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June 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>

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now. There is now an increased drive to communicate lessons and results, and to scale-up the entire project approaches and the revival of Al Hima in other parts of the country as well as regionally.

Delays in access to project funds have slowed down implementation in early 2012 and IUCN must improve the speed of its financial reporting. IUCN must also clarify the current partnership arrangements in order to clarify co-finance matters, particularly in regards to the Jordanian Organic Society for Farmers (JOSF). Monitoring processes must now focus on methods for partners to track progress in governance, and how partners make linkages in governance changes to long term improvements in livelihoods and environmental conditions. A key evaluation outcome has been recognised and emphasised as the need for effective communication by IUCN, on the unique opportunities as well as challenges faced while conducting governance work. In particular that governance work, although slow to deliver tangible results in the short-term, has high value, long-term and large-scale benefits to be obtained by adopting a patient approach, low on cost, but highly demanding on time, human resources and monitoring.

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with European Commission expectations, to evaluate the progress of the project in Jordan (as part of a wider four-country evaluation). During the evaluation period, wider issues were explored – treating the EC project as a component of a longer-term initiative (Al Hima) that is emerging in Jordan.

The evaluation was conducted in an approach that complemented ongoing community-based participatory approaches that project partners and communities were familiar with. Participatory approaches were also used to ensure ownership by communities/partners, and allow the participants to reflect on participatory plans made in the previous two years.

The evaluation focused on the following five major issues (see Annex 1 for more detailed Terms of Reference):

1. Review progress in the implementation of project activities – are partners delivering according to the EC requirements? Are they on track to complete the project in the allotted time?
2. Review progress towards the project goals and objectives (review activities against the theory of change) – how are our activities taking us towards our objectives? What assumptions is the project making and how do they stand up to scrutiny?
3. Review of challenges – what challenges are being overcome? What challenges still need to be resolved, and what modifications to the project will this require? What lessons should be learned about project design based on these challenges?
4. How effective is the project monitoring strategy? What lessons is the project yielding so far and what more monitoring and evaluation is required?
5. What is already known about the next steps after this project is implemented? What follow up activities are needed and what are the fund raising priorities?

The evaluation consisted of a day with the IUCN project team identifying delivery challenges and updating on overall progress and constraints; a day with project partners and community delegates to evaluate project progress and also to demonstrate the participatory evaluation methodology to the participants; two days repeating the evaluation process in the project sites; a final day with



problems. The process of dialogue is at the heart of everything in the project: it is used to define activities, to establish partnerships, to find legal solutions over land disputes, and to identify and address policy gaps or barriers. The individual solutions differ in each case, and communities are supported to identify locally-acceptable opportunities. The four villages and their specific solutions are summarised as follows:

1. Bani Hashem: The community (supported by their governorate) has identified 1500 hectares of official forest land that they have described as "the last green area" in the rapidly industrialising Zarqa river basin. Negotiations between the Bani Hashem community and the Department of Rangelands, involving the prime minister's office were carried out to provide the community with the right to manage the lands as rangelands. Approval was given to the community to manage the 1500 Ha on the condition that the government maintained some control and management was successful. Bani Hashem has developed a local tribal law, called "Mathak Sharaf", to help enforce the new land management system by restricting grazing. Mathak Sharaf has been approved by the governor and strengthened through the support of the local police who can help enforce the law. The Ministry of agriculture has established a community group to take the process forward (the CBO is called Hima Bani Hashem).
2. Duleil: Duleil means "shade" in Arabic, an indicator of the once heavily forested area, now largely devoid of trees. After a community exchange visit Duleil community members have agreed to stop cultivating an area of approximately 100 hectares initially, to allow vegetative regeneration and provide livestock fodder. Atriplex seedlings were provided by the government to demarcate the boundary (atriplex is not a good fence, but it is an indigenous plant that thrives in these drylands).
3. Halabat: The community identified a significant area of land that is currently owned by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. They have negotiated with the department to have access to the land and to manage it in order to demonstrate improvements through livestock keeping

other ministries, are one of the most important outcomes of the project and are key to the overall success.

