



Enhancing sustainable urban food systems in the Gaza Strip - Networking for positive policy change and resilience

Background

Given the specific context of Gaza, where economic opportunities are very limited, any development programme should focus on promoting a 'resilient local development approach' and making the best use of what is locally available. Promoting and strengthening localised and sustainable urban food systems and markets play an important role in this, especially in light of Gaza's rapid population growth, growing urban unemployment and poverty, increasing household vulnerability to food insecurity and the imposed import and export restrictions that severely threaten and limit agricultural development.

Urban food security in Gaza

Since the second Intifada (2000-2001) access and mobility restrictions have been imposed on Gazans. Many Gazans who relied on farming and construction work in Israel as their main source of income have been denied permits to leave Gaza from this period onwards. Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has been even more tightly closed off, resulting in exceptional conditions where both imports and exports of goods are very restricted and irregular. Coupled to the devastating effects of the 2014 war, and a high population growth, the resulting complex socio-economic situation has dramatically increased poverty and unemployment in the Gaza Strip. According to an April World Bank report, in 2016, the unemployment rate remained very high at 27%: 42 % in Gaza and 18% in the West Bank. Youth unemployment in Gaza is particularly worrying at 58%. And, although nearly 80% of Gaza's residents receive some form of aid, poverty rates are very high.

Past studies (Oxfam, ECHO 2012 Household Economy Assessment) already made clear that with current levels of household income, poorer households would not be able to cope with a substantial reduction of food and/or cash assistance. The study showed that a substantial reduction in food and cash aid would have important negative effects on the poorest segments of the Gaza population bringing them close to the minimum food security threshold (the food security threshold represents the total food and cash income needed to cover the cost of 2,100 Kcals of food per person per day and the non-food items necessary for survival). This situation has not improved over the past years.

Local agricultural production

Consumer food insecurity is growing in parallel with declining agricultural self-sufficiency. Accelerated population growth (3.5%), urban sprawl and increasing conversion of agricultural land for housing, restricted access to (quality) land in the border area, sea and water, coupled to limited availability of good quality seeds and breeds, has resulted in a decline in the percentage of self-sufficiency for some agricultural products to about 50%. There is also a decline in livestock production on which the Bedouin life in the Gaza Strip traditionally relied on. In addition, fragmentation of agricultural property (1 to 3 Dunum per farmer) implies that (urban) agriculture in Gaza is - to a large extent - is often being done on small land areas. In combination with the poverty of the majority of the producers, scarcity and low quality of available inputs and water, this leads to low investments in the land and low productivity.

The majority of donor agencies still prioritise “more food imports” and programmes for “food assistance” and “free donations” as a response to food insecurity and poverty in the Gaza Strip- and also in the West Bank. These programmes have often been leading to more dependency on direct household assistance and on international markets and increasing vulnerability for food price fluctuations (especially for Gaza with border closures; export restrictions; high import taxes and with an urban population spending a large part of their income on food). At the same time, several agricultural development projects aiming at strengthening agricultural value chains had a focus on cash crops and export. The shift from food crops (vegetables, fruits, field crops) to cash crops (strawberries, ornamental flowers) also led Gaza to now needing to import certain field crops, vegetables and fruits (with resulting price increases, increasing vulnerability to price hikes and deteriorating local food security).

There is a need to re-focus on food crops (field crops, vegetables, fruits, animal products, honey, fish..) and strengthening of the local food system to ensure less dependency on international markets, lower ecological foot/food print, lower vulnerability to shocks due to climate change and military and other occupational measures that affect local agriculture production and food systems. Greater networking, coordination and exchange with relevant stakeholders is needed to shift the focus away from emergency aid towards the integration of long-term resilient development policies and innovative initiatives, despite the difficult context.

International agendas recognise the role to be played by urban and peri-urban agriculture

The [Milan Urban Food Policy Pact](#), signed currently by over 159 cities, including the Palestinian cities of Bethlehem and Hebron, *‘recognises that family farmers and smallholder food producers, (notably women producers in many countries), in urban, peri-urban and surrounding rural areas, play a key role in feeding cities and their territories, by helping to maintain resilient, equitable, culturally appropriate food systems; and that reorienting food systems and value chains for sustainable diets is a means to reconnect consumers with both rural and urban producers’*.

This recognition of the role agriculture can play in sustainable urbanisation is shared by [agriculture ministers of 65 nations, including Palestine](#), who:

- ‘are aware that as much as three-quarters of the global population will live in cities and

urban agglomerations by 2050;

- emphasise that food security is a prerequisite for political and social stability and crucial for planning and managing the urbanisation process successfully;
- are concerned that the national and international debate on urbanisation is not paying sufficient attention to food security;
- wish to make food security for cities an international priority and underline the role of sustainable agriculture in its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) plays in urbanisation processes; and
- highlight the capability of agriculture in rural, peri-urban and urban areas to supply urban agglomerations not only with food but also with a wide range of public goods and services' (GFFA, 2015).

