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United Nations Development Programme
Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

OUTCOME EVALUATION

OF THE UNDP/PAPP MID-TERM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK, 2008 - 2011

Final Report
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In Consultation with UNDP/PAPP Steering Committee

Acronyms and abbreviations

APA	Association of Palestinian Authorities
CDI	Capacity Development Initiative
CEC	Central Elections Commission
CPR	Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CSO	Community Service Organization
DEEP	Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme
GES	Gender Equality Strategy
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
INGO	International Governmental Organization
ITU	Information Technology Unit
KFW	Kredititanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau – German Development Bank
LDP	Leadership Development Programme
LPAC	Local Programme Advisory Committee
MAP	Mutual Alliance for Peace
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDLF	Media Development Loan Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFI	Micro finance Institutes
MIS	Management Information System
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoEH	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoL	Ministry of Labour
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MTSF	Mid-Term Strategic Framework
MYF	Multi Year Framework
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PA	Palestinian Authority

oPt	occupied Palestinian territory
PAPP	Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People
PARC	Palestinian Agriculture Relief Committee
PPMU	Planning and Project Management Unit
PNGO	Palestinian Non Governmental Organization's Network
PRDP	Palestinian Reform and Development Plan
PSAT	Policy Strategy Advisory Team
TOKTEN	Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals
TORs	Terms of Reference
ULAI	Union of Local Authorities Israel
UNCT	United Nations Country Team

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Outcome Evaluation underscores UNDP/PAPP's[1] unique role and programme within the UNDP system in the ongoing conflict environment of the occupied Palestinian territory. In this context, UNDP has provided services in its large investments to the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) in infrastructure development and employment generation. Additionally, UNDP's governance portfolio is focused on strengthening the responsiveness of governing institutions. Within the evolving political and institutional context, UNDP is moving towards a more upstream policy role through institutional and capacity building support to the Palestinian Authority while continuing its early recovery support.

The evaluation focuses on two strategic and interrelated outcomes in UNDP's Mid Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) that represent UNDP's comparative advantage. The assessment included a comprehensive desk review, semi-structured one on one and group discussions with UNDP staff in the East Jerusalem, Ramallah and Gaza offices; government officials, donor partners, and visits to West Bank and Gaza. Additionally, field visits in Gaza provided the opportunity to view and discuss three micro finance projects with the CSO project staff and beneficiaries.

Meetings and discussions in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza explored issues related to the efficiency and effectiveness of programme implementation; the validity and relevance of interventions in poverty reduction and improving governance; cross cutting issues; contributions to Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the peace process and lessons learned.

Summary of Findings

UNDP has undertaken an internal change management process to support a programme framework and upstream policy work.   A Policy, Strategy and Advisory Team (PSAT) within UNDP has been established to guide UNDP's strategic interventions. The major objective of the PSAT as outlined in the Terms of Reference is to enhance the agency's strategic capacities "to implement a focused and well-defined programme that is crisis responsive and incorporates relevant cross-cutting issues."[2] The PSAT provides an important mechanism to align UNDP's programme focus with national priorities. Its first meeting was conducted during the evaluation mission. The

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[1] United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People
[2] Draft Policy, Strategy & Advisory Team (PSAT) TORs

strength of this coordination mechanism will ensure that UNDP's comparative advantage under upstream policy support is integrated into its programmes.

The scope of the evaluation focuses on two of the Outcomes in UNDP/PAPP's Mid-Term Strategic Framework, Outcome 2, and Output 5. under the Objective 1 of the Poverty Reduction Portfolio and Outcome 2, Outputs 4, 5 and 6, under Objective 2 under the Governance portfolio

Poverty Reduction – Promote Sustainable Livelihoods

The evaluation examined achievements under a key output in its poverty reduction portfolio "*access to social, economic, public services and public utilities improved.*" UNDP's contributions in restoring access to services and creating short term employment through infrastructure improvements have been enormous and critical in addressing the emergency needs of the oPt population created by the occupation imposed on Palestinian citizens over the last decade. An even stronger response was needed in Gaza at the end of the year, although the lack of access prevented addressing the urgent needs of damaged infrastructure.

Major infrastructure development and employment generation projects funded by KFW[3] have contributed to construction or restoration of hospitals, schools, and water systems. These contributions have been significant in improving access to services and to creating over 700,000 short term employment workdays.

The Land Reclamation and Development Programme created 4,400 permanent employment opportunities and temporary employment for 33,000 farmers in 130 rural locations in West Bank districts. A 20% increase in olive oil production and 15% increase in fruit production in the West Bank resulted from the development and cultivation of 25,000 dunums of land and the construction of 3,000 cisterns for supplementary irrigation with farmers contributing 25% of costs.

Interventions guided by seven selected civil society organizations with agriculture expertise resulted in the establishment of one stop shop approach supported by standardized systems and procurement procedures. Additionally, a Planning and Management Unit (PMU) was established in the Ministry of Agriculture with nine people trained to guide the CSOs' in monitoring compliance with the standardized system. The interventions contributed to both sustainable livelihoods of farmers and increased accountability in the sub-sector. The now institutionalized Land Reclamation and Development Programme, operating under the PMU and the CSOs, provides an exit strategy for UNDP to work at a more strategic level with the Ministry of Agriculture.

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[3] Kredititanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau – the German Development Bank

UNDP has recently supported a comprehensive study to assess land use and suitability for agricultural production using sophisticated Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and applications, and socio-economic assessments. This study is expected to provide the main decision making instrument for policy and decision makers as well as practitioners in strategic agricultural planning. Further, UNDP has provided the support for activating the services and developing the capacity of a Land Research Center to provide free information to the MoA, CSOs, academia and local beneficiaries in the fields of land use and suitability. The programme was financed over the past four years from the Government of Japan, Italy, and IFAD[4].

The Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme, DEEP, is UNDP's flagship programme in addressing sustainable livelihoods and has been recognized as the national path finder for poverty solutions derived from lessons learned from prior development interventions in the West Bank. Today, DEEP is one of UNDP's more strategic interventions in creating social and economic access to the poor through business development services, grants, and microfinance to small and micro enterprises, and is emerging as a major contributor to UNDP's upstream work. The successes of the programme are far reaching in creating synergies among various components of the poverty alleviation portfolio.

DEEP provides micro finance grants to cover beneficiaries' initial project costs and monitoring support. Qualified beneficiaries are selected under standardized criteria which assesses the social and economic capacities of the family system. After six months of successful implementation, beneficiaries are eligible for micro finance loans to expand their projects. Micro Finance Institutes (MFIs) have been established and staffed with experts in traditional and Islamic micro-financing. To date, 2,210 poor entrepreneurs (48% women) out of the targeted 4,000 households unqualified for commercial loans have been given the needed support to develop their own business enterprises by the project. The successes of the programme have strategic implications for expanding MFIs and for promoting their inclusion in the formal national banking system. Further, the adoption of the poverty alleviation criteria developed under the programme provides an excellent tool as part of a national strategy in assessing poverty and extreme poverty conditions in the oPt.

Strengthening Responsive Governing Institutions

There have been major constraints in achieving progress under this output due to instability and weak implementation capacities of government institutions. Despite these challenges, UNDP interventions contributed to strengthening responsive governing institutions at the three output levels:

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[4] International Fund for Agricultural Development, Rome, Italy.

(i)   *Capacities of the executive branch of the Palestinian Authority Strengthened at all levels;*

(ii)   *The practice of legislatures and locally elected bodies to represent the citizens improved, and*

(iii)   *Justice systems and Rule of Law improved*

Under Output 1, further to UNDP's CDI intervention, the government's commitment to building the capacities of the executive branch and all levels of government has been realized by its adoption of a national Capacity Development Initiative for the oPt's top leaders and a Capacity Leadership Development Programme for senior civil servants.

The Introduction to Participatory Planning Programme resulted in the oPt's first Strategic Development Plan at local level in the Jenin Governorate. The participatory process involved donors, central and local governments and civil society and included constituents representing the issues of women, youth and the disabled.

UNDP's assistance in drafting a property tax law for needed revenues at local level has been applauded by the UNCT.[5] Assistance has also been provided in compiling a data base on municipal assets. Policies and standardized procedures manual have been developed for local government units. A Unified Accounting and Budget System for local government, supported by UNDP has been endorsed by the Ministry of Local Government.

Under Output 2, *the practice of legislatures and elected bodies,* UNDP's support to the Central Elections Commission (CEC) facilitated a fair and transparent election process in municipalities. Further, UNDP's support for a consensus building strategy with political parties has resulted in establishing a partnership with the Carter Center and a national counterpart to promote peace building at all levels.

Under Output 3, *Justice Systems and the Rule of Law improved*, UNDP has emphasized strengthening the rule of law in its MTSF in line with the global mandate. UNDP's work in this area, although in the nascent stage, is supporting the Palestinian Authority's strategy of Justice Now. A Planning and Project Management (PPMU) has been approved and implemented in the High Judicial Council. The introduction of an Information Technology Unit (ITU) has resulted in an automated case management system in three governorates. The project is underway to upgrade and connect more courts. A Training process for new judges has been established, and new judges have been trained.

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[5] United Nations Country Team

Cross Cutting Issues

a) Capacity Development Strategy

A letter of Agreement for a major Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) was signed in June, 2008. A capacity development assessment was approved by the Prime Minister as the first step in strengthening the oPt's top leaders, and the first assessment is carried out in the Ministry of Planning. Additionally, a Leadership Development Programme for senior civil servants was pilot tested with 32 men and 8 women participants. The CDI is a major step in advancing a strategic approach in strengthening the responsiveness of public institutions to govern effectively.

Further achievements in strengthening governing institutions include the success of the Joint Councils for Services Planning and Development (JCSPD) in bringing the work of small municipalities under the umbrella of the JCSPD and decreased the number and operating costs of local government.

b) Gender Equality

Women have benefited from many of PAPP's projects, including the Introduction to Participatory Planning Programme, the KFW and Land Reclamation Programme and the first phase of the Leadership Development Programme. After the Gaza incursion, specific attention was given to the needs of women through an immediate focus group discussion with three women leaders representing a women's umbrella organization. This provided sufficient information for the design of a Social Development Assessment that is examining a broad spectrum of questions about social inclusion, targeting men and women, old, young, disabled and healthy, marginalized and geographically central Gazans.

UNDP, in cooperation with the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC), has supported the Rural Women's Credit and Savings Association. The project began in 1999, as a saving and credit programme to provide economic assistance to members of a women's cooperative in the West Bank. Over the years, PARC expanded its work to include capacity building based on international best practices. The women's cooperative now overseas the management of funds with PARC continuing to provide technical and logistical support. The project is ongoing in 132 locations in the West Bank and Gaza with 5,653 rural women.

UNDP was also part of the interagency team that secured a grant from the Spanish MDG Achievement fund in the window on 'women', and is expanding its work on the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence.

Although these projects are considerable, UNDP staff indicate that a more strategic approach is needed to properly address the needs of women and men at different life stages. Discussions with UNDP Gaza programme staff indicate that the needs of women and men should be addressed within the culture and context of the family system under the "do no harm" policy. Since further dialogue is needed to understand the effectiveness of the family system in addressing the specific needs of women and men, old and young, including people with special needs, more work is underway at present to refine PAPP's capacity to deliver socially responsive programming.

