



*Near East Christian Council
Committee for Refugee Works*

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1. Executive Summary

A. Political Background

Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region 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. Meanwhile, the Israeli Peace Now organization has reported that during the first half of 2013, the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem increased by 70 per cent in comparison to the same period in 2012. According to the anti-settlement organization, Israel embarked on the construction of 1708 additional housing units between January and June 2013, compared to 995 in 2012.

B. Contextual analysis

The 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 2.6 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”.

UNCTAD report notes that since 1967, Israel has established about 150 settlements in the **oPt**, including East Jerusalem. In addition, an estimated 540 internal checkpoints, roadblocks, and other physical obstacles continue to impede Palestinian movement in the

oPt, separating Palestinian communities from international and local markets. As a result, Palestinian products lose competitiveness in local and international markets, and economic growth in the oPt leans more and more towards the services sector, with a decline in agriculture and manufacturing. Israeli restrictions on the movement of people and goods in and around the oPt make Palestinian trade heavily dependent on the Israeli economy. This reinforces Palestinian dependence on Israel and is the major factor behind the chronic Palestinian trade deficit, which grew in 2012 from 44 per cent to 47 per cent of gross domestic product.

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 final 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.

The NECC-ICC direction in **Service provision** focuses upon **Community development through the sectors of education, access to water and food security**. **Capacity building** direction is integrated in the food security program, **advocacy** 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.

The **right to education** is constantly hampered by lack of foundational standards as set by Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies **INEE** related to "Access and learning environment" whereby our aim is to enhance the education facilities and promote the safety and well-being of learners, teachers and personnel who are linked to health, nutrition, psychosocial and protection services. Despite harsh economic constraints, yet we made a drastic difference towards providing a healthy education environment at Akra and

Nazzlet Issa schools for boys, through maintenance and renovation works of 10 classrooms and insulation works of 6 additional classrooms respectively.

In the water sector we **completed the remaining internal network in Burkin/Jenin district**, suffering from a very old network with 15% of the community not connected to the internal network. We provided the remaining 500 meters length of pipes with their accessories in 2013 whilst the 5500 were provided in 2012. Today the new network of 6.0 kilometers, enhanced supply to reach 110 lt/c/d for domestic and agriculture consumption ensuring regular supply of water to 78% of the households.

We have also accomplished installation of 1500 meters in length of the transmission pipeline in Bani Zeid Al-Sharqiya municipality, connecting from Obwein water source to Mazare' Al Noubani and Arura villages.

Food security; The strategic direction to divert from the emergency efforts of food staples towards community development remains to be sought through the food security program which had tremendous success for the third year whereby inputs introduced are becoming productive rendering beneficiaries self-sufficient. It was addressed through **the provision of 38 domestic farms in the villages of Saniria and Azzun Atmeh in Qalqilia district**, suffering from land confiscation and lack of access of farmers to their land. 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.

Capacity Building direction focused upon affected farmers in Saniria and Azzun Atmeh villages addressing farm management. The training comprised of theoretical and practical stages. A "Model Farm" was introduced to beneficiaries where they conducted all the physical training and application of the theoretical material with required standards and specifications.

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 settlements"**. The program became actively engaged in a highly complex issue but managed to emerge solid and steadfast amongst the challenges ahead.

NECC-ICC remains grateful for the generous local donation in the amount of USD 30,000 received from the Arab Company for Medical and agricultural products (ARABCO), represented by the Managing Director Mr. Ghassan Mustaklem, towards the Food Security project reflecting their contribution to vulnerable communities in the agricultural sector.

Despite the chronic status of the conflict and worsening living conditions yet, we were able to realize our community development objectives and maintain strategic directions towards ecumenical performance and witness in cooperation with local governance authorities and communities.

2. Organizational History and 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 and Vision Statements

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.

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 and 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)	Dr. Mary Komsieh (Vice Chair)
Mr. Ghassan Mustaklem (Treasurer)	Mrs. Tala Duwani (Secretary)
Mrs. Sandra Khoury (Member)	Mr .George Sahhar (Member)
Mr. Samer Shehadeh (Member)	Ms. Naela Rabah (Member)
Mr. Maurice Younan (Member)	Ms. Elham Salameh (Member)
Mr. Sobhi Makhoul (Member)	Father Antonios AIOurshalimi (Member)

Core Staff & consultants

Mr. Ramzi Zananiri (Executive Director)	Eng. Luna Siniora (Projects Manager)
Mr. Hanna Khoury (Finance Officer)	Ms. Hiyam Salameh (Loan Officer)
Mr. Thaer Abdel Qader (Field coordinator)	Ms. Susan Dahdal (Secretary)
Mr. Moh'd Sheikh Omar (Field Coordinator)	Mr. Abdallah Awad (Trainer)
Mr. Moh'd El Akhras (Veterinarian).	

6. NECC-ICC Overall Goal

NECC-ICC is implementing the third 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, education and Food Security, with capacity building and advocacy solidifying sectors' direction. The loan revolving program policy revised and became accessible to applicants.

7. Community Development Program

7.1 Food Security

● Introduction

According to FAO's most recent estimates, 12% of the global population were unable to meet their dietary energy requirements in 2011-2013. Therefore, around one in eight people in the world are likely to have suffered from chronic hunger, regularly not getting enough food for an active and healthy life.

Even though the developing regions have registered significant progress towards the millennium development goal 1 hunger target, the vast majority of hungry people live in developing regions, where the prevalence of undernourishment is estimated at 14.3%.

The estimated number of undernourished people has continued to decrease. Yet, the rate of progress appears insufficient to reach international goals for hunger reduction in developing regions unless additional efforts are exerted to reduce hunger at two levels; to meet immediate needs and long-term sustainability to increase food availability and enhance agriculture productivity.

Almost half of the world's population live in rural areas, with more than 80% of these rural people deriving their livelihoods from agriculture. Agriculture is essential for the economy particularly in developing countries; the agriculture sector contributes as much as 30% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the World Bank, 1% growth in

GDP from agriculture increases the expenditures of the three poorest declines by at least 2.5 times as much as 1% growth from the rest of the economy.

In the oPt, with destruction of property and restricted access to natural resources and services, limited employment opportunities and decreasing incomes coupled with high food prices, an estimated 1.3 million Palestinians are food insecure as per FAO component of the consolidated appeals 2013.

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 rights.

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

● **Problem Statement**

In the oPt, though food is generally available and supplied in sufficient quantity and variety, 4 out of 10 Palestinians are food insecure due to physical and economic reasons; the occupation's policies and practices and conflict, in addition to the ability to purchase the food available in the markets.

The occupation's policies and practices, mainly the restrictions on movement of people and goods and the damages to personal property have severely affected people's physical access to food and farmers' physical access to the inputs to produce food. This in turn has contributed to higher prices of basic food and commodities in addition to reducing the purchasing power of many vulnerable families. Moreover, confiscation of land, expansion of illegal settlements in addition to the construction of the separation wall has continued to prevent Palestinians' access to basic services which in turn increased vulnerability.

According to the poverty rates among individuals according to household monthly consumption in the West Bank published by Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS-2011), 42.7% of the Palestinians in the West Bank live below the poverty line with about 38% live in deep poverty. Furthermore, the households living above the poverty line are not necessarily safeguarded against poverty in the near future, as about one-third of those cases are borderline cases which may exhaust their coping mechanisms and become vulnerable to fall below poverty line.

Food-insecure households' characteristics indicate that larger households are more vulnerable (according to OCHA, the average household size among food-insecure people in the West Bank is 6.3 and 7 in Gaza), have a higher adult to child dependence ratio in addition to a higher number of female adult members.

Palestinian households managed to cope in difficult times. These coping mechanisms are considered negative as they depend on the cut expenditures on health, food

(consumption of poor quality and nutrient-deficient food), sold assets and asked for assistance from relatives and friends. However, with rising poverty and unemployment, the coping mechanisms are exhausted and severely strained and vulnerability increased, thus, the food security situation has considerably deteriorated and an additional 17% of the population are under threat of becoming food insecure (*OCHA consolidated appeal 2013*).

