



*Near East Christian Council
Committee for Refugee Works*

Annual 2015 RePort

“And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation”. Co 1:7

International Christian Committee P.O.Box 19195 Jerusalem | Tel: +9722-6288858 | Fax: +9722-6287054 iccjer@netvision.net.il | www.iccjerusalem.org

1. Executive Summary

A. Political Background

This is a copy and paste analysis from last year in which we analyzed regional challenges and priorities affecting Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region which continues to witness a major wave of change depicting a new “Sykes-Picot” that will redefine and reshape the MENA region. Palestinian dream towards sovereignty and statehood remains to be undermined by Israeli State occupation with control over Palestinian people, land and resources. Israeli occupation practices persist through geographic and demographic changes in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), with focus upon Area C, which is 60% of the West Bank, furthering defragmentation of occupied territories rendering them non coherent and non-viable, imposing a de facto contextual reality. Israeli right winged leadership is proceeding towards annexation of the West Bank and conducting punitive measures against the Palestinian Authority (PA) whereby Israel has always played the card of tax returns towards the Palestinian authority compromising initially, salaries within the public sector. The 2014 war on Gaza remains to have its toll and its repercussions in the West Bank impacting unemployment and poverty rates. The Palestinian chronic issues remain haunting Palestinians who feel “forgotten” amidst the regional developments with a growing sense of hopelessness.

B. Contextual analysis

The recent conflict in Gaza has put further stress on an already struggling economy with falling income per capita in 2013, contract further by end of 2014 according to the latest World Bank update on the state of the Palestinian economy. The report spelled out the repercussions of the political uncertainty and restrictions on movement and access. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) agency issued a gloomy outlook for the Palestinian economy arguing that tougher Israeli Policies and settlement expansion were pushing the occupied territories into poverty. UNCTAD reported the impact of the Israeli occupation since 1968 on the productive base of the Palestinian economy and especially its once-flourishing agriculture, “has been devastating”. The Economy has lost access to 40% of West Bank land, 82% of its ground water, and more than two thirds of its grazing land, UNCTAD report said.

The situation has been aggravated by a sharp drop in foreign aid, in addition to number of barriers to movement of Palestinian people and goods within and out of the West Bank. These physical obstacles aim to maintain segregation and separation policies over more than 2.8 Million Palestinians and form an integrated and coherent system that restricts movement of people to their basic services.

C. Poverty in the West Bank

UNCTAD reported that across Palestinian areas there was “continued severe poverty and chronic food insecurity” on the West Bank food insecurity which affected 66% of the population. The UNCTAD comment was underpinned by another statement from the U.N’s International Labor Organization (ILO) which puts the jobless rate at 26% of the work force. “Israeli restrictions on movement, faltering aid flows, a paralyzed private sector and a chronic fiscal crisis cloud the horizons, UNCTAD declared. Amid persistent high unemployment, it added, “one in Two Palestinians is classified as poor”.

Having cited the global, regional and national threats and challenges; and as gloomy **the picture is portrayed, yet, we see that it is in such conditions, we are urged to serve and make a difference in peoples’ lives. We remain to be tools for hope, “And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation”. Co 1:7**

D. Programmatic performance

The organization **programmatic performance** is guided by policy documents for all types of intervention. Policy implementation is translated into four phases representing actions with their timeline. The **first phase** represents the selection of target area and target group with a mapping of actors and area profiling, the **second phase** comprises of the fulfillment of legal documentation and bidding process which is culminated by contractual agreements, the **third phase** is designated to the execution with supervision and the **fourth phase** represents the handover procedures with internal assessment and reporting.

Throughout the project cycle, the Near East Council of Churches-International Christian Committee (NECC-ICC) is keen upon **relationships** with appropriate Ministries, local governance authorities, relevant cluster forums and beneficiaries to ensure effective cooperation in prioritized designated areas and avoid drain of resources and duplication.

Monitoring and Evaluation is being performed at various levels of the management and governance structures of the organization.

In its **Service provision**, NECC-ICC aims to enabling Palestinian communities, better manage and preserve available natural resources and protect the environment through the water and agriculture sectors. The **Capacity building** direction is integrated within the agriculture/food security program and **Advocacy** that focuses upon the right to water and illegal settlements in the oPt.

Objectives were realized with the full support and cooperation of local communities who were forthcoming throughout planning and implementation stages, demonstrating a high sense of responsibility and ownership.

As to the **agriculture sector**, domestic farming remains to be crucial for rural communities who suffer from land grab and endure severe hardships from illegal settlements and the separation barrier. We were able to provide 29 domestic farms as planned in the cluster of Qalqilya district with focus upon, Jinsafoot village.