They conclude that: *'We, the agriculture ministers, are convinced that successful urbanisation needs agriculture! And call for urban food security to be made a priority on the global agenda!'*

This call, next to others, was taken up in the [New Urban Agenda](#), adopted by 169 countries in Quito last October 2016, that will guide implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals for the coming years. In the New Urban Agenda, food security and nutrition are now indeed placed at the centre of urban and territorial sustainability. The New Urban Agenda emphasises the need to 'strengthen food system planning' and recognises that dependence on distant sources of food and other resources can create sustainability challenges and vulnerabilities to supply disruptions. The Agenda includes a commitment to: *'Support urban agriculture and farming, as well as responsible, local, and sustainable consumption and production, and social interactions, through enabling accessible networks of local markets and commerce as an option to contribute to sustainability and food security'*.

The Gaza Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform (GUPAP)

The Gaza Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform- GUPAP, launched in 2013, consists of a multi-stakeholder, interactive and participatory forum that brings together all key actors involved in the development of a resilient Palestinian agricultural sector in the Gaza Strip. The GUPAP's vision is aligned with a broader vision of supporting a more resilient agricultural sector that seeks to contribute to Gaza being more food secure, less dependent and vulnerable, and with its population having improved access to sustainable jobs and income, improved livelihoods and a safer environment. For information about GUPAP's BoD members please see <http://gupap.org/en/gaza-urban-peri-urban-agriculture-platform-members> , and for GUPAP's Founding Committee please see <http://gupap.org/en/gupap-founding-committee> .

The GUPAP facilitates the coordination, networking and organisation of urban agriculture actors (for improving agricultural production, joint processing and marketing, for building consumer trust and for better service provision) and of policy and institutional actors (to work on a more enabling framework for the urban agriculture sector as well as improved access to productive resources). GUPAP is currently made up of about 80 members, including **national and local government institutions** (amongst others the Ministry of Agriculture-MoA, the Palestinian Water Authority and the Environmental Quality Authority, the Ministry of National Economy-MoNE and the Ministry of Local Government, municipalities and the Palestinian Institute for

Standards); **Non-Governmental Civil Institutions** (including a.o. the Women's Affairs Centre, the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, PARC, MAAN , ACAD and the Palestinian Farmers Union), the **Private Sector** (including a.o. the Palestinian Trade centre, Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Food Industry), **Research and Educational Institutions** (represented by local universities contribute to conduct research on agriculture, food processing and quality inspection by laboratories); **Agricultural Value Chain Platforms** where date and dairy beneficiary producers and other agricultural value chain actors collaborate together to increase and improve local production and processing and **Agricultural Micro-Finance Institutions** (like the Faten lending institution, Palestinian Development Fund, Cooperative Society for Saving and Lending and Reef Finance Company, amongst others). A full list of GUPAP members can be found in Annex 1.

Over the past years, GUPAP has been effective in identifying general policy gaps that affect the development of the Gaza agricultural sector. By building institutional capacity and collaboration among GUPAP members this resulted in the design and adaptation of 5 policies relating to local market-oriented urban and peri-urban agriculture development, including MoNE assessment of protection of national products, dates and dairy products & investigation on tariffs for imported foreign dairy products and quota placement on imported powder milk, the activation of the Dates Sector Development Committee (Red Palm Weevil Cluster), an advocacy campaign on women agricultural rights, and the reactivation of the Consumer Protection Association and launching of a Buy-local campaign.

GUPAP facilitated the development of a new three-year strategic framework for the **Consumer Protection Association** in coordination with the MoNE and other related actors. The review of food safety standards and guidelines, as well as their enforcement, is a crucial part of this plan. Coordination among key actors concerning the development of the palm date sector (fight against Red Palm Weevil and dates processing) by GUPAP and safety/ quality control at farm level led to the establishment of a **new action plan by the Dates Sector Development Committee (Red Palm Weevil Cluster)**, represented by MoA, Oxfam, FAO, ICRC, PNGO, Chamber of Commerce and other actors. The project contributed to controlling the RPW by training programs and co-funding of 354 pheromone traps.

GUPAP has enabled the **participation of women and representatives of small scale producers** of both value chains through value chain platforms and GUPAP meetings, and facilitated a series of workshops with women rights activists and civil society actors to analyse gaps in Palestinian labour law. As a result, the Women's Affairs Centre (WAC) has launched a lobby and advocacy campaign to enhance economic rights for women labourers working in the agriculture sector.

