

ROOFTOP GARDENS IN PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS

Karama Organization for Women and Children development, located in Deheishe refugee camp on the West Bank, works for the benefit of the local community since its establishment in 2002. From the year 2012 on, Karama engages the women and youth in a rooftop garden project that helps them grow fresh produce on their own roofs. This idea fights the rising food insecurity among refugees, and empowers women and youth with valuable skills. These gardens also carry the potential to develop into feasible social enterprises that employ innovative production groups who process and add value to their own rooftop produce. In 2016, the European Commission has selected this initiative as a recipient of their funding. Almost 90% of the proposed budget will be funded by the EU, while the other 10% will have to be funded from other sources.

This overview will introduce the selected initiative for which Karama invites other funders to participate in.

Project Title: Proud and productive food security entrepreneurs in Palestinian refugee camps

Project Specific Objectives:

- 1) Improved food security in camps by increasing local food production in rooftop gardens. This addresses a widespread concern in a way that increases local independence, self-reliance and confidence of participants.
- 2) Increased skills and involvement of women and youth in local development processes in refugee camps. This objective will increase their employability and capability to provide for their families, giving them future perspective and confidence.
- 3) Increased economic activities for the participants through social enterprises related to the rooftop gardens. By linking local production with the consumers in Bethlehem and Hebron region this intervention taps into a potential that could be harnessed through social enterprises.



Picture 1&2 show female participant in her rooftop gardens established in 2012 in Deheishe Refugee Camp.

Project Target Group (participants): Both women and young people from refugee camps will be selected to receive a garden on their roof. 220 rooftop gardens will be established, benefiting 220 women or young people directly and at least 1760 extended family members as well as the whole camp population.

Project Location: The first project cycle will start in four refugee camps in the Bethlehem and Hebron region, while the third project year has an extension to three more refugee camps (from the whole West Bank)

Project Duration: 48 months (4 years), proposed starting date is 01 February 2017.

Project funding: 90% by the European Commission and 10% from other sources requested by Karama

Project Summary

This initiative builds on the experience of Karama Organization with local rooftop gardens that allow women to harvest vegetables and herbs for two harvesting seasons per year directly from their roofs in the refugee camp.

This proposed project will work on two levels; in the **first** place the individual package of constructed rooftop garden, training in agricultural and social topics, supervision and workshops that focusses on the individual empowerment and employment of women and young people. The rooftop gardens consist of seven tubes optimizing the use of soil and water to produce a range of vegetables and herbs, under the cover of a plastic house to create the right atmosphere and give protection.

Secondly, collective activities will bring the participants into production groups that develop feasible and profitable social enterprise ideas with the help of business workshops, production tools and investments. These collective activities include market research into the most profitable and sustainable production units, the creation of packaging & production houses in each camp and stimulating entrepreneurial activity among the participants (through additional social & business workshops and business awards). **With this second branch of collective activities the basic idea of productive gardens will be taken to the next level by reaching for social enterprises that will give more benefit to the communities than merely the sum of the gardens produce.** Collective centers ("packaging houses") will serve as hubs where the production groups can meet, bring their produce and add value to them (through business ideas ranging from pickled vegetables to dried herbs and baked stuffed breads). These activities will have both an impact on local food availability & security, as well as personal and collective levels of empowerment and well-being of camp residents.



Picture 3&4 show the harvest of cucumbers and tomatoes in one of the rooftop gardens build in 2012.

Simplified Activity Overview per Project Year

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Baseline study	80 more gardens build in 4 camps	20 x 3 more gardens to be build	
80 gardens in 4 camps	160 participants receive supervision & training	220 participants receive supervision & training	
80 participants receive supervision & training	Extra entrepreneurship training for selected participants	3 additional collective centers build	Market research for better private sector linkages done
4 collective centers build	Production tools selected and installed (herbs, breads, pickles so on)	Extra entrepreneurship training for selected participants	Extra entrepreneurship training for selected participants
Extra entrepreneurship training for selected participants	Mid-term evaluation	Business award package (including training) for 4 ideas / production groups	Supporting private sector linkages of stores/production group
Market research to production ideas done		National event held to spread idea nationally	Closing ceremony & end evaluation