The project targeted most vulnerable group, with farming skills and whose sole source of income is welfare support from UNRWA, WFP and Government Social support, thus living in extreme poverty. The target group became self-sufficient and productive with a monthly yield of at least USD 145 per household per month.

The human rights-based approach remains to be a strategic direction through **advocacy** emanating from our community development program with focus upon the issue of **“Water and illegal Settlements”**. The program became actively engaged in a highly complex issue but managed to emerge solid and steadfast amongst the challenges ahead. NECC-ICC was privileged in **hosting the annual meeting of the World Council of Churches- Ecumenical Water Network in 2014 in Jerusalem**. This has paved the way for a focused campaign on water injustices culminated by adoption of a position paper and statement released by WCC.

2. Organizational History & Structure

The Near East Council of Churches-International Christian Committee (NECC-ICC) is a Humanitarian Ecumenical Church Related Organization established in 1949, when four Americans residing in Jerusalem, wired the World Council of Churches requesting immediate support for the Palestinian refugees who sought refuge in the West Bank.

NECC-ICC has a rich experience in working with the poorest of the poor and the marginalized communities within the Palestinian society. It has evolved from a relief

based organization to one with rural based grass roots development strategy that included mother and child centers, infrastructure development, land reclamation, access to education and water, social work and training in nutrition and gender awareness as well as vocational training. Through over sixty years of work and experience with the Palestinian people, NECC-ICC has positively affected over 520 rural villages.

Structurally, NECC-ICC operates as the area committee for the Department of Service to the Palestinian Refugees (DSPR), which is a service department of the umbrella organization Middle East Council of Churches (MECC). MECC is an international organization, which acts as an ecumenical forum of service for all Christians of all denominations in the Middle East.

3. Mission & Vision Statements

Mission: The Near East Christian Council Committee for Refugee Works is the only Ecumenical Service arm of the Churches in Jerusalem and the West Bank, reflects the Christian core values in its Witness and Diakonia to foster and advance socio-economic conditions of Palestinians through the active contribution to improve living conditions and realize basic human rights.

Vision: The organization sees its vision towards a Palestinian society which guarantees pluralism and equal opportunities for all its citizens based on the ideals of justice, equality of rights, opportunities and freedom.

4. Identity, Culture & Values

Identity

The fact that NECC-ICC is an ecumenical body, representative of the local Church, with its executive membership comprising of local Church leaders, we are called as Christians to serve in humbleness and self-sacrifice, putting our own pride and agendas aside to meet the needs of the marginalized and oppressed in society.

Culture

There has been a continuous Christian presence in Palestine for the last 2000 years, testifying to the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, events which all took place in this very land. The NECC-ICC responded to the first Nakba and has been sincere in its Diakonia towards serving the Palestinians on the baselines of our Christian beliefs and understanding.

Values

Diakonia and unity (ecumenism) are naturally intertwined, strengthen and encourage one another. **This is most evident when churches come together across denominations to provide relief and assistance to those in need.** At the same time, assuming a position of servant hood while lifting up and encouraging fellow Christians is a spirited expression of both ecumenism and Diakonia derived from our Christian beliefs that proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ as hope for the suffering and to teach love and justice according to God's will.

Values upon which our Diakonia is based.

- **Human beings are created in the image of God** underlines the equal values of ALL irrespective of race, color, sex or creed.
- Expressing **Christian witness in an ecumenical spirit.**
- **Community's involvement** in defining their needs, aspirations and priorities to bring about change in their lives.
- **Enhancing ownership** through the active involvement and engagement in the early stages of planning and implementation which ensures sustainability.
- **Learning culture** is practiced, experienced and shared with local communities and governance to empower them and promote self-reliance.
- **Transparency, credibility and accountability** are emphasized locally and internationally.
- Ensuring **gender** integration and balance within actions.
- Encourage **voluntary** spirit and practice.

5. DSPR-West Bank Area Committee

The four Church families have equal share distribution for the nomination of their respective delegates to each Area Committee. The committee comprises of 12 members who serve for a term of 4 years. The constitution throughout its representation embodies a diversity of professionals and volunteers in various fields. Youth and gender issues were considered in this composition.

