



**Strengthening the
resilience and livelihoods
of Gazan fishing
communities by promoting
the establishment of a
marine cage farming social
business**



PROJECT CODE
OSRO/GAZ/703/ITA



RESOURCE PARTNER
Republic of Italy

CONTRIBUTION
USD 2 417 459



IMPLEMENTATION
04/10/2017–02/05/2023



TARGET AREA
West Bank and Gaza Strip



BENEFICIARIES
3 600 households (20 000 people)



KEY PARTNERS
Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of
Labour, Fishery Syndicate Union and
Al-Tawfiq Cooperative Society for
Fish



Objective

To strengthen the resilience and livelihoods of Gazan fishing communities by establishing marine aquaculture as a new subsector within the Gazan fishing sector.

Activities implemented

- Installed a marine cage farm in the Gaza Strip with annual production capacity of 150 tonnes, benefiting 3 600 fishing households, and established a social business as an autonomous enterprise to manage the farm.
- Organized five workshops and awareness sessions for 200 fishing households to introduce the project, clarify roles and responsibilities and protect marine assets.
- Conducted 20 workshops for 140 stakeholders in the fisheries sector to share FAO's experience in marine cage farming and exchange aquaculture knowledge with the participants.
- Organized two dissemination workshops for 300 participants to inform them about the project's outcomes and activities and the role of the social business in improving the quality of the marine cage farm.
- Provided the social business with essential equipment and tools to operate the marine cage farm and supplied it with 158 tonnes of fish feed.
- Installed a comprehensive security system and an accounting software for the social business to enable it to monitor operations and record financial transactions.
- Paved the road connecting the social business' operational office with the Gaza City port.



- Trained six members of the social business' board of directors on the legal framework of the fisheries sector, strategic management, marketing, accounting and procurement.
- Trained four farm operators and one technician in Gaza Strip on diving fundamentals and safety and fish health and operations.
- Implemented an operational oversight plan to provide technical support, mentoring and on-the-job training to the social business' board of directors during the first few months of cage operations.
- Conducted market research to facilitate the integration of the social business into the fish market.
- Reviewed and assessed the existing institutional, regulatory and legislative aquaculture frameworks in the Palestinian Authority.
- Produced a report with a five-year plan, guidelines and service models for the public sector to follow.
- Finalized a report on existing regulations and capacities in November 2022 and another a report on recommended regulations and models of services in March 2023.
- Developed a high-quality illustrated manual to serve as a guide for marine fish farming and undertook a comprehensive revision of the literature on fish stock assessment in the Gaza Strip in collaboration with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.
- Trained 300 members of the Environmental Quality Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of National Economy on the aquaculture sector establishment and public policy formulation.
- Introduced an Excel sheet application to support the social business in managing and monitoring various aspects of its operations, including production planning, inventory management and data collection.
- Assessed the infrastructure and equipment owned by the Department of Fisheries and recommended a list of items to be procured to improve fish health monitoring and management.
- Organized a seven-day training programme for six Department of Fisheries' laboratory personnel, four social business farm operators and two private aquaculture farm laboratory staff on fish disease identification, diagnosis and treatment.
- Supported the social business in identifying a suitable private business partner to assist with the harvest operations and fish marketing.



Results

- Enabled 3 600 fishing households to access the marine cage farm which has an annual production capacity of 150 tonnes.
- Contributed to the success and sustainability of the marine cage farm thanks to the establishment of the social business and capacity development of its staff, and the installation of a robust infrastructure for the farm, which was reinforced to withstand strong currents.
- Contributed to the overall efficiency of the social business' operations, thanks to the distribution of necessary tools and equipment.
- Enhanced the social business' ability to maintain a thriving fish population within the marine cage farm, thanks to the provision of fish feed (158 tonnes).
- Enabled the social business to harvest 52.5 tonnes of gilthead seabream, generating revenues of over ILS 1.5 million (USD 393 831).
- Contributed to the production of higher-quality fish compared to the those produced on land, selling at ILS 32.7/kg (USD 8.6) versus ILS 28.29/kg (USD 7.4) for fish produced in land-based fish farms.
- Facilitated the movement of personnel, equipment and harvested fish between the social business and the Gaza City Port and reduced transportation challenges, thanks to levelling the road connecting both locations.
- Enhanced the marine cage farm management skills of the social business' staff, enabling them to successfully manage the entire production cycle, thanks to capacity-building programmes.
- Raised awareness, built partnerships and ensured the project's alignment with the needs and aspirations of the fishing community in Gaza Strip, thanks to the organization of two dissemination workshops.
- Built a repository of information on various aspects of the aquaculture sector in Gaza Strip through the development of manuals and guidelines and production of reports and studies.
- Led to the discovery of previously unidentified diseases in the fish farms, thanks to a seven-day training on fish disease diagnosis.
- Attracted potential investors to the nascent marine aquaculture sector in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who expressed interest in scaling up the project.

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