

Field Crops Production and Improvement

<i>Project Title</i>	Improvement of the cultivation field crops and forages in the marginalized areas in the Bethlehem Governorate
<i>Project Duration</i>	24 months
<i>Estimated Budget</i>	The total area targeted is around 6000 dunums, Therefore, the total budget is estimated at around US \$807,500 The farmers will contribute with 20 percent of the seeds costs and the cooperatives will contribute with 25 percent of the required agricultural equipments.
<i>Stakeholders</i>	The project stakeholders will be the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Local Agricultural Associations and NGOs.
<i>Targeted Areas</i>	The project will target the marginalized area at the Bethlehem Governorate including: <i>Za'tara, Ash Shawawra, Dar Salah, Al 'Ubeidiya, Jannatah, Tuqu', Beit Fajjar, Marah Rabah, Beit Sakariya, Kisan, Jubbet adh Dhib, 'Arab ar Rashayida, Al Khader, Al Ma'sara, Khallet al Haddad, Al Khas & An Nu'man , Beit Sahour and Beit Ta'mir.</i>

<p>Map Targeted Areas</p>	
<p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>The project will directly benefit 1200 families (approximately 7,800 individuals).</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>During the last few years, the Bethlehem Governorate as well as other Governorates in the West Bank was suffering from the drought seasons which had a large negative impact on Palestinian farmers and herders. Up to 99.8% of the area cultivated with field crops and fodder in the Bethlehem Governorate is rain fed. As a direct result of dry conditions in the south-eastern West Bank, up to 50% of the field crop seeds and fodder production forages were lost this year. This is severely threatening the availability of seeds for the coming agricultural seasons, at a time when the Palestinian farmers are already suffering from high prices of agricultural inputs, especially the seeds of field crops and fodder to feed livestock and the shortage in the availability of local adapted varieties.</p> <p>This project aims to purchase from local farmers (agricultural cooperatives) field crops and fodder seeds of the local drought resistant varieties and redistribute them to the most vulnerable drought-affected farmers. This will enable them to replant their fields next season, increase the size of cultivated areas, increase plant production and provide more feed to increase the animal production. Ultimately, the project will improve the people in the Bethlehem Governorate's, access to affordable nutritious food and it will assist in reducing food prices.</p>
<p>Project Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the livelihood of the beneficiaries' families. • To increase the cultivated areas with field crops and forages.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the produced amounts of food grains and legumes. • To improve animal feed production and forage. • To improve the productivity of livestock (red meat and milk production). • To decrease the cost of plant production. • To reduce the effect of drought. • To decrease the land degradation and soil erosion of the marginalized areas. • To create jobs for the poorest families.
<p><i>Project Activities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist 1200 of the most vulnerable drought-affected farmers in planting 6000 dunums with suitable local varieties of wheat, barley, common vetch, better vetch and chickpeas. • Providing vital and timely extension services to beneficiary households, with the assistance of MoA. • Establish a participatory mechanism for project activities (seed purchase, farmers' selection, seed distribution and monitoring) through creating project community committees in the targeted areas. Also, coordinating with the existing active agricultural cooperatives to create a sustainable seed production and a distribution system. • Improving the capacities of 8 active agricultural cooperatives in the seed management and improving the farmers' coordination and collective purchasing and selling systems, as well as creating a food security system. • Providing the created social seed bank (with the participation of the targeted 8 cooperatives) with the required equipments, machinery, and facilities. • Building farmers' knowledge in crop management, seed storage and Integrated Pest Management as well as cooperation. • Improve Farmer cooperation.
<p><i>Expected Results</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased income and production of beneficiary farmers. • 540 metric tons of wheat, barley, lentils and common and bitter vetch seeds produced. • 1500 tons of green fodder and dry hay produced. • 500 men and women farmers linked with effective cooperatives. • A social seed bank created and provided with suitable equipments, machineries' and facilities. • Capacity built of 8 agricultural cooperatives in developing and managing the social seed bank and the cooperative system management. • Capacity built of 1200 farmers in crop and pest management, seed storage and coordination.