Given women's very low participation in the workforce, and the high number of deaths of males in the conflict, particular emphasis is needed to identify the social and economic isolation of women and girls without a male family member. More work is also needed to identify how male identity is being shaped in an increasingly conservative and violent society, which will inevitably impact on levels of family violence and may further curtail all aspects of women's social, political and economic engagement.

c) Youth

A major contribution to the youth sector is recognized by UNDP's establishment and linking of Sharek, a national youth organization to a larger NGO with operational support systems. National youth parliaments have been initiated in schools and leaders identified and trained to expand the parliaments. A programme for university youth has been implemented addressing internal reconciliation and non violent conflict resolution processes.

Surveys have been conducted to identify the main challenges confronting youth. Youth centres were constructed and eleven drafts of a youth policy have been developed over the last two years. Partnerships are in process among stakeholders to work with the Ministry of Youth in the approval of a youth policy and strategy and to conduct a national youth conference.

d) Crisis Prevention and Recovery

UNDP with its implementing partners has focused on recovery and rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure. Agricultural lands have been rehabilitated in the West Bank to provide income generation to people cut off from employment in Israel due to construction of the wall and closures. Further, agricultural lands, the major driver of the economy in Gaza, have been destroyed or damaged by Operation Cast Lead in 2008/2009. Further, a UNDP Early Recovery and Response Team met in Gaza during the evaluation to design a coherent programme with specific programme interventions and to avoid working in silos.

e) Conflict Transformation and Peace Building

UNDP incorporates a policy of "do no harm" in all of its work recognizing the potential of fueling the conflict at several levels. The Interpeace projects in five districts provide a forum for participatory discussions and debate among all stakeholders. A Municipal Alliance for Peace (MAP) office has been established and staffed with two coordinators with UNDP's support at the request of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and the Union of Local Authorities / Israel (ULAI).

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

An integrated programme approach linking outcomes of project to sustainable results didn't exist until the introduction of the Results Based Framework in UNDP/PAPP in 2007. Progress has been made in strengthening the planning and M&E systems. Recognizing that M&E depends on the factors included at the planning stage, a comprehensive Performance Monitoring Framework has been developed and implemented with data entered in the UNDP MIS system. A Local Programme Advisory Committee (LPAC) has been established to review relevance of programme interventions against fifteen criteria prior to approval. UNDP staff reported that *SMART*[6] criteria of Results Based Management has been incorporated in programme planning monitoring and evaluation, however, staff further indicated that the M&E system needs to be strengthened and consistently implemented.

Lessons Learned

- One of the key lessons learned from the assessment is the importance of incorporating the soft components of human resources, capacity building needs, equipment, systems and processes in programme design.   Because earlier infrastructure planning and project documents did not include the soft components, needed human resources, equipment, designated space utilization and processes were not available upon completion of construction.

- Another lesson learned is that funds necessary for the soft components not included in the infrastructure budget at the planning stage are difficult to raise from donors after the fact.

- Involving end users in identifying appropriate economic projects relevant to their interests and capabilities increases their ownership and commitment to the success of their projects. It would appear that this participatory process could be expanded beyond DEEP.

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[6] SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bounded

- Based on the success of DEEP, the provision of initial grants for persons experiencing extreme poverty should be considered for income generation opportunities. These micro-grants could be as small as the cost of a shoe shine stand or a sewing machine.

- The KFW programme was able to lower costs of supplies and to identify local providers through standardized procurement systems. The standardized system contributed to transparent and accountable practices.

- Although the initial training of fifteen local authorities in the implementation of five procedure manuals was successful, lessons learned from this intervention indicate that piloting this intervention would have allowed more in depth training and would have been more sustainable. Further, lessons learned from global experience indicate that innovative or change management interventions require pilot testing to assess the absorptive capacities of government officials, any unintended results under the "do no harm" policy and to allow for adjustments and revisions as indicated.

- The minimal inclusion of special needs groups indicates that there is a risk of limited focus on these groups when mainstreaming their issues. For this reason, it is important that the monitoring and evaluation process pay close attention to indicators that assess their participation and specific issues.

Recommendations

Based on the evaluation findings, the following priority recommendations are as follows:

Governance - Enabling national policy and mechanisms

UNDP should support high level discussions among government leaders, donor partners, civil society organizations, the private sector, media, academic and youth leaders towards the development of a national vision and policy. A national vision policy framework is the first tier of government that represents its vision for the state-building strategy and organizational strategy.

The national vision and policy statement can provide a clearer reform and development path for the oPt. The Capacity Development Initiative should be supported and expedited to strengthen the competencies of national leaders and senior civil servants.

Poverty Reduction – Strengthened sustainable livelihood programmes

Infrastructure programmes should be aligned with the national development goals and the MTSF. In order to increase effective access to social and economic services, the soft components of human resources, capacity building needs, technical assistance, and systems and processes should be included and budgeted in the programme documents.

Building on the successes of the land rehabilitation and DEEP programmes, requiring participants to fund a percentage of project costs contributes to sustainability through national ownership. For example, this concept could be extended to a small fee for the use of community facilities, or staffing a reception desk in exchange for use of the facility.

Raising the priority of youth and gender issues

The social culture of the oPt supports mainstreaming of gender and youth issues into the extended family system. UNDP should raise the priority of youth and gender over the next period recognizing that solutions to social and economic problems can only come from civil society. Partnerships with CSOs with expertise in specific need areas should continue to be supported and strengthened to work within the social fabric of the oPt and under the "do no harm" principle. Emphasis should be placed on building the enabling environment across government to more effectively mainstream youth and gender issues. A youth policy and strategy is critical given that 50% of the population is under age 18.

Early Recovery and Peace Building

Early recovery, conflict prevention and peace building underlie much of UNDP's work in the oPt. The importance of reducing tensions caused by lack of employment and extreme poverty has been recognized in the enormous contributions of short term employment generation, land rehabilitation for farming and access to grants and loans for small business projects. Under the support of the international programme advisors, these initiatives can be brought to the next level.

Peace building processes to develop youth leaders and to reduce internal conflicts in youth parliament programme and training in conflict resolution should be expanded over the next period. Continued support should be provided to the Municipal Alliance for Peace (MAP) initiatives and monitoring and evaluation process should assess the value added of the two coordinators.

Programme Design

UNDP's work in the infrastructure sector has been enormous in broadening and deepening social and economic services for the Palestinian people. To strengthen UNDP's impact in this sector over the next period, funds should be included in programme budgets for the soft components of staffing, capacity building, essential equipment, systems and processes.

UNDP' Organizational Effectiveness

UNDP's internal change management process over the last eighteen months has built the organizational foundation for an emphasis on a programme approach and contributions to upstream policy work. An Internal Control Framework (ICF) was introduced and a committee of UNDP managers was established to monitor and provide recommendations on its progress. The Terms of Reference for a Policy and Strategy Advisory Team was signed in December, 2008 to guide its current and future programmes. International Programme Advisors/Team Leaders have been hired for the Poverty Reduction and Governance portfolios; Early Recovery and Crisis Prevention, Peace Building, and Women's Empowerment Programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

UNDP/PAPP's adoption of the UNDP Corporate Results Based Management is in the early stages. Major achievements have been realized in the creation of comprehensive databases. Because the RBM system is new to staff, it is important that programme advisers ensure that the SMART criteria is included in the planning stage to support an effective M&E system.

1. INTRODUCTION

UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP)[7] performs a unique role within the UNDP global system, operating in the continuing conflict environment of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) where the prospects for development remain uncertain. Until 2006, UNDP/PAPP was not aligned to the UNDP corporate strategy. Projects were implemented under the 1978 General Assembly mandate to "improve the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people by identifying their social and economic needs and by establishing concrete projects to that end."[8]

Since 2006, UNDP/PAPP has been functioning as a "country office" with its headquarters in East Jerusalem and offices in Gaza and Ramallah. It is one of the largest and most successful of UNDPs global operations, employing over 300 staff, the majority of whom are Palestinians. UNDP/PAPP serves as an umbrella organization for most UN development assistance agencies working in the oPt. The functions provided to the agencies are related to their travel, logistics, contracts and payments.

UNDP set out a clear vision in its Mid-Term Strategic Plan, 2008 -11, (MTSP), linked with the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP). The MTSF provides a grounded framework for a programme approach to address national priorities through its development interventions. Senior level international programme advisers have recently joined UNDP/PAPP to guide the vision and development path under the strategic framework.

UNDP's Early Recovery Programme and Poverty Reduction Programmes provide critically needed assistance to the Palestinian people with interventions designed to provide the catalyst to sustainable development. The restoration of critical infrastructure improves access to services and employment opportunities and contributes to reduction of tensions caused by extreme poverty. Programmes in strengthening governing institutions and reform contribute to peace building initiatives.

UNDP's credibility and comparative advantage is recognized by the major contributions of its 14 development partners, with five of its largest contributing partners being the IDB, Japan, Germany, the European Union and Italy.

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[7] UNDP/PAPP will be referred to in this report as UNDP
[8] General Assembly Resolution 33/147, 1978

1.1 Development Context

Poverty in the oPt:

A World Bank report reflecting the worsening economic conditions in 2008 indicates that "unemployment in the West Bank rose from 17.7% in 2007 to 19% in the first quarter of 2008 while unemployment in Gaza has increased from 29.7% to 29.8%" [9] The report further indicates that this does not include underemployed workers who left the workforce to work in unpaid family labor or seasonal agriculture. If discouraged workers were added, the unemployment rate would raise the unemployment rate to 25.7% in the West Bank and 35.5% in Gaza.

The World Bank report further indicates that without remittances for food aid, the poverty rate in the West Bank would rise to 45.7% and to 79.4% in Gaza and deep poverty would increase to 34.1% in the West Bank and 69.9% in Gaza. *The Social Watch, Country Report, 2007* [10] describes the severe challenges in the opt:

All development indicators in Palestine are in danger of further decline because of the combination of Israeli occupation and the subsequent deterioration of the economic situation. Women bear the brunt of this burden with female-headed households experiencing an incidence of poverty 1.3 times higher than households headed by men despite humanitarian aid and women's efforts to generate income in household-based activities

Poverty cannot be viewed purely as an economic issue. Not only does poverty

Development Indicators	
Total Population	3,762,005
West Bank	*2,372,216*
Gaza	*1,389,789*
Population Growth rate	3.3%
Adult Literacy Rate	92.4%
Unemployment Rate	28.4%
<5 years mortality Rate per 1000 births	24%
% Population with access to safe water	90%

have many social impacts, but the term needs to be understood in such a way as to incorporate the inhibited access that Palestinians have to resources, opportunities, services, and aid. Economically, this translates into a lack of access to markets, raw materials, means of production, job opportunities, and labour. More generally, the repercussions of the lack of sovereignty over borders and Israeli confiscation and expropriation of land prohibit control over natural resources. The lack of freedom of movement negatively affects access to education, mental and physical health services, and meaningful political and social participation. These consequences increase disproportionately for the poor.