Area Committee Board Members

Mr. Ibrahim Maliha (Chairperson)

Mr. Ghassan Mustaklem (Treasurer)

Mrs. Sandra Khoury (Member)

Mr. Samer Shehadeh (Member)

Dr. Mary Komsieh (Vice Chair)

Mrs. Tala Duwani (Secretary)

Mr. George Sahhar (Member)

Ms. Naela Rabah (Member)

Mr. Maurice Younan(Member)
Mr. Sobhi Makhoul(Member)

Ms. Elham Salameh (Member)
Father AntoniosAlOurshalimi (Member)

Core Staff & consultants

Mr. Ramzi Zananiri (Executive Director)
Mr. Hanna Khoury (Finance Officer)
Mrs. Susan Dahdal (Secretary)
Mr. AbdelRahim Saidi (Field Coordinator)

Eng. Luna Siniora (Projects Manager)
Ms. Hiyam Salameh (Loan Officer)
Dr. Amer AbuFarha (Veterinarian)

6. NECC-ICC Overall Goal

NECC-ICC is implementing the fourth cycle of its strategic directions building upon previous experiences and contextual needs and priorities. Guided by the organization mandate and values, we remain committed to reflect change. Capitalizing upon more than 60 years of experience, NECC-ICC was able to identify the appropriate strategic goals for its future performance in the various localities and sectors.

NECC-ICC has carefully defined its **Overall Goal** that is an extension of its long standing mandate which is in line with the intended results of **Community Development Programs**. **This Overall Goal is as follows:**

To improve and protect vital economic and social infrastructure by enhancing basic services, socio- economic conditions and support economic growth for Palestinians living in refugee camps and elsewhere.

In the absence of a political scope coupled with growing frustration, agony and hopelessness, emphasis was given to the set goal through community development program that was successful in identifying the appropriate forms of intervention that contribute partially in easing up the ongoing chronic crisis in sectors of **water, food security, with capacity building and advocacy solidifying sectors' direction. The loan revolving program remains vital for economic empowerment and making a difference in peoples' lives.**

7. Community Development Program

7.1 Food Security

7.1.1 Introduction

At the 1974 World Food Conference, "food security" was defined with an emphasis on supply only as "availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic food stuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in

production and prices." Later, demand and access issues were added to the definition. The final report of the 1996 World Food Summit states that food security "exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."

At the household level, food security exists when all members, at all times, have safe access to enough food for a healthy life. On the other hand, food insecurity is a situation of "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways" (*United States Department of Agriculture*).

The WHO states that there are three pillars that determine food security: food availability, food access, and food use. The FAO adds a fourth pillar: the stability of the first three dimensions of food security over time. In 2009, the World Summit on Food Security stated that the "four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization, and stability".

Although the United Nations recognized the Right to food in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and has since noted that it is vital for the enjoyment of all other rights, in the oPt, severe restrictions have been placed on people's livelihoods and movements resulting in high levels of poverty resulting in vulnerability of many families to food insecurity.

We at NECC-ICC are keen to reflect our values of Christian Witness and Diakonia through active contribution to improve living conditions of Palestinians in addition to fostering their basic human right.

Throughout our food security project, we thrive to protect, respect and achieve one of the most important human rights, the right to food, through contributing to the improvement of livelihoods of vulnerable Palestinian communities by ensuring availability and access to basic foods.

7.1.2 Problem Statement

In the oPt, food insecurity is a major issue facing Palestinians; the latest Food security survey showed that food insecurity stands at 33%; that is 1.6 million people are classed as food insecure out of which 19% are in the West Bank. (*WFP*)

Food insecurity in the oPt is caused by unemployment, poverty and high food prices which is a result of the Israeli occupation and its measures; Israel has confiscated

thousands of dunums of land from Palestinian farmers to build illegal settlements, bypass roads and the Separation Wall. Moreover, the checkpoints, roadblocks in addition to crop destruction create extreme challenges for farmers attempting to reach their land and their markets.

Qalqilia district is blessed with fertile agricultural land and water resources, but like all other areas in Palestine , it suffered under the impact of closure and other restrictions;

- 15 illegal settlements in Qalqilia district inhabited by 45,366 settlers have grabbed 21,280 dunums of land.
- 6,240 dunums of confiscated land as a result of the separation wall inclusive of the security buffer zone.
- 39,080 dunums of land planted with olive and citrus trees isolated behind the separation wall and are inaccessible to farmers.
- 19 out of 35 production wells have been confiscated as a result of the separation wall.

Consequently, Qalqilia, the hub for some 32 communities, has lost at least 15% of its municipal lands and over 50% of its agricultural lands. Moreover, the town of Qalqilia lies on the main Western Aquifer inside the West Bank which supplies 51% of the West Bank's water resources which now are mostly annexed to Israel.

7.1.3 Problem Justification

Under the circumstances of occupation practices and deteriorating economic conditions, it is crucial to address the livelihoods crisis through a strategic approach that will ensure food security and alleviation of poverty.

