farming households to save their own seeds which can be used for fresh production purpose for longer term sustainability.

The only element of risk would be a sustained drought primarily in the North where agriculture is rain-fed resulting in availability of water for home gardens.

6. Financial summary:

Budget Items	Amount (US\$)
Staff Cost	300,000 (10%)
Input Cost (includes cost of distribution and training for use)	2,340,000 (78%)
Administrative Cost (general operating cost)	150,000 (5%)
Administration Support Cost	210,000 (7%)
TOTAL	3,000,000