

## PROJECT FACT SHEET

### MENARID

#### PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

Starting Date: 2010  
GEF Budget \$ 4,320,000.00  
UNDP TRAC Budget \$ 200,000.00  
Government Funding \$14,600,000.00  
Implementing Partner: FRWO.  
Location: Tehran, Semnan, Kermanshah, Sistan&Baluchistan, and Yazd

#### Why is it important ?

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region hosts some of the driest countries in the world with a rainfall of less than 200 mm/yr in its hyper-arid eco-zones and is subject to frequent drought and unpredictable rainfall. Iran faces similar issues. Land degradation and desertification are increasing problems, leading to biodiversity loss, deforestation and cropland reduction. This is twinned with rural poverty. Despite improvements in tackling root causes of land degradation and mitigating the impact of ecological and climatic change, challenges in enacting and enforcing environmental regulations and conservation policies remain. The MENARID project intends to play a catalytic role in addressing these issues through removal of barriers to *integrated natural resources management* (INRM) which is seen as an instrumental solution.

The project was initiated in 2010 jointly between the Global Environmental Fund (GEF), UNDP and the Forest, Rangeland and Watershed Management Organization (FRWO) of Iran. It is being implemented in pilot sites in Tehran, Semnan, Sistan & Baluchestan, Kermanshah and Yazd provinces: focusing on institutional strengthening and promoting all stakeholders participation.

#### Goals and Objectives

The project will contribute to the four GEF focal areas; Land Degradation, Biodiversity, Climate Change mitigation and International Waters. It has three main goals: 1) producing enhanced knowledge and understanding of the drivers of natural resource and land-use change causing ecosystem degradation with consequent impact on ecosystem services and local livelihoods; 2) developing an enabling environment for INRM and the use of the enhanced knowledge; 3) establishing community-driven, climate-resilient approaches and techniques for sustainable land and water management demonstrated through INRM practices.

### How will we reach it ?

The project prioritises institutional strengthening along with the engagement and mobilization of the all stakeholders (including local communities). Strategic interventions in awareness raising and sensitization, in training, in participatory processes, in INRM practice and policy, in demonstration activities in four types of agro ecosystems (rangelands, rain-fed agriculture, irrigated agriculture, and forest/woodlands) will be undertaken: to enhance ecosystem resilience, land productivity, water-use efficiency and carbon sequestration - while reducing the vulnerability of local communities to drought.

### What have we achieved so far ?

The project has initiated: identification of constraints to INRM in Iran and stock taking of local best practices; mobilised communities and local governance systems in four provinces towards participatory and integrated approaches to planning; initiated combined watershed based and District level “strategic planning” – with support of four institutional layers, including national MoJA (FRWO), Provincial Governor General, District Governor and Community Councils / Committees; prompted use of alternative livelihoods approaches and new clean energy techniques at community level; developed models and *Standard Operating Procedures* to facilitate community based INRM processes; undertook South South Cooperation study tour to see India’s institutional approaches and mechanisms.