Agricultural activities are characterized mainly as family-based production activities to subsist household needs. With more than half of both plant and livestock production are mainly for domestic consumption; yet, domestic agricultural production is important and should not be neglected as in value or weight terms most of the food (vegetable and meat production) consumed by Palestinians living in the West Bank is domestically produced.

In our rural areas, most of the houses are spacious and there is always room for developing a small home garden on a small scale in the backyard whereby one can build an animal-shed, plant some trees and even sow seasonal vegetables.

This home garden can improve people's livelihoods; it can help them in saving money, developing their income and has potential to help them meet some of their food basic needs.

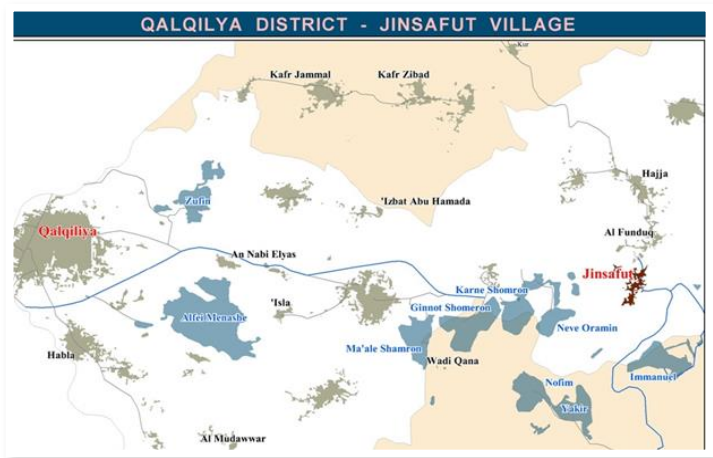
As the economic access to food in terms of the ability to purchase food rather than lack of food is the main constraint to securing a healthy nutritious diet, we at NECC-ICC are keen to ensure **physical and economic access to sufficient supplies of safe and nutritious food by promoting productive and income generating agriculture activities in rural areas.**

7.1.4 Target Area

Qalqilia district was selected for this year's intervention as per the strategic plan. It is one of the prime agriculture hubs in the West Bank and a prime front line district with rich resources that is swallowed into Israel proper in various forms.

Of the 32 worst affected communities within the district, as assessed by the Directorate of Agriculture in Qalqilia are 15 communities of which we have served 3 communities throughout last year's intervention and prioritized 1 community which is **Jinsafout** village for this year, taking into consideration the severity of its conditions, the viability of the project in the area and its available resources.

Jinsafout, named after a Roman commander named "Jin Safout", is a village with a population of about 2800 persons, out of which 45 are refugees, forming 500 families and distributed on 549 households. It is located at 16Km to the east of Qalqilia city and is managed by a village representing council comprising of 11 members out of which 2 are females.



People of Jinsafout depend mainly on work in Israel as this constitutes 50% of the workforce, whereas the agriculture sector accounts for 34%. Unemployment rate reaches 15% of the population and the worst affected groups were workers in Israel and farmers due to the occupation's practices and measures. The poverty rate in Jinsafout reaches 10% with 40 families being registered by the ministry of social and welfare affairs.



The total area of Jinsafout is about 17000 dunums out of which 15000 dunums are Zone C, 500 Zone B in addition to 1600 dunums of confiscated land for settlements and military bases. As most of the village lies in Zone C, thus, many of the village houses have demolishing orders by the Israelis.



The separation wall is surrounding the village from the northern side and the settlements with their industrial zones from all other sides; “Emmanuel” settlement and its industrial zone, “Haramat Gil’ad”, “Neve Menahi” and “ Alouni Shilo”. The main entrance to the village is through the bypass road # 55 which is mainly used by settlers who exercise harassment and violations to the people of Jinsafout on daily basis.

As for the agricultural land adjacent to the settlements, part has been leveled without warning the owners, as claimed by the Israelis for security reasons, other 200 dunums has been closed by a fence and

farmers have been denied access to and about 4000 dunums whose owners are forbidden from even approaching. Furthermore, a 2Km bypass road serving a nearby settlement of “ Emmanuel” has been constructed at 25m width in addition to the buffer zone swallowing more of Jinsafout land.

Jinsafout suffers not only from land confiscation and harassment of settlers, moreover, the industrial zone of “Emmanuel” settlement gets rid of its chemical waste and wastewater in the neighboring land of the village which has resulted in dramatic impact on the environment with destruction of olive trees and fertile land which has become arid and not suitable for agriculture anymore.



