
Programme Title:	Creating one-stop-shop for sustainable businesses
Country:	occupied Palestinian territory

I. Joint Programme Information

Joint Programme Information

Programme title:

Creating one-stop-shop for sustainable businesses

Sectorial area of intervention and policy objectives

Inclusive economic growth for poverty eradication

 Create opportunities for decent jobs and secure livelihoods.

 Create better government policies and fair and accountable public institutions.

 Promote inclusive and sustainable business practices.

UN Lead Agency:

UN Women (UN Women)

UN Participating Organizations:

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

International Trade Centre (ITC)

Local Partners:

Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA)

Palestinian Ministry of National Economy (MoNE)

TBD: Women Business Forum (WBF)/Palestinian Business Women Association (ASALA)/Palestine for Credit and Development (FATEN)

Palestinian Standards Institution (PSI)

Palestine Trade Center-PalTrade

Economic and Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC)

Rozana Business Women Group

Al Thimar Company

Report submitted by

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Reporting Period Ending:

Monday, May 1, 2017

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III. Financial information

Detailed Financial Report:

 [Joint Programme Work Plan and Budget - Final.xlsx](#)

SDG-F Funds

UN Agency	Total approved funds	Total funds Transferred to date	Total funds committed to date	Total funds disbursed to date
UN Women (UN Women)	726,600.00	726,600.00	0.00	726,600.00
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	426,700.00	426,700.00	33,833.57	364,632.43
International Trade Centre (ITC)	346,700.00	346,700.00	3,000.00	317,832.50

Total	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00	36,833.57	1,409,064.93
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Matching Funds

Name of source	Total approved funds	Total funds Transferred to date	Total funds committed to date	Total funds disbursed to date
UN Women	700,000.00	700,000.00	0.00	575,256.00
Food and Agriculture Organization	450,000.00	450,000.00	0.00	450,000.00
International Trade Center	350,000.00	350,000.00	0.00	340,000.00

Total	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00	0.00	1,365,256.00
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IV. Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries – Breakdown

Beneficiary type - individual	Total	Female	Male	Comments
Farmers				
Entrepreneurs	45	45		45 women entrepreneurs trained and received direct support. Note that during the programme implementation, 2 participating MSME's dropped out of the programme thus towards the second half of the implementation the total number of MSME's reached 43.
Civil servants/government	198	128	70	During the reporting period, a total of 91 public servants (56 F & 35 M) working the MoA and MoNE participated in training related to gender-responsive services.
Indigenous				

Children				
Youth				
Private Sector (Staff)	18	14	4	Through the previous reporting period, 16 Staff members from the two Palestinian companies went through a gender audit by UN Women, and 2 women running two businesses Shops by FAO.
Women's Associations/ cooperatives members	637	631	6	Within the current reporting period, additional 492 women members of targeted cooperatives received training and /or other direct support. This brings the total number of training beneficiaries to 637 for the first 18 months
Total	898	818	80	

Beneficiary type - institutional	Total	Comments
SMEs	45.00	MSME's (30 WB and 15 Gaza).
Cooperatives	23.00	Within the current reporting period, additional 3 Cooperatives were targeted, where they contracted the business shops as selling points for selling points. This brings the total number to 23 for the first 18 months.
Government/municipal organizations	6.00	Within the current reporting period, the Ministry of Culture participated in the consultations sessions related to the Policy Paper.
Private sector	4.00	No additional companies were targeted during this period. The JP continued working with the two Palestinian Private companies on the Gender Audits and the 2 Businesses Shops created with the support of FAO.
Community-based organizations		
NGOs		
Total	78	

Indirect Beneficiaries – Breakdown

Beneficiary type - individual	Total	Female	Male	Comments
Farmers				
Entrepreneurs				
Civil servants/government				
Indigenous				
Children				
Youth				
Cooperative members	3,567			Estimated number of family members of 637 cooperative beneficiaries indicated above, assessed using the average West Bank household size of 4.9 (PCBS, 2015). Gender disaggregation is not possible for this figure.

MSME's members and their families	1,506			Individual beneficiaries are calculated based on taking the average household of women families and the average of employees that the MSMEs have.
Total	5,073	0.00		

Beneficiary type - institutional	Total	Comments
SMEs		
Cooperatives		
Government/municipal organizations		
Private sector		
Community-based organizations		
NGOs		
Total		

Any other information regarding JP beneficiaries*:

□ UN Women, through the established consortium, continued to provide technical support and hands on coaching to the participating MEME's with focus on product development and marketing during the reporting period. Technical training and coaching related to pricing, costing, marketing communications, distribution channels, shipping, and custom clearance was provided to the participating MSME's to ensure their familiarity with marketing strategies and interventions that enable them to expand their sales markets. In addition, the participating MSME's were provided with extensive support related to product development.

□ The two business shops established through FAO's support continued to sell products by the 23 women's associations/cooperatives - produced by their 637 female and 185 male members - to the general public. The marketing plan for each of the established "Business Shops" in Jenin and Halhoul developed in the previous reporting period were rolled out with the aim of improving the quality and competitiveness of the products; opening new markets and increasing sales volumes; and raising the market profile of products produced by rural women among Palestinian consumers. The two business shops participated in six exhibitions in Hebron, Ramallah, Jenin and Amman, in addition to participating in the project's closing event. Furthermore, the two business shops were provided with software and hardware for managing their business as well as coaching to enhance their knowledge of business management and accounting software.

□ As a result of ITC intervention, the JP beneficiaries gained a better understanding of export requirements, and improved their skills in negotiating and communicating with buyers. They became more aware and acquired greater knowledge of market requirements and current market trends. ITC's hands-on coaching, advisory services, and market linkages efforts have resulted in increased sales in both local and international markets, which was one of the main challenges women-owned MSMEs and cooperatives were facing. The JP beneficiaries benefitted from a continued coaching on product development based on feedback provided by interested buyers (collected by ITC). By improving the products, the sales of women beneficiaries increased by 80% in the local and international markets, and new job opportunities were created.

□ The JP, through ITC, facilitated the participation of women MSMEs in exhibitions in the Abu Dhabi, United

Arab Emirates; Berlin, Germany; Geneva, Switzerland by ITC, and several local exhibitions by FAO and UN Women. It also included facilitation of B2B meetings for MSMEs with prospective buyers as well as organizing a trip for a group of German traders specialising in ethnic foods to Palestine to meet with and explore business opportunities with cooperatives. Moreover, NFC –the intermediary exporter- was supported by ITC to have representation in the “SIAL Food Event” in Paris, as well as to present its products to and meet with a wide range of potential European buyers in April 2017 (several of them have expressed strong interest). Such efforts helped beneficiaries to learn about the concept of perceived value and to be exposed to international markets. Overall, the support provided to MSMEs and cooperatives to enhance their participation in trade has resulted in increasing their sales and enabled a few of them to create new market linkages.