While the overall food security situation has slightly improved, food insecurity levels in Area C remain higher than in Areas A and B although the bulk of the agricultural land as well as main aquifers are located in Area C.

The crisis experienced through the gender lens indicates that men and boys are much more likely to face death, injuries and detention. Men who have traditionally held most of the jobs in the formal sector, and thus have been the main income-earners, have by and large been terminated or suspended due to controls of movements of workers and goods. This is especially the case for younger men, as they face the most severe restrictions in obtaining travel permits.

The negative impact of the crisis as experienced by girls and women have mostly been indirect, such as increased levels of domestic violence, femicide (honor killings), reduced access to reproductive health services, and increased time and risk in accessing water and food, as well as increased responsibilities taking care of the sick as a result of limited access to medical services. Girls, particularly in large rural families, are dropping out of school in order to help carry some of these extra responsibilities.

Socio-Economic Fact Sheet published by OCHA shows that female-headed households represent 7.8% of all Palestinian households, but it is one of the highest recipients of food aid and other humanitarian assistance. This is because poverty amongst these households is higher than those headed by male. In a female-headed household, there is usually only one parent, and the job of caring for children is often done at the expense of engaging in income-generating activities.

● **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 protect livelihoods and mitigate poverty.

Although donors have provided emergency humanitarian assistance including cash and food to those who had lost their main source of livelihood, this has not been enough to prevent the numbers of the food insecure from increasing.

In order to prevent further deterioration, improving food security situation becomes essential and one of the key humanitarian concerns in the oPt. However, due to decline in funding, the targets have not been entirely met; only 30% of the targeted households benefited from production units and home gardens (*OCHA consolidated appeal 2013*).

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.

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.**

Agricultural activities are characterized mainly as family-based production activities to subsist household needs. More than half of both plant and livestock production are mainly for domestic consumption, 23% to sell the surplus after meeting the domestic consumption and 20% for direct sale (CEPR Memo 2012).

These activities improve rural livelihoods and contribute to household food security by ensuring availability and access to basic foods and prevent rural households from falling into deep poverty. We target food-insecure households who have some agricultural skills and resources so as to help them escape the poverty trap through livelihood project which aims at enhancing their food security situation.

Targeted households are engaged in domestic farming in a sustainable way with their capacities, agricultural knowledge and know-how enhanced towards increasing their food security.

● Target Area

Qalqilia district was selected for this year's intervention as per the strategic plan. Despite its small area, Qalqilia is considered as one of the most important amongst other districts in agriculture; its land is fertile, the area is enriched with water sources in addition to the climate variability which results in variety of crops.

The agricultural land in the district forms 6.2% of the total agricultural land of the West Bank. Furthermore, the total return of the agriculture sector in the district is about 22% of the total return (PCBS 2010-2011).

The number of communities within the district is 34, with coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, 2 communities were selected for the implementation of the food security project for this year; **Azzun Atmeh** and **Saniria** villages.



Azzun Atmeh

Location: Azzun Atmeh is located three kilometers to the east of the Green Line and is about 11 kilometers away from Qalqilia's southeastern sides. Its land extends from Beit Amin village border in the north, to Al-Sawiya village in the south as well as from the Green Line in the west to the vicinity of Saniria village in the east. The village is surrounded by 4 settlements which were built on lands belonging to residents of the village;



- **Sha'are Tikva** from both the eastern and northern directions, established in 1982, its built up area is 915 dunums and its municipal area is 1045 dunums (*Foundation For the Middle East Peace*). It confiscated more than 1000 dunums from the lands of the village as well as lands of the surrounding villages. This settlement breaks the territorial continuity between the village and the two neighboring villages Beit Amin and Sanirya.
- **Oranit** from the western direction, established in 1984, its built up and municipal area is 878 dunums (*ibid*).
- **ElKana** from the south eastern side, established in 1977, its municipal area is 1198 dunums, built up area is 758 dunums (*ibid*).
- **Ets Efrayem** from the eastern side of the village between Sha'are Tikva and Elkana, established in 1985, its municipal area is 458 dunums and its built up area is 184 dunums (*ibid*).



The separation wall, which is established on the village's land, separates the village from the rest of the West Bank and places it in the "seam zone" turning the village into a big prison. Residents of the village reach other parts of the West Bank through a gate, moreover, only residents of the village and Palestinians with permits are allowed to use the gate.

The construction of the separation wall has led to the plowing of more than 700 dunums from the village's agricultural land including 50 dunums were used for plastic houses in addition to 650 dunums cultivated with more than 2100 olive trees.

Moreover, the alternate route of the wall has a length of 4 kilometers starting from the western entrance of Azzun-Atmeh along by-pass road 505 until it reaches Sha'are Tikva in the east. As a result, thousands of additional dunums owned by residents of the village are isolated behind the wall and their entrance to their land is now contingent upon getting permits from relevant occupation authorities. Thus, their access becomes harder and sometimes even impossible.

Population: The whole village population, which is about 2000 residents, find themselves in a complete prison with only one passage gate to the village which is totally closed from midnight until 5 am. Number of families is 375 out of which 60% live in deep poverty. Twenty families rely on aid from Ministry of Social Affairs in cash and in kind; medicine, health insurance in addition to USD 200 /3 months.

To add to the people's pressures, the Israeli occupation partitioned the village by completely separating 8 houses in which 10 families (74 people) are separated from the rest of the village. The houses which are located at the southern side of the village are about 200 meters away from the rest of the village and are isolated through another checkpoint and a gate; the residents have to cross the checkpoint in and out of their area only on foot carrying their stuff and every day needs and reaching their village.



Check-point & gate isolating 10 families

People above 12 years of age need permits to cross the checkpoint. However, children under 12 years of age need to hold their birth certificates, a copy of one of their parents' ID in addition to a copy of one of their parents' permit to cross the gate into the village.

This situation has been in force since the year 2000. After the completion of the Wall further restrictions were imposed on the movement of those people living in these houses, such as, the restrictions on the types of commodities and stuff that are allowed access as well as daily raids and harassment by settlers and army, which have turned the lives of those people into a continuous nightmare.

Area: The village total land area is about 4300 dunums, out of which 800 dunums are used for growing crops in plastic houses, 200 dunums used for house constructions, while the remaining 3300 dunums are cultivated with olive trees. According to local village council, the Wall has isolated behind thousands of dunums from Azzun Atmeh and neighboring villages as follows:

- 1800 dunums from Azzun Atmeh and Saniria mostly planted with olive trees and covered ground crops (inside plastic houses),

- 1100 dunums from Al-Sawiya and Masha planted with olive orchards,
- 800 dunums between Azzun Atmeh and the green line opposite Kafr Qasem town inside the green line.

On the whole, the total of 3700 dunums of land are inaccessible since they fall behind the separation Wall which threatens the existence of many families in the area who totally depend on agriculture as their main source of income. Furthermore, additional 3000 dunums were confiscated for the establishment of the settlements mentioned earlier.

Economy: The village mainly depend on agriculture with more than 70% of village's residents working in the agriculture sector; of whom 90% are engaged in plant production while the rest in livestock and poultry.

The restrictions on the movement of the Palestinian residents entering to and coming out of the village and only allowing Azzun's ID holders to enter the village imposed by the Israeli occupation, in addition to difficulty in transporting and marketing agricultural goods and crops upon which more than 90 % of farmers are dependent of, which has led to an increase of unemployment in the labor force and damage of the agricultural crops.

Saniria

Location: Saniria is located 18 kilometers south-east of Qalqilia. Its land extends from Kufr-Thulth village in the north, to Mas-ha village in the south in addition to the settlement of Ets Efrayem as well as from Bidya village in the east to Beit Amin border village in the west. As per Oslo Agreement, the village is located in zone B whereas the neighboring village of Azzun Atmeh is considered as zone C.



