

Annex 11:

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Ministry of Agriculture

HYDROPONICS FARM IN Al Mujib Valley

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

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1. Introduction and Project Description

- a. Jordan's agriculture sector is well positioned to maximize the economic, social and environment benefits of advanced agriculture technologies. Hydroponics allows farmers to grow crops faster than traditional field-based agriculture while using a fraction of the water needed and allowed to produce vegetables by using the same water. Moreover, hydroponics can be fueled by solar energy and its crops can be grown in practically a pesticide free environment. The development and expansion of commercially viable business models based on hydroponic farm systems has huge potential in Jordan. These farming systems are not dependent on large volumes of water or land availability. Jordan's agriculture is currently the largest user of water. While farmers irrigate about 46% of the total agricultural land, agricultural water requirements represented around 50% of total national water supply. Jordan's system of subsidies affects the use of irrigation water, which necessitates strict rationing to allocate the remaining water resources.

The project includes three main components:

- Component 1 - Supply, Installation, and Operations. This component will include the design, acquisition, installation and operations associating with pilot hydroponic technology that is appropriate to the climatic and social conditions of the target area.
 - Component 2- Business Model Development. This component will focus on creation and management of an innovation platform that will focus on the development of hydroponics business model (including access to finance, registration, access to services, etc.). The model will be designed to attract private investment, it should include features specifically enable women and youth to obtain access to hydroponics units and/or the related services (e.g. technical support, logistic, packaging, etc.) required for sustainability and commercial viability of the hydroponic units. Special emphasis will be given to maximizing the use of digital solutions. The platform will require inclusion of technical experts, civil society, universities, chambers of commerce, specialists in digital solutions and private sector.
 - Component 3: Dissemination and Training. Key areas for this component include the design, organization and implementation of a campaign to generate awareness of production systems and to train targeted communities in the technology and/or business models. The campaign will specifically focus on the sharing the lessons on the social, economic and environmental benefits of the production systems.
- b. The project will be based in the Wadi Al Mujib nearby the village of Ariha approximately 80 km south West of the capital Amman. Wadi Al Mujib lies in the heartland of Jordan smallholder agriculture experiencing high rates of poverty. The project will take place on Government land (one and half hectare) registered for Ministry of Agriculture.
- c. The Project aims to test and promote a commercially viable, socially-inclusive, and water-efficient agriculture production systems in Jordan through comparison of intensively managed covered farming units (see Annex no. (5), MoA, Concept Project Study Alternatives). The project will: (i) be comparing traditional covered production system against high technology hydroponic production system; (ii) identify which of these systems is commercially and environmentally viable; and (iii) draw and disseminate lessons learned from the project and identify avenues for investment, replication and scaling up. Lessons learned would seek to inform future

(public and/or private) investments in Wadi Al Mujib and beyond. (Appendix 1, land ownership documentation, general project lay-out, and supporting imagery file is provided)

- d. Objectives of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- Understand the stakeholder engagement requirements;
 - Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement such that it meets the standards of International Best Practice;
 - Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the Project and its activities;
 - Identify the most effective methods, timing and structures through which to share project information, and to ensure regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation;
 - Develop a stakeholders engagement process that provides stakeholders with an opportunity to influence project planning and design; Establish formal grievance/resolution mechanisms;
 - Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP;
 - Define reporting and monitoring measures to ensure the effectiveness of the SEP and periodical reviews of the SEP based on findings

2. Brief Summary of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities

A public consultation meeting was organized on 21,22th, April 2021 by Alqasr Agriculture Directorate with all relevant stakeholders' i.e. local community -including women and youth-potential beneficiaries, relevant government officials, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and independent farm owners. All stakeholders were invited including fruit and vegetable retailers at the stakeholder's engagement meeting in order to understand their requirements and input for improving marketability of Hydroponic farm produce. The purpose of the community consultation meeting was to build the awareness of the stakeholders on the social and economic opportunities and benefits envisioned in the development, management and production phase of the environmentally sustainable hydroponics farm unit. Due to the possibility of replication of the hydroponic farm in other communities and the need to explain the rational and the benefits of establishing this farm it was necessary, during the community engagement, to include farmers from other farming communities and villages in order to exchange views and experiences with them.

