



# Capacity Building Workshop on Genetic Resources for CGIAR Scientists and Partners from Near East and Neighbouring Countries

*17 – 20 September 2018,  
ICARDA, Beirut, Lebanon*

Alliance



Genebank Platform



Organized by the CGIAR Genebank Platform,  
in coordination with ICARDA and AARINENA

## Acknowledgements

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### Alliance



The Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) delivers research-based solutions that harness agricultural biodiversity and sustainably transform food systems to improve people's lives. Alliance solutions address the global crises of malnutrition, climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.

The Alliance is part of CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food-secure future.

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## Report on the ‘Capacity Building Workshop on Genetic Resources for CGIAR Scientists and Partners from Near East and Neighbouring Countries’, 17 – 20 September 2018, ICARDA, Beirut, Lebanon.

In September 2018, the CGIAR Genebank Platform Policy Module joined the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA) to organize a capacity building workshop on genetic resource policies for CGIAR scientists and partners from Near East and neighbouring countries. The workshop was held from 17 - 20 September 2018, hosted by ICARDA, at the Lancaster Plaza Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon.

This event brought together 20 staff members from 6 CGIAR Centres (including genebank managers and technical staff, plant breeders, senior scientists, legal counselor and genetic resources policy specialists), 16 representatives of national agricultural research organizations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon,

Oman, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and representatives of the Secretariats of the [International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#) (ITPGRFA), the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD) and the coordination team of the [Global Project on Access and Benefit Sharing of the United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP).

### Objectives

The workshop was designed to increase participants’ understanding of the CGIAR Centres’ obligations vis-à-vis international treaties and conventions dealing with access and benefit-sharing, and how these international instruments influence the day-to-day management of scientists, researchers and support staff involved in the management of plant germplasm collections



and plant breeding programmes at national and international levels.

Given the direct relevance of the ITPGRFA to these activities, the workshop also focused on increasing participants' knowledge of the multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing (ABS) of the ITPGRFA and their self-confidence in using the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) for the acquisition and transfer of plant genetic resources.

One of the main workshop goals was also to increase participants' awareness of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and how the translation of this Protocol into national laws can affect the management and sharing of plant genetic resources.

In short, the workshop sought to enhance participants' capacities to make practical and concrete decisions about what protocols and transfer agreements they can or must apply when acquiring or transferring plant genetic resources. The workshop was also an opportunity to expose participants to supporting material and resource people that can help them deal with policy and legal issues when managing genetic resources.

## Setting the scene

The first session of the workshop started with a general overview of the ITPGRFA by a CGIAR expert, with a close look at the multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing and its practical implications for those who collect, conserve, utilize and share plant genetic resources. A member of the Secretariat of the CBD presented the main elements of the Nagoya Protocol and highlighted the mechanisms that the Protocol requires countries put in place, in order to monitor user compliance with access and benefit-sharing (ABS) obligations. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and introduce issues for general discussion.

As part of this session, the focal points for the ITPGRFA of Lebanon and Oman made presentations about their countries' experiences implementing the CBD and the ITPGRFA. They

put the accent on how they had regulated the access to plant genetic resources, and the sharing of the benefits arising from their use. In this way, participants from the CGIAR and from partner organizations became familiar with the laws in these countries and acquired ideas about practical approaches for making these international conventions work at the national level.

## Implications for daily operations

The second, third and fourth sessions of the workshop were dedicated to looking in detail at the legal and policy issues that may arise at the time of acquiring, using and transferring plant genetic resources and information during the course of genebanks' and researchers' regular work with plant genetic resources. Participants from ICARDA, CIP and ICRISAT made introductory presentations to explain the context in which they acquire, use and transfer genetic resources respectively. The presenters explained the legal and policy challenges they encounter. These presentations were followed by lively question and answer sessions in which participants compared experiences and raised more questions. These introductory presentations about Centres' practical experiences were complemented by a presentation looking at due diligence obligations on ABS, derived from the Nagoya Protocol. A member of the coordinating team of the Global ABS Project of UNDP made this presentation.