GUPAP also contributed to a **buy-local campaign** jointly with the Oxfam Danida project to both reinforce and build the economic literacy principle of buying local in Gaza and raising the awareness of the consumers about local products, in particular, dairy and dates local products.

Furthermore, GUPAP has worked with both governmental and non-governmental institutions to internalise the concepts of market oriented urban farming within the strategies and function of

the national institutions. It was successful to integrate this concept within the 2016-2018 strategy of MoNE. Similarly these concepts as well as the project's participatory extension approaches have been integrated in the MoA strategy. GUPAP facilitated participation of value chain actors, including small scale producers and private sector, to provide input into these strategies.

From 2013-2017, GUPAP was hosted by Oxfam and PNGO. It was supported in its work by both Oxfam Italy as well as the RUAF Foundation-Global partnership on Sustainable Urban Agriculture and City Region Food Systems (www.ruaf.org).

GUPAP Work plan 2018-2021

In 2017, GUPAP was established as an independent Palestinian NGO with its own legal status. In the coming years, GUPAP will adopt the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and promote different actions for promoting local food production by:

1. **Promoting and strengthening urban and peri-urban food production** and processing based on sustainable approaches and integrate urban and peri-urban agriculture into agriculture and food policies and city development and resilience plans.
2. **Seeking coherence between the city and nearby rural food production**, processing and distribution, focussing on smallholder producers and family farmers, paying particular attention to empowering women and youth.
3. **Applying an ecosystem approach to guide holistic and integrated land use planning and management** in collaboration with both urban and rural authorities and other natural resource managers by combining landscape features, for example with risk-minimizing strategies to enhance opportunities for agro-ecological production, conservation of biodiversity and farmland, climate change adaptation, tourism, leisure and other ecosystem services.
4. **Protecting and enabling secure access and tenure to land** for sustainable food production in urban and peri-urban areas, including land for community gardeners and smallholder producers, for example through land banks or community land trusts; provide access to municipal land for local agricultural production and promote integration with land use and city development plans and programmes.
5. **Helping to provide services to food producers in and around cities**, including technical training and financial assistance (credit, technology, food safety, market access, etc.) to build a multigenerational and economically viable food system with inputs such as compost from food waste, grey water from post-consumer use, and energy from waste etc. while ensuring that these do not compete with human consumption.
6. **Supporting short food chains**, producer organisations, producer-to-consumer networks and platforms, and other market systems that integrate the social and economic infrastructure of urban food system that links urban and rural areas. This could include civil society-led social and solidarity economy initiatives and alternative market systems.
7. **Improving (waste) water management and reuse** in agriculture and food production through policies and programmes using participatory approaches.

GUPAP will also adopt the Milan Pact Monitoring Framework that is currently under development.

GUPAP has defined the following goals and activities for the coming 3 years (2018-2020):

Goal (1): Consolidate the functioning of GUPAP

The goal is to consolidate the functioning of GUPAP as an independent NGO, maintaining sustained participation of its wide institutional member platform. Related strategic actions will include:

- 1.1 Continue to facilitate the efficient and effective functioning of the platform, information exchange and joint policy lobbying and advocacy activities.
- 1.2 Expand membership to new urban producer groups and value chains (e.g. vegetables, fodder producers).
- 1.3 Develop a new 3 year joint action plan with all GUPAP members, with institutional commitment for its implementation.
- 1.4 Regularly monitor GUPAP functioning, activities, results and impacts in order to improve performance.

Goal (2): Influence local and national (and where relevant regional and international) agriculture, food security, economic, local governance and other policies that bear on the development of sustainable and resilient urban agriculture in the Gaza Strip.

The GUPAP seeks in the coming period to enhance the understanding of the policy environment, legal, regulatory and planning framework relevant to urban and peri-urban agriculture in the Gaza Strip. This work will complement the past work done on policy review and revision. It will continue to work on MoA and MoNE policies around agriculture, consumer protection and food safety. A key objective will also be the development of a Palestinian urban agricultural policy (learning from similar national policies in other countries like Sri Lanka and Kenya) and corresponding implementation programme. To do so, continuing awareness raising and capacity building of involved stakeholders is key. Related strategic actions include:

- 2.1 To continue to review and influence policies of the MOA and MoNE in so far they bear on sustainable and resilient urban agriculture development.
- 2.2 Promote and support the development of a national Palestinian urban agriculture policy and programme.
- 2.3 Enhance awareness of decision makers and technical staff on the importance of urban agriculture and the need for building a favourable policy and regulatory framework.
- 2.4 Support local municipalities (in Gaza and the West Bank) to adopt the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and exchange experiences in its implementation.
- 2.5 Support local monitoring of the Milan Pact, using the framework currently being developed by Pact secretariat, FAO and RUAF.
- 2.6 Share experience and learning with other regional and international platforms working on similar activities.
- 2.7 Sharing GUPAP experiences on international platforms and events.