A project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) was discussed and agreed upon during the community consultation meeting with the stakeholders (see annex 4, Main Participants Concerns). The proposed GRM was prepared collaboratively and transparently with the stakeholders and made available by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to farm laborers working on site in the Arabic language as well as to all other stakeholders. Any amendments or updates to the GRM will be based on prior consultations and announced prior to implementation and presented in printed format in the Arabic language by the MoA.

All comments, endeavors and interventions by the invited stakeholders and response to the representative of the Ministry of Agriculture were documented.

3. Stakeholder identification and analysis

The section identifies the key stakeholders, who will be informed and consulted about the project, including individuals, groups, or communities that:

- Are affected or likely to be affected by the project (project-affected parties); and
- may have an interest in the project (other interested parties);
- may be disadvantaged and/or vulnerable individuals or groups

3.1 Project Affected Parties (PAPs)

- a. The main beneficiaries and stakeholders in this project will be the farming NGOs from Alqasr, cooperatives, local farm owners, women and youth laborers, farmers and farm owners from adjacent locations including Ariha, Al Mughir, Abu Turabh and Masear, representatives from the Jordan Valley Authority and the Water Authority, the MoA, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Water and Irrigation and Karak Cooperation Directorate.

The ESIA team at the MoA has identified the interests of the project affected parties and their roles in project design, implementation and decision-making processes. The project activities will lead to the use of the same water sources that are used by farmers in Wadi Al-Mujib. The project produces small amounts of solid and liquid waste with an organic content.

Therefore, communication on the timing of project implementation and implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be a critical component in minimizing these impacts. The MoA will be responsible for the successful implementation of this plan.

3.2 Other interested parties

Other interested parties include individuals, groups, or organizations with an interest in the project. These groups of stakeholders will be interested on the Hydroponic project for variety of reasons. Their interest could be because of its location, its characteristics, and its impacts, or other matters related to the broader public interest. These parties may include regulators, government officials, the private sector, the scientific community, academics, unions, women's organizations, other civil society organizations, and cultural groups.

The project has and will continue to identify other interested parties' interest and roles in the project's design, implementation and decision-making process and will engage them in stakeholder consultations throughout project implementation.

3.3 Disadvantaged / Vulnerable individuals or groups

Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups are potentially disproportionately affected and less able to benefit from opportunities offered by the project due to specific difficulties to access and/or understand information about the project and its environmental and social impacts and mitigation strategies.

The project area includes a few villages that are classified as pockets of poverty in Jordan. Additional or disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups in the project area include "those registered as poor in local social services; female-headed households; families headed by disabled persons, unemployed people, and Syrian refugees in the project area.

The ESIA team at the MoA interviewed some vulnerable families, some unemployed individuals, and a group of Syrian refugees in the Alqasr Agriculture Directorate during the field visit to the project site on the 21st and 22nd, April 2021.

The expectations of the unemployed and the Syrian refugees were significant in the

job opportunities generated by the project, whether seasonal or permanent. As for the vulnerable families, especially the poor, they had reservations about working on the project for fear of affecting the cash aid they get from the National Aid Fund.

As explained in the ESIA, “Even the minor impacts of the project can be important to some vulnerable people, especially the unemployed and the Syrian refugees, but the small project size does not meet the needs the large numbers of vulnerable groups in employment opportunities and improving their livelihoods, this point is made clear in public Consultation Session. This SEP will ensure that these vulnerable and disadvantaged groups or individuals are consulted throughout project implementation and their feedback incorporated to ensure successful implementation of the project.