After each of these introductory presentations, the workshop participants worked on practical exercises on possible scenarios in small groups. These scenarios described real life situations that different actors involved in the use of plant genetic resources face, involving ABS issues. They included a series of questions that fostered discussion and experience sharing within the small groups. Back in the plenary, representatives of each small group presented the main points of the discussions and the conclusions at which they had arrived. Expert resource persons encouraged discussions on different points of view, provided guidance where the small groups raised unanswered questions, and elaborated on the small groups' considerations when





useful. Participants' inputs and discussions on the scenarios helped enrich the training material for subsequent similar workshops, as well as guidelines and other tools that are currently being developed by the Policy Module.

These sessions finished with an overall presentation on the need to implement the ITPGRFA and the Nagoya Protocol in a mutually supportive manner. This presentation built upon the workshop's main discussions and key messages and framed them within the general objectives of climate change adaptation and sustainable agricultural production.

### Improving genebank operations and recognizing farmers' rights

The last session of the workshop included a presentation by the genebank manager of CIP on approaches and tools for improving genebank communications and as such, enhancing availability and accessibility of *ex situ* collections. Finally, following an online presentation by members of the Secretariat of the ITPGRFA, participants discussed possible ways to recognize

and promote farmers' rights as part of the work as genebank managers, breeders, research leaders and technical advisors to their national governments. A strong recommendation came from them that in future similar workshops, representatives of farmers' associations could be invited to participate.

### Visit to ICARDA Genebank

The workshop provided the participants with the unique opportunity to visit the ICARDA genebank in the Beqaa Valley of Lebanon. In recent years, the ICARDA genebank has undergone a process of reallocation of the collections and its main activities. The ICARDA genebank was established in 1985 at Tel Hadiya, Syria. Since 2012, the Syrian conflict has affected the genebank's core activities of regeneration, characterization, conservation and distribution. To resume these activities, in September 2014, ICARDA made the decision to relocate its genebank activities to Lebanon and Morocco. Since 2015, genebank and field facilities have been established in these two countries. Participants from national organizations were





close collaborators of ICARDA, many of whom had not yet had the chance to visit ICARDA's new facilities in Beqaa, where currently an intensive programme of regeneration and characterization is underway to reconstitute the active and base collections. It is expected that the whole process will last until 2030, to allow the regeneration of forage and range lands for which seed production requires special isolation conditions, and facilitated pollination using bumble bees. This visit was also a great opportunity for colleagues from other CGIAR Centres to get to know the latest technologies used in the genebank.

The Annexes to this report include the workshop agenda with links to online presentations, list of participants and the scenarios and practical exercises utilized.



*The workshop has been fruitful. It has included clear and useful lectures that have addressed most of my questions. It has helped national focal points and national authorities understand how to apply access and benefit sharing rules under both the ITPGRFA and the Nagoya Protocol. We have also benefitted from discussions among the participants and lecturers. This has helped clarify many misconceptions about the multilateral system of the Plant Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol.*



Ali Chehade, Researcher at the Institut de Recherches Agronomiques Libanais (IRAL), Lebanon and Focal Point for the ITPGRFA in Lebanon.



*Knowing about something is good, understanding it is better. Many times, I used the SMTA because I was obliged to, but when I attended the workshop on PGRFA in Beirut-Lebanon I started understanding why I was using it; and why, when and where it must be used.*



Brighton Gapare, ICRISAT Genebank, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.



*This was a good opportunity to learn about the ITPGRFA, the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol, and about norms on access to genetic resources, sharing of benefits arising from their utilization, etc. It was also interesting to have hands-on experience through practical case studies and identify the best legal ways of sharing breeding material to the global research community. To be frank, this was time I studied intricacies of SMTA and its importance while sharing germplasm with researchers. This workshop made me familiar with the process, resource people and material which can help us to deal with policy and legal issues when managing genetic resources.*



Anupama Hingane, Pigeonpea breeder, ICRISAT, Patancheru, India.



