



The regional training course on **The Role of Genebanks in Promoting the Use of Agricultural Biodiversity to Combat Desertification** from 27 November – 7 December 2006, is jointly organized by the Desert Research Centre (DRC) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) with the cooperation and sponsorship of the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation and the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The course will be inaugurated on 7 December 2006 with a high level panel discussion and media conference on the role of agricultural biodiversity to combat desertification at the headquarters of the Desert Research Centre in Cairo. Course participants will be transferred to the Egyptian Desert Gene Bank in El Arish, where the course will begin the following day.

The objectives of the course are to:

- a. Create awareness about the importance of conservation in *ex situ* and *in situ* collections, including crop wild relatives, and the use of genetic resources to address problems of genetic erosion arising as a result of desertification;
- b. Improve the knowledge of the participants about technologies and tools for seed conservation and use;
- c. Equip participants with the skills needed to apply best practices and technologies for seed conservation and use;
- d. Strengthen the capacity of participants to develop strategies to combat desertification through rehabilitation and restoration activities;
- e. Enhance the use of genetic resources in *ex situ* and *in situ* collections, including crop wild relatives, to address the problems of desertification, erosion, and production in order to improve the food security, nutrition and livelihoods of farmers.



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