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[9] World Bank Report, Economic Development, West Bank and Gaza, first quarter of 2008
[10] Social Watch Country Report, *Women and Poverty: The High Price of Occupation*, Izzat Abdul Hadi

The increasing number of settlements and blockades in the West Bank, the construction of the separation Wall[11] and the military campaign launched against the Gaza Strip in late December, 2008 greatly exacerbate these conditions. From 4 September, 2007 to 29 April 2008, there was an increased number in closure obstacles from 566 to 607.[12] The wall completely separates Jerusalem from the West Bank. These obstacles significantly affect movement within the oPt, challenging day to day social and economic interactions of the Palestinian people. It is reported that the checkpoints can reduce the work day to as little as two hours. Safe access to all services under these conditions is limited. Access to water is a key factor restricting economic development. There are 220 villages without water supply due to their inability to secure water permits from the Israeli Government to construct wells. Permits go through eighteen stages of approval in various administrative departments. Furthermore, quotas limit the drawing of water from each well. In many cases, Palestinians are deprived of access to water resources by being deprived of access to their land.[13]

After the Hamas' victory in 2006, Israel and the Quartet (UN, EU, US, Russia) refused to accept the results of the election and to work with the new government. Funding was cut off which provided Israel the opportunity to re-enact its siege tactics against Gaza. This international embargo resulted in the collective punishment of the Palestinian people in the Gaza strip. Israel's freezing of tax revenues collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority to pay 160,000 civil servants following Hamas' victory in 2006 further increased the hardships on many households and communities in Gaza as outlined in the development context and as reflected in the chart entitled *Household Incomes Post Elections*.[14]

UNDP's work was once again challenged by the Israeli incursions at the end of December, 2008. Early reports indicate that an estimated 11,514 homes were badly damaged and 4,036 totally destroyed,[15] with middle and North Gaza incurring the heaviest losses. Despite this catastrophic situation, UNDP increased its engagement in social and economic empowerment through DEEP[16] in Gaza and the West Bank, while continuing its Early Recovery response in Gaza.

While significant achievements have been realized across a number of areas covered by the MDG agenda, the crises nature of the Palestinian context makes it difficult to measure progress. UNDP/PAPP's contributions to MDGs are more broadly addressed in the context of Crises Prevention and Recovery which can be used as a basis for

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[11] Separation Wall, with an expected length of 400 miles cutting off the oPt from Israel
[12] OCHA Report, West Bank and Gaza, May 2008. These figures do not include Green line checkpoints, flying checkpoints and the Barrier.
[13] Palestine Monitor Fact Sheet, 18 December 2008
[14] Survey undertaken by Near East Consulting between 3 April and 8 May 2007 as reported in Development Times, Issue No. 1, July 2007
[15] Palestinian Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, March, 2008
[16] DEEP, Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme

advocacy and increasing key stakeholder participation in building consensus on national priorities and goals,[17] and further in "recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations."[18] Measurement of progress towards sustainable achievements under the MDG agenda will depend on improvements in the political situation and removal of restrictions on mobility and access. If these conditions are not addressed, the situation in the oPt is likely to worsen.

1.2 Achieving Results in the Development Context

Within this context, UNDP has been providing de-facto government services with the major portion of its budget utilized for large scale infrastructure projects that provide short term, labor intensive employment. In addition to these major investments, UNDP has been able to convene and mobilize donor partners to address more multi-dimensional problems. Further, UNDP has expanded its role in support of policy development to focus more strategically on its comparative advantage. Lessons from its downstream activities, as well as emerging needs, will contribute to state building through its upstream work.

UNDP's vision for development is defined in its Mid Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) (2008 – 2011). Achieving the objectives under the MTSF are crucial in addressing the needs of marginalized groups and the futility and depression now present among large numbers of the population.[19] UNDP's vision is as follows:

> *UNDP/PAPP is a leading and responsive development agency working together with the Palestinian people to fulfill their vision of a peaceful, sustainable and equitable society by promoting democratic governance, human development, human security and livelihoods.*[20]

1.3 Purpose

The evaluation assesses the relevance and effectiveness of UNDP strategy's in achieving the two outcomes outlined in the MTSF [*reducing human poverty* and f*ostering democratic governance]* in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the national development plan. To this end, the evaluation focuses on the progress of these two outcomes that fall under UNDP's Poverty Alleviation and Democratic Governance portfolios.

The major goal of the evaluation is to assess the overall progress and relevance of UNDP's strategy in achieving the outcomes and to provide concrete recommendations for donor cooperation. The assessment will examine the impact of

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[17] MDGs in Conflict and Disaster Settings, 17 August 2004, Cross Posted with MDG Net
[18] United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security
[19] "More than 80 percent of young Palestinians are depressed and 47 percent identify themselves as Muslim rather than Palestinian," UNDP/Sharek Assessment, Ramallah, 31/3/2009
[20] UNDP/PAPP Mid Term Strategic Framework, 2008 – 2011, page 22

previous interventions, identify factors in the development context hindering performance, and assess UNDP's role in transforming the conflict towards development needs. The evaluation will underscore the significant political, social and economic challenges to UNDP's efforts and identify lessons learnt to drive future interventions under a programme framework.

1.4   Objectives and Scope

The Terms of Reference for the evaluation indicate that "two strategic and interrelated outcomes" will be targeted that "best represent PAPP's mandate and comparative advantage, national development frameworks and past and present development interventions."[21]

UNDP's two strategic goals under the Second Multi-Year Framework (MYF), aligned with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), are identified as reducing human poverty and fostering democratic governance. UNDP Mid-Term Strategic Framework, supported by its Gender Equality Strategy 2008-11 (GES), re-emphasizes the two thematic areas, specifically the evaluation assessing the progress of outputs in achieving the outcomes under the following two objectives:

Objective 1: Promoting sustainable livelihoods, economic recovery and self reliance

▪ *Outcome 2: "Essential infrastructure for economic and social development improved"*
- *Output 5: Access to effective social, economic, public services and public utilities enhanced,*

Objective 2: Enhancing the development of efficient, responsive and accountable institutions through:

▪ **Outcome 2: *"Responsive governing institutions strengthened"***
- *Output 4: Capacities and performance of the executive branch of the Authority strengthened at all levels in the areas of public administration, social services delivery and local governance*
- *Output 5: The practice of legislatures and locally elected bodies to represent the interest of citizens improved*
- *Output 6: Justice systems and the rule of law improved and accessible*

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[21] Consultant's Terms of Reference, October, 2008, page 9

1.5   Limitations of the Evaluation

The limitations of the evaluation, in addition to the challenges of the development context, include the short time frame of the mission and the changes in the implementation arrangements outlined in the Terms of Reference. It was originally planned that background materials would provide the basis for on-line discussions between the international consultant and counterpart prior to the mission. Changes in the counterpart during this process prevented the delivery of these early inputs.

Additionally, the Terms of Reference indicated that two national counterparts would be hired to collect and summarize materials in advance of the mission. Because the hiring process was not completed as expected, it was agreed that the hiring of the consultants at the start of the mission would slow rather than expedite the process. This required the international consultant, team leader, to collect and review documents while conducting scheduled interviews and meetings during the mission. The limited availability of programme staff due to their work pressures and travel out of the country also limited discussions during the evaluation.

Although, UNDP's contributions to good governance are far-reaching, it is too early to assess sustainability as some of its major programmes are in the inception phase. Additionally, the local governance programme is currently being redefined. Further, the relevance and sustainability of interventions are severely challenged in the development context of the oPt in which conditions and needs are continually changing and which require UNDP to address emergencies on the ground.

Assessment of cost effectiveness of interventions requires an analysis of the relationship of inputs to outputs to determine whether other resources could have achieved the same results at a lower cost and in less time. There were no benchmarks or materials to base such comparisons or conclusions.

2. Evaluation Methodology

2.1 Guidelines for the Evaluation Design

The evaluation is based on UNDP's Results Based Management system in assessing progress towards outcomes and in identifying the inter-relationships of a number of development interventions. While the evaluation adheres to the UNDP's guidelines for an outcome evaluation, it is understood that there is no one precise way to conduct an evaluation. Rather collection and integration of data from different sources converge in an assessment of results.

An outcome evaluation, unlike project evaluation, does not require collecting volumes of primary data but rather follows methodological approaches in assessing quantitative and qualitative data. The path of the evaluation starts with the outcome and works backwards,[22] analyzes factors contributing to progress and then assesses UNDP and its partners' contributions. The analysis considers how the policy, institutional, environmental and cultural factors influence the activities of the government and key partners in achieving the results of objectives.

Further, the evaluation examines how the outcomes were influenced by the external environment as well as UNDP's contribution and interaction with key partners. The evaluation also considers to the extent possible, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, the degree of change and sustainability of outputs.

2.2   Data Collection

The assessment included a comprehensive desk review of relevant documents, semi-structured one-on-one and group discussions with UNDP staff in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza; senior officials in the Ministry of Planning, High Judicial Council, Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Agriculture, and with three senior officials from the Japanese Embassy.

Eighteen individual meetings and group discussions were undertaken with 30 participants in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza from UNDP offices, government, a Civil Society Organization and beneficiaries. Discussions with participants from three micro finance projects and the implementing NGO partner in Gaza provided opportunities for on-site assessment of UNDP's achievements.

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[22] UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluations

2.3 Evaluation Questions

The evaluation explored the following areas to determine the relevance of UNDP's interventions and strategy in achieving progress towards results.

i.   Ways in which the implementation of programmes/projects were effective and efficient to achieve outputs and outcomes
ii.   Validity and relevance of interventions in poverty reduction and improving governance
iii. How infrastructure and employment generation programme addressed poverty reduction
iv.   Contributions of interventions in strengthening responsive governing institutions
v.   How the performance of governing institutions were strengthened in areas of responsiveness, particularly in promoting the rule of law and justice systems
vi.   How the programme design, implementation and monitoring addressed crosscutting themes of specific needs of different populations, capacity development and crisis prevention and recovery
vii. Areas in which conflict and gender sensitive approaches were considered
viii. Gender sensitive approaches were considered in the programme design and implementation
ix.   Factors related to sustainability of outputs considered in programme planning
x.   Lessons learned for future programming

2.4 Data Analysis

The analysis results from discussions with key stakeholders examining their perceptions of phenomena, a comprehensive desk review of key documents and observations during site visits throughout the oPt.   Pattern matching and triangulation of the data converge to verify the validity of the assessment based on multiple perceptions and data was carried out.

3. Evaluation Findings

UNDP has undertaken a significant change management process during the mid-term period to support a programme approach with a focus on upstream results based on lessons learned from downstream interventions. Senior level international advisors were brought on board to support UNDP's major programmes in Governance, Poverty Reduction, Social Development and Women's Empowerment, Early Recovery and Crises Prevention and Peace Initiatives.

A Policy, Strategy and Advisory Team (PSAT) was established in December, 2008 to support and enhance UNDP's capacities "to implement a focused and well-defined programme that is crisis responsive and incorporates relevant cross-cutting issues."[23] The PSAT provides a forum to ensure that UNDP's programmes are aligned with the MTSF, the CDI Strategy and the revised PRDP, and provides an entry point for a major focus on a strong and forward looking programme framework over the next period. Full implementation of the PSAT was delayed due to the Gaza crisis at the end of the year, however the initial planning meeting was held during the evaluation period.

3.1 Poverty Reduction

Objective 1 – Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods

Under Objective 1, the evaluation focuses on progress of Output 5 (access to social and economic services improved) in achieving Outcome 2 (increasing Palestinians' livelihood capacities and resilience in the continuing crisis).

