



*Near East Christian Council
Committee for Refugee Works*

Annual 2018 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

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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.

B. Contextual analysis

Palestinians in the West Bank are subject to a complex system of control, including physical (the Barrier, checkpoints, roadblocks) and bureaucratic barriers (permits, closure of areas) which restrict their right to freedom of movement. The expansion of Settlements, restrictions on access to land and natural resources and ongoing displacement due to demolitions in particular, are ongoing. Israeli policies curtail the ability of Palestinians in Area C and East Jerusalem to plan their communities and build homes and infrastructure. The result is further fragmentation of the West Bank.

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

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (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 denial of access to natural resources in the oPt.

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 524 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: DSPR is an Ecumenical Church Related Organization in the Middle East Region, that reflects the Christian core values in its Witness and Diakonia in partnership with local and global actors, aims to foster and advance socio-economic conditions of Palestinians through health, education, environmental, economic, social and humanitarian programs with the realization of basic human rights.

Vision: DSPR's vision is towards an empowered pluralist Palestinian society which guarantees equal opportunities for all its members and vulnerable communities.

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- Jerusalem /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. Ghassan Mustaklem(Chairperson)	Mr. Aram Jilleh (vice Chairperson)
Mr. Yousef Aoun9Treasurer)	Mrs. Tala Duwani (Secretary)
Mr. Ibrahim Maliha(Member)	Mrs. Sandra Khoury(Member)
Mr.George Sahhar (Member)	Mr. Daoud El Issa (Member)
Mr. Samer Shehadeh (Member)	Mr. Sami Jouzi (Member)
Mr. Maurice Younan(Member)	Ms. Elham Salameh (Member)

Core Staff & consultants

Mr. Ramzi Zananiri (Executive Director)	Eng. Luna Siniora (Projects Manager)
Mr. Kosta Dabit (Finance Officer)	Ms. Sanaa Jamlamneh(Agronomist)

6. DSPR-Jerusalem/West Bank overall Goal

DSPR Jerusalem/West Bank is implementing the fifth 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, DSPR Jerusalem & West Bank was able to identify the appropriate strategic goals for its future performance in the various localities and sectors.

Our regional overall goal remains to be : Embracing communities that are empowered to care for the needs and promote the rights of its members.

Within the current unified strategic cycle we subscribe to 3 components of the strategic objectives:

- SO # 2: Palestinian refugees and non-refugees can sustain themselves economically.
- SO # 4: Emergency relief is provided timely and sufficiently in accordance with Sphere standards
- SO # 5: DSPR is a robust organization with a solid financial base.

SO #2

Agriculture road

In compliance with the strategic cycle 2017-2022 we have prioritized working with Rural Communities with emphasis on area “C” in the Central and Northern Governorates of the West Bank mitigating land grab and denial of access to natural resources “water” for agricultural and domestic purposes.

We have conducted an initial assessment with Ministries and directorates and have an overview of the needs split into small, medium or large scale allowing flexibility to our financial resources and fundraising efforts.

All approaches are aligned with the National strategic plans and full coordination with the appropriate Ministries, directorates and localities.

● **Problem Statement & Justification**

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, by-pass 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;