GUPAP will continue to apply a participatory process (as done in the past years) to review the strategic plans, regulations and policies, to raise awareness and to advocate for policy revision, support formulation of revised policies, their institutionalisation, implementation and monitoring.

Goal (3) Consolidate the establishment of an on-line information resources centre on urban agriculture to facilitate broad user access to information from the Gaza Strip and other (Arab speaking) countries.

Currently, information on urban agriculture in Arabic language is fragmented, often out-of-date and dispersed among the many organisations working in this field. The importance of consolidating the established information and knowledge resources centre on urban agriculture in the Gaza Strip lies in the fact that it will bring together available information in one place and make such information publicly accessible. This will be done in an online resource centre, the latter including a unified, national, and interactive database published on the GUPAP website. This database will be linked to international database, like the Urban Food Action Platform under development by FAO and international city networks (see <http://www.fao.org/urban-food-actions/areas-of-work/governance-and-planning/en/>).

The above will facilitate improved access to information to a wide group of involved stakeholders (for example policy and strategy documents are not easily located nor accessible), increase efficiency of policy and project implementation (having needed information quickly available in one location) and accelerate local innovation and development (building on experiences and learnings already documented in local and international information materials). In addition, the collected information and resources will be made available to research, education and training organisations. Specific attention will be paid also in making available for urban producers and other market chain actors for agricultural production and value chain development and innovation.

Under this goal, the following specific strategic actions are pursued:

- 3.1 Developing an interactive and participatory website and database on urban and peri-urban agriculture in the Gaza Strip.
- 3.2 Collect and update existing information and develop new information materials on urban agriculture.

Goal (4) Facilitate and strengthen institutional capacities and innovation in urban and peri-urban agriculture.

Following its past working approaches, the GUPAP will continue training needs assessment and capacity building for all its members and other involved stakeholders. Adult learning and learning by doing approaches (PLAR) will be applied in order to optimally benefit from local experiences, knowledge and resources. Also to ensure demand based and responsive training fitted to the local context. Capacity building will be focussed on strengthening the skills of the GUPAP members in urban agriculture, policy review and revision as well as strengthening the skills of agricultural institutions and organisations to adopt participatory development approaches and innovative practices of urban agriculture. The main strategic actions for this goal are to:

- 4.1 Increase capacities of the GUPAP members to enhance their effective and efficient engagement in GUPAP activities.
- 4.2 Provide training to urban and peri-urban agriculture farmers for improved production and marketing practices.
- 4.3 Facilitate links between GUPAP members and donor agencies for the implementation of urban agriculture projects (including for example school and home gardens, low space production systems, vegetable processing etcetera).
- 4.4 **Establish an Intermediate (Co)Funding mechanism for Urban Agriculture innovation in Gaza:**

In response to increasing needs and recognition for urban agriculture, requests to co-finance local urban agriculture projects (often presented by NGO's and local urban farmer groups in coordination with supporting local government departments) or to assist in the identification of donor and financial organisations that are willing to fund urban agriculture projects or programmes have been multiplied in the past years. However for many donor and financial organisations such urban agriculture projects don't fit well in their actual grant programmes (often rural/agriculture or urban/other sectors) or the size of the projects is too big or too small to be funded. Also, urban farmer groups and businesses often lack the expertise to formulate proposer project proposals, business plans and funding applications. In response to these identified needs and demands, GUPAP will establish an **Intermediate (Co)Funding mechanism; Gaza Urban Agriculture Innovation Fund (GUAIF)**. GUPAP will act as the secretariat and coordination of such an Intermediate Funding Mechanism that will take charge of managing the process of project assessment, results monitoring; the co-funding of local multi-stakeholder innovative initiatives on urban agriculture and the realisation of activities that will lead to increased local financing urban agriculture.

Donor agencies may support the fund with any amount of funding and may target their funding to specific innovative projects (e.g school and top roof gardens, local youth businesses stc...). Maximum 10% of the contributions will go to GUPAP management of the fund. The other 90% will directly benefit the projects. **For more information on the fund please see Annex 1 below.**

The aforementioned goals and strategic actions form the basis for further operational planning under which the GUPAP will develop and implement its various programmes, activities and initiatives. These will be implemented in close and strong cooperation between different GUPAP members and other involved stakeholders (see attached list of GUPAP members), a transparent call and selection process for the planned activities will be opened. The GUPAP will be supported by the international RUAF Foundation with over 15 years of experience in urban and peri-urban agriculture. It will also call on other (national and international) expertise where needed.