Infrastructure and Employment Generation

The KFW[24] supported infrastructure and employment generation was UNDP's first flagship programme initiated in 2002 in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning (MoP). Construction and rehabilitation of hospitals, schools, courthouses, youth centers and restoration of water and sanitation systems provided needed infrastructure in the oPt and employment for people in small communities previously employed in Israel.

Since 2002, the programme has funded 529 projects, 358 in the West Bank and 144 in the Gaza Strip in nearly half of the communities in the oPt.   Over 700,000 workdays were generated and permanent jobs created through staffing centers. Additionally, 101 common services buildings were constructed in West Bank and Gaza to house local authorities and to provide public space for women's associations, libraries, computer laboratories and clinics. Further, 117 road projects now provide 100

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[23] Draft Policy, Strategy & Advisory Team (PSAT) TORs
[24] Kredititanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau – the German Development Bank

kilometers of access roads. In the last phase of the programme, 356 permanent jobs were created. Of the jobs created, 180 were for women and 51% were previously unskilled workers. Fifty-Two percent of the materials were purchased through local agents.

KFW has contributed to national ownership and accountability and transparency mechanisms by requiring that all bills for projects be certified by village councils and then signed by UNDP before transferring funds. KFW monitors projects by entering and maintaining currency of data in UNDP's Performance Monitoring Framework.

UNDP's interventions in improving access to water supply have been a significant contribution to the agriculture sector and its ability to generate income and to small business start ups. Through UNDP's assistance, 11,000 residences have access to water supply in the Tulkarem Governorate. A major challenge in expanding access to 220 villages in the governorate without water supply is the difficulty in obtaining water permits from the Israeli Government to dig wells in the district.

The contributions of KFW have been enormous. Three hospitals have been built or rehabilitated and additional classrooms built in schools. Youth centers have been constructed in the West Bank and Gaza. While projects have opened opportunities for increased access to social services, the soft components were not adequately addressed early in the construction process. The components of staffing, capacity building, operating systems and processes, including the cost of priorities that can be translated into parcels for donors, should be a major requirement for the next period.

Land Rehabilitation

UNDP's Land Development Programme, started in 1997, covered all districts of the West Bank. Recent objectives focused on increasing the cultivated land area and creating short term employment for Palestinian workers who lost their jobs in Israel as a result of the closures. Interventions included land rehabilitation, cultivation of orchards and vegetables. Additionally, technical assistance under the programme built the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture and local NGOs.

Seven Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) with expertise in the agriculture sector were selected, each to work in separate villages. A *one stop shop approach*, supported by a data system, was initiated with standardized manuals and specific procurement forms. Materials for construction were purchased through a standardized procurement process with beneficiaries contributing to 25% of the cost. A Planning and Management Unit in the Land Development Office of the Ministry of Agriculture was established and nine people trained to manage the unit and work with the CSO's in monitoring the standardized system.

More than 5,000 households benefited from the programme through land reclamation in 130 sites throughout the West Bank. Approximately 22,000 dunums of land was reclaimed and became productive and over 800,000 fruit tree seedlings were planted. Additionally, 3,000 cisterns were constructed and retaining walls built to prevent soil erosion. More than 500,000 workdays were created for labourers and their families.

The activities are now fully functioning under a standardized system effectively managed by the CSO's, enabling UNDP to exit its downstream land rehabilitation activities. UNDP strong catalyst role in this area is a model for best practices. The achievements of the Land Rehabilitation Programme have contributed not only to the outcome under the Poverty Alleviation portfolio but also to the Governance portfolio through increased management capacities of the MoA and CSOs and to accountability and transparency at local levels.

UNDP's continuing work with the MoA will be at a strategic level, facilitating policy development. In this regard, UNDP has recently supported a comprehensive study to assess land use and suitability for agricultural production using sophisticated Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and applications, and socio-economic assessments. This study is expected to provide the main decision making instrument for policy and decision makers as well as practitioners in strategic agricultural planning. Further, UNDP has provided the support for activating the services and developing the capacity of a Land Research Center to provide free information to the MoA, CSOs, academia and local beneficiaries in the fields of land use and suitability.

A Participatory Natural Resource Management Programme has supported an integrated land management approach through focus on four components encompassing land reclamation and improvement, crop-productivity, access to credit and strengthened agricultural outreach.

Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme - DEEP

UNDP's flagship programme (DEEP) is one of UNDP's more strategic programmes in creating social and economic access to poor families through grants and micro-finance, and is emerging as a major contributor to UNDP's upstream work. DEEP's Board of Trustees includes IDB, UNDP, MoSA, MoL and MoP The successes of the programme are far reaching in creating synergies among its various components under the poverty alleviation portfolio and, at the same time, contributing to UNDP's governance work in strengthening governing institutions and promoting gender equality and social cohesion.

The DEEP programme harvested lessons learned from projects requiring participants to contribute to the cost of the programme. Initial grants are provided for start up businesses with participants contributing 25% of the investment either through funds or labor. The implementing Civil Society Organization provides continual technical

assistance to the businesses. After six months of demonstrated success, participants are eligible for micro-finance loans.

Five Micro-Finance Institutes (MFI) have been established and staffed with banking experts. Significant progress towards sustainable results has been realized in providing access to economic services through this intervention. A baseline of 4,000 families was established. A piloted Social and Poverty Assessment is now used as the basis to qualify families' eligible for participation in DEEP. This tested assessment tool could be adopted as the government's national social and poverty assessment instrument.

The DEEP progress report reflects that 1,696 families received support and are now benefiting from their enterprises; 786 family projects have been designed and implementation is under way.[25] On site monitoring and evaluation reports "real life" stories, reflecting beneficiaries' income change after participation in the DEEP programme. In spite of conditions in the Gaza Strip, 535 small scale projects were established by the end of April, 2009. DEEP further contributed to Gaza's vital poultry breeding projects implemented by the Palestinian Hydrology Group. Projects in Gaza ranged from retail food, sheep breeding, poultry, service and maintenance shops and other projects.

Site visits to three DEEP funded projects in Gaza, in sheep raising, grocery retail and computer business, demonstrates the success of DEEP. The families in each of these projects report increased productivity and intentions to expand their enterprises. These projects are improving the social and economic lives of the family, including access to higher education for sons and daughters.

Poverty was an isolating experience. Sameer no longer had the money to buy the gifts that it is customary to bring to the homes of relatives and friends so he stopped visiting. His friends and relatives could still visit but their frequency decreased as their situation did not improve.
Last year, he heard that a Gazan non-governmental organization, the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee, was looking for candidates for a pilot poverty reduction programme. The programme provides a grant for a start up and after six months of demonstrated success, beneficiaries are eligible for a mico-finance loan to expand their businesses. Sameer' family volunteered.
The programme aims to help families become self reliant by finding out their business interests and abilities to earn an income and then supports them as they work their way out of poverty.
Sameer said: "We worked out what was the best way that I could provide for my family. We decided that the repair of washing machines with my son-in-law was the most feasible project." The NGO provided start up funds for tools and training in project management and bookkeeping. Sameer now proudly shows pages of handwritten accounts reflecting his profits. After six months of demonstrated success, he states that "income earned by own hand is much better than any other kind of money. When you work everything tastes better. You can send your children to school and you do not feel like a beggar," he said. "I have regained my self esteem."

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[25] DEEP Progress Report by Mid-April, 2009

The early successes of DEEP resulted in the opening of new branches in Qalqilia, Toubas and Hebron to serve poor families and build competencies of a number of MFI employees. Loans are now offered in rural areas. The competencies of 86 CSO staff have been built and tools, manuals and templates have been developed for the Center of Continuous Education to ensure proper targeting of poor families through an accurate assessment of their conditions. The standardized tools ensure the harmonization of the execution of DEEP by the implementing CSO partners throughout the oPt.

Challenges to the DEEP project have included changing the mind-set of the MFI culture from a commercial lending institution to a more empathetic attitude towards beneficiaries. A further challenge is the large amount of donor money that is pouring into the oPt providing free grants. UNDP has been working with partners to change this culture from aid dependency to self dependence, dignity and accountability.

Table 1 below sets out the progress towards achievement of output 5 under the infrastructure outcome, and implications for the future

Table 1

Objective 1: Promote Sustainable Livelihoods, economic recovery and self-reliance				
Outcome: Essential Infrastructure for economic and social development improved				
Output 5: Access to effective social, economic public services enhanced				
Interventions	**Planned Output**	**UNDP Partners**	**Achievements**	**Future**
KFW Infrastructure development	3 hospitals, classrooms, water systems, community centers	The German Development Bank	All projects completed and signed off	Incorporate soft components, in project design
Land Development Programme, West Bank	Increased land cultivation crop diversification, Short term employment	The Governments, Japan, Italy, and IFAD and IDB	22,000 dunum of lands reclaimed, 500,000 work days created, farmers contribute to 25% to overall cost. National Land development forum established	Build on successes to support MoA and Land Research, expand discussions on priority issues among stakeholders
Mapping of 540 CSOs working with youth	Assessment of CSOs capacities and expertise in specific needs areas	Sharek Youth Forum, Near East Consulting (NEC)	Questionnaire developed, survey conducted, mapping completed	Incorporate data as part of youth strategy; continued support to Sharek
DEEP Programme Grants and micro finance, West Bank and Gaza	Grants to 4,000 entrepreneurs from households below consumption poverty lines and 18,000 micro-finance loans to 12,000 micro and very small enterprises.	ILO, IDB, CSOs	Social and poverty assessment pilot tested to qualify families, 2,210 families reached, capacity of 5 national MFI's significantly developed to provide pro-poor financing and Islamic lending	Integrate tools for poverty reduction into the system of MoSA[26] Develop models for social safety nets to households below deep poverty lines

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[26] Ministry of Social Affairs

3.2 Governance

Objective 2 - Enhancing the development of efficient and accountable institutions

The evaluation of Objective 2 of the Governance portfolio focuses on UNDP's progress in achieving Outputs 4, 5, and 6 under Outcome 2, *Responsive Governing Institutions Strengthened*

Output 4: Capacities and performance of the executive branch of the Palestinian Authority strengthened at all levels.

The Ministry of Planning indicated that all sectors throughout government need a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities and a more substantive and broader cross-sector focus. Further, the Ministry reports that the PRDP 2008 - 2011 was based on information compiled at local levels, whereas previous plans were more participatory involving civil society in dialogue. The new 2011 plan will address the PA's agenda within and across ministries in areas of (i) economic productivity and employability, and (ii) increased security through paid jobs for youth. The Ministry has expressed its interest in UNDP's assistance in the strategic planning of each sector.

UNDP supported the anti-corruption study conducted by AMAN[27], a national coalition for accountability and transparency, published in March 2008. The NGO's against Corruption, Parliamentarians against Corruption, Journalists for Integrity and Transparency networks are involved in AMAN's anti-corruption activities. AMAN provides a forum for the development of a national anti-corruption plan.

Office of the President

UNDP's work in strengthening the institutional, organizational and human resource capacities of the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Planning and the General Personnel Council is in the early implementation stages. A strategy for capacity development of the top level of government has been approved in a Letter of Agreement between UNDP and the Ministry, and a UNDP supported Planning and Management Unit (PMU) within the MoP has been established. A capacity development assessment has been pilot tested in the MoP and is in the analysis stage. The assessment will provide the basis for a Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) Programme for the oPt's top leaders.