V. Joint Programme Progress

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Progress	Difficulties	Expected deliverables
JP Outcome 1: Public and private sectors have enhanced policies and practices for inclusive socio-economic development of women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives	A policy paper incorporating the main national policy directions related to women's economic participation was drafted during the reporting period. The policy paper was produced under the auspices of the National Committee for the Women's Employment (NCWE) in full partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture, National Economy, Labor and Women's Affairs. It focused on 1) the protection of local products of the women MSMEs and 2) creating incentives for women businesses and cooperatives. The policy paper was prepared based on national priorities stipulated in the National Policy Agenda and the sector and sub-sector strategies and sets the basis for identifying priority areas that requires the development of policy instruments that will shape the policy intervention works for the main stakeholders involved including the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of National Economy, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Women's Affairs.	<p>Lack of consensus on the priorities and contents of the policy paper as well as the target groups by main stakeholders, which made it difficult to agree on the final product and policy priorities. For example, a power struggle has taken place on whether this policy should target only women in the agricultural sector only, or all women in the economic sector, which has posed a challenge towards finalizing the policy paper.</p> <p>Lack of support from high-level decision makers in relevant government institutions, including for the policy paper; and the challenging overall socio-economic situation and political instability affecting Palestine.</p> <p>Applying any new policies require a national dialogue involving the private sector as well as public. The dialogue will need to be initiated by the government and it is not very clear nationally what is the financial implications for the private sector to adopt any new policies (if any). Also, there is no monitoring mechanisms that are applied to ensure the proper implementation. This will also need the Legislative Council's approval, which is not active at this moment.</p>	UN Women will continue working on the operationalization of the policies and on developing individual plans for each of the four targeted ministries to translate these policies into actions. These efforts are also aimed at enhancing the accountability of the PA line ministries and ensuring the application of the policy priorities benefiting women in the economic sector.
JP Output 1.1: Palestinian public institutions are better able to develop and apply more equitable policies and technical services to support and protect increased economic activity in the private sector.	During the reporting period, 91 public servants (56 F & 35 M) improved their knowledge of gender concepts and the meaning of gender mainstreaming. The public servants from the Ministry of National Economy and the Ministry of Agriculture participated in a capacity building trainings and awareness raising sessions aimed at developing the skills and knowledge of the ministries' staff for developing gender sensitive policies. The targeted staff members together with staff from the Ministry of Labor and under the leadership of the National Committee for Women's Employment (NCWE) worked with the national consultant hired through the JP to develop policy proposals for: (i) instituting mechanisms that provide market protection for traditional agricultural and cultural products produced and manufactured by women MSMEs and cooperatives from unfair competition; and (ii) providing growth and development incentives for women-owned/led cooperatives in the agriculture sector. The final policy paper, which integrated policies for both protection and incentive provision, was submitted to the NCWE for final revision and approval, after having been revised on the basis of recommendations given by senior PA officials, including the Prime Minister's Policy Advisor, in "validation workshop" held in Ramallah. With a view of pooling efforts to develop the two policies on protection of local products and giving incentives for women cooperatives, a variety of meetings were conducted by the policy making consultant with a multitude of stakeholders in order to identify a baseline to prepare the policy. Moreover, two national consultation sessions were conducted, the first workshop targeted, representatives from the civil society and the private sector, women entrepreneurs and cooperatives, while the second targeted; the public sector and governmental institutions. The two consultation sessions intended to discuss the policies and mechanisms related to the development and protection of the Palestinian traditional and agriculture products. The two sessions came up with recommendations that have been taken in consideration in the first draft.	The capacity of private and public sector to adopt gender sensitive policies and practices is at a low level and no policies are in place to support women economic empowerment. Therefore, a participatory approach has been chosen to develop these policies and enhance gender sensitive practices.	UN Women will continue working with the national stakeholders on developing policy instruments to ensure the implementation of the Policy Paper. Work is ongoing on identifying policy instruments that could be endorsed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Ministry of National Economy, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Agriculture.
JP Output 1.2: Targeted private companies have increased engagement and social responsibility towards inclusion of women in the economic sector based on values and gender equality and promotion of women rights	Two private companies –The Bank of Palestine (BoP) and Birzeit Pharmaceuticals Company (BPC), the largest companies in their respective sectors- have been assisted to undertake a comprehensive gender audit using ILO's gender audit methodology. This was done through a participatory process, facilitated by local experts certified by ILO that involved building gender awareness and analysis capacity within both companies through training and accompaniment of 14 staff, and participation of more than 100 staff from both companies in the assessment activities through focus group discussions and interviews. The process culminated in an audit report for each company, with policy and operational recommendations for enhancing equality and gender equity in the workplace and in key operations/services. As envisaged in the JP's results framework, recommendations included suggestions for changes in the complaint mechanisms and policies related to sexual harassment, which were being under consideration by the Board of the two companies at the time of evaluation. The two private companies have shown high commitment towards the inclusion of gender sensitive policies. Particularly, Bank of Palestine expressed their interest to embed part of the recommendations raised by the Gender Audit.	The risk of translating the two private company's commitments towards concrete actions, due to additional financial resources that might be needed and the commitment by top management to implement any recommendations. UN Women approach was based on raising the awareness of the private sector on the importance of women engagement in the economic sector. UN Women will enter into a strategic dialogue with the private sector to address the main risks and benefits of applying gender equality. Also, UN Women will assist the companies set in place the most effective action plan for implementation of gender equality and promotion of women rights in the private sector.	UN Women will continue working with the two private sector companies and others on the inclusion of more women through introducing and implementing the recommendations of the Gender Audit, building on the results and recommendations of the JP final evaluation.

