



Final Evaluation for

**“Livelihood Security and Civil Society Strengthening
in the Occupied Palestinian Territory Project”**

- TATWEER

Draft Final Report

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Project Summary

Project Name	Livelihood Security and Civil Society Strengthening in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (TATWEER) project		
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Implementing Partner(s)	ARIJ and ESDC		
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List of Acronyms:

1. AMENCA: Australia-Middle East NGO Cooperation Agreement
2. ARIJ: Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem
3. CARE WBG: CARE West Bank & Gaza
4. CBOs: Community Based Organizations
5. DAC : Development Assistance Committee
6. DFAT: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
7. DRRM: Disaster Risk Reduction Measures
8. ESDC: Economic and Social Development Center
9. GCT: General Consulting and Training
10. GAP: Good Agricultural Practices
11. IOF: Israeli Occupying Forces
12. MOA: Ministry of Agriculture
13. NARC: National Agricultural Research Center
14. NFC: New Farm Company
15. NGOs: Non-government Organizations
16. NRM: Natural Resources Management
17. PNGOs: Palestinian Non-government Organizations
18. PRDP: Palestinian Reform and Development Plan
19. TOR: Terms of Reference

List of Case Studies:

1. Addressing local vulnerability – Case Study of the Nursery page 18
2. Holistic approach in TATWEER – Case Study of the Sheep Farm page 27
3. Women empowerment through different roads – Case Study of the Women Saving and Credit Scheme in Jenin page 29
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Executive Summary

The project “Livelihood Security and Civil Society Strengthening in the Occupied Palestinian Territories “TATWEER”, which is funded by the Australian Government DFAT as part of the Australia - Middle East NGO Cooperation Agreement (AMENCA) is a six year intervention that started in May 2009 and will end in June 2015. The project is implemented by CARE Australia in partnership with CARE West Bank & Gaza (WBG) and three Palestinian partners: Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ), Economic and Social Development Centre (ESDC) and New Farm Company (NFC). It is implemented in 17 localities distributed among two governorates in the Northern West Bank; Jenin and Tubas.

These communities are marked by years of unsettled conflict and restricting occupation, which impacts the livelihood and well-being of the population in many diverse ways. Agriculture is a main source of income for these communities, with both livestock holders and farmers making up a large part of the economic activities of households. Traditionally, farming has been a family business with women making up 34% of the agricultural workforce. The agriculture sector has the highest capacity to absorb large numbers of the unemployed, especially those who used to work in Israel. Despite its significance, the agriculture sector receives comparatively little attention from policy and decision makers within the Palestinian Authority and the donor community, attracting only 1% of donor funding to the Palestinian territories. Over the past years, farmers have been facing increasing difficulty in farming their land due to protracted conflict situation and Israeli occupation on the West Bank as well as the effects of climate change including drought, water shortages, flood and frost. Farmers also have to cope with sharp increases in the cost of production, low selling prices for their produce, and decreases in agricultural productivity.

Purpose and Focus of the Evaluation

Though every project needs thoughtful evaluation, the nature of TATWEER makes it even more pertinent that its achievements and lessons are captured. The time span of the project over six years and the innovative approaches applied make it crucial the performance is assessed. Therefore the objectives of this evaluation are to 1) assess the project’s achievements and performance following the DAC guidelines, and 2) identify recommendations and opportunities for future program planning. Specific questions were formulated by the TATWEER team to guide thinking of the evaluation team, which were reflected in the evaluations findings.

The evaluators have used a combination of different research tools to give a complete image of the progress made. Among these are the baseline data, monitoring and reporting reports from the TATWEER team, field visits, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries and experts. The time span of the evaluation was from November 2014 until March 15th, 2015.

Outline of Evaluation Findings

The overall objective of TATWEER is to reduce vulnerability among communities in Jenin and Tubas Governorates through improved and sustainable livelihood security and increased capacity of civil society organizations. To work towards this goal there are four specific objectives formulated;

1. Improve food security, livelihoods, and natural resource management;
2. Increase the participation of women and youth in the Palestinian development process;

3. Strengthen the role of community organizations in the development process; and
4. Contribute to efficient and effective management of the AMENCA2 program.

The findings of this evaluation show that these goals have been reached in a holistic, innovative and sustainable way. Through the activities in each community as well as the macro-level networks positive change has been reached at individual and community level.

Goals surrounding	Reached	
Food Security	√	Significant contribution to HH food security through increased production and sustainable access to income generating activities. Attention for sector development and sustainable linkages to markets
Access to skills and services	√	Empowering CBOs to provide stable, high-quality services and spread knowledge and improved skills. CBOs became knowledge centers and strengthened linkages with input & service providers
Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) applied	√	Innovative practices were introduced through all interventions and facilities to improve the NRM and optimize long-term production and sustainable practices
Women and Youth involvement	√	Every activity in every community had attention for inclusion of women and youth, be it in locally relevant ways. Women in all communities benefited from the activities and increased skills, income and well-being, while they became more active in local decision-making in most communities.
CBOs capacity building	√	Working through the CBOs made them more capable of representing their community, running facilities with services and entering into new partnerships that benefit the whole community.
Effective project management	√	Through effective reporting, meetings and communication TATWEER has been managed effectively and the team contributed to the whole AMENCA project successfully.

Figure 1 Overview Aims Reached in TATWEER 2009-2015

Relevance

The TATWEER activities have shown great relevance to community needs, national objectives and AMENCA program wide goals. The project was also in clear alliance with CARE's Economic Empowerment Program that is strongly related to its project logic and areas of change. A participatory approach in design and implementation reassured that vulnerable people were reached and interventions addressed the communities' strengths and challenges. This was shown in the CBOs and local committees' roles in the selection process and designing project facilities. The review of the situation of the local communities and the interventions done showed that the project addressed very urgent local challenges that have made a great difference in the life of farming households, women and youth. This can also be seen in the huge demand for the project's services and inputs and the wide request for support and membership in all facilities and activities, resulting in an increased outreach and accelerated development of the project's actions.

Major Approaches Taken

Throughout TATWEER some major innovative approaches have been applied that have informed project design and all community interventions. First of all the project has worked in a way that increases local capacities. By making sure the knowledge, skills and confidence of project beneficiaries and partners

would grow in the process, the capacity of both individuals and organization has grown to sustainability beyond TATWEER. This was applied to working with the Palestinian NGOs ARIJ and ESDC as well as NFC by making sure staff would grow in responsibilities on the job and administrative systems and methods were upgraded to increase efficiency beyond the work in TATWEER. Secondly this was key in the work with local CBOs, who received major capacity building interventions both through training, provision of new and better systems, additional staff support and coaching. The aim in TATWEER has always been to let CBOs themselves run the development interventions after TATWEER would phase out and the results have been clearly visible in the field as most of the CBOs were capable to operate effectively with minimal project team support and follow up at the end of the intervention.

Contributing to the success of many activities was the focus on Value Chain Development, meaning the advancement of all production stages from inputs at the farmer level till the end consumer that would use the final product. By understanding this process and the challenges and opportunities apparent in this chain, the gaps for improvement could be found to connect the farmer with more sustainable income. Innovative tools in this were also the feasibility studies applied before several interventions and the business planning skills that were shared with PNGOs and CBOs.

Lastly, women, youth and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) have been integrated in all activities as a success factor for long-term impact and sustainability. By using different tools to empower women and youth, they are encouraged to be included in local development processes.

Achievements

This section will summarize the main achievements of TATWEER and how it has been able to contribute to change on the ground in the project communities. The different goals will be discussed, namely; increased food security, empowerment of women, engagement of youth and CBO capacity development.

1) Food Security

TATWEER has been able to make a real change both in the production level of farmers as well as the costs of production for more than 4,200 farmers (of which more than 535 female). All activities took a holistic approach and took into account the production process from inputs to the market. By increasing access to inputs, knowledge and services, production quality and quantity could increase. The profitable networks that could be established and local production of inputs led to a decrease in costs for many farmers. The table below gives an overview of multiple ways the project impacted farmers' livelihood.

	Increased production	Decreased production costs
Seed Bank	By accessing better, high-quality seeds and services and applying GAP farmers were able to increase their production. Resilient seeds also produced better under harsh conditions in the region.	Collective purchases through the CBO helped farmers to decrease costs. By accessing services, machinery and learning from GAP farmers increased their efficiency in their business.
Sheep Farm	Through the model farm farmers applied better practices that combined with better quality rams led to more milk production and	The improved practices helped farmers to diminish the use of fodder through more efficient techniques. Accessing better extension services

	higher production of twins. Services like access to medicines helped them to keep their livestock healthier and more productive.	decreased their medical costs and brought a healthier flock.
Nursery	This facility connected farmers with better quality seeds to increase their production. Training and accessing advice also contributed positively.	The nursery reduced the stress and concerns of farmers, who didn't need to travel anymore to access their seedlings. Less transport costs, limited loss of seedlings and water through a controlled process as well as collective purchases reduced their production costs.
Home Gardens	By increasing access to water and new types of fruit trees and vegetables, women increased their production. Training in new techniques and GAP helped them to be more efficient.	Sustainable water harvesting techniques were crucial to decrease costs and support the women in their work, while better practices ensured the efficient use of time, water, soil and nutrition.
Farmer Field School	Through the model school both farming households as well as the women engaged have learned new skills and better practices that increased their production. New techniques like early planting have increased the harvest.	GAP contributed to reduced costs especially in the field of pesticides/fertilizer and their application.
Queen Bee Unit	Providing high quality inputs and queen bees is a big step in increasing production quality and quantity, while training helped women and CBOs to improve their business. They were also connected with private actors to less produce.	Participants received training and inputs that support their honey production. Receiving better inputs helped them to decrease costs, while increased knowledge decreases losses.

Figure 2 Impact of TATWEER activities on farmers' livelihood

This economic impact of the various interventions has been clearly captured in the survey conducted in line with the Final Evaluation and the case studies prepared by the TATWEER team. The economic gain farmers received through the facilities have reached USD 660,337 for 1,130 Seed Bank participants (for season 2013/2014) and USD 285,572 for 121 Nursery participants (for season 2013/2014)¹. This means USD 2,360 per farmer per year in the Nursery.

93% of the participants in the Seed Bank stated in the Final Evaluation Survey that they are applying GAP techniques learned under TATWEER of which 60.3% reported an increase in production because of these techniques and 54% an increase in production quality. More than 80% of the Sheep Farm participants noticed a decrease in diseases during TATWEER after applying new techniques learned in the model farm. 18 recipients of enhanced rams were surveyed and stated an additional income of 7,265 USD per year because of increased milk production, increased twin rate, reduced abortion rate and better barn

¹ Seed Bank and Nursery Monetary Values

management. A larger group of interviewed farmers stated their savings only because of applying Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) taught in the Sheep Farm equalled to 62,934.44 USD or 1,368 USD per farmer².

2) Women

The project targeted women in all levels starting from individual to household, CBOs and community. It has ensured involvement of women by devising activities that exclusively targeted women (home gardens) as well as ensuring the engagement of women in the CBOs and women's benefit from the facilities directly and indirectly, based on the huge role women have in agricultural work. The improved HH access to different inputs and services had a great positive impact on the women's level of effort in their daily agricultural work. Besides this there were some locations that set up an income-generating project exclusively designed for women, for example the Food Processing Units in Raba, Aqqaba, Jalboun and Al Jalameh. The impact of these interventions has been noticed at the personal level both emotionally and economically as well as at the collective level in CBOs and communities. Other empowered CBOs were enabled to create and host women interventions and activate other income generating activities for women like Faqua

Women engagement at the CBOs level was tailored considering the activities of the CBOs and cultural sensitivities where needed. Overall, female membership of the General Assembly from all participating CBOs grew, except for the CBOs behind the Nursery where women benefitted greatly indirectly. At the end of year 2014 their membership as part of all General Assemblies grew on average with 14 percent point; ranging from an increase with 50 female members in Aba to an increase of 10 female members in Tubas. Female participants in CBOs have become Board members in at least four CBOs, who went from all-male boards to mixed boards. Women groups and the voices of women also became more heard in local village councils as they were able to mobilize their capacities and work effectively through the project and could now provide evidences of their capability. In several communities women do now take part in local elections and in a village like Faqqua' the women's association is now regularly consulted on topics of local importance. Women stated to have become more confident, more inclined to let their voices be heard while receive more respect from their families and society.

Increase in income has also taken place in many interventions, both in the home gardens where on average 42,7kg per year per garden could be produced in the production season, as well as in the Seed Bank, Sheep Farm and Queen Been units where women could increase their production and reduce their costs. For the 9 women participating in the Farmer Field School in 2014, their new income meant a huge change for them in their personal situation. Many reported on their increased involvement in their household finance and the future of their children. On average, women worked for an increase of 92% in their year income, by only selling during 4 months of 2014.

3) Youth

Engaging youth at several stages in the project has been an important aim of TATWEER, who sees youth as key change-makers in their community while it is crucial opportunities are created for them to encourage them to stay in their communities in contribute to the future of all. In line with this, youth have been involved in the activities of the CBO capacity building as animators who played a great role in activating, engaging and attracting other youth in their communities, as community change-makers in youth-led community initiatives and through exchange visits with Universities and CBOs.

² Sheep Farm monetary value, 2014

Fresh graduates have been attracted to work in six participating CBOs to enhance the skills of CBO members in modern administrative and financial systems (after receiving additional training) and to give the youth valuable work experience. This has been very successful on both sides; CBOs increased their capacities and reported very positively on the collaboration, while many youth found long-term employment afterwards. The topics they have thought the CBOs in ranged from strategic planning, to accounting software and gender.

Besides this, 25 female and 15 male fresh graduates participated in a Summer School in 2014 after which they took the lead in organizing community projects in their own community. The seven communities that participated benefitted from environmental campaigns, traffic safety campaigns or the development of community centres. Through these activities the youth learned valuable skills and increased their confidence, while relations with the community have been improved they were able also to mobilize other youth in their communities to participate and to learn more about the CBOs work. Many village councils reported very positively on these activities, while youth felt positive about their own contribution. Several other empowered CBOs started to work in more initiatives that engage youth participation like summer camps and campaigns

4) CBOs

The project has succeeded in building the capacity of participating CBOs and transformed them into vehicles to provide services to their members and communities. Depending on each local situation, the CBO became a knowledge centre, where better agricultural techniques were promoted, where collective inputs could be guaranteed, where services could be accessed, networks established through which also major concerns were collectively addressed or advocated for. This approach represented a cornerstone in the development approach that TATWEER has applied and has achieved remarkable results. By building the TATWEER facilities through the CBOs, and empowering the other CBOs from different aspects sustainability was increased of these centres while development happened in way suitable and responsive to local needs.

The capacity of the CBOs was increased through a structured institutionalization of the CBOs focusing on legal review, training, and working with a young graduate to implement new administrative and financial systems as well as learning new skills in management, involvement of all members (men and women), business and planning. Through increased trust from the community and effective services, many CBOs have increased their membership significantly.

Overall the CBOs have increased their social and economic sustainability with only in Y5 already 12 new partnerships established with external donors (like MoA, Oxfam, other development agencies). The facilities the CBOs are running are also covering their running costs in the case of the Seed Bank and the Nursery, while the Sheep Farm is going into that direction. CBOs themselves have already contributed financially to these facilities, by investing in further expansion of the facilities' operation. In summary the evaluation saw the CBOs have increased their capacity to serve their communities as social-economic hubs.

Project Management and Sustainability

TATWEER has used several strategies to increase social, economic and environmental sustainability of activities and many indicators show this has been reached in a good way. Local ownership and capacity was promoted throughout, till the level that CBOs are capable of managing facilities till a good level. Activities in year 6 are still focusing on transferring management and ensuring good exit strategies;

while the capacity increase of CBOs already showed CBOs have good management capacity to continue the activities. Many participants confirmed they prefer receiving services through the CBOs and access CBOs for advice and assistance on issues related to their livelihood. CBOs have also been able to create sustainable linkages with other networks, with external resource mobilization leading to inputs that are beneficial for the farmers. Only in Year 5 there were already 12 new linkages established between CBOs and external actors like INGOs and the MoA. CBOs have also been able to make own financial contributions to the extension of their facilities, which shows the commitment and feeling of ownership towards the activities. Besides this, increasing the capacity of the partner NGOs has been a crucial step in ensuring long-term sustainable impact on Palestinian society by working towards NGOs who are more capable to serve their communities and possess effective skills for project management.

