



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Gender equality and women's empowerment in Palestine - Final Joint Evaluation

Quick Facts

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Technical Area: *GENDER*

Evaluation Management: *RO-Beirut;
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Taken from the Executive Summary of the MDG Joint Evaluation Report

The MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Programme in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) has been implemented by six United Nations (UN) agencies in an effort to address gender based violence (GBV), violence against women (VAW), political participation of women and equal economic rights in a joint effort by strengthening the national Gender Machinery in oPt for the very first time.

Although the time period for writing the proposal of the joint program was short and did not allow for proper consultations with all stakeholders equally, the inception phase was, nevertheless,

longer and allowed for more participation and involvement by social, political and economic actors from the West Bank and Gaza, thus making the JP integrative and holistic in its nature. Activities were implemented through a two-tier process by linking research with policy action to improve service provision of the Palestinian Authority, its institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs), and by developing sustainable institutional capacities and encouraging innovative projects. Thus, the JP has significantly contributed to the goals of the thematic window on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment of the MDG Achievement Fund, which has been funding the JP with a total amount of 9.000.000 USD.

Despite the challenges to set up an organizational structure based on the specifications of the MDG-F Implementation Guidelines, which would have enabled the JP to be implemented more smoothly, the JP has nevertheless achieved measurable progress in addressing and contributing to the achievement of the MDGs at the national level:

- Through the development and endorsement of the Violence Against Women (VAW) Strategy, which was enacted in January 2011 by the Ministers Cabinet,
- The implementation of the VAW Strategy through the line ministries by developing action plans,
- In support of the above, the draft of the Cross-Sectoral National Strategy on Gender (CSNSG) 2011-2013, the very first in its kind advocating to mainstream gender across all sectors in oPt,

- The development of the Media and Advocacy Strategy on GEWE issues for the very first time in oPt,
- The institutionalization of the national Gender Machinery towards the end of the JP by means of establishing a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Unit within the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA), being in charge of developing and monitoring national gender indicators in close cooperation with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and the Development Assistance and Reform Platform (DARP) of the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MoPAD), whereby gender mainstreaming can be initiated through a three tier process: by linking the national level with that of the sub-national and local (tawassol) and vice versa,
- The publication of the most gender sensitive “violence survey”, the PCBS has ever published through capacity development interventions by the JP, hence enabling policy-makers to address violence cases in a much more targeted and comprehensive way,
- The development of guidelines for Family Protection Units of the Police, the curricula to eliminate VAW in schools and the one for lawyers, judges and prosecutors on how to deal with cases of VAW, which were institutionalized within the relevant departments,
- The establishment of the National Committee on Women’s Employment (NCWE) as an advisory body to the Minister of Labor. The NCWE was endorsed by the Cabinet of Ministers and is comprising of the Ministry of Labor (MoL), Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA), Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU), Development Center of Birzeit University and the Center for Democracy and Women’s Rights. It’s mandate is to advocate for gender sensitive policies, legislations, capacity building interventions, social safety net for women workers and a healthy work environment, and
- The JP allowed UN agencies to develop more holistic interventions in the field of GBV, VAW and GEWE. It also increased the organizations’ technical expertise to mainstream gender within their programmatic

areas. UNRWA, for instance, adopted GEWE, GBV and VAW within its programmatic areas for the very first time in oPt, rightly so, as violence cases are more prevalent in the refugee camps, one finding the latest violence survey.

The outreach of the JP went beyond the contribution to MDG 1 and MDG 3; in fact it contributed to 6 out of 8 MDGs at the micro, meso and macro level, thus making the JP a success story.

The contribution of the JP via MoPAD to support the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is rated as medium, although oPt has been involved in the Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey for the very first time only two years ago. This is an average result.

Recommendations

The contribution of the JP to the Delivering as One approach/ UN reform, however, is rather low. In order to take up the success stories and replicate them in possible/ future JP interventions, the following recommendations are proposed in order to ensure sustainability of the JP accomplishments.