4. Stakeholder Engagement Program

4.1. Purpose and timing of stakeholder engagement plan (SEP)

The main goal of the SEP is to improve and facilitate decision making and create an atmosphere of understanding that actively involves project-affected people and other stakeholders in a timely manner, and that these groups are provided with sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns that may influence Project decisions. This SEP is a useful tool for managing communications between the project Owners and its stakeholders. The MoA funded Project will be based in Wadi Al Mujib, the heartland of Jordan smallholder agriculture experiencing high rates of poverty. The project will form a local committee at the project site from the stakeholders, this committee will meet once every month or whenever the need arises to discuss the tensions that may arise during the implementation of the project, and ways to address them. Therefore, the proposed model will also contribute to enhancing social cohesion. table (1) bellow included a list of stakeholders that will be consulted.

Table 1. project stakeholder needs

Community	Stakeholder group	Key characteristics	Language needs	Preferred notification means (e-mail, phone, radio, letter)	Specific needs (accessibility, large print, child care, daytime meetings)
Al Qasr	Parents with young children	Approximately 180 households affected; 300 childrens	Official language	Written information, radio	Child care for meetings—late afternoon preferred timing
	Refugees	38 extended families, poverty level	Official language	Visit with translator and civil society representative	Graphics, education on process
	Amro Villages Charity Association	Approximately 26 members	Official language	phone	daytime meetings, transportation to the meeting site
	Itlalat Tarajan Charity Association	Approximately 7 women members	Official language	phone	
	Skill and Perfection Charity Association	Approximately 30 women members	Official language	phone	
	The Royal Way Charity Association	Approximately 34	Official language	phone	daytime meetings,

		members			transportation to the meeting site
	Umhat AL-Ezz Charity Association	Approximately 9 women members	Official language	phone	daytime meetings, transportation to the meeting site
	Agriculture Committee / Decentralization Council in Karak Governorate	Committee elected at the level of Karak	Official language	Letter, phone	
	Farmers Union /Karak Governorate	Approximately 804 members	Official language	Letter, phone	
	Karak Cooperation Directorate	Governmental institutions	Official language	letter	daytime meetings
Qasabat Al Tafileh	Parents with young children	Approximately 180 households affected; 300 children	Official language	Written information, radio	Child care for meetings—late afternoon preferred timing
	Refugees	38 extended families, poverty level	Official language	Visit with translator and civil society representative	Graphics, education on process
	Tafileh Young Women Association	Approximately 35 Women member	Official language	phone	daytime meetings, transportation to the meeting site
	Alduhul agricultural cooperative association	Approximately 16 farmers member	Official language	phone	
	Alnumtih agricultural cooperative association	Approximately 23 farmers member	Official language	phone	
	Agriculture Committee / Decentralization Council in Tafileh Governorate	Committee elected at the level of Tafileh	Official language	Letter, phone	
	Agricultural Engineers Association	Approximately 230 agricultural engineers Of them, 60 are unemployed	Official language	Letter, e-mail	
	Farmers Union /Tafileh Governorate	Approximately 140 member	Official language	Letter, phone	
	Tafila Cooperation Directorate	Governmental institution	Official language	letter	daytime meetings

4.2. Proposed strategy for information disclosure:

The project will discuss the technical reports and outcomes of the project's work progress and transfer the project's experience to the stakeholders and farmers in the region through direct interviews in workshops. Brochures will also be used to publicize the project's activities. Visits will also be organized for the media and electronic news

agencies to the project site to inform the local communities in other regions of Jordan the importance of the project in introducing modern technologies used in agriculture.

4.3. Proposed strategy for consultation

Access and communication with project target groups will be secured through workshops and focus groups on specific topics associated with the project such as activities associated with the preparation and construction phases of the project and so on. The views and concerns of the stakeholder groups will be documented and addressed by the MoA and will be taken into consideration in the overall project implementation. The GRM will also play a vital role in ensuring the concerns and feedback of the stakeholders are captured and reflected in the overall project implementation.

