

# CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS OF THE BAKERIES AND MILLS COMMITTEE



The Bakeries and Mills Committees of the Autonomous Authority for Northeast Syria (AANES) manage the public sector mills and bakeries that produce and distribute bread at subsidized prices throughout the region. In Al-Hasakeh, the Bakeries and Mills Committee supervises a public milling and baking system that is still managed through Government of Syria mills and bakeries. In Deir-ez-Zor Governorate, the GoS is not involved in bread production. The Local Authority coordinates wheat distribution through the Agricultural Community Development Corporation (AgDevCo) and contracts with private mills and bakeries to produce and distribute bread. This document captures capacity needs of the bakeries and mills committees as learned from interviews with key stakeholders in the wheat to bread value chain and interviews with the bakeries and mills committee leadership.

## Managing Bread Production in Northeast Syria

Supplying bread in the NES is a challenging task. In Al-Hasakeh, for example, 540 tons of wheat is distributed mills that produce 450 tons of wheat flour per day<sup>1</sup>. Both milling and bakery capacity is reduced through damage and destruction from years of conflict, aging equipment and poor quality fuel that limits efficiency. Production capacity is low and the Bakeries and Mills Committees must establish multiple contracts with small volume public and private mills. In many towns and villages the population fluctuates with displaced persons and through markets where there are many visitors to the town. Capacity to monitor population and bread requirements are limited. The committees often rely on sub-district and village-based 'Kominats' that maintain records on people living within their area. This provides population estimates but does not count other population fluctuations. In Al-Hasakeh, distribution of flour is managed by GoS estimates that have, according to the Bakeries and Mills Committee, declined by 40 percent over the years. In Deir-ez-Zor the Bakeries and Mills Committees make their own estimates and distribute wheat and flour through AgDevCo.

The role of the bakeries and mills committees is to:

- supervise the operations of mills and bakeries,
- determine the quantities of flour for each bakery and distribute the flour to them,
- manage and consider the requests and complaints from bakery owners,
- define the quantities of wheat needed to be processed through mills to meet bakery flour needs, and
- supply mills and bakeries with fuel and fuel subsidies.

## Bakeries and Mills Committee Challenges:

In both Al-Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor, the committees are challenged by a lack of highly trained, skilled staff and inadequate funding to fully carry out their mission. While the Bakeries and Mills Committee in Al-Hasakeh plans to strengthen staff capacity to take over the management of mills

and public bakeries in the governorate, they do not yet have the resources to manage this. In Deir-ez-Zor, there is a consistent need for training and support to build capacity to manage the wheat to bread process more effectively.

The capacity building needs identified with Bakeries and Mills Committee leadership are recorded in the table on page two of this publication. In general there are three broad capacity building needs identified through our review:

1. **Data-driven wheat and flour distribution:** The committees operate on limited data concerning the population, households, displaced persons and visitation to towns and villages. Meeting community bread consumption needs efficiently depends upon sound demographic data and to estimate population and bread needs.
2. **Technical Assistance:** Technical support is required on the efficient management of mills and bakeries, food quality standards and to build digital monitoring systems
3. **Financial Management and Data Management:** Strengthening financial management and data systems support will enable Bakeries and Mills committees to prepare and implement financial plans and use data more effectively to support operations.
4. **Financial resources:** Apart from the planning and management systems, the committees must rehabilitate multiple bakeries and mills and require the financial resources to carry out construction and repairs.



<sup>1</sup> Anonymus. 2020. Wheat Value Chain Assessment: Northeast Syria.



## Bakeries and Mills Committee Capacity Development Needs

Support Needed	Capacity Building Activities Identified	Priority
Planning for Wheat and Flour Distribution	Conducting demographic surveys to determine wheat and flour demand	High
	Developing plans for wheat, flour, and bread distribution	High
	Develop wheat purchase plan based upon sound data and evidence that roll up to a governorate-wide plan	High
	Feasibility study and project management capacity to plan, design, fund and implement mill and bakery rehabilitation and construction projects	High
	Train staff on analyzing and estimating community need	High
	Training in goal setting, setting objective and work plans linked to a realistic budget	Medium
	Support in developing a training plan	Medium
Technical Assistance to Support the Wheat to Bread System	Warehouse and inventory management	Medium
	Build capacity to provide technical services to mills	High
	Strengthen knowledge on quality specifications for wheat and flour milling	Medium
	Management and operations of mills and milling equipment	High
	Management and operations of bakeries and bakery equipment	High
	Specific training for mill operators and operational managers from the Local Authority	Medium
	Food safety standards for mills and bakeries	Medium
	Strengthen capacity for digitization and use of data systems to manage information and statistics	Medium
Training in crisis management and planning for food security during crisis	High	
Quality Control for wheat and flour quality	Self-Authority wants to establish its own laboratories to conduct quality controls for mills and bakeries	Medium
	Train staff in conducting quality control tests on wheat, flour, and bread	Medium
Financial management support	Identify and establish a financial management system for the industry	Low
	Train staff in the management and operations of a new system	Low
	Train finance staff in bookkeeping and accounting skills	Medium
Administrative Support	Build capacity for electronic data collection and management	Medium
	Data entry and management and general computer skills	Low
Other Capacity Needs	Financial resource to rehabilitate and construct mills and bakeries	High
	Access to new information and training to upgrade skills in modern mill and bakery infrastructure, systems, and management	Medium