



MA'AN's Jordan Valley Monthly Update

MA'AN's monthly updates are not intended to be a news source, but instead offer information that is relevant or underreported in the region.

November 2014



Date storage cold room in Jiftik supported by AFPS

Palestinian dies in explosion from Israeli military exercises near Bardala village

On the 23rd of November, a Palestinian herder died of injuries sustained after ordnance left by the Israeli army exploded in Bardala village, in the northern Jordan Valley. Residents said the Israeli army performed drills in the area two days earlier.

Since the beginning of the occupation, Israel has established a strong military base throughout classified 'Area C' of the West Bank. In the Jordan Valley, 56% of land has been seized and classified as military land. Firing zones are frequently established within closed designated military areas. Very often, areas are not cleared after military exercises, today, land mines from the 67 war and unexploded ordnances are covering 50,000 acres of the West Bank. Between 2000 and 2012, there were 948 casualties, all civilians from landmine detonations and unexploded ordnances. All these could have been avoided if the state of Israel had endorsed its responsibility as occupying power, yet no government clearance initiation has been launched.

Israeli labour laws to be applied to Palestinian workers in the West Bank are under discussion

Discussions were held throughout November on the situation of Palestinian workers in the Israeli settlements and Israel Justice Ministry meetings were convened to discuss whether the Israeli labour law should be applied to Palestinian workers beyond the Green Line.

In the Jordan Valley, many farmers, due to land annexation by Israeli settlements, lack of resources available for farming and lack of job opportunities, end up working in the settlements for the benefit of Israeli settlers and companies for very low wages. Hired on informal temporary contract-basis, they earn 70 NIS a day (when the Israeli minimum salary is 200 NIS) and have neither pay slip nor social benefit. Implementing Israeli law in the West Bank would be a step further into a deeper annexation and colonization of Palestine, hence for sure, not aiming to improve Palestinians' welfare.

MA'AN's Work in the Jordan Valley

Jordan Valley youth for a change

The objective of this project, supported by Save the Children, is to increase the capacities of youth and women to ensure they possess the required skills for the labor market and for seeking job opportunities. This month, job and vocational employment fairs were organized, as well as "start your own business" trainings. In addition, youth from 15 to 18 years old benefited three months apprenticeships in private companies in order for them to gain experience, have a clear sight of what the labour market is, and eventually, be hired after their apprenticeship. Youth friendly microfinance institutions were also introduced to youth and a network was initiated between youth from Jordan Valley.



Job Fair for youth in the Jordan Valley

Emergency response to heavy rains in Marj Na'aje by renovating and building drainage systems

An emergency project was implemented with the support of Save the Children. This project sought to alleviate the heavy rainfall experienced in the village of Marj Na'aje by renovating and building drainage systems for water flow. The first rains that occurred at the end of October and the start of November caused extreme flooding; Marj Na'aje was one of the worst affected areas with water flow running through the streets, houses and under housing structures. Existing drainage systems were expanded and re-lined with cement, making them wider and therefore more able to cope with rainfall. Streets which had no existing system had new channels dug and existing drainage pools were expanded to allow for more water to be held within them. This project began in mid-November and will be coming to a close in the next two weeks.

Supporting small farmers in the Jordan Valley

Beginning of November, MA'AN received a visit from representatives of AFPS (Association France Palestine Solidarité), as the project is coming to a close. With the MA'AN team, they visited the two parts of the project: date trees plantations in the villages of Zbeidat, Marj Na'aje and Marj Ghazal, as well as the date storage cold room in Jiftik. The two sides of this project aim to build resilience and contribute to farmers' ability to remain on their land, as well as strengthening their marketing independency around the year. Throughout the visit, the extension of the cooperation of MA'AN and AFPS for 2015 and beyond was also discussed.

Jordan Valley Opportunity for Undertaking Development

Meetings were held with representatives of each targeted community with an external consultant to assess their needs, using a participative approach. Later compiled in comprehensive reports, this will help to answer adequately their priorities. Indeed, one axis of the JOUD project focuses on community driven initiatives, chosen by the people themselves. This project, funded by the Norwegian Representative Office aims to contribute to improving living conditions and resilience of communities in the Jordan Valley.



Need assessment with community members in Zbeidat