4.4. Proposed strategy to incorporate the view of vulnerable groups

Vulnerable or disadvantaged groups will be contacted via direct interviews to ensure that they are not discriminated against in permanent jobs or as seasonal workers in the project. Their views, opinions and concerns will be documented and addressed and taken into consideration in the project implementation as relevant.

4.5. Timelines

The timeline for implementation of all phases including construction and operation is 8 months. During the implementation stages, consultative meetings will be held with stakeholders covering all activities associated with preparation, construction, operation and closure of the project. Deadlines for comments will be two weeks after the proposed consultation meetings as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Project stakeholder consultations during implementation phase

Project stage	Topic of consultation group	Method used	Timetable (location, dates, year)	Target stakeholders	Responsibilities
Preparation and construction	Project design	Discussion with public meeting, Presentation	Professional Associations Complex, February 4, 2021, 11 a.m.	Agriculture Committee / Decentralization Council in Aqasr Sub Governorate, Farmers Union /Karak, Agricultural Engineers Association, Karak	Project owner
Operating	Project progress reports	Discussion with public meeting, Presentation, Brochure, Media	The project site, June 17, 2021, 11 a.m.	Cooperation Directorate, Amro Villages Charity Association, Itlalat Tarajan Charity Association, Skill and Perfection Charity Association, The Royal	
Project Closure	Project final report and lessons learned	Discussion with public meeting, workshop, Media	Professional Associations Complex, November 10, 2022, 10 a.m.	Way Charity Association, Umhat AL-Ezz Charity Association.	

4.6. Review of Comments

- a. All comments, points and input provided during or immediately after the community consultation by the invited stakeholders will be documented and responded by the Alqasr Agriculture Directorate.

- b. If the answers cannot be made available for any reason to the requester during the consultation meeting, the MoA is committed to provide the written responses to the requester within 2 working days after the meeting.
- c. The answers can also be provided verbally by phone but a written copy must be filed in the Farm office for future reference with all other questions and answers that were presented during the consultation meeting and made available to stakeholders if requested by them.
- d. All comments made throughout project implementation will also be documented and addressed within a maximum of 1 week of the date of registration of the comment and this will be done verbally by phone.

4.7. Future Phases of Project

- a. The Ministry of Agriculture / project owner will prepare semi-annual reports regarding environmental damage, grievances and project achievements. These reports will be presented to stakeholders from the meetings of the local committee for the project in Alqasr Sub Governorate, as well as the committee supervising the implementation of the project in the Ministry of Agriculture.
- b. The Ministry of Agriculture will issue special reports, upon request, in the event of any unexpected environmental or social impacts. These reports will be shared with stakeholders through direct meetings and interviews..

5. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities

5.1. Resources

- a. The project owner representative, Alqasr Agriculture Directorate, will be organizing the public consultation meeting through coordination with the MoA and will send out invitations to all relevant stakeholders, informing them of the time and place of the meeting and the objective of the meeting.
- b. It is the full responsibility of the MoA/project owner to ensure that all aspects of the SEP are implemented.
- c. The cost of the necessary logistics i.e. paper, pencils, projector and screen, refreshments, Electrical connections chairs, tables, flip chart will be the responsibility of the Alqasr Agriculture Directorate, these estimated expenditures will be approximately 6622 USD and will be spent from the allocated budget in the business model of the project as outlined the table below..

Table 3: Stakeholder Engagement Plan - Estimated Budget

Stakeholder Engagement Activities	Quantity	Unit Cost (USD)	Total Cost (USD)
Social media staff	3	200	600
Travel expense for staff	16	200	3200
Stationery, paper, pencils	3	75	225
Pastries, refreshments, coffee, Tea.	3	215	645
Hall	3	300	900
Communications materials (pamphlets, posters, PR kits-including design)	3	150	450
Contingency	1	602	602
Total			6622

- d. A list of the responsible staff at the MoA for this task can be contacted by phone, (+96232315121, +962799963184), or on the complaints page on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture or sent on the Ministry of Agriculture page on the Facebook link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/207233332651059/> or the Ministry website (www.moa.gov.jo), once the implementation of the project begins (Construction Phase).
- e. Documentation of meetings will be undertaken by Alqasr Agriculture Directorate incorporating a list of all participants and their contact information of the MoA team..

