



## Press release

The Minister of Finance and Planning, His Excellency Mr Shukry BISHARA, and the Consul General of France in Jerusalem, His Excellency Mr Hervé MAGRO, signed on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016, a financing agreement related to **rural development in the Jordan Valley - Area C**. This substantial support of 5 million euros is financed by the French Development Agency (AFD). The overall objective is to build the resilience of Palestinian communities in Area C. In line with the Palestine Authority strategy on Area C, the assistance will embrace the following activities: upgrading public infrastructures, support to local economic & social development and building capacities of communities and local government units.

This intervention follows a comprehensive and sustainable approach, previously financed by AFD through a pilot project in Area C, in Khirbet Zakariya (Bethlehem District) which was a component of another 5 million euros program.

The Ministry of Local Government, working in conjunction with the Village Councils of the beneficiary villages and the Joint Service Councils will be responsible for implementation of the assistance. The infrastructure component will be implemented by the Municipal Development and Lending Fund through the European Union “Access to essential and public infrastructure” program. This project is considered as a first large scale and tentative of integrated approach in Area C that will be replicated if proved successful.