Management of TATWEER went through many levels, with support from DFAT on monitoring and evaluation, guidance by CARE Australia and the project management from CARE WBG. It was the aim from the 4th year of the project to move project implementation responsibilities to the local Palestinian NGOs ARIJ and ESDC which led to an increase in their staff's skills. While CARE WBG followed up closely, by the end of the project ARIJ and ESDC were taking fully care of project implementation.

Procurement and reporting procedures have been found clear by the evaluation, with project reports increasing in quality over time. The reporting has contributed to effective oversight of the project by donor and PSC with senior staff from CARE, with the last actor able to make recommendations and adjustments throughout the process. The majority of the project activities was delivered on time, with some activities developed later on in the process as complementary ideas were added and in one case delay due to late delivery of technical equipment for a women's food production unit. The quality of all implemented activities in TATWEER was very satisfactory and have all contributed to a transformation of local challenges into forces for positive change.

Recommendations

Finally, the evaluation team can recommend the following based on the evaluation's findings.

➤ The participatory approach during design and implementation has proven to be very successful. It is recommended that this is continued in any future intervention and their participation is more actively encouraged during the design stage. This should complement the involvement of marketing / business specialist who should be involved as well from an early stage to increase the effectiveness of the Value Chain Development approach.

➤ It was noticed that the strategy for women empowerment had many successful outcomes with changes at the economic and social aspects of women's lives. It was however noticed that ownership of means of production did not come into the hands of women (e.g. not in green houses). This should be considered, whether this is an aim or not. What could contribute to a more effective implementation of women empowerment would be a common understanding of the Gender Strategy as well as a common reporting system, with the indicators from the Gender Strategy used at all levels to report progress and make any challenges visible for the project management team and PSC.

➤ It could be considered to include more extensive Disaster Risk Reduction measures (DRRM) as part of interventions in areas to better deal with windstorms, flooding and frost that often affect North Jordan Valley areas.

➤ A strategy for more sustainability could be the recruiting of professional personnel to manage TATWEER facilities in a more business driven approach. This could accelerate the process of transforming these community facilities into social-economic development centres.

➤ Food security is a very crucial challenge in Palestine and extends beyond the agricultural sector. It could therefore be taken into consideration if projects should be extended to non-agricultural sectors or linkages with non-agricultural actors, especially when it comes to networks of income-generating projects.

➤ The great success of the integration of fresh graduates in the project urges the evaluation to recommend generalizing this as an economic and social model that contributes to better youth opportunities and attracts young people to play an active role in their own community and keeps them part of their own community. It should be applied in future interventions and propagated to other organizations. In addition, it should be noted that this intervention had a good male / female ratio and it is recommended that a percentage is set to ensure young female graduates will not make up less than 50% of the involved youth.

Introduction

1.1 Initiative Background

The project “Livelihood Security and Civil Society Strengthening in the Occupied Palestinian Territories “TATWEER”, which is funded by the Australian Government as part of the Australia - Middle East NGO Cooperation Agreement (AMENCA) with an amount of AUD 7,382,215, is a six year intervention that started in May 2009 and will end in April 2015. The project is implemented by CARE Australia in partnership with CARE West Bank & Gaza (WBG) and three Palestinian partners: Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ), Economic and Social Development Centre (ESDC) and New Farm Company (NFC). It is implemented in 17 localities distributed among two governorates in the Northern West Bank; Jenin and Tubas.

The overall objective of this project is to reduce vulnerability among communities in Jenin and Tubas Governorates through improved and sustainable livelihood security and increased capacity of civil society organizations.

The specific objectives of TATWEER are:

5. Improve food security, livelihoods, and natural resource management;
6. Increase the participation of women and youth in the Palestinian development process;
7. Strengthen the role of community organizations in the development process; and
8. Contribute to efficient and effective management of the AMENCA2 program.

The intervention followed a holistic approach with attention for the vulnerabilities of farmers and livestock holders, as well as the vulnerability of specific target groups of women and youth. The vulnerability concept as seen by TATWEER is closely connected with access. Access to knowledge, high-quality inputs and services, networks and markets are crucial steps to move out of vulnerability into sustainable livelihoods. Innovative and rounded approaches were directing all activities of TATWEER specifically Value Chain Development, Capacity Building and Good Agricultural Practices. This led to a wide set of project activities implemented in the two target governorates, listed below. Though this list won't cover the full reach of the project, it does provide the reader with the main visible project activities that will be referred to throughout the rest of the evaluation.

- In Jenin the **Seed Bank** serves as a collective tool for more than 1,100 farmers to access high-quality and affordable seeds, mainly wheat in addition to alfalfa, hummus, beans and vetch, as well as a place for training and knowledge.
- A **Sheep Farm** is established in Tubas and serves more than hundred smallholders with services, high-quality inputs, among them high-quality rams, and training around livestock holding.
- For a still growing amount of farmers (220 in 2014/2015) the **Nursery** in the Jordan Valley allows them to have guaranteed access to quality seedlings close to their farms, as well as assistance and collective networks.
- In Tubas and Jenin more than 210 **home gardens** where rehabilitated or created where women produce a variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs, including attention for sustainable water techniques.

- The **Queen Bee Units** created a knowledge and research centre as well as supported 6 CBOs and 51 families with income generating activities and connected farmers with marketing networks.
- The **Farmer Field School** included the rehabilitation of green houses and included 17 women in a Women Business Model, while spreading good agricultural practices among hundreds of farmers.
- Three **Food Processing Units** were established, engaging women to further add value to their production by processing them to an advanced final product and connecting them directly with private actors.
- A Summer School for youth was organized after which **youth-led community projects** took place in 6 communities.
- **Fresh graduates** were linked with CBOs to guide the CBOs in new administrative and financial system as well as reform towards stronger and more responsive organizations, giving the youth valuable work experience.
- **Exchange visits** have been contributing to exchange of knowledge and change of perceptions and were organized at several levels; between women, between CBOs, with university students and CBOs and among farmers.
- Throughout the intervention **linkages** have been created between farmers, CBOs, private sector and governmental actors supporting farmers to have better access to inputs, services and markets.
- Through the coordination and participation of the TATWEER team **national networks** could be revived in crucial productive sectors like the Seed Council, Honey Council and Tobacco Council.

Situation Palestine

The TATWEER intervention takes place in a territory marked by years of occupation, unsettled conflict and great steadfastness of the population. While many development efforts have been taking place in the region, great vulnerability and unmet basic needs continue to exist among the population. At the same time repeated emergency support has clearly not reached any sustainable development objectives. The most recent report on poverty has shown that the poverty rate in 2013, based on monthly consumption patterns was 25.8%, of which 12.9% suffered from extreme poverty. Food insecurity in Occupied Palestine is linked to a large extent to poverty. The available data from the PCBS shows that the percentage of households nationally lacking food security was 34% in 2012, which represents an increase compared to 2010 and 2011. Labour force participation rates remain low and unemployment stood at 23.9% nationally in 2013 (21.2% for males and 35.3% for females).

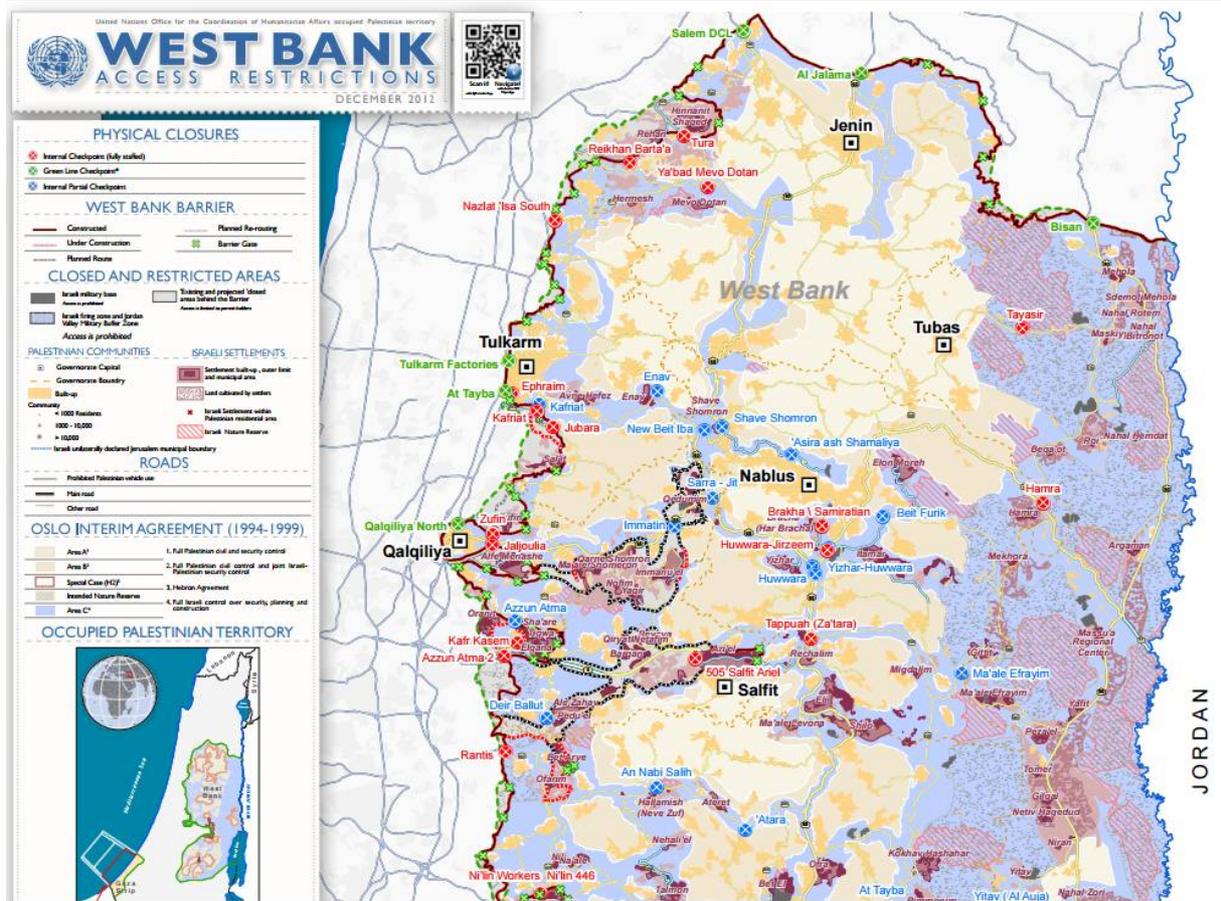
Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the West Bank's economy, providing a vital source of livelihood and food security for Palestinians. Nearly 20% of Palestinians directly rely on subsistence farming. Traditionally, farming has been a family business, with women making up 34% of the agricultural workforce. The agriculture sector has the highest capacity to absorb large numbers of the unemployed, especially those who used to work in Israel. Despite its significance, the agriculture sector receives comparatively little attention from policy and decision makers within the Palestinian Authority and the donor community, attracting only 1% of donor funding to the Palestinian territories. Over the past years, farmers have been facing increasing difficulty in farming their land due to protracted conflict situation and Israeli occupation on the West Bank as well as the effects of climate change including drought, water shortages, flood and frost. Farmers also have to cope with sharp increases in the cost of production, low selling prices for their produce, and decreases in agricultural productivity. Greater investment in agriculture can help overcome these growing challenges and will have positive flow on

impacts for other sectors of the economy, particularly construction, transportation, education and health.

Localities

TATWEER focusses its efforts on two governorates in the Northern West Bank namely Jenin and Tubas. In this region the Jordan Valley can be distinguished like as a specific region to the east of Tubas province.

Table 1 UN OCHA Map of the Northern West Bank (2012)



2.2.1 Jordan Valley

The Jordan Valley is one of the Palestinian agro-eco regions in which a considerable portion of irrigated vegetables and fruits are produced in the West Bank. Three key communities in the north of the Jordan Valley, Bardala, Kardala and Ein el Beida, have a total population of 4,022 (667 households) farming 12,000 dunums (12 square kilometres). More than 90% of the people in these communities rely on agriculture as their primary source of livelihood, and have farmed this area for generations. Key problems these communities are facing are; access to inputs and markets due to closures and movement restrictions placed on them by the Israeli occupation and increased vulnerability to environmental changes.

2.2.2 Jenin Governorate

Jenin Governorate is located in the northern West Bank with a population of approximately 260,000 inhabitants across an area of more than 100,000 hectares largely relying on agriculture. Jenin farmers have been facing increased difficulty in farming their land due to political problems and due to the effects of climate change including drought, water shortages, flood and frost. Farmers also have to cope with sharp increases in the cost of production, with e.g. the prices for seeds – a main input for the agriculture - have increased up to seven times since 2000 and yet the quality of these seeds has reduced substantially. Combined with limited available water and movement restrictions, many farmers saw a decrease in agricultural productivity thus making farming an infeasible income generating activity to many.

2.2.3 Tubas Governorate

Tubas governorate is located in the north of West Bank with a total population of 75,000 of which 27 communities live in Area C (under full Israeli military control). 17% of Tubas land is used for agriculture and grazing purposes where farming and livestock breeding are a main source of income with the a total of 40,000 sheep and goats, owned by 587 farmers. 80-85% of the farmers in Palestine that keep goats and sheep are small producers (<50 heads) that typically involve the work of all family members, especially women and children, in taking care of the herds. Most significant problems faced by sheep and goat holders in occupied Palestine in general and in Tubas specifically are related to high costs of inputs including fodder and veterinary services, effects of the Israeli occupation and climate change affecting available water and land, limited extension services and thus lack of access to needed knowledge and proper coaching as well as weak flocks with different diseases due to fragile farm/barn management.

1.2 Evaluation Purpose and Questions

Though every project needs thoughtful evaluation, the nature of TATWEER makes it even more pertinent that its achievements and lessons are captured. The time span of the project over six years and the innovative approaches applied make it crucial the performance is assessed. Therefore the objectives of this evaluation are:

1. To assess the project's achievements and performance following the DAC guidelines, and
2. To identify recommendations and opportunities for future program planning.

The main guide for analyzing the intervention's performance is the DAC guideline developed by OECD for the evaluation of development assistance. In addition, the TATWEER team provided guiding questions to guide the evaluator's thinking in the evaluation and pay attention to specific parts that stand out, hurdles or questions.

The specific objectives of the evaluation have been set as the following:

1. To determine the extent to which the project has achieved its overall goal and specific objectives.
2. To determine the extent to which each outcome was achieved.
3. To assess the intended and unintended impacts of the project.
4. To assess the impact of the project on farmers in general taken into consideration women and youth; specifically:
 - Impact of the project interventions on women benefiting from TATWEER project, as well as the effect of their participation to gender relations/dynamics at households and community level.
 - Impact of the project interventions on youth benefiting from TATWEER project, as well as the effect of their participation in CBOs and at community level.

- Document key challenges faced by both women and youth, and assess how these affect their participation at community level.
 - Identify and document key lessons and strategies that will inform CARE's future women and youth related programming as well as gender mainstreaming in other interventions.
5. To provide recommendations to inform CARE and TATWEER partners' programming to improve quality and impact.
 6. To identify and document key lessons and strategies that will inform CARE's similar (5 or 6 year long term projects), particularly market-oriented and value chain approaches and programming as well as CBO capacity building as socio-economic hubs and private sector engagement/development.
 7. To assess to what extent TATWEER aligns with CAREWBG's Economic Empowerment Program, and Theory of Change.

1.3 Evaluation Scope and Methods

The evaluation followed a "before and after design", and used both base-line information as well as gathered information about key outcome items before and after the program. This allowed an assessment of whether the hypothesized change that the project planned for has occurred. Different sources of information were accessed with this aim; baseline data, monitoring and reporting reports from the TATWEER team, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews.

