

## ICBA wins Global ESG Awards

**Dubai, UAE, January 30, 2024** – The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture ([ICBA](#)) has won Platinum and Gold Awards by [Global ESG Awards](#) for two impact-focused projects addressing food security and gender equality in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The Platinum Award in the category of “Reducing Hunger and Malnutrition” was given for the project aimed at supporting women farmers in Morocco’s Rehamna Province. Funded by Canada’s [International Development Research Centre](#) and implemented by ICBA during 2017-2020, the project helped to strengthen quinoa value chains and improve rural livelihoods through technology transfer and capacity development. Under the project, ICBA introduced 5 high-yielding and stress-tolerant quinoa genotypes and provided 270 farmers, 140 women involved in quinoa processing, and 45 extension specialists with skills and technologies for quinoa production.

The Gold Award in the category of “Women Empowerment” was presented for the Arab Women Leaders in Agriculture ([AWLA](#)) fellowship program. Now in its third edition, AWLA is specially tailored for early- and mid-career women professionals in agriculture and related fields from the region. It is designed to help them secure leadership roles by encouraging gender-responsive working cultures and creating platforms to showcase their intellect, capability, and contributions. Since its launch in 2019 in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Islamic Development Bank, and [CIMMYT](#)-led [CGIAR](#) Research Program on Wheat (WHEAT), 38 women scientists from seven countries - Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and the UAE – have graduated from the program.

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, said: “Impact and sustainability cut across all our efforts. Through our research and development work, we always aim to deliver impact and contribute to Sustainable Development Goals. So, we are delighted to receive these awards in recognition of our achievements in sustainable development, food security, and women empowerment.”

Mr. James Carty, Deputy Director for the Middle East & East Asia at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, said: “Unlocking the full potential of women scientists across the Middle East and North Africa region is essential for tackling the urgent global challenges we collectively face, in particular the challenges posed by climate change. We are excited to see ICBA being recognized for its outstanding work on gender equity in the Middle East region, both on quinoa value chains

in Morocco and on the AWLA program which helps to bridge the gender gap in agriculture and ensure more equitable outcomes.”

“Solutions to the MENA region’s food security and climate challenges should be science-based and innovative, making use of all talent,” said Mr. Victor Kommerell, former Program Manager of WHEAT and Interim Director of Donor Relations and Fundraising at CIMMYT. “AWLA helps achieve that. More women leaders in food systems research and innovation are needed.”

Global ESG Awards celebrate pioneers at the forefront of fostering sustainable development. The awards ceremony is held every year, and winners are recognized in 20 categories aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

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### **About ICBA**

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is a unique applied agricultural research center in the world with a focus on marginal areas where an estimated 1.7 billion people live. It identifies, tests, and introduces resource-efficient, climate-smart crops and technologies that are best suited to different regions affected by salinity, water scarcity, and drought. Through its work, ICBA helps to improve food security and livelihoods for some of the poorest rural communities around the world.

[www.biosaline.org](http://www.biosaline.org)

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