## ANNEX 1 - Agenda

### Capacity Building Workshop on Genetic Resources for CGIAR Scientists and Partners from Near East and Neighbouring Countries, 17 - 20 September 2018, Lancaster Plaza Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon.

#### DAY 1: Monday, 17 September 2018

8.00	Registration	
<b>Opening</b>		
9.00	Welcome and opening	Hassan Machlab, Country Manager (ICARDA-Lebanon)
	Participants' introductions and expectations	All
	Objectives of the workshop. Program overview, adoption	Isabel López Noriega (Bioversity International)
9.40	Brief Introduction to the Genebank Platform and its modules	Dave Ellis (CIP), Isabel López Noriega
10.00	Coffee break	
<b>General introduction to International Policies affecting centres' use of genetic resources and national experiences in implementing those policies</b>		
10.30	<a href="#">A close look at the Multilateral System of access and benefit sharing and the SMTA (Standard Material Transfer Agreement)</a>	Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton (IRRI)
12.00	<a href="#">Emerging issues and ongoing negotiations</a>	Isabel López Noriega
13.00	Lunch	
14.30	Shaping small working groups and Genetic resource policy quiz	Facilitated by Mohammed Ajlouni and Mariana Yazbek (ICARDA)
15.00	<a href="#">Implementing the ITPGRFA and the CBD in Omant</a>	Ali Al-Lawati (OAPGRC, Oman)
15.30	Coffee break	
16.00	<a href="#">Presentation of the Nagoya Protocol</a>	Beatriz Gómez (CBD Secretariat), on line
16.30	<a href="#">Implementing the ITPGRFA and the CBD in Lebanon</a>	Ali Chéhadé (LARI, Lebanon)
17.00	Closure of the day	



## Day 2: Tuesday, 18 September 2018

Acquiring genetic resources and information in compliance with international and national laws (and figuring out what to do when there are no laws)		
8.00	<a href="#">Introductory presentation on how users acquire materials and policy challenges they encounter: ICARDA genebank experience</a>	Mariana Yazbek and Ahmed Amri (ICARDA)
8.45	<a href="#">Ensuring due diligence under the Nagoya Protocol</a>	Claudio Chiarolla (UNDP)
9.30	Small groups work through scenarios regarding the application of ABS laws to acquiring genetic materials and information.	Exercise introduced by Isabel López Noriega
10.00	Coffee break	
10.45	Feedback from small groups and discussions in plenary	
11.30	Trip to Terbol	
13.00	Lunch in Terbol	
14.00	Visit to ICARDA genebank in Terbol and Baalbek	
Around 19.00	Trip back to Beirut	

## Day 3: Wednesday, 19 September 2018

Using and transferring genetic resources in compliance with applicable laws (and figuring out what to do when there are no laws)		
9.00	<a href="#">Introductory presentations on how genebanks and breeders distribute materials, to different users, for different purposes, and the policy challenges they encounter. CIP genebank and ICRISAT breeding experiences.</a>	David Ellis (CIP) Srinivasan Saminemi (ICRISAT)
10.30	Coffee break	
11.00	Small groups work through exercises/ scenarios that raise key issues related to the application of different international and national laws to uses and distribution of genetic resources and information (including traditional knowledge) in a range of different contexts and for a range of different purposes.	Exercise introduced by Isabel López Noriega
12.30	Genetic resources policy quiz	Facilitated by Dr. Amri and Mariana Yazbek
13.00	Lunch	
14.30	Feedback from small groups, and discussion in plenary	
15.30	Coffee break	
16.00	<a href="#">Presentation and discussion in plenary on the importance to implement the Nagoya Protocol and the ITPGRFA in a mutually supportive manner</a>	Isabel López Noriega
16.30	Small groups work through exercises/ scenarios that present situations in which the ITPGRFA and the Nagoya Protocol overlap.	Exercise introduced by Isabel López Noriega
17.00	Closure of the day	
Evening	Group dinner	