The evaluation has passed by the following stages:

1. Inception and orientation stage.

In this stage several meetings were held between the evaluation team and CARE WBG in which they clarified their views and expectations from the evaluation and highlighted the importance of this evaluation for their organization and its partners, as well as for the future development of the rural areas. It was explained that this evaluation is following an evaluation that was already carried out by DFAT. It was stressed that the results of the work should be used in the design of the coming phase of AMENCA. Other meetings were held with senior staff at CARE Australia, DFAT and partner NGOs to discuss responsibilities, expectations and guiding questions for the evaluation. Based on this, the design of the research tools took place, namely key questions for the semi-structured individual interviews, the focus groups discussions and the questionnaires for the quantitative survey and the setting of field visits agenda. This stage was finalized by the preparation of the detailed evaluation plan, which was presented in the inception report.

2. Desk study.

Following, all project's documents as well as the summary and objectives of AMENCA II program were reviewed. This has also covered the various reports, studies and evaluations that have been conducted for the project. The evaluator has given particular attention to the reports of monitoring missions conducted to the project, the documented case studies as well as the sustainability studies reports. The study has also included the DFAT monitoring and evaluation studies, CARE WBG economic empowerment program, and CARE women's empowerment framework. It is worth mentioning that the desk study did not stop by the presentation of the inception report but continued during the field visits and after.

3. Conducting the Field Research.

The evaluators have used four field's data collection methods: direct observation, surveying, expert opinion (from key resource persons) and case studies. The evaluator has used both qualitative tools (semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussion) and quantitative tool (questionnaires).

In this stage the evaluator has given more importance to:

- a. Individual semi-structured interviews with CARE WBG management, management of ESDC, NFC and ARIJ, and field officers from CARE WBG and their partners (ESDC, ARIJ), heads and members of some of the CBOs, field officers of the MOA;
- b. Focus group discussions with the management of CBOs facilities developed during TATWEER and the members of administrative boards of the CBOs (male and female);
- c. Field visits, direct observation and interviewing of beneficiary farmers, women and youth from nine villages out of 17 locations participating in the intervention.
- d. Quantitative survey in which two questionnaires were developed to target individual households' beneficiaries and CBOs.

4. Analysis of the collected data and information in the above desk and field research methods.

In alignment with the evidence based research principles, the evaluators have put the findings of all interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations, together to reach evidence based results and conclusions. The quantitative survey has been analysed using the SPSS software to do the necessary correlations and statistics.

These stages took place from November 2014 which saw the signing of the contract, until 15th of March when the final report was submitted from the consultant to CARE WBG. Almost all interventions from TATWEER were visited and around 10% of all participants were included in the sample for the questionnaire. Combining these tools with the focus groups, interviews and desk research could validate the observations. In Annex A the list with field visits is included that the evaluation team undertook in the process.

Evaluation Findings

In this part the main findings of the evaluation are discussed following the structure of the DAC criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance. This analysis starts with the program's Relevance, followed by Effectiveness and its possibility to reach all objectives and Efficiency. Under Impact the changes powered by the intervention are discussed after which Sustainability is assessed. Finally, a look at Monitoring systems will be taken.

1. Relevance:

The first part of the discussion considers whether the undertaken activities suited the priorities of the target groups as well as the stated objectives of the donor and how any adjustments took place to keep activities relevant over the unusual long time span of this intervention.

1.1 Relevance to the local situation

Reviewing the characteristics of the communities in the Northern West Bank and the challenges they are facing it is clear that the intervention is addressing very urgent local needs. As a major agricultural area with many vulnerable families depending for their income on agricultural activities, the interventions in these fields were reaching a very vulnerable group in Palestinian society. It also can be stated that the project activities are in line as well with the government objectives as set out by the Ramallah based government in various planning documents. The review of Palestinian National Plans, the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008-2010, Strategic Plan for the Agricultural Sector 2011-2013 as well as various interview with field officers from the Ministry of Agriculture³ showed that the interventions and goals of TATWEER are in line with government strategies. This confirms the good cooperation and consultation of the ministries at different levels and different stages of the project as done by the TATWEER team.

Matching Local Needs and Strengths

Several mechanisms were in place to ensure that local needs were addressed and local strength included both in designing the intervention and during implementations and adjustments. First of all the project was developed in a bottom-top approach, with input from the partner NGO's and local CBO's in the design phase and the implementation. This can be seen in the big role CBO's played in selecting the final beneficiaries, who also participated in setting up the selection criteria. In project activities like the home gardens and green house rehabilitation, the selected candidates show many who didn't had any

³ As confirmed in interviews by the evaluator on 29/12/2014: The head of procurement department from Tubas directorate of the MOA stated: "The activities and services that the sheep farm facility in Tubas provides in the field of livestock breeding improvement, particularly the supply of high quality Assaf rams, and the farm management, reuse of agricultural remains as alternative fodder (silage) align with the ministry policies for this sector." As another example also the Seed Bank facility was confirmed by an agronomist from the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) was confirmed that "the seed multiplication which is done by the seed bank facility through TATWEER project support is in full alignment with the MOA and NARC policies and support the national efforts in this field."

income at all or a very unstable and small family income before the intervention⁴. Further this was very clear in the youth-led community projects taking place in 6 project communities. The youth confirmed they were in charge of the needs assessment, applying newly learned tools and making sure local needs were met⁵. All community facilities and investments were designed in collaboration with the local community, making sure needs were understood through detailed needs assessment. This ensured the inclusion of the most vulnerable farmers; which does not only refer to economically weak farmers, but also to farmers without any access to quality inputs or services. For example when looking at the farmers in Tubas, there were many livestock holders without access to extension services, training and/or VET. This highly impacted the quality of their animals and high percentages of diseases were noticed. These crucial challenges were addressed in TATWEER.

TATWEER project has built on existing strengths and capacities of local communities to respond to local needs. In a practical way, it continued with existing facilities that were created in earlier interventions and training that was given earlier. An example of this can be found in the Seed Bank; this is a community-run facility that has been operating since the LIOPT project in 2006 by the Jenin Governorate Farmers Association (JGFA). TATWEER's primary intervention was to build the capacities of the JGFA as a strong local mobiliser able to run and sustain the Seed Multiplication Bank during and after the end of TATWEER project. Linking the Seed Bank to a local CBO aimed to enhance the community ownership over the Seed Multiplication Bank as it is established based on their needs, run, and sustained by their elected board members. Since 2009, capacity building activities were carried out with the JGFA to improve their technical, management, planning, and organizational skills building on 2006-2007 interventions and assessments that allow the Seed Bank to better correspond and meet farmers' demand. JGFA, through the Seed Bank, was able to replace the services that were previously provided by few local dealers who charged 7 times higher prices for poor quality seeds and equipment rental⁷.

⁴ Farmer Field School Package, 2014

⁵ Youth Evaluation Workshop, 2015

⁶ This was also confirmed in interviews with key members of the project communities, where Ula Albzoor, secretary from the board of the Raba Cooperative for Animal Husbandry stated that the education center was established by the Youth community project under TATWEER as a result of the needs assessment conducted by the youth in Raba.

⁷ Seed Bank Case Study, 2014

CASE 1: Addressing local vulnerability – Nursery in the Jordan Valley

Farmers in the Jordan Valley communities of Bardala, Ein al Beida and Kardala faced great challenges regarding their livelihood; intensifying movement restrictions and difficulties in accessing land as well as inputs. Seedlings – a key input – previously had to be purchased from communities behind checkpoints in this area where illegal settlements are flourishing. This resulted in high costs, delays of often 3-4 hours with risk of loss of seedlings and chances of humiliations at checkpoints manned by Israeli soldiers.

Through increased input costs and diminishing quality of production, livelihoods had become more unstable with great vulnerability for external shocks like closures, loss of water, droughts or floods. Through TATWEER, three CBOs were brought together and received the inputs to build a Nursery where all farmers from these 3 villages can grow their vegetable seeds into seedlings. Services like advice and machinery are available as well, while the collective buying of seeds gives the community more collective power.

*For now, farmers are relieved from the burden of passing army controlled road blocks, which also impacts the women active in the business while they can trust the quality seeds. This was proven when during the 2011 frost the Nursery's seedlings were the only ones to survive in the whole area. In project year 5, 121 questioned farmers could save each **2277 USD** through knowledge, services and seeds accessed through the Nursery. But one of the female farmers stressed: "the Nursery does not only saves us money, it also saved our mental health".*

Response to new conditions

The TATWEER team was very responsive and inventive when dealing with changes in the context or local situation, with plans being adjusted where really needed. This had to take place both at the level of CBOs as well as the facilities that were created in collaboration with those CBOs. While the suggestion of a seedlings nursery in the northern Jordan Valley was apparent in the TATWEER team from the design phase on, this had to be further discussed in the start phase of TATWEER. By discussing with the three CBOs of Bardala, Kardala and Ein Albeida, it became clear that the social dynamics would not be impacted for the good if only one CBO was included and the reach of farmers would be greatly limited. Therefore the bold goal of connecting the three CBOs together was set, with the aim to let the nursery be run by a combination of the three CBOs. With great efforts this aim was reached, but could not have been known beforehand. The same counts for the inclusion of women; several ways had to be tried and adjusted to fit the social dynamics of each community and setting. The team proved to be very resilient and inventive in working with these CBOs, where initial ideas sometimes had to be rethought to reach to set objectives of more relevant involvement of women. This included the decision to engage with more women-groups initially which finally led to more CBOs incorporating women in their membership. Finally, the team's adequate response to new information and studies also shows clearly in their dealing with the construction of the facilities and the food processing units. From the earlier stages of the project, feasibility studies have been done to check if investments would be socially and economically sustainable. This led sometimes to the decision to decline constructing certain interventions (e.g. a fodder store or certain food processing units), as their sustainability could not be proven. This is a great sign for the team's capability to deal wisely with new information.

Building on Partners

To start the successful inclusion and development of local partner NGOs, ARIJ and ESDC, a capacity assessment by external consultant E&Y was done. This has given the TATWEER team a good understanding of the partners, on which they could build in the years after. Their capacity has been enhanced in many ways; updates in their administrative and financial systems, new techniques like feasibility studies and more on the job training for staff, especially in the field of M&E.

As a third tier the CBOs were involved in the design and implementation of the intervention, which was also preceded by a concise assessment of their legal status, functioning and networks. The CBOs have been engaged in the selection of beneficiaries, developing of business plans and training content. All other activities have been implemented in a participatory way which made sure the CBOs would grow into centers for economic and social development. This also allowed TATWEER to have several techniques in place to ensure the most vulnerable people were reached. While the CBOs were highly involved, information was always cross-checked with other sources and key persons from the community. The selection criteria were set up in a way that gave preference to women in general and women headed household in particular.

1.2 Relevance of activities under AMENCA 2 goals

The objectives as defined under TATWEER were closely linked to the AMENCA 2 components. “Reducing Vulnerability” was targeted through activities in the area of food security, improved agricultural practices and stronger community organizations. This clearly follows the project logic formulated by the team and in project documents and are observed as very relevant by the evaluation.

All activities were delivered in packages, which proved to meet local needs and increased the long-term impact. All inputs that were given to CBOs, farmers, women or youth were accompanied by capacity-building and training to increase agency, skills and knowledge. This was always followed up throughout the project time with more meetings and especially with network building and stimulation of relevant and beneficial relations with other community, private actors, consumers and government.

On the ground this was clearly noticed. The provision of inputs, e.g. for the plant production, food processing equipment, animal feed and animal production, was complemented by training in e.g. farm management, integrated farm management, water rationing, food processing and many other courses, as well as local demonstrations and school farms that have introduced farmers to improved agricultural practices (rainwater harvesting, agricultural waste recycling (silage) and effective natural resources management (NRM). Meetings were held among farmers, with input providers, service providers, possible private partners and many governmental actors. This enables the evaluators to state that these activities were relevant to the project’s objectives.

A closer look through field observations showed the evaluation team that implemented activities were highly relevant to the formulated objectives and complemented each other. This can be seen for example in the series of interventions with CBOs, which included a legal review, following up with their sometimes sensitive recommendations like merging into mixed CBOs, capacity building, training in new administrative systems, working with young graduates, practical inputs and network meetings. The observations showed that CBOs improved their governance, developed better by-laws, followed up with their mandates and improved their operational, administrative and financial systems. They even developed business plans and became more sustainable. While a closer look at the impact of all activities will be taken in a following section, there have been no activities noticed that were not closely related to the formulated objective of AMENCA and the interventions have been relevant and meaningful to the communities.

The activities for women and youth were also aimed at them becoming more involved in the long-term processes of community development, which sometimes included with income-generating activities or increasing their employability or was aimed at changing social attitudes and practices. The project has ensured involvement of women by devising activities that were targeting women exclusively like the

home gardens, Farmer Field School as well as the CBO's capacity building activities. Many activities were adjusted to the specific needs of women and youth and adapted to their possibilities. This was especially clear in the women activities, which ensured income-generating possibilities were created close to home and in safe and socially-accepted environments. All these have led to the enhancement of women's potential to increase their livelihood and income.

The expected outcome of objective 4 contributes to Component 3, "Capacity Development via AMENCA 2" and Component 4 "Program Management" of AMENCA 2 and aims to strengthening collaboration amongst AMENCA 2 partners and others for learning and continuous improvement throughout implementation. The annual meetings that used to be held for all AMENCA II partners were in fact a plateau for exchange knowledge and experience and used to be attended by TATWEER key personnel. These activities were very relevant for the achievement of this outcome.

1.3 Relevance of TATWEER under CARE's Economic Empowerment Program

Not only were the many TATWEER activities based on the direct local needs of the target groups (farmers, women, youth and CBOs) but it also took the greater eco-system into account in which the communities live and operate, acknowledging the many vulnerabilities agricultural communities face under Israeli occupation. This holistic approach has led directly to a sustainable increase in overall production and income but also to more resilient farmers whose livelihoods are less vulnerable to external shocks.

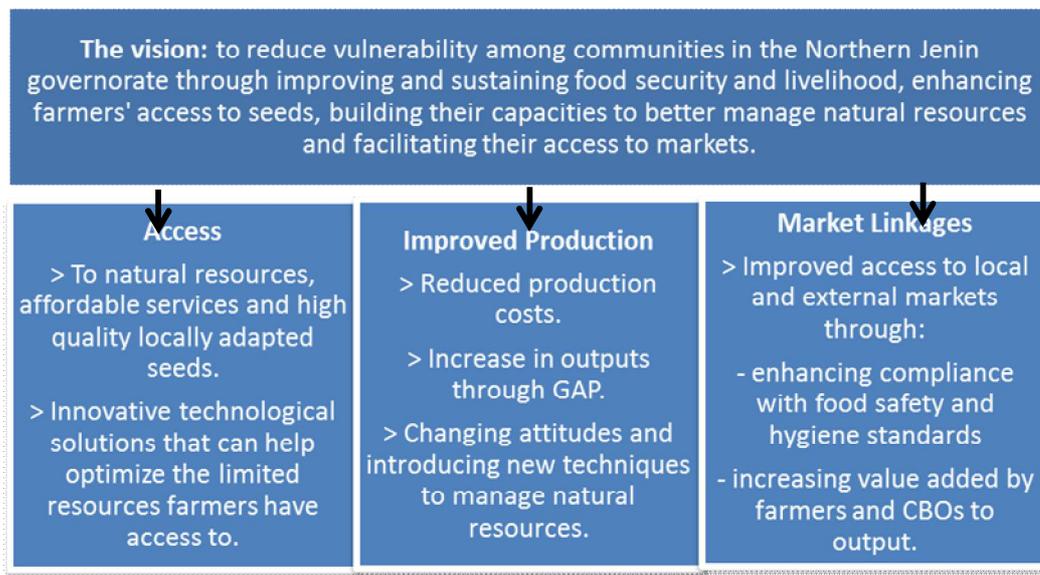


Figure 3 Summary of vision behind Community Facilities in TATWEER

The holistic approach behind TATWEER stems from the vision of the CARE WBG Economic Empowerment program that envisions four areas of change. These areas of change in the EE program vision have been kept in mind during the TATWEER implementation as well, because they represent the key causes of economic disempowerment and also the areas where TATWEER aims to enact positive change. Based on CARE WBG's vision the following areas have been addressed as main areas of change;

- Firstly, increase **key skills and access to services** that lead to long-term improvement in farmers' productivity and income (agricultural, technical, business, etc.);

- Develop community facilities (like the Seed Bank, Nursery, Sheep Farm, Farmer Field Schools) as social enterprises capable of managing **sustainable facilities** that serve as a hub for collective purchasing, farming, processing, packaging, and/or marketing of farmer's products. The increased capacity of CBOs becomes clear in, among other things, their capability to better evaluate future decisions by undertaking simple feasibility studies themselves. This is an example of a practice first showed to them by the TATWEER team at the start of the intervention! The project actors also adopt value chain and market driven approaches to remove key constraints in the whole value chain rather than introducing short-term fixes at the farmer level that have proved to be unsustainable;
- Improve the **Enabling Environment** for farmers by adapting a rights-based approach when dealing with the MoA and other influential actors to alleviate factors that inhibit farmers from engaging in the formal economy, help get access to more local and external markets thus increasing the opportunities for production, etc. This is of course in addition to improving the infrastructure that is needed to ensure equitable environment for farmers (access to water, roads, etc);
- **Remove/Mitigate Restrictions on Movement and Access:** advocating internally and externally around access to natural resources (especially water, land, etc.). This is of course in addition to adopting technological solutions/innovations that can help optimize the limited resources that farmers have access to.

