

## **Integrated Project in Organic Agriculture and Fair Trade in Jenin – Palestine**

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*The Arab Agronomist Association, Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, and Associazione di Cooperazione allo Sviluppo are collaborating in different programs supporting Palestinian agricultural sector.*

*In the northwestern area of the Jenin district, an integrated project is trying to mitigate the chaotic humanitarian consequences created by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It involves four villages: Silat al-Arthiyya, Anin, Rummana, and at-Taybe, that are amongst the most affected by the Separation Wall. The construction and existence of this wall not only violates human rights and international agreements through collective punishment, expropriation of private property, houses demolition, impediment of freedom of movement, and partition of families, but it has also led to the loss of several donums of agricultural fields by Palestinian farmers. The main goal of the present project is to recover unproductive fields through the cultivation and production of almonds, wheat, sesame, and beans according to organic farming methods.*

*As a response to arable land loss, the project intends to recover unproductive lands in order to support the poorest farmers of the area both in an economic and psychological way. Organic cultivation methods are adopted in this context as an instrument to stimulate land respect and sustainability. Land recovery techniques include removal of stones, manual preparation and land plouwing, construction of terrace walls, land fertilization through the use of compost, and legumes cultivation.*

*The direct beneficiaries of the project consist of 70 families that work to recover two valleys of organic trees and different open fields for cultivation. More than 20,000 new trees have been introduced, and 320 donums have been cultivated with wheat, sesame, and beans. The farmers are part of different cooperatives linked to a farmer's union, while the activities are performed mostly on a collective basis.*

*All the crops are going to be certificated by COAP (Center for Organic Agriculture Palestine) and distributed by fair trade channels. Both the almonds, with the proceeds of drying and shipping, and the wheat, with the production of cous cous, involve different women's associations and cooperatives based in the Jenin area. Hundreds of people depend economically on this transformation process, which guarantees transparency, strong capacity building, fair prices, and gender equity.*

*Finally, this project wants to support the hope of hundreds of Jenin farmers that intend to continue growing the land and searching for a peace with justice, in all senses.*