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Progress	Difficulties	Expected deliverables
<p>JP Outcome 2: Increase access and competitiveness of women run MSME's and cooperatives' products in local, regional and international markets.</p>	<p>23 women's cooperatives have contractual agreements to supply two private business shops with their products for direct sales. The two shops are dedicated to selling products by the women's cooperatives providing them with direct access to the local market. Both companies, Al-Rozana and Al-Thimar, witnessed impressive increases in their sales turnover in 2016 compared to the baseline (40% and 68.1%, respectively). For Althimar Company in Jenin sales to the public during the project implementation period totalled 262,896 NIS (about USD 72,000), while for Al Rozana Company in Halhoul sales to the public totalled 149, 834 NIS (about USD 41,000), for a combined total sale from the two shops of around USD 113,000. In addition, more than USD 205,000 was generated from exports. New Company Farm, an export intermediary used by the JP to support cooperatives, reported a record US\$ 177,334 in purchases from cooperatives in 2016, of which one third (34% or US\$ 60,294) was from 13 cooperatives targeted by the JP.</p> <p>35 of the 43 targeted MSMEs (81.2%) realized sales turnover increased since the beginning of the programme. On average, targeted MSMEs reported a 28.6% increase in their sales turnover compared to 2014, well above the JP's target of 20%. Among those MSMEs that witnessed increases in sales, the average increase was 46.2%, with 12 more MSMEs having witnessed three-digit growth figures in their sales (ranging between 100-800%) between 2014 and 2016. Discussions with the women owners of the targeted MSMEs strongly suggest that the support provided by the JP - particularly registration (which enabled the women to access market corporate channels that were untenable otherwise), advice on marketing to corporate buyers, exhibitions, and product development support provided by ITC, played a central role in increasing their sales.</p>	<p>The Palestinian Standards Institute's standards do not yet exist for all of the products produced by the cooperatives. A cooperation agreement was signed with the Palestine Standards Institute (PSI) to develop Palestinian standards for four food products - maktous, thyme, freekeh and maftoul. Of these, PSI standards are ready for Maftool, Zaatar and Maktous, while for Freekeh the standards were not yet field tested because of seasonality.</p> <p>This project has supported the development of four new sets of standards. One mitigation measure for the absence of PSI standards was the development of the product manuals which also aim to streamline quality and create a culture of continuous quality assessment among producers.</p> <p>The ability and willingness of the MSME's and cooperatives to apply all the skills they have acquired and to translate the theoretical concepts to practical procedures in their business plans.</p> <p>UN Women adopted different approaches to ensure increasing the competitiveness of the MSME's and Cooperatives through on job training, Business to Business and coaching.</p>	
<p>JP Output 2.1: Women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives strengthen their capacity to improve their competitiveness in a sustainable and environmentally responsible way</p>	<p>The two business shops (Al Thimar and Al Rozana), opened in the first reporting period, continued to provide access to the local market to women cooperatives in the West Bank and received additional support through training and in-kind assistance to reinforce their capacities and autonomy. During the reporting period, the two shops maintained and strengthened their sales relationships with their 23 supplier cooperatives as well as received trainings and materials (computer and software) to enhance their bookkeeping practices. The shops create a direct linkage between the cooperatives and the consumers allowing the cooperatives an effective access to the local market and are fully stocked with products from the women cooperatives. Under the Baitutie brand, the shops have increased their efforts to locally market the products by participating in six food exhibitions, namely the Amman International Exhibition (November 2016 and March 2017), Jenin Saturday Market (March 2017), Al Birah Food Exhibition (March 2017), ASALAH organized exhibition in Ramallah (mid-March 2017), Near East Foundation Exhibition in Ramallah (March 2017) and the Hebron University Exhibition (April 2017). The unified, comprehensive marketing plan designed for both companies (Althimar and Alrozana) during the last reporting period was rolled out. Building on previous coaching and marketing campaigns conducted during previous reporting periods, the work of the marketing plan focused on improving the quality and competitiveness of products; opening new markets and increasing sales; and raising the market profile of the products produced by women's cooperatives among Palestinian consumers.</p> <p>FAO continued to provide technical support to the participating women's cooperatives during the reporting period. During the project's implementation, 637 women from the cooperatives selling their products at the two shops received training and coaching related to food processing, food safety and quality control, packaging and labeling, and marketing. Twenty operational manuals tailored to the needs of the 20 targeted women cooperatives were developed and rolled out to normalize the quality of their products and marketing services that are linked to the two shops. Through matching funds, four of the cooperatives received a variety of inputs and training as well as coaching and support to build a sales relationship with the West Bank-based marketing firms Mount of Green Olives Company and New Farm. Furthermore, FAO strengthened the institutional and managerial capacities of these women's cooperatives through introducing ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems as well as building the capacities of their management and finance staff to conduct financial business analysis and economic feasibility assessments. In addition, matching funds were used to procure inputs for the two business shops, including a new sign for Al Rozana and a redesigned set of labels for 20 products featuring the Baitutie logo as well as freezers, display refrigerators, pasteurization equipment and other equipment required for high quality processing.</p> <p>UN Women and ITC continued providing capacity developing initiatives to the participating MSME's during the reporting period, including coaching and training. Both UN Women and ITC facilitated training sessions on topics ranging from financial management, business strategy design and export quality management to negotiations skills and gender and business. Work with the women on improving product design continued and included coaching women in producing new collections that are in line with international market requirements while at the same time upholding traditional artistry. During the reporting period, 43 women MSMEs participated in a technical training related to shipping and custom clearance services in addition to coaching services on reviewing the certificates and documents needed for shipment to ensure that the shipment is safely delivered on time to the final customers. The participating MSME's participated in a three days training course on "Distribution Channels" organized to familiarize the MSMEs with the network used to get a product to the wholesaler or retailer, and how to calculate their breakeven point and ensure profitability from their deals with wholesalers, retailers, and direct sales. As a result of the training, 78% of the women MSMEs are now keeping their business accounts separate from their personal accounts demonstrates that MSMEs started recognizing the importance of keeping business accounts separate as their businesses started to take the shape of legal entities. Moreover, 90% are now aware of the importance of proper bookkeeping and 48% of the MSMEs reported that they started using the Excel templates in recording all the data into designated books. 15% of the women MSMEs employed accountants to do the bookkeeping. Furthermore, the majority of the women MSMEs are now aware of the importance of customizing their products to meet the needs of their customers (58% of the MSMEs are now customizing their products to meet the needs of their customers whether individuals or organizations) and keeping a database of their customers to make sure of continuing communication and feedback between each other.</p> <p>UN Women, through the established consortium, continued the process of legal registration of the MSME's with the MoNE and the Chambers of Commerce for unregistered MSMEs in addition to providing technical assistance to registered MSME's to re-register, as needed. 23 MSME's were provided with support to register with MoNE for the first time, 17 women MSMEs were provided with support to obtain membership in Chamber of commerce and 12 women were assisted to renew registration they previously had. It is worth mentioning that two of the 17 MSMEs that got registered with MoNE were registered as industrial companies, whereas the remaining 15 were registered as individually-owned enterprises. Moreover, The Palestinian Shippers Council (Consortium Partner) in coordination with the Gender Unit in the MoNE supported women MSMEs to register their trademarks. In addition to the above, 17 MSME's have registered internet web domain names allowing them to communicate with customers and partners more professionally.</p> <p>Furthermore, and to improve the women MSMEs competitiveness, a list of local, regional, and international sources for raw materials required in the production process of the MSMEs products was prepared by the partner consortium and distributed to the MEME's. The list will provide the MEME's with a future reference to be able to get lower prices for raw materials.</p>	<p>Some of the women MSME's resisted registering their businesses officially with the MoNE and the Chambers of Commerce because of their fears of being subject to taxes. To tackle this problem awareness group sessions were held with the MSMEs to explain the importance of registration of their businesses on the short run and the long run and to encourage them to take this step.</p> <p>Political conditions and geographical barriers restricting movement of MSMEs affected the commitment of some women MSMEs in the capacity building training programme; however, the JP Management team took these circumstances into consideration and the mitigation plan was to distribute the trainings according to the locations of the MSMEs rather than organizing centralized trainings.</p>	