Community relations have changed, both within and between communities, through the dialogue processes. The communities have acted upon majority of the solutions they identified, an indication that internal dialogue has been constructive and solutions oriented. Similarly, the dynamic between communities has become more constructive. During the evaluation workshop with Bani Hashem and Hashmiyah, the Hashmiyah community stated that they were waiting to do more work until the government or another partner repaired a traditional water point. In riposte the Bani Hashem community said they were proud that they were achieving all their results alone and they were not waiting for anybody's support. This dynamic is very healthy and there is a sense of pride developing around the ability of each community to overcome their own challenges.

Gender relations have changed substantially during the project, with some actions implemented by women, but increasing scope for men and women to collaborate on natural resource management. The Bedouin communities have strong customs that have prohibited interaction between men and women in public fora, but this appears to be breaking down. During the Duleil and Halabat workshop, the Halabat women joined the Duleil group (which is dominated by women), since they are not permitted to interact in the public discussions with their own men. At this meeting the men from Halabat requested the women to join them, which was noted to be an important achievement.

The establishment of 4 hima sites is a major achievement, although two of the sites are very new and it remains to be seen if they can establish regulations. Nevertheless, the Bani Hashem and Duleil sites have been established for a year now and already show signs of increased vegetation cover. It may take a long time to demonstrate direct links to livelihood improvement, but in the meantime communities are benefiting from the encouragement of their own success and empowerment.

EC project) to revise the strategy so that it incorporates Al Hima as a management approach. This creates a good entry point for IUCN to achieve project objectives related to policy change. The Director of Rangelands has also expressed his motivation to see this project succeed, to see new

interested in collaborating on this project. IUCN should tap into this opportunity and others in order to accelerate rangeland improvements.

Similarly more effort is required in building income generating opportunities on the rangelands improvements. Communities showed a number of medicinal plants that have recovered during the first year of protection and plans should be taken forward to improve marketing and sustainable management of these resources. We recommend funds to be allocated towards processing facilities (e.g. making tea bags for infusions of medicinal plants like \_\_\_\_\_).

Community dialogue and mediating in conflict is a major challenge that will always be part of this type of governance work. It takes unique skills, and the successes in Jordan are testimony to two or three dedicated staff from within the project partnership as well as the dedication of a small number of key community members. The staff noted their genuine fear of land conflicts as they embarked on the work and have identified the reduction in hostilities as an important indicator of change and growing trust. The Director of rangelands also noted this challenge and highlighted the importance of carefully selecting and training the right people to ensure such work continues to escalate. Overall however partners have reported growing trust and willingness to confront and discuss land issues without fear that all such discussion automatically will lead to loss of land rights. An important lesson is that, given these understandable fears, community-to-community experience sharing (e.g. through exchange visits) is an important way to initiate the governance dialogue. In this regard, success should breed success as more opportunities for such dialogue are established.

Multistakeholder approval is essential to the long term success of this initiative, and local governance arrangements are initially fragile and could be undone by one non-cooperative investment from government or an international donor. However, all stakeholders have their goals and objectives and may be resistant to aligning their plans with those of the community. It is important to invest significant time and energy in building partnerships and gaining trust between all stakeholders (including international NGOs). A useful approach is to ensure that the community plans are truly owned by the community and represented as community plans, rather than the plans of the implementing agency (in this case IUCN or AWO). This can be challenging given the demands of each agency to see its brand or logo on all outputs. However, IUCN should continue to promote the community plans on behalf of the community and insist that new initiatives and investments respect and adhere (as far as possible) to the community-based process.

Flexibility is also an essential part of the governance approach, and is sometimes challenging given the need to adhere to pre-determined project plans. However, there has been value in being able to demonstrate to government and the community that IUCN is responsive: a key dimension of good governance. An example is the insistence of the government that IUCN add another site for the sake of local acceptability. Although this was outside the project plan it was felt important to respond to the government desires to show a collaborative and responsive spirit.

Patience and time are required to build relationships and there are concerns that the demand to deliver project outputs could encourage partners to move too fast for the communities. IUCN's slow pace of implementation in the first two years reflects the patient approach that has been taken and it is clear that, since community agreements have been reached solid foundations have been created for rapid implementation of follow on activities. Nevertheless, follow on projects must be designed



to allow continued dialogue and partners should avoid projects that demand rapid implementation on the ground.