Budget 2018-2020

Goal	Budget 2018-2020 USD (3 yrs)
Goal (1): Consolidate the functioning of GUPAP -Including staff costs 1 GUPAP coordinator and 1 support staff , basic office costs (60,000 USD/yr) -2 Annual GUPAP meetings (2,000/meeting) Total 64,000 USD/yr	192,000
Goal (2): Influence local and national agriculture, and other policies that bear on the development of sustainable and resilient urban agriculture in the Gaza Strip -Policy review and advocacy (2 contracts with GUPAP members @10,000 USD per contract/yr) -2 policy lobbying/advocacy events/yr (USD 1250 each) -local and regional exchange: 7,500 yr (incl travel) -Policy monitoring (in the context of the Milan Pact) (1 contract with GUPAP members @10,000 USD/yr) Total USD 40,000/yr	120,000
Goal (3) Consolidate the establishment of an on-line information resources centre on urban agriculture -Website and data base development and management (6,000 USD/yr) -Collection and collation of information (2 contracts with GUPAP members @10,000 USD per contract/yr) Total 28,000/yr	78,000
Goal (4) Facilitate and strengthen institutional capacities and innovation in urban and peri-urban agriculture. -Capacity building GUPAP platform (USD 6,000/yr) -Training urban and peri-urban producers (USD 10,000/yr) -Facilitation and formulation pilot project proposal (USD 4,000/yr) - Establish Gaza Urban Agriculture Innovation Fund (GUAIF) as an Intermediate (Co)Funding mechanism that will facilitate 5 development and PLA research grants yearly (USD 100,000) Total USD 120,000/yr	360,000
Contracting national and international advice Total USD 20,000/yr	60,000
Total 3 yr budget	810,000 USD

GUPAP is looking for collaborative funding from a group of donors or individual donor funding for specific activities. We can prepare specific project proposals when required.

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Annex 1 : The Gaza Urban Agriculture Innovation Fund (GUAIF)

1. Justification

In response to increasing needs and recognition for urban agriculture, requests to co-finance local urban agriculture projects (often presented by NGO's and local urban farmer groups in coordination with supporting local government departments) or to assist in the identification of donor and financial organisations that are willing to fund urban agriculture projects or programmes have been multiplied in the past years. However for many donor and financial organisations such urban agriculture projects don't fit well in their actual grant programmes (often rural/agriculture or urban/other sectors) or the size of the projects is too big or too small to be funded. Also, urban farmer groups and businesses often lack the expertise to formulate proposer project proposals, business plans and funding applications. In response to these identified needs and demands, GUPAP will establish an Intermediate (Co)Funding mechanism; The Gaza Urban Agriculture Innovation Fund (GUAIF). GUPAP will act as the secretariat and coordination of such an Intermediate Funding Mechanism that will take charge of managing the process of project assessment, results monitoring; the co-funding of local multi-stakeholder initiatives on urban agriculture and the realisation of activities that will lead to increased local financing urban agriculture.

Donor agencies may support the fund with any amount of funding and may target their funding to specific projects (e.g school, home & top roof gardens, local youth businesses etc...). Maximum 10% of the contributions will go to GUPAP management of the fund. The other 90% will directly benefit the projects.

2. Working modality:

The Gaza Urban Agriculture Innovation Fund (GUAIF) will use following two modalities:

1. Provide **(complementary) grants to small UA food security oriented and innovative projects** implemented by local CBOs/NGOs, working together with other stakeholders in urban agriculture (research institutes, local governments, private enterprises). Projects should include urban agriculture initiatives undertaken by urban poor and marginalized households, organisations supporting them, mainly focusing at self-provisioning, improving diets and selling of small surpluses (home gardens, low-space/no space gardens, edible rooftops, community gardens, school and top roof gardens with community outreach, gardens at clinics and community centres, etcetera). The grant component will be relatively high, but will complement funding supplied by project partners. In this way the formulation of and local support to these type of urban agriculture projects is encouraged.

Projects should benefit a minimum of 50 households/beneficiaries. Grants provided will have a maximum amount of USD 20.000/project; Maximum 80% of the total project costs will be funded; 20% funding need to come from local contributions (from the beneficiaries, NGOs supporting them or local government support).