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Progress	Difficulties	Expected deliverables
<p>JP Output 2.2: Women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives increase their participation in trade</p>	<p>A market led approach was used to ensure that the targeted products, from both cultural and agricultural products, will successfully access to the targeted markets, as follows:</p> <p>1. Food products: 1- Products with export potential were selected by ITC expert, and a roadmap on the international market requirements was provided: A field visit was organised by ITC to the State of Palestine in May 2015, with the aim of selecting the most promising products for export to Europe and of identifying gaps between the local business practices and international standards. During the visit, cooperatives and producer groups managed and owned by women producers and entrepreneurs were visited across the West Bank, and participated in workshop on export marketing. As a result of this mission, the products with the best export potential were selected; several criteria were used for the selection of the products. These criteria concern both the supply and the demand side of the market, as well as the intervention logic. A comparison of the current status of the selected projects with the required international market standards, in terms of packaging, certification, volume, promotion, etc., was conducted. The main issues identified in the analysis are as follows: low level of quality management and the small scale production process limit the market to that segment that is most eager to buy the product. To overcome the limitation in export skills of the producer groups, as well as the small production volumes, ITC recommended using a supply chain or value chain approach. In this case, ITC selected New Farm (intermediary exporter) to take over the role of exporting and export marketing and to ensure that the market requirements provided by ITC experts are met prior to committing to any transaction.</p> <p>2. Coaching and backstopping of the intermediary exporter to meet international requirements provided: The intermediary exporter "New Farm Company" was able to align the selected products with the market requirements. They have better understanding of market requirements. This was one of the main results of the continued coaching and guidance provided to the intermediary exporter by ITC expert. The backstopping component covered several aspects, including: compliance requirements, labelling requirements, pricing, packaging, and the best marketing and sales approach. A compliance check list, labelling check list, and a marketing strategy have been provided to the intermediary exporter. This has resulted in updated price lists and information sheets and may have contributed to more effective communication with prospective clients</p> <p>3. Market linkages were created with optional buyers from the EU markets: - An intensive marketing campaign of six months took place from September 2016 until April 2017. The campaign was conducted by the ITC in collaboration with the beneficiary export company New Farm Company (NFC). During the campaign, more than fifty potential buyers have been contacted in the EU market, specifically, Germany, Netherlands, and the UK. - Meetings with potential buyers: ITC met with potential buyers in the trade fairs of SIAL Paris, which took place in October 2016, and Biofach Nuremberg, which took place in February 2017. Samples, brochures, product specifications, prices and other information were shared with interested prospects. Feedback was collected by ITC expert from the buyers. For more details, please review the report on SIAL event in annex 4 - Business Tour was organised for food representatives to Europe: A business tour took place from 27 March to 2 April 2017. The objective of the tour was to promote the Palestinian cooking among French and English cooks, and to participate in the business meetings sessions (B2B meetings) organized by ITC expert. In this tour the intermediary exporter and the FAO representative together with the ITC met prospective customers in the Netherlands, Germany and France. Together with the well-known author Ms Joudie Kalla, writer of Palestine on a Plate, a dinner annex promotion event was organised in Paris. Another promotion event is being organised in Paris with the French chef cook Vincent Piette. The marketing campaign resulted in the following :(i) three buyers have expressed their firm intention to buy products from New Farm Company . These companies are based in the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Canada. The concrete product interest is for maftoul, freekeh, za'atar, olive oil, olive tapenade, and maqdous. The webshop downtownsales.co.uk based in London committed to list all products from the catalogue, while also offering them in three physical shops they have in London. Twelve other buyers are classified as high priority prospects (category A) and have a good chance to start buying in the foreseeable future.</p> <p>2) Cultural products: Similar approach was used with women owned SMEs producing cultural products. conducted to assist the product development process for the EU/Netherlands market. Details are below: - Analysing markets requirements: ITC undertook two market studies (EU and MENA region) with the objective to find new buyers to source from the targeted women owned SMEs and cooperatives, and to identify market requirements. ITC has finalized its work on product design and development with this group of beneficiaries, based on the recommendations provided in market requirements studies undertaken in March 2015. In addition to that, marketing research for the Portfolio of Products was - Collecting, continuously, feedback from buyers on adjusting products: During the life cycle of the project, women owned SMEs and cooperatives had the opportunity to learn about the concept of perceived value, and market requirements. Through hand on holding, advisory, and coaching, women were able to adjust their products to match buyers' requirements. - Linkages with buyers: ITC contacted more than 109 organizations, mostly in the UK, Germany, USA and the Netherlands, and more than fourteen advanced negotiations with prospective customers took place; five/seven orders took place in Q1 2017 . - Creating Linkages with buyers, including, high-end design brands for women in the handicraft sector and famous cooks for the food sector in Paris and the United Kingdom, in addition to creating opportunities with hotels (chains) and resorts in the US: This project has made it possible to link targeted women in handicraft with designers from the US and European markets. - Matchmaking Events: Organization for the participation of a group of the Palestinian businesswomen in the textile international fair in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on 16-19 April. The selected group of women showcased their products at the International Textile Fair in Abu Dhabi, alongside exhibitors from Europe, Turkey India, China, India, Japan and Korea. Business-to-business (B2B) meetings with buyers in the UAE following the Fair have been arranged. ITC also organised for the participation of women to the Bazaar Berlin that took place in the period Nov.16-20. Furthermore, ITC presented samples from other Palestinian women entrepreneurs at the Caspian Fashion Week, which took place in Astrakhan on 21-24 April. Moreover, ITC organized for a trip for a group of German potential buyers to Palestine during the period 9-13 May 2016. A major "mainstream" importer joined the tour.</p>	<p>This output has faced no significant obstacles to implementation, but rather faced technical limitations (the JP managed to overcome): The main challenge in achieving this output is the lack of certification for food products and quality of cultural products. Also the limited supply of these products might be a challenge, which can be overcome by compiling supply from different suppliers/ targeted women beneficiaries. Lack of availability of the local raw material is another challenge which requires that women businesses import/buy raw materials from other countries. Hence, more work towards improving their experience in supply chains management. Women businesses faced challenges in accessing the EU market due to: Small processing units Small scale of production. Facilities often did not comply with requirements for food processing (Good Manufacturing Practices) Working procedures were often informal and did not generally comply with GMP. No formal quality and food safety systems were used, nor did they own certifications. Focus on finished products for the domestic markets, regional markets, or solidarity and ethnic markets abroad with uptake of Palestinian products. Often a dependence on others for their marketing (production on order) but with some encouraging exceptions. Varying levels of business planning and marketing and business skills.</p>	<p>For remedying these challenges it is recommended to; - Consolidate the existing product offer into larger volumes of consistent quality. - Help companies and organisations to introduce certified quality and food safety systems. - Help companies to obtain organic certification. - Develop facilities for exporting ingredients in bulk. - Engage specialised exporters for making market linkages. - Establish a platform for addressing export marketing issues.</p>