2. Effectiveness

The evaluation will now move into a discussion of the effectiveness of TATWEER in reaching its objectives. The first part will look at its stated objectives and outcomes and till what level they were reached. Especial attention will be for the major factors that influenced the achievement of all objectives.

2.1 Reaching Project Objectives

The goal of TATWEER is to contribute to reduced vulnerability among communities in the Jenin and Tubas governorates, through improved and sustainable livelihood security and increased capacity of civil society organizations. Within the targeted communities, the project has achieved this goal through the following four objectives:

Objective 1: Improve food security, livelihoods, and natural resource management.

Objective 2: Increase the participation of women and youth in the Palestinian development process.

Objective 3: Strengthen the role of community organizations in the development process.

Objective 4: Contribute to efficient and effective management of the AMENCA 2 Program.

Based on an evaluation of progress reports, field visits and interviews the evaluation team can state with confidence that real change has been made on the ground and objectives have been achieved in the project communities. The table below will discuss in more detail how the project activities have been able to contribute to AMENCA Program Wide Key results. Based on the evaluation being done in the middle of project year 6 the data shows results up till project year 5. This table does not focus on achievements at the output levels, but focusses on outcomes and the factors that contributed to change.

AMENCA II Program Wide Key Results	Reaching Target	Main Achievements
Objective 1: Improve food security, livelihood, and natural resource management.		
Improved food security at the household level through increased food production for family consumption	<p>Target 1: 500 female headed household s/ 4,000 farmers increased food production by 30%.</p> <p>Target 2: 3,950 household</p>	<p>Target 1: Reached at end of Y5: 567 female & 3,566 male farmers (4,133 farmers)</p> <p>Target 2: Reached at end of Y5: 537 female & 3,747 male farmers (4,283 farmers)</p> <p>✓ Through the Seed Bank 1,079 farmers from 35 communities borrowed 179,565kgs of seeds to cultivate 4,500 dunums. In addition, 51 women improved their production through accessing affordable and high quality varieties of seeds and borrowed 6,140kg of seeds from the seed bank, and benefited from its services. The Seed Bank has been able to reach more farmers than first planned as it proved to address a great need of the farmers and many farmers approached to participate. Besides the CBO behind the Seed Bank was able to effectively mobilize different resources, from own contribution as well, in order to secure extension of the facility. Lastly the established networks through TATWEER have greatly helped in this, with expertise, finance and services coming from outside as well.</p> <p>✓ Queen Bee Production Unit: A knowledge and research center was</p>

	<p>s increased income by 15-35% and reduced costs by 10%.</p>	<p>established to support the development of the Bee-keeping sector in Palestine and provide services to households and CBOs. 117 households, including 80 women-headed households, increased their income on average by 15% through reducing their production costs. The queen bee unit distributed 1,000 bee queen cells, 310 virgin queens, 81 naturally mated queens and eight artificially mated queens, to 134 households. 300 bee queens were distributed to eight CBOs, while e.g. 84 kilos of honey were produced by Faqua' CBO and 67 kilos by Aqqaba CBO, with all the produced honey was marketed.</p> <p>In this way a sustainable contribution to the whole sector-development has been made, the importance of which was in the first phase of TATWEER slightly underestimated by the project team. This led in the end to fewer households directly being supported with inputs, but a more sustainable impact being made on the whole sector.</p> <p>✓ Nursery: To the end of November 2014, the Nursery propagated 2,038,729 seedlings for 220 farmers from the three participating CBOs. In the following season, the nursery was expected to exceed the highest achieved production, where it is expected to reach 3,500,000 (based on the registered demands). 121 questioned farmers who received services from the nursery propagated their seedlings for two seasons a year reported reduction of costs by approximately \$170 a year (an average of 10%). This includes reduction on production costs, savings from the inputs, and savings from transportation. This intervention greatly reduced the vulnerability of farmers, as they were first under great threat from the Israeli occupation which limits movement and access.</p> <p>The whole community has been reached by the facility, with now attention being given to expending to farmers outside the direct community. Farmers have expressed great satisfaction with the quality of produced seedlings by TATWEER nursery, in addition to the reduction in production costs and increase in the farmers' share from the nursery generated profit. The CBO has been actively contributing in this facility, with its networks (among other with the MoA) allowed resource mobilization and investments in the facility.</p> <p>✓ The Sheep Farm has been acting as a learning center for breeders from Tubas and from other locations, with better practices and innovations being introduced and promoted among farmers. Better rams have been distributed among 91 farmers, who overall could increase their production with 25%. Farm management tools were also provided for at least an additional 90 farmers. Inputs were not given to more farmers than expected, as the facility itself was not designed for such a great amount of farmers receiving the tangible inputs of rams. The training though this allow other farmers to increase their productivity and effectiveness it was noticed. The CBO has been investing in the facility as well, taking own responsibility for expansion of the project.</p> <p>✓ More than 300 farmers have been reached with GAP demonstration that encouraged small but tangible changes in their agricultural businesses. In a next stage of the project, two Farmer Field Schools were developed where 17 women from Arraneh and Abba started working in from year 5 on. Focus groups and assessments of the two Farmers Field Schools in year 6 showed that they provided nine women from two communities with an opportunity to start their own business and to increase their family income by an average of 88.39%, which came up to a total of 30,000 USD.</p> <p>This intervention has showed a great learning curve in how GAP can be best shared and encouraged and how women and youth can be engaged in the process. The emphases in the second phase of this activity has been put more on practical training and selection of the most replicable, scalable and adapted</p>
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		<p>innovations and GAP that are relevant and “doable” for the local farmers. The Women Business Model showed to be a great way to increase women’s income, be it on a small scale. The effectiveness of the GAP spread through this Women Business Model still needs to be measured.</p> <p>✓ During five years of TATWEER project cycle, 210 home gardens were established; 10 of them were for hardship cases. The evaluation of this activity showed that the home gardens help the farmers to achieve their households’ food security. 60 questioned women reported an increase in production by 78% seasonally and the water harvesting savings which reached an average \$400/per year, in addition to the \$70-110 savings in income during the production season. The impact of this intervention was extended when the dried herbs production unit was established and women could grow herbs for marketing. Due to the vulnerable situation of many of these families, the extra water was of crucial importance also for their own consumption. This did compete with the water being used for their gardens though.</p>
<p>Improved access to locally available quality services and skills.</p>	<p>1) Target: 5 new facilities established, 5 CBOs providing services.</p> <p>2) Target: 4,200 households accessing basic services and skills through CBOs.</p>	<p>Target 1: Reached 10 CBOs, including 5 CBOs running facilities, are providing services.</p> <p>Target 2: Reached 4,284 households, including 537 female headed households.</p> <p>All CBOs are providing services that meet their communities’ needs and challenges, either in the area of livestock holding, farming, bee-keeping, production and marketing. Important networks have been established with other service providers and private actors to support farmers with the whole production process.</p> <p>Access to services and knowledge has increased for all project communities, where facilities and/or knowledge centers have been established. While these are used by more than 4,200 participants, they are also open and accessible for the whole population increasing access for thousands of people. The impact of has further increased because of the networks established by the communities, where ministries and private actors have been able to provide additional services to the population. This can be seen e.g. in the Nursery facility, where an expert has been hired by the MoA to be available in the center for the farmers to benefit from.</p> <p>Access to markets has been a very important step in the project, which was supported by placing interventions from the start of the production process to the very end of packaging and marketing. Private actors like NFC as well as governmental actors and the local NGOs have played an important role in this, with their training, increase in skills and knowledge, improvements in the production process and possibilities to process, package and market. Throughout implementation though, misunderstandings between farmers and private actors had to be overcome; social business thinking had to be encouraged among all stakeholders. A flagship achievement has been the establishment of three Food Processing Units that took a holistic approach to increasing opportunities for women. Some key achievements of these units are the following;</p> <p>✓ Freekeh and Maftoul food processing unit at Jalboun: the CBO hired seven women to work in the Maftoul unit with an average increase in the family income of 23.5%. Till February 2015, the CBO has marketed 1,350 kilos of Freekeh in the local market with a total price of 4,600\$. Many companies and organizations visited the Unit and took samples, in the purpose of purchasing Maftoul and marketing it. The</p>

		<p>CBO is currently linked to Kanaan Fair Trade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Freekeh food processing unit of the Seed Bank (JGFA): NFC purchased 18 tons of Freekeh that were produced in Jenin Farmers Association Processing Unit during October 2014. The purchased Freekeh was delivered to Lethem's in UK, another 18 tons of Freekeh were shipped during December 2014. Lethem's expressed interest to sign a contract for purchasing 150 tons of Freekeh during 2015 season. In networking, NFC has introduced Jenin Farmer's Association to Sanabel Al-Naser, Al-Ard and Akluna companies to provide them with Freekeh and provide the service of cleaning. ✓ Dried Herbs food processing unit: the herbs' home garden beneficiaries sold the herbs they produced to the Dried Herbs Unit with a total value of 3,960\$. This has resulted in increasing the 24 beneficiaries income by 11.45% (172\$/ beneficiary from the first season).
<p>Improved agricultural practices including more effective and ecologically appropriate farming methods and Natural Resource Management.</p>	<p>1) Target: 2,000 farmers (previous target was 720 farmers) adopt environmental sound practices.</p> <p>2) Target: 1,500 farmers (previous target was 720 farmers) with improved water management.</p>	<p>Target 1: Total achievement end of Y5: 2,272 farmers Target 2: Total achievement end of Y5: 1,467 male farmers and 383 female farmers.</p> <p>A great amount of farmers could be reached under this set of activities which is mainly due to the holistic approach that all project components took. This meant in practice that all project activities on the ground paid attention to see how they could contribute to spreading GAP and act as a knowledge center. This resulted in the inclusion of training, exchange visits, extension services and demonstrations in many facilities including the Sheep Farm, Nursery, Farmer Field School, Queen Bee Units and Seed Bank. There was a clear learning curve though during the project in understanding how GAP could be best encouraged among farmers; different techniques had to be used where it proved very difficult to include youth in this process. Including women as spreaders of GAP still needs to be evaluated on as data was not available yet. It did make a difference if a participatory approach was chosen and if schools were used where the demonstration took place (in opposite to the use of individual model farmers where other farmers would visit which proved to be unsuccessful).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Capacity building for CBOs on NRM and best practices: Capacity building for CBOs was continued using several techniques: class-based training on theory, practical training, exchange visits, awareness raising through visits to demonstrations, peer education using farmer-to-farmer approach, and direct coaching for CBOs by project partners, in terms of transfer of knowledge and skills and implementation of TATWEER activities with farmers and members. Please note that from halfway through the project all activities implemented under capacity building are carried out in full cooperation with extension departments of MoA, involvement of other actors in the area (e.g. ICARDA), and building on other CARE led projects (climate change and Rawasi). ✓ The Farmer Field School became a reference to practical demonstration for good agricultural practices in the area; specially women and men working in/ managing or /owning greenhouses. Learning by doing processes proved to be successful especially when it comes to replicable, scalable and relevant techniques like planting techniques, picking timing and used pesticides and herbicides (quantities and environmental friendly). 17 farmers from Abba and Arraneh CBOs (5 men, 12 women) participated in more than 10 trainings in Y5, and 79 other leader farmers (11F, 68M) from 11 neighbour villages. The Extension Department in Jenin Governorate continued supporting Field School Farm through providing trainings, extension and follow up visits. ✓ The sheep farm is continuing acting as a "school farm" where CBO

		<p>members are invited to see and learn from existing demonstration initiatives (biogas and liquid fertilizer production) and farm management techniques. <i>In Y5 a comprehensive training course in advance sheep farm management was conducted to 25 livestock breeders in the sheep farm, two animal specialists and one veterinary doctor conducted the training course, with the total of 36 training hours. The training course was divided to in-class and practical training sessions. Pre and post assessment showed that the knowledge's of the breeders increased by 30 % (30% before training, 60% after the training). The training course covered interconnected topics including: managing enhanced breeds, feed and feeding, breeding, milking, internal and external parasites control, vaccines and diseases, etc.</i></p> <p>✓ Innovative demonstrations have been set up in later years of the project. A Biogas demonstration started operating in Y6 and producing liquid fertilizer. 608 liters of liquid fertilizers were distributed to 17 farmers from Jenin and Tubas governorates. The liquid fertilizer is used as supplementary fertilizer to the vegetables in the greenhouses. Pre and post questionnaires collected from farmers indicated that the liquid fertilizers had good impact on the vegetation of plants and increased the weight of the fruits, compared to those untreated by the liquid fertilizer. Feedback from the farmers showed that sheep farm liquid fertilizer can be used as an alternative of two chemical fertilizers: sixteen (rich with iron) and Ammoniac (rich with nitrogen). The same assessment showed that using 50% of the needed fertilizers as liquid fertilizer can save up to US\$ 40, per month during the production season (in addition to its effect on the size of the vegetables and fruits). It is worth mentioning that before applying the liquid fertilizer in the farmer's greenhouses, selected farmers received training on liquid fertilizer usage methods, quantities, frequency, and procedures. MoA was part of the whole process starting from the assessment of the fertilizer and ending with the documentation of the feedback from the farmers.</p>
Objective 2: Increase the participation of women and youth in the Palestinian development process.		
<p>Increased awareness of the importance of equal representation in participation.</p>	<p>Target 220 women participate in community planning structures (Previous target was 50 women).</p>	<p>Total achievement till end Y5: 475 women participating in community planning structures.</p> <p>Encouraging and empowering women to start being more active in local CBOs has been a key to increase the confidence of women, their skills and the influence they have on local processes. Through their activities in CBOs, women have become more trusted in society and have increased their social mobility. In several CBOs women now hold leadership positions while they are also more involved in village councils and local decision making. As in their own words, CBOs have become their doors to the whole world through which they can access and influence.</p> <p>Another key change-maker has been reported as the exchange visits organized for the women and CBOs around the West Bank. This allowed women to meet in different settings and see examples and role models in other communities. This proved them with more confidence and also ideas for new initiative in their own community, while their community increased their respect for these women who had been travelling and seeing other localities.</p> <p>✓ At CBO level several tools have been used to increase participation of women. This included a legal review of CBOs, training, encouragement of</p>