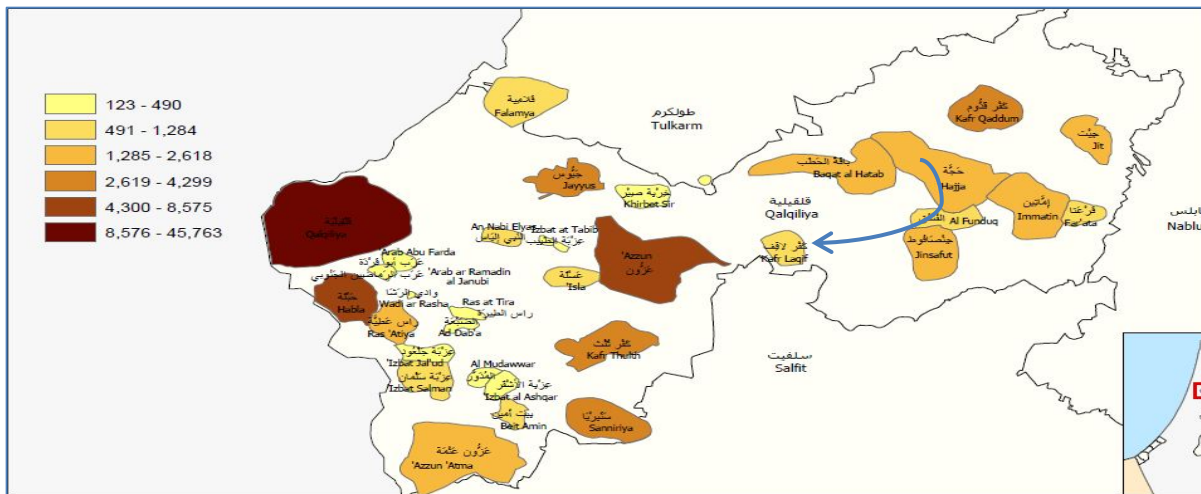
- 15 illegal settlements in Qalqilia district inhabited by 45,366 settlers have grabbed 21,280 dunums of land.
- 6,240 dunums of confiscated land as a result of the separation wall inclusive of the security buffer zone.
- 39,080 dunums of land planted with olive and citrus trees isolated behind the separation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

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.

This year we focused upon a cluster of villages comprising of Jinsafout, kufur Qaddum, Kufur Laqef and Hajjah Labelled as Juret Amrah in the eastern part of Qalqilya where there is intensity of land confiscation. We operated in area “C” through the construction of an agriculture road of 3 kilometers in length providing access to 665 Dunums of agriculture land benefitting 1900 persons.



Impact

The agriculture road inter connects 4 villages enabling farmers access to their land encouraging agriculture growth with no mobility restrictions.

Directorate of agriculture in Qalqilya encourages agriculture through distribution of fruitful trees with high value and provides training on crop diversification.

Ownership & Sustainability

- The village council announced the project to all farmers and illustrated the routing of the agriculture road.
- Farmers expressed high interest and all commended the routing and reflected approval in a signed document (legal waiver) enabling the construction and rehabilitation of the road with a width of at least 5 meters. Farmers expressed willingness to give as many meters for the road for the sake of having access to their land.
- Farmers contributed in cash for the construction and rehabilitation of the road by 5 % of the total cost.
- The contractor also contributed to the project by 5 % of the total cost.
- The contractor deposited with ICC a 5% maintenance guarantee, valid for one year.
- The village council is committed to perform maintenance works after the elapse of the first year. **Pictures**

Before



After



Water

Problem Statement & Justification

Location: the northern part of Ramallah & Al Bireh Governorate serving Almazraa Alsharqiya, Sinjil, Jilijlya, Ebwein, Aroura and Mazaree Al Noubani.

The existing water pipeline that supplies water for the project beneficiaries, comprising of 22,000 inhabitants is completely devastated. Also there is a lot of consumer connections on this pipeline which adversely affect the distribution of water to the villages after Al Mazra'a al Sharqiya. This causes a high percentage of water losses reaching more than 45% and it forces the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU), the water provider, a long time to supply water for these communities. The existing pipeline is incapable of conveying the required amounts of water during the peak consumption. Beneficiaries are suffering from the economic and burden of purchasing water from an unreliable and intermittent water supply throughout the year. Water is provided in series once per 10-15 days for each village. The deteriorated pipe and inadequate quantities of water also caused serious health risks. To that effect there is an urgent need for constructing a new trunk line to bypass al Mazra'a al Sharqiya in order to enhance the water service and delivery and increase the per capita per day as well as improving hygienic conditions. Accordingly an MOU was signed with the JWU whereby we were responsible to purchase 700 meters of 8" trunk line with accessories, in accordance to agreed upon specifications and delivered them to JWU who were responsible for the installation, testing and provision of water to beneficiaries.



Impact

A reliable, suitable and dependable source of water 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, is to increase to about 80 l/c.d.
- 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.

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.

Herbal production.

Problem Statement & justification

DSPR Jerusalem & West Bank focused on the most affected areas in **Qalqilya, Tulkarem and Tubas**, as these governorates show some of the highest food insecurity levels. In the West Bank, the humanitarian situation is greatly affected by the construction of the Separation Wall and movement impediments denying farmers access to market. The governorate of Tubas/Aqaba village is chosen as the project location because **37 percent of all the agricultural land in the West Bank is located in these areas and is considered the agriculture hub of the West Bank**. Furthermore it is situated in area "C" which is under total control of Israeli military who have military training camps adjacent to residential and populated area.