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[27] The AMAN Coalition, the Palestine chapter of Transparency International, is composed of the Arab Thought Forum, Palestine Trade Center, Palestinian Institute for the Stucy of Democracy/Muwatin, Mezan Centre for Human Rights (Gaza), Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy/Miftah, and the Palestinian Council of Foreign Relations

Ministry of Local Government

The Jenin Governorate under the Ministry of Local Government has pioneered the development of the nation's first district level Strategic Development Plan under UNDP's *Introduction to Participatory Development Planning, Phase I* involving donors, central and local governments and civil society. The Governorate is comprised of 80 localities with 12 Municipal Councils, 30 Village Councils and 34 Project Committees.

The participatory development process involved constituents from special needs groups including the Union for Palestinian Women, Deir Ghazalah Women Centre, Mselieh Women Centre, Jalboun Women Centre, Cooperative, Women Society for Lending and Marketing, Qabatya Women Society, Faqoa'a Young Women Centre, *Sharek*[28] Youth Centre and the General Union of Disabled.

The Jenin Governorate's Strategic Plan is a major achievement in the government's decentralization process. The Jenin plan is linked to the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP) and the lessons learned from this success will be used by the Ministry of Local Government in the second participatory planning phase to expand decentralized, participatory planning and implementation throughout the oPt.

The Local Rural Development Programme clustered 215 local authorities under a framework that has contributed to the government's performance and accountability by strengthening collective efforts and cost sharing throughout the oPt.

Five MIS procedure manuals for procurement, human resources, project management, archiving and a Unified Charter of Accounts have been adopted by the Government. Fifteen local authorities have received initial training in the procedures, however further capacity building is needed, particularly in project management and archiving. Although the overall result of the technical assistance has been successful, it was indicated that pilot testing with fewer authorities would have allowed for more substantive training and provided lessons learned for expanding the training.

UNDP's support to local government in redrafting the existing property tax laws has been lauded by government as a major step towards increasing needed revenues to manage municipal assets. This intervention builds on the work under the MDLF[29] with local authorities in compiling and activating the data base of municipal property.

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[28] *Sharek* – Arabic for "participate"
[29] MDLF – Media Development Loan Fund

Table 2 below sets out the progress towards achievement of the Outcome – Strengthened Responsive Governing Institutions under Output 4 and indicates implications for the future.

TABLE 2

Objective 2: Enhancing the development of Efficient and accountable institutions				
Outcome 2: Responsive governing institutions strengthened				
Output 4 – Capacities of the executive branch of the Palestinian Authority Strengthened at all levels				
Intervention	**Planned Output**	**UNDP Partners**	**Achievements**	**Future Orientation**
Support to AMAN to mobilize civil society	National Action Plan to Combat Corruption	UNCAC, AMAN	Anti corruption study completed	Continue support to planning process
Strengthen capacities of government leaders	National Capacity Development Strategy to train oPt government leaders	Multi donors	Letter of Agreement for a national capacity development strategy signed by the PM; CDI assessment instrument developed and pilot tested in MoP	Support for a national development vision and strategy through high level policy fora; sectoral strategic planning and functional reviews of key ministries
Capacity building of senior civil servants	1,200 senior civil servants trained	Italian Government, MoP, General Personnel Council	Training modules developed and pilot tested, first group of 40 civil servants trained, 32 men and 8 women	Continue support, of programme, follow up to determine performance of civil servants trained
Local Government: Introduction of Participatory Planning in the Jenin Governorate comprised of 87 localities	Strengthened capacities of Joint Councils; Consensus built on strategy for development; strategic plan developed	Government of Ireland; CSOs from women's groups; Sharek Youth Center, General Union of Disabled	Training of trainers of 27 national development experts to conduct participatory planning; 117 men and women participated in Strategic Plan developed for Jenin Governorate, the first strategic plan at local government level	Build on lessons learned in Jenin Governorate's strategic planning process; encourage donor participation in governorates
Reform legal framework for property tax laws at local level	Amended Property Tax Law	Japan	Property tax law redrafted; compiled data base of municipal property in process	Continue support in building data base for management of municipal assets

Output 5: The practice of legislatures and locally elected bodies represent the interest of citizens improved

UNDP has contributed to strengthening legislative processes to represent the interests of its citizens at several levels, including supporting reform initiatives, consensus building, peace initiatives towards a unified government and providing participatory opportunities for youth.

UNDP has supported the Central Elections Commission (CEC) in the oPt since its inception in 2002. The success of the CEC in reforming its structure and support of the recent election process contributed to the recent transparent elections in municipalities.

UNDP's support for a c*onsensus building with political parties* strategy has resulted in the establishment of a partnership with the Carter Center and a national counterpart to promote peace discussions and debate among all stakeholders and at all levels.

Civil Society Organizations' capacities are another key factor in contributing to the political processes and representing citizens' interests. UNDP projects in the CSO sector have included establishing contracts with three local organizations to assist communities in finding solutions to their own problems. Since 2007, UNDP has supported 18 CSOs with eight small grants in Jerusalem and ten in the West Bank operating in various sectors including culture, environment enhancement, education, youth sports, and special needs areas of the blind, orphans and the elderly. These Palestinian non-governmental organizations are preparing strategic papers in three sectors (education, agriculture and health) to achieve a cooperative partnership with the government.

Table 3 below sets out the progress towards achievement of the Outcome – Strengthened Responsive Governing Institutions under Output 5 and indicates implications for the future.

TABLE 3

Output 5 – The practice of legislatures and locally elected bodies to represent the citizens improved				
Intervention	**Planned Output**	**UNDP Partners**	**Achievements**	**Future Orientation**
Support restructuring of Central Elections Committee	Municipal Elections held		First municipal elections in 3 decades, 84% participation	Continue to provide advisory support
Support to Palestinian NGO Network to initiate civil society dialogue on priority issues	Internal capacities of NGOs developed; visionary committees established	Civil Society Organizations	Strategic papers in 3 areas, education, agriculture and health developed to support cooperative partnership with government in process	Involve key NGO's in national visioning and policy development
Setting up and staffing an office for Association of Palestinian Local Authorities and Israel Local Authorities	Establishment of a functional Secretariat for Municipal Alliance for Peace	Netherlands Ministry of Development	2 coordinators from Association of Palestinian Local Authorities and Israel Local Authorities	Continue technical and advisory assistance

Output 3: Justice Systems and rule of law improved and accessible

The oPt is identified as one of the priority conflict situations under the UNDP *Global Programme on Strengthening the Rule of Law in Conflict and Post Conflict situations 2008 – 2011*. Based on this priority, UNDP's MTSF 2008 – 2011 identifies Rule of Law as a core focus area under its mandate of Governance and Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

The Judiciary system has been strengthened under UNDP's infrastructure projects by the construction of three modern courthouses in Nablus, Khan Younis and Gaza. Piloting of automated court clerical functions and database systems has been initiated. The current UNCT Progress Summary Report applauds UNDP's contributions to governance and rule of law by the completion of the critically needed infrastructure.[30]

UNDP's current programmes are consistent with the PRDP strategy of *Justice Now* to rehabilitate and strengthen the credibility and accountability of the sector, although interventions are in the early implementation phase. A Planning and Project Management Unit (PPMU) under the Attorney General's Office has been approved and is in the inception phase.

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[30] UNCT, 1st quarter 2009, Summary of progress on UN Reform in West Bank and Gaza. The oPt does not have an UNDAF.

A PPMU has also been established under the High Judicial Council and progress is monitored quarterly and reported in the Annual Plan. An Information Technology Unit (ITU) has also been established under the High Judicial Council resulting in an automated case management system in three governorates. The second phase of the project is underway to upgrade and connect more courts.

A new UNDP programme has been approved to evaluate performance in the justice sector where there has been a historic reliance on an informal justice system in the oPt. A framework to evaluate the justice sector's performance will link the informal and formal judicial systems. A major factor in evaluating performance in the sector in the immediate future is the early implementation stage of various interventions.

Additionally, evaluating performance in the justice sector is further challenged by the high activity of donors focused on infrastructure, one time training interventions and by the lack of coordinated mechanisms between and among the Ministry of Justice, the High Judicial Council and the Attorney General's PPMU. These challenges provide an entry point for UNDP's interventions over the next phase.

Table 4 below sets out the progress towards achievement of Outcome 2 under Output 6 and provides implications for the future.

TABLE 4

Output 6 – Justice System and Rule of Law Improved				
Intervention	**Planned Output**	**UNDP Partners**	**Achievements**	**Future Orientation**
Strengthen the Justice Sector	3 courthouses constructed; a Planning and Management Unit established in the High Judicial Council; annual plan for development of a judiciary	Japan Government of Netherlands	3 courthouses constructed; PMU established in High Judicial Council; Information Technology Unit established in the Council, and connected to 3 governorates	Support for a cross functional planning, coordination mechanisms for the Ministry of Justice; Begin functional reviews of ministries with the Justice Sector
Automated court case management systems	Automated court systems installed in 3 governorates; judges trained; effective file archiving	Japan	court systems automated in 3 new court houses	Expand to other governorates; bring staff from other governorates to Jenin for cross-training in automated systems

3.3 Cross Cutting Issues

3.3.1 Capacity Development Strategy

Capacity Development for oPt's leaders

A *Letter of Agreement* for a major Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) was signed by the Prime Minister in June, 2008. The CDI embarks on a strategic and institutional approach to strengthen the individual, organizational, and institutional leadership at the top level of government. The initiative begins with an assessment of the capacities and responsiveness of public sector institutions to govern effectively and efficiently in line with the PRDP. The Ministry of Planning is the focal point for facilitating the capacity development strategy in coordination with the General Personnel Council who will be the implementing agency.

Progress towards achievements will be monitored under three outcomes that address: (i) the MoP's capacities to formulate and monitor the implementation of national plans; (ii) the General Personnel Councils' capacities to formulate and implement effective human resource management and policy development, and (iii) the strengthened capacities of three selected government institutions to implement reform and development. A comprehensive capacity assessment instrument has been developed based on UNDP standard CDI criteria and a pilot assessment of the MoP was carried out and is in the analysis process.

Civil Service Leadership capacity building for senior civil servants

The UNDP supported Leadership Development Programme (LDP) falls under the General Personnel Council of the Palestinian Authority and is the first administrative centre for the provision of civil service training. The GPC has drafted a new law that links civil service leadership training to promotion.

The LDP is the first training programme designed for senior civil servants under the national context and delivered in Arabic. The training is expected to be a major driver of the government's performance based management system by developing the core competencies of 1,200 civil servants starting at the most senior level of government.

The training material was developed from current best practices and implementation will involve highly interactive processes using applied learning and case studies. Coaching, mentoring and external exchange are included in the programme design. Cross cutting issues, including Monitoring and Evaluation and Gender Equality, are also incorporated in the training design. The pilot phase, completed in May 2009, provided training for 40 senior civil servants, eight of whom were women.

Assessing the effectiveness of capacity building interventions at policy level, however, is seriously challenged by the instability of the political situation and the slow peace process. Additionally, assessing the effectiveness and relevance of these interventions will be difficult unless they are linked with a national vision and policy on governance.