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Progress	Difficulties	Expected deliverables
<p>JP Output 2.3: Promotion of Palestinian products produced by women owned MSME's and cooperatives in local, regional and international markets is increased</p>	<p>FAO, ITC and UN Women provided technical and financial support for the promotion of cooperatives and MEME's products during the reporting period.</p> <p>Business Deals:</p> <p>Under the signed cooperation agreement between FAO and the Palestine Standards institution (PSI), specifications for "Maftoul", a product of targeted cooperatives, was developed to bring the number of products with specifications to three. The specifications for freekeh are still being finalized as the results of seasonality related delays. PSI has taken ownership of this activity and is committed to working with Araneh Cooperative to finalize these standards after the project's implementation period. The standards developed for these products based on the specifications will allow for expanding the market for these products to international and regional market.</p> <p>In addition, the two business shops established through the support of FAO continued to build on its agreement with the "Al Hannona Market" in Amman, Jordan. By 1 March 2017, the value of exports to this shop totaled 56,700 (USD 15,500). During the same period, Al Rozana had sold 48,000 NIS (about USD 13,100) of their products at Carrefour in Amman, Jordan. The companies also signed a sales agreement with the local marketing company New Farm, which sells Baitutie products on the local market and generated USD 177,234 as of 1 March 2017.</p> <p>Through the support of the UN Women and the consortium, business deals were concluded with one MSME's to export soap to Germany and the UK. The business deals were worth a total of 40,000 USD. Another MSME managed to establish a business deal and shipped soap to the UK for a total of 50,000 USD.</p> <p>One of the MSME's managed to conduct a business deal to ship 120,000 USD worth of embroidery and handcraft products to Chile. The established One Stop Shop provided technical support related to the shipment including packaging, issuing the needed documents and certificates for shipping and custom clearing.</p> <p>Product Development:</p> <p>During the reporting period, more progress in terms of products development and market linkages for the participating MSME's was achieved. 15 women MSMEs managed to produce new items / new production lines that are currently being promoted on several websites, internal and external retailer stores and in BWF exhibitions. This progress on the MSMEs products came as a result of a comprehensive process that included products assessment for all the MSMEs and on the job coaching that included recommendations in terms of product development, building a brand, packaging and market linkages.</p> <p>Market Linkages and Exhibition:</p> <p>Linkages have been created with the Palestinian Embassy in Switzerland during the reporting period. ITC had several meetings with the Palestinian Ambassador to promote the newly produced collection of the beneficiaries. A showcase for the products will be organised with the embassy in Geneva at the United Nations premises on 2-3 June 2017. The objective is to show the Palestinian culture and heritage. After finalizing the preparatory stage of the product development, the Palestinian Shippers Council and the Business Women Forum and in coordination with the market linkages consultant recruited through the JP conducted several meetings with the MSME's to discuss marketing options of their products. The consultant accordingly approached many retailers locally, regionally and internationally, to promote and explore potential business deals. As part of the efforts for promoting the MSME's products, Carrefour, a leading shopping mall in Jordan, expressed interest in having the soap of one of the women MSMEs to be presented in the mall. Beit Al Turath, a Jordan based company specialized in cultural handicraft, agreed to display MSMEs products in their shops including embroidery, handicrafts and Soaps. Istiklal Library company, one of the oldest and most respected stationary companies in Jordan, agreed to test some products produced by the MSME's particularly wooden boxes, wooden notebooks and coasters and to check their marketability. It is also worth mentioning that the consultant managed also to coordinate with many private companies and tourist stores at the local level who expressed their interest in the MSMEs products like. As a result, Heritage Touch, a participating MSME, concluded a deal with a total of 7000 USD for specialized pillows for a tourism shop in Jerusalem. Also Tujan's Art, another participating MSME, concluded deals the Bank of Palestine and the European Union offices in Palestine.</p> <p>In addition, the JP facilitated the participation of MSME's in the following events and exhibitions: he Baitutie brand, the shops have increased their efforts to locally market the products by participating in six food exhibitions, namely the Amman International Exhibition (November 2016 and March 2017), Jenin Saturday Market (March 2017), Al Birah Food Exhibition (March 2017), ASALAH organized exhibition in Ramallah (mid-March 2017), Near East Foundation Exhibition in Ramallah (March 2017) and the Hebron University Exhibition (April 2017). The two shops helped support ESDC and FAO with the development of 20 product manuals designed to streamline preparation standards. These manuals were designed, printed and disseminated in April 2017. Moreover, the unified, comprehensive marketing plan designed for both companies (Althimar and Alrozana) during the last reporting period was rolled out. Building on previous coaching and marketing campaigns conducted during previous reporting periods, the work of the marketing plan focused on improving the quality and competitiveness of products; opening new markets and increasing sales; and raising the market profile of the products produced by women's cooperatives among Palestinian consumers. Throughout this reporting period our partner consortium BWF and PSC continued their work in facilitation of participation of MSMEs in trade shows and exhibitions, where these exhibitions help the women MSMEs to get exposure, market their products, make network and business deals in addition to open new horizons to new markets. this reporting period witness improve in the sales performance: where the total sales from the beginning of the programme until this reporting period reached more than NIS 240,000, through participation in various local, regional and international exhibitions as listed below.</p> <p>Berlin Market throughout the ITC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Closing Ceremony of the One Stop Shop Programme • BWF Annual Exhibition 2017 • An exhibition with the Ministry of Finance • An exhibition with Friend's Society of Islamic Orphanage School in Jerusalem • The American Consulate Bazaars held in Jerusalem • The Europe Day 	<p>The main difficulty in preparing the cooperatives to meet local, regional and international standards was that PSI standards for the majority of products produced by the cooperatives did not exist before this project began. The three sets of standards developed under this project were adopted by the cooperatives producing the related products; however the standards development process is time and resource intensive, meaning additional sets of standards are yet to be developed.</p>	

Cross-cutting issues

How has the JP addressed during the reporting period (please provide concrete actions):

1) The **sustainability** of the JP work. (200 words)

The JP made appropriate and largely successful efforts to create or strengthen existing conditions likely to foster the continuation and dynamic adaptation of results under Outcome 1 by:

o Contributing to strengthening the overall enabling environment for addressing women's economic rights in the context of the local market for agricultural and cultural products as regards the existing legal and policy frameworks. This included: (i) helping to increase the availability of relevant, locally generated policy analysis and data on gender equality and equity dimensions in different parts of the economic space affecting women producers of agricultural and cultural products, which will remain available to stakeholders beyond the duration of the JP; (ii) helping to develop individual and organizational capacities of key public sector actors (duty bearers as well as gender advocates), and supporting these actors in assuming or expanding their already existing leadership role as regards gender mainstreaming in the context of their respective public sector responsibilities; and (iii) facilitating partnerships and networking among national and local actors, thereby enhancing actual and potential future coordination of efforts among them.

o Supporting national ownership of results, e.g. by ensuring that partners were not only beneficiaries, but co-creators and drivers of different initiatives.

o Demonstrating how, through simple technical support and capacity building, private business could analyse their business performance and operations from a gender perspective. This helped to increase awareness and knowledge of formerly neglected issues, in particular the situation and needs of working women in the private sector, thereby contributing to key actors acknowledging the need to address these needs.

Under Outcome 2:

The JP worked with the Business Women's Forum (BWF) to train women owned enterprises and connect them to markets, in the process providing BWF with the approach, materials and hands-on practice to deliver these services. BWF used the skills and experience developed with ITC support under the complementary project to deliver support to women owned businesses under the JP . BWF replicated the model that it previously developed and rolled out with ITC support.

The JP also continued building the capacity of Business Women Forum (BWF) to continue providing better services by creating the one-stop-shop/business service hub shops. It is expected that the BWF will act as a multiplier institution by extending its services to more women in other sectors. This will strengthen the demand for BWF services and will make it more sustainable in the long-term.

Registration of MSMEs and cooperatives in the Ministry of National Economy, Ministry of Health, Chambers of Commerce and other related line ministries is crucial to ensure the continuity and the sustainability of the MSME's and cooperatives, moving from the informal to the formal economy businesses will open a new window for them to reach a new markets in the regional and international markets, this will drive income and employment generation, as well as contribute to improve the livelihoods of women and their families, and improve the overall socio-economic development of the country.

A cooperation agreement was signed with the Palestine Standards institution (PSI) in order to develop Palestinian standards for four products - makdous, thyme (za'atar), freekeh and maftoul. Of these, PSI standards are ready for Maftool, Zaatar and Makdous, while for Freekeh were not yet field tested because of seasonality PSI has taken ownership of this process and will follow with Araneh Cooperative with the aim of finalizing the standards during the upcoming freekah season.

At the enterprise Level:

During the life of the project, selected women-owned SMEs integrated the knowledge and skills acquired through training and advisory services provided by the project's technical experts and consultants (from ITC and UNW). The commitment of selected enterprises and the positive results will ensure that the new techniques will be well integrated in the enterprises' business processes and will continue to be used in the long term. It is expected that women who benefited from the project will be able to train future groups of women involved in similar value chains.

In addition to that, the JP engaged a specialised exporter for making market linkages: ITC provided coaching and advisory to the intermediary exporter on markets requirements, including: market compliance, pricing, marketing, certification, packaging and marketing. It is expected that the intermediary exporter will act as a multiplier entity by extending the knowledge they obtained to more cooperatives and small producers, who will be exporting their production through the intermediary exporter. This approach has been used to resolve several issues including: small production, language barriers, ect.