		<p>women, working with fresh graduates and the ESDC Gender Specialist and giving women opportunities for income-generating activities.</p> <p><i>Women report on the impact of this approach and they mentioned that due to TATWEER interventions, they are more confident to submit offers and compete with other service providers. Most of women CBOs are now preparing themselves to run for elections at the community level to hold key positions in local councils. They believe that due to their work, they are more accepted and trusted by the community, not only by other women but also by men. Women are interested in further empowering other women at different levels of the village: socially, economically and politically.</i></p> <p>✓ At household level: As part of women's empowerment within the TATWEER project, women's CBOs and female farmers are given priority for the distribution of inputs and participation in capacity building training of topics such as: beekeeping, internal management and good governance, greenhouses, home gardens, and services from Seed Bank. Meetings and interviews with women showed that women are more involved in decision-making at the household level as a result of their direct contribution to household income.</p>
Enhanced potential for women to increase livelihood and income.	<p>Target: 400 women increase income by 25% (target previously was 250 women).</p>	<p>Total achievement since start of program: 648 women increased their annual income by at least 25% compared to before TATWEER.</p> <p>Economic empowerment has been working in several parts of TATWEER. Besides separate activities focused only on women, the female community members were also included in all mixed facilities, be it in different ways suitable for each community and locality. This proved to be a key empowering approach, as the amount of women included in the project was increased and the encouragement of women to be active in mixed settings contributed to their overall empowerment.</p> <p>✓ The facilities of the Seed Bank, Sheep Farm and Queen Bee Unit included female beneficiaries and helped the women to reduce their production costs while increased their quality and quantity. The specific activities of Home Gardens, Farmer Fields Schools and Food Processing Units had a huge impact on the women's economic activities. It ensured women had an income, while it was for some women the first time to contribute to their household's income. Their input in household decisions was increased. All of this was done in a relevant and appropriate way that often created opportunities for women close to their household. A clear example of this is the Food Processing Units.</p> <p>✓ Food processing units: The dried herbs food processing unit at Aljalameh benefits 48 women from five CBOs who planted herbs. The unit purchased their products to produce herbs bags. Another six women from Aljalameh CBO work in the food processing unit. The Freekeh and Maftoul food processing unit is managed by the JFGA, where Jalboun CBO established Maftoul food processing unit, at least 8 women work on it while all products will be produced in a very high quality to meet exporting requirements.</p>
Objective 3: Strengthen the role of community organizations in the development process.		
Increase the capacity of NGOs and CBOs to offer sustainable		<p>10 CBOs improved, including 5 facilities established. 3 Palestinian NGOs are more capable to serve their communities.</p> <p>Three Palestinian NGOs, ARIJ, ESDC and NFC, have greatly grown in their capacity and effectiveness to deliver development projects and support their</p>

<p>services to local communities and beyond.</p>		<p>communities. TATWEER was taken as a model by them, in which they learned techniques that can be and are applied through their whole work in Palestine. The gradual on the job training and capacity building ensured staff are capable to perform all the needed tasks themselves in an effective way. CARE was able to move to a coordinating role towards the end of the project, with the PNGOs taking the lead in project implementation.</p> <p>At the CBO level, we see CBOs who all made a significant change over the six years participating in TATWEER. A holistic mix of activities encouraged CBOs to become hubs of social and economic development. The CBOs benefitted from a set of interventions; legal review, on-job training, receiving animators, receiving inputs for the development of social or economic activities, increased contact with women and youth from the communities and participating in exchange visits. The participatory development approach and the long-term focus of activities led to a sustainable change in the CBOs where General Assemblies have grown, regulations and responsibilities are more clear and Boards become more representative (with at least 4 CBOs (of the 7 mixed CBOs) now including women in the board). Overall membership did increase with 20%, while female membership grew with 15%. The fresh graduates thought CBO members and board members to keep up critical skills in management, financial administration, strategic planning and collective work. 10 strategic plans have been developed and discussed (among the participants being 61 women), as well as exit strategies with all CBOs. 7 of the CBOs have also developed specific business plans to create innovative, sustainable activities.</p> <p>CBOs started to deliver services that are relevant to the local economic activities, like collective agreements for input delivery or for access the markets, as well as training and extension networks. But CBOs also started to lead economic activities themselves with CBOs now involved, through TATWEER, in the production of Freekeh, Maftool, Olive Paste, Tea, Honey, Dairy products and a bakery. This has directly created job opportunities, especially for women producers, while more income could be generated in a sustainable way for the years to come.</p>
<p>Objective 4: Contribute to efficient and effective management of the AMENCA 2 Program.</p>		
<p>Quality implementation of the TATWEER project and interventions implemented in close cooperation with local partners and AMENCA2 partners.</p>		<p>Visibility</p> <p>When it comes to visibility TATWEER has placed the main emphasis on visibility of the CBOs and local partners among the beneficiaries, as CARE stresses the CBOs and partners' responsibilities to deliver towards their communities. CARE and donor are known among project communities, with them being mostly stressed in the macro network and relations with government actors. The visibility of the actors in the field is also supported by publications produced by the project. The stress on CBOs and local partners caused that the donor's visibility has been maintained at field level and publications, but among beneficiaries, the donor's visibility was not as clear as its partners.</p>

2.2 Key factors impacting achievements

In review of the achievements during TATWEER, several key reoccurring themes have been noticed that have made a great impact on its success to achieve the desired results. They can be listed as the following:

- ✓ **Local ownership**, especially among CBOs. CBOs took great responsibility and found many ways to contribute as CBO financially to the facilities and extend these themselves.
- ✓ New **networks** established through TATWEER allowed for resource mobilization from outside. The CBOs were able to connect with many governmental and private actors that allowed investments, finance and services from outside that expanded the reach of the facilities and the impact of the project.
- ✓ The **holistic package** of all activities: training, capacity-building, guidance and networks always accompanied any investment. All activities also had attention for women, youth and GAP which doubled their impact on the two main objectives (1 & 2). Facilities not only worked on food security and increased production, but always made sure to look at how women and youth interventions could be interwoven and how GAP could be supported at different levels.
- ✓ **Connections with private actors** and markets: this opened up many possibilities for more income-generating activities in sometimes unforeseen ways. E.g. the dried herbs production unit which flowed from women working in home gardens to the Food Processing Unit (FPU) to be sold in local markets.

Female and young beneficiaries from TATWEER gave high importance to the support their received to participate themselves actively in the development process and they referred to this as a key for change. Youth reported their skills and confidence were built by having to space to act and try themselves in their community with the support from TATWEER. Women pointed to the encouragements to be active in the CBOs as a good incentive for overall development. Now the women feel comfortable accessing the CBOs they stated, through which they can access the whole world. This goes beyond having the know-how about gardening or production, they reflected, this means they can take it always to the next level by accessing networks and services through the recognized CBOs.

Besides factors that contributed to the achievement of objectives, there were also some reoccurring themes that limited or challenges the effectiveness of TATWEER.

- ✓ The unmet basic needs of several communities caused that some resources allocated to TATWEER activities were directed to household needs. Because several participants are unable to even meet household needs for water, it was difficult for them to use the water for their rehabilitated home garden e.g. this 'basic needs

Case 2: Holistic package contributes to valuable improvements in the Sheep Farm.

The Tubas Sheep Farm does not only provide the farmers with enhanced inputs (breed rams, alternative fodder) but also ensures the spreading of better agricultural practices and building capacity to ensure more sustainable farm management. Different techniques are used to spread knowledge, with services being available, demonstrations held, exchange visits and peer to peer education. Securing better relations with MoA and supporting networks has been part of the intervention. Innovations like silage and bio-gas production have been successfully implemented here. Through this, famers' knowledge has been improved and they have healthier and more productive livestock directly upgrading their profitability and supporting their livelihood. Through a final survey it was noted that 84% saw a decrease in disease throughout the intervention and 74% saw an increase in productivity (milk and twins)

approach' still made sure that the real challenges of the families were met, but with taking some resources away from project activities.

✓ The high importance of whole sector development was something that was later on in the project fully understood. Some sectors in Palestine could benefit greatly from holistic development (e.g. the Bee / Honey sector), which was not realized when TATWEER started its activities in this sector. It would have therefore been very beneficial if full studies of the relevant sectors are made at the beginning of any intervention, to make sure challenges are well understood and paths are seen towards more sustainable improvement.

✓ The project showed a clear learning curve concerning how to best spread better agricultural practices among farmers, with some initial ideas (using youth in this process) not proving to be successful. By trying different approaches, a clear impact has been made through the demonstrations and model schools. It is of great importance those lessons are applied in any new intervention.

Case 3: Women Empowerment through different roads – Jenin's Saving and Credit Scheme

The TATWEER team has always stressed the need to include women empowerment in the project in a way that is locally relevant and addresses the real needs of the women. While women have increased their participation rates in the CBO behind the Jenin Seed Bank, with now 270 female members, a greater impact was wished to be made. Through discussion with the CBO board and target group, the JFGA has taken the lead in establishing a special scheme that has just received license from the relevant authorities and can financially support women for the benefit of their own development, their families or entrepreneurial ideas they have. In this way, women are enabled to use their potential to feed into the existing opportunities created by the Seed Bank while it also enforces the existing efforts of TATWEER to make more women join JFGA and enjoy the services they offer. This increases the involvement of women in formal institutions and enables to be more active in local development processes.

2.3 Implementation Strategy

The intervention was implemented in a participatory manner, which gradually shifted many responsibilities to the partner NGOs, with the vision to increase their capacities as well. This was reflected in the staffing structure as well, with changes mostly from Y4 on. The increase in the number of staff in the last two years of project was a result of increasing attention to conduct closer monitoring of the project's outcomes in collaboration with CARE WBG, ARIJ and EDSC. Overall this led to a much greater involvement of the local partners ARIJ, EDSC and NFC and an increase in their capacities, but at the expense of more resources being devoted to management and monitoring. By Year 6 the partner PNGOs took full responsibility for implementation of project activities with support from CARE WBG.

The intervention has also been managed in a responsive way that used studies and gather new information to redirect activities and plans. This can be clearly seen in the decision to implement only three Food Processing Units (dried herbs, Freekeh and Maftool) while five possible units were studied (dried tomato/tomato paste and dairy processing). The feasibility studies developed led to the decision to only implement the activities that had proved sustainable both economically and socially.

Similar observations can be made about the approaches used to include women more in the development processes, where regular learning and adaptation of ideas took place. Though different tools have been used, e.g. the legal review, which led to relevant changes in several communities, other

communities have been more resistance to change and required other techniques. In the facility in Jenin where women involvement had only been minor, a new model was applied through which women could become a more active part of the CBO, namely a 'Saving and Credit Scheme'. It was crucial to still establish this rotating fund through the CBO as this increases the visibility of women in front of the CBO memberships and made the women part of the formal institutions.

3. Efficiency

This part of the analysis looks into questions of efficiency, where the focus is put both on organizational capacity and the efficiency of the approaches chosen. This takes into account questions of resource efficiency and if objectives were achieved on time.

The field observations during the evaluation field visits enabled the evaluator to say that the quality of the implemented activities was very satisfactory and that the implemented activities have transformed the available resources into the intended results in an efficient manner.

3.1 Organizational Capacity

Overall the project has been implemented efficiently and the evaluators could also see a learning curve with the management team about how to supervise and manage the partnerships best. The sharing of learning processes applied in the cadre of M&E activities in the project has enhanced exchange of experience and provided CARE's partners with new methods and techniques for e.g. need assessments and feasibility studies⁸. Interviewees with the employees of local partners and members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) all have highlighted the importance and positive effect of the implementation modality that was adopted for the project management starting from the third year of the project's life cycle. This has enhanced the learning process in the cadre of the project and has rendered local partners more involved and responsible for/accountable to achievements. Also the interviewed field officers from ARIJ, ESDC highlighted the importance of the experience that they have gained through their work under the supervision and guidance from CARE WBG. They highlighted the importance of the joint annual planning workshops that CARE WBG led and the skills it has provided to them. They especially have shown their appreciation to the techniques that they acquired like PONAT. These observations show that in this way the organizational capacity increased during the project and the objective related to this has been met. The increase in staff that took place to reach this achievement is therefore justified.

Considering the time limitation, the evaluators have examined the procurement procedures through a sample procurement operation. The examination of this sample of procurements enabled the evaluators to state that the employed procedures ensure transparent and free competition which give guarantee that the procured services and materials are cost-efficient.

Networking and Coordinating

CARE WBG has established and supported many new networks and stronger relations among all project stakeholders. Most notably are the relations between governmental actors and CBOs, as well as macro networks related to sector development like the Honey Council and the Tobacco Council. These relations have led to tangible inputs in e.g. CBO facilities to increase the benefits for the participating households and stimulated national sector development.

Regular workshops have been organized to bring local partners and ministries together around the themes TATWEER is working on. These joint workshops that used to gather CARE WBG staff with its local partners and the MoA have contributed effectively in improving collaboration/partnerships with the local partners and CBOs and get objectives and activities of the different actors on the same line.

⁸ Interviewing field officers from partners NGOs, 18/12/2014.

Through these workshops good relations with MoA's field officers have been established as well with the research centre NARC.⁹

Coordination with local village councils has been another important aspect of TATWEER's network. The support for increased contact between CBOs and village councils led to better understanding between both actors and increased cooperation. This can be seen in several villages (e.g. Faqua') where the women-led CBO is now regularly consulted on topics of importance in the village council. These relations are something that could be further encouraged in any future interventions.

CARE Women's Empowerment Framework formed an integrated strategy that includes the three main dimensions for development: the individual level, structures and relationships. Despite the importance of this strategic framework, the desk review or field visits did not demonstrate clearly any systematic linkages of this strategy with some of the major project activities like the Nursery, Seed Bank and Sheep Farm. Also, monitoring documents did not follow the three levels mentioned in the framework systematically. Though progress has been made towards the goals of women inclusion in development processes and the income-generating opportunities for women, this could have benefitted from a more efficient reporting system on the three levels of women empowerment. Related to this, the field visits and interviews did not indicate harmony surrounding the concept of gender and gender equality, as well as the mechanisms for monitoring changes related to gender. A more common concept of gender equality and reporting on the changes at these levels would have increased the efficiency of these activities.

3.2 Efficiency Transitional Approaches

As mentioned by PSC member Dr. Shuaibi¹⁰, TATWEER was placed as a transition between emergency and development. This transitional approach was reflected in the nature of the implemented activities which in fact were mixtures of activities that have a humanitarian/emergency nature (rehabilitation of greenhouses, distribution of seeds and seedlings, etc.) and developmental interventions (capacity building of CBOs, introducing value chain approach, establishment of the facilities). This mixture is very applicable to the local situation, as the current conflict situation still keeps emergency aid needed till a certain level. The chosen paths as part of this transitional approach have contributed significantly to the success of the project, which will be discussed in the following sections.

One of the most significant interventions of TATWEER interventions was that of capacity building of CBOs. The inclusion and training of the participating CBOs transformed them into vehicles to provide service to their members and to implement services that serve the communities as a whole rather than individuals. This approach can be considered as a cornerstone for the sustainability of the outcomes of the project and has transformed these CBOs into collective social hubs to improve economies of scale in their communities. As will be discussed under "Impact" the CBOs were able to improve their performance, increase their services and attract new resources through the capacity-building of TATWEER. At the same time, the set of interventions that were implemented in favour of these CBOs or in cooperation with them represented good examples of the business oriented approach that deals with

⁹ Confirmed by interview with field officers Sameh Jarrar (NARC), Bassam Sawafta (head of Northern Jordan Valley Agricultural Cooperative) and Mr. Bzoor (member of the village council of Raba) who all showed satisfaction of the level of coordination.

¹⁰ Interviewed as CARE area manager, 28/12/2014

the totality of the value chain (business planning, intervention at production level, post harvesting, quality assurance and marketing).

CASE 4: Transitional Approach reaching results through the Seed Bank – Jenin

Since 2000, the prices for seeds – a main input for the agriculture - have increased up to seven times, and yet the quality of these seeds has reduced substantially. Farmers in Jenin are highly vulnerable to external shocks and unavailability of water, drought, frost or floods have kept their income highly unstable, with some farmers becoming tied by lenders or dealers. Traditionally farmers had always paid for the seeds they bought after harvest time, but under the deteriorating economic situation, most local dealers now require them to pay for their orders upfront. While, some farmers had the capacity to store seeds for future seasons, many smaller farmers were simply forced to abandon farming.

Through capacity building of the CBO behind the Seed Bank and by providing inputs, more than thousand farmers can now access cheaper, higher quality seeds as well as services. But the Seed Bank's benefits extend beyond this provision; they connect farmers together, ensure collective agreements with service providers and private actors through which sales increase the farmer's profitability. Through JFGA's marketing initiatives farmers were able to sell all the excess products in project year 5, increasing their profitability up to 14% compared to last years. Due to the quality assurance provided by the Seed Bank, farmers were linked to New Farm Company (NFC), a Palestinian social enterprise that was able to export tens of tons of Freekeh (smoked-wheat) to the UK. This means that the Seed Bank did not only improve the livelihood of farmers but also opened up new market/marketing channels and access to new (external) markets rather than compete against local suppliers.