3.3.2 Gender Equality

Employment of women in the oPt labour market is among the lowest in the world at 15.7% (17.9% in the West Bank and 11.5% in Gaza) whereas the average for the Middle East and North Africa region is 29%.[31] Women are employed predominantly in the service and agricultural sectors in low-skill areas and precarious work situations placing women at an even more disadvantage compared to men. Thirty-Five percent of women work as unpaid family members.

A Focus Group, conducted immediately after the Israeli incursion with three women leaders representing a women's umbrella organization in Gaza, indicates the appalling conditions faced by women in Gaza.[32] The discussions indicated that when women's centers were reopened after the war there was not only an increase in the number of clients dealing with divorce and custody issues but also in the numbers and types of social isolation issues. Areas of long term response were identified: these include interventions for the specific needs of displaced teenage girls due to separation from male family members; greater emphasis on crisis preparedness; women's rights and protection, the needs of women as care-givers, and the need for broader psychosocial services. Men's needs were not separately assessed but the focus group was asked to speculate on what these might be. Further, research is now being conducted to more fully understand the needs of old and young, male and female, people with disabilities and other socially marginalized Gazans such as the Bedouins.

The on-going crisis in the oPt has further deprived the poor from access to basic social services. Women are particularly vulnerable in crises due to their lack of access to services and care specific to their needs. A UN report in 2006 indicates that the prevalence of anemia in pregnant women has increased to 43% due to lack of access to services and insufficient food.[33]

It is also reported that women are more vulnerable to family violence in a crisis context. This violence may be exacerbated by men's involvement/victimization by the politically-induced violence to which they are exposed as they are culturally more mobile than women. A study of violence against women in Gaza indicates that 1 out of 5 women are subjected to physical violence from men in their households; more recent research indicates that there was an increase in men's violence in the home

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[31] ILO, Global Trends for Women, March, 2007
[32] A Focus Group on Women in Gaza, UNDP, 27 January 2009
[33] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) July, 2006

during the Israeli incursion.[34]   Women in Gaza and the West Bank alike are not only poor because of low household income but because they are also socially isolated and not participants in decision making processes.[35]

A greater emphasis on the specific issues faced by women and men in the different social cultural context and conditions of the Gaza and the West Bank should be addressed in programme design under the "do no harm" policy. It was reported that Palestinian society believes that the needs of women are addressed within the family system and that addressing them using terminology such as "women's empowerment" could threaten the male head of the family and result in a backlash. To avoid this problem, UNDP focuses on family-centred programming as in DEEP and assessments which address relational issues between women and men, old and young.

While women have often been the indirect beneficiaries of UNDP's interventions, a greater understanding is required of how, and whether, programmes have impacted women's access to social and economic services. Further increased dialogue on how to integrate gender equity issues across all sectors is needed to strengthen UNDP's work in this sector. To this end, the Gender Advisor will play an important role on the PSAT in mainstreaming gender issues in and across programmes and ensuring the development of a gender equality policy. The gender policy should include four dimensions: gender disaggregated design; sex and age disaggregated data on participation in various stages; disaggregated targeting and impact on both strategic and practical levels.

3.3.3 Youth

The Sharek Youth Forum, launched in 1996 by UNDP, operates under three core programme areas to (i) facilitate youth's entry into the labor market; (ii) establish services in remote areas for child development and (iii) build the capacity of youth organizations. Sharek works in 20 communities in the West Bank and Gaza and has established itself as an independent Palestinian organization in alliance with a larger CSO for operational support in 2004, although UNDP continues to provide an advisory role.

UNDP, in partnerships with Sharek, CSOs, MoEHE, MoYS, MoP, and Women's Affairs, has developed a capacity building initiative for 2009 – 2011 which includes a media unit composed of young Palestinians to diffuse the voices of youth throughout the oPt. Capacity development will focus on: conflict resolution skills, peaceful dialogue reconciliation and national unity; a strongly and widely understood youth justice system; a forum for children ages 13 to 18 to express their ideas, and a right to education including human rights.

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[34] A Study on Violence Against Women in Gaza, Women's' Affairs Office, November, 2005
[35] Improvement of access to social and economic services for women, UNDP Project Document

Youth Parliament Programmes for high school and a programme for university youth in Gaza on internal reconciliation and non-violent conflict resolution strategies are strategic interventions under implementation. The objective of the programmes is to develop group leaders who, in turn, will lead the programmes for a wider expansion of the strategies throughout the oPt.

Youth Centers were constructed under the Poverty Alleviation infrastructure portfolio, however a survey[36] in 2007 indicates that a limited number of youth use the centers, and the percentage of females using the centers is even lower. Interventions to strengthen the relevance and capacities of these centers are in process.

Although eleven drafts of a Youth Policy have been developed since 2006, it has not yet been approved by the MoYS. A joint meeting was held with the MoYS, UNICEF, UNFPA during the evaluation period to advance the development and approval of a national youth policy and strategy with UNDP taking the lead implementation role. Seeking the Ministry's approval and support for the youth policy is a high priority for UNDP.

An advisor under the TOKTEN[37] programme has been placed in the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) to strengthen the Ministry's planning capacities and to identifying and promote the interests of youth under the age of 18 years, who represent 50% of the oPt's population.

The oPt's youth has a vital role to play in influencing the direction of legislatures and locally elected bodies. Establishment of a youth body to cooperate in the development of a critically needed youth policy with the Ministry is under discussion. Mapping of organizations working with youth in West Bank and Gaza has been undertaken as a starting point for the national youth policy. After school activities and vocational training of youth will be explored. Different expertise areas and interests of NGOs will also be integrated in a programme approach. Strategic partnerships with donors, such as UNICEF, will be initiated for lessons learned in their youth projects.

3.3.4 Crisis Prevention and Recovery

Crisis prevention and recovery processes have been mainstreamed throughout UNDP's programmes. UNDP follows a policy of "do no harm" throughout its work based on its deep awareness of the danger of politicizing any process. Further, UNDP is aware of the need to reduce the risk of escalating conflict through its work and to

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[36] The Youth Talk: Perception of Palestinian Youth on their living conditions, Sharek Youth Forum, May 2008
[37] TOKTEN Programme, Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals. TOKTEN consultants are expatriate nationals who return to invest their expertise in projects in their home country.

contribute directly or indirectly to the peace process.[38] UNDP has attempted to find effective entry points at both programme and project level and to develop mechanisms for consensus building between and among the various constituencies at both national and local level.

Provided the context of polarization and internal conflict, it is clear that every peace building strategy in the oPt should have as an objective the support of the process of consensus building and depolarization. This implies trying to promote dynamics of reconciliation at different levels of the Palestinian society, but mainly with the political organizations that have been engaged in violence and confrontation in the past and have a strong influence in the society. These are the organizations with capacity to reach a national agreement conducive to a national unity movement.

UNDP works through local authorities, civil society and NGOs, recognizing that solutions must be nationally developed and owned. UNDP's work in responding to emergencies, wherever feasible, is guided by a development approach that focuses on longer term development opportunities and crisis prevention. For example, UNDP provided sustainable income opportunities through its land rehabilitation programme to Palestinians who were cut off from their employment in Israeli due to closures.

In this context of internal fragmentation, UNDP has started some initiatives with the purpose of promoting reconciliation and consensus building. The objective is to reduce polarization and create spaces of dialogue and agreement. One of these initiatives is in partnership with Carter Center and a Palestinian NGO; Arab Thought Forum. The goal is to bring together representatives of political parties and civil society organization to exchange ideas and reach consensus on the electoral framework. This provides a common platform in which the political parties discuss the future electoral process, establish relationships and build confidence, after a long period of confrontation and even military clashes. The project is being implemented in 8 Palestinian cities, involving both national and regional leaders from all the parties with parliamentarian representation and some of the smaller parties. Lawmakers, members of the Parties directorate and former officials have been participating in the meetings. The Palestinian electoral council also participates in the meetings. At this moment after years of confrontation and polarization this is the only regular space of interaction between the political parties in which they are trying to reach consensus on a specific issue. Furthermore, the project is also starting to provide technical inputs on electoral reform for the preparation of the elections. UNDP and the Carter Center have been able to convene these spaces as international organizations regarded as neutral and legitimate.

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[38] Peace and Conflict Sensitivity in International Cooperation: An Introductory Overview, Thania Paffenholz

Also in the field of dialogue and cohesion, UNDP is supporting Interpeace which is an international organization that works on reconciliation in several conflict countries. In the oPt, this organization is working at local and provincial level in bringing together social leaders from different organizations and perspectives and sectors (youth, media, NGOs, women, private sector, ex detainees). Local Working groups have been established in some of the most critical and tense places like Hebron, Jenin, and Ramallah. Through this mechanism the leaders intend to identify common priorities and define proposals to be discussed with the local and regional authorities.

UNDP assisted in setting up the Municipal Alliance for Peace (MAP) office at the request of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and the Union of Local Authorities, Israel (ULAI). MAP has contributed to the peace process by keeping the doors open for dialogue at local levels. UNDP also provided logistical support and strengthened the capacities of the two coordinators to support the MAP initiative.

UNDP, in partnership with the Palestinian Association for Development and Reconstructions, distributed food packages to Palestinians not served by other agencies immediately following the 22 day Israeli attack on Gaza at the end of the year. In addition to the large scale human losses, government institutions and industrial complexes were destroyed.

Further, UNDP received USD 20 million funding from the Palestinian Authority (PA) to provide cash compensation to Gazans (identified in the damage assessment reports) whose houses were damaged or destroyed during the Israeli incursion. Additionally, UNDP signed an agreement with the PA to provide cash compensation to farmers and the private sector whose assets have been affected during the incursion. Furthermore, UNDP, in collaboration with international partners and UN agencies is in the process of removing and crushing the rubble of destroyed buildings to pave the way for reconstruction, and is providing livelihood support to deprived families through the DEEP project as well as through CSO grants.

Under a context characterized by violence, the youth are one of the most vulnerable sectors. In partnership with youth organizations, UNDP elaborated a mapping document, identifying main problems affecting the youth and best practices in oPt. Some meetings are being conducted with the Ministry of Youth and youth organizations in order to discuss the document and contribute to the formulation of a public policy on this issue. It is expected to establish a permanent forum for the follow up of the policy and to encourage social participation.

UNDP understands that the unintended results of initiatives could fuel politicization of the process and personal agenda in light of the pending elections in the next 18 months. UNDP has strengthened its Crisis Prevention and Recovery programme under the management of an international programme adviser. The CPR programme is exploring indirect entry points with government and civil society organizations to facilitate reconciliation of differences, consistent with its "do no harm" policy.

4. Factors Affecting the Outcomes

The continuing crisis context of UNDP operations is a major challenge to the achievement of outcomes. The lack of political stability and the lack of a national vision and consensus across and within government institutions further challenge UNDP and its development partners' progress towards achievements. The Israeli incursion of Gaza, at the end of 2008, once again disrupted UNDP's attention from a programme focus to response to emergency operations.

4.1   Programme design and implementation

An integrated programme approach linking outcomes of projects to sustainable results did not exist until the introduction of the Results Based Framework[39] in 2007. The concept of a framework was lacking in the government. Baseline data in earlier projects, where such data exist, are based on government reporting rather than on an objective external assessment. The concepts of transparency, partnerships and information sharing, although introduced, are still new within the Palestinian Authority. Progress has been made in reporting under the infrastructure projects indicating steps towards transparency and accountability.