5.2. Management functions and responsibilities

- a. The MoA and the project owner representative, Alqasr Agriculture Directorate will be responsible for carrying out each of the stakeholder engagements as indicated in Table 2 of this SEP. The allocated staffs at both the MoA and the Alqasr Agriculture Directorate have the relevant experience to conduct meaningful consultations with the stakeholders and document and address any concerns or comments accordingly. All stakeholders will be encouraged to be involved in the discussions and proposed solutions to issues that arise during the consultation session. Stakeholder participation in project management will be ensured through the project's local committee.
- b. It is imperative that all MoA team and Alqasr Agriculture Directorate be present at planned public consultation meetings. Management will follow up closely on all the documented concerns and comments of the stakeholder engagement sessions and will ensure that these are addressed adequately.
- c. Minutes of the stakeholder engagements will be taken and documented after each consultation sessions (as laid out in Table 2) with a list of the attendees, a summary of the main concerns, and a detailed explanation of how these concerns and comments were addressed.

6. Grievance Mechanism

The Grievance Mechanism will be made with straightforward and clear procedures for the people and stakeholders who have any concerns or grievances to be able to present them directly to management, by phone, text message through Facebook or text message through watsapp, and responses to said issues or grievances can adequately be addressed in a timely manner. All grievances will be documented in a sample log of complaints and grievance (see annex 6). Any and all issues or grievances must be made by using any of the project grievance mechanism uptake channels by writing and deposited in the Grievance Box near the project manager's office on site the fund will be available for people and stakeholders with special needs, if a complainant cannot access the grievance box or cannot read or write, they can also lodge a complaint through the other uptake channels like a text message with a description of the Grievance at hand could be sent to the project officer or Alqasr Agricultural Directorate, to either of the following numbers: +96232315121, +962799963184, or it could be sent to the complaints page on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture (www.moa.gov.jo) or the Facebook link

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/207233332651059/> The complainant could also request for a direct meeting with the project officer

- All contact information will be made clearly visible on a sign at the main entrance of the farm or on the website or Facebook page of the Ministry of Agriculture
- In the event that the complainant does not know how to read or write, a phone call can be made directly to the following numbers: +96232315121, +962799963184. All complaints can be kept confidential and anonymous upon the request of the complainant
- A list of the grievances should be compiled on a monthly basis and provided to the MoA by the Cooperative association on site with the actions taken for each grievance, time of submission, and date of corrective action taken. If the grievance issue or complaint has not been mitigated within the time of the weekly or monthly report to the project manager or the Alqasr Agriculture Directorate, then a reason for not carrying it out must also be written in the report. The MoA has the responsibility to either accept or deny the reason and order an amicable solution. A solution must accordingly be found and if needed it should be escalated to the MoA management. A final report on the corrective action must be presented to the MoA within a mutually agreed time.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

6. ?Involvement of stakeholders in monitoring activities

The Hydroponics farm project will cover 15 dunoms (1.5 hectares) and there will be no need during this trial phase for any third party to monitor project impacts and mitigation programs as all monitoring activities will be undertaken closely by the MoA.

7.2. Reporting back to stakeholder groups

A weekly farm management and operations report should be sent to the MoA along with the quarterly financial report. These two reports are considered essential in identifying technical and financial issues related to the daily farm operations and its financial sustainability. Any stakeholder engagements and their outcomes should also be documented and shared with the MoA within these reports.

Stakeholders will always be reminded of the availability of the grievance mechanism. All recommendations and mitigation plans discussed and agreed upon in the community engagement meetings will be filed under the Community Grievance folder in the manager's office and a copy should be posted on the project manager Bulletin Board outside his office for any visitor to read.