According to RIWAQ, the village has a number of archaeological sites; a shrine, remnants of Roman pools, old wall, as well as the mosque and the Muslim cemetery.

Population: The whole village population is about 3000 residents; the total number of families is about 600 out of which 40 rely mainly on aid from Ministry of Social Affairs. Moreover, there are 30 refugee families who get aid from UNRWA.

Area: Total land area is about 12000 dunums, about 7000 dunums have been confiscated for the establishment of the surrounding settlements. Most of the villagers' land is located in Azzun Atmeh, thus, they need permits to reach their land through the gate.

Economy: About 25% of the population are unemployed, 25% work in the agriculture sector, 35% are labor in Israel and the rest work in government and private sectors. Furthermore, about 50% of the total families' monthly income doesn't exceed USD 400 as most of them suffer security rejection from the Israeli occupation and are denied access to their isolated land behind the separation wall.

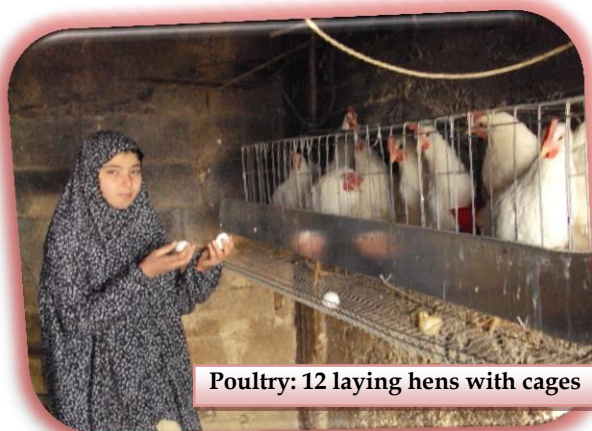
● **Project Description**

We at NECC-ICC continue focusing on combining humanitarian relief and longer-term livelihoods through encouraging production-**home garden**. This approach has been adopted to enhance household food security through **38 home gardens (17 in Azzun Atmeh and 21 in Saniria)** 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 animal raising**. The **plant production element** consists of **planting of 5 productive trees; avocado, lemon, orange, guava and nectarine** of 4-5 years of age where each home garden with adequate space area, (total of 75 trees for 15 home gardens). 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 was 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 the 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 11.4 tons, in addition to 100 kg of feed per home garden for hens, in a total of 3.8 tons.** The total amount of

fodder supplied to the beneficiaries of the project is 304 bags weighing 15.2 tons in total.

This year, each of the cages supplied to the home gardens consist of 5 slots, with each slot accommodating up to 3 hens, thus, each beneficiary has enough space for additional



Livestock: 2 pregnant heads of sheep

3 hens to buy in the future, 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 444 laying hens were delivered with an expected daily productivity of 11-12 eggs per home garden.

For the sheep, 2 heads of pregnant sheep were delivered for each home garden in both locations to enhance food security in addition to the economic situation of households; a total of 76 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.



Isolation of herd

Upon selection, the herd was isolated in the supplier's barn for a period of one week and monitored throughout this period by the veterinarian. Blood tests were performed at random and analyzed by the laboratories of the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, vaccinations in addition to the ultrasound for pregnancy before delivery.

After numbering the selected sheep, a selection matrix was designed to include easy-to-follow technical/tender criteria. This sheet was of dual purpose; to complete individual profile of selected sheep and for fair distribution of pairs of sheep to the beneficiaries. This late purpose was applicable after sorting sheep depending on sheep individual variations according to registered profile's data. The ranking system of coupling sheep heads delimits errors of biased in nomination of sheep pairs onto beneficiaries.



Vet performing blood tests

Tenders were performed for the supply of each item in addition to the veterinarian and trainer 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 both the trainer and 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. Also, 4 visits were conducted by the project coordinator for counseling services for the home-garden in general.

This year, the project coordinator developed **Internal-Farm and External-Farm Records** which were distributed to each home-garden and orientation for data filling was done by the coordinator to each beneficiary for the management of the garden.

The internal records are important for the management of the garden and are to be filled by the beneficiary himself. They comprise of the following; reproduction record, offspring record, mobilization record, health status record, fodder purchase record, feedlot record, milk production record and milk sales record, whilst the external ones are important for the monitoring of the visits of both the trainer and the veterinarian to the garden.

● **Capacity Building**

We believe that strengthening the households' abilities to manage their home garden successfully is a must to ensure best achievement of goals in addition to sustainability of project.

Two training sessions were held; one in each location in both **theoretical and practical** dimensions; 12 training hours were distributed throughout 2 days for the theoretical training on livestock and 1 day for the practical one with an average of 4 hours a day.

The training material was reviewed, updated and prepared in a power point presentation format in addition to handouts prepared for the beneficiaries highlighting the main points of the training, the village council contributed by providing the



Theoretical training session

adequate space for the training to be held at. Besides, an ideal animal shed in the village was selected for the practical training with full acknowledged facilitation from the owner.

The beneficiaries' high interest was reflected with full participation; 38 direct beneficiaries attended the 3 days (each in

his/her village) in addition to their active participation throughout the sessions as reflected in the trainer's report. Moreover, some of them with previous experience shared their knowledge which in turn enriched the training and motivated others for networking amongst each other.



Practical training session

The training addressed different topics that are very important for the management of the home garden. The approved modules covered the following:

- Types of sheep and sheds with specifications.
- Livestock management and the importance of using records.
- Breeding and fertility; sexual and physical maturity.
- Pregnancy, delivery, pre and post-delivery.
- Vaccinations and diseases.
- New born and feeding at different stages.
- Lighting programs for laying-hens.

An assessment that was conducted by the trainer reflected satisfaction of about 94% of the participants with the topics handled, providing them with new information, and the means of presentation that was clear and easy. About 70% of them noted that the timing and duration of training sessions were very good as the rest complained about conducting the training on a rainy and cold day. Consequently, it is clear that the training was successful.

● Target Group

In full coordination with the two village councils, an announcement was hung in several locations within each community, covering the village councils' premises, schools, mosques, grocery stores and main places in the village. The announcement was made for 7 days and entailed the project criterion for applicants:

- Household's with no/low-income.
- # of individuals per household not less than 4.
- Adequate space of home garden.
- Willingness to contribute to the project.
- Commitment to the project's requirements of training.

Consequently, each village council designated an employee for filling applications at its premises; the registration period lasted for 7 working days in each location with **a total of 86 and 113 applications filled in Saniria and Azzun-Atmeh respectively.**

As agreed upon in the initial meetings with the village councils, since the number of applications in Azzun-Atmeh were less than 100, accordingly all were legible for the socio-economic survey, whereas in Saniria, from the 113 applications screened and initially filtered by a committee formed by the village representatives, 62 were selected for the socio-economic survey.

Accordingly, a plan was developed by our technical team for conducting the **socio-economic survey** for 86 registered names in Azzun-Atmeh and 62 initially filtered by the committee in Sanniria by visiting each one 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 17 and 21 families in Azzun-Atmeh and Saniria villages respectively, in total 38 families benefited from 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 fulfilling of all legal prerequisite documentation. Therefore, **38 beneficiaries** signed contractual agreements and started preparing their gardens, **from which one third of the households are in the "seam zone"** area, were targeted through this project benefiting around 20 individuals.

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

- About 40% of the households have 4-6 individuals whereas about two thirds have 7 individuals and more.
- 60% of the households have children at schools whereas about 30% have children at universities.
- About 60% of the breadwinners are farmers/workers whereas about 40% of them are unemployed.
- About 58% of the targeted households' monthly income is less than USD 280.
- About 80% of the beneficiaries have had their agricultural land confiscated and/or isolated.
- About 40% of the benefitting households depend on aid from UNRWA or Social Welfare.

● **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 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.