UNDP's major shift in programme design under the MTSF, integrates the priorities of the PRDP and is reflected in its programme objectives. There is increased recognition within UNDP that programme design is more than a number of projects defined as a "programme" approach. The internal change management process positions UNDP to ensure effective strategically driven programme design rather than activity driven development.

A key tool adopted by UNDP to help ensure effective programme design, is the application of a thorough project review done by the Local Programme Advisory Committee (LPAC), where outcomes, outputs, results, risks, and issues are reviewed and addressed from the outset.

Partnerships between UNDP and ministries have been developed for the purposes of signing off on a "Certificate of Good Work" after the completion of a construction project. For example, the Department of Engineering within the Ministry of Education and the UNDP Engineering team are jointly evaluating the construction of additional classrooms, with both teams signing the certificate, indicating that all safety and education standards are met. Recently, the Italian donor partners have indicated their

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39 RBM is a broad management strategy aimed at achieving significant changes in the way organizations operate, with improving performance (achieving better results) as the central orientation. Key factors include clear objectives, strategy, expected results and performance indicators, reporting results against expected results. UN Evaluation Group Meeting, Rome, 2005

interest in participating in the certification process to ensure their legal protection. This process will be included in the future design of infrastructure programmes.

UNDP's programme design and implementation strategy are guided by its "do no harm" policy and ongoing monitoring is included in progress reports. The potential of fueling conflicts or furthering political agenda was widely recognized throughout the evaluation discussions.   It is widely recognized that programme design and implementation are most successful when there is government capacity and commitment to apply a programme approach which is supported by an institutional framework at central and local levels and efficient mechanisms for aid coordination and oversight.[40]

4.2   Sustainability of results

Sustainability of results in the conflict context is, at best, fragile; however, the potential for sustainability is noted in several programme areas.

The land rehabilitation and cultivation under the Land Regeneration Programme have contributed to the environmental sustainability of lands and the economic sustainability of farmers in the West Bank.

Development of standardized accounting and procurement systems and procedures contributes to sustainability through the accountable and transparent use of resources.

Infrastructure projects have rebuilt and sustained fragile water systems for 11,000 families in the Tulkarem Governorate providing access for economic opportunities for farmers and businesses.

The importance of addressing sustainability in programmes is particularly recognized in recent UNDP's programme documents.   For example, the Leadership Development Programme for civil servants includes an administrative core to manage and ensure the consistent delivery of civil service training.   Additionally, the General Personnel Council, responsible for human resource management has drafted a law that ties promotions to leadership training.

Discussions with government officials in the Justice Sector indicate that the high level of donor involvement in infrastructure projects development has resulted in duplication and confusion in roles, and further complicates assessment of sustainability.

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[40] UNDP Programme Approach, 1997

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

An effective M&E system depends on the factors included in the planning stage, and particularly, the inclusion of baseline data and SMART[41] objectives. Given UNDP's unique role and comparative advantage in the oPt, factors to measure the impact of UNDP's interventions on the conflict using "do no harm" indicators should be included under Indicators. Although other variables could be influencing the conflict, linking interventions to de-escalation of tensions in programme geographic areas could contribute to an improved understanding of UNDP's effectiveness.

UNDP has developed a project planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation circular that includes guidelines to help ensure results based management throughout the programme cycle. The circular also includes a checklist for quality programming that establishes the procedures to be followed by its Local Programme Advisory Committee (LPAC). The checklist identifies fifteen areas for review prior to approval of any programme intervention. This checklist includes factors related to stakeholder participation, contribution to poverty reduction, governance, gender equity, capacity development, sustainability and results orientation. The results orientation component requires adequate baseline data, indicators, benchmarks, measurement and M&E mechanisms.

Additionally a Performance Monitoring Framework has been developed and implemented with data entered in the UNDP MIS system as evidenced by examples provided during the evaluation. However, a more thorough assessment is needed for a clearer understanding of consistent application of the M&E system. Further, quantitative baseline data of soft components should be included in infrastructure projects to accurately measure increased access to social and economic services.

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[41] SMART, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded

6. Conclusions

The Terms of Reference for the evaluation of UNDP's pogrammes to achieve two outcomes: (i) essential infrastructure for economic and social development improved and (ii) Responsive governing institutions strengthened. The evaluation explored progress towards achievement of outcomes through outputs. The conclusions are based on assessment areas outlined in Section 2.3 of the evaluation report.

Effectiveness of implementation in achieving outputs and outcomes; validity and relevance of interventions

The findings from the analysis indicate that implementation and outcomes of the programmes were relevant and consistent with the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan. Major achievements through programme implementation have been realized under Outcome [*essential infrastructure for economic and social development improved*] providing increased access to social, economic and public services. The evaluation further concludes that progress in a number of interventions under the outcome contributed to MDG 1 *eradicating poverty and hunger*, MDG 2, *Achieving universal primary education*, and MDG 7 *ensuring environmental sustainability.*

Infrastructure contributions to the three MDGs were found in the rehabilitation of agricultural lands; restoration of efficient and sustainable water systems; increased access to primary education through addition of classrooms, and increased economic opportunities through short term employment, micro finance loans and land rehabilitation. Further, three hospitals and three modern courthouses were built.

Achievements to the Outcome [*responsive governing institutions strengthened*] were realized particularly under the Ministry of Local Government. Standardized and institutional procedures in the income generation programme and the construction of courthouses under the infrastructure provided cross cutting achievement under the governance outputs.

Contributions of Infrastructure in poverty reduction

The evaluation found major achievements under Outcome 2, *essential infrastructure for economic and social development improved.* Infrastructure development has had a significant impact on the livelihoods and self reliance of individuals and local communities through employment opportunities, land restoration and access to the micro finance sector.

The improvement of essential infrastructure also is also integrated into cross cutting strategies and upstream policy in poverty reduction, strengthening governing institutions and cross cutting issues of gender, youth, crisis sensitivity and sustainability. Enormous implications for sustainable land management has been

realized and nationally owned. The evaluation concludes that micro-finance loans under DEEP are emerging as major vehicles for moving people out of the poverty trap.

Responsive governing institutions strengthened

Progress towards achievement of the three outputs under the outcome [*strengthening responsive governing institutions*] has been realized at central and local level. Although interventions at the central level are in the early implementation stage, Planning and Project Management Units were established in the two leading sectors of Planning and Justice. Information technology systems and automated case systems have been implemented. A national Capacity Development Initiative was signed by the Prime Minister and is in the inception phase to strengthen the capacities of government leaders. Performance benchmarks and capacities of each sector are in the development stage.

Progress towards the development of a Macro Economic Forecast Programme for PRDP 2011 plan has been initiated by the MoP and the PM office using variables of production, political stability and socio-economic variables based on 20 variables compiled at local level.

UNDP contributions to strengthening local government and CSOs have been realized through outputs under both outcomes. Standardized procedure manual developed for local government units have been institutionalized. Amendments to the local government law have been drafted and submitted to the MoLG. Micro finance Institutes have been established and institutionalized as the informal banking sector. A Unified Accounting and Budget System for local government endorsed by the MoLG and a property tax law drafted for critically needed revenues at local levels.

The evaluation finds that progress in achieving output 5 [*the practice of legislatures and locally elected bodies to represent the interests of the people improved*] under the governance outcome has been realized in several areas. The most significant achievement in the output is evidenced by the fair and transparent municipal elections with the support of the Central Elections Commission.

Tangible progress towards results of output 6 [*justice systems and rule of law improved*] is evidenced by the construction of three modern courthouses and the implementation of an automated court system. UNDP has also provided support for a Planning Management Unit in the High Judicial Council. While the interventions under this output are in the early implementation stage, the evaluation finds that the cross sector management and coordination mechanisms in the justice sector are lacking.

Cross Cutting themes in programme design and implementation
UNDP's Capacity Development Initiative, signed by the Prime Minister, demonstrates the government's commitment to develop and implement a Capacity Development Strategy. A comprehensive and focused Capacity Development Strategy, derived from needs assessments and lessons learnt will drive UNDP's programmes in support of the PRDP and will provide a platform and mechanism for donors to support institutional and human resource capacities in a coordinated process.

At the same time, UNDP is working with senior staff in the Prime Minister's Office to help them develop systems and tools so that the Secretariat can carry the mandate of the PMO. The capacity of the PMO to lead, direct and guide the public administration system is critical in improving governance in the oPt. The strengthening of these institutions' visioning and strategic capacities, has implications for stabilizing the state and improving, social and economic development through accountable and transparent performances.

While women have benefited from UNDP's interventions, particular needs are not specifically addressed in programme documents. Baseline data, targets or indicators to reach women are not included in most of the project documents reviewed.

The evaluation found that the establishment of the Sharek Youth Forum, launched by UNDP in 1996, as an independent Palestinian organization, is a major entity in raising the priority of youth issues in the PRDP and in supporting the development of a youth policy and strategy.

Crisis prevention and recovery is embedded in all of UNDP's programmes under its policy of "do no harm." Specific interventions contributing to CPR through the Interpeace Initiative implemented as a forum in five districts for participatory discussions in relation to a longer term Palestinian vision for peace.

Conflict Sensitive Development
In a context characterized by conflict and occupation the development interventions should not only try to contribute to the satisfaction of the social needs of the population, but should also create the conditions for reducing the violence and improving reconciliation dynamics among the people. In this sense, the development interventions should be contextualized and take stock of the conflict dynamics trying to avoid doing harm and fueling the confrontation. Also in the monitoring and evaluation of interventions in a conflict context, it is necessary to measure not only the achievement of the stated objectives but also the effect of the interventions on the conflict situation, either contributing to reduce the tensions or aggravate the existing polarization.

UNDP's Partnership Strategy
UNDP has established long term, collaborative relationships with donor partners over the years. Its five major donor partners include Islamic Development Bank, Japan, Germany, European Commission and Italy. Additionally, it has developed partnerships at all levels of government including the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Local Government. Partnerships contributing to sustainability of outputs have also been created with local authorities and civil society organizations. However, the evaluation indicates government's concern regarding the lack of donor coordination and donor driven projects which can derail strategic planning. This is a global issue in the development context and an opportunity for UNDP to guide a more programme approach among its donor partners.

Factors related to sustainability
The major success story of UNDP's contributions to sustainability has been found in its land rehabilitation and its micro-finance programme, providing loans and economic opportunities to the very poor. Additionally, the standardized accounting, procurement and monitoring systems contribute to sustainability of results.

Unintended Results
The evaluation did not find any unintended results in programme interventions. It was reported, however that there was a tendency of beneficiaries to expect free handouts based on their experiences with donors' contributions over the years. It was reported that this culture of dependency was against UNDP's efforts to restore self reliance and expectations for beneficiaries' investments in programmes.

7. Lessons Learned

A major lesson learned from the design of earlier infrastructure projects is the difficulty in understanding the relationships between inputs, outputs and progress towards achievements of outcomes. For example, early infrastructure projects did not include inputs for the critical soft components of staffing and capacity building requirements, equipment, systems and processes.