2) The promotion of **women's empowerment and gender equality**. (200 words)

Gender equality and women's empowerment are core development objectives of the project. Fundamental for the realization of human rights and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes, gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed in all of the JP's outcomes, outputs and Activities as detailed below:

At the institutional level

□ What capacity was built within partner Ministries and the NCWE is an achievement that the JP should seek to build upon to enable both the public and private sector to adopt inclusive development policies and programmes.

At the private sector level,

□ The JP worked on strengthening women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives capacity through many specialized approaches like coaching, trainings, business to business methods. Additionally, the one-stop-shop/business service hub and the two business shops are especially designed to enhance women economic empowerment. The project supported (45) women-owned businesses and cooperatives to meet buyer requirements. Matchmaking events and business and business meetings were also organized to create concrete sales opportunities. Furthermore, the project is also directly engaging and supporting the private sector through its two point of sale business shops in the north and south of the West Bank, which are now also selling their products through the marketing company New Farm Company in the West Bank and through Al Hanona Market in Amman, Jordan and Kafour Mall in Amman.

□ The JP promoted a more inclusive and gender sensitive working environment in the private sector. Two private companies -The Bank of Palestine (BoP) and Birzeit Pharmaceuticals Company (BPC), the largest companies in their respective sectors- have been assisted to undertake a comprehensive gender audit through a participatory process, facilitated by local experts certified by ILO that involved building gender awareness and analysis capacity within both companies through training and accompaniment of staff from both companies in the assessment activities through focus group discussions and interviews. The process culminated in an audit report for each company, with policy and operational recommendations for enhancing equality and gender equity in the workplace and in key operations/services. Recommendations included suggestions for changes in the complaint mechanisms and policies related to sexual harassment, which were being under consideration by the Board of the two companies at the time of evaluation. The expectation was that the success of the gender audit would encourage others to replicate it, thereby creating some sort of a positive systemic change in the enabling environment for women's economic participation.

At the socio-economic level

Using a results-oriented model for women's economic empowerment, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Fund joint programme 'Creating a one-stop shop for sustainable businesses' has enhanced the

socio-economic status and decent working conditions of its women beneficiaries. With the joint programme's support, beneficiaries' women-owned and operated cultural and agricultural businesses are positively impacting Palestinian communities, building economies inclusive of the most marginalized, and contributing to the preservation of Palestinian cultural heritage.

3) The engagement in **public-private partnerships**. (200 words)

The JP was particularly relevant to and very-well aligned with the State of Palestine's strategic approach to economic development and employment as outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2014-2016 and the National Labor Sector Strategy 2014-2016. This approach focused on strengthening the foundations of the national economy to provide decent employment opportunities and enhance productivity. It specifically aimed to contribute to the following strategic results: Increased employment opportunities through investment; a more enabling environment for balanced economic growth and development; improved productive capacity and competitiveness of Palestinian businesses; and expanded entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives among youth and women.

As part of its responsibilities, UN Women managed to create a full partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture, National Economy, Labor and Women's Affairs with regards to developing the policy paper. The process for developing the paper included meetings and consultation sessions with a multitude of stakeholders from the civil society, the private sector, women entrepreneurs, cooperatives, public sector and governmental institutions in order to identify priority areas for developing the policy. These sessions and meetings came up with recommendations related to the mechanisms for development and protection of the Palestinian traditional and agriculture products.

UN Women also created partnerships with two private companies which underwent the Gender Audit exercise. This was done through a participatory process, facilitated by local experts certified by ILO that involved building gender awareness and analysis capacity within both companies through training and accompaniment of 14 staff, and participation of more than 100 staff from both companies in the assessment activities through focus group discussions and interviews. The process culminated in an audit report for each company, with policy and operational recommendations for enhancing equality and gender equity in the workplace and in key operations/services. As envisaged in the JP's results framework, recommendations included suggestions for changes in the complaint mechanisms and policies related to sexual harassment, which were being under consideration by the Board of the two companies at the time of evaluation.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is part of the committee that supported FAO to develop a needs assessment and marketing study. Through the project's implementation, FAO facilitated MoA's strategic engagement with the private sector (business shops run by Al Thimar and Al Rozana companies) as well as civil society (ESDC), which also acts as an intermediary for women's associations and cooperatives. Under the JP, FAO works in coordination with the MoA, Al Thimar, Al Rozana and ESDC towards successful project outcomes.

Marketing linkages was also created between the participating MSME's and cooperatives with many private sector companies in Palestine and in the region through the JP. The linkages established ensured more exposure to the MSME's and the cooperatives and provide for sustainability for business deals

Communication and Advocacy

Has the JP articulated an advocacy & communication actions that helps advance its policy objectives and development outcomes?:

Yes

Please describe communication activities developed as part of the JP. :

A joint communication strategy was implemented that aims to foster greater public support to Palestine women’s economic empowerment in general, and women’s entrepreneurship in particular guides communications and visibility actions under the JP.

The communications team, which included specialists from the three UN agencies, produced a brochure and success story booklet that were distributed as a single project information pack as well as planned and delivered the project’s final event and exhibition. In addition, FAO commissioned a photographer to document the production process of some of its cooperatives. These photos will be used to raise awareness about the JP’s achievements and the importance of promoting women in agriculture well after the implementation period.

FAO, which had the lead role in implementing the communication plan , continued to meet regularly with the MoA and MoNE to enhance knowledge about the importance of working with the private sector as well as creating an enabling environment for agricultural cooperatives, particularly women’s cooperatives, to access the market to ensure inclusive and sustainable development. Such meetings positively influenced the public engagements of key stakeholders like the Minister of Agriculture who has highlighted the importance of women’s access to markets on numerous occasions, even in forums not connected to the JP.

ITC News:

Please see some of the success stories published in ITC News

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<http://www.intracen.org/news/Palestinian-businesswomen-to-showcase-textiles-meet-buyers-in-United-Arab-Emirates-Russian-Federation/>

•

<http://www.intracen.org/news/Palestinian-company-Meera-Soap-boosts-sales-through-better-branding-market-access/>

Success stories reported under the complementary project:

o <http://www.intracen.org/news/Palestinian-toy-company-sells-4000-dolls-after-redesign/>

o

<http://www.intracen.org/news/Palestinian-businesswoman-launches-fashion-line-opens-own-store-with-ITC-support/>

o <http://www.intracen.org/news/A-glimmer-of-hope-for-Palestinian-women/>

Book about our women:

[http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Redesign/Projects/Arab-States/Palestine_low-res_spreads%20\(3\).pdf](http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Redesign/Projects/Arab-States/Palestine_low-res_spreads%20(3).pdf)

Please provide concrete gains on how the the JP communication and advocacy efforts have increased awareness on SDGs.:

(250 words)

JP twitter handle:

@

Other social media channels managed by joint programme (Instagram, Google+, You Tube...):

One UN Coordination and Delivering as One

The SDG-F is based on the principles of effective development cooperation, inclusion and participation and One UN coordination.