● 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 encouraged all family members to engage in the caretaking of the garden.
- Capacities of beneficiaries were enhanced through theoretical and practical training conducted by specialized technical team, enhancing their knowhow and knowledge for effective and efficient management of their home gardens.
- 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 a smooth delivery.
- A promissory note of one year was 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 for continuous follow up and vaccination schemes.
- After delivery of all inputs for the home garden and for a period of 3 months, the trainer, the project coordinator in addition to the veterinarian extended their services provided for the beneficiaries through regular site visits to all home gardens for following up and consultation.

● Challenges

The main challenge faced this year focused in Azzun-Atmeh. Throughout implementing the project particularly in October, **the Israeli Occupation closed the gate leading to Azzun-Atmeh for security reasons according to their claim**. Since then we were denied

access and our technical team couldn't reach the beneficiaries or deliver any of the home-garden's components.

Accordingly, certain actions were taken by our administration with the Israeli coordinator of government activities in the oPt; a unit engaged in coordinating access of international organizations in the Occupied Territories. Thus, we obtained security clearance for access during specific timings in and out of Azzun-Atmeh. Accordingly, our technical team was able to carry on all activities as per our plan of action but with delay on the timeframe and all inputs of the home-garden were delivered.

Moreover, 3 households from our target group live in the "seam zone" and our technical team was denied access and couldn't reach these families even after coordinating for their entrance to the village through the gate. So we had to take certain measures for these families to benefit from the veterinarian and trainer counseling visits. Accordingly, and in cooperation with the village council, the beneficiaries brought their livestock to the fence separating their houses from their village for the veterinarian to check on them and get the counseling from the technical team.

● Most Significant Change

- **Sarah Khalil Ahmad Abu-Khadijeh:** is a 45 year old divorced woman. She is the breadwinner for a family of 7 members; Sarah and her two kids; 15 years old boy and a 16 years old girl, in addition to her divorced daughter with her two kids and Sarah's mother who is a widow. Sarah is a refugee from Gaza Strip and her husband left her and than 15 years, she works as a cleaner for the village council 6 times a month in addition to aid from social welfare; her monthly income doesn't exceed USD 200.



Sarah has been living in a shelter in the "seam zone" for more than 3 years after leaving the rented room she was living in as she couldn't pay the rent. As she said, the owner of the land is a good man and he allows her to stay in his land.



Sarah's place (house)

When we met Sarah after delivering all the inputs of the home-garden, she expressed her gratitude and appreciation, she said: "that is the only good thing that happened to me since years, my husband left me with my kids, and now my daughter is getting divorced....."; and she is looking forward for a better future for her family. Sarah said: "Thanks God for everything, now I can provide my family with eggs, milk and cheese, I attended all the training sessions and learned many things about sheep and hens that I will try my best to apply for the well-being of my sheep and hens, hoping that I will, in the near future be able to make money out of them."

I. Education Sector's Project

● Introduction

Education, in its general sense is a form of learning in which knowledge, skills and habits of people are transferred from one generation to the next, and as defined by the European Court of Human Rights, education is the whole process whereby, in any society, adults endeavor to transmit their beliefs, culture and other values to the young.

Since education is the corner stone for development and educated people are vital for the economic development of their communities, the challenge remains to make education global accessible for everyone particularly the poor and disabled. Provision of free and quality education ensures that everyone is to be treated with dignity and entitled to fundamental human rights.

At the Palestinian level, education has a unique status. Although Palestinians have always valued education which empowered them throughout history, education under occupation remains to be threatened by many factors that render investing in future generations burdened with many obstacles.

While Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention enshrined the right to education; it states that, "The Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children. Nevertheless, the Palestinians living under occupation for more than 60 years have always been deprived from their basic human rights and education is one of these fundamental human rights which have great significance as a baseline to freedom and a precondition for the exercise of other human rights.

Each school year, thousands of Palestinian school children in the oPt continue to face a number of challenges in accessing education; lack of classrooms, sub-standard school infrastructure, poor quality of facilities and restricted access to educational facilities.

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 education program, we thrive to protect, respect and achieve one of the most important human rights, the right to education through contributing to the improvement of conditions and access to basic education by enabling students continue their basic education in safe and healthy environment.

● **Problem Statement**

The importance of education lies in its direct relationship to the human inspirations, values and loyalty to the community and homeland. Throughout the Palestinians' long history, education has played an influential role as it has always been considered as the one prerequisite not only for nation building but also for achieving a genuine and sustainable peace.

Although education is free and government-funded, educational development in the oPt is a challenging experience, funding for the education system comes from the government budget through the Ministry of Finance; government expenditure on education as percentage of the total government expenditures is less than 20%, the remaining funding comes from donors and international organizations.

Since the Palestinian Authority (PA) has been suffering from financial constraints on its development budget, the achievement of the Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012 of the MoEHE was affected negatively; only 70% of the targets of the MoEHE first goal which is related to access were achieved in addition to about 40% of the targets of the MoEHE second goal related to quality were realized.

According to the MoEHE data for the school year 2011-2012, about 74% of the total number of schools in the West Bank and Gaza are government schools and under full responsibility of the MoEHE. Most of these schools in the West Bank in general face difficulties; access to schools is primarily constrained by physical conditions and movement restrictions, insufficient investment in upgrading education which in turn has led to crowding and deterioration in the learning environment, moreover, the limited services for students with special needs has become evident.

Many students and teachers face physical threats and obstructions on their daily route to school from settler violence and checkpoints across the West Bank. According to OCHA Monthly Humanitarian Report, *during the first six months of 2012, there were 16 documented incidents of damage done to schools, education interrupted, or direct injury inflicted on Palestinian school children by Israeli military forces or settlers.* Furthermore, the PA Ministry of Education has identified 183 schools, with approximately 50,000 students, as located in vulnerable areas.

MoEHE assesses that over 50% of the Palestinian government schools lack minimum acceptable water and sanitation (WASH) facilities that are essential in promoting good hygiene behavior and general health which in turn leads to improved school attendance and performance.

Consequently, funding from donors and international organizations is essential for developing the education sector to be **available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable** (concept of 4A's) and as part of the continuous national effort to build what has been destroyed by the Israeli Occupation.

● Target Area

One of the most important issues for education is the creation of an effective learning environment which is essential for enhancing the achievement of students and their positive attitudes toward education.

Within this year's initiatives, and with full cooperation with the MoEHE, we focused on *enhancing the learning environment for Akraba primary boys' school in Nablus district and Nazlet Issa primary boys' school in Tulkarem district, where every child should have a right to an environmentally safe and healthy school that is clean and in good repair.*

To ensure the provision of environmentally safe and healthy schools, two schools were selected with priorities placed on improving facility and environmental conditions; **Akraba and Nazlet Issa primary boys' school.**

Akraba Primary Boys' school: Is the oldest school in the Governorate of Nablus where 10 classrooms were constructed in 1924 and the remaining 11 were constructed in 1995. Today there are 21 rooms comprising of 15 classrooms with 3 specialized and 3 administrative rooms with limited space area of 30 m² each, serving 459 students and 27 teachers.

Nazlet Issa primary boys' school established in 1970 for children from grade 1 to 6 accommodates 173 children in 6 classrooms with 12 teachers. Children share same school facilities with students from the adjacent secondary school, encompassing many hazardous incidents.



Mayor of Akraba, with auditor & CoS representative.

● Problem justification

Since Akraba and Nazzlet Issa boys' schools are very old structures built since 1924 and 1970 respectively, whereby in Akraba 10 classrooms are spared from demolition since they represent a cultural heritage, yet they remain unhealthy and unfit learning environment for children, with high humidity and lacks ventilation and lighting, lacks tiling and unlevelled floors, cracks all over the walls and ceiling.



Nazlet Issa primary boys' school, the six classrooms were constructed by the local community at stages, which lacked expansion joints that resulted in structure spaces, in addition to cracks from the ceiling since the roof is not insulated. During rainy days, many school days were lost since the administration requested students not to attend class, as water leaked everywhere and actually it was raining within the classrooms.