To add to the suffering of Jinsafout people, the settlers let their wild pigs loose and free to move around in the agricultural land of Jinsafout causing damage to crops, soil, trees and fences in addition to attacking human beings in many cases.

7.1.5 Project Description

We at NECC-ICC continue focusing on combining humanitarian relief with community development through domestic farming in the agriculture sector. This approach has been adopted to enhance household food security through **29 domestic farms in Jinsafout** which is considered as one of the easiest ways of ensuring access to a healthy diet. With safe and easy access to land and water, these home gardens can be well-developed not only for households' sufficiency of daily food needs but as a source of income in the long run as well.

The project comprises of two components; **Plant production and livestock**. The **plant production element** consists of **planting of 5 productive trees; walnut, guava, nectarine, orange and lemon trees** of 4-5 years of age for each home garden with adequate space area. All trees were carefully selected to enhance household's food security situation with significant focus on



expensive nutritionally rich types that poor households can't purchase. Furthermore, the climate in the area in terms of temperature and rainfall, availability of water in addition to the planting season were considered when the plants were selected.

The second component of the home garden, **livestock and poultry**

which consists of 2 pregnant sheep, 12 laying hens with their cages in addition to fodder for both hens and sheep sufficient for a period of 100 days; 300 kg of feed per home garden for sheep, in a total of 8.7 tons, in addition to 100 kg of feed per home garden for hens, in a total of 2.9 tons. The total amount of fodder supplied to the



beneficiaries of the project is 232 bags weighing 11.6 tons in total.

This year, each of the cages supplied to the home gardens consist of 4 slots, with each slot accommodating up to 3 hens, in addition to troughs for feed and water. According to specifications each hen was around 100 days old upon delivery with required identification papers and records from the hatchery with an average weight of 1.15 kg. A total of 348 laying hens were delivered with a daily average productivity of 10-11 eggs per home garden.



For the sheep, 2 heads of pregnant sheep were delivered for each home garden to enhance food security in addition to the economic situation of households; a total of 58 heads of pregnant sheep were selected by the veterinarian on the basis of quality from a known source of supply, the age of the sheep varied between 15-30 months with an average pregnancy of 3 months and tagged with

special ear tags of unified color and serial numbers.

Upon selection, the herd was isolated in the supplier's barn for a period of 5 days and monitored throughout this period by the veterinarian. Blood tests were performed at random and analyzed by a specialized laboratory, needed vaccinations were performed in addition to the ultrasound for pregnancy before delivery. After numbering the selected sheep, a distribution mechanism sheet was designed to include easy-to-follow technical/tender criteria.

Tenders were performed for the supply of all inputs in compliance with technical and legal specifications and standards. Moreover, all inputs were delivered to the gardens in accordance to a set timeframe on the basis of accomplishments of agreed upon phase distribution.

The local contribution took the form of preparing the land for planting the trees in addition to preparation of animal sheds for the second component of the home garden that is sheep, fodder and laying hens with their cages in accordance to specifications.



After delivery of all components of the home garden for each beneficiary in both locations, two visits per home garden were conducted by the veterinarian with the project coordinator in a set timeframe in order to check on the components of the garden, provide counseling services in plant production and livestock and technical guidance to beneficiaries, in addition to any veterinary treatment required.

7.1.6 Target Group

In full coordination with the village council, an announcement was affixed in several locations covering the village council's premises, schools, mosques, grocery stores and main places in the village, in addition to the word of mouth which is very practical in small villages. The announcement was made for 7 days and entailed the project criterion for applicants:

- Families with no/low-income.
- # of individuals per family not less than 4.
- Adequate space of home garden.
- Willingness to contribute to the project.

Consequently, the village council designated an employee for filling applications at its premises; the registration period lasted for 7 working days with **a total of 69 applications filled.**

In line with the plan of action the technical team conducted the **socio-economic survey** by visiting each household and filling a **questionnaire** with all information regarding the social and economic situation of the household. The technical team **initially filtered questionnaires** according to an updated grading matrix on the baseline of the set criterion for eligibility and selected 29 households for this year's intervention.

The selected names were invited to a **collective meeting** with our technical team for orientation about the project as well as fulfillment of all legal prerequisite documentation. Therefore, **29 beneficiaries** signed contractual agreements and started preparing the designated space area for the receipt of inputs.

The socio-economic survey conducted, revealed the following outcomes:

- About 55 % of the households have 4-6 individuals per household whereas the other 45% are with 7 individuals plus.
- About 48% of households have children at school whereby 41% have youth at universities.