2. Provide **technical advice and support (grants) to local NGO/research (PL&A research) and extension agencies to support farmer groups and enterprises that have demonstrated initial success and potential for up-scaling.** By channelling the funding through local NOG, research and extension local capacities for implementation

and support will be enhanced. The local partners will provide technical support in form of market research; business planning; formulation of follow-up and larger scale programmes and getting access to commercial financing to successful groups/enterprises farmer groups/projects that may have been initially funded by GUAIF or that have been supported by other programmes, in order to increase the quality of their projects/business plans and facilitate access to credit/loans. This will increase sustainability, local uptake and potential up-scaling of similar activities.

Each project supported should benefit a minimum of 50 households/beneficiaries. Grants can be provided to a maximum of USD 20,000. An own contribution of minimum 20% of the total costs is required.

2. Requirements to access funding

For each of the 2 funding modalities (and next to the mentioned volumes of financing and own contributions) a set of further general and specific requirements will have to be adhered to before any funding can be granted:

a. Recipient organisation; own contribution or match funding

The recipient organisation should have a legal status, a bank-account and be a not-for-profit private or farmer organisation. The implementing organisations should have demonstrated (technical) capacity to implement the project, prove that they are financially sound and be committed to jointly make the required local contributions (maximum 50% in-kind; the other 50% of match funding needs to be cash). Co-financing from other organisations is beneficial.

The organisation applying for the supports must be the same organisation that will receive the funding and be responsible for financial management and reporting. Organisations can only be awarded one project every 3 years.

Financial support will not be awarded to:

- Individuals and profit-making organisations
- Local authorities directly. However local authorities can be a partner in and provide support to a GUAIF project
- Organisations that are in poor financial/administrative health

b. Complete proposal

Proposals should answer all information categories outlined in the application forms to be used (see below annex 2 the full application form). Incomplete proposals will be rejected right away.

c. Objectives and priorities

The project should seek to meet the aims of the GUAIF and make a contribution to GUPAP vision on urban poverty reduction and employment creation, urban food security, improved urban environmental management, and community adaptation to climate change. The types of projects that can be submitted are outlined above. The projects must also identify clear project outcomes that will be achieved during the lifetime of the project. These outcomes should be SMART (specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based) and need to include information on dates and numbers, as well as what will happen and who will benefit.

d. Participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships

Projects need to target groups of minimum 50 beneficiaries. Preferred beneficiaries are urban poor and disadvantaged groups like unemployed youth, women heading households, farmer woman etcetera.

Projects should demonstrate that:

- Beneficiaries are consulted and involved in all stages of the project (from project development, to implementation and monitoring)
- The project benefits urban poor and vulnerable groups and responds to a clearly identified need
- The project builds on and forges good and effective partnerships, multi-stakeholder involvement and joint learning
- The project fits in other local or national strategies

e. Gender, environmental sustainable agriculture and sustainability

Preference will be given to projects that are gender sensible; promote environmentally sound agricultural practices and have a high probability of success and low level of risk; are able to continue beyond the life of GUAIF funding, have a high replication potential and high visibility. Projects should include a comprehensive sustainability or exit strategy.

f. The duration of the projects preferably should not exceed:

- 1.5 years for the subsistence and food security projects
- 2 years for the start-up commercial projects/enterprises
- 1.5 years for the technical support grants

g. **Monitoring of the results** of the project should be included in the project design.

h. Eligible and non-eligible costs

Eligible project costs include:

- **Capital costs** (construction or leasing of buildings and land; equipment¹; infrastructure refurbishment; small means of transport –eg. a tricycle for transporting produce; no cars will be funded), and
- **Revenue** (salaries and associated costs directly related to project implementation; project related management, administration and running costs; training; promotional costs of advertising and publicity; maintenance costs for equipment and transport; professional fees; travel and subsistence if of mayor and added value for the project and financial costs such as banking, audit and accountancy costs).

Funding cannot be provided for:

- Projects that fall outside the aim and type of projects that are outlined above
- Staff time to develop and write the application
- Costs incurred or expenditure committed before GUAIF financing support was offered
- Core and running costs for an existing project

¹ Any application for capital costs involving land and buildings must be accompanied by proof of freehold or leasehold ownership of the land and buildings. The purpose for which the capital assets are being used during the lifetime of the project may not be changed without written permission from the GUAIF.

- Project components that are already or will in future be covered by other financing sources
- Existing loan repayments.

3. Application and assessment process

once a year a call for applications will be launched. The following number of projects that will be financed will depend on the availability of funding.

A two-stage and open application process will be applied:

- First stage application: an open application process. Applications will be assessed on the basis of the criteria outlined above. Applications will be directly approved, approved under conditions or not-approved.
- Second stage application: potentially strong projects that are approved under conditions are invited to submit a new and improved application.

All applications should be made using the forms that are provided by email/mail on request.. Forms should be completed and, together with other requested documents (see the checklist provided) emailed to the GUAIF.