#### Day 4: Thursday, 20 September 2018

Using and transferring genetic resources in compliance with applicable laws (and figuring out what to do when there are no laws) (cont.)		
9.00	Feedback from small groups and discussions in plenary	
10.00	<a href="#">Improving genebank communications and operations for germplasm distribution: Experiences from CIP</a>	Noelle Anglin (CIP)
10.30	Coffee break	
Implementing farmers' rights and sharing non-monetary benefits		
11.00	<a href="#">Introductory presentation on farmers' rights and non-monetary benefit-sharing</a>	Mario Marino and Tobias Kiene (ITPGRFA Secretariat)
12.30	Feedback from small groups and discussions in plenary	
13.00	Workshop evaluation and closure	Facilitated by Dr. Ajlouni
13.30	Lunch	

## ANNEX 2 - List of participants

**Capacity Building Workshop on Genetic Resources for CGIAR Scientists and Partners from Near East and Neighbouring Countries, 17 - 20 September 2018, Lancaster Plaza Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon.**

N°	Name	Position and Organization	Email
1	Ahmed Amri	Head of ICARDA Genebank, Rabat, Morocco	a.amri@cgiar.org
2	Aladdin Hamwih	Chickpea breeder, ICARDA Cairo, Egypt	a.hamwih@cgiar.org
3	Ali Allawati	Genetic Resource expert. Animal and Plant Genetic Resource Centre, Oman	ali.allawati@trc.gov.om
4	Ali Chéhadé	Research Engineer (Department of Plant Biotechnology) Institut de Recherches Agronomiques Libanais (IRAL) P.O Box 287, Zahlé Lebanon	alichehade@hotmail.com
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6	Andrea Nour	Legal Counselor, ICARDA Cairo, Egypt	a.nour@cgiar.org
7	Anupama Hingane	Pigeonpea breeder. ICRISAT, Patancheru, India	h.anupama@cgiar.org
8	Asif Javed	Principal Scientist Officer, Plant Genetic Resources Institute NARC, Islamabad, Pakistan	javaidpgri@gmail.com
9	Aziz Niane	International Nurseries, ICARDA Lebanon	a.niane@cgiar.org
10	Beatriz Gómez (online)	CBD Secretariat, Montreal, Canada	beatriz.gomez@cbd.int
11	Brighton Gapare	ICRISAT Genebank, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe	b.gapare@cgiar.org
12	Claudio Chiarolla	Regional coordinator ABS Global Project United Nations Development Programme, Istanbul, Turkey	claudio.chiarolla@undp.org
13	Dave Ellis	Head of CIP Genebank, Lima, Peru	d.ellis@cgiar.org
14	Fadilah Al Salameen	Research Scientist & Acting Program Manager, Biotechnology Program (BT) Environmental & Life Science Research Centre, (ELSRC) Institute for Scientific Research, Kuwait	fslamian@kisr.edu.kw

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17	Hiba Docmac	Seed Bank Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI) Tel Amara Station, Rayak, Lebanon	
18	Isabel López Noriega	Policy Specialist Bioversity International CGIAR Genebank Platform	i.lopez@cgiar.org
19	Joelle Breidy	Seed Bank Manager Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI) Tel Amara Station, Rayak, Lebanon	jbreidy@lari.gov.lb
20	Khaled Mohammad Ali Abulaila	The national Center for Agricultural Research and Extension, Amman, Jordan	kabulaila@gmail.com
21	Lamis Chalak	Professor at the Lebanese University; Head of the National Committee for Plant Genetic Resources at the Ministry of Agriculture	lamis.chalak@gmail.com
22	Maeen Ali Ahmed Al-Jarmouzi	General Director, National Genetic Resource Center P.O. Box 87148, Dhamar Yemen	maeen1@yahoo.com
23	Mariana Yazbek	Head of ICARDA Genebank, Lebanon	m.yazbek@cgiar.org
24	Mario Marino (online)	Officer Secretariat ITPGRFA, Rome, Italy	mario.marino@fao.org
25	Mohammed Ajlouni	Coordinator of AARINENA (based in ICARDA Jordan)	m.ajlouni@cgiar.org
26	Mona Siblini	Head of the Department of Horticulture at the Ministry of Agriculture. Co-chair of the National Committee for Plant Genetic Resources. Lebanon	monasiblini@hotmail.com msiblini@agriculture.gov.lb
27	Mujibur Rahman Arifi	Gene Bank and Database Specialist Agriculture Research Institute Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and livestock. Kabul, Afghanistan	nasrati.mujiib@gmail.com
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29	Muhammad Kashif Ilyas	Senior Scientist Office, Plant Genetic Resources Institute NARC, Islamabad, Pakistan	kashifnarc@gmail.com
30	Noelle Anglin	CIP Genebank, Lima, Peru	n.anglin@cgiar.org