Financial reporting has been the principal challenge in this project and has led to delay in implementation during 2012. The 2010 financial audit took 8 months to complete and therefore the 2011 funds did not arrive until mid-year 2012. However, work has resumed after a short delay and it is hoped that the 2011 report will be submitted more smoothly so that 2012 funds will arrive in good time. Specific training has been provided to the Jordanian finance officer to comply with EC regulations and ongoing support is now being provided from IUCN's Brussels office. Furthermore, IUCN has instituted 3-monthly reporting to identify reporting errors in advance of the annual report which is expected to speed up reporting in future.

Specific lessons and recommendations to the Jordanian project partners for strengthening their initiative.

Improve financial reporting. The coordination unit should give greater support to Jordan to speed up financial reporting processes. Measures have already been taken to improve reporting, including translating all receipts as they are received and preparing quarterly reports to the coordination unit so that anomalies can be addressed sooner.

Improve narrative reporting. The coordination unit recommends changing the style of reporting so that project logic and coherence is more evident. A revised reporting format will be used in future so that the project can report according to its own rationale first and then convert reports into specific EC formats as required. This will minimise overlap and misleading information since many activities contribute to multiple objectives.

Strengthen the provision of technical guidance on environmental management and rangelands management. In particular it is recommended to use the Al Hima approach to pioneer rangeland management practices that use herbivore impacts as a tool for better water and nutrient cycling. It is also recommended to monitor such approaches closely and communicate their benefits, and to use the EC project component on economic valuation to demonstrate the value of traditional herding and land management practices.

Specifics in project sites:

1. Bani Hashem – recommend to work on a rangelands management plan and conduct action research into rangelands management approaches that favour rehabilitation of the land. Recommend to invite the Royal Jordanian Botanical Society to advise on herd management strategies, including the use of penning animals on rangelands to concentrate manure/seeds on degraded patches and use of intensive short-term grazing practices. The flora assessment could be expanded to include a greater range of productive and non



Spend time and resources on stakeholder engagement. Although this is time consuming and expends a lot of energy, multi-stakeholder engagement is another key to success. Many partners collaborating to achieve the same ends will have a much greater combined impact than those same partners striving for different goals, or taking divergent approaches. The implication is that the underlying “good governance” that is established cannot be owned by one institution (in this case IUCN under the EC project). It should be owned by the community and they should be supported to insist that all development partners respect and support the rules and regulations. Evidently this requires intensive negotiation since many development partners will have established plans and expectations.

Flexibility in implementation of activities is vital, and is related to the previous point. All development partners must respect governance principles and this means being responsive and consultative. This principle fails if the development partner has a pre-ordained plan that they are obliged to adhere to. Project activities should be designed in such a way as to allow adequate flexibility and to be determined and driven by community plans.

Allocate sufficient resources to negotiation and relationship-building: do not dismiss workshops and planning meetings as trivial and unnecessary, but rather see them as integral and fundamental components of strengthening governance. The result is that it is possible to achieve striking outcomes at low overall cost, but with a high demand on human resource capacity (skills as well as time, staff as well as communities). The current project design, with its significant space for CEMPing (Community Environmental Management Planning), illustrates how planning can be an integral project component or objective rather than a precursor to project delivery.

Monitoring of behavioural change is essential but challenging. The outcomes of good governance are changes in attitude and practice, and this is expected to lead to long-term sustainable desired changes in terms of real impacts. Outcome-mapping approaches are strongly recommended to track changes in relationships between different stakeholders and have been initiated through the Theory of Change exercise (see annex to this report). Short-term reliance on impact indicators is discouraged as it is likely to push interventions towards immediate deliverables with no regard for process and sustainability.

Give greater priority to high-quality monitoring of such complex process-based initiatives. In future all initiatives should allocate greater resources for monitoring and see monitoring and evaluation as part of the participatory process rather than an extractive assessment – monitoring of governance can be part of an adaptive management strategy used by communities and other local partners. Ideally monitoring tools should be designed and implemented at project inception and the project should conduct an appropriate and thorough baseline which are then built upon and revisited at the end of projects to analyse the change in both quantitative and qualitative means. However, in reality the process of implementing good governance is highly informative and difficult to predict and therefore monitoring strategies must be flexible and responsive and must change iteratively during the project.