Further, the evaluation identified lessons learned for future programming in the following areas:

- One of the key lessons learned from the assessment is the importance of incorporating the soft components of human resources, capacity building needs, equipment, systems and processes in programme design. Because earlier infrastructure planning and project documents did not include the soft components, human resources, equipment, designated space utilization and processes were not available upon completion of construction. For example, sufficient teachers to staff additional classrooms, and professional staff and equipment for hospitals were not available upon completion of construction. The projections and procurement of soft components should be incorporated in the project management plan to ensure the timely availability of the components;

- Another lesson learned is that funds necessary for the soft components not included in the infrastructure budget at the planning stage are difficult to raise from donors after the fact.

- Involving end users in identifying appropriate economic projects relevant to their interests and capabilities increases their ownership and commitment to the success of their projects. It would appear that this participatory process could be expanded beyond DEEP. For example, small grants could be provided for vocational training opportunities relevant to beneficiaries' interests and talents and followed with micro-finance loans for start up business after completion of training.

- Based on the success of DEEP, the provision of initial grants for persons experiencing extreme poverty should be considered for income generation opportunities. These micro-grants could be as small as the cost of a shoe shine stand or a sewing machine.

- The KFW programme was able to lower costs of supplies and to identify local providers through standardized procurement systems. The standardized system contributed to transparent and accountable practices.

- Although the initial training of fifteen local authorities in the use of five procedure processes and manuals was successful, lessons learned from this intervention indicates that piloting this intervention would have allowed more in-depth training and would have been more sustainable. Lessons learned indicate that innovative or change management interventions require pilot testing to assess the absorptive capacities of government officials, to test for unintended results under the "do no harm" policy and to allow for adjustments and revisions as indicated.

- Development interventions could be utilized as a leverage to convene spaces of dialogue between direct or indirect beneficiaries who have been previously engaged in violent disputes and confrontation.

- The limited inclusion of special needs groups in programmes indicates that there is a risk of limited focus on these groups when mainstreaming their issues. For this reason, it is important that the monitoring and evaluation process pay close attention to indicators that assess the participation and specific issues of these groups.

8. Recommendations

UNDP has a window of opportunity, based on its high visibility and credibility as a neutral partner, to push its envelope of assistance under the MTSF and to take an even stronger leadership role in guiding a coordinated development approach among its key partners at all levels.

The recommendations are aligned with UNDP's strategy and comparative advantage in upstream policy work to guide the government's reform and development path. The success of recommendations from the evaluation findings, however, depends on "how quickly and accurately it can link policy, project and programme outcomes, to specific public sector characteristics."[42]

8.1 Enabling national policy and mechanisms

National Vision and Policy

The government has taken a major step in reform through its development of a national plan; however, a national policy is needed to guide future planning. As recognized in the development literature, a policy framework is a "set of guiding principles or rules intended to influence decisions…they are statements rather than high level plans delivering change."[43]   A national policy framework is the first tier of government that represents its vision for the state-building strategy and organizational strategy.

A forum for high level policy discussions among the oPt's top leaders from government, youth leaders, women's groups, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, and media should be initiated in the immediate future to discuss and build consensus on the role of government and implementation strategy in the oPt context. Surveys at grass roots level will provide a voice for Palestinians in the development of a national vision for the oPt's future. The discussions will also contribute to a better understanding among top leaders of the role of government in a global environment. Further, it will bring to focus their responsibilities and in promoting state building.

The national development policy should be communicated as part of the reform and decentralization processes. The national development policy, as well as sector specific policies, is needed, particularly for youth, who represent more than fifty percent of the population.

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[42] *Eduardo Wiesner (1998) "Introduction", Evaluation and Development: the Institutional Dimension, edited by Robert Picciotto and Eduardo Wiesner, Transaction Publishers*
[43] Rushcliffe Borough Council, 2005

The National Development Policy will drive the PA's major development priorities and objectives for PRDP. Pillars of the policy, providing the strategic foundation for the next five to ten years, should address the following:

- Enabled social and macroeconomic policy environment with emphasis on developing leaders among youth, and the socio-economic needs of youth in general
- Expanded crisis prevention, conflict reduction, peace building and the "do no harm" policy framework
- Expanded employment generation opportunities
- Strengthened civil society's voice in governance
- Ensured mainstreaming of environment throughout policies and programmes
- Strengthened the monitoring and evaluation systems within and across sectors

Major policy and planning documents have been drafted over the years. Collection and review of the existing policy drafts should be discussed with the Prime Minister's Office and reviewed for currency and relevancy. The draft documents can provide the background material for the policy discussions. The following series of top level discussions should translate the national vision policy to the major thrusts of the next PRDS and MTSF.

The launching of the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) of the oPt's leaders in conjunction with high level policy discussions should contribute to a clearer understanding of the role of government linked to institutional and human resource development priorities.

Strategic Planning and Functional Review of Ministries

During the evaluation discussions, the Ministry of Planning emphasized the need for sectoral strategic planning of all ministries. The evaluation findings support the need for sectoral planning, including cross functional mechanisms within sectors. The strategic planning process of key ministries is the next step in the national policy and planning process. The Ministry of Justice to support the Rule of Law outcome would provide an entry point for the strategic planning and functional review processes.

Functional reviews of key ministries provide another entry point for the identification of UNDP's institutional development and public sector reform priorities in support of the oPt's vision and development policy.

Strategic Planning at Local Level

The first phase of the Introduction to Participatory Planning Programme resulted in the first strategic plan in a large governorate in the oPt. UNDP's assistance in the development of the Jenin Governorate Strategic Plan was a major contribution towards the outcome of strengthening governing institutions. The plan is also a step in building national ownership. UNDP should take advantage of this significant success story to expedite strategic planning in other governorates.

8.2   Strengthened sustainable livelihood programmes

Infrastructure programmes should be aligned with the national development goals and the MTSF. In order to increase effective access to social and economic services, the soft components of human resources, capacity building needs, technical assistance, and systems and processes should be included and budgeted in the programme documents.

Building on the successes of the land rehabilitation and DEEP programmes, requiring participants to fund a percentage of project costs contributes to sustainability through national ownership.

The DEEP assessment instrument, with comprehensive and specific criteria to qualify the poor for assistance, should be considered for use as a national poverty assessment instrument;

8.3   Raising the priority of youth and gender issues

The social culture of the oPt supports mainstreaming of gender and youth issues into the extended family system. Because solutions to social and economic problems can only come from civil society, UNDP should continue to build partnerships with CSOs to work within the social fabric and the "do no harm" principle. While mainstreaming issues within the family context are important, a strengthened focus on the specific needs of youth and gender through participatory discussions is needed since they represent over 50% of the population.

A stronger emphasis on building the enabling environment across government and the supporting mechanisms within the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Women's Affairs is critical over the next period. A strengthened youth policy will focus on strategies to address the leadership, vocational and employment needs of the youth in a shrinking global market.   A gender equity strategy policy will incorporate the "do no harm" policy by re-enforcing the family system while addressing the needs of women during different life stages, pre and post fertility, social isolation and the needs of widows without male members.

UNDP's movement towards a strong youth policy and strategy underway should be advanced to top priority level and accelerated. Interventions, building on UNDP's successes in building youth leaders through youth parliaments and conflict resolution should be accelerated over the next period. Further, development plans over the remaining MTSF and coming years should focus on addressing the interests of youth who represent 50% of the oPt's population and mainstreaming the issues across all programme.

Surveys on the issues and needs of these sectors, along with the results from UNDP's Mapping of CSOs, identifying their specific expertise areas, will provide important data for the workshop discussions. Two UNV expert advisers, working as counterparts to each Minister will expedite strategic policy development and action plans. The UNV advisers will work closely with UNDP's Women's Empowerment Unit and the newly established PSAT Unit.

8.4   Crisis Prevention and Recovery and Peace Building

Crisis Prevention and Recovery are at the basis of UNDP's work in the oPt. The importance of reducing tensions caused by lack of employment has been recognized in the enormous contributions of short term employment generation and access to grants and loans for small business projects.

Peace building processes to develop youth leaders and to reduce internal conflicts have been implemented in the youth parliament programme and training in conflict resolution. An office for the Municipal Alliance for Peace and staffing of two coordinators has strengthened peace building initiatives at the local level. Support for a *consensus building with political parties* strategy has resulted in the establishment of a partnership with the Carter Center and a national counterpart to promote peace discussions and debate among all stakeholders and at all levels.

Support of reconciliation efforts at different levels of the society is critical to the success of the Palestinian political unity and to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. This will require the development of spaces and scenarios where different sectors of the Palestinian social and political spectrum could gather and discuss key issues for the Palestinian future. The recent implementation of initiatives by UNDP provides the foundation for further development of this area.

8.5   Programme Design

UNDP's work in the infrastructure sector continues to broaden and deepen access to social and economic services to the Palestinian people in areas including, but not limited to, education, health, justice, social centers for women and youth and access to

water. UNDP's enormous contributions in providing vital infrastructure for the delivery of social services has increased UNDP's credibility as an effective and accountable partner with the government, donors and civil society.

To strengthen UNDP's impact in this sector over the next period, funds should be included in programme budgets for the soft components of staffing, capacity building, essential equipment, systems and processes. Further, to ensure that these components are in place at the time construction is completed, they should be reflected and tracked in the Work Breakdown Structure and Gantt Chart of the Project Management Plan.

8.6   UNDP's Organizational Effectiveness

UNDP's internal change management process over the last eighteen months has built the organizational foundation for an emphasis on a programme approach and contributions to upstream policy work. The Terms of Reference for a Policy and Strategy Advisory Team was signed in December, 2008 to guide its current and future programmes. International Programme Advisors/Team Leaders have been hired for the Poverty Reduction and Governance portfolios; Crisis Prevention and Recovery and Peace Building, and Women's Empowerment Programme.

The chart below reflects the principles in moving from a project to a future oriented programme approach.

Status Quo Project	Future-Orientation Programme
Donor-Driven	PA/PRDP/Community Demanded
Short-Term, Ad hoc	Long-Term, strategic
Project, sectoral	Programme, cross sectoral
Project Inheritance	Programme Development
Minimum Report	Culture of M&E Framework
Infrastructure/Humanitarian	Early Recovery/Development
Obsession on deliverables (delivery)	Focus on Results and Human Development Impact
Imitation/Replication	Vision/Innovation

8.7 Strengthened Monitoring and Evaluation

A Monitoring and Evaluation System[44] has been designed consistent with the UNDP Corporate Results Management Guide (RMG) and UNDP's Mid Term Strategic Framework. The M&E system and processes are integrated into the Programme and Project Life Cycles beginning with ensuring alignment of an intervention within the MTSF through the implementation process. Implementation of the Performance Monitoring Framework is in the early implementation process and is evidenced from a review of available reporting forms.

UNDP's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework should be strengthened to define the key assumptions based on the oPt's development priorities that drive programme interventions. Quantifiable baseline data along with indicators should be identified in measurable terms and by date. Effective monitoring and evaluation cannot be provided without this data and are not only important for monitoring and evaluation requirements but also for providing data for programme guidance and determining the contributions of partners.   Additionally, they are valuable in building internal morale through measurable evidence of UNDP's performance and achievements.

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[44] Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Guidelines, UNDP/PAPP, 2009

ANNEX

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