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31	Omer Tahseen Salahaldeen Al-Qaltaqge	Assistant manager of plant genetic resources department. Seed testing & certification Directorate. Ministry of Agriculture, Baghdad, Iraq	omer_tahseen@yahoo.com
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34	Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton	Head of Genebank, IRRI, Los Baños, Philippines	r.hamilton@irri.org
35	Rusudan Mdivani	CIP Region coordinator, Tsibili, Georgia	r.mdivani@cgiar.org
36	Safa Kumari	GHU, ICARDA Lebanon	s.kumari@cgiar.org
37	Safa Mohamed Naseer Al Farsi	Director of Seed and Plant Genetic Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Oman	
38	Srinivasan Samineni	Senior Scientist, Chickpea breeding, ICRISAT, Patancheru, India	s.srinivasan@cgiar.org
39	Tobias Kiene (online)	Officer Secretariat ITPGRFA, Rome, Italy	tobias.kiene@fao.org
40	Yousef Waghani	Head of Genetic Resources Unit. General Commission for Scientific Agricultural Research. Syrian Arab Republic	



## ANNEX 3 - Scenarios and practical exercises

### Capacity Building Workshop on Genetic Resources for CGIAR Scientists and Partners from Near East and Neighbouring Countries, 17 - 20 September 2018, Lancaster Plaza Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon.

#### Acquiring germplasm

##### **CASE 1: Acquiring PGRFA found in *in situ* conditions**

You are a genebank manager and are planning to organize a collecting mission to collect samples of crop wild relatives of wheat in two countries which are parties to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. You know that wild relatives grow in certain protected areas managed by the Ministries of Environment, in public lands managed by municipal governments and in private farms.

Based on the ITPGRFA, what access and benefit-sharing rules do you think these countries should apply to your collecting mission?

Would it be appropriate anyone in the country (e.g. the national authorities and/or the owner or manager of the land you collect from), to ask you to acquire the material under a SMTA? Can they request you to obtain other permissions in addition to the SMTA?

Will the procedures and conditions for access be different depending on where the samples are found (i.e. private vs. public lands; managed by the central government vs. managed by local governments)?

##### **CASE 2: Breeder to breeder transfer**

You are a CGIAR breeder working with several breeders in national agricultural research organizations. For decades, you have exchanged germplasm with these breeders as part of formal and informal research collaborations. Often, you have not used any material transfer agreement.

You would like to obtain samples of maize from some colleague breeders who work in the national agricultural research organization of a country which is neither a party to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture nor to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing.

You are confident that the results of your maize breeding will result in new varieties being released in a number of countries which are parties to the Nagoya Protocol and which are putting in place monitoring mechanisms for monitoring compliance with national access and benefit-sharing laws.

How should you approach the acquisition of maize germplasm from your colleague breeders? What documentation would be necessary for you to feel comfortable with such acquisition, if any?

##### **CASE 3: Identifying MLS material in national genebank**

You are the manager of the national genebank. You are preparing a notification for the Secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in which you will inform about the PGRFA within the national genebank that are included in the multilateral system of the Treaty according to Article 11.2 of the Treaty.

The genebank includes PGRFA which were collected in, or obtained from other countries before the entry into force of the Treaty.