Stronger networks with service providers and the Ministry of Agriculture have also proven to reduce vulnerability among farmers. When flooding in 2013 destroyed the crops of over a hundred farmers across 7 communities, the Seed Bank worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers to reach an agreement on how to respond to the disaster, especially when it came to vulnerable and small farmers.

The integration of marketing, sales, quality management components, was achieved to a good extent. Firstly, NFC has played an important role in that providing the training on quality control and marketing the produce. Their work with women in the cooperatives of Jalboun and Aljalameh are good examples of the effectiveness of this approach. NFC has provided the training to ensure quality during production, helped in the procurement of the food processing equipment through the identification of the equipment specifications and supported marketing of the produce (herbs, Maftool and Freekeh). They played important role in facilitating linkage and networking among the various CBOs¹¹.

Besides, the introduction of business thinking and practically business planning to CBOs was one of the important achievements of TATWEER project. At least 7 CBOs have developed these plans and used them in new proposal and funding applications with other funding sources. These plans were prepared in a participatory way as part of the work of the animators (young graduates) and volunteers from the youth initiatives.

It has shown in the focus groups at the end of the project and field visits that in all communities, women and youth are more trusted and more likely to be included in the development process of communities. This has been an objective in itself from TATWEER but shows also something about the efficiency of the project; by putting efforts in the inclusion of youth and women through the activities, social patterns are now changing, while development processes will be more inclusive and communities can benefit from the input and contribution of all community members.

11 Interviews with Mr. Haitham Hasasneh, NFC director and Mr. Hashem Abu Hasan and Mrs. Seham Abu Arrub.

3.3 Risk and Timely management

A risk analysis has been made during project preparations and this has been revised at the mid of the implementation. The matrix has been taking into account relevant aspects of social, cultural, economic and external challenges that could come up during the project. This analysis at the beginning and during implementation has enabled the project team to come up with relevant mitigation strategies that could be applied when risks were faced. This has happened in instances of community tensions, hesitation of women involvement and environmental disasters. Several possible risks were already dealt with in project strategies by e.g. placing more resources in the capacity building of NFC to build it as a strong partner involved in whole value chain activities as well as holding complaining and communication mechanism open with the whole of the communities where TATWEER had beneficiaries.

The evaluator has also used the Annual Plans and Half Year Reports to examine whether the project has achieved its objectives on time or not. The management used to prepare annual synthetic reports and an annual plan for the year to come. The quality of reports varies from good report (e.g. the report of the 4th year and Year 5 Plan) to reports of lower quality from earlier in the project, from which it was difficult to compare the progress of implementation against the original plan. Most activities have been implemented on time however, with some changes made in the design as already mentioned in 2.3.

It was also noticed that some of the demonstrations related to GAP (silage, liquid fertilizers, and raised beds) were implemented late in the project. This has led to the fact that a final report that could capture the results of the demonstrations of the raised bed technique is not yet ready, which decrease the benefit from this experience and decrease the possibility to replicate. Though these demonstrations were added later in the intervention as an innovative component and not in the original plan, the lessons learned would have been valuable from this seemingly successful project part. Some other delays in the project have been taken place in the project due to technical problems, or late delivery of needed items from abroad. Though small in scale, locally this had a strong impact as e.g. a women cooperative experienced delays with the food processing unit due to delay in delivery of machines from abroad.

4. Impact

Evaluating the impact of TATWEER's project, the evaluators have considered the following questions:

- What has happened because of the project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
- Changes noticed and impact on the key target groups: CBOs, women, youth.

In compliance with the TOR, there has been placed specific focus on the following aspects of the key target groups.

- ✓ Impact of the project interventions on women benefiting from TATWEER project, as well as the effect of their participation to gender relations/dynamics at households and community level.
- ✓ Impact of the project interventions on youth benefiting from TATWEER project, as well as the effect of their participation in CBOs and at the community level.
- ✓ Impact on the vulnerability of farmers and CBOs.
- ✓ Identify and document key lessons and strategies that will inform CARE's future approaches to gender mainstreaming and women and youth related programming.

4.1 Impact on CBOs

Important changes have been taking place at the collective level and CBO's have been transformed, several of them in very effective working groups and facilities that address local needs in a collaborative and responsive way. This section looks at two types of impact that TATWEER has had on the CBO's.

- a. Impact on the financial and economic sustainability of the CBOs and facilities; and
- b. Impact on the social credibility and developmental role of these institutions.

From the beginning of the intervention the aim has been to create sustainable, representative community organizations. This has moved the TATWEER team to encourage brave reform and change in organizations that are built on sometimes sensitive social relations. A great tool in this has been a legal review which led to several "objective" recommendations that increased the CBOs representativeness (inclusion of women e.g.) and compliance with the law and their own objectives. This has led to the change of regulations in several CBOs which ended up including women in their general assembly. As an example, the CBO behind the Seed Bank has come a long way until it is now sustainably providing crucial services for its community. In 2006, the Seed Bank was established bringing four CBOs together with the total number of 250 farmers. Now, in 2013 the JGFA overseeing the Seed Bank was able to increase its CBOs membership by 6 times reaching 2,000 members. Moreover, through the efforts made by the TATWEER team, there are now 340 female members in the CBO of whom at least 110 are involved in the whole cycle of farming.

CBO	# members before intervention	# members after intervention	# women before intervention	# women end 2014
Al Jalameh Cooperative	52	92	2	17
Raba Cooperative	25	40	1	15
Faqua Charitable society	53	72	All women	All women
JGFA (Behind the Seed Bank)		174		30
Aba Agricultural Cooperative	40	100	5	55

Tubas Cooperative for Animal Husbandry Development (Behind the Sheep Farm)	75	105	17	27
Aqqaba Charitable Society	45	87	0	17
Jalboun	15	15	15	15
Three CBOs behind Nursery	250	250	0	0

Figure 4 CBO membership before and after TATWEER

Economic viability

The size of the financial support which the targeted CBOs varies from 9,029 USD in case of Raba Cooperative Society for Sheep Breeders to 252,253 USD in the case of Tubas Cooperative Society for Developing Livestock¹². Several of the facilities that have been created have been able to start make an income themselves. As an example the extra income earned by Tubas Cooperative Society for Developing Livestock amounted to 23,950 USD at the end of 2014, not even taking into account the savings of the farmers through these facilities which amounted to more than 190,000 USD in 2014. Another example of their economic viability shows the Jalboun Cooperative for Rural Development has established a viable income-generating project namely the Food Processing Units for Freekeh and Maftool. The marketing services that NFC provides in the cadre of this project and the linkage services it provides to the cooperative strengthen the women's cooperative economic sustainability. Broadly the evaluation team can state that the main facilities of the Nursery and Seed Bank are currently covering their own running costs with the income-generating activities. The Sheep Farm however is still starting to become viable economically by increasing its opportunities for income-generation. Furthermore, only in Y5 already there have been 12 new relations between external donors and the CBOs that bring new resources to the community and great benefits for the household¹³. As example we can mention Al Jalameh Cooperative who was selected to start a new cooperation agreement with the Italian agency Neksos, building on activities implemented by TATWEER.

Case 5: TATWEER's impact on CBOs – Tubas Cooperative

Tubas Cooperative has come a long way from its modest beginning. In 2009, the total number of Tubas Cooperative members was 56, all males. Now Tubas Cooperative has 104 members including female members in the board of directors. Tubas cooperative is currently advocating for sheep and goat holders in Tubas. It works directly with individual farmers and then negotiates collectively -on their behalf- in meetings with the different ministries, national sectorial committees, and with the different suppliers (veterinarian services, fodder collective purchase, etc.). This shows the CBO was able to become a strong institution in the region that now has good working relations with relevant ministries, suppliers and veterinarian services. Inputs from TATWEER, like the accounting and operational systems, training hall and help with business plans, were crucial to reach this. It has become a visible organization for both farmers, who are eager to become a member, as well as INGO's, who know its address while organizations like Oxfam and the Welfare Association visited it.

¹² Copy of TATWEER Monitoring Table (update)

¹³ Y5 Key Results Table

A key for this success is the Value Chain Approach that TATWEER held throughout the whole project and which means to take into account every step of the value chain before making any investments. By looking from the farmer to the end product and end consumer, it can be estimated whether interventions will bring long-term economic benefit. It will point to areas of development that are traditionally not thought of and have led to interventions in product processing, simple added value techniques and complete food processing units. This has guided also the training and capacity building for the CBO that took into account training for CBOs in business thinking, quality and safety standards and marketing. Through these steps the project ended with CBOs having their income generating projects, CBOs who are legally compliant and having the necessary skills to implement and run their businesses in an efficient and eventually a sustainable way.

Social role of CBOs

The financial and economic sustainability of these CBOs have enhanced their social credibility. The skills CBO management teams have acquired because of the training they received and the financial and administrative systems that the project has provided have enabled these institutions to play crucial proactive role in the development of the community that they serve. Many of these CBOs became social development hubs that provide advice and help in finding employment for women. The survey held as part of the Final Evaluation has indicated that 60% of the examined sample of beneficiaries from the Sheep Farm (Tubas) addresses the cooperative first in case of any problem in their flock. 59% of examined sample of beneficiaries from the Nursery (Jordan Valley) also have identified the nursery specialists as the first and best to provide

advice in case of problems. The farmers also showed to have more trust in the quality of seedlings grown in the Jordan Valley nursery since they purchase the seedlings together and can follow up with their daily growth. For instance, the nursery's seedlings were the only ones to survive during the 2011 frost. The nursery and associated CBOs have a great reputation in the area which is noticed in the increase in membership and the orders from farmers from other villages in the Jordan Valley. Moreover, the nursery introduces new species of seeds and crops as well as better agricultural practices and increased knowledge, which helps the farmers to increase their land fertility and productivity and, with that, their income. The capacity of CBOs to serve their communities has increased, earning them a positive reputation within their communities and an increase in membership. The CBOs themselves invested approximately 50,000 USD in the nursery, 30,000USD of which was used to expand the building and increase the

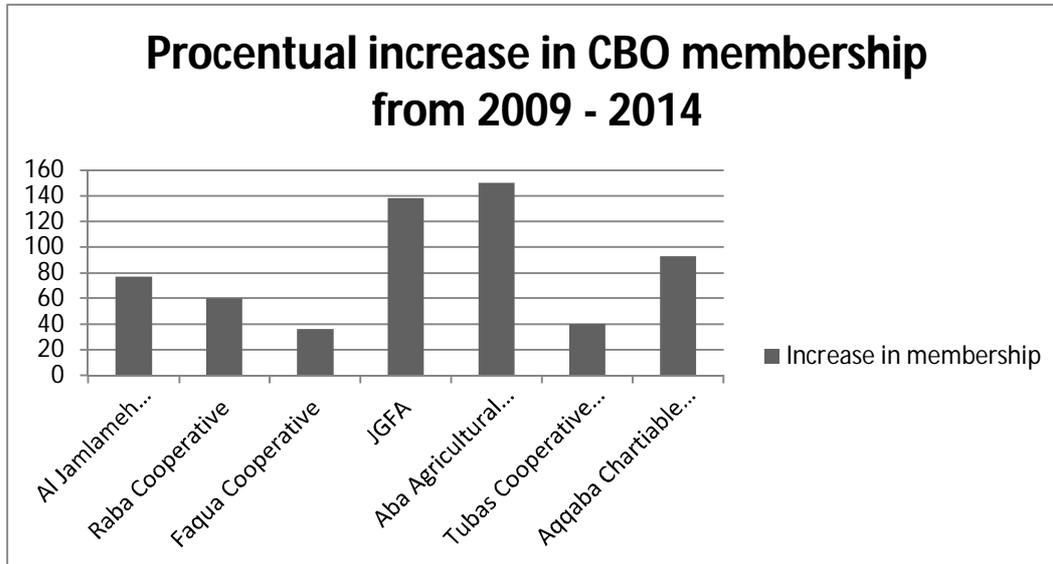
Case 6: TATWEER's impact on Women CBOs

The all women CBO from Faqua' might not have received to most financial input, but it did for sure greatly increase its sustainability and position in society by working with TATWEER.

The credibility that Fuqua women's centre has gained because of TATWEER has enabled them to mobilize external resources for their community center and extend the activities they can offer. So did they attract funds for a sewing workshop that employs a number of women. The training on food safety and standards they received in TATWEER has provided to the centre has enabled it to get a number of contracts to provide patisserie to institutions outside their village. The social credibility that these women CBOs now have has opened the door for many active women in these centres and cooperatives to occupy decision-making positions in their municipalities and village councils. This did not only take place in Faqua' but also in Jalboun and Raba.

production capacity from 1.7 million seedlings to 2.1 million seedlings per year.

Their increased role in the society can also clearly be seen in their membership. All CBOs have greatly increased their membership through the course of the project, meaning that they can serve more farmers but also that more farmers can voice their opinion in this CBO and the CBOs work can be more representative.



Besides, the CBOs have become to represent their community in many more places and forums. The case of JGFA can be mentioned here who represents farmers in the National Tobacco Council as well as Jalboun Cooperative who is a member of the National Council of Seeds. These are important institutes for the national sectorial development and it is a very significant step that CBOs can include the voice of farmers there. Many of these CBOs, especially in Aljalameh, Raba, Tubas, Jalboun, Aqqaba and Faqua' became employers or helped their members finding jobs.

4.2 Impact on vulnerability farmer

The impact of TATWEER interventions on farmers and their livelihood is remarkable. Through utilizing the various research tools, it is possible to summarize the most important project's impact on farmers in the following list, giving more evidences afterwards:

- ✓ Farmers skills and know-how in the fields of NRM, pest management, animal husbandry, local seed conservation and other agricultural skill have increased;
- ✓ Improved food security and livelihood of farmers and their families is supported;
- ✓ Increased revenues and profitability of farmers because of the support provided in the field of inputs, processing and marketing.

The most visible improvement in the livelihood of vulnerable farmers has been made by the three key facilities established by TATWEER (the impact of the Home Gardens and FPU's will be discussed under Women). Not only facilitated the facilities access to services, knowledge and markets, the inputs received through these centres also caused an decrease in production costs and an increase in production for many farmers.

A closer look at the Nursery shows that the savings were not only caused by better inputs, but also by the application of better agricultural practices. The quantitative survey that was conducted in the cadre of this evaluation has revealed that the savings in production cost by individual farmers because of the Nursery reached 37.8% on average compared to production before the establishment of the Nursery. An increase in production quality was also reported by more than 75% of the farmers.

Similarly, in the Sheep Farm did farmers' increased knowledge in agro ecosystems, breeding and innovative husbandry techniques greatly add to the savings they were able to make. By applying new techniques of separating animals, vaccines and the use of VET services, the health of their flock did increase. The savings made by farmers can be directly related back to improved farming practices and enhanced rams that have increased livestock' health and led to fewer diseases. Through the survey done for the Final Evaluation 84% of farmers benefitting from the Sheep Farm reported a decrease in diseases in their flock, while 73% noted an increase in production of milk and twins. On average farmers reported a reduction in diseases of 60% while an increase of production was reported of almost 40% compared to before the establishment of the Sheep Farm. Looking at specifically milk production, the farmers reported that they had an average increase of milk production of 27%. The need for fodder has also reduced by applying division methods in the animals' housings that allows farmers to address more precisely the animals' specific need.