● **Project Description**

On the basis of our values upon which our Diakonia is based, community's involvement in defining the needs, aspirations and priorities to bring about change in their lives is essential. In this context, we were always keen to involve the community in the various stages of the project.

At the early stages of planning, the MoEHE was directly involved in defining the needs of the education sector and prioritizing them in compliance with its five-year development plans to guarantee reaching the most needy and avoid waste of resources, overlap and duplication with other actors working in the same field, Nablus and Tulkarem districts have been prioritized the two schools, where we have visited, assessed and endorsed their prioritization.

The first project was renovation of the 10 classrooms in Akraba and insulation of the roof top for 6 classrooms at Nazlet Issa school.

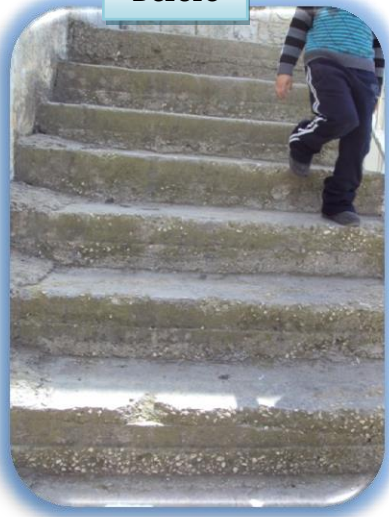
The directorate of education of South Nablus and Tulkarem assumed their role in coordinating with the local governance bodies, furnishing them with the standard specifications of the MoEHE in addition to their supervisory role during implementation and handover of all phases of project.

The municipality of Akraba were directly involved, this involvement took the form of partnership where governance structure signed a contractual agreement and contributed with more than 48% of the overall direct project cost, providing a site engineer for supervising the implementation of the project on site, preparing tendering documents, engineering plans and specifications as well as execution of other unforeseen works that came up throughout implementation.

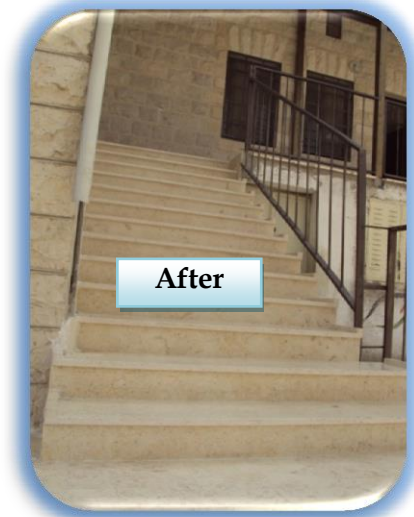
As to the project in Nazzlet Issa the village council did not have any sources and the directorate of education in Tulkarem volunteered all related BOQ, and supervised implementation.

● Pictures:
Akraha primary boys' school

Before



After





Before



After





Before



After



Nazlet Issa primary boys' school



Before



After



● Impact

Maintenance works performed this year targeting 16 classrooms, provided 632 school children a healthy learning environment. The strict compliance with the implementation phases enabled us complete all works before the start of the new scholastic year which started on the 1st of September 2013. There was an EU school project for girls in Akraba which did not finish in due time, and the Directorate of Education in cooperation with the municipality was able to respond positively to the emerging problem of lack of classrooms for girls, thus opened its doors and engage in the double shift type of education, whereby morning hours were assigned for girls and afternoon hours for boys. Thus the school responded to the problem accommodating more than 800 children, boys and girls for the first quarter of the scholastic year. Girls were jealous since boys are having better premises than theirs, whilst boys were complaining that girls are going to inflict damage to their renovated premises.

When we visited the school at the early stages to assess the status of the school, we were shocked of the furniture being used, we are talking of simple desks and chairs. That was not the case. Accordingly we exercised pressure over the directorate of education of South Nablus, who graciously **contributed to new desks and chair for children, representing the least of their contribution.**

Earlier we spoke about the local community contribution that reached 48%, simply because it **encouraged the municipality to perform additional works** related to external works, related to the playground, drinking fountains and surrounding fences, main entrance gate, **rendering the school safe and healthy internally and externally.**

Consequently, and as the projects were maintenance, finishing and construction works, all that type of intervention is labor intensive whereby, **temporary jobs were created amongst skilled and unskilled labors within the two communities throughout the execution of the projects in addition to enhancing the local commercial market through material suppliers, factories and machinery.**

● Sustainability

The issue of sustainable development is a key concern and remains a major challenge for us; various endeavors were made to ensure sustainability of projects.

The projects responded to the **MoEHE's priority**, moreover, they are socially accepted since they were selected as per the **communities' priorities** for which they **contributed significantly**. That in turn **guarantees continuous follow up and supervision** which with no further evidence enhances **local ownership** of projects.

The **technical team was flexible** in its approach allowing **design considerations for future expansion enabling absorption of future** students to be enrolled.

The issue of **future maintenance and repairs of the structures** are guaranteed through a **one year maintenance warranty** represented in 5% of each project's total cost deposited by the contractors with the municipality and village council.

● Challenges

We did not face any challenge, since all phases were performed with strict supervision and monitoring resulting in the ability to open the new scholastic year in time, despite the additional works which were performed simultaneously. It was a great success in performance of many actors to realize a common objective.

II. Water

● Introduction

Water is one of nature's most important gifts to mankind. It is essential to life and a key component in determining the quality of our lives. Although water covers more than 70% of the earth, only 1% of it is available as a source of drinking.

More than 3.4 million people die each year from water, sanitation and hygiene-related causes with nearly all deaths, 99%, occurring in the developing world. Moreover, more than one in six people worldwide-894 million people lack access to improved water sources.

Worldwide, water is scarce and this problem is growing; people either lack enough water (quantity) or lack access to safe water (quality). **Having access to safe and sufficient drinking water and sanitation is central to living a life in dignity.** Yet, billions of people still do not enjoy this fundamental right.

Human rights demand a holistic understanding of access to water and sanitation, the right to water and sanitation requires that these are available, accessible, safe, acceptable and affordable for all. However, physical access to water is limited in many regions in the world in addition to unequal distribution of resources in many others.

In the oPt, the Palestinians suffer physical and economic water scarcity; access to water is limited as the oPt is a water-scarce region in addition to Israel's discriminatory water policy which maintains unequal allocation of water between Israelis and Palestinians.

Water is the Palestinians' most precious resource. However, Israel controls 85% of the water resources in the West Bank; hence the Palestinians are forced to rely on the Israeli occupation for access to their own water which in turn undermines any possibility for sustainable development and violates their right to water. While the Palestinian water use doesn't even meet the minimum daily standard of 100 lt./c/d as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Israelis use the greater amount of the region's total water.

Moreover, the most reliable resources were confiscated by Israel for their own use, the Israelis use the Palestinian water and what is left is then sold back to the Palestinians at a higher cost. Yet, the Palestinians have a right to access their own water resources and it's their right for an equitable distribution of water resources.

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.

● **Problem Statement**

Water is a major issue in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Although in the Oslo II Agreement of 1995 Israel recognized Palestinian water rights, the water issue was left to the final status negotiations which were to begin in 1996 but have not yet started.

Accordingly, a Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) was set up, Israel maintained control of the total flow and volume of water to the oPt while PWA took the role of allocating the limited supply made available by Israel with no ability to manage water resources.

Israel has taken sole control of the water resources in the area; it effectively controls 100% of the Jordan River basin, more than 80% of underground water resources from the Western (mountain) aquifer and uses 85% of groundwater resources available in the West Bank. Consequently, the State of Israel and Israeli settlers get continuous water supply all year round while Palestinians face continuous scarcity and access to water.

- **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.
- **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.