Can these PGRFA be included in the multilateral system? Please provide the reasons for your response.

## Transferring germplasm

### **CASE 4: Genebanker's uncertainty**

You are the head of the national genebank. Your genebank holds a wide range of both Annex I and non-Annex I materials that have been collected over the last 20 years.

You are pretty sure that most, probably all, of the Annex I material in the genebank is in the MLS. But something is holding you back from distributing samples of that material using the SMTA.

What is holding you back? How can you get to the bottom of the issue so you feel comfortable making decisions when you get requests?

There are crop improvement programmes for both Annex I and non-Annex I crops in the country, which are supported through partnerships (including germplasm and knowledge exchange) with research organizations outside the country. The national genebank supports these crop improvement programmes by acquiring, conserving and evaluating a diverse range of germplasm of those same crops. As part of its activities, the genebank also provides diversity to genebanks and breeders outside the country working on the same crops. You use the SMTA for Annex I materials, but you do not know what legal instrument to use when you are distributing the non-Annex I PGRFA to recipients both inside and outside the country. As luck would have it, you are having lunch tomorrow with the national focal points for the ITPGRFA and for the CBD/ Nagoya Protocol. You hope that you can urge them to come to a policy decision with respect to requests for non-Annex I PGRFA in the genebank. You will need to give them a thorough briefing before they can decide. What are their options? What do you advise is the best way forward? Why? Are there circumstances under which you would provide a different opinion?

### **CASE 5: Request for landraces for release and commercialization**

You manage a collection of plant genetic resources which is included in the multilateral system. You receive a request from a public research organization which wishes to test some landraces that are in your genebank with the idea to release them as such for commercialization by public and private seed companies.

How do you respond to this request? What kind of instrument would you use for transferring the landraces?

Would your response be different if the landraces are from a country different from the requestor's country?

### **CASE 6: Smallholder farmer as provider**

You are a smallholder farmer who intercropped maize, common bean, banana and coffee.

The local extension officer from the sub-district office of the national agricultural research organization comes to your house explaining that she is conducting a collecting mission as part of a large research programme involving local, national and international research and development organizations. They are looking into ways to improve these crops so that they perform better under changing climate conditions, both in your country and abroad. She asks if you have seeds or cuttings that you are willing to share.

A seed breeding company representative stops by and asks you for seeds or cuttings of some of the plants he finds interesting.

The local extension officer comes by with a master's student working for the national genebank. They ask if they can have some seeds and cuttings to deposit in the genebank. What do you do in each case? What rules apply?





## Transferring PGRFA Under Development

### **CASE 7: A sorghum research and development chain**

You are a sorghum breeder in Country A. Your organization has previously received sorghum germplasm with an SMTA that you used in your breeding program. You have now developed a segregating population which you want to distribute to a range of organizations as part of an international evaluation network. You want the recipients to send you back information about the performance of the materials which you will analyze and make available on a dedicated website maintained by your organization. Beyond sharing the evaluation data with you, you don't care what the recipients do with the materials, including incorporating it in their own breeding programs. What legal instrument should you use to distribute the materials? What kinds of information do you have to include?

In the course of evaluating the materials it has received from your organization as per 5.1 above, Sweet Sorghum Dreams (SSD) identifies a line that is well suited to the agroecological niche conditions in Country B. SSD wants to sell seed of that line in Country B. Can it do so?

Another recipient of your materials, Sorghum Storm, crosses some of the material received from you with locally adapted materials and creates a new sorghum variety. Sorghum Storm does not have the capacity to bulk up and sell seed on its own. Instead it makes an agreement with another company, Miracle Seed Co., to do that. What legal instrument should Sorghum Storm use to transfer the material to Miracle Seed Co?

### ANNEX 4 - Reference materials

#### **Capacity Building Workshop on Genetic Resources for CGIAR Scientists and Partners from Near East and Neighbouring Countries, 17 - 20 September 2018, Lancaster Plaza Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon.**

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For further information about the workshop,  
or about published resource materials or  
possible future trainings, please contact:

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