- About 55% of the breadwinners are farmers/workers whereas about 45% are unemployed.
- About 70% of the targeted households' monthly income is less than USD 350.
- More than 60% of the beneficiaries have had their agricultural land confiscated and/or isolated.
- About 50% of the benefitting households depend on aid from UNRWA or Social Welfare.

7.1.7 Impact

Home gardens offer great potential for **improving targeted households' food security** through direct access to a diversity of rich nutritional food that couldn't be purchased before and **alleviating nutrient deficiencies**.

Furthermore, it will **enhance their economic situation** by increasing the purchasing power from savings on food expenditures and income from sales of garden products.



The expected results of the project are as follows:

- The average total **egg production** during the production season that lasts for one year is expected to reach 3600 eggs per home garden at an average price of **USD 580**. Considering the average number of individuals per household, each one has got an egg a day all through the year.
- The average number of **new born sheep** within one year is at least 3 sheep which increases the number of heads of sheep per household up to 5 that is worth about **USD 2,000**.
- Dairy production of **210 lt. of milk** per household during production season that is worth **USD 420**.
- The average **production of trees** is estimated to reach 15 kg (3 kg per tree, with 5 trees per household) at an average price of **USD 12** a year.



Thus, the first year's yield value per household is USD 3,012 with expenses reaching USD 1,300. Net return per household is at least USD 1,712 yearly representing about USD 143 per household a month.

7.1.8 Sustainability

To ensure sustainability of the project, the following actions were taken:

- Since it is a home garden, within the vicinity of the house, this encourages all family members to engage in the caretaking of the garden.
- The two sheep provided were pregnant for at least 90 days opting to accelerate return. Additionally, provision of high quality of feed for a period of 100 days ensured access to feed at no cost until delivery of newborns.
- A promissory note of one year has been signed by the beneficiaries against sheep; this note guarantees no sale of heads of sheep provided for a period of one year ensuring delivery and bonding with families.
- All livestock provided to beneficiaries were registered by the Ministry of Agriculture/veterinary department for continuous follow up and vaccination schemes.
- After delivery of all inputs to the domestic farms and throughout the period of 3 months, the project coordinator in addition to the veterinarian extended their services to the beneficiaries through regular site visits to all home gardens for follow up and consultation.



7.1.9 Most significant Change

Ibtissam, 53 years of age, is a hard working woman farmer and mother to a son Mohammad who is 19 years of age (unemployed mechanic by profession) and a daughter Hadeel 17 years of age at the 11th grade at school. They live in a small house of 90 m² space area consisting of 2 bedrooms, living room, kitchenette and bathroom, surrounded by a home garden of 50 m². Her experience with the project started when there was an announcement at the village council where she applied, and



became engaged with the project from the announcement day, since May 2015 onwards and is still on going in 2016. She always dreamt of a start-up project but had no means for it. As she read about the project she was hopeful that she would have this opportunity and start this project which with the rented Dunum that she has, would make a big difference in their lives.

“ The project helped me a lot whereby each of the two heads of sheep delivered twins, I no more buy any dairy products as I am collecting eggs from hens and milk from sheep which I process part into cheese and labneh. Accordingly the start-up project started with 2 sheep and today they are 6. It has contributed positively to my life where I used to have free time in the afternoon after I come back home from the farm, sitting at home and doing nothing. Today I have full time, in the afternoon I am very busy taking care of my home garden. Additionally, my kids are sharing this responsibility with me. I have learnt that there is still good in life as witnessed from people in my village and the support received from the organization and its people. I never had or experienced dealing with livestock, today I have learned how to deal and benefit from them.”



“ My husband, may his soul rest in peace, was a farmer. He used to grow thyme and sell it in the market. As we are close to Nablus area, in 2002 as he was on his way back after selling that day's produce, he was shot dead by Israeli soldiers. Yet I was determined to overcome, and with the help of people in my village, I was able to find a job as a farmer working and earning my daily bread for me and for my kids through the hard labour work as hired help. My husband's family owned a 10 dunum land planted with olive trees which has been isolated by the fence surrounding Jinsafout”.



Today I rented a one dunum space area which I am farming myself with the help of my son and earn a decent living from it. I would like to thank the kind people in my village who provided the material and labour to construct the shed so as to accommodate the livestock within.

7.2 Water

7.2.1 Introduction

According to the United Nations Human Rights Covenants, it is illegal for Israel to expropriate the water of the Occupied Palestinian Territories for use by its own citizens, and doubly illegal to expropriate it for use by illegal Israeli settlers. Despite, Israel fully controls the water resources of Palestine and the division of groundwater is subject to provisions in the Oslo II Accord.