First stage application

Applicants will receive a confirmation of receipt within two week of receipt. Each application will be assigned a unique reference number that should be used in future communications on the application and project.

GUPAP will set up a team of qualified assessment officers that are independent and have no links with the organisations putting forward a project proposal. Depending on the nature of the project, an GUAIF assessment officer with expertise in that type of projects will be assigned to the application and assess and score each application against the assessment criteria. External advice on the organisation and local situation may be called for.

All applications and scores are then compared by the assessment team and a selection of applications to be funded is made. Decisions will be made within 4 weeks after the deadline for receiving applications.

Outcomes of the first stage application may be one of the following:

- Applicants are informed of the approval of the application.
- Applicants will be given the opportunity to improve their application if projects seem strong and potentially successful, but require some (relatively small) adjustments.
- The application will be rejected as ineligible. An improved application may be submitted in a next round.

Second-stage applications

Applications that are conditionally approved (e.g. adaptations to be made in the proposal or budget, further clarifications needed) will get a one-month time period to adjust and resubmit their proposal. A formal approval of the project will be postponed until such conditions have been met.

Once an application is successful, and additional conditions have been met (for example confirmation of match funding), a formal contract including standard terms and conditions of financial support will be elaborated and signed.

If the application is unsuccessful, the applicant may decide to resubmit an amended application, in the next GUAIF call for applications.

Details on the type of projects that have been supported will be made public on the GUPAP website.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Peer-reviewed assessment

Assessment of the first round of projects to be funded under modality 1 and 3 will be done in an assessment meeting to be organised the first year. This will ensure that each assessment officer has good and complete understanding of assessment criteria; and enhance homogeneity in applying the criteria. Each round, a random sample of approved projects will be assessed before approval by a second assessment officer to ensure quality and completion of criteria.

Monitoring and evaluation visits

Three projects per year will be selected for a technical monitoring visit to check on implementation and results. During these visits and where needed, (technical) advice to project implementation will be provided. A report on each monitoring visit will be made, highlighting lessons learned and recommendations for improvement. Follow-up will be given to check if improvements have been put in place within 3 months after the monitoring visit. Failure to do so may result in reduction or termination of funding.

External audits

Similarly three projects per year will be selected for a local external audit control. Audit reports will include –where relevant- a set of recommendations to improve financial administration and management of the project. Three months after the audit, implementation of these recommendations will be evaluated. If recommendations have not been put in place, funding may be terminated.

A global audit at the level of the GUAIF will be implemented each year.

Corrective measures; Sanctions

If defects are identified in the functioning of one of projects and informal communications have not led to adequate changes, the GUAIF officer will write a formal letter indicating the deficiencies that have been found and the corrective measures that are needed and the suggested time frame to implement such measures. No new transfers of funds will be made to such a partner until these measures have been implemented satisfactorily. If the problems persist, the GUAIF officer may decide, to end this relationship and repayment of the outstanding balance. Contracts at all levels will include conditions that allow the measures mentioned above.

5. Joint learning, information management and reporting

A specific section of the GUPAP webpage will be developed, featuring (a) general information on the GUAIF; (b) funding modalities, criteria, application procedures, formats and results, and (c) information and reports on all funded projects. Also a set of hard-copy communication materials will be developed covering general information on the GUAIF and the application process/formats.

Important findings and lessons learned during the monitoring visits will be shared with all project teams to enhance joint sharing and learning during project implementation.

Four systematisation reports will be developed, 1 report on each funding modality; each featuring the type of projects supported; results achieved and lessons learned.

Each year a technical progress and financial report will be elaborated and submitted to the donor agencies.

6. Financial management and administration

GUAIF has sound procedures in place for:

- Contracting out of services and purchase of goods;
- Staff time monitoring. Professionals as well as support staff keep detailed daily records of their time expenditures related to different categories of activities. These time sheets are used as basis for invoices.
- Expense claims and recording of general and project related costs;
- Financial closing of projects and programmes;
- Treasury and debtor/creditor management;
- Annual audits that are carried out for the approval of the yearly accounts of the GUAIF.

Funds for each of the projects are transferred by the GUAIF to each of the project applicants in the following way:

- upon signing of contract: 40%
- upon delivery of (drafts of) certain specified products or services: 40%
- upon delivery of final products/reports and approval of expenditure statements: the balance.

In the contracts, clear rules for subcontracting and procurement of equipment etc. will be established to enhance transparency. Technical and financial reports have to be signed by the legal representative of the project applicant organization.