Give greater priority to monitoring environmental indicators. Indicators of ecosystem change and changes in species diversity can be highly informative of underlying governance improvements. They also address a major motive of participating communities: this evaluation demonstrated that economic motives are not the sole driver of participation. At project inception a biodiversity

monitoring strategy should be established that can be repeated on a biannual basis to take into account seasonality. Community members can devise and adopt the monitoring techniques with technical support, and continue to use it as a tool to measure how effective their management practices are into the future.

Build capacities and sensitivity for strengthening governance. People that can work effectively with communities often make it look simple, whilst other people are unable to grasp even basic concepts: a lot of the difference is down to the character and values of the individual and this is difficult to

2. Increase the level of high quality technical advice to the project sites, in the fields of rangelands

Davies, 20/04/2012

Objective of the evaluation: review project progress, identify challenges and propose modifications for finalisation of the project

6. Review progress in the implementation of project activities – are we delivering according to the donor requirements? Are we on track to complete the project in the allotted time?
7. Review progress towards the project goals and objectives (review activities against the theory of change) – how are our activities taking us towards our objectives? What assumptions are we making and how do they stand up to scrutiny?
8. Review of challenges – what challenges are being overcome? What challenges still need to be resolved, and what modifications to the project will this require? What lessons should we learn about project design based on these challenges?
9. How effective is the project monitoring strategy? What lessons is the project yielding so far and what more monitoring and evaluation is required?
10. What do we already know about the next steps after this project is implemented? What follow up activities are needed and what are the fund raising priorities?

Review of Theory of Change together with key project partners and community representatives

How is the ToC understood amongst these stakeholders?

How well does the ToC actually represent what we are trying to achieve?

What important issues are overlooked by the ToC?

What is the audience for the lessons learned in project implementation? How can relevant information be conveyed – how can ICUN learn as an institution?

Areas of intervention that need continuation

Areas of interventions worth scaling up

Opportunities for project continuation – compared with IUCN exit strategy

Roles and responsibilities for next steps in project development or continuation

This outline does not allow for travel to the field. Additional days should therefore be inserted where required. This plan can be modified according to the needs of each country.

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| Day 1 | Review of project documentation with project team, meetings with support staff and technical coordinators  |
| Day 2 | Meeting with key project partners – full day (6 hours)<br>Simple workshop format with presentations of project outline, feedback on progress and partnerships, breakout sessions to discuss performance etc.<br>Anticipate 2-4 government participants, 2-4 NGO participants and 2-4 community representatives |
| Day 3 | Meeting with communities   |



| Day                  | Meeting   | Key questions  | Methodology |
|----------------------|---|--|-------------|
| Sun 24 <sup>th</sup> | IUCN project team, support staff and technical coordinators – IUCN ROWA Office Fadi / Fida/ Amer (FC) , Lara(PD) and RD | Review of the Mid Term Evaluation Process<br>Review of documentation<br>Review of work plan and deliverables |             |

Form groups to address the following questions. Groups should be split appropriately – for example by gender.

1. Overall what are we trying to achieve?
  - a. We will try to get everybody to articulate exactly what are the higher ambitions of the project – 30 minute discussion
2. Groups to discuss the questions in the grid below (we will discuss these at length first to see if we all agree)
  - a. Group discussion for up to 2 hours followed by feedback to the wider group

| What did you plan to do? | Why was this relevant to the overall goal? | What did you achieve? | What didn't you achieve? | What constrained you? | What will you do differently next time? | What lessons can you take for the future? | How will actions be sustained beyond the project? |
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|                          |  |                       |                          |                       |   |   |   |

Questions for general discussion after the group work:

1. What is the value of participatory planning? Is it just about delivering our project or are there bigger ambitions?
2. What is the technical merit of the different interventions? How are we contributing to reversing desertification etc.?
3. Sustainability: how is our work helping to change things in the long term? What should be the next steps to maintain continuity and achieve sustainability?

1. Most significant change exercise
2. Range ecology presentation

1. Other deliverables –