Despite the setback of forced migration of 700 persons from their locality which was declared a military area , Al Aqaba have the potential to increase their production output, which can help alleviate the level of food insecurity for the targeted farming households. This governorate is also known to be a traditional agricultural area, and many of the markets in the West Bank depend on their products.

Until 2002 Al Aqaba village population of 235 were simply running away from their village seeking safer locations in the nearby Tayasir village. Today there is a reverse

migration towards Al Aqaba village where there is today a water network and the agriculture sector seems very attractive. The Gap that existed until recently is about to be solved with the will and determination of its residents who are looking forward to being supported by providing means and sources for skilled cultivation of land to be cultivated in 6 types of herbs which are in great demand by the village factory owned by the Rural Women Society.

The weather is ideal for such a crops with the availability of water, what remains is utilizing the land, exercise the skill they know best which is farming and with the provision of inputs and enhanced capacities on how to deal with herbs, with crop diversification to improve yield and delivery of products to the nearby factory for processing and export. Thus a comprehensive cycle of one of the key food chain components is our target for the coming 3 years towards a systemic approach for future agriculture land growth and economic benefits leading to sustainable agriculture. The work will be a joint venture between the factory owned by the Rural Women Society on one hand and a cooperative of farmers on the other hand which will be led by DSPR Jerusalem & West Bank.

In 2018 we aimed at increasing household income and market access for a cohort of farming families, through a holistic project of land preparation, greenhouses, cultivation of high demand herbs, irrigation. By May 2018 we were able to conclude land preparation for 8 dunum space area, provision of 8 plastic greenhouses with irrigation system, 96,500 seedlings provided, delivering a yield in the first crop cultivation on April 2018 reaching 882.5 kilograms of diversified herbs.



Impact

- The whole project is market oriented geared towards enhancing economic condition through agriculture growth and the end result is a product with high value absorbed by the existing factory. Farmers were always discouraged in

farming simply because they did not even cover their production costs. This is solved and sustainability ensured by the high value herbal production and absorption within the local and external market.

- Economic wellbeing of farmers realized through a contractual agreement with 8 farmers whereby the factory is committed to absorb yield reaching approximately 12 tons per year in 4 yield periods at a cost of USD 1.5 per wet kilograms.

● **SO # 4: Emergency relief is provided timely and sufficiently in accordance with Sphere standards**

Problem Statement & Justification

In the West Bank of Palestine, the water sector is facing many challenges, the majority and most serious of them are due to the political context resulted from the violations of Israeli Occupation to the Palestinian's basic human rights including the humanitarian right to access safe drinking water.

In 1995, the Oslo II Accord adopted a quantitative approach to the water issue, detailing the quantities to be allocated to Israel, the West Bank, but did not sufficiently take into account the natural, political and socio-economic developments that have affected water supply and demand in the region since that time.

While the Palestinian population of the West Bank has almost doubled since, water allocations have remained capped at 1995 levels; today, Palestinians have access to less water than they were granted by the already-inequitable Oslo agreements. Water consumption by Israelis and Palestinians reflects evident inequality. Israel currently utilize approximately more than 85% of water resources and prevents Palestinians from obtaining their water rights in groundwater aquifers and Jordan River according to international laws.

Today, Israeli citizens have unlimited running water year-round while hundreds of thousands of Palestinians suffer from water shortages through the hottest months of summer. Given these shortages drastically affect Palestinians' health, life conditions, and economic well-being.

The project is implemented in Area C: as was originally designed in the West Bank area. The selection of the most vulnerable communities was performed in cooperation with the ministry of agriculture who prioritized Jenin district since it suffers most of lack of access to water and the emergency intervention was considered to be of more than relief but rather a recovery phase. The provision of water was discouraged by communities as we visited with them and preferred water tanks of high storage capacity to enable them benefit from the purchased water and consumption for at least 2 weeks and constant availability of water in water tanks of 5 cubic meters ea.

Bidding, purchasing and delivery of 60 water tanks was performed to vulnerable herders, whose possessions of sheep was small representing 30 heads of sheep per herder.



End of Report