

Development of Efficient Irrigation Technology and Extension, Syria

(Period of the study: 36 months from March, 2005 Our assignments: Training/Extension/Rural Society)

Background of the Study

Although irrigation is indispensable for the sustainable agricultural production in Syria belonging to the dry area, the depletion of water resource becomes serious problem due to recent increase of irrigated area. Since agriculture consumes more than 80% of the total water use, the efficient utilization of water is strongly needed. The government of Syria, therefore, decided to convert all the traditional surface irrigation systems to the modern systems such as sprinkler and drip between 2000 and 2004. Out of total 1,200,000 ha of irrigated area, however, sprinkler and drip irrigation systems have so far been introduced only 160,000 ha and 50,000 ha respectively. It means the irrigation modernization in the farmers' field is not in the expected progress. Under such circumstances, the government of Syria requested the implementation of the project on the development of efficient irrigation technology and extension by appointing the research and extension directorates under the Ministry of Agriculture as implementing agencies.

Outline of the Study

As for the development of water saving irrigation, the problems are (i) inadequate information for farmers on the proper operation of irrigation facilities, (ii) insufficient skills and capacities of extension agents to support such farmers and (iii) insufficient extension activities for farmers. Major activities of the current project are (i) introduction of proper irrigation facilities at the model farm, (ii) training of extension agents and (iii) extension activities for farmers. The training of extension agents aimed at the capacity building of extension agents in order for them to carry out needs assessment and proper diagnosis of irrigation facilities and farm economy. In the extension activity for farmers, it was programmed for the trained extension agents to accumulate their experiences through planning and implementation of various field activities such as field day and seminar based on the results of their own needs assessments and the skills obtained in the training.

Our Assignments

- Collection and analysis of information on existing training and extension activities,
- Selection of model farm site and formulation of model farm design,
- Assessment of training needs and preparation of training curriculum and materials,
- Preparation of training manual and implementation of training activities,
- Implementation of extension activities by the trained extension agents, and
- Preparation of extension materials (pamphlets and posters) and extension manuals.

