

The Project for Strengthening Support System Focusing on Sustainable Agriculture in the Jordan River Rift Valley, Palestine

(Period of study: 12 months from Jan. 2008 Our assignments: Livestock Production/ Fodder Crops)

Background of the project

The Jordan River Rift Valley is located in the eastern part of the West Bank, with an area of approximately 1,000 km² and a population of 89,000. Agriculture, as a main industry in this area, plays an important role in the regional economy, accounting for 70% of the working population and producing 12% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the West Bank. Agricultural land in the Jordan River Rift Valley is about 13,500 ha, 4,000 ha of which is under irrigation in Jericho. The main problems for agriculture in this area are: (i) poor farming technology, (ii) poor water management, (iii) salinization of farm land, (iv) shortage of fertilizers and chemicals (and the effect of inflation on the cost of these inputs), and (v) limited access to the market due to the controls imposed Israel. However, effective measures to address the aforementioned problems have not been initiated. Under these circumstances, based on the integrated agricultural development plan proposed in the Study on Jericho Regional Development Master Plan, the Project Formation Mission for Agriculture and Agribusiness Development Program was dispatched by JICA in November 2006 and ideas have been exchanged with the Palestinian National Authority (hereinafter referred to as "PNA"). In response to the official request of the PNA, the Project to establish an effective research and extension system was discussed and agreed upon by both parties.

Outline of the project

The objectives of this project are to accomplish the project purpose by achieving the project output and, consequently, to contribute to the achievement of the overall goal. The overall goal is to improve agricultural productivity of peasants/small farmers in order to realize the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity. The project purpose is to establish a basis for the effective agricultural extension system through direct linkage between research and extension. The project area, project base and the beneficiaries of this project are as follows. Target areas are Jericho and the Jordan River Rift Valley which is located in the eastern part of the West Bank and consists of Jericho, and parts of Tubas and part of Nablus districts. Beneficiaries are as follows: Extensionists of General Directorate of Extension and Rural Development (GDoERD)-Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Jericho, Tubas and Nablus Department of Agriculture (DoA)-MoA, researchers-National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) and peasants and small farmers in the project area. Experts of organization and system from the request of Pakistan.

Our assignments

- To establish appropriate technologies for cycle-oriented agriculture in the target areas
- To introduce technologies on dairy products for rural development in the target areas
- To establish linkage between research and extension
- To give instructions on management of demonstration farms and experimental farms