Actions	Description
Managerial practices (financial, procurement, etc.) implemented jointly by the UN implementing agencies for SDG-F JPs	The project management teams met on a regular basis, to discuss any joint efforts needed for the implementation including operational coordination, integrating work plan, budget preparation, drafting reports, establishing communication and public information plans, addressing management and implementation and other programme related issues. Each UN Agency highlights its main role and responsibility for any joint event or coordination.
Joint analytical work (studies, publications, etc.) undertaken jointly by UN implementing agencies for SDG-F JPs	<p>Export potential of the selected women owned SMEs in the MENA region and Europe was analyzed by ITC. Both reports provided guidance to UNW on how to improve the products based on international standards.</p> <p>A report on "Access to the European market" for three products was delivered for the food sector by ITC. Recommendations and suggestions for improvements of the products were provided to FAO. A brochure and success story booklet were distributed as a single project information pack.</p>
Joint activities undertaken jointly by UN implementing agencies for SDG-F JPs	<p>ITC and FAO collaborated on supporting cooperatives to achieve Output 2.1, demonstrating good synergies between the two agencies.</p> <p>ITC over the JP's lifetime provided technical advice and undertook in-depth market assessments. This included undertaking a food and drink market assessment in the European Union (EU), which provided sort of a roadmap for building the capacity of Palestinian enterprises to export ancient grains, herbs and spices, and pickled condiments to Europe, which was applied by FAO. This was later followed by developing a marketing strategy, by both agencies, which identified international market linkages for women cooperatives in Palestine; price analysis of Palestinian products in the EU markets; and initial compliance checks for some products and product labels.</p> <p>Finally, ITC continued providing technical guidance to market proposition of NFC, while FAO was poised to assure the quality and export readiness of the products.</p> <p>ITC also provided UNW with the recommendations/roadmap aiming at improving products to be aligned with the international standards. UNW improved the products based on the recommendations.</p>
Other, please specify:	

What types of coordination mechanisms and decisions have been taken to ensure joint delivery? :

The JP team met regularly (PMT meetings) to coordinate upcoming activities and actions. These meetings gave the opportunity to all partners to raise any coming plans and events that need joint efforts. The RC representative supported the meetings and made sure that appropriate coordination between UN Agencies was taking place. A focal point was assigned in each agency to facilitate cooperation mechanisms between the JP partners in terms of technical, financial and visibility issues. At the field level, the JP Team conducted regular monitoring visits to the project beneficiaries and activities, for the purpose of monitoring and supporting each agency's work. For example:

- The FAO communications focal point provided feedback on the development of the One Stop Shop's web portal both to UN Women and their implementing partner, BWF. UN Women and FAO agreed to start monitoring field visits for FAO targeted cooperatives.

ITC, in cooperation with the FAO, identified two intermediary exporting companies to be the focal point for the different agrofood cooperatives. ITC, FAO, and the intermediary exporter met regularly to follow-up on the progress, agree on the upcoming activities and to ensure the smooth implementation of the planning activities.

National Ownership: Paris, Accra and Busan Commitments

The SDG-F strengthens the UN system's ability to deliver results in an integrated and multi-dimensional manner by supporting the Joint Programme modality and by bringing together United Nations Agencies and national counterparts in a collective effort to ensure ownership and sustainability of results of JPs and advance towards the SDGs.

Partners	Involvement *	Type of involvement	Examples
Government (specify national/local)	Fully involved	Policy-decision making	<p>At the governmental level, the JP worked with the MoNE in registration of women small businesses, with special focus on the women owned run MSME's to swift the economic activities from the informal to formal sector. In addition to that the JP worked with the MoNE and developed the capacity of the appointed MoNE staff with regards to all aspect related to deliverance of gender sensitive services.</p> <p>The JP worked with the related PA Ministries (MoWA, MoL, MoA, and MoNE), particularly with the NCWE to develop a policy paper highlighting the policy directions for the main national stakeholders with focus on economic empowerment of women. Several meetings and consultation sessions were conducted by the consultant with a multitude of stakeholders in order to identify a baseline to prepare the policy paper. Two national consultation sessions were conducted with representatives from the civil society and the private sector, women entrepreneurs and cooperatives, the public sector and governmental institutions. The two consultation sessions intended to discuss the policies and mechanisms related to the development and protection of the Palestinian traditional and agriculture products. The two sessions came up with recommendations that have been taken in consideration in the first draft of the two policies.</p> <p>All of FAO's programmes are implemented under the umbrella of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and FAO's activities under this JP are in line with the MoA's Agriculture Strategy: Resilience and Development 2014-2016. The MoA is part of the committee that supported FAO to develop a needs assessment and marketing study. At the governorate level, FAO works closely with the MOA to ensure policy support for and the promotion of the two business shops and 23 cooperatives.</p>

Partners	Involvement *	Type of involvement	Examples
Private Sector	Fully involved		<p>UN Women conducted a gender audit for two Palestinian companies “Bank of Palestine” and the “Birzeit Pharmaceuticals Company” and provided them with key recommendations concerning the gender gaps in specific areas of work and how to adopt gender sensitive policies and procedures.</p> <p>UN Women supported MSMEs establish linkages with the private sector both locally, regionally and internationally. Business deals were concluded between several MSMEs and private companies in Palestine, Jordan, the UK, and Chile.</p> <p>In Halhoul, FAO is working in close cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce to build strong links between the business shop and key private sector stakeholders in the agriculture sector and to ensure the visibility of the shop in the local market.</p> <p>In addition, the two business shops have built on their previously informal arrangement to export their products at a shop called Al Hanona Market in Amman, Jordan by working to sign an official agreement that governs this trade relationship.</p> <p>ITC has supported women owned businesses/intermediary exporter to improve their competitiveness and connect them to markets. The beneficiary SMEs received customized advice and capacity building to diversify their production, improve product quality and design, and upgrade business plans to better meet buyers’ needs. Through business generation activities, such as participating in international exhibitions and trade fairs, these women owned SMEs/intermediary exporter were able to connect with international buyers, learn about their requirements and strike business deals. The JP has helped to empower these women entrepreneurs, both in terms of the revenue they generate through their business acumen as well as their personal development</p>

Partners	Involvement *	Type of involvement	Examples
Civil Society	Fully involved		<p>The development of the Policy Paper was done through a participatory approach that included consultations with national stakeholders including civil society organizations. UN Women consultant facilitating the developing of the policy paper consulted key civil society organizations throughout the whole process and ensured their feedback and input was included in all drafts of the policy paper.</p> <p>FAO built on their previous cooperation to implement the JP, by strengthening ESDC and their presence and influence in civil society. ESDC is also working on enhancing the capacity building of the cooperatives particularly, in agricultural and agro business products as well as producing local market studies per targeted product.</p> <p>UN and ITC Women partnered with the BWF fully in the implementation of activities related to the participating MSME's. As such, BWF was involved in each step of the implementation. Guidance and supervision was provided by UN Women and ITC to the BWF to implement the designed activities. The BWF benefitted from ITC support with organizational development and staff training. This ensured better local ownership of the project accompanied by an effective use of the "learning-by-doing" approach to strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries.</p>
Academia			

* Implementation of activities and the delivery of outputs

Please briefly describe the current situation of the government, private sector and civil society on regards of ownership, align:

The JP was (and continues to be) relevant in view of national and international commitments and strategic priorities of the Government of the State of Palestine, and the United Nations strategic priorities as identified in the UNDAF for the State of Palestine. It is also very well aligned with UN Women's, FAO's, and ITC's corporate and country-level priorities, as well as with the SDGs (particularly SDG1, 5, 8, 10, and 17) and the SDG-F policy goal of inclusive economic growth for poverty eradication and gender mainstreaming. The Palestinian Authority's commitment to mainstream gender and the principles of equality, equal opportunity, and active participation of all to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and for the empowerment of Palestinian women was reflected in the CSNGS 2014-2016. The strategy acknowledged that sustainable development requires a focus on the participation and empowerment of women in all economic, social, political, and cultural sectors; and that this requires the integration of gender issues in all national policies and programs. By focusing on enhancing economic and market access opportunities for women MSMEs and cooperatives, and by working towards building capacity within key government institutions and private sector to mainstream gender in their policies, the JP was well in-line with the CSNGS 2014-2016.