● Target Areas

The **Jenin Governorate** is located in the northern part of the West Bank. The area of the Governorate is approximately 583 Km² and forms about 10% of the West Bank area. The population of the governorate is estimated at 288,511 with some 80 communities out of which 28 communities denied the service of a piped water supply. These communities depend on water collected in cisterns during winter and on buying water by tankers from private agricultural wells or springs in the area.

Drinking and domestic water supply management in the Governorate is carried out through municipalities, village councils and the joint water services council for the northwest Jenin villages. The service providers are supplied in bulk by the West Bank Water Department (WBWD).



The main sources of water supply in the Governorate for all needs are springs, wells and purchased water from the Israelis. However, these sources do not meet the real needs of the communities. The Governorate is supplied with about 6.4 MCM/year for domestic purposes with an average water supply of less than 62lt./c/d.

Consequently, the **Governorate of Jenin is considered one of the poorest and most vulnerable governorates with regard to water supply and accessibility** compared to other governorates, about one-third of the water in the system is unaccounted for water (UFW) with an annual water deficit of more than 8 MCM/year.

Within this year's initiative and with full cooperation with all relevant bodies, we focused on **improving the average rate of drinking and domestic water supply to Palestinian communities through rehabilitating and expanding existing internal water networks to reduce the percentage of loss and serve the unserved, accordingly, we resumed work in Burkin village in Jenin District, as to the other project it was in the North West of Ramallah representing Bani Zeid Al-Sharqiya comprising of Mazare' Al Noubani and Arura were selected.**

Burkin

Is a town with 6500 population (about 1083HH), located 4 Km west of Jenin city, rising about 270m above sea level and situated on hills and mountains combining three different environments: land plains, mountains relatively high compared to the city and valleys.

The village's urban structural plan that has been proposed to the Ministry of Local Governance for approval comprises of 5000 dunums, yet the village mainly depends on agriculture where the agricultural land amounts thirty seven thousand dunums out of which 11 thousand dunums are planted with olive trees, 18 thousand dunums cultivated land by farmers from the village in the plain of Marj Ibn Amer in addition to 8 thousand dunums in Arraba plain.

Burkin has a religious significance for being mentioned in the Bible as the place that witnessed the famous miracle of Jesus Christ healing 10 men of the disfiguring and contagious skin disease leprosy during His journey from Nazareth towards Jerusalem.

The story begins in Gospel of Luke 17:11-13: "*Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village (Burkin), 10 men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, 'Jesus, Master, have pity on us!'*".

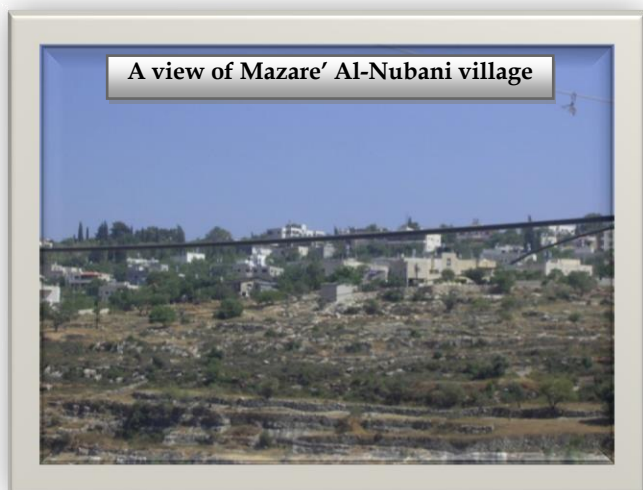
Burkin has several archaeological sites but the most important of all is St. Gorgeous Church that has been built in the place where the miracle happened in the era of King Constantine and his mother Helena about 1500 years ago. The church is considered as the fifth sacred place in the world for Christians and the fourth oldest church in the world after church of Nativity, the church of Annunciation and the Holy sepulcher. The church comprises of two parts, the church structure and the cave that is carved into the rock with an area of about 20m² and topped by a circle window; according to historical novels was used to take down the food for the ten men with leprosy who were quarantined.

Ramallah District Bani Zeid Al Sharqiya (Mazare' el Noubani and Arura)

Mazare' Al-Nubani and Arura are two villages with a population of about 6000 persons and are located 25Km to the north of Ramallah city, Ramallah district. The two villages are combined in one municipality under the name of Eastern Bani Zaid municipality. Jerusalem



A view of Burkin village



A view of Mazare' Al-Nubani village

Water Undertaking is the service provider; water is served through a main transmission pipeline that starts from Ein Samya 3 production wells, providing about 20 communities along its path and ends at these two villages with a total length of about 25Km.

● **Problem justification**

Burkin's water sources are five privately owned production wells out of which four are agricultural wells whilst the fifth is owned by the municipality. Three of the agricultural wells are owned by farmers from the village with limited productivity throughout winter season and no productivity during summer season (May to October).

Thus, the village depends mainly on the fourth agricultural well that is owned by a farmer from Qabatia (a neighboring village) with productivity of 20m³/hr in addition to the one owned by the municipality with productivity of 10m³/hr.

The municipality buys 22000 m³/month in total mainly for domestic use at a rate of USD 0.7 /m³ and sells it to the people in Burkin at different rates: The first 10 m³ consumption per HH for USD 1.3/m³, from 11 - 30 m³ for USD 1.8/m³ and from 30m³ and more for USD 2.6/m³.

All the water supplied to the village is transmitted to a reservoir of 1000m³ in capacity and then distributed to the community through a water distribution network that is ineffective:

- The network is more than 30 years old and devastated with leaky pipes.
- the losses in the network reach 51%; (it is assumed that the average consumption is 112.8 lt./c/d, instead it is 55.3 lt./c/d)
- the network serves about 80% of the community.

The municipality with the support of different government and non government organization rehabilitated and expanded part of the existing network throughout the years 2008-2012. **Yet, 18% of the existing network is still in need for rehabilitation in addition to about 20% of the community not connected to the network and fetch water through plastic pipes from unlicensed agricultural wells with no control over the water's quality.**

Bani Zeid Al Sharqiya (Mazar' el Noubani and Arura)

The existing main pipeline serving the two communities is 3" in diameter pipe, 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 two villages which is a main cause of leakage which aggravates the problem.

The average consumption is about 40 lt/c/d and 57 lt/c/d in Mazare' Al-Nubani and Arura communities respectively. The communities are not served constantly but once every 12 days.

Especially in summer time, the two communities resort to tanked water from a nearest point of about 12 Km in each direction at a low rate of 150NIS/10m³ as the water tank is provided to the villages through WBWD. The problem is that as the consumption is at its peak during this period, people have to wait for 7-10 days to get turn by tankers. Furthermore, people

with good economic condition buy tanked water from tankers from outside the village at a rate of 250 NIS/m³, the ones with bad economic situation (50%) resort to get water from the polluted spring in the village.

● Project Description

Burqine

Within a contractual agreement signed with the municipality, the project comprised of two phases; the **first phase** was our responsibility in providing the municipality with 6000 m split over two years, 2012 and 2013 whereby in last year we were able to deliver 5,500 meters run of pipes with their accessories and in 2013 the remaining 500 meters run of pipes and their accessories. **The second phase** was the municipality's role in installing them in the agreed upon locations.

These pipes were divided as follows: 2880m (48%) of the supplied pipes were used for rehabilitation of some lines within the existing network serving 113 HH and the rest, which was 3120m (52%), was used for expanding the network, thus serving 31% of the unserved community, about 59HH.

The total cost of the project reached USD 166,165.8 out of which 57.8% was the local contribution which took the form of supplying all house connections and installing all pipes with their fittings. Additionally, the municipality's contribution was preparing all technical documents needed for implementation of plans and bills of quantities.

Bani Zeid Al Sharqiya (Mazare' el Noubani and Arura)

Construction of 1500m transmission pipeline of 6" diameter between the village of Obwein and the two villages of Mazare' Al-Nubani and Arura. In addition to rehabilitation of 1300m of 2" diameter deteriorated supply network pipelines in Mazare' Al-Nubani.

