

Project: Bread for Syria „Bakery of Grace“

Interim Report

At the request of many friends and supporters, I should like to submit an interim report on the regional bakery in Maaruneh. I have to mention, however, that not everything is going exactly according to our original plan. Donations have arrived more slowly than anticipated and in the meantime the economic and legal frame conditions, the public regulations and requirements have changed again and again. The construction plan had to be readjusted several times. Nevertheless, we are confident that further support will be received and that the anxiously longed for bakery will make a dream come true for those living in dire poverty.

a) Legal aspects:

All required building permits have been obtained. It has not been easy task so far, but thanks to the cooperation of many helping hands and with the grace of God, we have managed to overcome many hurdles. After personal consultation with the Syrian Minister of Domestic Trade in Damascus, we were able to extend the validity of the state license for starting up the bakery by 6 months (until June 19, 2020). Once the building has been completed and the machines have been installed, the application for state subsidized flour can be submitted.



b) Technical aspects of the building project:

Despite some difficulties and delays (weather conditions, official requirements, availability of materials), the construction work is making progress. Thank God, the topping-out has already been reached. Now the walls are being pulled up. According to the architect's current assessment, the shell structure should be completed by the end of February and the interior works by mid-April, so that the machines can then be installed.



c) Cost situation:

So far, a donation amount of roughly € 280,000 has been raised. According to the original calculations, this should have covered the building costs, but due to some unforeseen additional costs (for example an additionally required retaining wall at a property boundary,

exchange rate fluctuations, etc.), the building will initially be left in a rough condition for cost reasons and the detailed interior work will only gradually be completed later on.

For the bakery production line worth € 170,000, a deposit of \$ 15,000 (approximately € 13,700) was made with the Lebanese supplier in order to secure the availability of the equipment. In addition to the production line, water filters including tanks, a ventilation system, two generators, a lift, two mixers and accessories are required. These devices were originally included in the order from Lebanon. However, they are currently also available in Syria and can be purchased at an even better price separately than as a package. Therefore, comparative offers are currently being obtained in order to find the best option. A total of € 50,000 has to be calculated for these cost items.



In addition, a current transformer is required, for which approximately € 10,000 will be needed. The installation of electricity lines by the government to secure permanent power supply for the bakery and the surrounding houses is likely to still take a few years.

Therefore, active support and donations are still needed for financing the above-mentioned machines, equipment and the transformer.

All final technical details and the respective cost items with the vouchers and invoices will be summarized in a final report at a later point of time.

d) Time schedule:

The following issues were discussed at a recent gathering of representatives of the local project coordination team in Damascus:

- Completion of the shell structure: by the end of February
- Starting in February: Selection of qualified staff for production, administration and sales; Preparation of employment contracts and, as far as required, preliminary training of staff
- Starting in February: Application for the supply of water and electricity for the bakery. With regard to electricity, a separate transformer will be required. In the currently troubled economic situation, the provision of a transformer by the state could take up to two years.



- A bakery logo was designed and coordinated by the planning team.
Preparation of a graphic design for the production of a logo to be mounted above the bakery entrance and for being printed on the paper bags to be used at the bakery's sales counter: February / March
- Interior works: by mid-April
- Delivery and installation of machines and devices: April / May
- Submission of an application for state subsidy of flour and energy: May
The production will initially provide bread for around 2000 people and will only gradually be expanded to supply other villages as needed. We want to point out here that the regional bakery will not displace any existing bakeries in the area.
- Opening of the bakery: The licence will expire on June 19 (which happens to coincide with the Feast of the Sacred Heart); Ceremonial inauguration and commissioning ahead of licence expiry, probably in late May or early June on a date yet to be determined.

We can see that an amount of around € 220,000 is still needed and we ask for your continued help and commitment.

At this point we should like to express our deep gratitude, - for all the donations received so far, for all your prayers, for your project advocacy, for your ideas and advice, for spreading the word. The wonderful way in which the donations have been received so far shows us that God is at work here, that he has steered help towards us whenever it was needed most urgently in order to carry on the project. Not to forget the support of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who sends us helping hands whenever hurdles are encountered and who raises us up again and again. We thus continue to trust in God's blessing and in the sustained help of the Virgin Mary for this "Bakery of Grace".

Connected with you in prayer,

Fr. Hanna Ghoneim



Information status: February 6, 2020