Strengthening of Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas

“Sustainable agricultural development, strengthening food security and improving farmers’ resilience and steadfastness on their lands are among the most important national development priorities” – Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture

Background and objective

Agriculture contributes significantly to secure the livelihoods of Palestine’s rural population and is an important pillar of its economic development. Enhanced opportunities for agricultural households to generate additional income or to secure their current standard of living in face of increasing challenges of climate change counteract increasing rural-urban migration, improve food security and strengthen social structures.

The “Strengthening of Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas” programme aims to improve the livelihoods of the agricultural population. A multi-level approach is applied that includes measures:

1. to increase the capacities of the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture – in particular of its regional extension departments – to deliver improved advisory services and planning processes to the rural population,
2. to improve the conditions for increased agricultural productivity (e.g. water availability), and
3. to improve the conditions for income generation and employability in Palestine’s agricultural sector (e.g. market access).

The “Strengthening of Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas” programme is implemented by GIZ in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and its regional entities. The programme is financed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and coordinates closely with other donors active in the sector to achieve maximum sustainable effects for Palestinians.

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<th>Project region:</th>
<th>West Bank</th>
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<td>Partners:</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)</td>
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<td>Current commission:</td>
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Interventions are planned in the district of Hebron (Dura), the northwest of the West Bank (Tulkarem, Qualqilia, Jenin) and in the central highlands around Ramallah. The project has a duration of 3 years.

The programme builds on the extensive experience of other GIZ programmes, e.g. the Climate Change Adapation Project and the Water Programme.

Expected achievements

- **Local concepts for rural development** will serve as a basis for efficient use of resources such as water and soil. These concepts will take risk mappings as well as market analyses into account and will support the MoA in strengthening the livelihoods of the agricultural population. In order to identify specific development priorities and measures NGOs, private sector associations and other collective organisations – particularly representatives of women’s and farmer’s organisations – will be actively involved.

- **Small-scale agricultural infrastructure**, like water tanks, efficient irrigation systems, energy-efficient pumping schemes and water harvesting systems as well as agricultural land rehabilitation serve to increase water availability in water scarce areas and increase resilience of farmers against changing rainfall and weather patterns.

- **Methods for sustainable water use and agriculture**, e.g. the reutilisation of treated waste water, climate change adapted crop cycles, mixed cultivation and climate smart agriculture in general will increase the harvest, while reducing input costs and subsequently increasing farmer’s resilience as well as incomes. A functioning agriculture contributes to food security and strengthens social structures as well as family networks in rural areas.

- **Measures targeted on income generation and employment opportunities** will strengthen farmers and in particular women’s groups to increase their incomes, diversify their businesses and develop new agricultural employment fields. Increased access to local, regional and maybe even international markets as well as cooperation with private sector organisations or universities will strengthen the economic capitals of the rural population.

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GIZ in Palestine is responsible for the content of this publication.

Access to sufficient clean water is indispensable for the Palestinian agriculture such as livestock farming, cash crop production or subsistence agriculture.