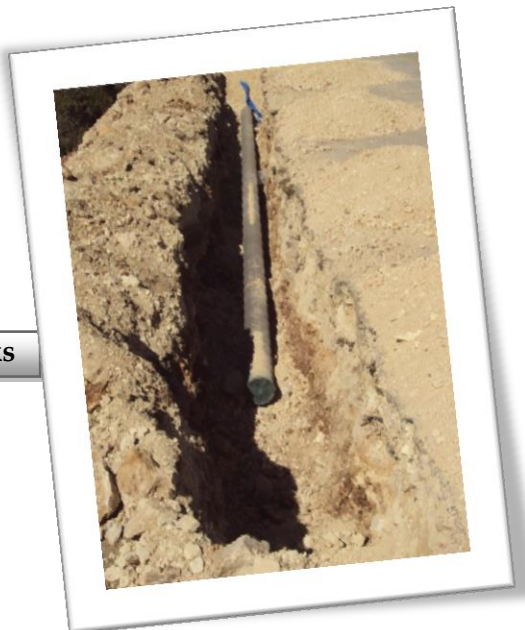
We have approached the Ministry of Finance for an exemption of VAT representing 16% and as an INGO we were authorized for the exemption enabling us proceed with the project without any projected deficits.



pipes



works



fittings

● Impact

In Burqine, with the addition of 500 meters run of pipes we were able to connect unserved twenty seven households with regular supply of fresh water.

Today, **85% of the community in Burkin has safe, sufficient, affordable and accessible water through an effective internal water network with a lifetime of at least 10 years.**

Bani Zeid Al Sharqiya (Mazar' el Noubani and Arura)

A reliable, suitable and dependable source of water for Mazaré' Al-Nubani and Arura villages provided through securing additional constant quantities of water from the current source reaching an average consumption of about 90 lt/c/d and 84 lt/c/d for Mazaré' Al- Nubani and Arura villages respectively.



● Sustainability

Developing the internal water network will increase its lifetime to 10-15 years with proper maintenance and follow up which is guaranteed by the very efficient technical teams at the municipality and village council respectively.

● Challenges

We faced many challenges until we reached to this year's initiative, these challenges were mainly as a result of the **different reference bodies for water in the area**; the West Bank Water Department (WBWD), Palestinian Water Authority/Project Management Unit (PWA/PMU), The Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) in addition to the projects department in the Ministry of Local Governance.

Furthermore, **these bodies lack effective coordination amongst each other and their financial resources are limited** which has made prioritizing the needs within the communities a very difficult mission to accomplish.

Moreover, **the limitations imposed by the Israeli occupation** on some of the initiatives in the water sector have added to the pressures that we faced throughout planning and implementation of this year's project.

As a result, prioritizing the needs by itself was very difficult and more efforts had to be conducted in order to assess, prioritize the needs and then select the project with a contingency plan prepared for any surprises or unforeseen issues that may pop up.

III. Advocacy

● Introduction

“Lack of access to adequate, safe, and clean water has been a longstanding problem for the Palestinian population of the oPt. Though exacerbated in recent years by the impact of drought-induced water scarcity, the problem arises principally because of Israeli water policies and practices which discriminate against the Palestinian population of the oPt.

This discrimination has resulted in widespread violations of the right to an adequate standard of living, which includes the human rights to water, to adequate food and housing, and the right to work and health of the Palestinian population.” *Amnesty International, Troubled Waters - Palestinian’s denied fair access to water (2009)*

International human rights law

According to international human rights law, access to water and sanitation is a human right. This right is enshrined in a number of international treaties which are legally **binding on states that have ‘ratified’ them**. These include:

- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Israel has ratified the above mentioned treaties and is obliged to implement them in all territories under its jurisdiction, including the occupied Palestinian territory.

Israeli Obligations: Israel ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) where the right to water is enshrined. In September 2010, the UN Human Rights Council affirmed for the first time that the human right to water and sanitation is legally binding. **Israel however is one of three countries that have not recognized both of these rights.**

International humanitarian law

The Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) states that an occupying power is responsible for maintaining public health and hygiene services in an occupied territory which necessitates the provision of clean water and adequate sanitation. The Fourth Geneva Convention also prohibits indiscriminate military attacks on civilian property and infrastructure including drinking water installations and sanitation infrastructure.

Furthermore an occupying power must protect the resources of an occupied territory and not use them for the benefit of its own population.

Israel’s Obligations: Israel is the Occupying Power in the West Bank and Jerusalem. Under international humanitarian law, an occupying power is responsible for the welfare of the civilian population and must ensure that civilians are provided with or allowed to secure the basics for survival including food, water, medical supplies and shelter. Palestinians are

guaranteed access to drinking water, water for personal hygiene and sanitation under the Geneva Conventions.

● **Problem statement**

"Where the basic service has not been achieved, hygiene cannot be assured and consumption requirements may be at risk. Therefore, providing a basic level of access is the highest priority for the water and health sectors". *World Health Organizations," Domestic water Quantity, service level and health" page three.*

In accordance to the International Law and the International Humanitarian law, Human beings should have **safe, sufficient, affordable and accessible water**.

- **Sufficient water:** An adequate and continuous water supply must be available for personal and domestic uses. The World Health Organization recommends on average 100-150 litres per capita per day to ensure all basic health needs are met. Once personal and domestic needs have been met, adequate quantities of water should be available to secure livelihoods and ensure food security.
- **Safe water and sanitation:** Water must be free from hazardous substances that endanger human health, and possess an acceptable color, odor and taste. Water sources should be protected to ensure safe water for present and future generations. Sanitation should be hygienic and not pose a threat to the environment and able to effectively prevent human, animal and insect contact with excreta and transmission of disease. Toilets must ensure privacy, dignity and safety for the user with excreta and waste water removed or disposed of safely.
- **Physically accessible water and sanitation:** Water and sanitation facilities must be within safe physical reach, in or near the household, school, work place or health facility and minimize threats to physical security, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and children. The World Health Organization recommends that water services should not be located more than 1,000 meters away from the home in order to ensure easy access to minimum quantities of water.
- **Affordable water and sanitation:** Water and sanitation infrastructure, services and ongoing operation and maintenance must be affordable. The cost should not reduce individual or household capacity to acquire other essential goods and services, such as food, housing, health care and education

● **Justification of approach**

NECC-ICC will continue to face up to the ongoing suffering of people affected by occupation practices not only through a specific response to aid **but also intervention that denounces unjust practices that are often root causes to human sufferings**. Accordingly, advocacy has become an **integral strategic component** in the organization directions towards tackling head on injustices. NECC-ICC is always keen in reflecting **positive change** in the lives of people we serve and is constantly challenged with problems that we felt could not be addressed through service provision and capacity building. This relates to the address of basic human rights of Palestinians with **focus upon Water**.

Nature of approach comprised of an International and National dimension.

- 1. The National approach aimed to mobilize affected community towards building up and making their own case and pursue it with the appropriate authorities towards change of policy and practice.***

In 2011 we were approached by the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) for a serious crisis in North East of Ramallah highlighting the urgency for a 3 kilometer pipeline to provide communities with potable water from the nearest source being Khirbet Qeis from the Salfit District.

NECC-ICC responded positively to the project after a tedious process of data gathering, needs assessment and lengthy meetings with all officials and actors involved. Our main concern was to guarantee an additional share of water through the Khirbet Qeis and the approval of the municipality of Salfit where the water source is available.

Our concern was twofold, on one hand we wanted to ensure that the water share will not be depriving others from their water share, thus pressuring PWA to secure additional water shares to both districts, and on the other hand we needed to make sure that there will be regular water flow through the pipes without any obstacles from the municipality.

The PWA agreed and we signed an MOU with the PWA which was published in official newspaper then. The MOU comprised of these concerns and a clear plan of action with a Map highlighting the routing of the pipes. In this agreement we will provide the pipes and fittings and the PWA will be responsible for the installation.