- Of the water available from the West Bank aquifers, Israel uses more than 80% of underground water resources from the Western aquifer and uses 85% of groundwater resources available in the West Bank. Israel often sells the water it steals from the West Bank back to the Palestinians at inflated prices.
- While 10-14% of Palestine's GDP is agriculture, 90% of them must rely on rain-fed farming methods. On the other hand, Israel's agriculture is only 3% of their GDP, but Israel irrigates more than 50% of its land.
- Three million West Bank Palestinians use only 250 million cubic meters per year, while six million Israelis enjoy the use of 1,954 million cubic meters, which means that each Israeli consumes as much water as four Palestinians.
- Israel effectively controls 100% of the Jordan River basin; Israel diverts one quarter of its total water consumption through its National Water Carrier from the Jordan River, whereas Palestinians have no access to it whatsoever.
- Israel has built the Separation Wall which is a water wall; it is not only to annex land, but also to surround and annex vital water source as around 50 groundwater wells and over 200 cisterns have been destroyed or isolated from their owners by the Wall.

We at NECC-ICC are keen to reflect Christian Witness and Diakonia through active contribution to improve living conditions of Palestinians in addition to fostering their basic human rights.

Throughout our water program, we thrive to protect, respect and achieve one of the most important human rights, the right to water through supporting Palestinian

communities to better manage and preserve natural resources by enhancing ownership and access to water resources.

7.2.2 Problem Statement

Due to the above mentioned practices and actions of the Israeli Occupation, the Israelis and their settlers get continuous water supply all year round, while Palestinians face continuous severe water scarcity;

- **Irregular water supply** across the West Bank particularly during summer months; when supplies of water are low, the Israeli water company (Mekorot) closes the valves which supply Palestinian towns and villages so as not to affect Israeli consumption. That could be seen with the settlers having their swimming pools topped up and lawns watered while the Palestinians not having enough water even for drinking.
- **Water distribution network losses of 30-50%** as a result of deteriorating networks and leaky pipes that are in bad need of repair in addition to about one third of the West Bank households with no piped water at all.
- **Many Palestinians have to buy their water**, either from Mekorot which makes them pay a price about 4 times higher than that charged to Israeli settlers in the West Bank, or from private suppliers selling expensive and unregulated trucked water.
- **Ban on Palestinians developing water resources in the West Bank;** Palestinians are forbidden from drilling new wells or rehabilitating old ones and even transmission pipelines connecting wells without permits from the Israeli authorities. Such permits are difficult or even impossible to obtain. Moreover, they set quotas on how much water can be drawn by Palestinians from existing wells.
- **The average water supply to 57% of the Palestinian communities is about 63 lt./c/d, in 7% of the communities, the per capita is less than or equal to 30 lt. in addition to 36% with supply that ranges between 30-50 lt./c/d.**
- **Ongoing pollution of the ground water of the Mountain Aquifer;** about one-third of the settlements' wastewater, 5.5 MCM/year as well as 10 MCM from Jerusalem Municipality undergo no treatment and flow directly as raw sewage into the environment in addition to more than 90% of Palestinian wastewater (50MCM/year).

Thus, the water problem remains to be continuous and efforts should focus on improving the situation by providing sustainable solutions.

7.2.3 Problem Justification

Within our strategic plan, this year we focused on the middle regions for the water project. As most of this area lies within the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Water Undertaking, they provided us with six priorities for urgent needs in the water sector which were filtered and out of which two locations were selected; that are Abu Falah and Yabroud villages in Ramallah district.

The two villages are supplied with water by Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) and need to have a reliable, suitable and dependable source of water for the high areas through securing additional quantities of water for the targeted areas and increasing their water consumption to reach 80 l/c.d.

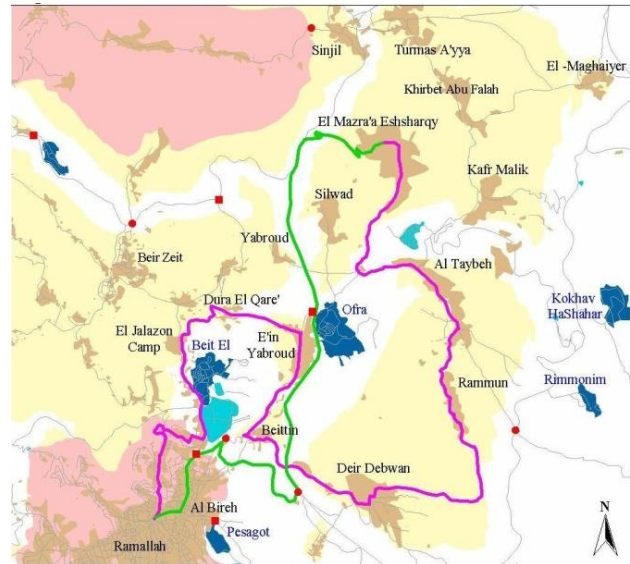
The source of water is Ein Samya production wells. The high areas of Abu Falah village and Yabrud village are suffering from severe water shortage;

