



November, 2007

Newsletter 2



Newsletter 2 - ComDev Near-East Portal

## Training Workshop *Communication for Development: Capacity Building for Practitioners* Amman, Jordan, 2 – 7 September 2007

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as "FAO") Regional Office for the Near-East, organized a training workshop in Communication for Development (ComDev) entitled "Communication Planning for Practitioners", in Amman, Jordan, from 2 – 7 September 2007. The workshop was organized in collaboration with the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) of the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the National Institute for Training in Amman.

The training workshop came in follow-up to the regional consultation on Communication for Development in the Near East, held in Cairo, Egypt, in June 2006 – in preparation for the 1<sup>st</sup> World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD 2006). Thematic studies conducted prior to the consultation revealed a critical deficiency in documentation coupled with a marked absence of skilled practitioners in the field. This was identified through the regional consultation and reiterated by the regional workshop on Reform of National Agricultural Extension Systems, held in Tunisia, in

September 2006.

ESDU has been teaming up with FAO in ComDev since the 9<sup>th</sup> UN Roundtable on Communication for Development which was held in Rome in 2005 and the first World Congress on Communication for Development which was organized by the World Bank and FAO in 2006.

**The training course was planned as a phased and continuing learning approach that engages participants through pre-assignments, structured training, field assignments, reflections and sharing of experiences with other trainees and practitioners via emails and internet-based forums.**

### Workshop Outputs

The workshop "Communication Planning for Practitioners" organized by ESDU and FAO took place in Amman Sep 2-7, 2007 and was attended by participants that have presented various case studies and have worked collectively to come up with proposals towards advancing Communication for Development in the region. The workshop was co-facilitated by two Canada-based ComDev consultants Ms.

Wendy Quarry and Dr. Ricardo Ramirez, with additional backstopping from Ms. May Hani from the FAO Regional Office for the Near East, Mr. Mario Accunzo from the FAO Communication Division in Rome and Mr. Ziad Moussa from ESDU. Ms. Silvia Balit, who headed the FAO Communication Division for 18 years was also invited as a special guest and resource person.

### This workshop included:

- An overview of the term "Communication for Development" with the aim of helping each participant "discover" his/her own particular definition
- An understanding of where and how communication can be deliberately enhanced within a development process
- Communication strategy building and the communication planning process.
- A taste of a range of communication tools and ideas to enhance the learning process.
- Stories from the field (failures and successes) to enhance understanding.
- Practical field work to practice different communication planning technique.
- Access to materials, methods and literature.
- A presentation on the ComDev portal for the Near East developed by ESDU in collaboration with FAO ([www.communicationfordevelopment-neareast.org](http://www.communicationfordevelopment-neareast.org)), to which the workshop participants committed in feeding success stories, best practices and ComDev documents from their respective country.

The workshop was planned as a step towards mainstreaming ComDev in agriculture, rural development and natural resource management programs and projects and aims to create a critical mass of skilled practitioners to draw on for the successful design and implementation of communication components in development projects in the Region. The **main objective of the workshop** was to identify key experiences, trends, needs and opportunities for advancing Communication for Development in the region.

*The workshop was attended by 31 participants from six countries : Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Palestine and Yemen.*



## Launching of the First E-forum and D-groups:

---

The E-forum was launched along with three D-groups, through ESDU, as of November 2007. E-mails have been sent in this concern, by the administrator, to all the participants of the workshop, FAO and ESDU group:

**E-forum Current Topic:** Enabling ComDev in the Near East: What would be the enabling factors that would help mainstreaming ComDev in the region?

### **Discussion Group 1: FAO Consultations**

The consultations lead by FAO (Tunis, Cairo, Amman) showed a wealth of best practices and innovative approaches to ComDev that are poorly documented and exposed:

- What can we do to reverse this trend?
- How will the portal help in this concern; your thoughts and ideas are welcomed

- What do we need to put in place as accompanying activities.

### **Discussion Group 2: Innovative ComDev strategies**

- What innovative ComDev strategies do you propose to use in your extension programs or projects in ENRM (Environmental and Natural Resource Management).
- Describe this strategy: approach, assessment of needs, innovative tools.
- Share the success factors, if you have a previous experience
- How would you evaluate the achievement of your goals?

### **Discussion Group 3: Share with us your suggestions**

What topics do you propose to discuss in the future D-groups?

### **For Participation in the debate:**

- Please register in the E-forum at [www.comdev-neareast.org/e-forum/](http://www.comdev-neareast.org/e-forum/)
  - Please register in the Discussion Groups at [www.comdev-neareast.org/d-groups/](http://www.comdev-neareast.org/d-groups/)
- An administrator approval will be sent to you later on, to be able to post messages.

### **Technical team**

---

The working technical team formed to establish the regional portal is composed of :

- Dr. Shadi Hamadeh, ESDU Coordinator (project manager)
- Mr. Ziad Moussa, ESDU Officer in charge of Capacity Development and Outreach (project coordinator)
- Dr. Salwa Tohme Tawk, ESDU Knowledge Management Officer (Technical Expert)
- Mr. Yarob Marouf, Marouf & Partners (IT specialist)
- Ms. Diana Abi-Said, ESDU Administrative Officer (Assistant Technical Expert)
- Ms. Layal Dandache, ESDU Executive Officer (additional backstopping)