Unfortunately this did not materialize since the PWA failed to get the needed consent from the Municipality of Salfit. It was a clear example of power struggle between the local authority and the national authority represented by the Prime Minister who gave clear directives to impose the solution upon the local authority. ALL related ministries from the PWA, West Bank Water Department(WBWD), Salfit Governorate, Minister of the local authorities, failed to convince or even impose the appropriate solution, since Salfit municipality had the upper hand over the Prime Minister and ministries.

Our struggle and forms of pressures, with the village council continued as they held many demonstrations, and peaceful protests in front of the relevant ministry, and we continued pressuring the PWA to fulfill its commitments.

Three years later the PWA failed to stand to its commitments and referred the issue to the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) who came out with an alternate plan which is more expensive but our share remained the same, with the project implemented.

At the end of the day our main aim was to get fresh potable water to the area and solve the chronic crisis of lack of water to that vulnerable community.

We have evoked a serious issue which demonstrated the lack of compliance to public good and national rights with water being a strategic source and should be treated as such, with no overriding power politics.

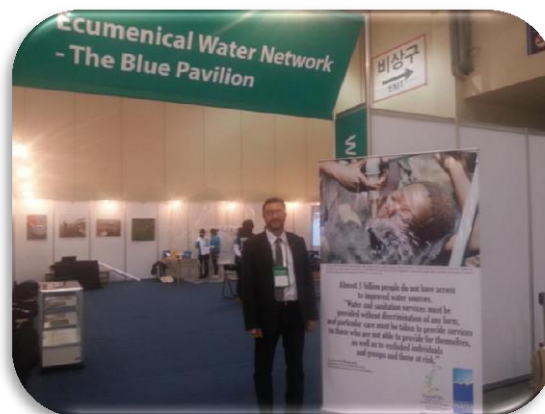
Eventually we are going to address the issue at the national WASH cluster to ensure appropriate regulations be formulated to protect the National water strategic sources and distribution.

We remain appreciative to Church World Service- USA who accompanied us throughout the process and were very flexible and understanding to their earmarked pledges.

2. *As to the international approach our aim is geared towards global Church structures to demand and pressure Israel to change policy and practices in order to comply with international law and respect Palestinian human rights through a solidified position to affect change.*

The NECC-ICC has become a member of the International Reference Group IRG to the WCC/Ecumenical Water Network. Our representation is the only one in the region and we look forward to capitalize upon that membership to reflect high exposure of the water issue in the region and in the oPt in particular, with focus upon Israeli occupation and right to water for Palestinians.

This has culminated in the incorporation of biblical reflections to the WCC campaign upon Water and Just peace throughout the seven weeks for water designed by the Ecumenical Water Network/EWN. Also participated in the WCC General assembly held in Busan, where the EWN was highly profiled with focus upon water in Palestine and Guatemala.



The EWN participated in the Assembly with its representatives through the Madang. It organized many activities /events in the Assembly to highlight the issues of water and sanitation. The EWN organized 2 Workshops at the Madang during the WCC Assembly.

- Slot for presentation about water issues in Occupied Palestine organized by Ecumenical Water Network and the International Christian Committee (a member of the EWN); displaying and distributing EWASH material in Ecumenical Water Network booth.
- NECC-ICC, member of the Ecumenical Water Network, ensured that Palestine would be included in the Ecumenical Water Network's participation; presentation was part of a workshop on "Water in Conflict"
- A presentation of the "Water in conflict", was made on November 4, 2013 about water issues in Palestine, including West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, and the Thirsting for Justice campaign. The audience (around 40 people) was receptive and took some notes. Informative material included the thirsting for Justice activist guide (500 copies), West Bank info graphic (500 copies), thirsting for Justice postcards (400 copies), thirsting for Justice stickers (200 copies), The majority of the material was

distributed in the booth of the Ecumenical Water Network during the length of the Assembly and during the presentation.

- In addition, 3 short movies on Gaza were projected on a screen in the booth on a loop (Farming in Despair, Foul Smell, Gaza is Floating) during the length of the assembly, and pictures about WASH issues in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, taken by Palestinian youth with local partners were displayed.

Alexander Abu Ata, a young WASH activist (eWASH Advocacy Task Force Officer) of West Bank, representing the NECC-ICC, a member of the EWN made a presentation on the “water apartheid” in Palestine at the hands of the Israelis. He highlighted stark discrimination between the water consumption by the Israeli settlers in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip and that of a Palestinian. When the Palestinians do not have basic water and sanitation facilities, the Israeli settlers have swimming pools. The state of river Jordan when it reaches the Palestine territories, it remains a sewer as majority of the water is used up by Israelis. There have been hundreds of water tanks and cisterns of Palestine region are destroyed by the Israeli authorities on a daily basis. He also highlighted the [Thirst for Justice campaign](#), which he is actively engaged in bringing water to Palestinians.

Another value added is our participation and membership within the Emergency Water and Sanitation/Hygiene (EWASH) and Water and Sanitation/Hygiene (WASH) clusters and active members of the Advocacy Task Force, ATF.

Advocacy with Global partner-United Church of Canada(UCC)

The United Church of Canada (UCC) is a partner of the Near East Council of Churches since decades ministering for the Palestinian refugees and most vulnerable communities in various fields. Throughout this partnership UCC not only enabled us minister to physical needs, but contributed to making the lives of refugees and most vulnerable communities more bearable, by nurturing a limited measure of hope and sustaining our faith in fellow brothers and sisters.

The climax of this partnership and relationship is reflected through the formation of a 9 person Partner Advisor Council drawn from each of the designated global regions of the United Church of Canada. **The underlying principles of the Partner advisory Council are:**

- To give partners access to the decision making structures of the United Church
- To enable partners’ voices to be heard at all levels of the United Church
- To affirm the role of partners in accompanying the United Church in its commitment to live out God’s mission in Canada and Globally.

The group meets annually face to face and members serve for three years with one half expected to be elected for a second term to ensure continuity.

The Partner Advisory Council met in Quebec city during the period of October 15-21, 2013 in the Turning over tables event, and issued a statement for the UCC consideration. Also, the boycott campaign of settler products was launched in December of 2013 by the [United](#)

[Network for Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel](#) which is reflective of the decisions undertaken by the General Assembly in Ottawa.

We appreciate and value United Church of Canada, who did not only demonstrate that it is a vibrant Church, but a committed Church to Christian values of Love, Peace and Justice.

A big thank you is ad due to our colleagues at UCC who have spent many long hours towards rendering our orientation and participation a smooth and successful mission.

● **Future directions**

We are keen upon linking the global actions undertaken with the developing local/national action plans as an organization or a forum. Since we are the only faith based organization in the local forum, and members of the WCC/EWN global forum, we will thrive to make good use of the global/regional opportunities to raise awareness/visibility of the water conflictive nature.

● **Loan Revolving Fund**

During 2013 the organization maintained pursuit of receivables with the clear objective to recuperate the working capital to make it useful and **in compliance with the strategic direction towards revising the Loan policy**. We have scored success in recovering working capital reaching 89%.

A loan officer was recruited and the NECC-ICC has presence and outreach to communities since they cannot all access Jerusalem. In this endeavor we would take this opportunity to register our appreciation to the Coptic Orthodox and Catholic Churches who graciously have provided us with the workspace once a week for public relations.

During 2013 ICC issued 15 loans in compliance with the new policy, 8 housing, 2 for higher education and 5 small businesses. Since 1998 the overall turnover of the loan revolving fund is USD 1,527,820 with repayments reaching USD 1,278,652 (84%) and receivable with reserve of doubtful accounts reaching USD 244,167. (16%)



*God's blessings and sincere thanks to:
All international partners for their faith
and trust in us,*

*All local partners for their continued
support,*

All beneficiaries for their cooperation

&

*All those who were directly or indirectly
engaged*

*In making the dreams of many people
come true!*