- The existing water pipelines serving the elevated areas of Abu Falah are 1 and 2 inches in diameter, which is not suitable to convey the required amount of water due to its small diameter, in addition to their deteriorated and exposed conditions.
- The existing main pipeline serving Yabrud village is 2 inches in diameter, which is not suitable to convey the required amount of water due to its small diameter and due to the deteriorated supply network of the villages.
- The average consumption is about 40 l/c.d and 45 l/c.d in the high areas of Abu Falah and Yabrud communities respectively.
- In the summer time, the targeted areas resort to buy water from mobile water tank. The cost of 5 cubic meter water tank is 150 NIS (30 NIS/m³).



7.2.4 Target Area

Khirbet Abu Falah is a village in Ramallah district with a population of about 5500 persons, forming 1200 families with an average of 6 individuals per family and distributed on 800 households. It is located at 26Km northeast of Ramallah city and is managed by a village council comprising of 9 members out of which 2 are females. The village is located at about 780m above sea level with an average annual rainfall of about 500mm and has an urban area of about 4000 dunums. About 65% of the workforce in Khirbet Abu Falah are employees; either in the government or private sectors, whereas the agriculture sector only accounts for 10%.



Yabroud is a village in Ramallah district with a population of about 800 persons, forming 130 families with an average of 6 individuals per family and distributed on 115 households. It is located at 12Km northeast of Ramallah city and is managed by a village council comprising of 9 members out of which 2 are females. The village is located at about 790m above sea level with an average annual rainfall of about 350mm and has an urban area of about 800 dunums. Most of the workforce in Yabroud is workers with unemployment rate reaching 15%.

7.2.5 Project Description

The project comprises of the construction of a total of 1,450 m main water pipelines of 4" diameter, 1,920 m main water pipelines of 3" diameter and 200 m house connections of 2" diameter.

In Yabroud, 1,140m of the 4" diameter pipes will be installed and the remaining 310m will be installed in Abu Falah village in addition to all the quantity of the 3" diameter pipes and the house connections.

As we approached the project for this year in partnership with the Jerusalem Water Undertaking, a memorandum of understanding had been signed with clear description of shares, roles and responsibilities in addition to a detailed plan of action.



Moreover, we had approached the Ministry of Finance for an exemption of VAT representing 16% and as an INGO we were authorized for the exemption which enabled us to proceed with the project without any deficits.

7.2.6 Target Group

The direct beneficiaries from the project are the people of the two villages who reside in the high areas. In Abu Falah, the direct beneficiaries are about 825 capita representing 140 households and 126 houses. In Yabrud, the direct beneficiaries are the total town population of about 850 capita representing 160 households and 144 houses.

7.2.7 Impact

A reliable, suitable and dependable source of water for the high areas of Abu Falah and Yabrud villages made available through securing additional quantities of water for the targeted areas increasing their average consumption of water to reach 80 l/c.d.

The expected impact from this project is as follows:

- Improving the pressure within the main pipeline and network as the new pipeline is installed.
- Increase the per capita available and therefore domestic consumption of drinking water, where at the moment the consumption rate is about 40 l/c.d and 45 l/c.d in the high areas of Abu Falah and Yabrud communities respectively. It is expected that the per capita water consumption will increase to about 80 l/c.d for both of the targeted areas.
- Enhancing the income of some households by saving the money paid for purchasing water from mobile water tank at cost of 30 NIS/ m³.
- Enhancing the hygienic practices and safeguarding the quality of water and reducing the risk of public health and water borne diseases as a result of drinking polluted water.

7.2.8 Sustainability

The sustainability is ensured as the project area lies within the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Water Undertaking, they will be responsible for the regular maintenance and ensuring the proper functioning of the network.

7.3 Advocacy

During 2015 we remained limited in engagement in Advocacy due to the scarce resources available. However we maintained engagement in National networks and fora's. This was the only platform through which we were keen to act and interact with. We contributed to the launch of the WCC international water day and appreciate the WCC General Secretary's presence in Jerusalem for the successful launch and inauguration of new premises of EAPPI.

7.4 Loan Revolving Fund

We released 10 housing, 8 Business, and 2 education loans throughout 2015 and recovery reached 94%.