After a long journey from Erbil via Amman and Chicago, eight junior university faculty and Ministry of Agriculture professionals from Kurdistan/Iraq arrived safely to Honolulu International Airport on October 22, 2008. Awaiting them were KAHEAD’s Director and Manager Drs. Samir El-Swaify and Ekhlass Jarjees.

In the weeks before the students’ arrival, the KAHEAD Team at UH was hectically preparing for their residences, furniture needs, registrations in English courses and TOEFL, and general orientation with assistance from UH Bridge Program, etc. We are grateful for the generous donations received from fellow members of the Rotary Club of Honolulu Sunset and UH colleagues which went a long way toward providing the necessary comfort of the students in their residences. All the students are academically eligible to join UH graduate fields of study and are now being introduced to their respective departments in preparation for the Spring Semester of 2009.

Who Are the 8 Students?

We are pleased to welcome Seerwan Ahmed Abdullah, Azad Saeed Ahmed, Sulaiman Ahmed Ali, Salih Farhan Ismael, Nazat Hassan Jeejo, Nyaz Foud Sulaiman, Farhan Jaafer Taher, Awat Nooradin Yousif to UH. They will pursue graduate degrees (MS/PhD) in Molecular Biosciences and Bioengineering (MBBE), Natural Resources and Environmental Management (NREM), Plant and Environmental Protection Sciences (PEPS), Human Nutrition, Food, and Animal Sciences (HNFAS), and Tropical Plant and Soil Sciences (TPSS).
With the support of MOHE&SR, the University of Hawaii at Manoa’s (UHM) College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) will collaborate with MOA, CA/USAL, CA/USUL, CA/UD, CA/UK and ATI/FTI to meet the following objectives:

1. Build the capacity of the educational and research institutions and expertise in agricultural sciences within the MOHE&SR, and the following higher education institutions: CA/USAL, CA/USUL, CA/UD, CA/UK and ATI/FTI.

2. Establish a Database Center to enhance MOA’s capacity for agricultural extension services and the transfer of technologies relevant to the region in cooperation with University Partners, and

3. Revitalize the infrastructure at MOA, CA/USAL, CA/USUL, CA/UD, CA/UK and ATI/FTI so as to ensure effective implementation of agricultural educational, research and extension/community outreach technology transfer.

Enhancing Library and Literature Retrieval Capabilities is one of the activities of KAHEAD’s objective.

Based on “train the trainers”, we nominated of librarians (from KAHEAD’s institutes and MOA to and trained them in (ICARDA). The principal objective of this training workshop was to develop a cadre of national facilitators/trainers who will train others at national level in the area of knowledge & information management within the context of libraries and information centers. With special focus on management of electronic resources (text, image, audio, video, multimedia, etc.) and in the use of methodologies for library automation and resources sharing, creation of union catalogues and open archives using web-based technologies.
The purpose of this activity is to assist selected ongoing graduate students at any of Kurdistan Universities in completing their Ph.D. research. These students will earn their degrees at their home institutions. This activity is necessary because the present institutional research capability is often inadequate. The selected applicants will have already finished their course requirements but their thesis and dissertation plans cannot proceed for lack of necessary facilities, instruments, and supplies. They will be provided with the resources and supervision required for finishing their research outside Iraq then return to graduate at their home institutions. Graduate Research Fellowships (GRF) are intended for a maximum period of one year at institutions in the region.

Ihsan Tawafiq Tayeb One of our GRF conducted successfully his research “The role of some methods in decreasing the negative effects of heat stress on production performance and some physiological characteristics of broiler” at AUB.

Graduate Research Fellows (GRF) Complete Research at UH and AUB

The Visiting Scholar Program (VSP) is intended to provide opportunities for selected MOA (Ministry of Agriculture) extension agents and university faculty to undertake short term “retooling” leaves at the University of Hawaii (3 per year) and regional partners (5 per year). The program mimics the sabbatical leave concept in U.S. universities with an expected primary benefit of professional and scientific development of the faculty member and overall upgrading of the employing university. Awardees will be able to upgrade their knowledge and skills through intensive activities in collaboration with peers at UH or another cooperating institution. While the VSP recipients will focus primarily on specific research or extension topics, they will also have the benefit of upgrading their teaching or outreach skills in cooperation with counterparts at host institutions.

Visiting Scholars (VSP)

We are expecting two visitor scholars from Kurdistan to be here at the University of Hawaii at Manoa soon.

Professional Conference Travel (PCT)

Professional conference travel awards are intended to allow faculty and staff to reconnect with their regional and global peers after the long isolation period they endured in recent years. This activity will be accomplished by awarding travel grants that allow attending conferences judged to be important by the management team, MOHE&SR, MOA, universities and a special Selection Committee. Timing of faculty travel will depend on when the particular conference is held and so will be staggered throughout the project period.

With appropriate justification and carefully designed and approved program, the participant may be given an opportunity to visit with academic institutions in the area of the conference for an additional period of up to one week. The purpose of this additional period is to explore recent scientific developments and cooperation opportunities.

Mr. Muaid B. A. Allous will participate in “CONFERENCE ON LAND DEGRADATION IN DRY ENVIRONMENTS” 8-14 March 2009 he will be presenting a poster on “the soil erosion and conversation in Kurdistan region, the main geomorphology types of land and its characteristics. The most important active processes and management practices that did in erosion control”.

Professional Conference Travel (PCT)
The goal of the Hawaii-Kurdistan Partnership for Revitalizing Agricultural Higher Education and Development is to energize the economy, protect the environment and strengthen food security of the Iraqi-Kurdistan region through introducing and integrating cutting-edge agricultural science, technology and outreach.

For additional information about KAHEAD’s objectives, plans and progress, visit our Website at http://manoa.hawaii.edu/kahead/

About KAHEAD

The reference desk of the UHM Hamilton Library supports agricultural research in Kurdistan-Iraq (including forestry, biotechnology, crop protection, pest management, agricultural economics, natural resource and environmental management, nutrition, food processing, food science, crop production, and animal sciences) through the KAHEAD Library Enhancement program.

KAHEAD part-time librarian, Ms. Patricia Brandes is providing search and retrieval services to current literature requested by graduate and faculty research at partner universities and Institutes. She uses a document delivery system in response to individual emails from researchers working in areas with inadequate access to research libraries, provides students and faculty with up to date information needed in their respective fields, performs searches to examine and identify potentially useful literature on specific topics, and supplies documents as scanned files. These email queries are augmented by the procurement of the Local Area Network Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (LAN TEEAL) and donation of hard copies of textbooks and reference materials for partners’ libraries.