1. To conduct an in depth capacity development needs assessment of the capacities of the main implementing ministries at the design phase, in order to better address the structural / systematic weaknesses that exist within the PA institutions so as to ensure sustainability and impact. UNDP’s and UN Women’s wide repository of knowledge products on issues such as capacity development within public institutions/ for gender mainstreaming should be continuously utilized for this purpose as well as ILO’s Participatory Gender Audit Strategy.

2. The design of the programme should be more results based. The Results Based Management (RBM) tool of the UN should be more adhered to. Results and outputs should be formulated to be as accurate as possible. The activities should then be designed to lead to the desired results, outputs and outcomes.

3. The monitoring should exceed the monitoring of activities into monitoring and evaluating the achievements of outputs. Monitoring reports

should elaborate on the problems and challenges faced by the implementers to include main discussion points and suggested solutions.

4. A proper review of the ToRs of the NSC, PMC, PS and PMT should be done at the inception phase. The review should examine whether the proposed governance structure is a) applicable to the current context and b) by considering local needs and existing capacities.

5. The UN agencies financial systems should be adjusted to produce disaggregated financial data on the West Bank and Gaza by showing the amounts disbursed in Gaza and the West Bank separately, so that financial imbalances favouring West Bank over Gaza are not occurring.

6. A technical review of the budget- as recommended in the midterm evaluation- remains also valid in the final evaluation. It should be done prior to the approval of the application and include an analysis of the annual allocations. Further, it is recommended that the review should also appraise the accuracy of the costs. The evaluation specifically recommends the use of the Activity-Based Costing (ABC) method in preparing budgets, because this method is consistent with the concepts of RBM. The evaluation is also not recommending the use of the commitment rate method for fund releases in JP that may be supported by the MDG-F in the future.

7. The Media and Advocacy Strategy should be developed at the outset of program implementation (design phase). It should specify the type of messages, advocacy campaigns and strategies to be used in order for the main messages to be mainstreamed. The current Strategy could be amended accordingly and should target more men, youth male, and children and marginalized groups.

8. It is recommended that in future projects the establishment of an M&E to monitor gender equity goals at the national, sub-national and local level should be established at the onset of the program, in order to centralize data on gender based violence, political participation and economic empowerment as well as other women related issues. The unit should also be equipped to provide support and guidance to other ministries and agencies so that all sectoral strategies are gender mainstreamed and monitored based on harmonized national gender indicators.

9. Strengthening of and aligning the referral system created by MoH/ MoSA and Family Protection Unit of Police (MoI) with that of UNRWA.

Even though UNRWA is operating under a different legal environment to which the one of the national institutions do not apply, the further institutionalization of the referral system within UNRWA is pivotal to address the highest amount of GBV and any other type of violence cases in the future. Alliances should be built with the EU funded projects on the establishment of a national referral system.

The no contact policy with the existing government and public institutions in Gaza should be revised, as the humanitarian as well as the developmental needs of Gaza is severe and pressing. To ensure sustainability and impact of future programs in Gaza, a focus and emphasis on public institutional building is essential.

Specifically, a recommendation concerning ILO is: **ILO and UNRWA** should continue with their income generation projects (TVET, SME, cooperatives and women engineers placement projects) in the next phase, by putting more emphasize on the integration of women and marginalized groups (youth criminals, youth that are trafficking etc.) into the local labor market and measuring the impact of such interventions by developing local indicators with regard to improvement of income, decline of poverty rate, increase of GDP in oPt, social coherence (differentiation into Gaza and WB) through JP intervention. These indicators could be developed with MoLG, MoSA, MoEHE and MoL through a bottom up approach and channelled through the relevant sectoral strategies (Employment, Social Protection, Agriculture and Economic Development). Emphasize should also be given to standardization and equalization of certification received by youth criminals with that of students certified by the MoEHE. UN agencies should facilitate this process by enabling MoSA, MoEHE and MoL to develop a policy paper to take action in this regard.