



PLANTING A FRUIT TREE NURSERY FOR RURAL DISADVANTAGED MOROCCAN FAMILIES ON LAND PROVIDED BY THE MOROCCAN-JEWISH COMMUNITY, NEAR THE BURIAL SITE COMPLEX OF RABBI NISSIM BEN NISSIM, IN THE AIT BAYOUD VILLAGE, ESSAOUIRA, MOROCCO

A PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL OF THE HIGH ATLAS FOUNDATION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE HARRY AND JEANETTE WEINBERG FOUNDATION

December 2011

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PROJECT SUMMARY:

This project will plant 120,000 almond and pomegranate seeds and saplings over five years on 1 hectare of land, located from the outer wall of the housing building that is part of the complex of the burial site of the revered Rabbi Nissim ben Nissim, in the Ait Bayoud village of the Essaouira province. The arable land is provided in-kind by the Moroccan Jewish community for this proposed tree nursery of fruit varieties that do not require pesticides. The project is for the benefit the surrounding rural villages that are socio-economically disadvantaged.

At the beginning of the project's first year (February-March 2012), 60,000 pomegranate and almond seeds/saplings will be planted on the contributed land, and after two years the trees will be distributed for free to approximately 500 households of the surrounding villages. People will plant the trees in their own orchards; they will also maintain them and be the sole beneficiaries of the new income generated from fruit yields. The third year, the land will be left fallow and revitalize. At the beginning of the project's fourth year, 60,000 fruit saplings will be planted again, and will be distributed to an additional 500 households (1,000 total) at the end of the project's fifth year. After 6 to 8 years, the 100,000 trees (factoring in survival rates) will generate for the rural communities approximately \$7,500,000 in fruit yields, which will increase multiple-fold average household incomes. The project will also sustainably prevent erosion and desertification.

This proposal to partner with the High Atlas Foundation to fully implement the Moroccan community-managed fruit tree nursery kindly requests \$46,450. The new Initiative to restore and preserve Jewish cemeteries in Morocco, which is under Royal Patronage, is synergistic with this proposed project that embodies diverse cultural partnership to develop rural communities that neighbor a Jewish cemetery. This proposed project is a pilot project; there are other similar special sites in rural areas that the Moroccan Jewish community can potentially contribute. The project creates a real example of Moroccan diversity and unity, and implementing it will also create a vital international example of diverse collaboration.

COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Eighty-five percent of rural Moroccan households earn less than the national average. The low market-value of traditional staples barley and corn (grown on approximately 70 percent on Moroccan farmland yet generate 10-15 percent of agricultural revenue) has compelled farmers to transition to plant cash-crops, most commonly fruit trees, to generate significantly greater income.

This community fruit tree nursery project integrates solutions to socio-economic and environmental challenges facing rural Moroccan communities. The project benefits include:

- Increasing multiple-fold average household incomes from fruit sales;
- Diversifying the rural economy and creating employment;
- Strengthening the natural environment by planting fruit trees that do not require pesticides and that will prevent soil erosion and desertification;
- Developing the agricultural technical skills of rural farmers, specifically in regard to tree nursery management (including, grafting, planting, treatment of diseases, and marketing);
- Diversifying diets and contributing to public health; and

- Strengthening democratic processes and creating diverse partnerships to alleviate poverty.

Further, the approach of building a community-managed nursery provides special advantages:

- Saplings are a fraction of the cost of two year old trees ready to be planted in orchards;
- Community nurseries involve the transfer of important technical skills that enable rural people to replenish their orchards in the future; and
- Nurseries are new and innovative profit-making enterprises and are needed to expand to meet the immense demand for fruit trees by rural Moroccan communities.

The project will transfer to eight local community members technical skills related to the maintenance of the fruit tree nursery agriculture (“Training of the Trainers”). The eight participants in the training will assist in the project’s implementation, on-going care of the nursery, and will train other community members in the agricultural techniques.

