

# Feeding the World Responsibly While Preserving Our Planet

## About SEKEM

SEKEM Group is a pioneering social enterprise founded in 1977 with a focus on regenerative development through biodynamic and organic agriculture, along with social and cultural initiatives. Named after an Egyptian hieroglyph representing vitality from the sun, SEKEM addresses challenges such as unhealthy diets, food insecurity, climate change, and water scarcity. Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish, the founder, believed in regenerative desert reclamation within a strong community as a solution to Egypt's challenges. SEKEM began in an untouched part of the Egyptian desert, growing into a multifaceted group of companies, NGOs, educational institutions, and a Medical Center. The initiative prioritizes economic, social, human, and ecological value creation for various stakeholders, earning international recognition and awards for its sustainable development model. SEKEM is considered a leading social business globally.

## Organic agriculture is a crucial part of the solution

SEKEM emphasizes the importance of organic agriculture, particularly the biodynamic approach, as a crucial solution to global challenges like food security, climate change, and poverty. Organic agriculture is a holistic system that enhances agro-ecosystem health and **resilience**, emphasizing **biodiversity**, biological cycles, and **soil activity**. SEKEM proved that organic farming contributes to a **long term food security** improving individual farm resilience through natural fertilizers, pest control and the avoidance of genetically modified inputs. SEKEM argues that organic food production is cost-effective when considering externalized costs like water and air pollution, CO2 emissions, and energy consumption.

- **Organic agriculture and climate change**

Organic agriculture, illustrated by the SEKEM model, contributes to climate change mitigation by sequestering more carbon in soil and trees than it emits, making organic farmers' climate positive. SEKEM advocates for organic and biodynamic practices to reduce CO2 emissions and water consumption, emphasizing the role in fostering regenerative agriculture, ecological balance, and farm resilience to reverse climate change.

- **Organic agriculture and water scarcity**

In Egypt, a water-scarce country with an annual per capita water share (560 m<sup>3</sup>) well below the international water poverty line, agriculture consumes 85% of available water, and 40% is lost to evaporation. SEKEM, through using biodynamic methods, has proven to enhance water efficiency. A comparative study by the faculty of Organic Agriculture at Heliopolis University suggests that this model can optimize water consumption by 20% while maintaining yields equivalent to conventional farms.

## Regenerating 40,000 farmers in Egypt until 2025

Jointly with the Egyptian Biodynamic Association (EBDA), SEKEM has initiated a project supporting 40,000 farmers in transitioning to organic and biodynamic farming. Inspired by SEKEM, EBDA introduces the Economy of Love (EoL) certification standard, emphasizing positive impact production, carbon sequestration, biodiversity and social equality. The standard aims to provide benefits such as increased income through whole system carbon credits and microloans supporting the transition. Phases 1 and 2 reaching **5,000 farmers** within one year are completed, phase 3 targets enrolling **40,000 farmers** by 2025. Phase 4, planned for 2028, aims to support the transition of **250,000 farmers**, converting **1.6 million acres** into biodynamic farming, generating 1.5 million tons of CO2. SEKEM's commitment revolves around scaling the building of healthy communities, promoting organic agriculture, and fostering social and cultural development in Egypt through a holistic approach encompassing economy, ecology, culture, and society.