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Executive Summary

Missional Community Agricultural Development Project, Beqaa Valley, Lebanon

Lebanon is now suffering from a triple crisis. Amidst economic collapse due to months of political turmoil and further collapse caused by the COVID lockdown, a huge explosion has left millions of Lebanese destitute, alongside the over 1.5 million Syrian refugees that live in their midst.

On August 4th, 2020, a massive explosion rocked Beirut to its core and devastated a people already languishing in despair. Over 5,000 people were injured, over 150 killed, and at least 300,000 displaced (12.37% of the city's population, which is 1 in 8 people) because of this disaster. The blast has now been ranked the 3rd largest explosion in a populated city, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Horizons International, with the support of its global partners, has redoubled its emergency relief work to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of those most affected by this catastrophe, as well as minister to them spiritually in this time of trauma. At the same time, Horizons is aware of the need to move as quickly as possible from short-term emergency relief to long-term development.

In recent years, Horizons has been working toward its vision to establish missional communities throughout Lebanon and the Middle East. An important component of this vision is to provide sustainable sources of support for these communities through income-generating work. These projects will employ many people who are out of work, and also serve as contexts in which to develop local spiritual communities.

This triple crisis has proved to be a catalyst, creating the urgency and opportunity to launch an agricultural project that can transform the Beqaa Valley ministry center into a fully fledged missional community. Established in 2017, Horizons' Beqaa Valley center started reaching out to the refugees in surrounding tent camps through conducting thousands of evangelistic tent visits and hundreds of children's events. By the grace of God, dozens of Muslims have proclaimed faith in Jesus and entered into discipleship relationships with Horizons staff members and partner churches.

Horizons is now planning to launch an agricultural project to strengthen the Beqaa Ministry Center's capacity to serve the spiritual and physical needs of the community, expand its evangelistic reach, provide more opportunities for deep discipleship and mentorship, and to bring sustainability to the ministry. This missional community will foster the physical and spiritual development of the surrounding community by providing gainful work for individuals and a stable food source for the needy.

Rather than relying only on international financial aid to purchase food, the cost of which is heavily impacted by inflation, this project provides long-term solutions to the problems of poverty and economic vulnerability. This missional community will provide an environment in which Lebanese and Syrians can not only develop practical vocational skills, but also foster close relationships with believers in Christ and provide ample opportunities for evangelism and discipleship. It will also equip this community of seekers and believers with the skills and opportunities they need to develop from surviving to thriving — physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

In order to fulfill this vision, a suitable piece of land needs to be purchased in the Beqaa Valley, ideally close to Horizons' current Beqaa ministry center. Horizons staff members are currently searching for an appropriate land parcel, and communicating with international partners to determine the amount of land that can be purchased. The more funding available, the bigger a piece of land can be acquired, and the lower the price per square meter, allowing each dollar given to make an even bigger impact.

Properties currently offered for sale have ranged from \$120,000 for 2,400 square meters (\$50/square meter) to \$264,000 for 22,000 square meters (\$12/square meter). However, in light of the current economic crisis, there will likely be great opportunities to obtain a suitable property for an excellent price.

Our ideal criteria for this parcel are as follows:

1. Size: Between 5-10 acres.
2. Location: Ideally in the area of Qob Elias, but possibly within 5-10 kilometers.
3. Soil: Must contain soil that is suitable for planting.
4. Water: Must have good access to an adequate water supply and good drainage.
5. Access: Must have good street access for vehicles and equipment.
6. Zoning: Must accommodate mixed use, including agricultural, residential, and commercial.

Goal for Agricultural Property Acquisition: \$500,000 USD

Goal for Startup funds for Structures, Equipment and Materials: \$450,000 USD

Total Project Startup Goal: \$950,000 USD

Raised to Date: \$697,435 USD

Remaining Need: \$361,453 USD

We are grateful to God for all He has done since the launch of Horizons' Beqaa Valley Ministry Center since 2017. During this time, the ministry center has matured considerably; it is now locally led and operated, and has developed a positive reputation within the community, having laid inroads for the gospel through personal relationships, evangelistic and discipleship programs, and humanitarian aid. This agricultural development project will enable the Beqaa Valley Center to reach a new level of impact and sustainability, and establish it as a strategic beachhead for the gospel in the region.

Thank you for your consideration!

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