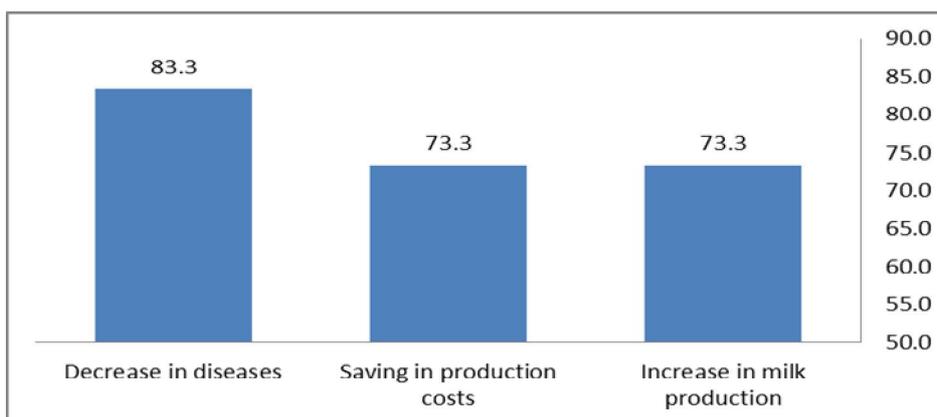


Figure 5 Percentage of Sheep Farm participants who noticed changes in production during TATWEER (Final Evaluation, 2014)

93% of the participants in the Seed Bank stated in the Final Evaluation Survey that they are applying GAP techniques learned under TATWEER. This includes reduced use of fertilizers and pesticides, use of less seeds per dunum and better quality seeds. 60% of these farmers reported an increase in production because of these techniques, 54% an increase in production quality and nearly 40% a saving in production costs. Farmers also benefitted from savings through lending seeds through the Seed Bank and by renting machinery through the Seed Bank.

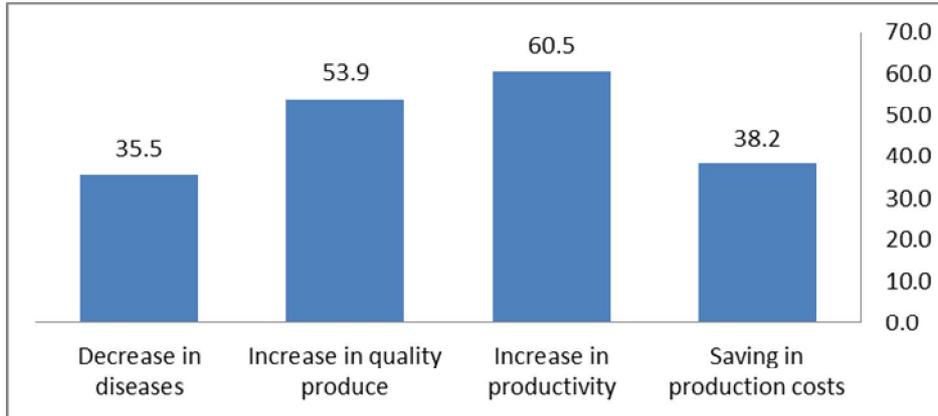


Figure 6 Changes noticed among farmers after applying GAP spread through Seed Bank (Final Evaluation Survey, 2014)

By understanding the local challenges, sector and value chain the facilities provided interventions that reduced the vulnerability of farmers, whether it was their dependency on imported seedlings or inaccessibility of locally adapted seeds. All facilities took into account the existing vulnerability factors and proposed innovative ways to reduce these vulnerabilities of farmers. So did the Seed Bank also multiply seeds as a resilience-backup which allowed them to reduce farmers' vulnerability to outside shocks? When flooding in 2013 destroyed the crops of over a hundred farmers across 7 communities, the Seed Bank worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers to reach an agreement on how to respond to the disaster, especially when it came to vulnerable and small farmers. One of the beneficiaries stated: *"The Seed Bank stood by us during the flood season this year. We were allowed to give back the destroyed seeds in the coming season. This flexibility did not exist prior to the Seed Bank; otherwise I would be indebted to a dealer and have to pay four times the price I pay now. They would take advantage of our desperation."*

4.3 Impact on Women

The evaluators' team examined the impact of TATWEER interventions on women at two levels: individual and at collective levels.

Looking at the individual level, the evaluators' team saw a great impact of the interventions focussed on individual women e.g. the Home Gardens and the Farmer Field School which rehabilitated green houses. A huge economic empowerment was noticed as the women developed an income and sometimes for the first time could contribute to their household expenditures and also increased their skills and position to discuss and voice her opinion.

Through the qualitative survey became clear that the Home Gardens supported the women

in providing for their families while they on average could produce 42.7 kg of various fresh vegetables and herbs. The Farmer Field School established in Aba had a great impact on the community but especially a sense of economic empowerment can be noticed among the women. Below is a selection is

TATWEER's impact on women in the household

Rajaa' Alsa'edi's income from her work in the Farmer Field School of Aba amounted to 3000 NIS in the second part of 2014, while previously she had an income of 1800 NIS per year. She stated she used this great increase to cover part of the household expenses, part for herself and part of it to cover the expenses of supplementary classes for her children. Reflecting on how it impacted her life, she sees it increased her involvement in household decisions. She now has a more active say in the financial situation of her family and future of her children.

the women who participated in the project and could increase their monthly income, which shows an average increase in income of 92%!

Table 2 Women Business Model: Profit and Increase in Income for Green House Participants

No.	Name of the beneficiary	Annual income before TATWEER intervention (NIS)	Revenue of Tomato by month (NIS)				Average increase in the income
			Aug. 2014	Sep. 2014	Oct. 2014	Nov. 2014	
1	Noha Ahmad Hassan	1200	1793.33	840.84	1406	480	94.18%
2	Nihad Sadeq Alsa'edi	2000	914.28	650.11	773.89	491.56	35.37%
3	Saleemah Azzamtah	3000	2863.67	2371	1562.33	1688.33	70.71%
4	Kaokab Azzamtah	2500	2661.67	1670.17	1817.67	1539.33	76.89%
5	Fehmeyeh Alsa'edi	300	914.28	650.11	773.89	491.56	235.82%
6	Rajaa' AlSa'edi	1800	914.28	650.11	773.89	491.56	39.30%
Average increase in income			92.05%				

A reoccurring theme in the focus groups with women was how their ability to voice their opinion and contribute to decision-making had increased throughout the project. This was noticed at the household level, as well in the CBOs and the village councils! Women membership of the CBO increased significantly over time, from 1 till 15 for example in Raba Cooperative and from 2 till 17 in Al Jalameh Cooperative. In total, until the end of the 5th year the percentage women made up from the CBOs membership increased with 14 percent point.

Table 3 Women participation in CBOs before and after TATWEER

CBO	# women before the intervention	% of total members before the intervention	# women end of 2014	% of total member end of 2014
Al Jalameh Cooperative	2	4%	17	18%
Raba Cooperative	1	4%	15	40%
Faqua Charitable society	53	100%	58	100%
JGFA	12	12%	30	17%
Aba Agricultural Cooperative	5	12.5%	55	44%
Tubas Cooperative for Animal Husbandry Development	17	23%	27	26%
Aqqaba Charitable Society	0	0%	17	20%
Jalboun			15	100%

CBOs behind Nursery	0	0%	0	0%
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Inside the CBOs women expressed they were taken more serious; the CBO even wanted the women to participate. As a practical example it was seen that in some CBOs the women negotiated about the general meeting times of the CBO, as they are best able to join the meetings during the day time and not in the evenings. Consequently the CBOs moved their meeting times to the mornings for the women to be able to attend as well. Women have also become a part of CBO Boards, with now 4 CBOs having female members elected on their Board. However, before TATWEER these CBOs didn't had any women represented on their board. The evaluation team has seen in all field visits that CBOs have become more gender sensitive and aware of the means of women's empowerment and obstacles in front of women status enhancement.

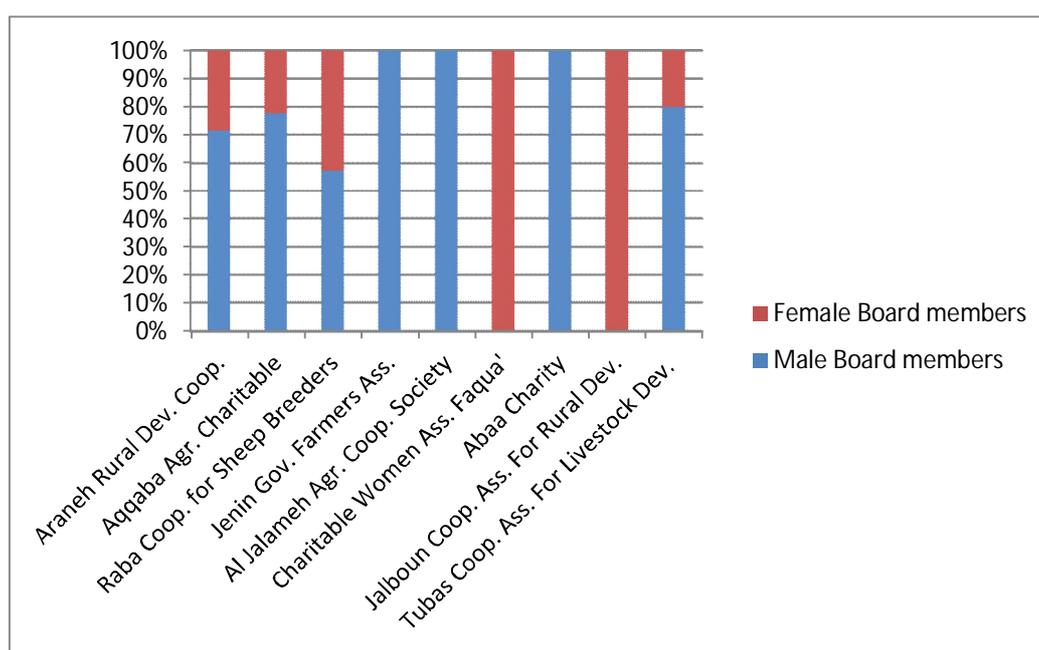


Figure 7 Board Members in participating CBOs at the end of 2014

The evaluators found that the project has contributed to the socio-cultural mobility among women to move into positions of leadership and influence both into the CBOs as well as the village councils. During the fifth year a gender assessment analysis was conducted by the ESDC Gender Specialist which has shown improvements compared to women's limited role before TATWEER. The analysis has indicated that an increased percentage of women are now taking part in the different levels of influence in CBO. The table below shows the percentage of decision-makers at those levels being female.

Table 4 Women Participation at Decision-Making levels in CBO Y5 TATWEER

Decision-making level	Percentage of women's participation
Strategic Organisational level	37%
Needs Assessments	28%
Implementation of initiative	36%
Representation in Partners and CBOs	44%

The evaluation noted that specific income-generating activities targeted at women e.g. home garden and green houses, did not result in changing social norms regarding ownership of production means and assets. Often home gardens and greenhouses still remained family businesses in which men had a larger role in decision-making.

4.4 Impact on Youth

The deployed resources in the cadre of the project in favour of youth are very modest. These were mostly restricted to capacity building in the cadre of the youth initiatives and employment of a limited number of fresh graduates. In spite of that, the evaluator can state that the result of these interventions was great on improving the capacity of those youth. The fresh graduates from university became animators and agents of change in their communities by working in the CBOs and introducing new techniques and skills to the communities, also with regard to planning and business development. All CBOs who have hosted these fresh graduates have shown great appreciation for the efforts and effect of those graduates on the performance of these CBOs. They helped them to employ and master the operational systems as well as the financial software that TATWEER provided to these CBOs. Most of the fresh graduates who were employed in the CBOs have found long-term employed afterwards¹⁴.

A second youth component was the Summer School conducted in Jenin in August 2014. After these workshops 25 female and 15 male fresh graduates from 7 of TATWEER communities designed their own initiatives based on their communities' needs in full coordination with their local authorities. This can be seen as an attempt to enhance youth involvement with the local authorities within the communities. The youth took the lead in undertaking a community needs assessment and develop a project that addressed those key issues. This has led to several successful initiatives in the areas of environment, road safety and youth centres. For example in Raba the village has been provided with an education center, which is being used by youth for workshops and activities. The head of the village council in Raba has been very positive about this initiative and stated it is hoped this center will develop into a cultural centre for all age groups. Many youth have reported on the increase in self-esteem they experienced in participating in those activities and also the increased respect of the community they experienced.

As a great example of this we can notice the increased interaction between village councils, CBOs and youth groups. While previously youth was largely left outside of more formal development processes like the activities in village councils, more CBOs and village council have been working together with youth and youth have taken up a more active role in those processes. This can be seen for example in Faqua', where the youth council is being actively engaged in decision related to the whole community's development.

What also shouldn't be overlooked is the increased believe of young people themselves that village councils and CBOs are relevant organizations for them to be involved in. The exchange visits of university students to local CBOs to learn about their facilities and progress resulted in change of the students' view on CBOs and the importance they can have in local development processes. After the visits 62% of the students stated to be interested in becoming members of a CBO because they recognized the important role CBOs can have in several sectors especially agriculture and marketing.

¹⁴ Year Report source

5. Sustainability

In this section it will be assessed how the project tried to increase sustainability and till what it is expected to be successful. TATWEER intervention had included a clear sustainability strategy that the evaluation team noticed was built on the following factors;

- ✓ Beneficiaries ownership promoted among individuals, CBOs and PNGOs;
- ✓ Capacity building of these participating individuals, CBOs and PNGOs;
- ✓ Stimulating linkages and collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and government actors;
- ✓ Involvement of women and youth in community processes and organizations;
- ✓ Strengthening the institutional capacity of CARE WBG local partners: ARIJ, ESDC and NFC to provide the long-term support to CBOs and individual farmers.

This has caused activities to be sustainable, both with an eye on social sustainability, organizational sustainability and environmental sustainability. A good commitment among partner NGOs and CBOs has been noticed towards continuing the facilities and interventions started. How this has been reached and until what level will be discussed below.

5.1 Social Sustainability

Beneficiaries' ownership building by the individuals, community and CBOs was promoted through a number of measures during the project identification phase, implementation and monitoring & evaluation. The participation of key personalities, village councils of the targeted communities as well as CBOs in the workshops, that were held for the need assessment purpose and to identify development opportunities and constrains during the identification phase, has contributed to the strengthening of the ownership feelings of the project and acceptance of the planned activities. The participation of the employees of the MOA in the targeted governorates has helped in keeping the devised activities in alignment with the ministry's strategies and priorities in both agriculture and animal production sectors.

The transparent selection criteria and the do-no-harm approach during the implementation and selection of individuals and CBOs beneficiaries ensured that the most vulnerable families were reached and that the community was aware of their selection. As is crucial in a do-no-harm approach, it also avoided fuelling any tensions in the communities, as has showed to be in the case in the selection of the site of the Nursery in the Jordan Valley where extensive discussion with the local community led to the agreement with three CBOs combined. The participation of local community and CBOs in the identification of needs and activities during the preparation phase has also contributed to the building of the ownership feeling of the beneficiaries. These align with the cultural norms and power relations in the targeted communities. There were power relationship identified that were rated more limiting for community development than supportive and sensitive measures were taken to positively challenge these negative power relationships. This has taken place inside CBOs where internal government reform has been supported as well as between women and men, where more inclusion of women has been gradually supported and achieved in many communities. All individual and CBOs interviewees have highlighted and confirmed this implementation's practice and its great positive influence on the ownership feelings. This represents an indicator of future sustainability of the project's activities.

5.2 Organizational Sustainability

The implementation methodology that TATWEER has adopted, in which the CBOs were the cornerstone, has had great positive impact on the capacity of these CBOs. These CBOs together with CARE WBG and the local partners ARIJ and ESDC were responsible for the selection of the individual beneficiaries. They were also highly involved in the development of the interventions, including feasibility determination and execution. This has provided on-job training for these CBOs, strengthened their capacity to implement similar projects in the future, has increased their credibility among its membership and will enable them to sustain the outcomes of the project. Nearly all individual interviewed beneficiaries confirmed that they prefer receiving the service through their CBOs. The major improvements in the legal status of CBOs, their constitution and laws, the frequency of their meetings and their representation of society are very positive indicators for their long term sustainability.

Several facilities led by CBOs are now becoming financially sustainable by having activities that are creating an income. The Seed Bank and Nursery have been able to cover their running costs in the last project year, while the Sheep Farm is making progress into that direction. The facilities are receiving strong oversight from the CBOs, who are capable of making sound decisions and running the CBO in the long term.