The financial reporting should include:

- Statement of expenditures for each of the main budget lines, with brief explanation of the main expenditures done under each budget line in the reporting period
- Explanation of differences between annual budget and expenditures (overspending and substantial under spending)
- Shifts between cost items within one main budget line can be made by the project partner without authorization, but have to be explained in the annual report; Shifts between main budget lines need the authorization of the GUAIF coordinator before expenditures can be made and the argumentation provided is included in the annual report.

Annex 2 : Full application form (to be completed)

Please fill out the required fields.

Project partners

Applying Organisation:

Additional project partner(s) and their role in the project:

General project information

Title:

Subtitle:

Location:

City/Village:

Area :

Governorate:

Category:

1. Subsistence and food security projects
2. Small scale commercial projects
3. Agricultural and environmental youth enterprises
4. Urban agriculture and climate change adaptation

Project proposal. The proposal should include:

Cover Page and Contents Page

- **Executive Summary:** what is this proposal about
- **Backgrounds and Justification:**
- **Objectives:** what we hope to achieve: expected results
- **Strategies/Activities:** how are you going to realise the objectives (per objective)
- **Work plan:** who will do what and when; the role/inputs/deliverables per partner / per year

- **Outputs and Results, Beneficiaries** (What, when, where, for whom); **Milestones** (key moments in the project process when intermediate results will be delivered and key decisions on next steps will be made)
- **Gender** (key issues, gender mainstreaming strategies)
- **Project management** (Partners and their expertise/experience, project organisation, decision making structures, administrative mechanisms, transparency)
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** (How the progress and results will be monitored and evaluated; accountability)
- **Risks / Contingency plans** (what will be done if certain assumptions fail)
- **Sustainability and replicability of project results** (how will continuity of results be secured after project termination; dissemination strategies; probability of replication)
- **Budget** (Summary plus detailed budget per year)

Cover page (1 page)

The cover page should indicate:

- Title of the project
- Name, postal address, tel/fax of the applying organisation (the institution that will coordinate and administer the GUAIF contribution to the project)
- Name of the person responsible for the technical and administrative coordination of the project and his/her email address and telephone number
- Names and postal addresses of participating organisations
- Total budget of the project (in national currency and USD)
- Contribution requested from GUAIF (in national currency and USD)
- Total own contribution of the participating organisations (in national currency and USD)
- Contributions from third parties (in national currency and USD)
- Estimated duration of the project (in national currency and USD)

2. Summary (in English) (1 page)

In the summary you briefly describe the key problem(s) attended by this project and the main results expected from this project as well as the activities through which one intends to realise these results.

3. Backgrounds and Justification (max 2 pages)

In this section you describe why this project is needed:

- a. What are the problems or potentials that will be attended by this project?
- b. Why it is important to work on these issues; and what exactly do you expect to learn from it?
- c. Who are the intended beneficiaries (type, number and location) of the pilot project and how have they participated in the formulation of the proposal?
- d. What is the context in which this project is undertaken; to what other activities (already implemented or to be implemented) the project is related?

4. Objectives / expected results (max 1 page)

This section describes what you hope to achieve:

- a. What are the results expected of this project?
- b. How will the results of the project be used, for what purpose and by whom?
- c. What are the factors that may influence the success of this project negatively (e.g. project assumptions that might fail)? What do you plan to do in each of these cases (contingency plans)?
- d. What will be done to secure that the project results are maintained after the termination of the project?

e. What possibilities do exist to replicate the project at a larger scale?

5. *Strategies / Activities* (max 3 pages)

Here you will describe through which activities you intend to realise the objectives and explain how the intended beneficiaries will participate in the implementation and evaluation of the project. This section should also make clear that a gender positive working methodology and what will be done to secure active participation of women. Please add a time table.

6. *Participating organisations* (max 2 pages)

In this section the participating organisations will be described:

- a. What will be their contributions to the project (refer to the activities mentioned above and indicate their financial and in kind contributions)
- b. List the names of the personnel of each organisation that will be coordinating the contributions of their organisation in carrying out the project and describe their expertise of relevance for this project

7. *Project coordination and administration*

In this section you describe:

- a. How the project will be coordinated and decisions will be taken
- b. How the project expenditures and the contributions by all project partners will be administered

8. *Project monitoring and evaluation*

In this section you explain:

- a. how you plan to monitor and evaluate the progress and results of the project and how the various project partners and beneficiaries will participate in this process.
- b. How you will ensure that optimal use is made of the lessons learned in this project

9. *Budget*

In this section you present the budget of the pilot project, specifying the own contributions of the participating organisations, the contribution requested from GUAIF and the contribution expected from third parties. An explanatory note is required for each budget item included in the budget, explaining what exactly is covered under this heading and how you arrive at the estimated amount per budget item.