The JP was well aligned with the NES vision of "export-led prosperity, made in Palestine," as well as with three of its four strategic objectives, namely: build the capacities of the exporting sector to diversify and penetrate international markets; maximize the contribution of exports to socioeconomic development through enhanced export competitiveness, including promoting involvement of women and marginalized groups in export value chains; and build and promote the image of the State of Palestine as a supplier of value-added quality products and services. The JP strategy of establishing a one-stop-shop for providing

business development and marketing services to MSMEs and cooperatives was also (and continues to be) very relevant to address the functional deficiencies in the business environment in Palestine, as identified in the NES and corroborated by key informants consulted by the evaluation. The overall consensus of women beneficiaries was that the one-stop business development services hub was (and remains) very much relevant to their collective needs, particularly given the fact that most of them lacked the time, knowledge, and financial resources needed to undertake the service functions that were to be offered by the one-stop-shop on their own. Targeted cooperatives confirmed that access to markets and sustainable market linkages are the key bottlenecks they face, hence indicated that the JP's focus on building their production capacity and enhancing their market linkages was very much relevant to their organizational development needs, as well as to the needs of their member producers.

Staff of Gender Units within the targeted ministries described the capacity building interventions planned under the JP as being "perfectly aligned" with their needs, and in-tune with their analysis of the capacity building needs for mainstreaming gender within the respective ministries. One informant interviewed by the evaluation made reference to the capacity building on integrating gender in planning and operations that was planned under the programme, describing it as "the best kind of support Gender Units could be provided to be able to discharge their functions more easily, and mobilise the support they need for this purpose." Trainees in the various ministries that have received training on gender reported that there was a clear need for the type of training and capacity building support that was planned within the framework of the JP, particularly the training on integrating and mainstreaming gender in national policies, plans, and programs.

The two private sector companies reported that the support they received within the framework of the JP to undertake a gender audit was relevant to their overall strategy of creating an equitable and inclusive working environment for their employees.

Please briefly provide an overall assessment of the governance and managerial structures :

The JP was deliberately shaped to simultaneously address constraints to inclusive growth and women empowerment at different levels, with and through multiple stakeholders, and from different angles. The joint programme was appropriate for this broad approach, given the needs of the target group and the types of change the programme set out to achieve. The relatively small number of participating UN agencies in the JP also lent itself for enhanced synergies and collaboration.

The governance of the JP was to be done through a three-tier management structure as per the SDG-F guidelines, with an NSC, a PMC and a PMT.

The PMT met on a regular (almost monthly) basis throughout most of the JP's implementation.

The governance structure ensures that all the joint planning is decided collectively and transparently between the JP partners. Furthermore, the JP partners are very committed to the programme meetings (NSC and PMC); these meetings were conducted periodically and as needed on emerging issues. The RC representative support the meetings and make sure that all partners have clear picture about the progress of the JP in all sectors in addition to the coming steps and joint activities. For example, the Chief of the Coordination Unit- UNSCO led the opening ceremony of the One Stop Shop in Ramallah, which was significant for representing the joint spirit of the programme. In addition to joint field visits that aim to understand developments in the field.

VI. Joint Programme contribution to the SDGs

SDG #	JP Contribution
Goal 1	<p>Target 1.4: The JP supports women to realize their economic rights both directly through capacity building and technical support as well as indirectly through advocating for their rights. For instance, women who have traditionally been involved in agriculture but disconnected from the financial rewards of the market were supported to sell their products directly through the JP business shops.</p> <p>The JP made significant contributions to enhancing the economic empowerment of women MSMEs with many of them achieving increased income as a result of increased sales; greater self-confidence and self-appreciation; improved status within the household and community; and an enhanced sense of being part of a support group.</p> <p>The JP supported women MSME's to register their businesses and move from the informal to formal sector. Moreover, the programme provides technical support to public sector to improve services provided to businesses from a gender perspective.</p>
Goal 5	<p>Target 5.5: The occupied Palestinian territory is facing a significant gender challenge, reflected by enormous disparity in employment and asset ownership among women and men. This situation reinforces the need to better economically empower women and support them to overcome existing barriers and societal constraints. The JP worked on enhancing the competitiveness and access of the women own/run MSME's and cooperatives through providing them with the needed technical trainings, skills and physical inputs to enable them to become self-sustainable businesses and more able to access new working opportunities and markets.</p> <p>The JP also worked on ensuring women's full and effective participation in business and trade and equal opportunities by coaching the women MSMEs and cooperatives continuously on business and trade aspects. Economically, they have been empowered with tools and mechanisms, they have moved from the informal to the formal sector.</p> <p>On the institutional level, the JP worked on enhancing the capacity of the public institutions, especially the Ministry of National Economy, MoL, MoWA and MoA to be able to deliver gender sensitive services for women owned businesses, MSMEs and cooperatives.</p>
Goal 8	<p>Target 8.3: The JP's policy work, deliberate focus on supporting the formalization of informal MSMEs, as well as support to enhancing the value added of both agricultural and cultural products have made contribution to SDG8 target of promoting "development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and [encouraging] the formalisation and growth of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises."</p>

SDG #	JP Contribution
Goal 10	<p>Target 10.2: Gender equality and women’s empowerment are core development objectives of the project. Fundamental for the realization of human rights and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes, gender equality and women’s empowerment are addressed in all of the JP’s outcomes, outputs and Activities.</p> <p>At the institutional level The JP equipped line Ministries with the required skills for engendering the existing legal framework governing economic activities and also engendering services provided to businesses. The capacity development training provided to key staff from line ministries has ensured that the ministries have the required set of skills to undergo a comprehensive review of the legal-framework and procedures and regulations from a gender perspective. With the support of the JP, the ministries began this process of reviewing policies and developed a policy paper highlighting policy directions and priorities in several sectors aiming at promoting women’s participation in economic activities through protection of local production of cultural and agricultural products and the establishment of incentives for women cooperatives working in the agriculture sector.</p> <p>At the private sector level, Two private companies -The Bank of Palestine (BoP) and Birzeit Pharmaceuticals Company (BPC), the largest companies in their respective sectors- have been assisted to undertake a comprehensive gender audit using ILO’s gender audit methodology. This was done through a participatory process, facilitated by local experts certified by ILO that involved building gender awareness and analysis capacity within both companies through training and accompaniment of 14 staff, and participation of more than 100 staff from both companies in the assessment activities through focus group discussions and interviews. The process culminated in an audit report for each company, with policy and operational recommendations for enhancing equality and gender equity in the workplace and in key operations/services. As envisaged in the JP’s results framework, recommendations included suggestions for changes in the complaint mechanisms and policies related to sexual harassment, which were being under consideration by the Board of the two companies at the time of evaluation.</p> <p>At the socio-economic level To increase access and competitiveness of women run MSME’s and cooperatives’ products in local, regional and international markets, the JP worked on strengthening women owned/run MSME’s and cooperatives capacity through many specialized approaches like coaching, trainings, business to Business methods. Additionally, the one-stop-shop/business service hub and the two business shops are especially designed to enhance women economic empowerment.</p>

VII. Additional Information

Attachments