Several CBOs have been able to extend the support they receive outside TATWEER, attracting other (I)NGOs to support their community development. In project year 5 this reached as much as 12 new partnerships that were established with partners outside CARE WBG and increased the possibility of CBOs to provide relevant services to their community. This ranged from funding for new income-generating projects (like in Faqua' and Al Jalameh Cooperative) till services from the MoA or participation in other INGO-led development projects.

Furthermore, ten exit strategies were drafted for the CBOs as a tool to maintain the management of the CBOs after TATWEER. These strategies focused on the different tasks and responsibilities within the CBOs and how they could go forward after TATWEER. All results of the assessments were included in the exit strategies as part of "decision making support system" and the prepared documents were presented to CBOs members (2 workshops per CBO).

Working through the Palestinian NGOs ARIJ, ESDC and NFC has greatly increased their capacity in project implementation, procurement and M&E. While starting with limited responsibilities in these areas at the beginning of TATWEER, they became more capable and confident to manage these activities at the end of TATWEER. Many valuable management tools and skills (like business planning and feasibility studies) have become part of the partner's way of working. Now partners are able to conduct their own feasibility studies for projects outside TATWEER as well support others to conduct these studies. This increased their capacity to serve Palestinian communities in the future.

5.3 Environmental Sustainability

The project has implemented a great number of training courses in the fields of NRM (mainly water and soil management) to ensure that farmer move to more sustainable practices that are better for their own farming business as well as contribute to the environmental sustainability of the intervention. In these trainings often the younger family member engaged in the farming practices had a key role in ensuring implementation of the newly learned skills. This was clear with more innovative practices like bookkeeping and keeping track of inputs and outputs. During field visits the farmers often forwarded questions about these topics to their oldest sons, who were practically the ones responsible for these practices on a daily basis. This is a crucial lesson to learn also with regard to sustainability. While

TATWEER team reflected that it was difficult to engage all youth from farming families in trainings, as they were often unable or unwilling to attend formal trainings, they were the ones who in the end ensured implementation on a daily basis.

Pesticide management, raised bed and double doors in green house demonstrations all contribute to better water and soil conservation and reduce damage to the environment. Many training sessions have been able to capture the application of new techniques by farmers, where training courses at the Sheep Farm showed a 30% increase in knowledge¹⁵, while 93% of the Seed Bank participants in training reported they continued using newly learned skills at home.

As part of the project's efforts to increase its environmental sustainability and meet the challenges of climate change in this area further research has been done during the project implementation phase into climate change and its implications for the project area. This has led to a better understanding of the local challenges and encouraged the project team to continue with innovative demonstrations and product development, such as locally adapted seeds and water harvesting techniques to suit the local situation. Access to water has been an important red line through the project as the area often knows a water shortage for political reasons, as well as underlying environmental challenges. By applying water harvesting techniques in almost all facilities and home gardens, communities and households became more independent with regards to their use of water.

TATWEER did not consider more Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures as part of interventions in the targeted areas. Windstorms often affect North Jordan Valley areas and it would have therefore been advantageous for the project to consider implementing certain activities that may reduce the effect of these storms on the plastic green houses.

¹⁵ Year 5 Key Results Table

6. Project Management and Monitoring

In the last section an extra look will be taken at the management of the intervention and the monitoring systems in place. It will be assessed till what level they are appropriate and were successful.

6.1 Monitoring System

The monitoring system that is in place in this project is very complex and is applied at a multiple levels:

1. AMENCA M&E advisor who monitors the partners who are funded through AMENCA II and the projects¹⁶ they implement;
2. CARE Australia and CARE WBG M&E officers who monitor the work of the local partner. After the program shift at CARE WBG, a team of monitors from CARE and their partner work together;
3. The team from the Impact & Learning Coordinator-CARE WBG and two M&E officers from ARIJ and ESDC monitor the work of the partner CBOs.
4. The M&E teams of the above-mentioned levels monitor the achievement of the project at the various levels and risks as well.

The base of the M&E system was the M&E framework which was developed at the beginning of the project and which has been continuously updated. Through this updating, the project overcame some of the weaknesses of time bound indicators and absence of quantitative specific indicators. At the inception phase of the project, TATWEER conducted a base line survey to be the reference of comparison between pre and post interventions conditions. In this updated M&E framework, the evaluator has identified the following monitoring and evaluation tools:

- a. Regular reports,
- b. Focus groups discussion reports;
- c. Questionnaire;
- d. Case studies documentation;
- e. Evaluation of the supported facilities or planned facilities like the sustainability and feasibility studies;
- f. Mid-term review of the project;
- g. Field visits.

Through examination of the various monitoring reports that were prepared during the first five years of project's implementation, the evaluator can state that the reports were gender sensitive and sex-disaggregated. Sufficient attention has been placed on the progress towards gender sensitivity and women empowerment at both individual and collective levels. The project reporting system also allowed CARE senior management to make relevant recommendations and give guidance on project implementation where needed.

6.2 Management System

CARE Australia has partnered with a local field office of its international network; CARE WBG. CARE Australia and CARE WBG have implemented the project in partnership ARIJ, ESDC and NFC as second tier partners. These together have implemented the project in partnership with CBOs as third tier partners.

¹⁶ AMENCA Risk Management Assessment – final report accepted June 2014.

CARE Australia has oversight of the project, providing project reports, annual plans, and budgets to the donor DFAT, as well as support to the Country Office in quality assurance, risk management and compliance with donor requirements and annual monitoring and support visits. CARE WBG manages the project in country with responsibilities focused on monitoring, evaluation and reporting of activities; logistical support (e.g., procurement, recruitment, communication); and liaising with project stakeholders including MOA, NARC, ICARDA and other donors in the country. CARE WBG together with ARIJ, ESDC and NFC have established a project management committee which has replaced the project steering committee (PSC) in order to give senior management of the partners more responsibility in the project. ARIJ supports all technical activities related to improved agricultural practices and water management. ESDC oversees capacity-building activities for CBOs serving farmers in the targeted communities and livestock management. NFC provides support to the CBOs and individuals in the field of marketing and training in the field of food processing standards and hygiene.

During the first two years of the project, ARIJ and ESDC employees were working under direct supervision of CARE WBG and CARE conducted all procurements, recruitment and communications. This model of implementation changed gradually towards more responsibilities for ARIJ and ESDC particularly in the field of procurement. Based on the different interviews with the project's top management and field officers, it can be stated that the change towards more involvement of local partners in all activities of implementation, monitoring and evaluation has given good results and has contributed significantly to receive its goals of sustainable improvement of development processes. Though in the end the implementation and monitoring of the project has been successfully, during the transition some weaknesses in the capacities of the partners had to be overcome¹⁷. These initial gaps had to be filled by the CARE WBG team, which did lead to a great improvement in the partner's skills towards the very end of the project. In summary, we can state that a major lesson CARE WBG has learned is the necessity to encourage responsibility among partner NGOs and CBOs for the development of their own communities.

The importance and support that the TATWEER team has given to NFC enabled NFC to play greater role in TATWEER in the final years compared to early stages of the project. NFC's involvement has been important in fully implementing the Value Chain Development approach as NFC could be a successful embodiment of the private sector connection for many CBOs. This was not only by connecting CBOs with end markets, but also by the training and skills development in crucial areas to reach these markets. Examples of this are the quality and food safety training for women engaged in food production as well as workshops in marketing. With the help of NFC and complementary workshops and activities the seeds of this important Value Chain Development approach have been planted throughout the intervention. Reflecting on interviews¹⁸ it is clear this approach is valued by all project partners and should be encouraged and strengthened in any future action. Because of the successful role in project management and implementation in the later stages, it would have unquestionably been beneficial if NFC was involved already at earlier stages of the project.

CBOs as implementing actors

Giving many responsibilities to CBOs as third tier implementers has led to a great increase in their local capacity, the increase in their possibilities to serve their communities and gives positive indicators for the long-term sustainability of their services. Interviewed women and men beneficiaries highlighted the important role of their CBOs and their preference to receive services through these institutions. It was

¹⁷ Interviews with May Abdelhadi and Hiba Tibi.

¹⁸ Interviews with executive director of NFC, assistant of ARIJ General Director and the heads of a number of CBOs and facilities

noticed though that working with less well-established CBOs at the earlier stages of the project took more resources from the project towards increasing the effectiveness of these CBOs away from other activities. The interventions in locations with well-established CBOs and social infrastructure have been successful in a shorter time-span, which became clear in villages like Jalboun and Faqua'. This does show it is a consideration that needs to be taken into account, concerning limited resources and priorities of any intervention.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Conclusion

The evaluation has been able to establish that the TATWEER intervention has been able to reach its objectives in a relevant, efficient and sustainable way. The project team has been working towards the goal of *reduced vulnerability among communities in Jenin and Tubas Governorates through improved and sustainable livelihood security and increased capacity of civil society organizations*. The project has been able to reach vulnerable men and women in agricultural communities both directly as well as through CBOs and through the networks established. This has contributed to more possibilities for these communities in the Northern West Bank to support themselves, while productions costs have been decreased and profits increased.

The figure below shows the achievements on selected objectives only, by showing the people reached through these activities. Through this table it becomes clear that 475 women have meaningfully increased their participation in local development processes, by being active in CBOs or village councils. This number is significantly higher than the originally planned 50 women or the 200 women aimed at in the adjusted plan. Similar achievements higher than planned can be seen at the number of women who could increase their income, farmers (male/female) with improved Natural Resource Management, farmers (male/female) with improved access and households with improved food security.

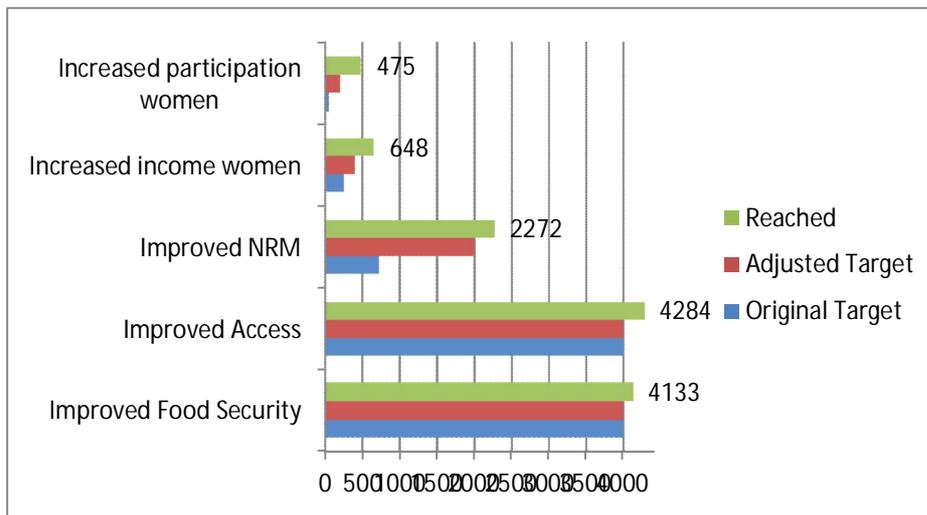


Figure 8 Selection on the achievements on TATWEER goals 2009-2015

Main achievements during TATWEER

It has become clear TATWEER has reached its quantitative objectives throughout the six years, in the areas of increased food security, increased women and youth participation and increased services through CBOs. To capture however the most significant achievements of TATWEER so far, we can look at the qualitative way these objectives were reached, bringing a sustainable, community-led reduction in vulnerability.

Farmer-focused business thinking

While keeping the farmer as the focus, improvements were based on the understanding of the whole value chain from producer to consumer. This caused TATWEER to teach CBOs crucial “business skills” that include strategic planning, feasibility assessments and value chain analysis. Based on this understand private sector engagement was also a crucial aspect that connected farmers with markets that can increase their profitability sustainably. With these efforts farmers has started selling their products to new markets, both locally and internationally. This led to job-creation and higher incomes in sectors like bee-keeping, food grains, olives and herbs. The Palestinian partner NGOs were taught to apply this business thinking systematically, with on the job training for staff.

Capacity building CBOs and PNGOs

CBOs and PNGOs overall capacity was greatly increased as igniters of development for their community. The evaluation saw their capacity increased in the area of; representation of the whole community, engaging with women and youth, partnerships, fundraising and financial sustainability and running facilities and services. Not all CBOs showed the same level of change, with three CBOs showing a great improvement in their capacity to serve their farmers through the Nursery facilities but less improvement in engaging with women and youth.

Increasing women’s involvement

TATWEER applied different ways to encourage more women involvement; through individual actions, through collective actions with women groups and through sensitization of the CBOs and communities to allow more women engagement at the decision-making level. This showed some very good results in several communities, with women reporting increased involvement at the household level through the training and income-generating activities and in communities through more members in CBOs or even village councils. In other communities it is more appropriate to say the seeds were planted, as several activities in those communities empowered women and made the community more eager to work with women but they were not yet included in the CBO boards however.

Encouraging youth involvement

Youth’s involvement in local development processes has been encouraged in two inventive ways in TATWEER. Through the fresh graduates who worked with the CBOs, the communities became more aware of the youth’s qualities while the youth also learned new skills and saw the usefulness of the CBOs. In 7 communities there have also been youth-led community projects organized which equipped the youth with useful skills as well did it show the community what positive change youth can bring. Also through the exchange visits with Universities, the CBOs and youth were positively exposed to each other and encouraged to work together in community development. The aspect of youth involvement presents a major lesson for future upscaling.

Economic opportunities for women

New economic opportunities from women were created in suitable ways that fitted their situation and their society. This was reached in a holistic way by offering training, skills development, input delivery and supporting market linkages. Women were also encouraged to think with and show initiative in working through the whole value chain, giving them a higher level of self-confidence as reported by them. On the ground this was seen in new skills in the bee keeping sector, market linkages through production of Freekeh, Maftool and olive paste stronger CBOs and networks with the Faqqua women's CBO now also functioning as a bakery.

Reducing vulnerability and increasing profitability

By establishing service, knowledge and input centers like the facilities of the Nursery, Seed Bank, Sheep Farm and Bee-keeping Center farmers could access high-quality inputs and services in a stable, safe and economical way. The facilities could also work with collective solutions to common problems, like collective purchases of inputs in the Seed Bank and Nursery. These centers also ensured collective access to extension services from the Ministry of Agriculture and private actors. This clearly showed the added value of these facilities for the vulnerability of the farmer. The facilities also contributed to reduced costs (through safer and more economical access to inputs/services) and helped farmers to add more value to their end-product. By accessing new markets together, the farmers could increase their profitability.

2. Recommendations

➤ The participatory approach during design and implementation has proven to be very successful. It is recommended that this is continued in any future intervention and their participation is more actively encouraged during the design stage. This should complement the involvement of marketing / business specialist who should be involved as well from an early stage to increase the effectiveness of the Value Chain Development approach.

➤ It was noticed that the strategy for women empowerment had many successful outcomes with changes at the economic and social aspects of women's lives. It was however noticed that ownership of means of production did not come into the hands of women (e.g. not in green houses). This should be considered, whether this is an aim or not. What could contribute to a more effective implementation of women empowerment would be a common understanding of the Gender Strategy as well as a common reporting system, with the indicators from the Gender Strategy used at all levels to report progress and make any challenges visible for the project management team and PSC.

➤ It could be considered to include more extensive Disaster Risk Reduction measures (DRRM) as part of interventions in areas to better deal with windstorms, flooding and frost that often affect North Jordan Valley areas.

➤ A strategy for more sustainability could be the recruiting of professional personnel to manage TATWEER facilities in a more business driven approach. This could accelerate the process of transforming these community facilities into social-economic development centres.

➤ Food security is a very crucial challenge in Palestine and extends beyond the agricultural sector. It could therefore be taken into consideration if projects should be extended to non-agricultural sectors or linkages with non-agricultural actors, especially when it comes to networks of income-generating projects.

➤ The great success of the integration of fresh graduates in the project urges the evaluation to recommend generalizing this as an economic and social model that contributes to better youth opportunities and attracts young people to play an active role in their own community and keeps them part of their own community. It should be applied in future interventions and propagated to other organizations. In addition, it should be noted that this intervention had a good male / female ratio and it is recommended that a percentage is set to ensure young female graduates will not make up less than 50% of the involved youth.