PROJECT TIMELINE

February – September 2012

- Prepare land and irrigation system and plant 60,000 seeds and saplings
- “Training of Trainers” workshops held with eight community members

October 2012 – December 2013

- Grafting of saplings
- “Training of Trainers’ workshops

End of 2013

- Distribution of 60,000 almond and pomegranate trees from nursery to households, who plants them in their private orchards and receive technical support as needed

2014

- Land revitalizes

2015

- Plant 60,000 almond and pomegranate trees in January 2015
- Grafting of saplings and maintenance of nursery

End of 2016

- Second distribution of 60,000 almond and pomegranate trees to households

The future

- HAF continues to assist community planning meetings and the implementation of local development projects in the Essaouira province

BUDGET

The partnering contribution kindly requested for this project is \$46,450. The total project cost is \$64,450, which includes the in-kind contribution of arable land (valued at \$18,000) for the project’s five year period provided by the Jewish Committee of Morocco.

Action	Description	Quantity & Unit Cost (\$ USD)	Cost (\$ USD)
<i>Project Implementation</i>			
Nursery plot development	Tilling, leveling, grading	1	2,000
Upgrade irrigation system	Cement, rebar, pipe, and technician	1	2,000
Fence		1	1,000
Fertilizers		1	250
Almond saplings		60,000 @ 5c each	3,000
Pomegranate saplings		60,000 @ 20c each	12,000
Grafting of plants		120,000 @ 10 c each	12,000
Caretaking	Watering, weeding, etc. of nursery	24 months @ \$150 per month	3,600
Transportation of materials		2 voyages @ \$500 per voyage	1,000
<i>Personnel and Administration</i>			
Project and training manager	Project coordination and workshops	24 months @ 15% of full-time	5,000
Communications	phone, fax, postage	1	600
Project administration costs	Coordinate w/ Moroccan and other admins, partner-building, financial management, logistics	1	4,000
Donor 1: Jewish Committee of Morocco – land for nursery	1 hectare of arable land	\$3,600 per year for 5 years	18,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST			64,450
TOTAL IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION			18,000
TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED			46,450

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In keeping with its focus on inclusive participation, HAF includes participatory monitoring and evaluation as a key project phase. Through the monitoring and evaluation process HAF's field officers and community members meet together on a regular basis to discuss project successes and challenges, and to identify new opportunities.

DESCRIPTION OF HAF:

The mission of HAF is to work to establish development projects in different parts of Morocco that local communities design and manage, and that are in partnership with government and non-government agencies. HAF uses a participatory development approach that includes beneficiaries as active partners in every step of the development process – from

prioritizing development goals to project implementation and management to monitoring and evaluation. Key to this approach is the facilitation of community planning meetings where beneficiaries together determine the types of projects they want to undertake and create action plans, which most often in fruit tree agriculture, clean drinking water, women's and youth empowerment, and development training.

Accomplishments of the High Atlas Foundation include: planting with communities 321,600 fruit trees and saplings in six provinces of Morocco (at least doubling the income benefitting approximately 30,000 people); building of eleven clean drinking water systems in villages that are among the most remote (halving infant mortality in a population of 3,000 people); and the construction of three women's and girl's cooperatives (providing 60 families social service and employment opportunities). The Foundation has conducted a series of experiential participatory training workshops in the Mohammedia area, successfully transferring skills with 30 university students and 15 communal assembly members.

The High Atlas Foundation (HAF) was founded in 2000 by former Peace Corps Volunteers who served in Morocco as a way to utilize the relationships and knowledge gained during their service for the continued benefit of the Moroccan people. HAF is a U.S. 501(c)(3) organization and a Moroccan association, and since 2011 has Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Key partnerships include a global convention with Morocco's High Commission of Waters and Forests to work with rural villages neighboring the country's ten national parks. Hassan II University in Mohammedia has partnered with HAF to create the Center for Community Consensus Building and Sustainable Development, which transfers essential skills in participatory community planning to students, faculty, local government technicians and elected representatives, civil society workers, and citizens.

HAF receives funding for its projects from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies. Donors include: Caterpillar Foundation, Earth Day Network, Embassy of the Netherlands, G4S North Africa, Global Giving, Infocore, Middle East Partnership Initiative (U.S. Embassy in Rabat), Mosaic Foundation, National Endowment for Democracy, OCP Group, Penney Family Foundation, Trees for Life International, and U.S. Ambassador's Empowerment Fund. HAF's annual fundraising events in New York City and Washington, DC, and receptions hosted by His Excellency Aziz Mekouar, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United States--are important sources of support for HAF's community projects in Morocco.

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