

WFP and ICBA partner to strengthen water governance and climate-smart agriculture for food security

Dubai, United Arab Emirates – 15 July 2026 – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in partnership with the [International Center for Biosaline Agriculture](#) (ICBA) and with financial support from Global Affairs Canada (GAC), has launched the MURUNA (“resilience” in Arabic) project to strengthen Iraq’s climate resilience. Iraq continues to face serious challenges to food security, with an estimated 2.5 million people requiring humanitarian assistance.

Increasing droughts, desertification, rising temperatures, and dwindling water flows in the Tigris and Euphrates pose increasing threats to rural communities - undermining agricultural productivity, reducing arable land, and exacerbating food insecurity across the country. Implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Water Resources, the MURUNA project will help Iraqi communities to address water scarcity through three interconnected approaches: inclusive water governance, improved community-level water management, and climate-smart agriculture.

The project will support water planning and decision-making processes at the national level, while working with water user associations to develop water use plans and to improve water infrastructure. These efforts will promote fair and efficient water allocation, and strengthen local participation, with a strong focus on supporting women. The project will also help vulnerable communities and farmers advance climate-smart agriculture by introducing innovative agricultural technologies and practices to strengthen long-term resilience to future shocks.

This project is made possible thanks to the support of Global Affairs Canada (GAC), whose funding enables ICBA and WFP to deliver sustainable solutions for Iraq’s water and food security challenges. ICBA’s role as the strategic partner in the project highlights the shared commitment to climate resilience and sustainable agriculture.

“Water is at the heart of Iraq’s future food security,” said Amit Singh, WFP Iraq’s Acting Country Director. “By investing in sustainable water governance and climate-smart agriculture, we are not only protecting livelihoods today but also securing resilience for generations to come.”

“ICBA is proud to partner with WFP, with the support of Global Affairs Canada, on the MURUNA project, which brings together stronger water governance, community-led resource management, and climate-smart agriculture,” said Dr. Tarifa Al Zaabi, Director General of ICBA. “For rural communities facing increasing climate pressures, resilience depends on practical solutions that work on the ground. Through MURUNA, ICBA will contribute its expertise to help farmers adapt and strengthen long-term food security in Iraq. This is where science can make a real difference - by turning research into practical solutions that strengthen livelihoods and build long-term agricultural resilience in Iraq.”

The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change

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About ICBA

Established by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Development Bank, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is a unique international not-for-profit applied research-for-development center. The center’s approach integrates strategic alliances, technical expertise, and knowledge empowerment to co-create innovative solutions for sustainable livelihoods and food security in saline and arid environments. The center’s research is at the nexus of soil, water, crops, and climate to prevent, manage and recover from salinity in agricultural lands. Through this holistic and integrated approach, ICBA strives to make a lasting positive impact on the lives and livelihoods of farming communities, ensuring their resilience and contributing to a more sustainable future for all. www.biosaline.org